

The Integration of Christian Spirituality into Evangelical Christian Education in the Local South African Church

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis, an integration of Christian spirituality into Evangelical Christian education, has required that both these disciplines be explored and discussed. Christian spirituality has been limited to a discussion of Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic spirituality, and has included a discussion of the commonalities between these two traditions. Since both are extremely vast, this thesis does not cover all the varieties within each tradition itself. The focus has been for a general understanding of spirituality in order to integrate it with education in the local South African church context.

Christian education has been explored from the perspective of education within the local church, particularly of adults. I do not consider the role of the school, nor do I cover the education of children and youth. These were necessary limitations to my topic. The discussion of Christian education is taken from a broad perspective, not just an evangelical due to the sparsity of literature on evangelical education.

Based on this research, suggested guidelines for the integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education in the local South African evangelical church are given. This forms the basis of part III of this thesis. This section begins with a discussion of the points of

contact between these two traditions, which forms the direction that the final chapter takes, giving some specific guidelines. These guidelines focus on the Evangelical emphases with the centrality of scripture being crucial.

The general conclusion of this thesis is that the task of integrating Christian spirituality into Christian education should not be that difficult since there is already much that is common between them.

INTRODUCTION

Based on an investigation into the nature and purpose of Christian education and Christian spirituality, suggestions will be given, in this thesis, on ways to integrate Christian spirituality into Christian education in the local evangelical church in South Africa. It is my contention that, by and large, this does not happen with any deliberate intention in contemporary Christian education within the local church. The current literature on Christian education shows very little, if any, recognisance of the vast literature and teachings of Christian spirituality through the ages. Even the contemporary research in the area of faith development, which comes the closest to spirituality, draws from modern scientific research, Piaget and Kohlberg being the starting points, rather than the more ancient teachings of spirituality. Thus, an intentional integration, drawing on the vast resources of Christian spirituality is needed, and is my purpose in this thesis, relating particularly to the Evangelical church in South Africa.

In the current South African situation, Christian education is largely an import from the United States of America and Britain, and thus reflects some of the same trends found in those countries. This can be seen in the use of American Sunday School curriculum materials, such as Scripture Press

and the rapid growth in this country of Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.), a Christian day school movement. A.C.E. is distinctly American, developing out of evangelical fundamentalism. No attempt is made to contextualise their material to the South African context. The Evangelical church of South Africa, in particular, is guilty of importing an unchanged and uncontextualised version of Christian education from these countries. Relevant research that is peculiarly South African is not available in the field of Christian education to date. It is not within the scope of this thesis to produce that research. Therefore, in this thesis I draw primarily on American, and to a lesser extent British literature and research on the subject, and attempt to adapt it to the local South African context, with particular reference to the Evangelical church.

The integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education, which forms Part III of this thesis, is particularly concerned with the questions related to how to enable people within the church to develop a spirituality that is both life changing and well informed. It will mean answering questions related to what spirituality and education in the church are.

In order to answer these questions, I have attempted to give an explanation of the nature and purpose of Christian education and Christian spirituality, before suggesting ways of integration. The discussion on Christian education is based primarily on the contemporary literature of both

Protestants, including Evangelicals, and Catholics. I use contemporary literature since Christian education is a relatively recent discipline, with most work done in this century.

The investigation into Christian spirituality has been undertaken from two perspectives, that of the Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical traditions. I have chosen Anglo-Catholic since this represents, for the most part, the thinking of Christian spirituality from the early days of Western Christianity, and is currently gaining in popularity among Christians from a variety of backgrounds and denominations. It is obvious that, in this thesis, there is no possibility of giving a comprehensive discussion of this enormously vast resource. I have, therefore, only highlighted the most common themes in the literature, choosing those that are being constantly referred to in contemporary writings on Christian spirituality. The coverage of Evangelical literature on Christian spirituality is done since my thesis is designed primarily for an Evangelical audience, and since I seek to make representation to the Evangelical church, particularly in South Africa.

Between Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical spirituality, there are many common themes. I have sought to highlight these, using them as the basis for part III, the integration of the two disciplines. I have deliberately headed part III as "an integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education", rather than as "an integration of Christian education into Christian spirituality". The former focuses

on Christian education, which is the primary focus of this thesis. I intend it to suggest that Christian spirituality must improve Christian education, rather than the other way around.

Because the central focus of this thesis is on Christian education, I have chosen to begin with an investigation into its nature and purpose. This has been no easy task. Christian education, as already mentioned, is a relatively recent introduction into the church situation, and even more recently has it been recognised as a discipline and field of research in tertiary level institutions. There has never been one central source to authoritatively define and explain it. The problem is compounded by the fact that the term 'Christian education' is only one of the numerous terms used to name this discipline. In my thesis, I will discuss this problem, looking at the other terms currently in vogue and defending my use of 'Christian education'. Such problems mean that explanations concerning what it is, what it should accomplish, and how it should be practiced are numerous and constantly changing. My thesis will reflect this diversity and even confusion. This is not to be seen as a negative factor. Neither do I wish to suggest that Christian education would be more effective if there were less diversity and confusion. This diversity and seeming confusion must be seen as a strength. This is so, since Christian education is concerned, first and foremost, with people. People are constantly changing and, therefore, Christian education must be a dynamic rather than a static

discipline, adapting to the needs of the people at a given time and place. To attempt to give definitive answers to the questions related to the nature and purpose of Christian education would be both presumptuous and arrogant.

For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen to submit that Christian education is an intentional, yet flexible educational activity, enabling men and women to live as priests in the Church, society and the world at large. It thus has purposive activities related to education. I do recognise that 'education' is a problematic term, with a variety of definitions. Suffice it here to say that, however it is defined, education does involve intentional teaching and learning experiences and therefore, Christian education must include such. Since Christian education is also concerned with matters related to being priests, it also has a spiritual purpose. As such, Christian education is an arm of the local church and not something distinct from it. It should, therefore, seek to help the Church fulfill its overall purpose. I also focus on adults rather than children or youth, hence my suggested definition uses the terms "men and women", meaning adults. I do this since adults are the church of today and will, therefore, influence the future church. It is also a necessary limitation for this research.

Part II takes up an investigation into Christian spirituality. Throughout this thesis, Christian spirituality refers to the discipline in the Christian Church variously called "ascetical" or "devotional" or "mystical" theology.

It consists of the teachings of Christianity concerning the practicalities related to living in relationship to God, self, others and the world. Throughout the history of Christianity, Christians have struggled with this and left behind a record of their struggles, with suggestions for Christian living. This means that this investigation proved to be an awesome task, with the primary problem related to what to omit, rather than to what to put in. As already noted, I approached Christian spirituality first from an Evangelical perspective, and then from the broader Anglo-Catholic perspective. Both terms, 'Evangelical' and 'Anglo-Catholic' are defined in the body of the thesis.

Evangelical spirituality is seen to be shaped by the understanding of divine revelation and thus scripture, the central role of the Spirit and grace of God, an emphasis on the whole person in relationship to God, as well as an emphasis on the rational mind in relating to God. These factors, in turn, shape how evangelicals practice their spirituality and what they practice as necessary disciplines. In this thesis, I discuss three suggestions concerning purpose for spirituality, thus Christian living. These are Christlikeness, maturity, and knowledge of God. As will be discussed, these are not distinctive to Evangelical spirituality.

The great strength of the Evangelical position is its commitment to the belief that spirituality is not the privilege of a select few Christians. Rather, it is for all Christians, regardless of their station in life or in the

Church. This has been the consistent teaching of evangelicalism.

An Anglo-Catholic spirituality, having much in common with an Evangelical spirituality, emphasises relationship to God, conformity to Christ and union with God in their understanding of spirituality. The growth of spirituality is understood to be developmental, hence I give a detailed discussion on the various views on stages of spiritual development. Growth is also understood to be achieved through disciplined practice of certain spiritual disciplines related to prayer and scripture.

The overall strength of the Anglo-Catholic tradition has been its more detailed teaching on the practices related to prayer and scripture, and more particularly its attention given to the interior life and how this can be guided. Thus, the practice of spiritual direction forms an important part of this position.

One important spiritual discipline that I discuss separately, rather than under either of these two traditions, is that of spiritual direction. By and large 'spiritual direction' belongs to the domain of Anglo-Catholic spirituality. Because of the misunderstanding among evangelicals concerning spiritual direction, and because of the contemporary growth of this discipline in all Christianity, I have discussed it in some detail in chapter six. It also forms an important part of the discussion of the integration of Christian spirituality

into Christian education.

In order to give clarity to the discussion on Christian spirituality, I have included a chapter on the comparison between the two traditions under review. While this is not explicitly related to the overall purpose of this thesis, it does help to guide and limit my discussion on an integration in Part III. In this final section, I will seek to suggest ways that the local Evangelical church can integrate the truths of Christian spirituality as related to such things as prayer, scripture, and development into its Christian education programmes in the church. To enable me to do this, I have included a chapter highlighting those elements that were seen to be important in both Christian education and Christian spirituality. This forms the basis for the final chapter, where suggested guidelines are given for an integration. For clarity, I have chosen to present these guidelines in four basic points; i) the necessity of handing of the faith through teaching; ii) the necessity of the worship of God in the world; iii) the necessity of a community of faith that bears witness to its worship and teaching, and finally iv) the necessity of service in the world.

The approach I have taken throughout this thesis has been that of an historical research point of view rather than an empirical one. This is because of the availability of a vast field of literature and other resources, particularly as it relates to Christian spirituality. My purpose throughout has been to attempt to review this literature and

give a general perspective, covering a variety of aspects and points of view, rather than singling out a few aspects for thorough and specific study. This generalisation has been intentional, and is meant to give this thesis as broad a representation as possible, as well as a more extensive appeal than a narrower study would do. Thus parts I and II reflect a very broad discussion of Christian education and spirituality. As I've stated, this is deliberate to enable me to give some specificity in part III in suggesting ways to integrate the two disciplines. My research has drawn primarily on written resources, with a number of personal interviews with people both in South Africa and the United States. My sources have been drawn from a wide variety of perspectives, even though my thesis will reflect an Evangelical bias. I do not attempt to discuss the spirituality or education of other religions, nor the current teaching of contemporary psychology, as this falls beyond the scope of this thesis. This means that, throughout this thesis, the term 'spirituality' is intended to refer to Christian spirituality.

PART I

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Investigating the nature and purpose of Christian education raises a number of problems. One of them is that, as a discipline, Christian education has as many explanations and definitions as there are Christian educators attempting to describe it. Westerhoff gives an example of this dilemma when he described Christian education as being in crisis with a number of uncertainties about it (Westerhoff 1976 and 1978). Westerhoff is not alone with his scepticism. O'Gorman in his introduction to Burgess' *An Invitation to Religious Education*, contends that "religious education is fighting for its life" (in Burgess 1975: vii). This is also confirmed by Scott in his discussion on the interests of religious education and professional education. He maintains that there is no consensus among Christian educators concerning the foundational issues of Christian education, such as its nature, scope, and purpose (Scott 1982: 588). This means that the discipline remains in confusion and uncertainty.

In order to counteract this uncertainty in the field, a number of Christian educators have called for a radical reorganisation of the church's approach to doing Christian

education. Two prolific writers in the field, Lawrence O. Richards and John H. Westerhoff III, have consistently argued for a new model for Christian education. In one of his earliest work, *Creative Bible Teaching* (1970), Richards perceived reform for the educational ministry of the church to be related to an improvement in the teaching methods of those involved. In a later work, *A Theology of Christian Education* (1975) [1], he called for an entirely new approach, which he named "socialisation". In a more recent volume, *A Theology of Children's Ministry* (1983), he cogently argued that the home, rather than the church, was the true centre of Christian education, while still advocating socialisation as the means by which Christian education should be approached. He thus continued to emphasise methodology. Richards is a conservative evangelical and writes from that perspective.

Westerhoff, who began his ministry in the United Church of Christ and later transferred to the Episcopalian church (Longnecker: 1984), also focuses on methodology. Despite the theological differences with Richards, he argues for a similar approach, that of socialisation. Karen Longnecker, in her unpublished Master's thesis, notes that Westerhoff named his approach "socialization" in a 1972 publication. Two years later he changed the name to "catechesis" and yet another two years later he was calling it a "faith-enculturation paradigm" (Longnecker 1984: 113). Longnecker further notes that Westerhoff now uses all three terms, but concentrates on the latter two (Ibid.: 114).

Westerhoff continues to argue for a radical new approach to doing Christian education. His 1976 publication, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* is considered to be his most definitive statement on Christian education as socialisation. This emphasis on socialisation in Christian education for Richards and Westerhoff does not sufficiently separate the role of Christian education from the of the church in general, thus, it tends towards confusion.

While Richards and Westerhoff call for an entirely new approach, which they name socialisation or faith-enculturation, others continue to argue for the reformation and improvement of the actual teaching process in the church. This is particularly true of evangelical Christian education because of their commitment to scripture and the belief that scripture does put emphasis on teaching. In a recent publication, *Effective Bible Teaching*, Wilhoit and Ryken argue for an improvement in teaching methodology. They suggest that improved teaching methods are the most important aspect in Christian education in the church today (Wilhoit and Ryken 1988). In an article on the same topic published in *Christian Education Journal*, they maintain that Bible teaching is "the church's unfinished task" and neglected in both contemporary evangelical churches and seminaries, where, according to the authors, the focus is on preaching rather than on teaching (Ryken and Wilhoit 1990: 39). Graendorf agrees with this perspective and suggests that through, what he refers to as "a meaningful teaching ministry", the church will be able to face the contemporary

challenges of our society (Graendorf 1981: 12).

This emphasis on teaching does have precedence since there is an emphasis on teaching in scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments. The words 'teach', 'teacher' or similar words are used over 100 times in the Old Testament and nearly 200 times in the New (see Brown: 1978: 759ff). The Hebrews were instructed in the Mosaic law to teach, particularly their children (cf Deuteronomy 6). Jesus came teaching. "It is the unanimous testimony of all the Synoptic writers . . . that Jesus 'taught'" (Brown 1978: 761). The early church continued the task of teaching. Thus the first Christians met "constantly to hear the apostles teach" (Acts 2:42 REB). And despite opposition, "every day [the apostles] went steadily on with their teaching" (Acts 5:42 REB). Paul continued this teaching emphasis among the Gentile converts. Not only are his epistles evidence of teaching, but he also proclaimed that it was his ministry (see Colossians 1:28). While teaching is not all there is to education, it certainly is a part of education. Since it is so important in scripture, it should also be important in the church.

Not only do Protestants, particularly evangelicals [2], focus on the teaching aspect of education, the Roman Catholic educator, James Michael Lee does so as well, preferring to use the term 'instruction' rather than teaching. Lee's book, *The Shape of Religious Instruction* calls for an instructional approach based on the social sciences (Lee 1971). Another Roman Catholic, Thomas Groome,

also has an emphasis on the teaching process which he describes in his books *Christian Religious Education* and his more recently published *Sharing Faith*. However, Groome's approach to teaching, which he describes in both his volumes as a "shared praxis approach", focuses more on the learner/participants, than on what the teacher does.

The emphasis of Wilhoit and Ryken and Lee is on the teacher and his or her methodology. Groome's approach approximates Kahlil Gibran's contention that a wise teacher "does not bid you enter the house of his [her] wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind" (Gibran 1926: 67). Shared Christian praxis seeks to enable people to discover their own wisdom, and then interact with the collective wisdom of the Church or community. Thus, while Groome is in sympathy with the approach of both Westerhoff and Richards, he has serious doubts about a purely socialisation approach. He argues that intentional socialisation would only work where a faith community was truly spiritually mature. He suggests that if Christian formation was entrusted to a socialisation approach, "given the present state of our Churches" we are more likely to end up with a conventional Christianity that is a far cry from the Gospels (Groome 1977: 264). A so-called secular educator, A. V. Kelly in his book on the theory and practice of curriculum development, agrees with this. He maintains that the school curriculum must go beyond socialisation and enculturation into a particular society because of the rapidity of social change and the need for people to be prepared for and

equipped to meet the challenges of this rapid change (Kelly 1982: 41). Groome's shared Christian praxis is an approach to teaching that is intended to form mature decision-makers who take responsibility for their own lives. Thus, while teaching is important, it must never be seen as the only aspect of the overall task of Christian education.

It is Groome, in *Christian Religious Education*, who reminds us that the journey to maturity and religious identity for education in the church will involve a struggle (Groome 1980: xv). He warns that it will not be easy to find a solution to the problems within religious education, and that the search for the right technique will not be on "the next band wagon," as so many people hope. He also highlights the fact that those who offer simple solutions are "immediately deserving of our scepticism" (Groome 1980: xiii). Groome's book was perceived by many Christian educators as one of the most significant on the subject. Of *Christian Religious Education*, James Fowler claimed that it was "likely to be the most significant book in the field of Christian education for the next twenty years" (Groome 1980: jacket cover). But, Groome cautions his readers not to view his ideas as the last or even his last word on the subject. His commitment to truth, he maintains, will mean that his ideas must continue to expand and change. This is evident in his most recent publication, *Sharing Faith* (1991). This is true of most thinkers in the field, which means that ideas about Christian education will continue to change. My thesis reflects this current thinking, hence the divergent

views presented.

Since this thesis is being written both for and from an evangelical [2] perspective, it will obviously be biased towards that, reflecting my own evangelical beliefs and heritage. This is not intended to portray that the evangelical approach is the right or only one. It is merely a reflection of my own background and the intentions of this thesis. However, the investigation into Christian education will consider the research in the field done by all Christian religious educators, Protestant and Catholic, evangelical and non- evangelical. This is in order to present as wide a view as possible. But, due to the scarcity of writing and research among evangelical Christian educators, as Blank notes in his article in *Christian Education Journal* (Blank 1988: 12), in this thesis I will rely particularly on non-evangelical, including both Catholic and Protestant works.

Before embarking on a discussion of the nature and purpose of Christian education within the Evangelical tradition, I will defend and explain my use of the term 'Christian education'. Thereafter, I will seek to give an understanding of the nature and purpose of Christian education, drawing on and referring to the suggestions made by other Christian educators. The nature of Christian education will be considered, relating particularly to the meaning and use of both *Christian* and *education*. Following on from this, the purpose of Christian education will be described, concluding with a tentative suggestion related to

why it exists, and what it could accomplish.

CHAPTER 1

NAMING THE DISCIPLINE

INTRODUCTION

There is much uncertainty concerning the name for this discipline, and this is crucial since the language that we use conveys a wealth of meaning. Scott notes this, stating that "When we buy into a certain term (or words), we buy into a world, a structure of knowledge, a process, a set of principles and mode of social relations" (Scott 1982: 588). This emphasises that the language that is used is of considerable importance. Eisner highlighted this, reminding us that "language is a surrogate for words. We try to articulate in words what we know in nonlinguistic ways" (Eisner 1985: 115).

Thomas Groome has remarked that "language is always inadequate and thus can always be improved upon" (Groome 1980: 28). And certainly the language of Christian education demonstrates this point clearly. It is constantly being "improved" upon. There is little consensus among Christian educators concerning the most adequate name for this discipline that would best describe the task of education within the local church. Scott remarks that "Religious educators cannot agree on the words to use. They have no consistent linguistic discourse. No stable pattern of conversation is currently operative in the field" (Scott

1982: 588). Westerhoff recognised the difficulty concerning the name, and sees this as being evidence of an even greater problem, which he argues is a theological one. He perceives the theological issue to be the problem behind the choice of name (Westerhoff 1978: 6). Of all the Christian educators researched for the purpose of this thesis, Westerhoff is the only one who is not consistent in the use of a name for the task in which he is involved (Longnecker 1984: 113). All other writers in the field have chosen a name and use it consistently.

The term 'Christian education' is not the oldest nor even the most common term to use, but it is the one most frequently used by evangelical churches. Before giving my reasons for choosing this term, it will be helpful to preface my remarks with a discussion of some of the other terms used to describe this discipline. The most common and oldest of those currently in use is 'religious education'. I will, therefore, begin with that. I will also give brief mention to a few other names that have been suggested as more appropriate.

1. Religious Education

The use of the term 'religious education' has been in consistent operation since the founding of the Religious Education Association (R.E.A.) in 1903. Despite the preference for this term, it has never been the exclusive one used by the R.E.A., as Westerhoff pointed out in the R.E.A.'s 75th anniversary volume which he edited, *Who Are*

We?. He there wrote that, while the R.E.A. and its journal, *Religious Education*, have maintained a constant usage of the term 'religious education', the journal has reflected the confusion in naming this discipline. Thus, terms like "religious instruction, Christian (Jewish) education, Christian nurture, Christian instruction, church (synagogue) education, ecumenical education and catechism" frequently appear (Westerhoff 1978: 3). However, as Westerhoff further notes, 'religious education' has been the most commonly used term, although no agreement has been reached, and today there is even less consensus than before. Westerhoff concludes, "While always in search of an identity, today we cannot even agree on a name by which to be identified" (Westerhoff 1978: 3).

However, religious education is still the term considered by many as the more neutral one to employ. Burgess explained that his decision to use this term rather than "Christian education" or "catechesis", "represents an effort to use as broad a term as possible" and adds, "no particular nuance is intended" (Burgess 1975: 16). James Michael Lee opts for this term, explaining that it is "more accurate than either 'catechesis' or 'Christian education'" (Lee 1971: 6). For Lee 'catechesis' "is a more technical term" referring to a specific aspect of the religious educators task, while 'Christian education', "suggests a certain triumphalism, as if religious education has to bear the label 'Christian' to be considered valid" (Lee 1971: 6). Lee, however, usually refers to the task as 'religious instruction', which is

discussed below.

Groome also prefers the term, 'religious education'. He maintains that "Religious education is a rich term. By its adjective it points to its specificity and by its noun it retains its commonality with all education", which he argues is an important link to retain (Groome 1980: 23). He also argues that "the term *religious education* accurately describes the general investigation of the religious dimension of life and the common quest for a transcendent ground of being" (Groome 1980: 24). Groome's discussion will be considered under his chosen name for this discipline, 'Christian Religious Education'. Groome's recognition that 'religious education' is a neutral term to use is one reason why it has found favour among Christian educators today.

2. Other Terms

2.1 *Christian Religious Education*

'Christian Religious Education' is Groome's choice to name this discipline. He describes in detail, in his book by that name, his reasons. As already mentioned. Groome prefers the term 'religious' since it relates to the "common quest" for transcendence. Since this means that all religious communities are involved in this task and can thus term what they do, "religious education", he suggests a further qualifier. "For this reason," states Groome, "I claim that when religious education is done by and from within a Christian community, the most descriptive term to

name it is *Christian religious education*" (Groome 1980: 24). He admits that this is a cumbersome term, which he refers to as "a piling up of words" (Groome 1980: 24), but uses it consistently, both in his early publication (1980) and in his most recent one, *Sharing Faith* (1991), since he considers it to be the most accurate term to describe his task. In defending the use of this "cumbersome" term, Groome explains that he too dislikes the term *Christian education* since

there is evidence that *Christian education* can have a pejorative connotation, especially for people who have come through the Sunday school tradition of some Protestant churches (Groome 1980: 24).

To support this statement, Groome refers to Gabriel Moran's claim "that Protestantism '*Christian education*' is generally understood as the activity by which 'officials of a church indoctrinate children to obey an official church'" (Groome 1980: 24). He does admit, however, that Moran is likely overstating the case in making this claim.

Thus for Groome, neither '*Christian education*' nor '*religious education*' adequately describe his task. His preference for '*religious*' has already been discussed above. He insists on the adjective '*Christian*', as opposed to a more specific Roman Catholic or Baptist, etc., to avoid being sectarian "in what ought to be a common enterprise" (Groome 1980: 24). And yet the term '*Christian*' does lend specificity to the common religious task (Ibid.). He maintains that the term '*education*' retains the bond with education in general. He writes, "naming our activity as *education* provides us a rich tradition with an enormous body

of literature and research" (Groome 1980: 23). He is here referring to what is generally termed 'secular' education.

2.2 Biblical Christian Education

To overcome some of the difficulties in naming the discipline, 'Biblical Christian education' has been suggested by some American fundamentalists. This is intended to demonstrate the recognition of the biblical authority. Thus, Werner Graendorf, professor of Christian education at the fundamentalist institute, Moody Bible Institute, entitled his work on Christian education, *Biblical Christian Education* (1981). There, he argues that the term "biblical" describes "an education approach that looks to the biblical record for both its origin and its relevance" (Graendorf 1981: 13). This education, he further argues, "finds its essential authority in the biblical record. . . . Its Christian nature is, in essence, Bible-based education" (Graendorf 1981: 15). He also boldly maintains that "Biblical Christian education must be understood as true education" (Ibid.: 13).

This emphasis on being "Bible-based" is important among Christian fundamentalists. For instance, Donald Howard, founder-president of the fundamentalist organisation, Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.), proclaims that A.C.E. is "Bible-based", meaning that is founded on "biblical principles" (Smallbones 1989: 20; Facts 1984: 16). Important to this approach is to be able to support every "educational" principle with a verse from the Bible.

Howard, and his A.C.E. staff do this scrupulously, while Graendorf does it to a lesser extent. While there are some who wish to emphasise a biblical approach, 'biblical Christian education' is not in common usage, and Graendorf's book made little impact.

2.3 Catechesis

Another term suggested and used to name the educational task of the church is that of 'catechesis'. According to Scott, it has been used synonymously with religious education and refers to "a process of evangelization and enculturation" (Scott 1982: 594). The term is most commonly used among Roman Catholics, and has not been very common in Protestantism. The only Protestant to use the term with any frequency and intention is John H. Westerhoff III. For Westerhoff catechesis is a term that includes both formal and informal type learning situations, as well as an enculturation or socialisation approach. Groome criticizes Westerhoff's usage, maintaining that he has given the word a far broader meaning than was ever intended. Groome contends that the word catechesis comes from the Greek verb *katechein*, and means "to respond", "to echo," or "to hand down". Thus, according to him, "the etymology of the word implies an oral tradition" (Groome 1980: 26). Westerhoff, he claims, has broadened the word to include a "process whereby individuals are initiated and socialized in the church community" (Groome 1980: 27). This, states Groome, gives a meaning to the process that makes it so broad that it describes the entire process of Christian becoming

(Groome 1980: 27), and not just that of Christian education. As already noted, Groome takes a strong stand against the use of catechesis to describe the task of Christian education. He maintains that it is "a specifically instructional activity within the broader enterprise of Christian religious education" (Groome 1980: 27), to which Lee would agree, as already noted. Groome further argues that when catechesis is used synonymously with religious education it

severs the Christian educational enterprise from its commonality with education and religious education. If this happens, then from what discipline does one draw to empower the activity? (Groome 1980: 27).

He feels that since catechesis is such a "church word", one would be obliged to draw exclusively from the "sacred sciences" such as theology and scripture, for background knowledge and understanding of religious education. Thus, he prefers to remain with the term religious education, adding Christian as the qualifier for religious.

2.4 Christian Nurture

While never taken seriously as a name for this discipline, 'Christian nurture' has suggested to some a more precise one to use. In 1930 Elmer Homrighausen challenged Christian educators concerning the usage of "religious" as an adjective for education. He argued that the term 'religious education' gave "no clear-cut idea as to the nature of the religion in which we desire to educate people", the very thing Groome seeks to avoid in his choice of 'Christian religious'. Homrighausen further claimed that the church

would not accomplish its goals "so long as we make Christianity a mere nebulous religion without definite things to which people may be attached" (in Scott 1982: 593). Homrighausen went on to declare, "We are Christian! We are not vague 'religionists!'" and pleaded for the prodigal, religious education, to return home "and be rebaptized in the name of 'Christian nurture'" (in Scott 1982: 593). However, while 'Christian nurture' never became a name for the discipline it did introduce a different term, Christian education, to be discussed below.

2.5 Religious Instruction

Yet another term used in the field is that of 'religious instruction'. It is used with frequency by James Michael Lee. For him, the term 'instruction' describes the process, while the term 'religious' stresses the content to be taught. He understands religion to mean "a way of living" which can and must be taught. Thus, religious instruction is an intentional educational process leading towards "desired religious outcomes" (from Downs 1993: unpublished notes). Lee's approach to religious education is an instructional one based on the behavioural sciences.

'Religious instruction' is also the term most frequently used in South Africa. It is used within the public school system to refer to instruction in religion, usually the Christian religion. Thus, it is used with similar meaning to that given by Lee. It very rarely is used within South African churches to refer to the educational functions of

the church. Since it has connotations of government school, it is not the term that best describes the task of the South African church.

The debate concerning the name by which to call this field of discipline continues. As Groome notes, "If a solution to the 'language problem' was so simple, the debate about what to call the enterprise would not have gone on so long" (Groome 1980: 24). He also issues two caveats to those who search for a more authentic name for the enterprise. He writes:

First, let us avoid an idealist assumption that all our problems will be solved and our task completed if we can only find 'the right words'. . . .
Secondly, let us resist the temptation to insist that everyone else use his or her language under penalty of excommunication from the community of discourse (Groome 1980: 28).

These are important points to keep in mind.

3. *Christian Education*

The use of the term 'Christian education' rather than the more common 'religious education', or one of the less common terms currently used by various educators, is a deliberate choice by myself. In choosing Christian education I do not intend to be pejorative, nor do I intend aligning myself with the more conservative and fundamentalist branches of evangelicalism. I acknowledge that religious education is a more embracing term than that of Christian education, but have chosen not to use it since it fails to specify the task sufficiently. As already quoted, Homrighausen objected to the vagueness of the term 'religious'. He saw it as being

"too hazy and nebulous" feeling that it did not adequately describe the religion into which the church desired to educate people. Eric Fromm gives a definition of 'religion' that also highlights the generality of the use of the term. In his book, *To Have Or To Be?*, he explains that he uses the word 'religion', not to refer to a particular religious system having to do with God or idols, but to "any group-shared system of thought and action that offers the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion". He admits that this is a very broad usage of the term, highlighting the fact that no culture is without a religion (Fromm 1976: 134-135). This underlines my contention that 'religious' as a qualifier fails to sufficiently explain the nature of education.

In the R.E.A journal, *Religious Education*, it is clearly demonstrated that religious education is an all-embracing term including Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, or any other religious education activity. This is true, and the R.E.A.'s attempt for a more ecumenical approach is respected by this writer. But a word that can be broadly used, to include all religions and thus, can be claimed by anyone, is inadequate for the purpose within this thesis.

The term 'Christian education' was introduced with the intention of giving greater specificity to the task. A few years after Homrighausen's plea for "the prodigal" to return and be renamed 'Christian nurture', H. Shelton Smith published his watershed book, *Faith and Nurture* (1941). According to Scott, Smith challenged religious educators to

recover their distinctive Christian nature, and this challenge led to a preference for the term 'Christian education', rather than 'religious education' (Scott 1982: 593). His book was a response to the contemporary religious education of his day, which Smith feared was being established on the foundation of Classical liberalism. He desired to see religious education established rather on neo-orthodoxy as taught by Karl Barth (Downs 1993: personal conversation). Thus, as Boys suggests, "Christian education functioned as the critique and corrective to what were perceived as the excesses of liberalism" (1989: 66).

Smith's plea was not heeded by most church educators, and 'religious education' still remains the most common term used. However, 'Christian education' became the term used most generally and consistently by the evangelical church. Thus, a recently published evangelical book on Christian education is entitled, *A Reader In Christian Education*, but consists of essays across the spectrum, including evangelical and non-evangelical educators (Gibbs 1992). For the evangelical, the adjective 'Christian' is meant to specify their task more clearly, and for the more conservative and fundamentalist evangelicals, it is also intended to distinguish themselves from the more liberal churches (Washington Bible College, class notes, 1974), thus reflecting in part Smith's concern.

I approve of Groome's attempt to add 'Christian' as the specifying adjective to describe his task. However, it is an unnecessary "piling up of words" to name the task, as

Groome chooses to as 'Christian religious education'. In my understanding, the name 'Christian' is a religious one, referring to a particular religion. While it is often necessary to specify that a person's religion is Christian, it should not be necessary to state that her or his Christianity is religious. By its very nature, Christianity is religious, when religious is understood as the quest for the transcendent God. Thus, when the term 'Christian' is used, it is with the intention of stressing that the task of Christian education will involve all the religious dimensions of life, such as the quest for transcendence that Groome refers to (Groome 1980: 24). Thus, for me Christian education specifies the religious aspects of the task being described herein.

The term 'education' is perhaps more difficult to defend. It certainly is not a biblical term, and should offend those like Graendorf who "look to the biblical record" for their relevance and origin. And yet it remains in popular usage, even among the most conservative churches. Since it is a secular term it could easily lead the Church astray in its task of Christian becoming. By this is meant that it could lead the Church away from biblical aspects to a purely secular approach that looks too much to secular education for its foundation. The over-emphasis on American behaviourism in much of the current literature on Christian education gives evidence of this as actually happening. Steele, in his book, *On The Way*, remarks that behaviourism is "the tacit psychology behind most of our current Sunday

school curricula", and adds that Sunday school teachers use behavioural objectives and look for the right behaviour as evidence that learning has taken place (Steele 1990: 63). Catholic educator, James Michael Lee, showed his acceptance of behaviourism when he confessed to believing that Jesus "regarded himself as a facilitator of behavioral modification" (Lee 1971: 57). The Southern Baptist, Leroy Ford, according to Perry Downs, "is a major advocate of behavioral objectives and of the use of behaviorism in Christian education (Downs 1993: personal conversation and unpublished notes). Mayes and Long's book, *Can I Help it if They Don't Learn?*, Graendorf's *Biblical Christian Education*, and Donald Howard's *Accelerated Christian Education* are just a few other examples of the choice of and emphasis given to behaviouristic psychology in Christian education.

However, there is no adequate term in the biblical record to describe what the church is about in this discipline, unless the biblical emphasis on teaching could be considered significant. Homrighausen and Shelton Smith's preference for Christian nurture seems a more accurate term. While the English Christian scriptures only use 'nurture' once (Ephesians 6:4), the concept of gradual growth implied by the term nurture, is a common picture. 'Nurture' is a term that moves the educator towards an approach that would involve relationships with the participants with the goal of facilitating Christian formation through them, taking people from where they currently are to greater maturity. And yet,

as Groome remarks, 'education', being a secular term, roots us in yet another tradition besides the sacred sciences, which the term 'Christian' leads us to. The word 'nurture' would tend to lead the Christian educator away from secular education, or at least encourage him or her to neglect it.

Another word used frequently among evangelicals to express a more biblical approach is the word 'discipleship'. This term more nearly reflects the approach of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels. Again it highlights the relationship between teacher and learner, with the learning coming primarily through this relationship. This is viewed as an attempt to follow the example of Jesus. But it is not a term that is ever used in the English Bible. The word 'disciple' is frequently used, but only in the Gospels and Acts. Again, the word would move us away from considering the secular sciences along with the biblical record. Unlike Graendorf, I do not believe that Christian education must be exclusively rooted in the biblical record for its "origin and relevance". The term 'Christian' is a sufficient reminder that the educator needs to study the sacred sciences, while 'education' encourages him or her to research in the secular sciences, thus giving a broader and more contemporary understanding of the task.

Since the term 'education' roots the task in a wealth of current research and writing, and since it does narrow down the task for the educator, I have chosen to remain with it. A word like 'nurture' or 'discipleship', while perhaps more adequately expressing the overall task of the church in

Christian becoming, broadens the Christian educators task too greatly. A task that is too broad cannot be efficiently accomplished. Although I am aware of the debate in secular circles concerning the meaning of 'education', with some giving it a very narrow definition of oral communication called teaching, and others seeing it more broadly as everything that happens, I see it as a specifying qualifier, which will be explained in chapter two. Thus, the term 'Christian education' is considered to both specify and limit the task of Christian education being described in this thesis.

For this reason, throughout this thesis, the term 'Christian education' will be used most frequently, with no particular theological or denominational bias intended.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

In the discussion on the use of the term Christian education rather than religious education or one of the other less commonly used names, some of the problems and uncertainties in this field were noted. This uncertainty extends beyond the name to the very nature of Christian education. What Christian education is, why it exists and how it should be approached, remain areas of confusion and disagreement. This should not be seen as negative or detrimental to the task of education in the Church. It forcefully suggests that Christian education, precisely because it involves people, is not something static that can be dogmatically defined. It is a dynamic process, calling for constant change, based on the present moment, culture, generation and people. Therefore, this discussion can only survey the field as it currently is and attempt an investigation into the general understanding of what Christian education is, beginning with a discussion of the two words 'Christian' and 'education'.

Few writers in the field of Christian education describe with any detail their understanding of *Christian* and *education*. Notable exceptions are Thomas Groome and Lawrence Richards. Groome explains at great length his

understanding and use of the term 'education' and, to a lesser degree, explains what he means by 'Christian' in his book, *Christian Religious Education* (see pp. 5-55). In his definitive work on Christian education, *A Theology of Christian Education*, Richards begins with a discussion of what he understands being Christian to mean (see pp 11-25), but does not explain the concept of 'education'. Westerhoff, while a prolific writer with numerous works on religious education to his credit, to date, has not written a definitive work on Christian education. *Will Our Children Have Faith?* is considered to be his most definitive, particularly concerning his understanding of faith-enculturation. In this work, Westerhoff gives his most detailed understanding of what it means to be Christian, although he does touch on the topic in some of his other works to which reference will be made. Other writers touch on the terms only briefly, some not at all. Since my purpose in this thesis concerns an integration of Christian education and Christian spirituality, it is requisite to that purpose to understand both the terms 'Christian' and 'education', hence a discussion follows, beginning with the term 'Christian'.

1. The Meaning of Being Christian

Hans Kung makes an important point in his book *On Being A Christian* concerning what it means to be Christian. He there bemoans the fact that the word 'Christian' has been over used in contemporary culture. He writes, "So much -- too much -- is Christian" and refers to things like

Christian schools, Christian political parties, Christian countries, Christian music, etc. Such an inflation of the term, maintains Kung, has led to its "devaluation" (Kung 1974: 119). He further urges that what is needed is a recognition that the term Christian does not refer to a world view or idealist philosophy "but has something to do with a person called Christ" (Kung 1974: 120). He emphasises that "the special feature, the most fundamental characteristic of Christianity is that it considers this Jesus as ultimately decisive, definitive, *archetypal*" for a person's relation with God, with his or her fellow humans and with society (Kung 1974: 123).

In this presentation of an understanding of what it means to be Christian, the starting point will be with Kung's argument that it has "something to do with a person called Christ." This Christ will be presumed to be the Christ of the New Testament, especially of the Gospels. It is beyond the scope of the purpose in this thesis to discuss the historicity of Jesus Christ, or to enter into the arguments concerning "which Jesus?". Rather, the presentation in this thesis draws from my evangelical heritage that accepts the Gospel accounts as the most accurate picture that exists to date, while not denying the problems that this presents. The Jesus Christ of the four Gospels is central to an understanding of what it means to be Christian. Through his life, death and resurrection, being Christian is made possible. Christianity is essentially a religion of the cross. Christ's atonement forms the central issue in

Christianity and must not be minimised. Perry Downs emphasises this point, stating, "The atonement is central to all of orthodox Christianity, and being Christian is integrally related to faith in Christ for the remission of sins" (1993: personal conversation and unpublished notes). To discuss what it means to be Christian without recognition of this fact is absurd. It thus underpins the basis of this discussion, even though it is not discussed in detail.

Drawing from the literature on Christian education and elsewhere, five aspects related to what it means to be Christian will be discussed. These are the importance of the communal rather than individualistic nature of Christianity. This leads naturally to a discussion of the relational nature of Christianity. I will also include a discussion of other issues considered central by some educators, such as life and faithful response to the kingdom of God.

1.1 Nature of Christianity as Communal

Any understanding of what it means to be Christian must take into account the fact that Christianity is of a communal rather than of an individualistic nature. By this I mean that being Christian means being part of a corporate body. As Westerhoff rightly claims, "One Christian is no Christian" (Westerhoff 1983: 7). Leech makes a similar point, stressing that, "At its very heart the Christian life and identity is a process of incorporation into a new social organism, a new community" (1992: 5). Leech insists that

individualism and "private" spirituality has nothing to do with Christianity. He quotes Zizioulas to support his own view that Christianity is communal and not individual.

Zizioulas writes,

Individualism is incompatible with Christian spirituality. None can possess the Spirit as an individual but only as a member of the community. When the Spirit blows, the result is never to create good individual Christians but members of a community (in Leech 1992: 5).

Groome, like others, also argues against a purely individual concept. He sees a belief in an individualised and otherworldly concept of Christianity to be "an impoverished and inaccurate understanding of the salvation made possible in Jesus Christ" (Groome 1980: 35). Groome refers to the belief of numerous Christians he has spoken to who perceive Christianity as having to do with "saving my soul" and "going to heaven". This coincides exactly with my own research among evangelical Christians. To the question concerning what it means to be Christian, the responses I have received show this same belief, that "Jesus died so that I could go to heaven." Personal belief and private devotions with God have often taken precedence over relating in community and involvement in the society around. Such a belief not only impoverishes Christianity, it also distorts it.

This is not to deny that each person is an individual and needs to make an individual response to the Gospel of Christ. Rather, it accentuates the truth that, as Paul wrote to the Romans, ". . . we who are united with Christ, though many, form one body, and belong to one another as its limbs

and organs" (Romans 12:5 REB). It also gives weight to the truth that Christianity is communal in nature, that being Christian means accepting that we belong to a community of God's people. This naturally leads to the second obvious point about being Christian. Not only is it communal, it is also relational.

1.2 Nature of Christianity as Relational

At its very essence, being Christian means living in relationship to God, self and others. Of particular importance is the relationship with God. Jesus came to give 'eternal life', as the Gospel of John brings out. In this Gospel, John taught that eternal life is the present possession of the Christian believer. He records that whoever believes in Jesus, given to the world out of God's love, "may not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 REB). John repeats this in the same chapter, verse 36, stressing there that those who do not believe "will not see life." In the context, 'life' means 'eternal life'. In chapter five, verse twenty-four, John makes it even clearer that this is what Jesus actually taught. He has Jesus speaking to angry Jews seeking to kill him. Jesus says to them, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. . ." (NIV). Eternal life as a present reality for the believer in Jesus is the consistent teaching of John. He concludes his first epistle with the assurance that those who "believe in the name of the Son of God" have eternal life now, and may know that with certainty (1 John 5:13). When John has Jesus

saying, "I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10 NIV), he has eternal life in view.

In Jesus' teaching, eternal life is far more than "everlasting life", as it is referred to in the Authorised Version of the Bible. Jesus himself defines eternal life in his high priestly prayer, found in John 17, as knowing God (verse 3). Both Morris and Carson in their respective expository commentaries on John, give acknowledgment to the argument that verse three is parenthetical, giving John's rather than Jesus' understanding of eternal life (Carson 1991: 555; Morris 1971: 719). It is not within the scope of this thesis to enter into this debate, I merely acknowledge that I am aware of it. The concern herein is with the meaning given to eternal life in this verse. In explaining the definition in John, Carson stresses that "eternal life is not so much everlasting life as personal knowledge of the Everlasting One" (Carson 1991: 556). And Morris, seeing in this verse "something of a definition of eternal life", argues that to know God "is life" and that eternal life is simply knowing God (Morris 1971: 719).

The importance of knowing God finds parallels in the Old Testament, as Carson suggests. With reference to Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the new covenant in chapter thirty-one, Carson notes that one of the promises offered in the new covenant was personal knowledge of God by all people, without the need of an intermediary (Carson 1991: 556). Carson concludes by stating that "to know God is to be transformed, and thus to be introduced to a life that could

not otherwise be experienced" (Carson 1991: 556). Knowledge of God was important in the prophecies of Jeremiah. Not only did he proclaim it as a promise of the new covenant, but also as the one thing that God most desired of his people. In Jeremiah 9:23-24 the writer challenges his readers who wish to boast. He urged that if they must boast about anything, they should boast about knowing and understanding God. Schipani, in *Religious Education Encounters Liberation Theology*, rightly asserts that in the biblical view "the knowledge that counts and matters" is knowledge of God and is "disclosed in righteous action" (Schipani 1988: 121), which Jeremiah seems to suggest in 9:24. This emphasises the importance of what is meant by knowing God or knowledge of God. This does not exclude the need for knowledge about God, rather it implies that. In order to relate intimately with God, indeed with anyone, it is essential to desire to know about God. This means that the study of theology (here understood as the study of God) is essential to being Christian. This, as will be referred to later, is an essential task of Christian education.

In *Christian Religious Education*, Groome does a thorough study into, what he refers to as a "biblical way of knowing". He argues in this section that the New Testament use of the phrase 'knowledge of God' is formed by the Old Testament Hebrew understanding of it. The Greek word for knowledge, *ginoskein*, maintains Groome, means an "intellectual looking at". But, argues Groome, this is not the meaning of the Hebrew word for knowledge, *yada*, and

therefore, neither the intended meaning in the New Testament, since the New Testament use of *ginoskein*, and its various forms, is modified by the Hebrew understanding (Groome 1980: 142).

The Hebrew meaning of *yada* is, according to Groome, a knowing of the heart rather than of the head. It is a knowledge that "arises not by standing back from in order to look at, but an active and intentional engagement in lived experience" (Groome 1980: 141). It is significant that the exact same Hebrew word, *yada*, is used both in relationship to God, as in Jeremiah 9:24, and to refer to sexual intercourse, as in Genesis 4:1. In the authorised version, Genesis 4:1 reads, "And the man knew [*yada*] Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain. . . ." This euphemistic use of *yada* strongly supports Groome's contention that, for the Hebrews, experience is crucial in knowledge. Thus, Groome concludes his discussion on the Old Testament understanding of knowledge by stating, "It is in experience and response that God is truly known" (Groome 1980: 141). In other words, knowing God requires both experience with God in a personal relationship, and obedient response to him. Groome refers to Jeremiah 22:15c-16 as support of this. In this passage the prophet contends that doing what is right and just, defending the cause of the poor and needy is true knowledge of God.

The New Testament meaning of knowing God is in continuity with this Old Testament understanding, also emphasising relationship with and obedience to God (Groome 1980: 142ff).

In the first epistle of John, the writer emphasises both loving God and obeying him. In chapter four and verse eight, he states, "Whoever does not love does not know God" (NIV). In chapter two and verse three obedience to God is highlighted as proof that a person has come to know God. Schipani agrees with this, arguing that "knowing God is not an abstract theoretical knowledge but active obedience to the divine will", and he adds, "obedience is our knowledge of God" (Schipani 1988: 121).

In his book, *Exegetical Fallacies*, Donald Carson claims that Groome's study has demonstrated a "selective and prejudicial use of evidence" (1984: 54). Carson rejects Groome's suggestion that the New Testament Greek understanding for the word 'know' comes from the Hebrew, which emphasises the experiential and relational aspects. Carson also points out that Groome has selectively chosen those verses in John that support his thesis and relate knowing God with loving obedience, but omitted the verses, many in John, that emphasis the necessity to believe "propositional content". In this connection, Carson writes, "It is imperative to believe not only Christ, but also what he says" (1984: 55).

Carson gives a timely reminder that relationship with God requires, as already noted, knowledge about God and thus belief in what God claims for himself. However, every statement presenting "propositional content", as in "Christ died for our sins", always takes us beyond the statement to the Christ to whom we relate. In other words, propositional statements are meaningless unless we go beyond them and

commit ourselves fully to God who made the claim, as Parker Palmer pointed out (1993: personal conversation).

Based on his study of the biblical way of knowing, Groome defines knowing God as "a dynamic, experiential, relational activity involving the whole person and finding expression in a lived response of loving obedience to God's will" (Groome 1980: 144), and this must entail acceptance of and commitment to the claims made by God. Such knowledge, as J.I. Packer remarks, is "a matter of grace" (Packer 1973: 36). By this he means that God is the one who takes the initiative throughout the relationship. Packer writes simply, "We do not make friends with God; God makes friends with us. . . ." (Packer 1973: 36). It is a matter of grace since, God could not be known by men and women unless he chose to be known and made that knowing possible. Job's friend, Zophar perceived this when he asked Job rhetorically, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" (Job 11:7, AV).

Knowing, being a matter of grace, is only made possible through the Holy Spirit of God. Paul has this in view in Romans 8:15-16 and Galatians 4:6. Through the Spirit, writes Paul, "we cry 'Abba, Father'" and are assured that "we are God's children." In his high priestly prayer, Jesus implies that an important part of his ministry, revealing the Father "to those whom you gave me out of the world," had been accomplished (John 17:6 NIV). In *Keep In Step With The Spirit*, J.I. Packer argues that it is only through the Spirit that this knowing of God continues today. He

contends that the primary ministry of the Spirit in the world today is to make God experientially known to the believer (Packer 1984: 49). He refers to Jesus' teaching on the Spirit in John 16 as support for this. In verse 14 of this chapter, Jesus teaches that the Spirit "will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and make it known to you" (NIV). Packer suggests that "what is mine" means "everything that is real and true" about Jesus as the incarnate God (Packer 1984: 52). Knowledge of God, as an essential, if not the essence of being Christian is made possible through the work of the Spirit.

Such a knowledge of God requires total identification with Jesus Christ. Jesus called for this when he said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34 NIV). This "practical, personal discipleship" means, as Kung points out, "getting involved with him and his way and going one's own way -- each of us has our own way -- in the light of his direction" (Kung 1974: 545). Identification, as this quotes highlights, means to follow in Jesus' way. Jesus also stressed total identification with him when he declared,

I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. . . whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him (John 6:53-56 NIV).

This kind of identification involves an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, but is far more than that. Moltmann suggests that the "Christian life is . . . the art of living with God for God" (Moltmann 1978: 38). Richards would agree with this, believing that, at its very essence

Christianity has to do with life; a life of total commitment to the person of Jesus Christ as discussed below. As Moltmann maintains, "Where Jesus is there is life" (Moltmann 1978: 19). This is not merely life after death, but life now. Jesus' life, argues Moltmann, was motivated, not by life after death, but by life before death (Moltmann 1978: 24). This leads to a third component of what it means to be Christian -- life.

1.3 Nature of Christianity as experiencing life

In *A Theology of Christian Education*, Richards convincingly argues that the essence of being Christian is in the new life received from God at conversion. In one of his earlier works, *A New Face for the Church* (1970), he explicitly states that the evangelical stress on an initial conversion experience is in full conformity with scripture (in Longnecker 1984: 26). He there describes conversion as an experience of the individual, who recognises that he or she is a sinner, who "comes to terms with God, and receives the forgiveness offered freely in Christ Jesus" (in Longnecker 1984: 26). According to Richards, it is at this point that a new life begins in the person so converted. He then begins *A Theology of Christian Education* with the question: "What do you view being Christian to mean?" (Richards 1975: 11). For him, this is where any discussion on Christian education should begin. Richards answers his own question with, "For me the starting point is found in the words of Jesus: 'I have come that they might have life and have it to the full' (John 10:10)" (Richards 1975: 11). Thus, being

Christian has to do with possessing life and living life to its fullest. He argues that this life is essentially supernatural in nature, coming from God, and that John's gospel frequently refers to it as "life eternal". This life is, according to Richards, both a result of faith in Christ and a present reality for all followers of him. It speaks both of life's quality now and its duration (Richards 1975: 12). Richards states that it is the "possession of life that distinguishes a Christian from all other men [women]" (Richards 1975: 13). Thus, for him, understanding "faith-as-life" gives the church a "distinctive and theologically sound Christian education" (Richards 1975: 14). The recognition that life is related to now, and not just to eternity is essential for an authentic Christianity in Africa today. The Roman Catholic theologian, Laurentia Magesa from Tanzania makes this point, stressing that what is needed in Africa today is "an authentic Christian spiritual life relevant to present day Africa." He adds that this would mean dealing with relevant issues in Africa now, such as injustice and oppression, and others (in Shorter 1978: 74).

This emphasis on life and living leads to a focus on the kind of life to be lived. Hence, Richards writes in *Creative Bible Teaching*, "the big aim of teaching is transformation" (1970: 101). In other words, the Christian educator needs to be concerned, not merely with the accumulation of facts, but with transformed lives. This transformation moves towards the goal of "being like Jesus".

This is the focal point of Richards' philosophy on Christian education and is reflected in the new title of *A Theology of Christian Education -- Christian Education: Seeking to Become Like Christ*. As will be seen in this thesis, the goal of Christlikeness is a common goal for all Christendom, it is, therefore, worth giving a brief discussion of it at this point.

While this has been the goal of Christians through the ages, when not coupled with other aspects of Christianity it can lead to individualism and misunderstandings. This is reflected in the hymnody of evangelicalism. Many popular hymns, such as Kate B. Wilkinson's hymn, "May the mind of Christ, my Saviour" and John Newton's much loved hymn, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," are distinctly individual in nature. As with Wilkinson's hymn, frequent use is made of the first person singular pronoun. James Gordon makes a similar point in his book, describing much evangelical hymnody as both "richly experimental" and "intensely personal" (Gordon 1991: 78). This emphasises an important aspect of Christianity, but often to the detriment of its communal nature.

It is worth noting, a point to which I will refer in the final section of my thesis, that music has always played an important role in evangelicalism, becoming a means of both expressing the experiential nature of Christianity, as well as its doctrinal content.

Another distortion of the meaning of Christlike is presented

in the teaching of the fundamentalist Christian school movement, Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.) currently growing in South Africa. A.C.E. base their understanding on the teaching of American fundamentalist, itinerant preacher, Bill Gothard. In his *Basic Youth Conflicts*, Gothard proposes that Jesus possessed sixty character traits, which he supports with a specific and isolated scripture verse. For example, one trait is "appreciative", defined as "expressing to God and others the ways they have served me", with 1 Thessalonians 5:18 as the text to prove and support this (in A.C.E. Manual 1984: 155ff). According to Gothard and A.C.E., a person is Christ-like when he or she conforms to these sixty character traits. These traits form an integral part of the basic curriculum of A.C.E.

There are, however, a number of serious weaknesses in such an understanding of what it means to be like Christ. The most obvious is that being like Jesus is translated into obeying a list of rules, since each trait is followed by a definition in the form of a command to be obeyed. Thus 'tolerant' is defined as "Accepting others and willing to endure their beliefs and actions with which I do not agree." Each of the sixty traits has such a command-definition. Christianity thus degenerates into the legalism and hypocrisy that Jesus despised and condemned in the Pharisees, and that got Paul so irate with the Galatian Church. A second obvious weakness of this approach is that it assumes that all Christians will be alike, possessing exactly the same character traits. This denies the

individual differences of each person. However, despite some of the distortions related to what it means to be like Christ, it is a crucial factor common to all Christianity, as will be noted in the discussion on Christian spirituality.

The distortions and misunderstandings, notwithstanding, being like Jesus is an important goal to strive for and does explain the kind of life to be lived. This means that it is also important to understand what it means and how best the Christian can be like Jesus in the world today. These are questions that Christians have struggled with down through the ages, as will be evident in the study of Christian spirituality. It also forms an important basis for the integration of Christian education into Christian spirituality, and thus will be returned to in the last section of this thesis.

To focus on life as the essence of being Christian, as Richards has done, is in conformity with Jesus' teaching, particularly as presented in John's Gospel and Epistles. The experience of being fully alive is one that all persons earnestly seek. However, it should lead beyond a privatised and individualised Christianity to faithful response to the Reign of God, a fourth component of being Christian.

1.4 Nature of Christianity as response to God's Reign

Seeing faithful response to God's reign as central to being Christian is particularly the teaching of the Roman Catholic, Thomas Groome. According to him, the concept that

best describes the "metapurpose" of being Christian, and thus of Christian religious education, is the Kingdom of God (Groome 1980: 35). In *Sharing Faith*, Groome explains his preference today for the term 'reign of God' rather than 'kingdom of God', both because 'reign' is a more accurate understanding of the biblical concept and because of the sexist connotations of the term 'kingdom' (1991: 14). He admits in his earlier work that he uses this term cautiously, recognising and acknowledging the problems with the interpretation of it. But it is a crucial concept in Christian education, as he explains in *Sharing Faith*. He there writes,

For Christian religious education. . . it provides the ultimate hermeneutical principle for what to teach from the tradition, the primary guideline for how to teach it, and the direction of its politics (1991: 14).

For him, the kingdom of God concept emphasises "an active state of ruling rather than. . . a static and localized reality" (Groome 1980: 51). Therefore he can write that "Christian living must be in response to" the Kingdom (Groome 1980: 36). This would, of necessity, lead to a Christian living that was relevant to the needs to society, so important, as already noted, for for an authentic African Christianity.

He gives a very thorough discussion of his understanding of the biblical and theological usage of the Kingdom of God. For him, the crucial place for understanding comes in the teachings of Jesus as presented in the four gospels. According to Groome, in these gospels, Jesus is viewed as having "radicalized the law of the Kingdom", presenting it,

not as "love of God and love of neighbor", but as "love of God by love of neighbor" (Groome 1980: 41). Love is at the heart of spirituality, and thus Christianity in Groome's teachings. The Christian vocation is "to lead a life of agape -- loving God by loving our neighbor". Christian spirituality, maintains Groome must flow from this vocation. As such, Christian spirituality is antithetical to "a privatized spirituality" (Groome 1980: 26). Love of God by love of neighbour is central to Groome's thinking and approach to Christian education and being Christian. With such an understanding, it is inevitable that Christianity is viewed primarily as a corporate reality that impinges on the world in which we live. In *Sharing Faith* he explains that God's reign as the metapurpose for Christian education means that the task is "an ontological one" and thus must involve the development of being through relationships of love that will influence Christians to be "historical agents of God's reign" (1991: 17). With this view, it is not surprising that Groome chooses liberation theology as one of his theological pillars.

This component helps keep in view other components of being Christian already discussed. To live in response to God's kingdom, since that means living out mercy and justice, leads the Christian into the communal and relational aspects of Christianity. It also leads us into society around us, forcing the Christian to live with political awareness, and not just an "otherworldly" awareness, and thus would be more relevant to the South African context. It teaches us that

the focus on life and Christlikeness does not merely mean individual transformation, but also structural and political transformation. Perhaps Groome is correct in positing God's reign as the pen-ultimate purpose in Christian education.

All these points highlight important aspects of what it means to be Christian. It is more than "believing in Jesus", or rather, "believing in Jesus" is here understood in terms discussed above. All these aspects of what it means to be Christian must affect the what, how and why of Christian education in the church, as must the understanding of the term 'education'.

2. The Meaning of Education

It is not the purpose of this thesis to attempt a definitive explanation of the term 'education'. Acknowledgment is taken of the variety of opinions that exist in the field concerning what constitutes education. This diversity of opinion is also reflected among Christian educators. For instance, Graendorf in *Biblical Christian Education* describes education as having to do with the teaching-learning process (Graendorf 1984: 13). He then refers to a number of biblical texts that relate to teaching, and argues that this usage suggests that teaching is for growth to maturity. He then concludes by stating that biblical education is "concerned with growth of individuals in a *bona fide* educational effort" (Graendorf 1984: 14). Graendorf makes no further attempt to explain the meaning of education. Another evangelical writer, Gresham

takes the same approach to education as does Graendorf. In his book with Daniel and Wade, he attempts to establish the great commission of Matthew 28:19-20 as the central task of the Church. He then places emphasis on the teaching aspect of this commission -- ". . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. . ." -- and argues that, therefore, "Christian education is the teaching function of the church" (Daniel, Wade and Gresham 1980: 22). Certainly teaching is an important concept, even command, in both the Old and New Testaments, as Downs pointed out (1993: personal conversation), and as was discussed earlier in this thesis. Teaching remains a central task of the church and does fall within the domain of Christian education. It also brings some specificity to the task.

Another religious educator, James Michael Lee, who concentrates on the instructional aspects of religious education, gives the term 'education' a very broad meaning. In his book, *The Shape of Religious Instruction*, he notes that "education is the broad process whereby a person learns something". Thus, according to Lee, a person is at all times being educated (Lee 1971: 6). Such a meaning for education, while possibly true, makes the educator's task particularly difficult since there is nothing specific to be done. It is, no doubt, for this reason that Lee prefers to use 'religious instruction' to describe his task, giving it some specificity.

These two views represent two opposite poles, a narrow view of oral instruction and a broader view including everything.

Westerhoff, on the other hand, seeks to give education a more intentional purpose. In *Will Our Children Have Faith?* he contends that education is an aspect of socialisation and involves "all deliberate, systematic and sustained efforts to transmit or evolve knowledge, attitudes, values, behaviors, or sensibilities" (Westerhoff 1976: 17). Groome, who gives the most deliberate and studied discussion of education in his book, *Christian Religious Education*, agrees with Westerhoff that education is an intentional activity, but cannot admit that all experiences are educational (Groome 1980: 20). Since Groome gives such a studious explanation for education, it will form the basis for much of the discussion in this chapter.

For Groome, the starting point is with the etymology of the English word 'education' (Groome 1980: 5). He maintains that the word 'education' is derived from the Latin, *educare*, and literally meaning "to lead out". For Groome this means that the root meaning of education is "an activity of 'leading out'" (Groome 1980: 5). Wilhoit, an evangelical educator, also takes this etymology as his starting point. In *Christian Education and the Search for Meaning*, he suggests that this meaning

reminds us that education is a process of leading students from where they are to a place where they can see the world -- including the spiritual and the natural dimensions -- in a more accurate way (Wilhoit 1986: 11).

For Wilhoit, education involves helping people move from where they are and what they know to something new.

Groome goes even further than this, and presents three points of emphasis suggested in the meaning of "leading

out". These are "1) a point from which, 2) a present process, and 3) a future towards which the leading out is done" (Groome 1980: 5). Groome understands time from an existentialist point of view, and argues that the assumption of the present is that it is the only time that actually exists for us and that within it "reside the heritage of the past and the possibility of the future" (Groome 1980: 8). For Groome the most important of these three points of emphasis is the second, the present, since this is "the time for immediate engagement in life" (Groome 1980: 8). But, since both the past and the future reside in the present, the educator's task, in this present moment, is to lead people from the past, by giving them an opportunity to share it, affirm it, and correct any distortions of past beliefs, and then to make responsible decisions about the future. This is the basis of Groome's approach which he names "shared Christian praxis" in his book, *Christian Religious Education*. It must be stated that Groome is not primarily considering the educational activity of the school or university. His approach is best accomplished with adults in small groups, although in his latest volume, *Sharing Faith*, he does suggest ways to use shared Christian praxis with children, and even in larger groups and more formal educational settings.

The past for Groome, involves not only an individual's past experience and knowledge, but also the heritage of the past experiences and knowledge of our ancestors. He writes, "One of the basic assumptions from which educational activity

arises is that the people who were here before us learned from their experience" (Groome 1980: 7). The educational task is thus to preserve and pass on this past knowledge. However, this is only one aspect of education. Excessive attention to it, maintains Groome, leads to what Paulos Freire calls "the 'banking' concept" (Groome 1980: 7). This is the process whereby an educator 'banks' his or her knowledge in the mind of the student with little growth or understanding taking place in the students' lives. Groome cautions that the present must do more than simply inherit the past, since this stifles creativity, becoming "more domesticating" than educating. He adds, "True education can never settle for sameness. It is to be a leading out rather than a standing still" (Groome 1980: 8). Thomas Merton made a similar assumption on education when he proposed that education was "the formation of the whole person" rather than the importation of knowledge (in Del Prete 1990: 13).

This means that education for Groome must continue with the present and the future. In the present, participants in the shared praxis group recall the past by sharing their experience and beliefs concerning a particular subject. Participants tell their own stories concerning what they believe and how they came to that particular belief. This is followed by a sharing of the Church's understanding of the subject. Participants are then invited to affirm truth and reject error in their stories and in, what Groome refers to as The Story (the traditional view or "God's Story"), and then to make responsible decisions about the future, both

for themselves and for the Kingdom. Groome argues that "if we are to have a useable future, we must educate towards it" (Groome 1980: 9). The concern for a future that is a transformation of the present and past is, according to Groome, an essential part of education (Groome 1980: 9). He accepts an existential concept of time, over against a linear one that divides time into three distinct sections, past, present and future. He believes that people cannot separate themselves from the present, which is who they now are. Nor can they be separated from the past, where they came from; nor from the future, what they will become. Both past and future are in the present moment (Groome 1980: 13).

However, in insisting that education must be for the future, attention should be given to the warning of Henri Nouwen in his book, *Creative Ministry*. He there makes the point that an education that ignores the present and the learner's present activities and relationships, focusing only on the future, "where the real things are supposed to happen to him [her]", is alienating (Nouwen 1971: 9). Much of contemporary Christian education is focused only on the future. Sunday school children are encouraged to memorise difficult Bible verses that say nothing to their present lives because it will be good for them in the future. "Learn this now because you will need it one day" becomes more important than what is happening now in people's lives. Such an attitude is oppressive rather than liberating, and is therefore anti-Christian. Nouwen sees this emphasis on the future as pulling learners away from their own

present-moment experiences to focus on an unknown future. The result is that many become blind to what is really happening in the present, living lives of total unawareness (Nouwen 1971: 10). Along with Groome, Nouwen believes that "if learning is in some way to be a preparation for the future, it can only be so when the future becomes present in the teaching relationship here and now" (Nouwen 1971: 13-14).

As Groome suggests in the beginning of his discussion, education is a human activity and, as such, only exists in what people do and desire to do in its name (Groome 1980: 3). This means that it is natural and even necessary that there are so many opinions concerning its meaning. For the sake of this thesis, both Groome's and Wilhoit's point that education is a "leading out process" will be taken seriously. This means that it involves three moments, a past from which, a present, and a future towards which the leading is done. The primary focus in this thesis is on an education for spiritual formation in adults. Therefore, this "leading out process" must mean that the educator accepts that the responsibility for learning and formation lies with the learner and not with the educator. The learner, therefore, needs to take seriously the task of learning and make disciplined efforts to learn, and thus grow through change.

Thus far both Christian and education have been discussed separately. Being Christian is seen as relating essentially to a person's relationship with Jesus Christ, requiring

total identification with him in his mission in the world today, and disciplined seeking to know God more intimately. It also means that life and God's reign are important components in understanding the true nature of Christianity.

Education has been defined as an intentional activity where the educator is concerned with leading others out to the formation of the whole person. This implies that people are on a journey. They are a pilgrim people, and the educator's task, as a fellow-pilgrim, is to come alongside and journey with another person for a while.

For the sake of this thesis, Christian education will be related to these two aspects of both Christian and education, and defined as an intentional and deliberate activity, attending in the present to the action of God as it relates to the past and the future, and thus a leading out towards spiritual formation, a task that never ends since spiritual formation is not a static concept, but dynamic, and where spiritual formation is understood as having to do with relationships with God, self, others, and nature.

CHAPTER 3

THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis, to integrate Christian spirituality into contemporary Christian education within the local South African church, presupposes that the purpose of Christian education is a spiritual one. However, it is still crucial to understand Christian education within the local church accomplishing a purpose that is related to the purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ, which after all, involves spiritual aspects. This means that Christian education must be seen as an arm of the church and not as something entirely separate. Downs states this, writing that "Christian education must be viewed as part of the ministry of the church, not as the total ministry of the church" (1993: 12/20). It is not something distinct, operating on its own, apart from the church. As C. Ellis Nelson remarks,

The general purpose of education [in the church] is the same as the purpose of the church, but the particular role of education is to foster deliberate efforts to help persons in the church develop a Christian mentality (in Westerhoff 1978: 199).

Ellis is simply stressing that Christian education cannot in any way be divorced from the church as a whole, and yet is distinct, having a 'particular role'.

Since Christian education is an integral part of the church,

before discussing the purpose of Christian education, it will be necessary for me to explain my understanding of the purpose of the church. It must also be stated at the beginning that the purpose of Christian education must not be confused nor fully identified with the purpose of the church. When this happens Christian education loses its reason for existence. In order to be viable, Christian education must remain distinct in its purpose but still in continuity with the church. It must be a deliberate activity that helps the church accomplish its God-intended mission on earth. Not everything the church does can be viewed as Christian education, even though everything the church does is educative, that is it teaches people.

While stressing the intentional nature of Christian education, it must also be made clear that I believe that much of our Christian education will and must be unintentional. By that I mean that the Spirit of God will work in ways that go beyond our intentions. Thus, while intentional, Christian education is also a spiritual activity beyond our total control and explanation. Henri Nouwen makes this clear concerning personal spiritual growth, which can be related to the Christian education activity. He describes his search through books, discussions with spiritual leaders, lectures, and study to find help in his own personal spiritual growth. His conclusion was that, despite all he had learnt, he had to accept that all another could do was to "offer a free and friendly place where one has to discover his own lonely way"

(Nouwen 1975: 13). Christian education can do this, offer a free and friendly place that will encourage another to find his or her own lonely way, and not much more.

1. *The Purpose of the Church*

To describe the mission of the church on earth is not an easy task, since theologians have presented varying points of view down through the ages. For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen to focus on the work of the evangelical, Howard Snyder, since his understanding seems most appropriate to the current South African situation. This is not to deny the importance of other views. The variation in views is a reflection of the way the church is described in scripture -- in narrative form in Acts, and metaphors in the epistles, rather than in the systematic, logical form of Western theology. The variety of these metaphors, such as body, vine, building, people, etc., suggests the complexity of the church. And yet within these metaphors and narratives there is a common thread. Howard Snyder in his book, *The Community of the King* concludes that "virtually all biblical figures for the church emphasize an essential, living, love relationship between Christ and the Church" (Snyder 1977: 55). In other words, while there are a variety of metaphors, each expressing something different about the church, overall they emphasize the same thing, the relationship between Christ and his church. Because of this emphasis, Snyder sees the most crucial models for the church to be "a charismatic community and God's pilgrim people, his kingdom of priests" (Snyder 1977: 40-41). The main emphasis

of his book is to explain these two models, a charismatic community and a pilgrim people. By charismatic community he intends to mean that the church "exists by the grace (*charis*) of God and is built up by the gifts of grace (*charismata*) bestowed by the Spirit" (Snyder 1977: 57). Such a model for the church is "one marked by community, interpersonal relationships, mutuality and interdependence" (Snyder 1977: 67). The biblical metaphor, according to Snyder that best fits this image is "the body of Christ", a favourite metaphor among evangelicals.

Snyder further stresses that as a charismatic community, one of the main tasks of the Church is reconciliation. This must begin between God and persons, and "must be demonstrated by genuine reconciliation within the Christian community and by a continuing ministry of reconciliation in the world" (Snyder 1977: 107). While perceiving reconciliation to be a crucial task for the Church, Snyder suggests that **the** God-given mission of the Church "is nothing other than bringing all things, and supremely, all people of the earth under the dominion and headship of Jesus Christ" (Snyder 1977: 12). Another way to put this is by using the concept of the Kingdom/Reign of Christ. Through the church, God acts in Christ "with such redemptive power that he is able to overcome hatreds and heal hostilities" (Snyder 1977: 54). In other words, reconciliation is only possible through the Lordship of Christ, that is, under the Reign of Christ. This also reflects a suggested component of what it means to be Christian.

In the current South African situation, reconciliation, and overcoming hatreds and hostilities are of vital importance with crucial consequences for post-apartheid South Africa. In 2 Corinthians, Paul teaches that the ministry of reconciliation has been given by God to the church community (2 Corinthians 5:18). God is the one who does the reconciliation through Jesus Christ. It is the message of reconciliation, maintained Paul, that is given to the Church (2 Corinthians 5:19). Reconciliation is between God and persons, and between people themselves. The ministry of reconciliation is thus a key mission of the Church of Jesus Christ today. It includes and goes beyond evangelism to "making disciples".

The metaphor that best pictures the church as a reconciled and reconciling community is "the building/temple of God". It is not one that is frequently used in the New Testament. Paul used it in 1 Corinthians, where he told the Corinthian church they were "God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9), and later, "God's temple" in which the Spirit of God dwells (1 Corinthians 3:16). This metaphor obviously has its roots in the Old Testament which has an emphasis on the Tabernacle and later the Temple. A supreme function of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and the Temple in Jerusalem was to be God's dwelling place on earth (Exodus 25:22; 29:42-43). As Clowney remarks, "The figure of the tabernacle/temple pictured the presence of God among his people" (Clowney 1988: 87). More than anything else, the presence of God is an indication that the people, among whom he is present,

belong to him. So Paul can write to the church at Corinth, ". . . you are of Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:23) and later, "You are not your own; you were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NIV). He is clearly stating to this church that their purpose as a church, and the purpose of each individual Christian, was to be a dwelling place for God in the Spirit. Therefore, Paul can conclude with, "Honour God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20 NIV).

In 1 Peter, the writer teaches that the church consists of "living stones" which "are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood" (1 Peter 2:5 NIV). Here the writer is stretching the Old Testament figure to convey the New Testament reality (Clowney 1988: 87). This reality is that the presence of God has become actual in Jesus Christ and the Spirit. "As God's dwelling place, the church has both a status and a ministry" (Clowney 1988: 88). Its status is 'priesthood'. The writer in I Peter emphasises this, referring to the church as "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" (1 Peter 2:9 NIV). Thus, the church is to function as a priesthood for God in the world, with each individual Christian being a priest. For Peter, this means that a primary ministry of the Church is to "declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9 NIV). Then, in verse ten, he speaks of the reconciliation that has taken place between God and his church. Once they were no people, now they are the people of God; once they had not known mercy, today they have

received mercy. This reality of reconciliation is both a gift and a primary task of priesthood. The priestly functions and responsibilities will be explained under the section on the purpose of Christian education.

Priesthood is not a reference to an ordained clergy, often referred to as priests in Anglican and Catholic traditions. A hallmark of the Reformation was the recognition that all Christians are called to be priests to God. "Priesthood of all believers" became an important rallying cry of the Reformation. Priesthood of all believers is a spiritual reality, involving all of life, and not merely a ceremonial reality (Clowney 1988: 90). Thus, it would appear that the overall task of the church in the world today is to function as a holy priesthood. This concern will be related to the purpose of Christian education within the local church.

2. The Purpose of Christian Education

While Christian religious educators have differing opinions related to the purpose of Christian education, there is general agreement that, as James M. Lee states, of all church activities, religious education is the most significant (Lee 1971: 10). It is also generally agreed that religious education aims "must possess a character and a content distinctly their own" (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 109). With this agreement that the purpose of Christian education is so significant and distinctive, it is surprising that it is also the most difficult question to answer, containing the greatest variety of opinions (Groome

1980: 33). Groome is correct to acknowledge that the reason for this lies in the truth that Christian education as such possesses no purpose of its own. It is the Christian educator who has the purpose, and therefore, the answers to questions concerning purpose require self-reflection on the part of the Christian educator (Groome 1980: 33), and I would add the local church. Along with the journey to maturity and religious identity, reflection on the purpose of Christian education, as Groome contends, requires a wrestling with ourselves, our past, present, future and our God. He adds, "The educational process that attempts to sponsor people toward maturity of faith can be expected to entail a similar kind of struggle" (Groome 1980: xv).

Although purpose in Christian education is viewed as being crucial, it has been neglected, as de Blois and Gorham note. They write, "Hitherto, the teachers of religious education have confined themselves altogether too much to form and method, and too little to the crucial content and purposes of religion" (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 64). A perusal of the current Christian education literature will show that little has changed since de Blois and Gorham wrote this in 1939. Wilhoit, for instance, decries the current lack of clear purpose in Christian education (Wilhoit 1986: 9). However, while purpose might seem unclear, it is without doubt not because there has been a failure to define purpose. A number of purposes have been suggested, of which I will highlight only a few.

2.1 Development of Faith

In perusing the literature, I have discerned that, despite the uncertainties, there is general agreement among most religious educators of various backgrounds and theological positions. Not only do they agree on the significance of purpose for Christian education, but also that the crucial issue in Christian education is the development of faith in persons. For many this is seen as the primary or ultimate purpose of Christian education. Thus, Groome can write that the common purpose of Christian religious education is "to enable people to live as Christians, that is, to live lives of Christian faith" (Groome 1980: 34). Agreeing with this, C. Ellis Nelson remarks that the crucial question in Christian education relates to the development of faith in God and how this is lived (Nelson 1971: 9). Groome devotes an entire chapter in *Christian Religious Education* to Christian faith as a purpose of Christian education, and Nelson has, thus far written two books on the subject, *Where Faith Begins* (1971) and *How Faith Matures* (1989). How faith is defined varies greatly, as does how it should develop. However, to be relevant to the South African context it must mean being actively involved in life now, rather than merely a future hope of life. The recent interest in faith development will be referred to at a later stage in this thesis.

2.2 Evangelism and Edification

While most religious/Christian educators argue for a purpose for Christian education that is in line with, yet distinct from the purpose of the Church, a few conservative

evangelical educators still argue for a Christian education purpose that is indistinct from the ultimate purpose of the Church as understood by conservative evangelicalism. Based on Matthew 28:19-20, the purpose of the Church and Christian education is understood to be two-fold, 'evangelism and edification'. Scott, in the conservative evangelical journal *Christian Education Journal*, defines evangelism as "to make disciples", and edification as, "to nurture disciples and equip them for ministry" (Scott 1983: 37). In a recent publication on Christian education from an evangelical perspective, Pazmino categorically states, "It is absolutely essential that evangelism be a key purpose of the educational ministry of the church" (Pazmino 1988: 52). De Blois and Gorham make the same plea for evangelism. They contend that the primary aim of Christian religious education "is to lead persons to faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord" (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 117). This, according to these two authors, is essential to the important objective of developing "in growing persons a complete and Christlike personality" (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 114 and 117).

However to limit Christian education to evangelism and edification is to handicap the Christian educator in his or her task, since Christian education would be no different to any other agency within the local church. It would have no reason for its existence. To argue that evangelism must be a key task of Christian education is to confuse it with the general task of the Church and detract from the essential,

and distinctive task of Christian education. This does not mean that Christian education should not be concerned with evangelism, but rather suggests that evangelism is not its primary concern or emphasis. However 'edification', where that is understood as teaching and exhorting, is.

2.3 Experiencing Life

Richards' understanding of what it means to be Christian -- experiencing life to the fullest now -- becomes for him a purpose for Christian education. Such a purpose is also related to the issue of development of Christian faith. Richards argues that 'faith as life', that is understanding faith in terms of how we live life, gives Christian education "a clearer focus" and he adds, "Christian education seeks to communicate and to nurture faith-as-life" (1975: 15). He further maintains that life is the central issue in Christian education, both in its transmission and nurture (Richards 1975: 16). In his writings, especially *Creative Bible Teaching* (1970) and *A Theology for Christian Education* (1975), Richards emphasises that Christian education should be concerned with transformation of life now. He contends that "the big aim of teaching is transformation" (Richards 1970: 101). Richards is not alone in focusing on life. Wilhoit suggests that Christian education should help "people make sense out of life" (Wilhoit 1986: 11). This would enable people to experience life more fully. Kenneth Leech refers to an ancient Eucharistic prayer, "We beg you make us truly alive", that makes a similar point. Leech is here stressing his point

that "Spirituality is about life". It is "life in Christ" (Leech 1992: 215-216). Magesa, in his brief article on African spirituality, makes affirmative reference to the comment of St Irenaeus that "The glory of God is man [woman] fully alive" (in Shorter 1978: 74). He thus highlights this point for African spirituality. Thus, Christian education for the South African church needs to be concerned with life and enabling people not only to 'make sense' out of it, but to be "truly alive", and thus glorify God.

How Christian education should achieve such a purpose does vary from educator to educator. In proposing socialisation as the means to achieving the aim of transformation, Richards remains unique in evangelical Christian education. For him, socialisation is the process "by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that make them more or less able members of their society" (Richards 1975: 82). He then applies that to the Christian faith community, contending that socialisation means seeing the church as a "culture" that seeks to involve its members so that they learn primarily through the life of the church, and are thus "socialised" into Christianity. He argues that a person should learn the Christian faith in the same way as he or she learns such things as language or manners. Thus, faith should be communicated in "real situations where affect, interest, motive, perceptions and behavior are united" (Richards 1975: 81-82).

Other educators such as the Roman Catholic, James Michael Lee and the evangelical educators, James Wilhoit and Leland

Ryken place emphasis on actual teaching as the means to promote life and its transformation. Lee leans heavily on the social sciences, particularly behaviourism. He writes, "religious instruction consists in facilitating the modification of the learner's behavior along desired religious lines" (Lee 1971: 56). He goes on to stress that religious instruction has as its central task "the modification of the learners inner and outer behaviors" (Lee 1971: 56). However, many educators, both Christian and non-Christian, argue that behaviourism destroys the worth and dignity of the individual human being since it denies the inner desires and interests of the learner, allowing another to decide for him or her how he or she should live. Kelly refers to this in his book, stating that behaviourism raises some serious questions concerning the nature of persons. He calls behaviourism an "industrial" model that makes no allowance for the individual desires or needs of each person (Kelly 1982: 99). Robin Barrow in his book, *Giving Teaching Back to Teachers*, finds it incredible that behaviourism still has such a stronghold on psychological study and indirectly on education, particularly in North America. He states that the "obvious inadequacies" of behaviourism have frequently been exposed, "but still the grip strangles" (Barrow 1984: 135). Barrow argues that not all matters can be characterised in terms of overt behaviour, as behaviourism attempts to do. He asserts that behaviourism "dehumanises the business of education, in that it ignores all reference to characteristically human elements such as intention, appreciation, satisfaction and

attitude" (Barrow 1984: 139). If this is true, behaviourism has no business in Christian education, as Perry Downs so ably asserts in his unpublished manuscript. He there agrees with Barrow that behaviourism "fails to allow for those aspects of reality which cannot be empirically observed" (1993: 8/6). However, as already noted, behaviourism and behaviouristic objectives continue to have a strangle hold on much evangelical Christian education despite its very unchristian, and even anti- Christian nature.

2.4 Priesthood

While the above-mentioned purposes only give a broad sweep of the opinions among educators, they do highlight some of the more common ones suggested. A purpose that seems to me to subsume those already mentioned, as well as take in the understanding of what it means to be Christian as outlined in this thesis, is that of priesthood of all believers. This concept is variously understood in the different Christian traditions, but I am assuming here the Evangelical understanding that all Christians are priests to God, not just a few ordained persons. It is not my purpose to defend this proposal. Since I have an Evangelical audience in view, that is unnecessary at this stage.

In this thesis I have suggested that the God-given mission of the Church in the world today is best seen in the metaphor of the Church as God's Temple. As such, the concept of priesthood gives us the clue to the task of the church. Specifically, the church's task is to enable people,

through the power of the Spirit, to be priests in the fullest sense of the meaning of the term. The purpose of Christian education is obviously related to this, as Wilhoit suggests. He argues that the purpose of Christian education is to help people make sense out of life and that the two biblical doctrines that help us do this are priesthood of all believers and the call to serve (Wilhoit 1986: 15). I would like to take Wilhoit's contention as my starting point, although, in this thesis the call to serve, or servanthood, will be intimately related to, even viewed as a part of priesthood. This concept of priesthood, when rightly understood, also allows for the various components of being Christian as discussed in the previous chapter. Since it is important to this thesis, an explanation of priesthood and the responsibilities will follow.

2.4.1 Explanation of Priesthood

Priesthood is not to be understood as a clerical profession for a few trained elite. Every Christian is called to be a priest and to perform certain priestly duties. This, as already noted is the general belief of all evangelicals. It highlights the truth that the formation of priests is a spiritual, and not exclusively an educational task, therefore, how, when and where this formation takes place cannot always be easily determined. The task of Christian education is to attempt some intentional means to enable people to be priests, but the educator must also be aware, as Groome reminds us, that our intentions are not necessarily God's intentions, and that people, listening to

God, will often go beyond or in different directions to what we intended (Groome 1980: 223). Groome adds that the mark of a great educator is the ability to lead people out, not just to what he or she thinks the person should do and be, but to totally new places (Groome 1980: 223). This will be returned to in Section III.

2.4.2 Responsibilities of Priesthood

Three responsibilities of priesthood will be highlighted in this thesis, based on the understanding of what it means to be Christian, as well as an understanding of the purpose of the church in the world today. These are i) the development of a personal relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ, requiring the discipline of solitude; ii) the development of interpersonal relationships within the faith community, requiring the discipline of community; and iii) the development of relationships towards the world, requiring the discipline of servanthood.

2.4.2.1 Development of solitude

The first responsibility relates to solitude and involves the responsibility of the individual to develop a personal relationship with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit. This is in line with the understanding of what it means to be Christian, where relationship to God, or knowledge of God was discussed as crucial. Solitude is concerned particularly with this aspect. In evangelical literature this is often referred to as "fellowship" with Christ (see de Blois and Gorham 1939: 111). In a sense, this is the

Christian's prior and most important responsibility. Bishop Ryle of Liverpool stressed the same point in different language. He maintained that "private religion must receive our first attention, if we wish our souls to grow" (in Gordon 1991: 5). 'Private religion' for Ryle refers to the Christian's disciplined responsibility of "Bible reading and prayer" (Gordon 1991: 5). This function requires that a person takes responsibility for his or her own life and recognises that only he or she, through the Spirit, can help him or herself grow in relationship with God. No one else can do this for another person. As Nouwen stresses, and quoted earlier, this is a lonely path but one that must be walked. Christian education can provide a friendly and supportive place for this to happen, as well as the necessary teaching and training. As will be discussed in Section III, this is the educators primary responsibility, and not just that of the participants in the pedagogical processes. Relationship to God implies that the responsibility of the priest is related to solitude. In fulfilling this responsibility, the person is also imitating the example that Jesus set for his followers. The Gospels, particularly Mark's gospel, repeatedly mention that Jesus spent time alone with the Father (see Mark 1:35). This will mean that deliberate and intentional efforts are made to teach Christians to pray, that is to relate lovingly to God. This will be discussed in some detail in the final section of this thesis.

This first responsibility is concerned with fellowship with

God, which is crucial and seen by some educators as the primary goal of Christian education. De Blois and Gorham write, "The aim of religious education is . . . a definite fellowship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and obedience to Him in sacrificial service" (1939: 94). In order for this to happen, maintain de Blois and Gorham, Christian education should also help people develop personally, into what they call "a completely integrated personality" which enables a person to have fellowship with God (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 92). They define an integrated person as the best possible person in his or her relationship to God, self and neighbour (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 110), thus extending the meaning of fellowship beyond the personal relationship with God.

While this is perhaps the Christian's most important spiritual responsibility, it must never be seen as his or her only responsibility. In the contemporary individualistic society of the West, there is a danger of overemphasising the truth that each Christian has personal access to God and therefore needs no other mediator save Jesus Christ. When this happens priesthood deteriorates to nothing more nor less than the individual's times alone with God in personal Bible reading and prayer, in other words, 'private religion'. Here in South Africa, this Western individualism can be balanced with the more communal nature of African culture.

2.4.2.2 Development of Community

The second crucial responsibility of priesthood is related to the faith community. In the book *African Christian Spirituality*, the editor, Aylward Shorter, organises it in such a way as to emphasise that commitment to community is essential for authentic African Christianity (1978: table of contents). Not only is a priest responsible to develop his or her own relationship with God, but also to develop and maintain personal relationships with fellow-Christians. This involves reconciliation between members as well as helping with reconciliation between another person and God, an important mission of the church. A priest is a mediator between another person and God. While each Christian has personal and direct access to God, as Paul reminds the Romans (Romans 5:1-2) and the writer of Hebrews reminds his readers, encouraging them to confidently enter God's presence (Hebrews 4:16), there are times in the life of the Christian that this access is broken, for whatever reason. It is in these 'broken' times that members of the faith community are meant to act as mediators for one another. This is implied in James' instruction to the church to confess their sins to one another and pray for one another (James 5:16). Paul adds in Galatians that Christians should also share each others burdens (Galatians 6:7). Both James and Paul are illustrating priesthood and stressing that all Christians have the responsibility to be priests to one another. This is crucial. However, just as priesthood is not a privatised matter, neither is it an exclusive one

where only church members are the participants and beneficiaries.

2.4.2.3 Development of service

A third responsibility of priesthood relates to the world and to the Church as a 'servant community' to the world. The Christian community, as a holy priesthood is responsible to mediate between God and the world, to bring God to the world, and to proclaim the message of reconciliation to the world. This will involve compassionate service in the world, which must also include issues of justice, thus making it extremely relevant for South African today. The call to serve is particularly related to this aspect of priesthood. Groome brings this out very clearly in his proposal that the purpose of Christian education is for the reign of God. De Blois and Gorham also emphasise this aspect in what they term as the aim of "social-consciousness", although they then limit that to a concern for the welfare of the group to which the person belongs (de Blois and Gorham 1939: 119). Priesthood to the world means, not only that the church prays for the world, proclaims the Gospel to the world, but also that it serves the world, following Jesus into the world. This will mean dealing with issues of justice, peace, and love wherever and however this is needed. It will mean being Jesus to the world. This again is a demonstration of the Reign of Christ, living lives of faith in response to the Reign of God.

2.4.3 Means and Content to achieve Purpose of Priesthood

These three responsibilities will dictate to some degree the means and content of Christian education intent on fostering priesthood. This will be returned to in more detail in Section III but a brief discussion is helpful at this point. Enabling people to function as priests and thus fulfill these three responsibilities is not merely an educational task. By this is meant that it is not something that can be simply taught. Relationship with God, or knowing God, is something that has to be personally experienced through the influence of the Spirit of God. Learning to live in community with the diverse group of people called into the Church of Jesus Christ can only happen as people live together, talk together and grow together. Compassionate service in the world requires spiritual power from the Father. The educator who forgets this will never be able to fulfil his or her task as a Christian educator. In order for these three responsibilities to be fulfilled, education in terms of teaching and learning is essential. The task of Christian education is to intentionally teach people, through whatever means, the truths that will help them to function as priests.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to discuss the content for Christian education in any detail, however, for the sake of clarity, a summary of possible content that the Christian educator needs to be aware of and be passing on to the Church community to enable people to live as priests will be highlighted. A content to enable people to develop

relationship with God, must be theological, teaching truths about God. No relationship can develop when a person refuses to learn anything about the other person, satisfied to remain in ignorance. This means that theology, understood as the study of God, is a crucial matter for content in the task of Christian education. For this reason, evangelical spirituality has consistently encouraged regular personal Bible reading (see Gordon 1991). How the theological and biblical content is taught is crucial and will form a major part of the discussion on the integration of Christian education and Christian spirituality. To develop relationships with one another within the Church community, learning about people and the different cultures, in other words, psychology and anthropology are also necessary. To be involved in compassionate service in the world will also require a knowledge of people and their cultures, as well as some practical skills in different ways to serve others.

CONCLUSION

As I understand it, priesthood moves us away from a highly personalised and other-worldly attitude towards Christianity, since it entails a responsibility towards the present world. It would, thus be concerned, as is Groome, with the Reign of God now, and with how our actions today will affect God's Reign. The responsibilities of priesthood move one away from a merely personalised Christianity that focuses only on the person's "devotional" life, making no impact on the world around us. A "kingdom of priests"

would, of necessity, be involved in both personal and social transformation. Issues of justice, righteousness and compassion would dominate, rather than issues of legalism, such as "do not drink, smoke, dance" and many others. Downs remarks in his unpublished manuscript, "Lamentably, there are people who would never think of smoking or drinking alcohol, but who are racists or materialists, and see no conflict between these values and their Christian faith" (1993: 7/8). Downs' remark highlights the urgent needs within the church today. Such an understanding is very much in line with the needs within contemporary South Africa.

Along with the purpose of enabling people to function as priests of God, two other important tasks of Christian education need to be considered. For Groome these are criteria in Christian education and should be the means of evaluating the task (Groome 1976: 196-197). These two criteria are presented in this thesis as being crucial for the Christian educator concerned with the development of priests. These tasks are, firstly, to help people lessen the gap between what they believe and how they behave. By this is meant that many people claim a certain belief, but live out something very different. For instance, many claim to believe that God loves them, but live as though they believed that God hated them. For this reason, prayer or entering into the presence of God, is such an onerous duty greatly neglected by so many who claim to believe it is important to spiritual development. But if a person truly believed that God loved him or her, entering into his

presence would be his or her greatest delight. This is just one example. Belief in justice and compassion must lead to working against the oppressive structures within our society, those against race, women and nature itself. The teaching task is to help people see the gap between their belief and behaviour and to do something about it. For Groome this means that a person's knowing of Christ should result in living a Christlike life (Groome 1976: 197). For the educator it means growing in wisdom so that "he [she] does not bid you enter the house of his [her] own wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind" (Gibran 1926: 67).

A second educational function is to help people become responsible decision makers, who take responsibility for their own lives. In other words, as Groome envisions, this means helping people "to personally appropriate the meaning of their faith in a way which enables them to go on reinterpreting and doing its meaning in later life situations" (Groome 1976: 197). One of the greatest dangers in the Christian ministry today is to take responsibility for the lives of others, telling them how they should behave in different circumstances, making decisions for them, and thus exerting power and oppressive attitudes over them. In his book, *In The Name of Jesus*, Henri Nouwen refers to the constant giving in by Church leaders down through the history of Christianity to the temptation to wield power over people. He suggests that the temptation to use power as a means of proclaiming the gospel "is the greatest of

all" (Nouwen 1989: 58). The task of the teacher concerned with enabling people to function as priests, is to stand back and allow others to make their own decisions and take responsibility for them. This means that people can no longer blame the environment, their parents, siblings, teachers, peers for the way life turns out for them. As Steele suggests, "This implies that we are to become more autonomous", which he defines as being "less susceptible to the environment and more in control of our own lives" (Steele 1990: 107). By taking responsibility for our own lives and our own faith, we are able to forge a life and faith that is totally our own and not some one else's. This kind of action leads to a conviction that is essential for genuine faith.

Both these tasks, to help lessen the gap between belief and behaviour and to help others become responsible decision-makers, mean that the educator him or herself must be this kind of person. Jesus taught that "A student is not above his [or her] teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his [or her] teacher" (Luke 6:40 NIV). The task is awesome. The warning in James should be taken seriously that "not many of you should presume to be teachers" since teachers "will be judged more strictly" (James 3:1 NIV). Again, this will be returned to in Section III.

The purpose of Christian education can best be seen in the concept of priesthood of all believers. The Christian educator's task is to provide the means for people to grow in personal relationship with God, with fellow-believers and

with the world. This will involve seeking ways to lessen the gap between belief and behaviour, and giving people the freedom to become responsible decision makers who go beyond what is taught them.

In summary, a purpose of Christian education is to enable people through intentional, yet flexible, and educational means, to live as priests and servants in the Church and in the world. An 'intentional means' recognises that disciplined reflection and planning is necessary. Being 'flexible' is a reminder that ultimately it is the Spirit of God, who works in ways often beyond those of mere humans, who will do the work. The term 'educational' recognises the kind of intentional activity, interpreting education as a process of leading people out to further spiritual formation on the journey to maturity, where that involves disciplined teaching and learning. Knowing God in an intimate and personal relationship is integral to being a priest, as is the need for active involvement in the world, seeking to bring in the Reign of God.

PART II

AN EXPLORATION INTO CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION

Explaining Christian spirituality is a monumental assignment. As Karl Rahner remarked, "Spirituality is a mysterious and tender thing, about which we can speak only with difficulty" (in Groome 1988: 9). And yet, it must be spoken about. It is not possible within the scope of this thesis to do such an explanation justice. Of necessity, many aspects will not be discussed and many traditions of Christian spirituality will not be explored. Neither will it be possible to examine in depth the contemporary usage of the term 'spirituality'. It is claimed today by a variety of people and disciplines, both religious and non-religious. Because of this wide usage of the term, it was necessary for me to limit my thesis. I have chosen, therefore, to concentrate on only two major traditions -- Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic.

I have chosen these two since within each of them there is a wide scope, both in the understanding of spirituality and in its practice. I have chosen Evangelical spirituality in particular because that is the primary focus of my thesis -- an integration of Christian spirituality into evangelical Christian education. I will investigate the purpose, meaning and distinctive practices of Evangelical spirituality, focusing primarily on the commonalities within

the various traditions of evangelicalism itself. Thus, I will not usually distinguish between different traditions, such as charismatic or Baptist or fundamentalist, etc. I am aware of the weaknesses of such a broad approach, but have deliberately chosen to do this to give this research a more effective place in the South African evangelical church.

Along with the Evangelical tradition, I have chosen to focus on the Anglo-Catholic tradition for a number of reasons. As already mentioned, one important reason is the broadness of the scope of spirituality with Anglo-Catholicism. Of necessity, it includes both the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions, as well as the pre-Reformation teaching on spirituality. I will include factors from this variety. But another reason, perhaps the most important one for choosing this tradition is the fact that many contemporary evangelicals concerned with Christian spirituality are looking specifically to the Anglo-Catholic tradition to either supplement or take the place of their own tradition. It therefore seemed appropriate that a general understanding of this tradition be explored and discussed. This will be done in chapter five. In chapter six, I will explore in some detail the important practice of spiritual direction, primarily as it is used in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, with some reference to modern 'psycho-spirituality', as well as to its use in evangelicalism. I will conclude this section on Christian spirituality with a chapter on a comparison between the two traditions, endeavoring in particular to highlight the similarities between them. This

seems important because of the wide scale usage of Anglo-Catholic spirituality in evangelicalism.

CHAPTER 4

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PURPOSE, MEANING, AND DISTINCTIVE PRACTICES OF EVANGELICAL SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION

If the exploration and discussion of Christian spirituality in general is a monumental task, then no less so is an exploration and discussion of Evangelical spirituality in particular. The Roman Catholic historian of Christian spirituality, Louis Bouyer complained that "nothing is more difficult to discuss than Protestant spirituality" (Bouyer 1968: 57). He could just as easily have written the same thing of Evangelical spirituality, a major tradition within Protestantism.

One of the difficulties, according to Schneiders, is that, prior to Vatican II, the term 'spirituality' was almost exclusively Roman Catholic, while today it is used by a variety of religious groups (in Hanson 1990: 18). Houston agrees with this, maintaining that the word 'spirituality' has been in common usage among Roman Catholics, and that it is for that reason rejected by Protestants (Houston 1991C: 180). Instead, Protestants found more acceptable terms to use, such as 'a godly walk' or 'practical divinity', as among the Puritans, 'holiness' in the Methodist tradition, or more generally to speak of 'piety' or 'devotion' rather than 'spirituality'. In the African evangelical context

'devotion' is more commonly used with little understanding of the term 'spirituality'. However, the two are not identical in meaning, and thus an explanation is needed. The term 'spirituality', according to Houston is a new word for evangelicals. He adds that this return to a common term is "engendering fresh dialogue between Protestant and Catholic traditions of discipleship" (Houston 1991C: 180), which I hope to demonstrate in this thesis. It is clear today that the term, as Saliers notes, "in the Christian context is no longer an exclusively Roman Catholic or even Christian term" (in Dupre and Saliers 1989: 539). Because of its newness in evangelical circles today, and more particularly in the South African church context, there are still the connotations of an exclusively Roman Catholic practice. This is affirmed by Allan Sager [3] who refers to many evangelical Christians who remain suspicious of the term 'spirituality', along with its various practices, seeing it as linked with traditional medieval disciplines that are incorrectly considered by many evangelicals to be against the biblical teaching of grace (Sager 1990: 26). The use of the term 'spirituality' to refer to the practice of the devotional life, according to Hingley, "would not have meant anything to Christians of the New Testament church, or indeed of the church of any era until the Middle Ages" (1990: 86). This would mean that some evangelicals would view practices of spirituality with suspicion.

This suspicion towards the use of the term 'spirituality' as well as towards the practice of spiritual disciplines, along

with the various ways in which spirituality is understood as a concept, multiplies the difficulty of discerning a generally accepted meaning, purpose and distinctive practices. Add to that the fact that, as David Parker admits, the concept of 'Evangelical spirituality' "is not at all well developed or defined, at least in comparison to other traditions" (Parker 1991: 125). Evangelical spirituality is a comparative newcomer to the field, so that non-evangelical Christians have remarked, "Is there such a thing as Evangelical spirituality?" (personal experience).

James Houston, along with his colleague at Regent College, Vancouver, J.I. Packer, has probably contributed more than any other evangelical to date to the understanding and clarifying of Evangelical spirituality. Both Houston and Packer are, therefore crucial in this discussion of Evangelical spirituality. It is worth noting here that this recent interest in spirituality in general, has been the impetus for a growing number of evangelicals to write about the practice of evangelical spirituality. David Parker's article "Evangelical Spirituality Reviewed", gives a comprehensive exploration into and defense of traditional Evangelical spirituality. It will be referred to frequently in this thesis. James Gordon's *Evangelical Spirituality* describes the spiritual practices of a selected twenty-two evangelicals from the Wesleys of the 18th century to John R.W. Stott of today. The book is an appeal to the sincerity and genuineness of the spiritual practices within this tradition.

Despite these difficulties of explaining spirituality for evangelicalism, it is necessary to attempt such a task since the practice of spirituality has attained popularity today. As Denise Ackermann remarked to the Stellenbosch Conference of the Institute for Spirituality, "spirituality, as we all know, is now in vogue" (Ackermann, unpublished paper 1991: 1). In his dictionary article in 1988, Albin made the identical comment (Albin 1988: 656). It is a comment that is repeated *ad nauseam* in the current literature on the topic. Ackermann's remark highlights that the interest in spirituality is very much 'in vogue' here in South Africa. This is borne out by the current interest in courses on spirituality at St Joseph's Theological Institute, Cedara, Natal, with a growing number of Protestants, including evangelicals attending. The Evangelical Bible Seminary of Southern Africa, Pietermaritzburg instituted a course on Christian spirituality in 1992 for the first time, and for many years has offered a related course, Devotional Theology. While the Institute for Spirituality, based in Cape Town, is primarily an Anglican organisation, it is also attracting a growing number of evangelicals. In its 1992 Conference, the evangelical, Jim Johnston presented a major paper.

Lovelace refers to the current interest in developing the spiritual life as "a growth industry today" (Lovelace 1985: 15). Hingley begins his article on Christian spirituality with a similar comment. He writes, "Spirituality has recently become a subject much talked about by evangelicals"

(1990: 86). Some years earlier, Houston claimed that the interest among evangelicals in spirituality was new and yet also, "a deeply based consciousness" (1984: 1046). In his article, David Parker suggests that the current use of the term 'spirituality' along with its contemporary practices is comparatively recent even in Catholicism, and is "quite an innovation for evangelicalism" (Parker 1991: 127). David Bosch's book, *A Spirituality of the Road* bears this out. First delivered as a series of lectures to the Mennonite Missionary Study Fellowship in 1978, and published in its present form a year later, Bosch makes no reference to the contemporary interest in and usage of the term 'spirituality'. This affirms the current belief that the interest in spirituality is a recent one, particularly among evangelicals.

This evidence of growing interest in, as well as the contention from evangelicals such as Donald Bloesch, that this "burgeoning interest in spirituality" reflects "the largely secular flavor of our time rather than the Bible or Church traditions" (Bloesch 1991: 22), makes the study of the topic imperative for today. James Houston also suggests that this growing interest in spirituality is a reaction against modernity that downplayed "humanness", and thus much that is described today as 'spirituality' should best be termed "relationality", since it concerns relationship to self in particular, with little to no reference to God (1993: personal notes). Hingley argues that evangelicals have lost contact with the spiritual heritage of the past

and therefore are suspicious of the contemporary interest (1990: 90). This suspicion takes a different form in the South African context, where it is also feared that 'spirituality' is Western rather than African. It might be seen as a weakness in my thesis that I do not discuss a distinctly African spirituality. This is both of necessity and deliberate for a variety of reasons. First, very little has been written on the subject of African spirituality, and it is not my intention to provide the primary resource on that. But, secondly, Christian spirituality is rooted in an ancient past that supersedes both African and Western cultures, originating in early Hebrew and Christian roots, which had much contact with Africa, particularly North Africa. Christian spirituality, while needing to address the needs of contemporary society, and thus will always be in a change process, cannot discard its heritage. In this thesis, I am particularly concerned with that heritage and how it relates to contemporary South Africa. This emphasises the need for a thorough study of the topic as well as being educated and formed in Christian spirituality, the task, doubtless, of Christian education within the Church. This will be taken up in Part III. A major task of contemporary evangelical Christian education is to enable Christians to understand Christian spirituality and its practice, and to keep it within the domain of the Church. This will be returned to in Section III of this thesis.

While misunderstandings and even ignorance is one problem among evangelicals related to Christian spirituality, other

evangelicals, such as Klaus Blockmuhl, formerly of Regent College, bemoan the decline of spirituality in evangelicalism. Blockmuhl emphasised his conviction that this is the greatest problem in the Evangelical movement today (Blockmuhl 1981: 42). In the same article, he complains that "there is plenty of preaching. . . but there is little solid spirituality behind it" (1981: 42). Other writers in evangelicalism complain that evangelical Christians are uncritically rejecting their evangelical heritage of spirituality practices and taking on contemporary forms that have no foundation in the evangelical movement, as Parker suggests in his article (1991). Many of these forms arise out of the Catholic and ancient Christian traditions, while others are taken from Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and the various forms of Buddhism (Hingley 1990: 86).

1. Evangelical: A Common Understanding

Before embarking on a discussion of a distinctively Evangelical spirituality, it is necessary to give a brief description of what is meant by 'evangelical' in this thesis. The Roman Catholic, Mary Boys, rightly remarks that "evangelicalism remains a notoriously imprecise referent" (1989: 13). This is probably so since the Evangelical movement is one of great diversity and influence. Thus, evangelical Christians are active in denominations and Christian movements that are not classified as 'evangelical' nor even as being within the Evangelical movement.

In his book entitled *Evangelical Spirituality*, James Gordon presents "four defining attributes" of evangelicalism since the 1730's, considered to be the evangelical revival period. Gordon names these distinctives as "conversionism, activism, biblicism and crucicentricism" (1991: 7). These are generally agreed to be the four main pillars of evangelicalism, although variously interpreted. Gordon adds that while emphasis on different ones does change, these four distinctives have remained basically constant over the years (1991: 7). Ellingsen's list of seven distinctives has much similarity with Gordon's [4]. These distinctives, particularly those related to the practice of spirituality, will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis. Here, will be highlighted a few points to emphasise what is meant by 'evangelical'.

1.1 Distinctives of Evangelicalism

A focal distinctive of evangleicalism is scripture. Gordon names this 'biblicism', refers to the evangelical belief in the authority of the Bible. Ellingsen refers to this as the affirmation by evangelicals of the Bible's importance for the Christian life. How this is understood within the Evangelical movement, however, does vary. For many evangelicals, it refers to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy, which Ellingsen defines as "the quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake. . . [so that] Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions" (1988: 206). It is inerrancy that gives the Bible its authority, as far as many evangelicals are concerned. The

evangelical, Perry Downs, emphasised this, writing that, "modern Evangelicals are characterized by a high degree of confidence in the authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture" (1993: 12/15).

However, while all evangelicals affirm the belief in the authority of scripture, or at least its importance in Christian living, not all affirm the doctrine of inerrancy and inspiration. For instance, in 1983 a major debate between the professors of two evangelical seminaries in the United States on the subject of inerrancy was aired on American public television. The professors of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School argued for inerrancy, and the professors of Fuller Theological Seminary argued against it. Their debate merely highlights the aggressive nature American Evangelicals either defend or refute inerrancy. The title of Harold Lindsell's book, *The Battle for the Bible*, which was intended as a defense of inerrancy and inspiration, also demonstrates the aggressive nature of the debate. In his book, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, George Marsden shows that inerrancy has been the cause of major debates and even splits in the evangelical camp in the United States. Here in South Africa the issue of inerrancy is not so serious. However, as already mentioned, despite the debate over inerrancy, evangelicals generally affirm the importance of the Bible. As Downs notes "[evangelicals] are known primarily as 'people of the book'" (1993: 12/15). It therefore plays a major part in the practice of spirituality among evangelicals, as will be illustrated.

A second distinctive of evangelicalism is what Gordon refers to as 'conversionism'. Ellingsen refers to this distinctive as the preference among evangelicals to emphasise the experiential over against the sacramental (1988: 295). Conversion is usually considered to be a once-for-all event producing, as the Puritan, Jonathan Edwards maintained, "abiding change" (1984: 142). It involves, as Francis Schaeffer suggests "accepting Christ as Savior" (1971: 3). This acceptance means that Christ then "makes his home" within the person through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:17). It is this that results in the "abiding change" Edwards referred to. According to Gordon, Jonathan Edwards described conversion as "involving nothing less than the radical renewal of personality by the operation of the sovereign, electing grace of God" (in Gordon 1991: 45).

Such a view of conversion has tended to lead evangelicals into the belief that, since "abiding change" or "radical renewal" has taken place, there is no need for any further spiritual practice, and thus the so-called spiritual disciplines are despised and scorned as superfluous. There is nothing more that the person need do, since he or she has already attained full salvation, which brings about radical renewal. Few evangelicals therefore, are ready for the "trials and tribulations" of normal Christian living. It comes as a shock to these Christians when their Christian life is no longer as wonderful as it was at conversion and immediately prior to it. They generally assume that they have sinned greatly, even though there is no evidence for

such sin. Much evangelicalism has failed to take seriously Edwards' further teaching that the process of transformation continues throughout life "until it is brought to perfection and glory" (Edwards 1984: 143). In other words, while conversion brings about 'radical renewal', this is experienced only as a gradual transformation process.

Today, within evangelicalism there is a recognition that the "once-for-all-conversion" concept has seriously undermined spirituality. James Houston argues that this is so since "transformation of life never ceases". He agrees with the medieval monks who realised that "the process of conversion was lifelong" (Houston 1991C: 184). Houston also suggests that the 'once-for-all-conversion' theory has led many Christians into believing that there is nothing they need now do except proclaim the gospel so that others may experience this conversion (1991C: 183-184). Which has led evangelicals to the third distinctive mentioned by Gordon -- activism. This means that evangelicals prefer an active rather than a contemplative approach to spirituality. This will be discussed in more detail under the practice of Evangelical spirituality. The fourth distinctive mentioned by Gordon is 'crucicentrism', which he describes as "the cruciality of the cross in doctrine, experience and piety" (Gordon 1991: 7). An example of an evangelical who places emphasis on the cross that Gordon refers to is the early 19th century British, Charles Simeon. He argued that the atonement of Christ was "the only adequate base for Christian spirituality" (Gordon 1991: 97).

suffice it to say at this point that evangelicalism, while expressing certain agreed upon distinctives, is also a fluid movement with much change and growth, as was illustrated with relation to the understanding of conversion and inerrancy.

1.2 Variety Within Evangelicalism

Before embarking on an exploration of the purpose and practice of Evangelical spirituality. It is important to acknowledge that here we deal with a great variety of traditions, with many differences between them. Ackermann takes note of this and mentions, by way of example, the differences between the spirituality of the charismatic renewal movement and that of Christians in dialogue with various liberation theologies (Ackermann 1991: 1). Added to that are the spiritualities of the Pentecostal movement, American fundamentalism with its growth in the Christian school movement here in South Africa, the Puritan tradition and many others within evangelicalism.

In the introduction to his book, Gordon remarks on the "extraordinary diversity in spiritual experience, doctrinal emphasis and personal temperament" in evangelicalism (1991: ix). This diversity is a reflection of a variety of factors that stress for us that the practice, even the meaning of 'spirituality' will vary. Bryant remarks that Christian spirituality must always be changing since it must interact with the surrounding culture, which is always changing (Bryant 1978: 6). Albin ascribes the diversity to the fact

that "the spiritual life is itself so complex" (1988: 657), while Yarnold suggests that it relates to the fact that "each theologian within each Church, would produce a different theology of spirituality" (Yarnold in Jones, et al 1986: 9). This means that the variety within Christian spirituality is not to be viewed as a problem to be solved. Rather, it reflects the individuality of each person within the Christian movement, each relating to different cultures, Church traditions and historical contexts. The important aspect is that spirituality, for the evangelical, remains within the confines of the biblical source.

However, while acknowledging this, it is also important to note, as Palmer does, that "every spiritual search is and must be guided by a particular literature, practice, and community of faith" (1983: 14). Thus, Johnston is correct in his contention that each denomination is "the custodian of a distinctive spirituality and as such, it shapes the character and quality of our corporate and personal lives with God in the world" (Johnston, unpublished paper 1992: 2). For this reason, it is important to explore the various traditions of spirituality and to embed our practice within a particular Christian tradition, which is not to say that this should not be done uncritically. Thus, the purpose within this thesis, is not to give a definitive description and definition of Christian spirituality, but to embed the practice of evangelical Christian education as it relates to spirituality, within a particular tradition that is within general evangelicalism.

The exploration into Evangelical spirituality is intended to try and describe it, considering in particular i) what Evangelical spirituality is; ii) the purpose towards which it is intended; and, iii) its distinctive practices. This discussion will attempt to demonstrate the diversity, not only in practice, but also in definition and understanding of purpose among evangelicals. While I have sought to limit myself to evangelical thought in this section, that has not always been possible since 'evangelical' itself, as previously mentioned, has such a broad representation. I recognise that, while there are those who are considered to be distinctly evangelical, and others who are distinctly Anglo-Catholic, many fall in between these two. Some are evangelical, but greatly influenced by Anglo-Catholic spirituality, and vice versa.

Therefore, to delineate a spirituality that is distinctly Evangelical (or Anglo-Catholic) will obviously be both difficult as well as impinge on other traditions. Most writers that will be referred to in this section are recognised evangelicals, a few are not but write of the evangelical movement, and others are somewhat ambiguous and defy labelling.

2. Evangelical Spirituality: An Investigation

In attempting to explain what spirituality is, it must be recognised, as Wakefield points out, that the term "'Christian spirituality' is itself a synthesis and has undergone numerous other developments from its Jewish and

New Testament origins" (1983: 550). Evangelical spirituality is just one form of this development, having undergone many further developments over the years. It is also recognised that the term 'spirituality' is, as David Parker notes, "a broad concept" that includes a variety of elements, conscious and unconscious, formal and informal (Parker 1991: 126). While the term today is very popular, its meaning continues to elude and remains ambiguous, with a multiplicity of definitions and explanations. Hanson rightly suggests that it is very difficult to explain the meaning of 'spirituality' (1990: 45), since it is "elusive", successfully evading attempts to capture it (Gordon 1991: vii). As an illustration of the difficulty to define Christian spirituality, Allan Sager, rather than define it, since it "is not a definable reality", chooses instead to suggest "hints" that help us to understand spirituality. Sager lists fourteen such hints, varying from "that by which one is sustained inwardly when all external supports give way" to "belonging to God's people" (Sager 1990: 24). The variety and scope of his "hints" tend to aggravate, rather than help the situation.

Another difficulty in defining spirituality is the breadth of opinion among Christian people. David Bosch suggested that the term 'spirituality' has often been identified by most people as being exclusively related to one's "devotional life" (Bosch 1979: 9). His book, *A Spirituality of the Road*, was an attempt to demonstrate that spirituality was far more than devotional practices and that it affects

the entire person in all of life. To this Denise Ackermann adds that spirituality has been defined as broadly as "Christian lifestyle" and as narrowly as "the disciplined life of prayer" (Ackermann 1991: 1).

In this attempt to define the term 'spirituality' as understood by evangelicals, I will highlight certain aspects considered important in both shaping and explaining Christian spirituality, rather than attempt to give a specific definition. Spittler remarked that spirituality is "informed by the beliefs and values that characterize a specific religious community" (1988: 804). This paper will attempt to delineate some of the more common and crucial beliefs and values of the general evangelical community, discussing five in particular -- i) divine revelation, ii) the Holy Spirit, iii) the whole person, iv) relationships, and v) the rational mind.

2.1 Factors that Shape Meaning

2.1.1 Divine Revelation

James Gordon argues that "the revelation of God in Christ" both defines the content and controls the emphasis of Evangelical Christian spirituality (1991: 3). He further asserts that "how this revelation is experienced and understood, in Christian communities and in individual lives, decisively shapes each spiritual tradition" (Gordon 1991: 3). In the evangelical community, as already noted, revelation, viewed as dwelling in the Bible, is crucial to Christian belief and practice. While little is written on

divine revelation as a shaping factor, possibly because of the newness of spirituality in evangelicalism, much is written on revelation as scripture, as the shaping factor in the practice of spirituality. Therefore, the subject of revelation will be covered more thoroughly under the section on the practice of Evangelical spirituality. However, divine revelation is considered to be the source for any understanding of spirituality, and much that is written on what spirituality is has frequent reference to scripture, as will be evidenced in the discussion that follows. Because of this emphasis, a more thorough discussion on scripture will be undertaken in Section III.

2.1.2 The Holy Spirit and Grace

Of indispensable importance in determining what Christian spirituality is for evangelicals, is the role of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God. Emphasising the former, Houston argues that "the first condition of true spirituality is then that 'we grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption' (Ephesians 4:30)" (Houston 1992A: unpublished address). These two are discussed together since grace, by definition, is a gift freely given, and since the Holy Spirit is the supreme gift freely given by God (John 14:16, 26), and since both emphasise that spirituality is not a matter of works, but of God's power. Allan Sager, for instance, believes that "spirituality must be understood in the context of God's grace" (1990: 9), while James Houston views

spirituality to be "the outworking. . . of the grace of God on the soul of man [woman]" (1984: 1047), and Lovelace argues that "spirituality is imparted by the Holy Spirit" (1985: 70).

Grace, as a dimension in Evangelical spirituality, emphasises that spirituality is not something that can be achieved purely by the efforts of the individual or the faith community. While there are certain spiritual disciplines to be practiced actively, spirituality is not something that can be created by human effort. It is always a gift of grace, as Sager and Houston's above comments correctly highlight. God's grace is ministered through the gift of God's Spirit. Without the Spirit there can be no growing into spiritual maturity, no making effective the practice of spirituality. It is the indwelling Holy Spirit (a tenet of evangelical faith, not to be discussed in this thesis) that enables the person to experience the realities of the spiritual life through grace. Jonathan Edwards wrote, "The Spirit of God dwells in the hearts of the saints as a seed, or spring of life, that exerts and communicates His own sweet and divine nature" (1984: 79). This is a general belief among evangelicals. Schneiders suggests that spirituality is Christian only when "the ultimate concern is God revealed in Jesus Christ and experienced through the gift of the Holy Spirit within the life of the Church" (in Hanson 1990: 23).

This gift of the Spirit emphasises the divine initiative in the matter of Christian spirituality. According to Gordon

Wakefield, the Puritans insisted that spirituality was not first a matter of human resolve, but had its origin in the divine initiative and overwhelming call of God" (in Jones, et al 1986: 439). And certainly the American Puritan, Jonathan Edwards, known as "the last of the great Puritans" (Houston in Edwards 1984: xvi) emphasised the place of the Holy Spirit in spirituality. Houston highlights this fact in his introduction to the contemporary publication of Edwards' *Religious Affections* (1984: xvi). In that book, Edwards argued at length for the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian spirituality. He maintained that, in the New Testament, it is only in relation to the Spirit that things or persons are termed spiritual, since, in Scripture, argues Edwards, 'spiritual' is not used to refer "to the soul or spirit as distinct from the body or the material part" (1984: 76). It is only through the Holy Spirit "dwelling as a vital principle in their souls", writes Edwards, that spiritual effects are produced, effects that "express his [the Spirit's] own nature" (Edwards 1984: 78). Since it is only in relation to the Holy Spirit that persons can be called 'spiritual', Edwards concludes that only God's people are truly spiritual since God's Spirit dwells within them (1984: 80).

This emphasis on the Holy Spirit is upheld by evangelical writers. Parker, in his article on Evangelical spirituality refers to a number of other evangelicals who argue for the place of the Spirit in Christian spirituality. He quotes Coucher as stating that spirituality "concerns the life of

God's Spirit within us" (Parker 1991: 125). A more dogmatic statement is the quotation from Donald Bloesch who maintained that

Biblical faith does not deny the place of spiritual disciplines but stresses that these have no value apart from the secret inward work of the Holy Spirit, and they are designed to bring our actions into conformity . . . with the will of God. . . (Bloesch in Parker 1991: 29).

In his book, Albert Nolan emphasises that in Christian spirituality it is God's Spirit that is the motivating force, not just any spirit (1986: 9). This belief is illustrated again and again as evangelicals refer to the important role of the Spirit in both the practice of spiritual disciplines and in producing spirituality in the life of the person so practicing them.

The focus on the Spirit and grace warns the Christian to guard against thinking that spirituality, as Dallas Willard remarked, is possible without God or that it is something "wholly inward" (Willard 1988: 77). Willard argues that "spirituality is a matter of *another reality*," which he does not specifically explain, but probably has a spiritual reality in mind, with the Spirit of God being specifically intended. He then argues that it

is absolutely indispensable to keep before us the fact that [spirituality] is not a 'commitment' and it is not a 'lifestyle', even though a commitment and a lifestyle will come from it (Willard 1988: 67).

This is in keeping with the belief that Christian spirituality is a result of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, any definition and practice of spirituality for the evangelical must take this into account.

2.1.3 The Whole Person

There has been a tendency in evangelical practice to view spirituality rather narrowly as relating only to spiritual as opposed to physical and material. Thus, as Nolan notes, most people have been brought up to view their spirituality as a separate part of their lives, related to such spiritual exercises as prayer and meditation. Although it is generally recognised that these should influence other aspects of one's life (Nolan 1986: 7). Nolan therefore stresses that the spiritual life "is not a department of one's life that can be separated from other departments" but is "the whole of one's life in so far as it is motivated and determined by the Holy Spirit" (1986: 7). Nolan also argued that, from a biblical perspective, human life is seen as a unity, not as "a soul inhabiting a body" (1986: 7). For David Bosch this is a fundamental issue. Spirituality, he maintained "can never be something that can be isolated from the rest of ourselves" (Bosch 1979: 13).

In his book, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, Dallas Willard argues for this wholistic approach to Christian spirituality. Willard places particular emphasis on the physical aspects, specifically on the body. Thus he argues that spirituality is "a relationship of our embodied selves to God" (1988: 31). He also maintains that "spirituality is simply the wholistic quality of human life" (1988: 77). In his article, Young would agree with this, since he maintains that "spirituality engages the whole person in the fulness of one's existence in the world" (1990: 91).

A whole person focus toward spirituality is crucial, if not in definition, then certainly in practice, as will be discussed.

2.1.4 Relationship

Christian spirituality, having to do with divine revelation, related to the Holy Spirit and involving the whole person, is also shaped by the person's relationship to God, to self, to others and to all creation.

Relationship to God is considered by many evangelicals to be the very centre of Evangelical spirituality, as Gordon notes, describing it as "the vitalizing encounter between the soul and God" (1991: 106). For others, relationship to God forms the actual definition of Christian spirituality. In his article on spirituality in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, James Houston defines 'spirituality' as "the state of deep relationship to God" (1984: 1046). Such a definition is expressed again and again in a variety of ways. Parker Palmer, for instance, refers to the spiritual life as "the quest for God" (1983: xi). J.I. Packer, in an article chooses, typically, to put the onus on God and describes spirituality as having to do with "how God draws people into deeper fellowship with himself" (1990B: 4). In the same article, Packer implies that spirituality is equated to relationship with God (1990B: 2). Fellowship, as used by Packer, whilst variously defined in evangelical circles, generally refers to relationship or communion, in this case with God. Thus Packer, in the same article,

emphasises that spirituality involves "the whole Christian enterprise of pursuing, achieving, and cultivating communion with God" (1990B: 2). Albin, in his dictionary article, concurs with this, simply stating that "Christian spirituality involves the relationship between the whole person and a holy God..." (Albin 1988: 657). Thus, Willard is correct to maintain that relationship to God is the central issue in Christian spirituality (Willard 1988: 77). Despite the wide variety of practice, there is, according to Parker "unanimity on the view that spirituality concerns a living, dynamic relation between the self and God" (Parker 1991: 128). The central problem then, for Christian spirituality concerns how to live in the world and in relation to God, an important task for Christian education to consider.

However, it is generally recognised that relationship to God must lead to relationship with others. An evangelical criticism of the monastic movement was the tendency to withdraw from the world and relationship with others. Although this point of relationship with others is not belaboured in Evangelical spirituality it is implied, as will be discussed under the practice of spirituality.

2.1.5 The Rational Mind

Before concluding this discussion on shaping factors, it must be noted that, for many evangelicals, the rational aspects are indispensable. By 'rational' I mean an emphasis on the mind and head, often to the exclusion of other

aspects of life and being human, such as emotions. In his discussion on Christian education, Perry Downs emphasises that, in order to be effective, Christian education "must recapture a proper understanding of the role of the mind in spiritual growth" (unpublished manuscript 1993: 7/3). He supports this with a detailed discussion on Romans 12:1-2, highlighting Paul's exhortation to "be transformed by the renewal of your minds" (verse 2). He further states that "transformation is to be accomplished by the renewing of the mind", which he explains means thinking in new ways (Ibid: 7/8).

Young also highlights this emphasis on the rational in his comment: "Evangelicals traditionally approach spirituality from a rational orientation because of the theological presuppositions of the inerrancy and authority of scripture" (Young 1990: 90-91). Young understands 'rational' to refer to the intellectual ability to understand and apply. He maintains that the emphasis on the rational flows out of the Reformation traditions (Young 1990: 88), and is a direct result of the doctrinal bias of inerrancy. The Puritan, Jonathan Edwards certainly emphasises the rational. According to Mary Boys, Edwards believed that "no object can come at the heart but through the door of the understanding: and there can be no spiritual knowledge of that which is not first a rational knowledge" (Boys 1989: 17). However, it must also be noted that while Edwards stressed the rational, it was not meant to exclude other aspects of being human. Therefore he maintained "Our people do not so much need to

have their heads stored as to have their hearts touched" (in Boys 1989: 14). Boys adds that the desire was for "a change of heart rather than a change of opinion" (Boys 1989: 14). Knowledge was meant to help people live differently (Edwards in Boys 1989: 17). Houston makes a similar point, suggesting that today there is much to indicate that "love is more important for human well-being than knowledge" (1992B" 191).

This emphasis on the rational has frequently appeared among evangelicals. In his article, "Evangelicals and Spirituality", Hingley highlights the importance of the rational, arguing that all practices of spirituality must be "controlled by and subject to our rational minds". Hingley further maintains that it is this emphasis on the rational mind that distinguishes Christian meditation from non-Christian meditation (1990: 88). James Gordon, in his discussion on the spirituality of a number of evangelicals from the Wesleys to John Stott, brings out this emphasis on the rational for many of these men and women. The Reformed preacher, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, discussed in Gordon's book, is an extreme example of one who emphasised the rational mind over all other factors of being human. According to Gordon, Lloyd-Jones took seriously the biblical instruction to "gird up the loins of your mind" (Gordon 1991: 288). Lloyd-Jones believed that "God's greatest gift to humanity is the mind with its capacity for apprehending truth" (Gordon 1991: 289). Thus Gordon can say of Lloyd-Jones that much of his "spirituality was mediated through intellectual engagement"

(Gordon 1991: 290). The rational was the heart of spirituality for Lloyd-Jones. He even equated "heart-worship" with "rational worship", referred to God as rational, who made us rational beings and gave a rational revelation "so that we may worship him rationally" (in Gordon 1991: 297).

This emphasis on the rational will be borne out in the practice of spirituality. But, it must be recognised that not all evangelicals place such a heavy emphasis on the rational. The Puritan, John Owen, considered the greatest of the Puritan theologians (Packer 1990A: 81), warned against a purely rational approach to spirituality. According to Packer, John Owen believed that sin promotes "universal unresponsiveness to spiritual truth." Thus, purely rational learning is ineffective since, ". . . only the illumination of the Holy Spirit, opening our heart to God's Word and God's Word to our hearts, can bring understanding, conviction about, and consent to, the things that God declares" (Packer 1990A: 83). And Downs, while focusing his argument on the renewal of the mind and thus the rational, does state that Christian faith also includes the relational and behavioural, and thus Christian education must be equally concerned with these components (1993: 7/1). Edwards' emphasis on the affections has already been referred to.

It is these five factors that help us to understand Evangelical spirituality. Of these five, I have chosen to emphasise only the first four. The emphasis on the rational

mind, while indispensable for those like Lloyd-Jones in the Reformed tradition, plays a less leading role in the spirituality of others. However, divine revelation, the Holy Spirit and relationship to God are seen to be of indispensable necessity.

Taking into account the factors of the grace of God and the Holy Spirit, which guard the person from relying on human endeavour, Christian spirituality is best understood in terms of relationship to God. It is both the quest for God and the initiative of God in desiring fellowship with men and women. This will, of necessity involve the whole person in the whole range of emotions and actions. It is far more than the rational mind, but will involve that, as I will seek to demonstrate in the final section of this thesis.

2.2 Elements that Suggest Purpose

One of the serious problems in Evangelical spirituality is the obvious ambiguity concerning the purpose for the practice of spiritual disciplines or spirituality. Evangelical Christians practice certain disciplines but with little clear idea of what their purpose is, or what should happen as a result of these practices. This could in part be related to the evangelical emphasis on grace and justification by faith alone. As a result of this belief, evangelicals have always insisted that what the person receives from God is freely given by God, and is not the result of any human effort. Thus, spiritual disciplines are not practiced in order to gain anything from God. This

means that, unlike Anglo-Catholic spirituality, Evangelical spirituality does not have specifically delineated results flowing from their practice of spiritual disciplines.

One of the problems with Evangelical spirituality is the pluralism of Protestant spirituality, already referred to. James Houston sees this as a serious weakness. He argues that Protestant spirituality has "a set of actions, normative for living [the spiritual life]," but that these actions are "intangible, dependent upon the culture in large part." Thus, with changing culture, patterns of piety change, making them unstable "so that today, in an era of massive change, the format of previous piety is dying, or at least is of much less relevance than before" (Houston 1991C: 182-183). There is the danger in the South African church of today to discard the "format of previous piety" for a more culturally relevant spirituality. Houston's warning is thus timely, while not denying the importance of being more culturally relevant. Kenneth Leech takes this even further and remarks that in the West, we live "in an atmosphere of spiritual deprivation and impoverishment" (1985: 1). This is a reflection of the lack of relevance of forms of piety, or the fact that they keep changing with culture and generation, leaving little stability in Evangelical spirituality.

The impoverishment of Christian experience is certainly related to the lack of relevance and practice of the spiritual disciplines, but also to the lack of clearly understood purpose for their practice. This is not to say

that evangelicals are ignorant of purpose in the Christian life, but rather that they are not clear on how this purpose is to be achieved, since purpose is not always understood, often being phrased in ambiguous terms such as "grow". Evangelical Christians are often taught that praying, reading the Bible and going to Church will help them to 'grow'. Children are taught to sing the chorus, "Read your Bible, pray everyday and you'll grow, grow, grow." Growth is often held out as the purpose towards which the Christian is moving. But the understanding of growth is ambiguous and difficult to define.

In this thesis, I will briefly highlight three main purposes that stand out in evangelical thinking, both as being the purpose for being Christian and for the practice of spirituality. Since at least two of these have already been discussed in chapter two, under the nature of Christian education, they will only be mentioned here as they relate to Christian spirituality. These three are i) conformity to the image of Christ; ii) maturity, often expressed as 'spiritual maturity'; and iii) knowledge of God, where that is understood as personal relationship with God.

2.2.1 Conformity to the Image of Christ

In evangelicalism, 'conformity to the image of Christ', or 'Christ-likeness' is common thinking, as has already been discussed. Parker views this emphasis on Christ-likeness as a "highly distinctive feature of evangelicalism" and quotes Tiller, who maintained that being conformed to Christ's

image was the essence of Evangelical spirituality (Parker 1991: 130). Parker appears to have overlooked the frequency within Catholicism of this ideal to be like Christ. Albin maintained that "conformity of heart and life to the confession and character of Jesus as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3)" was the test of Christian spirituality (1988: 657). This remains a central issue and will be seen to be an important link between Christian spirituality and Christian education. Since this has already been discussed in some detail in a previous chapter, it will not again be covered here.

2.2.2 Maturity

Maturity, as a purpose for Christian spirituality, while usually expressed in other terms, is seen to be the teaching of Paul. His exhortation to the Ephesian Church that "we will all grow up into [Christ]" (4:15) is understood to mean that Christians must mature. Paul also described his urgency in ministry "to present everyone perfect in Christ" (Colossians 1:28). The word 'perfect' can also be translated as 'mature' or 'complete'. These verses are repeatedly used to encourage the Christian to grow on to maturity. But the problem lies in the ambiguity of the term 'maturity', with different ways of understanding and explaining it. It is often equated with Christ-likeness, as Gordon suggests (1991: 4) and held up as a goal towards which we move. This means that the discussion then revolves around what it means to be like Christ. Downs describes spiritual maturity as "a matter of holding to correct

beliefs, loving God more deeply, and living in growing obedience to God" (1993: 7/1). This will lead naturally to "changed lives", a sign of maturity according to Downs (1993: 7/2).

Roberta Hestenes, in an interview in the evangelical journal, *Leadership*, probably gives the most comprehensive meaning of 'maturity', and therefore will be referred to in some detail. She suggests that there are two ways to define maturity. The first is related to the New Testament word often translated 'perfect' in the King James Version, and as 'complete' or 'mature' in later versions. Hestenes suggests that this term means that "maturity is engaging in behavior appropriate to the stage in which you are", or "living up to the capacities God has made possible for you" (1988: 14). Thus, at every stage in life, from infancy to old age, a person can be mature.

A second way of defining maturity according to Hestenes is related to qualities. She refers to a list in Ephesians 4, such as using spiritual gifts, building up the body, discerning truth from error, etc. She stresses however that maturity is not an end state towards which persons are moving. She contends that "Maturity is pressing toward the mark; immaturity is complacency and self-satisfaction" (1988: 14). The emphasis is on the "pressing towards" rather than on arriving at some mature end-state. Hestenes further maintains that mature people and faith communities "care about the things God cares about". She highlights five suggestions -- i) "a genuine concern for the lost, both near

and far; ii) concern for the poor; iii) speaking the truth in love; iv) discernment; and v) prayer (1988: 14). As an example of discernment, Hestenes refers to the German church of the 1930's that blindly followed Hitler because "he quoted the Bible and talked about Jesus." She could just as easily have referred to the South African Churches that uncritically accepted their government for the same reason and failed to address the injustices of apartheid.

Christian spirituality should bring about this kind of maturity in the lives of those that practice it. Whether this should be the intentional purpose of spiritual practices or not, is debatable. A spirituality that aims blatantly at personal, or even group maturity, could become individualistic, even unchristian and introspective, focusing purely on the self or the group, rather than reaching outside of the self or the group. Maturity should result from the practice of spirituality, but should probably never be the reason for practicing spiritual disciplines.

2.2.3 Knowledge of God

Knowledge of God, rather than union with God, is the more generally accepted specific purpose for the practice of spirituality for evangelicals. Lovelace agrees, contending that fellowship with God is the goal of faith (1985: 135). Knowing God is understood to refer to the intimate personal relationship a person has with God through the Spirit. It was addressed in some detail in chapter 2 and mentioned as

a shaping factor in defining Evangelical spirituality, and will here be discussed as it relates to a purpose towards which to aim.

'Knowing God' is often equated by evangelicals with 'receiving Christ as Saviour'. It is not unusual to be asked by an evangelical, "Do you know Jesus?" when he or she really means "Are you a Christian?" or "Have you received Jesus as Saviour?" This understanding has meant that an active pursuit of God, in order to know him more intimately, is not considered that necessary among many contemporary evangelicals. And yet, this was not always so. Evangelicals of the past considered knowing God as the important goal to pursue. Houston, in one of his articles describes spirituality as involving "the enlargement of our awareness of God, of what gives a living, growing relationship before God and with each other" (1991A: 3).

Houston also reminds us that the great thinkers of the Church have always insisted that "the knowledge of God and the knowledge of self cannot be separated" (1991A: 4). Which Packer supports with specific reference to the Puritans, who maintained that a realistic self-knowledge is essential for living the Christian life (Packer 1990A: 194). The fact that knowledge of God required knowledge of self makes spirituality "at once the easiest and most difficult thing in the world," as A.W. Tozer pointed out. It is easy, writes Tozer because knowledge of God is first and foremost a gift, freely given by God, and difficult "because there are conditions to be met and the obstinate nature of fallen

man [woman] does not take kindly to them" (Tozer 1961: 122). Tozer lists six conditions that need to be met in order to know God. These are not conditions for receiving salvation, but for deeper intimacy in relationship with God. Since they highlight significant features of evangelical beliefs, I will list them in full, omitting Tozer's detailed explanation of each.

First, we must forsake our sins.

Second, there must be an utter committal of the whole life to Christ, in faith.

Third, there must be a reckoning of ourselves to have died unto sin and to be alive unto God in Christ Jesus, followed by a throwing open of the entire personality to the inflow of the Holy Spirit.

Fourth, we must boldly repudiate the cheap values of the fallen world and become completely detached in spirit.

Fifth, we must practice the art of long and loving meditation upon the majesty of God. Sixth, as the knowledge of God becomes more wonderful, greater service to our fellow men [and women] will become for us imperative (Tozer 1961: 122-123).

It is interesting to note that Tozer's first condition related to sin. An awareness of sin has always been considered important in Evangelical spirituality, even though today it is not often referred to. Charles Colson refers to Jonathan Edwards who believed implicitly that "a deepened sense of sin" was essential to the cultivation of true spirituality (in Edwards 1984: xxxi). It is not surprising, therefore to discover that Edwards resolved to understand his inner life. Gordon writes that he determined "to examine carefully and constantly what that one thing in me is, which causes me in the least to doubt the love of God; and so direct all my forces against it." He also resolved to "'trace' each sin back 'to the original cause'" (Gordon 1991: 43).

As a general rule, evangelicals have a sense of, or seek to experience a sense of personal involvement in, even responsibility for the death of Christ. Gordon maintains that this sense "invested Newton's spiritual life with moral urgency and spiritual warmth" (1991: 73). While this sense of sin was very real, even urgent in Evangelical spirituality, it was never meant to stand between the Christian and Christ. So while evangelicals like Robert Murray McCheyne, experienced a deep sense of sin and repentance, "not unmingled with tears" and referred to himself as "so vile, so useless, so poor, and, above all, so ungrateful", (in Gordon 1991: 123), they also experienced an increased desire to know God more intimately.

It is worth noting that, as Houston mentions in his article, the desire to know God among contemporary Christians is one reason for the growth and popularity of spirituality at this moment in time (1991A: 3). He thus acknowledges that evangelicals generally recognise that the practice of spirituality will lead to deeper knowledge of God. David Parker makes the interesting observation that the evangelical emphasis on a personal relationship with God has been a major reason why Evangelical spirituality "has not developed a universal system of spiritual disciplines in the way Catholicism has" (1991: 130).

2.3 Distinctive Practices of Evangelical Spirituality

While evangelicals have only recently begun to use the term 'spirituality', to refer to certain practices, and only

recently referred to 'spiritual disciplines', certain distinctive spiritual practices have marked evangelical Christian living. However, evangelicals have tended to over- react towards the practice of spiritual disciplines because of past abuses. Dallas Willard contends that spiritual disciplines were abused when they were seen to be the means to merit salvation. Fearing this, evangelicals have tended to exclude these practices (Willard 1988: 25). This over- reaction, according to Parker "has resulted in the loss of valuable practices." Parker also suggests that the Reformation, the Puritans and Pietists, all influential in shaping Evangelical spirituality, "were meant to correct abuses, not to destroy valid and useful Christian practices" (1991: 123).

A valid and useful practice, according to Willard, would be one that was "undertaken to bring us into more effective cooperation with Christ and his kingdom" (1988: 156), rather than to achieve salvation. It is, therefore, typical of evangelicals to emphasise faith in the exercise of these disciplines. Thus, Lovelace contends that faith is "the root of all valid spirituality" (1985: 133) and essential for spiritual growth (Lovelace 1985: 10). However, as Morton Kelsey reminds us, the individual must still "supply an ego interested in receiving and integrating" the experiences that depend entirely upon God to give (Kelsey 1972: 146). In other words, faith does not exempt the faithful from performing certain exercises of piety. The experiences that are God given, evangelicals stress, are to

be received through faith alone. Therefore, spiritual disciplines are to be undertaken in faith. They should also, as Houston notes, be motivated by the relationship of the Christian with the Triune God, that is with God's whole being (1993: personal notes).

While certain disciplines stand out as distinctive, even universal among evangelicals, and will be discussed in some detail, others are less common and practiced by fewer evangelicals. These too will be mentioned, but only briefly. It must be noted at this point that evangelicals have not traditionally termed their spiritual practices as 'spiritual disciplines'. Thus the use of the this term is not distinctive to nor traditional with evangelicalism. Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* and Dallas Willard's less popular, *The Spirit of the Disciplines* have done much to popularise the term 'spiritual disciplines' among evangelicals.

In his article, David Parker acknowledges that, within evangelicalism there are a variety of practices of spirituality, but that "this variety can be reduced to a simple pattern which reveals the essential structures of evangelical spirituality" (Parker 1991: 131). This basic pattern consists of the daily "Quiet Time", regular Church attendance, Christian service and surrender to God, and remaining "unspotted by the world" (Parker 1991: 132-136). These will be discussed in detail as they form the basic distinctives of the practice of Evangelical spirituality. However, it should also be noted, as Houston did, that many

of these practices, which he claims were the inheritance of "a Victorian form of piety", have today either "worn thin or become superseded" (Houston 1991C: 183).

2.3.1 The Quiet Time

The daily devotional, referred to as "Quiet Time" (or 'Q.T.')

is defined by Parker as "a private daily session of personal prayer and devotional reading of the Bible" (1991: 132). It still remains an almost universal practice among evangelical Christians. For many, such as Parker, it is viewed as the distinctive mark of Evangelical spirituality (Parker 1991: 128). In Gordon's discussion of 22 evangelical leaders from the 18th century to the present, it is noted that a daily, preferably early morning, Q.T. was practiced and insisted upon by all the people discussed. For instance, Bishop Ryle of Liverpool, categorically maintained that Bible reading and prayer are essential, even the roots of Christianity. He contended, "Wrong here, a man [woman] is wrong all the way." He further insisted that "private religion must receive our first attention, if we wish our souls to grow" (in Gordon 1991: 5). George Whitfield insisted that Bible reading must be "devoted and daily" and include prayer (Gordon 1991: 6). Hannah More believed that the Bible, "read prayerfully", would be "nutriment to the heart" (in Gordon 1991: 113). These are but a few examples of evangelicals who sincerely believe in the practice of Q.T.

It is also considered by many evangelicals to be the

assurance of "the success of any given day" (Gordon 1991: 5). This belief continues today. Reg Codrington, a leader in the South African Baptist Church and currently pastor of Pretoria Central Baptist Church, has frequently remarked in my hearing, that his day goes well when he has had his Quiet Time of prayer and Bible reading, and that it goes badly when he has failed to keep this time of devotions. This is a common understanding among many evangelicals, and is taught to Christians from the beginning of their Christian experience.

It is obvious, therefore, that both prayer and Bible reading and study are essential aspects of the evangelicals' spiritual practice. In his article, Hingley assumes this. He believes that every Christian must have a personal spirituality, which he describes as "a discipline of Bible reading and prayer" (1990: 89). The well-known evangelical, Billy Graham, once claimed, "Prayer combined with Bible study makes for a complete and glorious life" (in Parker 1991: 132). This daily Q.T. of Bible reading and prayer is, for the evangelical "the means of knowing and hearing God, and receiving his guidance and power" (Parker 1991: 132). It is important, therefore, to examine separately and in detail this evangelical practice, beginning with the practice of Bible reading.

2.3.1.1 The Practice of Bible Reading

As has already been noted, a distinguishing mark of evangelicals is the stress on the Bible as God's Word,

understanding it to be authoritative for life today. With that theological tenet, it is not surprising that evangelicals place a high emphasis on regular Bible reading and study. Parker maintains that "evangelical spirituality depends almost exclusively for its sources on Scripture." He sees this as a product of the Puritan heritage that upheld the Bible "as the only religion of Protestants" (Parker 1991: 137).

Other evangelicals, such as D.L. Moody express a great love for the Bible. Moody went so far as to claim that the only "'true' Christian loves the Bible, reads the Bible and obeys" it (in Gordon 1991: 185). And others, like Robert Murray McCheyne "measured his spirituality by the enjoyment and help he gained from regular reading of Scripture" (Gordon 1991: 140). Despite the fact that McCheyne died at an early age, 29 (1813-1843), he published a guide to help Christians read through the Bible in one year. It was called, *Daily Bread*. McCheyne firmly believed that the Bible should be read through in its entirety on a regular basis. He also made plans to read through the Bible in one and two months (Gordon 1991: 139). McCheyne's contemporary and friend, Horatius Bonar urged the same comprehensive reading of the entire Bible, insisting that no part should be omitted (Gordon 1991: 140).

Some years later, Martyn Lloyd-Jones made a disciplined use of McCheyne's *Daily Bread*, reading through the entire Bible each year (Gordon 1991: 293). Such a concentration on the Bible has been common among evangelicals from early times.

Jonathan Edwards was said to have "saturated himself in the Bible throughout his life" (Houston in Edwards 1984: xvi).

As has already been intimated, the reason for this emphasis on Bible reading is the belief in the authority of Scripture as God's Word. For many evangelicals there is also the firm conviction that scripture is inerrant and inspired by God's Spirit in its entirety. This belief has led to the conviction that God speaks directly through the Bible, and only through the Bible. Hingley stresses this, maintaining that evangelicals are committed to the belief that God speaks through his Spirit in the Word (Hingley 1990: 87). This has led evangelicals to reject the Catholic belief that God speaks through Church tradition and in *ex cathedra* statements of the Pope, or any other means not supported by scripture. Because of this belief that God only speaks through the Bible, evangelicals are encouraged to read it daily and to believe that spiritual growth is only possible through this regular habit of reading. It is also believed to be the most important means of grace for the Christian since "the divine image and superscription is written upon every line" (Gordon 1991: 60-61).

It is also recognised by evangelicals that God speaks through his Word only by means of the Spirit, thus the Spirit plays an important role in the receiving of God's Word and reminds the evangelical that he or she must receive it through faith alone. According to Packer, John Owen argued that scripture only proves to be God's living Word through the Holy Spirit, since he gives it the "permanent

quality of *light*". Owen defines 'light' as that "which dispels darkness and illuminates people and situations". Owen further maintained that "the Spirit makes the Scriptures *powerful* to produce spiritual effects" and can personalise scripture to each individual who reads it (in Packer 1990A: 90-91).

For this reason, as Hingley remarks, the reading of scripture should not simply be an intellectual exercise, "but an occasion for a personal encounter between the reader and Jesus Christ" (1990: 88). Doubtless, it is for this reason that Parker Palmer describes his Bible teaching ministry as one in which it is essential to teach more than a "body of knowledge or set of skills", but a "mode of relationship between the knower and the known, a way of being in the world" (Palmer 1983: 30).

2.3.1.2 *The Practice of Prayer*

To avoid Bible reading degenerating into an intellectual exercise and nothing more, prayer is its essential companion. For many evangelicals, prayer is "the heart of spirituality", as Bloesch maintains in his book *The Struggle of Prayer* (1989: vii). James Houston affirms this, perceiving personal prayer to be the focus of Christian spirituality. He also relates personal prayer to communion with God, which he understands to refer to what Christians in the past called "the interior life" (Houston 1991A: 3).

Prayer has been given a wide variety of meanings. Parker suggests that the prayer of the daily Q.T. is "petition and

intercession and as a channel of spiritual nourishment" (1991: 132). In this type of prayer, the primary emphasis is on "talking to God", humbly acknowledging our need for him to intervene in our lives and the various situations around us. A more general meaning given to prayer is expressed by Donald Joy who maintained that "prayer should be 'total life' communion with God" (1989: 9). This emphasises that prayer is more than "petition and intercession" since it involves the whole person in all of life. Prayer is thus the means through which sustained encounter with God takes place, and therefore is as essential as breathing.

2.3.2 Activism as a Practice of Spirituality

However, for the evangelical, prayer, perhaps because it is viewed as "total life communion with God", must be accompanied with activity. Gordon refers to prayer and activity as the "two poles around which much of the spiritual life revolves" (1991: 87). And Wainwright goes so far as to define spirituality as "a combination of prayer and living" (in Jones et al 1986: 592). Living is considered to relate to activity. Activism then, often takes priority with the evangelical over other spiritual disciplines. Gordon writes of George Whitfield that his activism allowed little time for reflection (1991: 64). This would describe many contemporary evangelicals. Houston describes the modern evangelical as allowing "activism rather than piety" to be the way of life (1991c: 183). This is seen in the fact that, for many evangelicals, *doing for*

God takes priority over *being* for and with God. Jim Johnston tells of one evangelical leader who claimed that he was too busy to spend time alone with God (personal conversation). It is not surprising, therefore, to realise that evangelicals considered spiritual maturity to lie in the amount of activity a person engaged in, and to view the very busy Christians as the truly spiritual ones. Uncritical acceptance is given to R.A. Torrey's assertion that "The working Christian is the happy Christian. The working Christian is the strong Christian" (in Parker 1991: 135).

It must be noted that activism is not an attempt on the part of the evangelical to earn salvation, which is believed to be the gift of God's grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Rather it is, as Parker maintains, a demonstration of gratitude and obedience to God, motivated by his love for us and our love for him. Paul's claim that "Christ's love compels us" (2 Corinthians 5:14) is seen as crucial in Christian service. Thus, it is not uncommon to find evangelicals, such as George Whitfield, who measure their love for Christ by the "zeal in his work" (Gordon 1991: 58). Love for God is an important motivating factor in evangelical service. William Cowper maintained that "to love Christ is the greatest dignity of man [woman]" (in Gordon 1991: 76). And Richard Lovelace reminds us that love is the "substance of real spirituality" (1985: 18). Because of their emphasis on love, evangelicals believe that Christian service or activity must be sacrificial, emulating

Christ's service while here on earth (Parker 1991: 135). Paul's exhortation to "offer your bodies as living sacrifices" (Romans 12:1), is frequently presented to the evangelical to encourage him or her into greater and more sacrificial service and surrender. It is this idea of 'sacrificial service' that lends impetus to activism often to the exclusion of contemplative reflection.

Christian activity is viewed first and foremost in terms of evangelism, recognised to mean "bringing others to Christ". Evangelising, also referred to as witnessing, is considered to be the primary reason for salvation. The chorus this writer sang as a child emphasises this teaching -- "We're saved to tell others of the man of Galilee." R.A. Torrey, an influential evangelical of the first half of this century, author of numerous popular books, insisted that evangelism "is the purpose for which Jesus has chosen us", and even claimed that it was a condition for power in prayer (in Parker 1991: 136). As a result, evangelicals are known to have neglected justice and other social issues, along with practical love of neighbour, in favour of 'witnessing'. They have feared what is termed the "social-gospel" that minimises personal conversion. However, this is changing in much evangelicalism, and it is not uncommon to now read statements urging justice issues, as Lovelace argues in his book. He states that "Spirituality that neglects the love of neighbour, and which fails to seek justice for the neighbour, is simply not biblical" (1985: 37).

This emphasis on activity, particularly witnessing, was not

always common, according to Houston. He suggests that "this century is possibly the first one in which action has been emphasised and valued more than contemplation". He continues, maintaining that

today we *do* things. We think contemplation wastes time, produces nothing, and bumps awkwardly into our schedules. Devotional reading is a questionable priority for most successful people today (in Edwards 1984: 189).

These disciplines, the daily Quiet Time, consisting of prayer and Bible reading, and Christian service or activity are the most distinctive and universal practices in Evangelical spirituality. Two, less common practices in evangelicalism will be mentioned briefly.

2.3.3 Music in the practice of spirituality

An important part of both Evangelical and African life is their music. It is a well known fact that music is integral to African life and this carries over into the African churches, including evangelical ones. Music is often simple and repetitive. This is also true of the music in the contemporary charismatic churches. It is not unusual in these churches for one brief song to be sung repeatedly by the gathered community. Much of the contemporary music relates either directly to scripture, where a verse from scripture has been put to music, or reflects personal experiences, understood commands from God or direct praise to God for who he is and what he has done. This is in continuity with the older evangelical tradition. Gordon describes evangelical music as being both "richly experimental" and "intensely personal" (1991: 78). Gordon

writes of D.L. Moody and his song leader, Ira Sankey as firmly believing that people wanted to sing what they felt, rather than what they thought. As a result, Sankey's lyrics, according to Gordon, "tended to be subjective, describing the inner experience of Evangelical doctrine" (1991: 181). This remains true of much contemporary Evangelical music today, particularly that of the charismatic movement. For instance, the South African charismatic Malcolm du Plessis has written a number of songs for the charismatic church. One of his most popular, copyrighted in 1984 reflects the experiential and personal nature of evangelical music, as well as the very emotional worship of God. He wrote:

I want to sing until I am lost in your love,
'Till I am found in your presence,
Worshipping before your throne. Moved by your Spirit,
Entering into his flow,
How precious these moments,
Lord I want you to know:
It's you, you who have won my heart,
Taken me into your arms,
Comforted me like a friend.
Your love surrounded me from the start,
I never want to be apart
From you ever again. (In Songs of Fellowship, Book 3).

Within the contemporary charismatic movement, both in this country and elsewhere, new music is continually being written and sung. du Plessis's song is just one example.

It is also true that music forms a vital part of the African churches. Their music is also brief and repetitively sung in the gathered community. But not only is music for the gathered community, Christians in these traditions in particular use music to enhance their own private devotions with the Lord. Thus, music plays a vital role in their

spirituality. Despite this fact, nothing is written on the place of music in spiritual development in evangelicalism. Because of its importance in both the charismatic and African churches, as well as other traditions of evangelicalism, I will devote a section to this in Part III on the integration of Christian spirituality and education.

2.3.4 Solitude and Community as practices of spirituality

Evangelicals stress community, commonly referred to as 'fellowship', over and above solitude. Having grown up in evangelicalism, I only learned about solitude later in life and through Catholicism, not evangelicalism, while fellowship with others was frequently taught. However, solitude and stillness were important disciplines for many evangelicals of the past, and today many are again emphasising the importance of the discipline of solitude. The growing popularity of silent and meditation retreats among evangelicals in South Africa bears witness to this fact.

However, fellowship, or community, has always been viewed as possessing priority over solitude. The exhortation of the writer to the Hebrews to "not give up meeting together" (Hebrews 10:25) is an important one for evangelicals, and is commonly understood to refer to regular church attendance (Parker 1991: 131). Parker explains that this meeting together as a church is to "find spiritual strength and nurture from the presence of Christ in the Body" and to "draw upon the grace of God through the ministries of those

gifted persons whom God has set in the church" (Parker 1991: 134). Thus, evangelicals recognise that spiritual growth does not happen apart from fellowship with fellow Christians. Gordon seeks to stress this truth in his book *Evangelical Spirituality*. He there maintains that evangelicals have always insisted on the importance of the faith community in personal growth (Gordon 1991: 5). He refers to Charles Simeon who insisted that spirituality had to be impacted with biblical truth "reinforced by being shared in the... fellowship of the worshipping church" (Gordon 1991: 103).

With this emphasis on fellowship, evangelicals are meant to be shielded from allowing spirituality to degenerate into an individualistic affair. Yet, much of the emphasis in *Evangelical spirituality* does lend itself towards individualism. It has already been noted in this thesis that the focus on "Christ-likeness" has tended towards an individualistic practice of Christianity. It could also be said that the emphasis on activism has had the same effect. And yet, evangelicals still emphasise community over solitude. This will be referred to in Section III as important to an integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education.

For many evangelicals the daily Quiet Time is usually considered to be a good enough substitute for solitude, even to be equated with solitude. Parker, for instance, argues that contemporary practices of spirituality are not to be "considered incompatible with evangelical spirituality." He

refers to the Quiet Time and "the sermon as a meditation on God" as valid practices, not needing replacement (Parker 1991: 140-142). This is true, however, many contemporary evangelicals find the quiet time and sermon inadequate and are seeking alternate spiritual disciplines to help them develop an intimate relationship with God. As is obvious, solitude is used here to refer to a specific time alone with God. This is not to deny that it can also refer to the "solitude of the heart that can be maintained at all times" (Foster 1978: 84). Although, this is only possible when 'outward' solitude is practiced on a regular basis (Foster 1978: 85).

Solitude was frequently emphasised as important in the writings of Jonathan Edwards. He often refers to solitude as 'retirement' or 'secret', and stresses its place in Christian spirituality. He suggests that the Psalmist taught that the "sweetest comforts" are "those that were to be had in secret" (Psalm 63:5-6) (Edwards 1984: 162). He also maintained that the general teaching of scripture supports this view, that the best blessings come from "retirement". As examples, Edwards cites Isaac, who went alone into a field to meditate (Genesis 24:63) and received Rebekah. Mary is a New Testament example of one who received a great blessing in solitude, when the angel Gabriel gave her the news of her conception (Matthew 1). He then repeats himself that only those who in "retirement and secret converse with God are specially blessed" (1984: 162). Edwards went so far as to say that "true religion [or

spirituality] inclines people to be alone for holy meditation and prayer" (1984: 161).

It is also frequently noted that the Gospel writers record numerous occasions when Jesus spent time in outward solitude, usually on his own, at other times with his apostles. His ministry began with 40 days of solitude in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11). After a busy day of preaching and miracles, Jesus went off into solitude to pray (Mark 1:35). Before his selection of the twelve apostles, he spent time in solitude, alone with his father (Luke 6:12). Jesus also encouraged his disciples to take time out of their busy schedules for solitude in prayer (Mark 6:31). It was the practice of Jesus to spend time in solitude. How regular this was, the Gospels do not tell us. And only on certain occasions are we told that Jesus got up "very early in the morning, while it was still dark" (Mark 1:35). Nothing in the Gospels suggests that solitude must be in the morning and everyday, as many evangelicals have insisted. The solitude that Jesus practiced and that Edwards had in mind is something more substantial than the daily Quiet Time. Dallas Willard, a contemporary evangelical makes this same point concerning the importance of solitude. Along with Edwards, he too believes that only in solitude is there "the possibility of a radical relationship to God that can withstand all external events up to and beyond death" (Willard 1988: 101).

While many evangelicals still consider the Quiet Time as adequate for meeting God alone, a growing number of

evangelicals today find this time inadequate and are opting for longer periods of solitude through retreats of various lengths, from one day to a weekend, or even eight or thirty-one days.

2.3.5 Spiritual Direction as Practice of Spirituality

An obvious dimension that is missing in Evangelical spirituality is that of the spiritual director. Parker explains that this is so because of the emphasis on the personal relationship with God through the indwelling Spirit. This has led evangelicals to perceive that fellowship with God is to be "direct and personal" and "not mediated indirectly by church, liturgy or sacrament" (Parker 1991: 130). In other words, evangelicals are encouraged to practice "the priesthood of all believers", meaning that since they have direct access to God, they do not need another to mediate on their behalf. This means that the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers" has come to be understood as nothing more nor less than that a person has direct access to God. Other aspects, such as being priests to one another (and thus 'spiritual directors') and even being priests to the world, mediating between God and the world, are either overlooked or under-stressed in much contemporary evangelicalism.

However, while there is no encouragement to make use of a spiritual director, evangelicals do consider their pastor as important in guiding them. They also, as Parker notes look up to leading public evangelicals as examples to follow.

Thus, the reading of the biographies of 'great saints' is greatly encouraged. The practice of discipling among many evangelicals could also be added here as a form of spiritual direction. Discipling involves a more mature Christian coming alongside a less mature or new convert to guide him or her in the ways of Christianity. There are many similarities between the teaching on discipling and spiritual direction. However, discipling has not been widely practiced in evangelicalism, and today the interest is moving more towards spiritual direction. The practice of spiritual direction, usually referred to by some other term such as 'spiritual friend' (as with Jim Johnston) or 'spiritual-formation guide' (as in Gorman 1990: 20) is only recently becoming a practice in evangelicalism. Very little has been written on the subject from the point of view of evangelicalism. This topic is discussed in detail in a later chapter.

CONCLUSION

Despite the ambiguity of the term 'spirituality' and the relatively recent use of the concept of spirituality among evangelicals, they are still able to defend certain practices and fit them into contemporary spirituality. By far the most important aspect of Evangelical spirituality is the Bible. It is a shaping factor in giving meaning to spirituality, and plays a major role in the practice of spirituality. For the evangelical, unless the Bible is used in some way in the practice of spirituality, it is not considered to be Christian spirituality.

The dependence on the Bible has tended to allow some evangelicals, as noted, to overemphasise the rational mind to the neglect of bringing in the whole person. Thus, Evangelical spirituality loses the constant awareness that the practice of spirituality is spiritual, reaching beyond the conditioning of the contemporary person. It requires supernatural intervention through the Holy Spirit, something that evangelicals do believe in. The recognition of the importance of the Holy Spirit is the means whereby evangelicals can be brought to a more thoroughly Christian spirituality.

CHAPTER 5

TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC TRADITION

INTRODUCTION

Anglo-Catholic spirituality is difficult to identify and, therefore, to define and describe with any specificity. Leech, in his recent volume, wonders whether "Anglo-Catholicism as a discrete phenomenon still exist" (1992: 127), which emphasises the difficulty in highlighting a distinctly Anglo-Catholic spirituality. It is a term with very broad meanings and connotations. For some it is a combination of English and English speaking Catholics, for others it means Anglican and Catholic. Added to this extensive use is the fact that the term 'Anglo-Catholic' is frequently used by people and groups, but seldom do these people explain their understanding of the term. Hence, I will attempt to give a brief explanation for this term, and state the meaning that will be intended in this thesis. The focus of discussion will be on the connotations of Anglican and Catholic, rather than on English and Catholic. Based on this, a discussion will follow on an understanding of spirituality in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, including an understanding of the common elements in Anglo-Catholic spirituality and an understanding of the development of Christian spirituality within a person.

1. Anglo-Catholic: An Understanding

In a dictionary article, C.F. Allison asserts that the term 'Anglo-Catholicism' is "the modern name for that tradition within Anglicanism that was previously termed 'High Church.' The name dates only from 1838. . ." (Allison 1984: 49). Allison also notes that the term 'Anglo-Catholic' has appeal largely to clergy rather than to laity (1984: 50). This would explain why there is this ambiguity concerning its meaning, especially when related to spirituality. P. Hillyer, in another dictionary article, agrees with the originating date suggested by Allison, explaining that the roots of Anglo-Catholicism stem chiefly from the Oxford Movement of 1833- 1845 (1988:23). Wakefield describes the purpose of this movement as being "to reassert and recover the Catholicity of the English church against its being an arm of the state, a pawn of politicians." Not only was it against politicians and state, but Wakefield also adds that it attempted to counteract the evangelicalism of Methodism in particular "which seemed to cheapen the gospel and relied too much on personal experience and feelings of assurance." It was also a reaction against the liberalism of modern biblical scholarship of that period (Wakefield in Dupre and Saliers 1989: 277). It was the contention of this movement, Hillyer notes, "that the Church of England was not a department of the state but a divine institution, a true branch or partner of the one holy catholic and apostolic church of Christ" (1988: 23). Hillyer further notes that this led to the reintroduction of "the rich theological

tradition" of the Church, which included a return to the practices of confession, fasting and the adoption of a rule for life. Hillyer is suggesting that in the Anglican tradition, a Catholic perspective was introduced, extensively influencing Anglican spirituality. This is witnessed to by the wide use of the Ignatian method of prayer and meditation in the Anglican Church (Harton 1932: 233). However, Catholicism was not the only influence on Anglican spirituality, as Wall remarks in his article. He contends that "Anglican spirituality, like Anglicanism in general, is richly diverse in expression because of the complex histories and various cultural settings of the many different churches in the worldwide Anglican Communion" (in Maas and O'Donnell 1990: 269).

This statement could just as easily apply today to all traditions in Christian spirituality, as Don Saliers notes in his article entitled "Christian Spirituality in an Ecumenical Age". He there remarks,

No longer can we assume highly distinctive divisions along expected lines or an easy division of the churches as closed spiritual types into Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox. Openness to other traditions is part of the story (in Dupre and Saliers 1989: 522).

Thus giving a discussion of a particular tradition, as is being attempted in this thesis, is particularly difficult.

From the origins of the term 'Anglo-Catholic' it can be deduced that Anglo-Catholic spirituality, like Anglo-Catholic theology, strictly speaking refers to the effect of Roman Catholic theology and spirituality on Anglican theology and spirituality. In its narrow meaning,

therefore, it refers to an admixture of Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions. However, the term today is used, albeit usually unexplained, in a far more general sense, especially when related to spirituality. A better term to describe what many people mean by Anglo-Catholic spirituality would be Protestant-Catholic spirituality. This is hinted at in Bouyer's discussion on Protestant spirituality. He writes there that it is difficult to explain Protestant spirituality since the majority of modern Protestants "who have unhesitatingly admitted Protestant spirituality at all" are "more or less *Catholicizing Protestants*" (Bouyer 1968: 57 [emphasis added]). Such a learning from other traditions is, as Lovelace points out, the realisation by Protestants "that they share with Catholicism a deep interest and rich heritage in Christian spirituality" (Lovelace 1979: 11). For this reason, there is a greater willingness among all traditions to learn from all other traditions, thus it is not merely Anglo-Catholic, that is, an intermixture of Anglicanism and Catholicism, but Protestant-Catholic, an intermixture of a far wider range of traditions. It is thus, as Houston points out, absurd to speak of different spiritualities, singling them out distinctively. Each tradition, maintains Houston, is influenced by other traditions and thus there is little "purity" within them. And yet, remarks Houston, this plurality of spiritualities exists and increases (Houston 1992A), as is witnessed to by the rise of contemporary spiritualities such as Liberation, Feminist, African, and others. There is, therefore profit in discussing different

traditions, such as Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic, the primary focus of this thesis.

In this thesis, the term 'Anglo-Catholic' will be used in this more general sense, referring more precisely to a Protestant-Catholic spirituality, that together shares the heritage of the pre-Reformation classics on spirituality, most of which are unknown in the Evangelical tradition of spirituality. It will also be seen in this discussion, and the comparison in a later chapter, that these traditions have more similarities than differences. This is true since, as Johnston points out, each tradition revolves around different aspects of the common life of Christ. He gives as examples the Anglican focus on the incarnation, and thus the life of Christ; the Catholic focus on the passion of Christ; the Eastern Orthodox traditions on the resurrection; the Reformed tradition with its emphasis on the ascension of Christ and his subsequent Lordship over the Church; while the Pentecostal and charismatic traditions focus on the Spirit of Christ (Johnston 1992: 2).

2. Anglo-Catholic Spirituality: An Investigation

Kenneth Leech, an Anglican, rightly warns that the remarkable contemporary growth in spirituality should alert Christians to the need for "spiritual discrimination and discernment between the phoney and the authentic, between the false gods and the true God" (1985: 23). This is an important caution, as 'spirituality' today is used very loosely. Scott Peck, for instance, wrote a book on

psychology, that makes little reference to God or the Spirit, and none as being significant for spiritual growth. He also makes little reference to religion in general, and yet refers to his book, *The Road Less Traveled* as a book on spirituality (1978: 11f). James Houston, in his addresses given in Natal on spiritual direction, referred to a growth today in what he names "spiritual anthropology". He explained that this term referred to a 'spirituality' that refuses to be rooted in Christian theology (1992A), which is precisely what Peck attempts to do. All this is a reminder that the term 'spirituality' is so broadly used that it requires wisdom in explaining it.

Because of this broad use and ambiguity some writers refuse to define spirituality at all. Galilea believes it to be an impossible task to define it, and suggests that "the root of the difficulty lies in the richness of the Christian idea of spirituality, which causes any definition to remain poor and lacking" (Galilea 1988: 3). And when the "richness of the Christian idea" is combined, and even confused with the contemporary concern for "inter-faith" spiritualities, and contemporary psychologies, definition becomes even more impossible to determine. Added to that is the understanding that spirituality also arises out of one's experiences. Gittins thus comments, "Spirituality is not vacuum-packed but actualized, experienced, discovered in particular circumstances and places" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 44). No doubt it is for this reason that Galilea, rather than define the term, highlights identifying marks that explain spirituality

(as did Sager in his book, already mentioned in chapter four of this thesis).

Thus, rather than define spirituality, I will first consider the common elements of Anglo-Catholic spirituality, and then discuss the understanding of its development within a person.

2.1 Common Elements in Anglo-Catholic Spirituality

A number of common elements appear frequently in the literature and discussions of Anglo-Catholic spirituality. In this thesis I have chosen to focus on the ones most frequently referred to. These are: knowledge of God understood as a relationship with him; related to that is the concept of union with God, considered to be the pen-ultimate purpose for Christian spirituality; a third common element is conformity to Christ's likeness with a related issue of obedience to Christ and his Church. Obedience to the Church is of particular importance in the Catholic tradition. Finally, a brief discussion will be made of growth to maturity, not so much because of its importance in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, as because of its importance in the Evangelical tradition of spirituality.

2.1.1 Knowledge of God as Relationship

The most commonly discussed aspect of spirituality is that of relationship. It is considered to be an important element of spirituality and often forms part of the definition as well as being seen as a purpose in Christian

spirituality.

Generally speaking, Christian spirituality is understood in the Anglo-Catholic tradition to refer to a person's relationship with God. For instance, Leech writes that "the spiritual life is the life of the whole person directed towards God" (1977: 34). While Bouyer maintains that "our spiritual life will be Christian to the degree to which we realize therein a life of personal relationship with God" (Bouyer 1961: 25). This suggests that important factors are the person's relationship to God, and thus his or her concept of God, as well as his or her relationship to and knowledge of the self, since spirituality involves the whole person relating to Christ. Wilkie Au, in his study on Christian spirituality, urges that "the foundation of any authentic spirituality must rest on a humble acknowledgment of the proper relationship between God and ourselves" (1989: 58). In his book, *Reaching Out*, Henri Nouwen takes this a step further. He there describes the spiritual life as "a reaching out to our innermost selves, to our fellow human beings and to our God" (1975: 14). Such an understanding highlights the truth that relationship with God requires a deepening awareness of and relationship to the inner self, as well as to our neighbour. This understanding of relationship forces a person to move from a purely rational approach to God, which is stressed so strongly in evangelicalism.

But not only does this element of knowledge of God as relationship give definition to spirituality, it is also

understood as an important reason for practicing spirituality. St Augustine expressed a central truth of Christianity when he prayed, "May I know you, may I know myself." Thomas Merton urges that this should be the desire of every Christian (Merton 1969: 67). With reference to meditation in particular, he emphasises this point, stating that it is not the purpose of meditation to "know about God as though he were an object like other objects which submit to our scrutiny and can be expressed in clear scientific ideas." Rather, writes Merton, "we seek to know God himself. . ." (1969: 79). This concurs with the teaching of Barry and Connolly, who also believe that the purpose of meditation is not to know the scriptures better, but to "know Jesus better" (1982: 57). Without doubt, 'knowing God' is an accepted goal towards which to strive in Christian spirituality.

However, 'knowledge of God' must be correctly understood. Early traditions of Christian spirituality stress, not merely the rational knowledge of God, although that is considered to be important, but a loving relationship with God. There is an important emphasis, therefore, on loving God with the whole person. Green, for instance, argues that the very essence of prayer concerns moving beyond merely knowing God to truly loving him (Green 1979: 81). Meeting with God is meant to be in loving relationship. Much is written in Anglo-Catholic spirituality, and also in the early Christian traditions prior to the Reformation, on loving God in the relationship with him. Knowledge of God,

as Bernard of Clairvaux understood, would lead to loving God (Bernard 1983: xxvii). A fifth century monk, John Cassian maintained that "the goal of life is love". Everything else, according to Cassian, including prayer, was secondary (O'Donnell in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 63). O'Donnell further notes that the purpose of prayer is "to fall. . . more deeply 'in love' with the Lord" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 135). The prayer of St Ignatius was to know God better so that he might love and follow him more closely (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 189). Tugwell brings out this same point in his discussion of St Gregory. According to Tugwell, Gregory maintained that "without this love, combined with a healthy fear, the attempt to know God will result only in 'the mistake of wrong understanding'" (Tugwell 1984: 118-9). John of the Cross also emphasises love for God, seeing it as "the main motive for all mortification" (Dupre 1981: 70). Since 'knowing God' means 'loving God', the focus is on the latter.

It is significant that many of the giants of spirituality, such as John of the Cross and Bernard of Clairvaux, devoted much of their study, meditation and preaching to the Song of Songs, which is the only love Song in the Bible. The Song was categorically interpreted as symbolising the relationship between God and his own people. This is unlike much contemporary understanding of this Song, which emphasises nothing more than the love-relationship between a man and woman. John and Bernard, and others like them, since they included the emotional aspects of relationship

and not just the rational aspect of knowing about, had no difficulty in interpreting Song of Songs, the sensual language and references to sexual love notwithstanding, as the love-relationship between God and his child.

Green, and the others mentioned, emphasise that knowledge must be understood in terms of a loving relationship and thus, must be experienced. Teaching must be given to enable persons to experience God in the 'now'. Galilea suggests that the teaching of John of the Cross in *Ascent to Mt Carmel*, makes this point. Galilea points out that the early stages in spiritual development prepare "us for the experience of God" (1988: 99). Other writers refer to this as 'meeting with God', rather than as 'experiencing God'. Au notes that the basic thrust of Ignatian spirituality "is to dispose us to meet the risen Jesus at the deepest level of our beings". This meeting, writes Au, must be reflected in Christian commitment (Au 1989: 99). Gerard Hughes also describes the purpose as meeting God "closer to me than I am to myself" (1985: 46). It is, therefore, not surprising that Merton can describe prayer as "yearning for the simple presence of God" rather than "uttering petitions for good things external to our deepest concerns" (1969: 67). Preparing for this visitation of God or the experience of relationship with God is thus the concern of the Christian desiring to live out genuine Christian faith, hence 'encounter with God' is an appropriate goal.

Such a relationship must be accompanied by a growing self-knowledge. Over and over in the literature on spirituality,

the Christian is reminded that knowledge of God requires knowledge of self. Gerard Hughes, remarking on this point, writes, "In every experience of our lives we encounter God. The more we are in touch with ourselves, the more we are in touch with him" (1985: 43). "In touch" is a contemporary term, but refers to the more familiar term, 'awareness', which has to do with being conscious of *who* you are and *why* you behave as you do. The Desert Fathers believed that unawareness was "the root of all evil" and that self-knowledge was essential in the spiritual life (Tugwell 1984: 16). According to Houston, Bernard of Clairvaux taught that knowledge of self led to "a wholesome fear of God" (in Bernard 1983: xxviii). Teresa of Avila's classic on prayer, *The Interior Castle*, is also essentially a book on self-awareness or growing self-knowledge. In this book, Teresa describes the self as a castle with many rooms. At the very centre of the castle, that is the self, is Christ. She describes the Christian's progress in prayer as journeying through the self, thus gaining awareness or consciousness of the self, to intimacy or union with Christ. Teresa writes,

How silly to think we can enter heaven without first entering our own souls. We need first to discover who we are, and reflect on the wretchedness of our nature and how much we owe God, begging God's mercy constantly (St Teresa 1988: 24).

Teresa is not suggesting here that self-knowledge is the key to salvation, but rather, the key to intimacy with God. Teresa is within a tradition that understood conversion as both "an initial decision and crisis" and also "a lifelong process that accompanies following Jesus" (Galilea 1988:

79). The initial experience of conversion should be followed by continual growth and conversion experiences. Teresa and others in her tradition, deal primarily with the progress after the initial conversion experience.

Gordon Mursell, who writes of the Carthusian order, stressed the importance of the development of self knowledge and awareness in the Carthusian monk or nun. He supports this with various references to early writings about the Carthusian order, and then remarks, "This is not unhealthy self- absorption, but the indispensable precondition, not only for the Carthusian life, but for any life centred upon love" (Mursell in Byrne 1990: 45-6). Mursell's caution about self- absorption is important. Many Christians, particularly those who take a purely rational approach to Christianity and spirituality, as in much evangelicalism, are suspicious of any concentration on self-knowledge, fearing that it will lead to introspection, which is understood as total absorption with the self, rather than leading to greater intimacy with God. This is not the case. Thus, while John of the Cross, for example, wrote of the dark nights, which can easily be construed as a depressive and unhealthy self-absorption, John himself insists that these experiences of darkness are essential, leading to a greater understanding of our needs and God's ability to fulfill them. This agrees with James' encouragement to "count yourselves supremely happy" when confronted with trials of any sort, since such testing of the faith produces maturity (James 1:2ff, REB). It is, therefore, not

surprising that the spiritual giants who insisted on self-knowledge, also had a remarkable knowledge of their God, and thus of the unknowability and mystery of God. John of the Cross stressed this and wrote, "However impressive may be one's knowledge or feeling of God, that knowledge or feeling will have no resemblance to God and amount to very little" (in Muto 1991: 43).

Love of God is never presented as genuine without love of neighbour. With reference to Jesus' contention that eternal life consisted in loving God and loving your neighbour as yourself, Wilkie Au insists that love, not disciplined obedience to laws and rituals, "is the sine qua non of religious life" (Au 1989: 22). This coincides with Gerald May's contention that "the real commandment of love is an invitation born in our own yearning, not an externally imposed 'should'" (1991: 14). He further stresses that love is "beyond the will", meaning that external 'oughts' do not promote love, thus love "is beyond all moral codes of behavior" (1991: 15). Love, by its very nature moves one away from moral codes of behaviour towards people. As noted in an earlier chapter, Thomas Groome is convinced that Jesus did not mean "love of God and love of neighbour", but "love of God by love of neighbour". While not always expressing it in this way, this is the essence of much of the early teaching on spirituality. For instance, the 14th century Carthusian monk, Geert Groote, along with St Augustine

held that the inherent texture of scriptural language was meant to stimulate the twofold love of God and neighbor; any other use or manner of reading was extraneous and indeed a perversion (Burrows in Maas & O'Donnell 1990:

112).

Teresa of Avila, of the 16th century, makes a similar point, insisting that her nuns "understand that true perfection comes from loving God and our neighbour" (St Teresa 1988: 16). These are the two requirements, according to Teresa, that Jesus makes of his followers, and are what the Christian should strive towards. She added, "If we practice both these virtues perfectly we shall be doing His will and so shall be united to Him" (in Harton 1932: 325). Love of God and of neighbour is considered to be the essence of the Gospel (Rakoczy 1992B) as well as the essence of perfection (Harton 1932: 301).

Out of this emphasis on knowing God, two ways of knowing came to be recognised and form part of the Christian tradition. These ways of knowing are termed 'apophatic' and 'kataphatic'. A brief explanation is appropriate to the overall purpose of this thesis, and follows.

The tradition that stresses the unknowability of God is known as the apophatic or negative tradition. In this tradition concepts such as 'cloud' and 'darkness' are important and frequently used to emphasise that God is Mystery, and thus unknowable by finite humanity. As Thomas Aquinas maintained, "We cannot know what God is, but only what he is not" (in Leech 1985: 176). St John of the Cross constantly claimed this. He also frequently used stark contrasts to make this point, such as, "All the beauty of creatures compared with the infinite beauty of God is supreme ugliness" (in Rodriguez 1977: 79). John makes seven

such statements in this section alone. In doing so, he is demonstrating that the human mind has no ability in and of itself to know God, since God is far beyond anything to which a person could compare him. The prophet in Isaiah makes a similar point. More than once, he asks the question, "To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to?" (Isaiah 40:18 also 40:25). Within the context of chapter 40, the answer is obviously, "No one" and "Nothing".

The anonymously written, *Cloud of Unknowing* follows the apophatic tradition. Lonsdale, in his discussion of *The Cloud*, highlights the author's singleminded emphasis on an apophatic approach to prayer. Lonsdale writes, "Contemplation means loving rather than knowing: 'because (God) can certainly be loved but not thought. He can be taken and held by love but not by thought'" (in Byrne 1990: 57). Lonsdale, however, is not in favour of a purely apophatic approach, considering it to be too limiting. He writes,

In downplaying the role of knowledge and imagination in prayer, this tradition some times seems to imply that these are inimical to true contemplation and do not really enter into a person's profound relationship with God (in Byrne 1990: 61).

Lonsdale concludes, "This is clearly an unacceptable position to hold".

Lonsdale's comments notwithstanding, there is clearly an acceptable place for this apophatic tradition. Leech notes this, as well as explaining that the kataphatic tradition is also biblical and necessary. He suggests that in the Old

Testament faith, Jewish "understanding of God was rooted in the sense of mystery, of awe, and of the essential unknowability of the true God." This, according to Leech, is demonstrated in Israel's firm conviction that "no man can see God and live" (as in Judges 13:22). And yet, maintains Leech, there is also a paradox, since Moses is said to have encountered God "face to face." Leech concludes,

Here indeed is the central paradox of Jewish theology: that God is seen and yet not seen, known and yet unknowable, revealed but always in hiddenness and obscurity. The knowledge of God is a dark knowledge, a knowledge which involves the encounter with the unutterable (Leech 1985: 162)

With his emphasis on paradox, it is not surprising that Leech opens his book, *True God*, emphatically stating that "true faith can only grow and mature if it includes the elements of paradox and creative doubt" (1985: 25). In an earlier work, Leech demonstrates that, although God cannot be seen, "a relationship of knowing and intimacy is possible" (1980: 11). This is an example of a paradox that the Christian must live with, and is supported by the unanimous teaching of the Christian mystics, who claimed "that the knowledge of God involves entering into mystery" (Leech 1980: 11).

While the apophatic tradition emphasises a practice of meditation and prayer that seeks to be emptied of all images and thoughts, the kataphatic tradition takes the opposite position. Ignatius of Loyola and his popular spiritual exercises stand in the kataphatic tradition, calling for active use of the imagination and memory. Both traditions have much to teach about the relationship with God. And

both traditions would agree with Thomas Aquinas who wrote,

The final attainment of man's [woman's] knowledge of God consists in knowing that we do not know him, in so far as we realize that he transcends everything that we understand concerning him. Having arrived at the term of knowledge, we know God as unknown (in Leech 1985: 176).

The emphasis in both traditions is with the recognition of the greatness of God. It is characteristic of the leaders of Christian spirituality down through the ages that they recognised who God is, and that there exists an infinite gap between God and humanity. But they also believed that this transcendent God, who is beyond human imagination, is an immanent God desiring to enter into personal relationship with his people.

According to Galilea (1988) and Houston (1992 and personal conversation), a serious weakness in contemporary spirituality is a lack of appreciation of the greatness of God. Galilea makes the point that we should not, a priori, think that Christians believe and pray to the Christian God.

There are always ambiguities and idolatries in the God who is adored and followed. Knowledge of and conversion to the God of the Gospels is a lifelong task for everyone. Spirituality is the gradual conversion to the God of Jesus (Galilea 1988: 24).

Galilea is highlighting the fact that, spirituality as a relationship with God is a growth process, necessitating that the person discard errors along the road of maturity. It is important, therefore, to pray, as Anthony Bloom suggests, "Help me, O God, to discard all false concepts of thee, whatever the cost to my comfort" (1966: 117). Houston makes a similar point. He frequently points out that a person's concept of God is often a distortion based on his

or her concept of his or her parents. He writes, "The image of our parents can easily usurp the place God rightfully has in our lives" (1989: 47). Quintos agrees that the father-child relationship is "a context for spiritual growth", adding that any problems in this relationship make "the transition from a belief in a God/Creator who endows every person with gifts" a difficult one, often blocking "authentic encounter with a loving God" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 93). Leech concurs with this and thus critiques the contemporary interest in "the god within" teachings. Denise Ackermann, for instance, maintains that the aim of spirituality "is the finding of the true Self, which is the Centre of All", which Ackermann interprets to mean finding "God in me" (1991: 2). Leech claims that this teaching "has moved in the direction of a narrow and limited understanding of God and of the nature of religion" (Leech 1985: 22). It has also opened the door to spiritualities that ignore a theological base.

Knowledge of God as an element of Anglo-Catholic spirituality, must be understood in terms of a loving relationship with God, self and neighbour. It also seeks to recognise the different traditions of understanding the element of knowledge of God. Therefore the explanations abound on the apophatic and kataphatic way of knowing God, although there is agreement that both traditions emphasise that God is Mystery. The person desiring to know God in loving relationship must eventually come to this understanding of God.

2.1.2 Union with God

Growth in loving knowledge of God leads to the union of the soul with God (Harton 1932: 301), which is posited as the pen-ultimate purpose of the spiritual person in Anglo-Catholic spirituality. Merton defines union with God as being "not only the vision of God in heaven but, as Cassian specifies, that perfect purity of heart which, even on earth, constitutes sanctity and attains to an obscure experience of heavenly things" (1950: 15). The concept of progress through stages culminates in the final stage of union with God. Thus, Evelyn Underhill can write that "Christian spirituality seeks union with God in order that we may better serve the purpose of His will." She further adds that this is done "by the expansion of the prayerful consciousness" (in Menzies 1946: 37), suggesting a key spiritual exercise in order to achieve this purpose -- prayerfulness.

Harton stresses that "the Christian life is essentially a life of union with God". But he also recognises that this is something that is given at baptism out of the infinite love of God (Harton 1932: 221). However, at a later point in the same book, Harton suggests that the purpose for the spiritual life "is nothing less than perfection -- the formation of a perfect soul leading to a perfect life -- and its end is the Beatific Vision of God" (1932: 299). He further adds that union with God is the end for which we were created (1932: 300). Harton does confess that perfect union with God is only attainable in heaven, and here on

earth is "potentially ours in Baptism, deepened by Holy Communion and actualised by prayer" (1932: 300). In more distinctively Catholic thinking, union with God is perceived more clearly as the goal towards which the person must strive. Thus, as McIntyre points out, Ignatius counselled union with God in all his writings (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 190). Braso insists that "Any concrete program of life, if it is to be called Christian, must lead to a single ideal: union with God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Braso 1960: 4).

However, although the person is to strive towards union with God, it is also recognised that, as John of the Cross shows, it depends entirely "on naked belief" rather than on "anything known by means of human ingenuity or experience" (in Muto 1991: 43). Union with God is the final Mansion in Teresa's *Interior Castle*, understood as an end state of perfection. This is when the person is in perfect accord with God, relating naturally to him.

2.1.3 *Conformity to Christ and His Will*

A third element of Anglo-Catholic spirituality is variously referred to as Christ-like, or following Jesus, or living in conformity to his will. Galilea sees this element of being like Christ as an important identifying mark, and describes it as "the process of following Christ, under the direction of the Spirit, and beneath the guidance of the Church" (Galilea 1988: 4). For Galilea, "following Jesus Christ is the most fundamental and original dimension of Christian

spirituality" (1988: 29). Nothing, contends Galilea, can substitute for following Jesus, "to learn, little by little, to be a Christian" (1988: 33). This is supported by Maas and O'Donnell who argue that "Christians of every age -- with the possible exception of our own -- have been preoccupied with the question, How can I be more perfectly Christlike?" (1990: 14). This is a central question for those concerned with genuine Christian spirituality. It has also been discussed at some length in this thesis in previous chapters.

It is also discussed at some length in various writings as a crucial purpose for spirituality. This is closely related to the pen-ultimate purpose of union with God, and in Anglo-Catholic spirituality is not really a separate purpose, although frequently mentioned separately. Referring to some of the literature on spirituality, Maas and O'Donnell note that "the concrete goal of all theological reflection" is "the imitation of Jesus' perfect obedience, his perfect surrender, his perfect peace, his perfect compassion and perfect justice" (1990: 14). They also point out that the desire to "imitate Christ (*imitatio Christi*) in his perfect submission to the Father's will" was the driving force behind the early monastic movement (Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 56). Submission to God's will is thus seen to be the imitation of Christ, and is frequently perceived so in the literature. For instance, Teresa of Avila wrote,

The sister who is beginning to practice prayer must have one aim only -- this is of utmost importance, so you must

not forget it -- with every ounce of determination she possesses, and regardless of the cost, she must work to make her will conform to the will of God (St Teresa 1988: 22).

Bedolla and Totaro argue that Ignatius was also concerned with conformity to God. The purpose of his exercises, they maintain, was to assist the person to discern God's will and then practice it in life (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 174). Christian perfection, understood as being like Christ, is explained primarily, even exclusively, in terms of conformity to God's will, as Maas and O'Donnell suggest. They write that

Christian perfection has to do with conformity to the externally imposed ideal of the perfect Christ, and it is the purpose of ascetical and mystical theology to describe the way in which a person becomes a 'perfect' Christian (i.e., conformed to the Crucified One) (Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 15).

Thus 'perfection' is conformity to God's will, which also means Christlikeness. Perfection is also understood as 'union with God'. It thus appears that there are different terms used to express the same reality.

2.1.4 Obedience to the Church

An important element in Anglo-Catholic spirituality, particularly Catholic spirituality, is obedience to the Church. Bouyer insists that God's Word is spoken in the Church and "is inseparable from the Church to the point that we cannot truly receive it except as it is communicated to us by the Church" (1961: 25). Ignatius, as an example, believed in the authority of the Church. Thus,

doing things in Christ is quite precisely doing things in union with the bishop. The criterion [for a spiritual

act] is not whether we can feel ourselves to be spiritual, but whether we operate within the unity of the church (Tugwell 1984: 4).

Tugwell also refers to Francis of Assisi who believed that "a life of total obedience to the gospel can only be lived within the church, in docility to the institutions of the church" (Tugwell 1984: 128). Segundo Galilea argues in terms of sharing in the life of the Church. According to him, a spirituality that fails to do this "ends by being extinguished or by becoming sectarian or subjective" (1988: 40). This would be more in agreement with the evangelical emphasis on fellowship with each other in the community of faith, and will be returned to in Section III.

2.1.5 Growth to Maturity

Both the Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic traditions are concerned with growth. While the Evangelical tradition places a major emphasis on this, often interpreting it as the goal of spiritual practices, this does not appear to be the case in an Anglo-Catholic tradition, therefore it will only be briefly touched on at this point. Wilke Au points out that commitment to growth is essential for those who desire to respond to God's invitation. Au asserts that this is "more a requirement than a choice" and refers to Irenaeus as his support (Au 1898: 19). Growth is not considered the goal of spiritual exercises, but rather, as Au suggests, is considered essential if goals are to be reached. For this reason, less is written on growth *per se* in Anglo-Catholic spirituality as compared with Evangelical spirituality.

Of these five elements, the primary common factor between Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic spirituality is knowledge of God, understood as relationship with God. Hence, this element was discussed in some detail. Union with God, while possessing a substantial place in Anglo-Catholic spirituality, was discussed more briefly as this is not an aspect that is accepted in the Evangelical tradition and will, therefore, not be that crucial to the overall purpose of this thesis. The element of conformity to Christ and his will is considered to carry considerable weight in both traditions and has already been discussed in some detail in earlier sections of this thesis. Obedience to the Church is primarily a Catholic tradition, little discussed in other traditions.

2.2 Development of Spirituality

Spirituality is developmental. According to Bouyer, this is the assertion of "the whole Bible, and most expressly by the New Testament." He refers to a number of New Testament passages such as Philippians 3:12 and Ephesians 4:13 [6] as support for this position (1961: 244). Downs would agree, referring to scriptural metaphors of growth that imply developmental stages, such as milk to meat and seeds to plants. Downs suggests that these imply that the Christian moves "from a preliminary stage to a later mature stage" (1993: 11/2). But not only is this the assertion of "the whole Bible", it is also the teaching of earliest Christianity. Bouyer refers to Augustine as one example, claiming that he did "not hesitate to say that anyone who

does not make progress in [the spiritual life] must be regressing, nay must even be in danger of falling away entirely" (Bouyer 1961: 244). Wilkie Au goes so far as to suggest that development is an important characteristic of spirituality. For him, development refers to growth as a gradual process that takes into account human readiness and God's grace. It is, therefore, experiential, that is something that must be experienced and actualised by a person. Precisely because spirituality is both developmental and experiential, it progresses through trial and error (Au 1989: 55). In other words, perfection does not take place over night. It is a gradual process. The obvious idea of development has suggested to many that growth occurs in stages. Down through the ages of Christianity many have delineated varying stages. Some of these will be highlighted.

2.2.1 Stages of Spiritual Development

A variety of versions exists related to stages in spiritual development. In this thesis I will restrict myself to the most common and most contemporary.

2.2.1.1 Classical Three Ways

The most common teaching on stages, which forms the basis of much of the later teaching and understanding of stages, is the classical concept of the three Ways of purgation, illumination and union. Bouyer gives a succinct summary of this heritage, suggesting that if the purgative way is characterised

by the extinction of vices and the illuminative way by the development of the virtues (chiefly charity), then the unitive way can be defined by the predominance of the gifts of the Spirit (1961: 276).

This is a typical teaching of the ascetical writers in particular, as Garrigou-Lagrange notes in his book *Christian Perfection and Contemplation*. He also mentions that these three ways were always related by the ascetical writers respectively to the way of beginners, proficient and the perfect (1946: 156). Harton goes so far as to suggest that this is a natural division of the spiritual life (1932: 304). Leech argues that this concept finds its roots in scripture. He writes that these three ways are "not alien mystical forms imposed artificially on the Gospel" but rather, they arise out of the Gospel message of "repentance, life in the Spirit, and perfection" (Leech 1977: 37). It is worth noting at this point that the evangelical, Richard Lovelace suggests that these three ways of classical mysticism seem to be a reversal of the biblical order, which Lovelace claims begins with "union with Christ claimed by faith, leading to illumination of the Holy Spirit and consequent cleansing through the process of sanctification" (1979: 19).

Since the acceptance of these three ways is wide-spread in Anglo-Catholic spirituality, a brief explanation is necessary. In his book, Harton points out that the concept of 'way' signifies a 'path', "whereby we go from one place to another." He further explains that these three ways of spirituality are reminders that the Christian is on a journey, moving towards a destination. This means that the

Christian does not remain at some permanent state for life, but "travels on its journey heavenward" (Harton 1932: 305-6). It must also be noted, as Bouyer does, that no sharp distinction exists between the three stages. There is no definite cut off point. Bouyer even intimates that unitive experiences could take place "without any very apparent period of transition" (1961: 245).

Such an understanding of the spiritual life, as progress through stages, is a constant reminder that growth is progressive, and that the Christian is continually journeying towards a goal. According to classical mysticism, that goal is union with God.

The journey begins, according to this tradition, with purgation. This is recognised to be "the Way of beginners in the spiritual life" (Harton 1932: 306). Its primary purpose is purification through genuine penitence. According to Bouyer, penitence is also the entrance into this first Way. He equates penitence with the New Testament concept of *metanoia* "which is precisely a 'change of spirit,' a conversion" (1961: 255). This is an obvious beginning stage in Teresa of Avila's seven mansions, described in her book, *The Interior Castle* (entitled "The Mansions" in the original Spanish). Teresa suggested that the beginner in the Christian spiritual life, and most especially in prayer "must look on himself [herself] as one setting out to make a garden for his [her] Lord's pleasure, on most unfruitful soil which abounds with weeds" (in Happold 1963: 344). The task at this stage is with

self-examination and repentance. Harton agrees with this understanding, writing that the primary task of this stage is the development of "the habit of self-examination" as the person recognises the need "of a real self-knowledge" (Harton 1932: 307). It is, therefore, a way "dominated by struggle against habitual sins, against the vice encumbering the life of fallen man [woman]" (Bouyer 1961: 245).

While not specifically referring to the traditional three Ways, Segundo Galilea also suggests that the starting point is with 'purgation'. He argues that progress in the Christian life of following Jesus means dealing with sin, "the only reality incompatible with life according to the Spirit and with any spiritual progress" (Galilea 1988: 80). He writes at some length on sin and temptation, insisting that dealing with sin is the beginning step, as well as a lifelong process (1988: 80ff). However, he also insists that "the Christian vocation is not merely turning away from sin but rather living according to the Spirit" which is what makes conversion an "ongoing task" (1988: 87).

Despite the emphasis on sin and repentance, at this stage the person needs to focus on God rather than on the self. According to Dupre this must happen "before the real purgation can start" (Dupre 1981: 69). He also maintains that "a successful entering of the purgative way presupposes that the soul has already become awake to the love of God" (Dupre 1981: 68). However, the purgative way is only the beginning stage. While there will always be the need for repentance because of sin, which Paul so aptly describes in

Romans 7, the spiritual life must progress to other stages and experiences. Thus, based on his study of St. Francis, Purfield suggests that

the final call of the purgative dynamic is a call to serve the Lord. . . . This call to serve the Lord, and the response, prepare us for entry into the illuminative dynamic in which the main characteristic is discipleship (Purfield 1992: 145).

The second stage or Way is illumination, or Illuminative Way. This is described by Harton as "the way of devout souls who have made some advance in the spiritual life." This advance is seen in that this person is no longer preoccupied "by a wholly sensual view of things" (Bouyer 1961: 261), as is the case in stage one. The illuminative way brings in a new perspective and experience of relationship with God. Harton maintains, "Souls in this way are admitted into that friendship with Christ for which the Purgative Way has been preparing them; loyalty has deepened into love" (Harton 1932: 314). This coincides with the teaching of Jesus given in John's Gospel:

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is about. I have called you friends, because I have disclosed to you everything that I heard from my Father (John 15:15 REB).

As a result of this friendship with God, the person develops a new and deeper love for God, which Harton sees as the first characteristic feature of the illuminative way (1932: 314). Harton also describes four other characteristics of this way. The second is "the deepening of the infused virtue of faith" (1932: 315). Prior to this stage, the person's faith is 'blind' faith, that is, his or her belief

is not based on any past experiences of relationship with God. But in this second way, the person's faith has past experiences with God to relate to. Thus, as Bouyer maintains, faith is now an experienced faith, or an infused faith (1961: 261). There now develops within the person "the power of spiritual insight and a real knowledge of the things of God" (Harton 1932: 315), hence the name 'illuminative'. The third characteristic, according to Harton, is "the deepening of the infused virtue of Hope." The fourth concerns the imitation of Christ, since the person is becoming "more and more in love with Christ" and thus desires to be like him. The final characteristic concerns "a deeper love of prayer" (Harton 1932: 316-7). These characteristics are not to be viewed as goals to strive for, so much as changes that will take place through grace.

The third Way, that is the Unitive Way, is considered to be "the Way of Christ's lovers, and represents, in its highest manifestations, the climax of Christian perfection in this life" (Harton 1932: 323). Much of the so-called 'Bridal theology' of John of the Cross, Bernard of Clairvaux and others, with their emphasis on the Song of Songs, relates to this third Way. It expresses the desire "to be with Christ no matter what the cost" (Purfield 1992: 146). It emphasises, experiences and enjoys the love-relationship between God and the Christian. For this reason, marriage is the most common metaphor used to explain this stage. Bouyer chooses another metaphor, that of adoption. He explains

that union as

our sonship [adoption] in the Son becomes so real that it is no longer as it were simply a reflection of the life of the Father that the Spirit projects on us, but this life itself that wholly possesses us (1961: 276-7).

This is in line with the teaching of Paul to both the Roman and Galatian churches that "the Spirit of God affirms to our spirit that we are God's children" (Romans 8:16 REB; see also Galatians 4:4-7). In other words, the adoption as children is a felt, inner reality, experienced, according to the mystical writers, only in this latter stage of spiritual development. This accords with the experiences of numerous evangelical Christians with whom I have had contact. In the early stages of their Christian life there is no assurance of their adoption, that is their salvation. Much later in the Christian experience, there is an inner, yet mysterious assurance -- the Spirit affirming with their spirit that they are the children of God.

2.2.1.2 Variations of the Three Ways

Many other classics in spirituality follow these three Ways, often describing them differently. The concept of three Ways was crucial to John of the Cross, but he describes it in terms of 'nights'. He therefore writes at great length on the "dark night of the senses". According to Muto, John's 'nights' "encompass the threefold path of purgation, illumination, and union." Muto cautions her readers that this is not a "linear" process, but "an ongoing cycle of deprivation, restoration, and graced transformation" (Muto 1991: 19). Muto gives an excellent summary of John's

teaching on the 'nights' as three Ways, which is worth recording in full.

Early evening or twilight marks the point of departure, the time of purgation, when we experience deprivation in the area of worldly pleasures, possessions, and powers. As we begin to mortify these attachments, we may be drawn by grace still deeper into the night -- to the midnight hour, dense and dark, where the only means of ascent is faith. Intellect, memory, and will are deprived of their normal ways of remembering and loving so that we may be made ready for the secret and intimate self-communications of God. The night eventually gives way to daybreak, to the dawn, symbolizing the point of God's arrival, when the lover is transformed into perfect union with her Beloved (Muto 1991: 19).

Thus, John of the Cross reinforces the concept of growth through stages.

Purfield suggests that Ignatius's division into four weeks for his spiritual exercises are related to the three Ways. Purfield considers that week one relates to the purgative way, week two to the illuminative way, and weeks three and four to the unitive way (Purfield 1992: 146). Ignatius' exercises highlight that the Ways are not so much natural developmental stages, as Ways the Christian desiring union or deeper relationship with God should follow. Bernard of Clairvaux also discerned three stages in the spiritual life, but described them in entirely different terminology -- 'animal' being the beginner, 'rational' referring to the one making progress, and 'spiritual' referring to the mature (Bernard 1983: 9). It is arguable that his choice of terms is rather unfortunate. However, his choice reflects a more natural development than a programme to be followed, as in the classical Three Ways.

The Jesuit, Thomas Green suggests yet another description of

stages, relating specifically to progress in prayer. The beginning stage concerns getting to know God and ourselves. He observes that this stage could last for several years and involves the practice of meditation and contemplation. The second stage is described as "the move from knowing to loving". Green maintains that in this stage the relationship between God and 'the one who prays' can be likened to lovers. This emphasises the heart rather than the head. Therefore, praying becomes "much more affective and much less reflective" (1979: 20). Green also explains that in this stage

as our prayer moves 'from knowing to loving', from the head to the heart, the activity of our understanding and imagination tends to be less important, and these faculties are reduced to a secondary role (1979: 101).

The third stage, according to Green, goes "from loving to truly loving", combining the affective and the will (Green 1979: 19ff).

The difference in methodological approaches suggested by Green, is consistent with earlier Catholic traditions. Teresa of Avila refers to this in her treatises on "The Degrees of Prayer." In this, Teresa views the soul as a garden, and describes four different means of watering the garden which she relates to four different stages in prayer. The progress, according to Teresa, is from "a great labour" on the part of the beginner in prayer, to the fourth stage where the pray-er does no work since God does it all. In each of the four stages a different approach to prayer is required. Thus, in stage one the person is in frequent meditation, constantly working the mind. This is very

different to the final stage, of which Teresa claims,

Here there is no senses of anything but enjoyment. . . . All the senses are taken up with this joy so that none of them is free to act in any way, either outwardly or inwardly (in Happold 1963: 343ff).

Such an approach to prayer, and thus to the spiritual life was consistent with Teresa's younger contemporary, John of the Cross. According to Muto, John believed that meditations, methods and manners of prayer may be of help in the beginning of the spiritual life, but they can become obstacles later on because the longer we live the more we realise that grace, not works, does the leading (1991: 51).

2.2.1.3 A Contemporary Understanding of Stages

A more contemporary description of stages was given by von Hugel in his 1923 publication *The Mystic Element of Religion As Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends*. Von Hugel writes,

Now if we will but look back upon our own religious life, we shall find that, in degrees and in part in an order of succession varying indefinitely with each individual, three modalities, three modes of apprehension and forms of appeal and outlook have been and are at work within us and around (1923: 51).

These three stages relate to childhood, adolescence and adulthood. This most clearly represents natural development and is, surely, a forerunner of the contemporary scientific approach to faith development as introduced by James Fowler (1981). The child apprehends religion, according to von Hugel, through sense and memory; the adolescent through question and argument; and the adult through intuition, feeling, and volitional requirements (1923: 51-2). As Ellen Leonard points out, von Hugel recognised that there are

variations in this scheme, and that progress is not neatly packaged, leaving childhood behind to enter adolescence, and so on (Leonard 1991: 249). However, Leonard is correct in her comment that "the transition from one stage to the next is both necessary and difficult" (1991: 249).

Childhood stage, relating to sense and memory, as von Hugel understood it, is focused on the external, the institutional element (see Leonard 1991: 249 and Hughes 1985: 11). In this stage, the person relies heavily on external authority and the security of the institution and its traditions. In other words, like children, the person needs to know the boundaries, knowing what is permissible and what is forbidden. There is little to no room for paradox, doubt and mystery in this stage. It is not surprising that the psychologist Scott Peck terms this stage "institutional, formal" (Peck 1987: 188). His use of the term 'formal' to describe the childhood stage indicates that people in this stage are attached to the forms of their religion, rather than to its essence (Peck 1987: 190). Those in this stage, maintains Peck, are the traditionalists who resist change in the church since the forms are so important to them (Ibid.).

The second stage of adolescence, the question and answer stage, was described by von Hugel as "the critical, speculative, philosophical" (in Leonard 1991: 249). Peck describes this stage as "skeptical, individual" (1987: 188). According to Peck, the skepticism of this stage leads people to be "active truth seekers" (1987: 192). In this stage, the person questions everything, and accepts nothing at face

value. Old answers that were satisfactory, or accepted in blind faith in the childhood stage, are discarded. The person begins an individual search for new answers that would better suit the new situations and attitudes being experienced. This stage has similarities with the Illuminative Way.

The final stage of adulthood is described by von Hugel as possessing "intuition, feeling and volitional requirements" which he perceives to be evidences of maturity (1923: 52). Peck describes this stage as "mystical, communal" (1987: 188). For him 'mystical' implies the ability to live with paradox and mystery, while 'communal' refers to the recognition that we belong to a greater community upon which we are inter-dependent. The adolescent search for answers is replaced with an infused faith in God as Mystery. There is now the capacity to live with paradox, doubt, uncertainties and unanswered questions. There is also a greater awareness of the communal nature of human life. As Paul so profoundly, yet simply put it ". . . each member belongs to all the others" (Romans 12:5, NIV). This becomes an experienced, existential reality for the person in the adulthood stage of spiritual development. This could be related to the Unitive Way, since there is also a greater appreciation of the experience of union with God.

In Peck's discussion of these stages, the implication is that a person desiring spiritual maturity moves through these stages in invariant sequence, leaving the previous stage behind. An important differences between Peck and the

more humble von Hugel, is that, while both recognise that progress is from stage one to stage three, through stage two, only von Hugel emphasised that all three stages are always evident in the person. Gerard Hughes brings this out in his discussion of von Hugel in his book, *God of Surprises* (1985: 11ff). It should also be noted that there is an obvious correlation between von Hugel's teaching on stages and the more traditional teaching. The stage of childhood, being concerned with externals such as rules and regulations, that is with doing the right thing, is related to the way of purgation. The adolescent stage of questioning and seeking truth is related to the illuminative way, while adulthood is the way of union and perfection. However, it should be understood that the relation is not necessarily that clear cut. Unitive experiences could happen at any of the stages von Hugel suggests. While the concerns of the Purgative Way will still be present in the adulthood stage and needing attention.

It is an interesting point that the contemporary research in faith development, while following the behavioural sciences, has much in common with von Hugel's teaching in particular. James Fowler's (1981) seminal work in this area is very similar to von Hugel.

It is worth recording the warnings of Dupre on stages. He cautions us not to view the spiritual life as falling into stages that naturally follow one after the other (1981: 67). He writes,

In the rhythm of spiritual life the purgation of senses

and mind gives way to the perception of a new transcendent reality. But it remains a cyclical ascent moving up in spirals that pass through the same succession of purification and illumination on ever higher levels (Dupre 1981: 75).

This agrees with the teaching that the evangelical, Jim Johnston gives, that growth progresses in cyclic spiral form, going through the same issues at ever higher and deeper levels (personal conversation). Henri Nouwen also cautions us in our understanding of stages. He warns against striving for success or measuring the spiritual life against certain standards. He observes that "many great saints have described their religious experiences, and many lesser saints have systematized them into different phases, levels or stages." He then warns that, while these distinctions can be helpful, "it is of great importance that we leave the world of measurements behind when we speak about the life of the Spirit" (Nouwen 1975: 17). Morton Kelsey gives a similar warning. He reminds us that God expects us to keep on growing (1976: 22), but that "growth can seldom be forced in nature, whether it is producing a tree or a human personality, nature unfolds its growth slowly, silently" (1976: 32).

The concept of growth through stages, while discussed as an understanding of how spirituality develops in Anglo-Catholicism, is obviously concerned with the relationship between God and a person. In fact, it describes this relationship in clearer terms. The fact that this relationship is described so thoroughly as developing through various stages illustrates the importance of the

relational element in Anglo-Catholic spirituality. The contemporary discussion on faith development emphasises this same point. It also, as Downs suggests, helps "us understand better the ways people experience and exercise faith" (1993: 11/24). This will be important in the discussion of suggested guidelines in Section III.

2.2.2 Disciplines for Spiritual Development

It is not unusual for a casual observer to judge Anglo-Catholic spirituality as being 'works' oriented, meaning that it relies on works for salvation. This is so because in the practice of Anglo-Catholic spirituality a greater effort to participate in specific exercises is made than in an Evangelical spirituality. It is, therefore, important to note that, while effort and labour are emphasised, so too are grace, mercy and faith. Teresa of Avila reminds us that faith has no value apart from works, and works no value apart from "the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ" (St Teresa 1988: 24). For this reason she instructs her readers, "Do not rely on yourselves but trust in God's mercy" (1988: 23). John of the Cross argued for the importance of faith as "the proximate means of ascent to union with God" (Muto 1991: 40). Green makes the same point, relating it more specifically to prayer. He writes, "Strictly speaking there are no techniques of prayer. The experience of God is sheer grace" (Green 1979: 90). Which is perhaps why Dupre remarks that "nothing in the spiritual life occurs 'automatically,' even though its major developments happen passively" (Dupre 1981: 69). It is not 'automatic' since the person does make

some effort. And yet, when God works, it is always grace -- a free gift -- and thus the person is passive.

Despite this truth that grace is essential, co-operation on the part of the Christian, and not passivity is required. Paul's exhortation to the Philippians bears this out and is, therefore important. Paul writes, "You must work out your own salvation in fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12 REB). Underhill stresses this point, seeing co-operation as an important ingredient of the spiritual life. She insists that the person cannot live up to his or her call "as spiritual creatures unless we are willing to pull our weight" (1937: 83). Underhill discourses at length in this section on the importance of practical involvement in the world, relating this to the spiritual life and the fulfillment of our "vocation" as "agents of the Creative Spirit in this world" (1937: 88).

Involvement has led evangelicals to place too great an emphasis on activism, as already noted. Spiritual traditions, from the very earliest, sought to work against this, hence the Desert Movement and Monasticism. Houston points out that the Desert Fathers referred to busyness as "moral laziness" (1989: 17), and sought to overcome it. Leech also warns against over-activity, seeing it as "a serious danger to the spiritual life." He suggests this can result in "stretching oneself beyond one's powers, and so leading to spiritual exhaustion and restlessness" (1985: 138). There is less emphasis placed on activism in Anglo-Catholic spirituality than in Evangelical. Greater

emphasis is placed on so-called 'spiritual exercises', such as reading, praying and meditation on scripture. This will be discussed and will be seen to have much in common with Evangelical spirituality. Two other important disciplines to be discussed in this chapter are solitude, with accompanying silence, and community.

2.2.2.1 Prayer and Scripture

The distinctive practice of spirituality within evangelicalism is the Quiet Time, consisting of Bible reading and prayer. While somewhat different, an important place is also given to Bible reading and prayer in an Anglo-Catholic tradition. Greater emphasis is placed on meditation and contemplation than in Evangelical spirituality.

Spiritual exercises in the Anglo-Catholic tradition are often broken down into a four-fold programme of reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. This analysis was made classic by the 12th century Carthusian monk, Guigo II (Tugwell 1984: 93). According to Tugwell, Guigo II preferred to use the singular word, 'exercise', rather than the plural form, as this stressed for him the all-pervasive nature of the spiritual exercise. For Guigo II, spiritual exercise was more than performing exercises at certain times (Tugwell 1984: 93). Tugwell writes, "what he is concerned with is the monk's (or Christian's) interior life as a whole, as something going on during all his [her] working hours" (Tugwell 1984: 94). Guigo II is obviously trying to avoid

the dichotomy into sacred and secular. All of life is sacred, hence there is a single spiritual exercise, albeit consisting of different aspects. This four-fold analysis of Guigo's continues to be essential in contemporary practice, although it is often, as with Fischer, reduced to three rather than four. For Fischer these three are *lectio* or reading, *meditatio* or meditation and *oratio* or personal prayer (Fischer 1988: 95). Fischer terms all three as "*lectio divina*" or sacred reading, which she describes as "a way of praying by listening, opening ourselves to God and allowing the words of scripture to flow into us to comfort or challenge" (1988: 95).

For many, spiritual exercises begin with *lectio*, that is with the Word of God, as O'Donnell points out (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 49). Explanations of *lectio* vary, but it is often related to meditation. Fischer defines *lectio* as reading scripture until "a word or sentence attracts us" (1988: 95). This then leads to *meditatio*, the repetition of or staying with that word or sentence, "repeating it, letting it enter us" (Fischer 1988: 95). O'Donnell describes *lectio* somewhat differently. He maintains that *lectio* has to do with vocalisation that naturally becomes meditative. He thus combines Fischer's understanding of *lectio* and *meditatio*. O'Donnell stresses that the point of repetition is not for the purpose of memorisation, but is a taking up of the Word of God, allowing ourselves "to be nourished and permeated by it" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 46). He further argues in the same essay that the purpose

of this exercise is "purely and simply to come to know God, to be brought before his word, to listen" (1990: 47). Ultimately, maintains O'Donnell, *lectio* leads to union with God. He writes,

Lectio has been described as a prayer that begins as a 'dialogue' and ends as a 'duet.' Thus what begins as God addressing us and our responding leads eventually to an experience of union (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 48).

He is here suggesting, as others have before him, that union with God requires the effort of the person in performing certain activities. Teresa's seven mansions, described in her book, *The Interior Castle*, bring this point out as well. But it must also be remembered that union with God is primarily a matter of grace, not works.

Lectio concerned a sacred reading of the Bible, often referred to as 'God's Word'. This tradition has an equally high regard for scripture as does the Evangelical tradition. Thomas Merton maintains that, for the early Desert Fathers, love of God was expressed "first of all in love for God's Word" (1969: 20). This concurs with Ward's belief that the Desert Fathers' conviction concerned the centrality of scripture in all things. He remarks that the Desert Fathers were so shaped by scripture that "it is almost impossible to say where quotation ends and comments begin" (in Byrne 1990: 8). Leech puts this in a negative fashion, stating that the Desert Fathers believed that "ignorance of the Scriptures is a precipice and a deep abyss" (1985: 140). Tugwell makes a similar point, illustrating it with the story of the eighth century St Lioba, who diligently read her Bible at every moment, unless praying or sleeping. Even in sleep she

requested that others read to her from the Bible. These readers claimed that, although asleep, she corrected them if they omitted "a single word or even a syllable" (Tugwell 1984: 104). According to Houston, this emphasis on scripture was also important to the Cistercians. They insisted that friendship with God

was sustained and matured. . . by meditations in the Scriptures. . . they were saturated in the Scriptures. Their desire for God was one with their desire to know and obey His Word (Houston in Bernard 1983: xxxii).

Again, this highlights the importance of making an effort to be steeped in the scriptures. According to Burrows, Groote had the same understanding of scripture. He too saw the Bible "as the vehicle of growth in the Christian life" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 113).

This high regard for scripture remains important today in Anglo-Catholic spirituality. The Catholic liberation theologian, Segundo Galilea stresses this, insisting that scripture remains the "recommended practice for the maintaining of one's life of faith" (1988: 48). In the Anglican tradition, private and public Bible reading continues to be practiced. In the daily rites of Morning and Evening Prayer, the Psalter is read through once a month, the New Testament is read through three times a year, and the Old Testament, once a year (Wall in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 276). Such a practice should receive whole-hearted endorsement from the evangelical community, which has its own tradition of regular reading of the Bible in its entirety. Bible reading is also always associated with meditation and contemplation. Guigo II is correct to insist

on the singular 'exercise', since reading, meditation, contemplation and prayer are, at times, difficult to separate. In truth there is only one exercise. However, for the purpose of clarity they are discussed separately.

Meditation is an important spiritual exercise as, according to Bouyer, "the assimilation of Christian truth is effected by [it]" (1961: 25). It has been described by Tugwell as verbal murmuring, often out loud. This led to "actually memorizing of the sacred texts" and also to the sense of "thinking about something" (Tugwell 1984: 106). Tugwell bases this understanding of meditation on the Latin *meditatio*, which essentially means "rehearsal", as did the Greek *melete*. Both words translate the Hebrew *hagah*, which meant to "recite". Based on this, Tugwell suggests that initially 'meditation' was "envisaged as something audible, something done with the tongue, as in Psalms 34:28 and 36:30" (1984: 105). Merton makes a very similar comment relating to the meditation of the early monks. He remarks that for them, meditation "consisted in making the words of the Bible their own by memorising them and repeating them, with deep and simple concentration, 'from the heart'" (Merton 1969: 21). Merton also cautions against a method or system of meditation. He suggests that we should rather "cultivate an 'attitude,' an 'outlook'" which he describes as "faith, openness, attention, reverence, expectation, supplication, trust, joy" (1969: 34).

Teresa perceived meditation to relate to mental activity, involving hard work. In her treatise on the degrees of

prayer, she likens the person praying to a garden that requires watering. As already discussed, she suggests four different ways of watering. The first, for the beginner in prayer, involves hard work, and is likened by Teresa to meditation. The person praying struggles to pay attention, deal with distractions and develop a proper sense of sin. This, according to Teresa is "working with the understanding" which has to do with meditation (in Happold 1963: 344ff). This emphasises that meditation is, first and foremost, a mental exercise. It is the stimulation of natural, active imagination, so central to the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius.

Meditation, as mental stimulation is in sharp contrast to "the world of 'secret' contemplation" (Muto 1991: 64). Teresa likened contemplation to rain that watered the garden without labour on the part of the gardener. This is her fourth stage in the degrees of prayer. In this stage, the person does no work. Teresa writes of this stage, "Here there is no sense of anything but enjoyment" (in Happold 1963: 352). Thus, meditation and contemplation are often viewed as progressive stages in spiritual development, but always they are related to prayer. Kelsey, for instance, suggests that

in meditation. . . there is a fresh emphasis on prayer as one way of meeting and relating to the One to whom one prays. Meeting God and learning what God wants of us become far more important than what we want of God (Kelsey 1976: 9).

The concept of stages affirms that the Christian needs to go through the disciplined and difficult work of meditation and

not jump to the seeming ease of Teresa's fourth degree of prayer. Meditation must come before contemplation.

Bible reading is always accompanied with prayer. These two constitute, according to Tugwell, the two essential elements in our developing relationship with God. He quotes St Augustine, who claimed, "When you read, God is speaking to you; when you pray, you are speaking to God" (Tugwell 1984: 103). O'Gorman essentially says the same thing when stressing that "At the heart of prayer is God's communication with us and not our thoughts about God" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 83). Neither can prayer be isolated from meditation and contemplation. These are forms of prayer, placing the emphasis on praying scripture (meditation) and simply *being* in the presence of the Triune God (contemplation). Anthony Bloom tells the story of a French peasant that perfectly illustrates the meaning of contemplation. The peasant daily spent hours in the chapel "motionless, doing nothing." Intrigued, the Catholic priest finally asked him what he was doing each day in chapel. The peasant replied, "I look at him, he looks at me and we are happy" (1970: 62). With this emphasis on contemplation, often known as the prayer of quiet, it is not surprising that the Anglo-Catholic tradition tends to deemphasise, although not neglect or ignore, the place of petition and supplication in prayer. This is hinted at in the above quotation from Kelsey, where he claims that meeting God and discerning what he wants of us, is more important than what we want from God. If a person is to discover what God

actually wants, he or she must learn to listen to God, rather than always talk to God. Making a similar point, Dyckmann and Carroll refer to Matthew Fox's definition of prayer, "a radical response to life" and suggest that as such, "prayer is not concerned with the mere saying of prayers. It involves opening up to the Lord in all that touches us" (1981: 43-4).

However it is understood, prayer is considered axiomatic for spiritual development. Underhill describes prayer as "man's [woman's] fundamental spiritual activity" (in Menzies 1946: 35). A Jesuit, McIntyre, believes that prayer "always remains the principal means for realizing our vocation in Christ" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 189). It has been variously defined and described, but generally it is acknowledged that "the basis of any authentic prayer life is interpersonal, loving communion with the indwelling Father, Son and Spirit" (Nemeck and Coombs 1985: 36). Relationship is the central issue. Bloom insists that "it is very important to remember that prayer is an encounter and a relationship" (1970: 2).

A frequent definition given to prayer is the one Harton attributes to St John Damascene, who defined prayer as "the lifting up of the mind [heart is sometimes used instead of mind] to God." Harton accepts this as the essence of prayer (Harton 1932: 222). O'Donnell and Maas also refer to this definition, seeing it as "one of the most ancient -- and satisfactory -- explanations of this most important but elusive subject," prayer. They claim that this definition

has references to Psalm 141:2 [7] (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 380). Based on this definition, Harton suggests that prayer can be divided into four parts. This is very typical of much understanding and teaching on prayer given in evangelicalism. Harton describes these parts as adoration, "the true and instinctive response of the creature to the presence of its Creator"; thanksgiving, which flows from adoration; penitence as a result of discerning sin and unworthiness; and finally petition, asking God's "favours as of grace and not as of right" (Harton 1932: 223ff).

Prayer is also understood as involving a relationship with God that transforms (Leech 1980: 6). This is probably the more crucial understanding of prayer. Thus Teresa of Avila could write, "Prayer doesn't consist of thinking a great deal, but of loving a great deal" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 259). Harton makes a similar point, contending that the soul comes to God "not to 'say its prayers,' not to 'make a meditation,' not to think or rest, nor to ask, but to find Him and be with Him" (1932: 223). Others, like Galilea refer to this as "the experience of God", seeing that as the essence of prayer (Galilea 1988: 101).

Precisely because prayer is a relationship, discipline and method do have a place. O'Donnell argues this, maintaining that "as with any authentic relationship, it requires time, attention, and discipline if it is to grow, stabilize, and mature" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 133-4). Thus O'Donnell contends that prayer should be daily in order to become a "life-giving encounter with God" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990:

134). Galilea also insists on the requirement of a disciplined life in order for prayer to flourish. He argues. "If our lives do not have discipline, we do not have the freedom necessary for an authentically contemplative encounter with God" (Galilea 1988: 106). He concludes that method in prayer is the way to enable a person to concentrate on God, thus demonstrating that method is not to be ignored (1988: 107). With this focus on method, it is not surprising that, as Maas and O'Donnell note, both Catholics and Protestants are making regular use of the rosary, which involves the practice of repetition, particularly of "the Our Father and the Hail Mary", which is seen as the "focus of renewed interest and appreciation" (Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 385).

While stressing discipline and method, it must also be noted that there is recognition given to the work of the Holy Spirit. Maas and O'Donnell mention that prayer is not a "'work' we perform on our own behalf," rather, the Spirit performs it for us. They suggest that "what we commonly call prayer is actually an *invitation* we issue to the Spirit to come and 'express our pleas' in a way that can never be put into words" (1990: 380-1). It is obvious that Maas and O'Donnell have Paul's words in Romans in mind: "We do not even know how to pray, but through our inarticulate groans the Spirit himself is pleading for us" (Romans 8:26). This means, according to Maas and O'Donnell, that prayer requires "placing ourselves -- our hearts and our minds -- at the disposal of the Spirit, and it is at this point that

specific prayers become extremely significant" (1990: 381).

Much of this is very similar to evangelical teaching on prayer. A major difference is the recognition given in Anglo-Catholic spirituality to the experience of darkness and dryness in prayer. Since the spiritual life is viewed more consistently as progressing through stages, the dry periods are often considered to be important transitions. Thus, they are expected. Green, who leans heavily on John of the Cross, writes at length on the dryness, as the titles of his books suggest -- *When the Well Runs Dry* (1979) and *Drinking From a Dry Well* (1991). His conclusion is that the experience of darkness and dryness become "more and more the normal, constant pattern of our prayer" (Green 1979: 120).

2.2.2.2 Solitude and Community

Much emphasis is given, in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, to the place of solitude, and therefore to silence, in the development of Christian spirituality. The influential monastic movement has always placed stress on solitude and silence. Of less importance is the discipline of community, and less is discussed on that discipline. It is interesting to observe that the Evangelical tradition places greater importance on community, which is usually termed 'fellowship', and very little, if any on solitude and silence, as already noted.

Solitude and Silence

Solitude and silence belong together, even though solitude does not necessarily demand silence, nor silence solitude. However, for genuine communion with God, solitude is fundamental. Nemeck and Coombs argue that "In order to pass beyond self and enter into direct communion with God, solitude of heart is essential. This enables us to remain always in loving interchange with God. . ." (1985: 37).

Leech understands solitude to mean an actual physical solitude and argues that "in the encounter with God" this dimension must "never be abandoned" (Leech 1985: 149). He further argues that solitude is "an indispensable element in the encounter with God" and considers this to be the central feature of Desert Spirituality. According to Leech, solitude is important because "it is in solitude that we begin to discover our true self, and this begins with an awakening to the unreality of our false self" (Leech 1985: 149). In an earlier publication, he made a similar point, highlighting that only by "being alone in the wilderness" can "inner perfection" come (1977: 142). While Leech argues for actual physical solitude, Nouwen stresses another dimension. He does not minimise the importance of physical solitude, but contends that "the solitude that really counts is the solitude of the heart; it is an inner quality or attitude that does not depend on physical isolation" (Nouwen 1975: 37).

Silence obviously relates to solitude and is even implied in

solitude. True solitude must involve silence. What Leech claimed for solitude, Rosetti claims for silence: "Without silence there is no true self-awareness or communication. Without silence there is no prayer" (in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 75). In this sense, silence and solitude are closely related. In fact, it is often the assumption of solitude that it also involves silence, particularly inner silence, the ability to shut off noise around and within. In order to obtain absence of noise, many Christians have, and still do, withdrawn into monastic type situations. But since the more important need is for inner silence, withdrawal is not always necessary, except for brief periods. In inner silence of the Spirit, "a life of communion with God could be sustained, regardless of the various occupations in which one was engaged" (O'Donnell in Maas & O'Donnell 1990: 60).

Community

Community, as already mentioned is not as strongly stressed in Anglo-Catholic as in Evangelical spirituality. The Anglo-Catholic tradition places greater emphasis on solitude. The two traditions have much to learn from each other in this area. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once warned, "Let him [her] who cannot be alone beware of community. . . . Let him [her] who is not in community beware of being alone" (1954: 57-58). Bonhoeffer is contending that both solitude and community are essential in spiritual formation; that we cannot have the one without the other.

Leech focuses on the importance of community when he remarks

that God "is known only in the context of shared experience" (1985: 25-6). This belief is shared by other writers on spirituality. Leonard states that "a basic insight of von Hugel's was that our growth is facilitated by one another" (1991: 248). Von Hugel was influenced by his spiritual director, Abbe Henri Huvelin who understood the role of spiritual guide to be like that of a loving parent. Huvelin wrote,

God who might have created us directly, employs, for this work, our parents, to whom He joins us by the tenderest ties. He could also save us directly, but He saves us, in fact, by means of certain souls, which have received the spiritual life before ourselves, and which communicate it to us, because they love us (in Leonard 1991: 248).

These three, solitude, silence and community can be described as important 'contexts' for the development of Christian spirituality, where 'context' is understood figuratively and not literally. They are fundamental in enabling the person to experience God in reality and be drawn into union with him. They provide the necessary space for the practice of prayer and Bible reading as meditation and contemplation. They make it possible for the person exercising spiritual disciplines to simply be in the presence of the Triune God, receiving his grace and mercy. In other words, the 'contexts' of solitude, silence and community encourage the person in a developing love-relationship with the Triune God. In the Anglo-Catholic tradition, this is augmented through the relationship with a spiritual guide, thus spiritual direction has an important role to play in Christian spirituality in this tradition, to be discussed in chapter

six.

While avoiding a definitive explanation of Anglo-Catholic spirituality, characteristic elements and practices have been discussed to aid moving toward an understanding of spirituality in this tradition. Important elements that characterise spirituality in this tradition are knowledge of God, where that is understood as a loving relationship with God; union with God, the pen-ultimate purpose for spirituality and thus for the Christian life; conformity to Christ and his will, and therefore involving obedience to the Church; and finally, growth to maturity. This growth is understood to be developmental, progressing through various distinct stages, each stage presenting different needs and requiring different practices of prayer, scripture, solitude and community.

CHAPTER 6

THE PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual direction is by no means unique to the Christian religion, neither does it have its origins in Christianity. By this I mean that it should not be viewed as being exclusive to the Christian religion or even as founded by Christianity. It is a very ancient art and a spiritual discipline of all the major religions of the world. Yungblut maintains that it predates Christianity, being a practice of the shamans and medicine men and women of ancient communities (1988: 7), albeit very different to Christian spiritual direction. It was also a practice of the Graeco-Roman philosophers, as Hadot maintains in his article, "The Spiritual Guide" (1986). Hadot concludes that article with the bold question: "Has modern spiritual guidance. . . brought the slightest advance over the millenia-old practice of spiritual guidance?" (1986: 455). His question is intended to highlight the truth that spiritual direction/guidance was an ancient and well thought through practice and that contemporary spiritual direction can still learn much from it. However, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss spiritual direction as practiced in these other religions and philosophical practices. The mentioning of these ancient practice is merely to note that spiritual direction is an ancient

practice. While it is certain that the Christian practice of spiritual direction learnt much from the Graeco-Roman practice, and today learns from Eastern Religious practices, it remains distinct, as I will attempt to show in this chapter, with distinguishing marks not found in other traditions of spiritual direction. It also, as will be explained, remains distinct from the more popular forms of therapeutic and pastoral relationships. For instance, in much evangelicalism the pastoral role is viewed as a substitute for spiritual direction. In fact, David Parker, in his article, defends this evangelical practice of pastor, arguing that the evangelicals "have a long tradition of spiritual guides, in their pastors, preachers, authors, and the corporate voice of fellow Christians. . ." (Parker 1991: 147). However, since Parker prefaces this statement with a warning against the danger of a spiritual director gaining "the possibility of enormously powerful spiritual control" over a person and thus, according to Parker, undermining the commitment to "the priesthood of all believers," the role of pastor is something distinct from that of the traditional spiritual director.

Until recently spiritual direction was little practiced in contemporary Protestant Christianity, and only rarely in evangelicalism. Leech proposes that a reason for this lack of attention has been a suspicion of "any acts which seemed to undermine the place of Christ as the one Mediator" (1977: 84). It has been taught, particularly in evangelicalism, that the Christian has direct access to God through Jesus,

and therefore, needs no human or canonised mediator to intervene on her or his behalf. While not denying this truth, there has been a move towards spiritual direction. In the last twenty years, in the Western Church in particular, "there has been a growing demand for spiritual direction, with a corresponding rediscovery and development of that art" (Lonsdale 1992A: 312). Since the 16th century Reformation, spiritual direction remained almost exclusively a Roman Catholic practice, although Anglicanism still practiced it to a certain extent. Today, its revival is being claimed by Christians of all denominations, including evangelical ones. It is again viewed as being "at the heart of the Christian religion," especially when it is understood as "the guidance of individuals in the 'life of the Spirit'" (Leech 1977: 2). This is reiterated by Parker who refers to Rowland Croucher's comment that "the use of a spiritual director is one of the most urgent needs of many Christians today, being 'an idea whose time has come (again)'" (Parker 1991: 146).

Because of this contemporary importance and, since it is being reclaimed and rediscovered by a variety of Christian traditions, in this chapter I will attempt to explain the practice, drawing on a variety of traditions, both ancient and modern. This means that this description is not just that of one tradition, but gives a more eclectic explanation. However, since the practice was kept alive in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, this explanation will obviously reflect much of that tradition. I will also

define the term as it is most commonly used in Christian spirituality, which will also mean describing the role of the Spirit in spiritual direction, and defend my use of 'spiritual direction'.

1. *The Use Of The Term 'Spiritual Direction'*

The term 'spiritual direction,' while the most frequent term to be used, is not considered to be the best one to describe the contemporary practice. It is, therefore, necessary to defend my use of this more common term, rather than one of the many contemporary substitutions. One of the major reasons for its unpopularity is the use of the word 'direction'. This is often understood to imply that there is one person in a position of authority telling another person what to do. Parker's comment referred to above, warns of this danger. Since exercising power over another is recognised to be both incorrect and dangerous, some prefer to use the term 'spiritual guidance', where 'guidance' is understood as one person coming alongside another to gently guide in the spiritual journey. The term "guide" thus has different connotations to that of "director". However, it is still problematic to others, who, therefore seek still other words to express this practice. Some, such as Kenneth Leech (1977) and Jim Johnston (1992, personal conversation) favour the term 'soul friend', since that implies mutuality rather than an authoritative structure of one directing another. Yet another term, suggested by Houston is 'spiritual friendship', which has similar understandings as soul friend (1990: 31). Both 'soul friend' and 'spiritual

friendship' are meant to connote that two or more people journey together to assist each other in relating to God, the task of spiritual direction.

Despite the critics and suggestions for alternate terms, 'spiritual direction' remains the most common term to explain this important discipline in Christian spirituality. In this thesis, I have deliberately chosen to use it as it is the most usual term and because it is being understood in new ways in contemporary Christianity. Rakoczy points this out in the book she edits, arguing that the meaning of 'direction' in contemporary literature

has shifted from the traditional perspective of one person showing another the path of God's ways to both seeking the forward direction of the Spirit together. The 'director' is seen as an empathetic companion on the journey (1992A: 22).

This would mean that today 'spiritual direction' is understood to be 'spiritual friendship'. This contemporary understanding is succinctly summarised by Dyckmann and Carroll, who write, "Spiritual direction is not in any narrow sense only about spiritual things, nor is it in any paternal or maternal sense directing" (1981: 22). Nouwen agrees with this understanding. In his introduction to Vanderwall's publication, *Spiritual Direction*, Nouwen commends him for describing spiritual direction in this same sense that Dyckmann and Carroll use. According to Nouwen, spiritual direction is not "one spiritual person" telling "another less spiritual person" how to behave. Rather, "spiritual direction means that two or more sinful, broken, struggling people come together to listen to the direction

of the Spirit" (Nouwen in Vanderwall 1981: x), which what the terms 'soul friend' or 'spiritual friendship' are meant to connote. In other words, spiritual direction is no longer understood as meaning that one person has control and authority over another person. Rather, there is a mutuality and friendship in the direction relationship with one person seeking to encourage another in his or her journey of faith. With this understanding in mind, I have chosen to use the term 'spiritual direction'.

2. Necessity For Sprirtual Direction

While not always popular, more and more contemporary Christians are recognising the necessity for spiritual direction and seeking spiritual directors. If living the Christian life is understood as responding to God's Spirit with the whole being and in all of life, it is essential that others come along side to encourage and guide. Responding faithfully to the Spirit of God is not an easy matter precisely because, as Vanderwall notes, "the life of the spirit is all inclusive and demands that we acknowledge its pervading influence in our lives" (1981: 7). Spiritual direction is, therefore about the whole person and the whole of life, as Merton maintains. He argues that direction "speaks to the whole man [woman], in the concrete circumstances of his [her] life, however simple they may be" (1950: 17). He further suggests that this means that direction is not only about prayer, discipline, hairshirts, and like matters, but is also about the ordinary things pertaining to day to day living. Thus, direction is not

about 'spiritual' things in any narrow sense of that word. But neither is it to be understood in the broad sense as used by modern psychologists. Scott Peck, for instance, uses it in a way where the Spirit and even a spiritual realm is ignored, and where 'spiritual' refers only to a person's inner most being or psyche (Peck 1978). Rather, spiritual direction concerns, as Fischer notes, "the movement of our entire lives in and toward God" (1988: 3), and such a movement is possible through the Spirit of God. It is a spiritual activity, involving more than the human psyche. It is the psyche in relation to God the Spirit.

Precisely because it involves the whole of life in relation to spirit, persons need the aid of another human guide. The spiritual guide is necessary because of the numerous pitfalls, which are often subtle, and therefore misjudged as grace by novices (Merton 1969: 36). It was probably these 'subtle pitfalls' that led John of the Cross to name "inadequate direction and inadequate discernment" as the two major hindrances to advancement in the spiritual life (Muto 1991: 18). In his article, "The Independence Myth", Houston reiterates Merton's contention that spiritual direction is needed precisely because sin is so deceitful. Houston writes, "If sin is so self-deceiving, then I need a soul friend to give me insights into the ways I am deceived, or insensitive, or hardened by sin within me. I cannot do it alone" (1990: 32). Spiritual direction, when that is understood as "the friendship of those who are the prayerful companions of God" (Houston 1990: 33), for Houston is a

necessity for spiritual growth for all Christians. Dyckmann and Carroll make a similar assertion, stating that "the journey of faith is a journey shared. We do not, cannot travel alone" (1981: 1). Merton, on the other hand, maintains that spiritual direction is not necessary for the "ordinary Christian layman [woman]," but is a moral necessity for the 'religious' [8]. He argues that this is because "anyone who freely adopts certain professional means for attaining to union with God naturally needs to receive a special formation" (1950: 21). However, Merton's is a more or less lonely voice in the modern world, in this regard. Contemporary teaching and practice tends towards encouraging spiritual direction for all Christians, the 'ordinary lay person' and 'religious' alike.

3. Common Meaning Of 'Spiritual Direction'

To understand the Christian meaning of 'spiritual direction', it is essential to assume that it is not something apart from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, before surveying the meanings for this term, I will briefly discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in spiritual direction.

3.1 The Role of the Holy Spirit

The role of the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to understanding Christian spiritual direction, and ultimately is what makes it 'spiritual' in the Christian sense. It must also be understood that the Holy Spirit, not the person, is the true Director and, as Hoover notes, the human guide is a helper in discerning the work of the Spirit in

the person's life (Hoover in Rakoczy 1992A: 69). This means that the human guide "is called to collaborate with the Holy Spirit" (Quintos in Rakoczy 1992A: 96). Thus, in a direction relationship there can be no possibility of one person taking authority over another, since both recognise that the Spirit is ultimately the one in authority over both of them. Sue Rakoczy affirms this, writing that with this renewal in the truth that the Spirit is the true 'director', it has meant that, "spiritual direction has, for the most part, lost its previous connotation of one person leading another on the path of discipleship" (Rakoczy 1992A: 1). The primary task of the human director is to enable another person to make a more faithful response to the promptings of the Spirit within. According to Corcoran, this understanding has been the traditional belief of Christians (in McGinn and Meyendorff 1985: 444). And this is true of Christians of all denominations and traditions. The fear that a human director would usurp the Spirit as Director was a major reason for the decline and eventual loss of spiritual direction in evangelicalism. It is crucial, therefore, to emphasise that spiritual direction is not about replacing the role of the Holy Spirit. Rather, it is about mutually aiding one another to more faithfully respond to the Spirit's (and therefore to God's) promptings in our lives. There is no question that, without the Spirit of God there is no genuine Christian spiritual direction or spirituality.

3.2 Defining 'Spiritual Direction'

Spiritual direction is usually concerned with two people,

the 'director' and 'directee', hence I will begin by defining spiritual direction in this situation. But it can also be undertaken in a group situation, and therefore I will make mention of that as well. Since group direction will be considered crucial to an integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education, more detail will be given in Section III.

3.2.1 Individual Direction

With so much written and spoken on the subject, it is obvious that definitions for spiritual direction abound. The common factor in many of these definitions is that spiritual direction is a relationship, usually between two people, to enable the one seeking direction to live in the world in relationship to God through the Spirit. It is, therefore, individual. Thus, Barry and Connolly write "spiritual direction is concerned with helping a person directly with his or her relationship with God" (1982: 5). This means that spiritual direction "focuses on what happens when a person listens to and responds to a self-communicating God" (Barry & Connolly 1982: 7). Barry and Connolly see spiritual direction in terms of "help given by one Christian to another" concerning their relationship with God (1982: 8). In other words it is usually between two people, where one is considered able to give mature aid to another seeking growth in the Christian life. In their brochure, the Shalem Institute in Washington D.C., define it as

an on-going relationship in which one person (the

directee), desirous of being attentive to his or her spiritual life, meets with another person (the director) on a regular basis. . . specifically for the purpose of becoming more attuned to God's Presence in order to respond more fully to that Presence in all of life.

This definition is comprehensive and succinct, giving the most obvious aspects of direction such as the relationship between two people and becoming more attentive to the action of God in daily life. This is the most general understanding of spiritual direction. Leech, for instance, quotes the definition of a Jesuit, John H. Wright, that stresses this same point -- "an interpersonal situation in which one person assists another to develop and come to greater maturity in the life of the spirit" (Leech 1977: 77).

The relationship between director and directee, described as "a privileged meeting of hearts" (Rakoczy 1992A: 9), is concerned with the nurture of the person's relationship with God. This relationship involves listening, in faith, to "the story of the workings of the Spirit in the life of one of them" (Rakoczy 1992A: 4). Thus, it is an interpersonal relationship to enable each other to reflect on their individual experiences and relate them to "who they are called to become in fidelity to the Gospel" (Dyckmann and Carroll 1981: 20). This requires a belief in a fundamental tenet of the Christian faith that God loves us unconditionally and "invites us, individually and collectively, to live and to act in partnership with [him] and with one another to bring about the reign of God" (Lonsdale 1992A: 313). As was noted in a previous chapter,

love is crucial in Christian spirituality.

3.2.2 Group Direction

A less frequently discussed form of spiritual direction is that of group direction. In his article in *The Way*, Patrick Purnell highlights the dimension of direction in the community of faith where it is a group, rather than merely two people involved. He describes spiritual direction as "a way in which Christians help each other on their pilgrim journey to the fulness of the Kingdom of God" (1985: 3). Tilden Edwards is more specific. In his book *Spiritual Friend*, he points out "that group spiritual direction is in fact the standard form of guidance in the Christian tradition" (in Byrne 1990: 45). At the Shalem Institute, where Edwards works, group direction is taken seriously, with a number of groups meeting regularly to listen to and encourage each other in the way of Christ (1993: personal conversation). Since spiritual direction belongs in the Church, it can and should be practiced within a group setting. Since the Church is "one body", albeit made up of "different parts" (1 Corinthians 12:13), life together is crucial. Within a group setting, where the group is made up of people of different stages in their spiritual journey, that is, a heterogeneous group, there would always be more mature Christians to encourage the growth of others in the group. The contemporary growth of the small group movement, particularly although not exclusively, in evangelical churches could form a natural group for direction. Since many of these groups meet specifically for sharing their

faith journey, listening to and learning from each other, direction does take place, albeit "willy nilly". This will be returned to in Section III. As Vanderwall insists, "Spiritual direction comes in many forms and is hence not restricted to a one-to-one conversation, though it is certainly an extraordinarily helpful tool when you can get it" (1981: 9). However, group spiritual direction is rarely discussed in the literature on this subject. Recently, the Shalem Institute in Washington, D.C. has embarked on a project of research and writing in this area, which is yet to be published (1993: personal conversation).

In summary, spiritual direction is today understood by many Christians to be an on-going relationship usually between two people, in which one gives the other guidance, encouragement and enabling in his or her relationship with God. It is concerned with the crucial problem of living in the world *and* in relationship to God. In this direction relationship it is recognised that ultimately it is the Spirit who is Director, and the one to whom both director and directee must respond.

4. Distinctives Of Christian Spiritual Direction

Christian spiritual direction has learned much from the more popular psychological therapies. While it is difficult, if not impossible to say where therapy ends and direction begins, I will attempt to show that direction is distinct from psychology and even pastoral counseling. This does not deny the truth that direction will often include therapy.

The definitions thus far referred to for spiritual direction all revolve around the person's relationship with God. This will obviously necessitate helping the person come to self-knowledge, so central to Christian spirituality. Houston quotes from John Calvin, who argued that "Our wisdom. . . consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves" (1990: 32). Similar comments by others have already been referred to in a previous chapter. Thus, psychological factors cannot be omitted. A recent notable feature of Christian spirituality and pastoral ministry in general, "has been the influence of psychology" (Lonsdale 1992A: 312). It is, therefore, interesting to note that the Anglican, Leech, borrows Max Thurian's definition for spiritual direction that includes psychological aspects. Leech proposes that spiritual direction is "a seeking after the leading of the Holy Spirit in a given psychological and spiritual situation", and thus is "the cure of souls" (Leech 1977: 34).

It is without doubt that spiritual direction has benefited from the insights of modern psychology. Bryant, for instance confesses to the help he has gained from the ideas of Carl Jung for his work of spiritual guidance (Bryant 1983: ix). Bryant is not alone in finding help from Jung in particular and psychology in general. A proliferation of publications have flooded the market in recent times making similar confessions and demonstrating how psychology and spiritual direction are related. In a recent book, Houston refers to this interest in psychology, particularly Jungian

psychology. He suggests that the reason for this interest is the "hint" in Jungian psychology "at the divinity we experience when what we do comes out of our depths and we sense the sacred dimensions to our lives" (1992B: 41). Houston seeks to warn his readers of this danger. It is therefore pertinent to ask the question: What is the difference between psychological assistance and spiritual direction? For many, the difference has become blurred and, therefore, difficult to determine. For instance, Quintos suggests that "one of the functions of the spiritual director is to lead the directee in the way of integration" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 90). 'Integration', a Jungian concept, has more psychological than Christian connotations and can, therefore, be misleading. In their article, Grant and Hayes recognise that psychological counselling and spiritual direction are two distinct tasks and yet in practice it often "would be difficult to put a label on where the one begins and the other ends." They insist, however, "that to blur the boundaries until they are indistinguishable is to do ourselves and others a disservice" (1990: 61).

It is, therefore, important to note that there is a distinct difference between the two, although they often compliment each other. Gerald May, a psychiatrist by profession, recognises this and writes,

But psychology, by its nature, is simply not big enough to include or even adequately address our deepest spiritual longings. Spirituality, however, by its nature, is compelled to address and incorporate psychology as well as every other aspect of human experience and endeavor (1982: 21)

May's contention is generally accepted among Christians

concerned with spirituality and spiritual direction. Notwithstanding, discussions relating to how psychological counselling and therapy and spiritual direction differ, continue. Thornton describes the difference between psychological or pastoral counselling and direction in superficial ways. He writes, "If counselling deals with problems, direction takes over as soon as they are solved" (1984: 11). The Shalem Institute also suggests that a distinguishing factor is problem or issue solving, which is the task of psychological counseling, but more correctly view spiritual direction as on-going, even in the midst of problem solving. In their brochure they write that,

Spiritual direction is concerned with finding and responding to God (in the midst of pain or disorder as well as in the rest of life). Problem/issue solving is not the primary focus of direction.

This understanding is reinforced by the writings of Gerald May, who is also on the executive staff of the Shalem Institute. In one of his books, he argues that spirituality is distinguished by a relationship with God that manifests itself in existential reality (1982: 33). In other words, it has to do with the whole person in all of life. Barnes agrees with this basic differentiation between spirituality and psychology, arguing that relationship with God through the indwelling Spirit is the central feature of Christian spirituality (Barnes 1990: 31). While the evangelical, James Houston, reminds us of a factor that must never be overlooked in Christian spiritual direction, if we are to avoid degenerating into mere psychological counselling. He writes, "It is not the psychoanalyst who knows us most

intimately, but God's Word that mirrors the inward conditions of our being, as it is before God" (Houston 1990: 32). Spiritual direction does involve listening to God in his Word.

It is the nurturance of relationship with God through the indwelling Spirit that gives Christian spiritual direction its distinctive. Therefore, as Lonsdale ably contends, the philosophy underpinning spiritual direction must be theological, rather than psychological (1992A: 313). Spiritual direction will often include psychological insights, but will always relate these to theology, and thus to relationship with God.

5. The Practice Of Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction was defined as a relationship between two or more persons that pays particular attention to their relationship with God and their living in the world. Such a definition obviously suggests that the practice of spiritual direction is relational and social. Thus, as Thomas Merton believes, "in order for it to work properly, normal, spontaneous human relationships" are required (1950: 19). But, because it is also social it will also deal with issues of compassion, truth and justice, as well as the communal aspects of spirituality (see Leech 1992: 2ff). In other words, spiritual direction can never be something impersonal or purely private. Both parties in the process must give of themselves to the other, to God and to the world. It must also be recognised that, although requiring

human relationships, psychological approaches will not be its primary means of practice. Although, since relationship to God involves relationships with others and an understanding of the self, psychological practices may become necessary at times.

This suggests a number of tasks for the direction relationship. In this thesis I will highlight only four.

5.1 Fostering Relationship to God

The most fundamental task of spiritual direction is the fostering of the relationship with God. Related to this, as Barry and Connolly suggest, are two other fundamental tasks of spiritual direction. The first is "helping the directee pay attention to God as he reveals himself." And the second concerns, "Helping the directee recognize his [her] reactions and decide on his [her] responses to this God" (1982: 46). Thomas Merton has a very similar understanding of the practice of spiritual direction, although a more literary way of putting it. He maintains that the work of spiritual direction is not the teaching of

a secret and infallible method for attaining to esoteric experiences, but in showing us how to recognize God's grace and his will, how to be humble and patient, how to develop insight into our own difficulties, and how to remove the main obstacles keeping us from becoming men [women] of prayer (1969: 36).

All this will require that directees talk about their relationship to God, self and others, while the director listens with great care. Since relationship to God has been discussed in some detail in earlier chapters, it will not again be described here.

5.2 *Fostering Prayer*

Related to the first task of fostering relationship to God, is the life of prayer. Fostering a life of prayer is the considered by some to be the central issue in the practice of the direction relationship. Houston sees this as the primary purpose of spiritual direction, which should happen "in the context of prayerful relationships" (1990: 33). Prayer is, therefore, an important focus of the relationship. Although, as O'Gorman notes, "prayer is not the only matter for reflection in spiritual direction." However, she adds that "how one prays and how one experiences God in prayer will be the focus of much of the conversation between the director and directee" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 82). This enables the participant in the direction relationship "to be centered on God in such a way that each is listening to God in the other" (Nemeck and Coombs 1985: 56). It is the responsibility of the directee to discuss with the director his or her practice of the spiritual discipline of prayer. The task of the director is not only to enable the directee to discern problems, but also to move on in the life of prayer. It is here that the stages of spiritual development become a useful guide for the director to follow.

5.3 *Fostering Attention*

Since fostering a life of prayer means listening to God and to each other, and third important task of the direction relationship is fostering attention. Such an understanding

implies that spiritual direction involves a dialogue between at least two persons, where listening to each other and together listening to God, become the important practice. Although, as O'Gorman reminds us, listening is not all there is to spiritual direction, yet it remains an important element throughout the process (in Rakoczy 1992A: 78). O'Gorman further adds that, in the direction relationship it is particularly the one directing who is to give "priority to an open accepting listening" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 78). This is accepted by Dyckmann and Carroll, who maintain that listening is the director's most important activity in the relationship (1981: 22). This means that the directee must bring to the relationship, as Belliveau notes, "the ability to communicate their feelings and their story" (in Rakoczy 1992A: 115). Communication and listening are, therefore, the core of the relationship (Hervera in Rakoczy 1992A: 24).

This listening is purposive -- to enable the person to discern the promptings of the Spirit within his or her own life and thus, to more faithfully follow Jesus Christ. Dyckmann and Carroll highlight this, proposing that "we luxuriate in a spiritual direction relationship, in a mutual effort to comprehend, to love, and to follow Jesus, the Christ" (1981: 25). They further note that spiritual direction is not about making one person feel better about him or herself, but to better enable the person to be "engaged in a project of fashioning the world in Jesus" (1981: 27). Spiritual direction is not a luxury merely for the mutual personal growth of participants in the

relationship. It should lead to a more faithful response to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a more faithful living the Gospel in the world today, in other words, living in conformity to the image of Christ, which must include matters of mercy and justice. Merton's explanation brings all this out and deserves a full quotation. He writes,

The whole purpose of spiritual direction is to penetrate beneath the surface of a man's [woman's] life, to get behind the facade of conventional gestures and attitudes which he [she] presents to the world, and to bring out his [her] inner spiritual freedom, his [her] inmost truth, which is what we call the likeness of Christ in his [her] soul" (1950: 17).

Merton is here stressing that spiritual direction is not simply about personal growth, but about becoming like Christ.

5.4 Fostering Responsibility

The director's task is to provide a climate of empathetic and compassionate listening to the directee's story that will enable him or her to grow towards Christ-likeness. This will mean, as most writers on spiritual direction caution, that the director must encourage and enable the directee to take responsibility for his or her own life and not remain dependent on the director. Barry and Connolly stress this point. They write that "the person who receives direction must always retain personal responsibility" and good directors will foster this (1982: 10). Mursell argues that setting people free from dependency is "a fundamental aspect of all direction" (in Byrne 1990: 47). Evelyn Underhill took the same approach, according to Joy Milo. She maintains that Underhill understood the role of director

as "co-listener and discerner rather than the expert instructor who had ready-made answers about the path one should follow" (in Byrne 1990: 129). If the directee is to take responsibility, he or she must be serious about following Jesus and about "some form of intentional prayer and reflection on the God-currents of one's every day life and prayer" (Shalem Institute brochure). A director does not control a directee, nor force him or her to take the Christian life seriously. Responsibility implies the freedom to choose or refuse spiritual direction. This stresses that spiritual direction, when correctly practiced, would encourage rather than undermine the evangelical commitment to "the priesthood of all believers". It would then follow that Christian spirituality would include facing contemporary issues relevant to the society. Thus, in the South African context, the directee would need to deal with the issues of apartheid in ways that are authentic to her or him.

This means, as Harton reiterates, that the director is dealing with individual people, each different from the other. Thus, there is no one method that is good for all people (Harton 1932: 231). As with Christian education, precisely because spiritual direction involves people, it must be an ever changing process, differing according to director and directee, while still focusing on the common factor of "prayerful relationship with God". This is the consistent teaching on spiritual direction. Harton, for instance, returns to this point, emphasising its importance,

stressing that there is "no rule-of-thumb method of training souls, every soul is different" (1932: 305). Maruca makes a similar point, emphasising that the uniqueness of each person must be respected in spiritual direction. He affirms that the primary contribution of the spiritual director

is to direct the attention of each person to the Spirit of God present and operative within each of us; to help him or her recognize, appreciate, and embrace the movements of that Spirit. It is not to impose our views, our values, our judgments (in Rakoczy 1992A: 35).

Spiritual directors must remain aware of the truth that each person is unique, deserving individual attention, needing to take responsibility for their own lives.

CONCLUSION

While spiritual direction is an ancient practice, as well as a universal one, it is in process of revival in this time in the Christian Church. It is not merely "another fad from our society's 'culture of novelty'" (Houston 1990: 31), but a genuine Christian practice to enable God's people to more faithfully live out the Gospel in the world today. It must be understood as a discipline that enables Christians, through the power of the Spirit, to live out their relationship with God and to more faithfully follow him in today's world. It always involves interpersonal relationships, usually between two people only, and less frequently in small group settings. It will seek to foster relationship to God, the life of prayer, paying attention to God and each other, and allow persons to take responsibility for their own lives.

CHAPTER 7

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS OF EVANGELICALISM AND ANGLO-CATHOLICISM

INTRODUCTION

Until recently evangelicals maintained a separation from any group that failed to adhere to the basic tenets of evangelical belief as described in an earlier chapter. This resulted in the development of an Evangelical spirituality that is distinct from an Anglo-Catholic spirituality, often showing an ignorance of the Anglo-Catholic and also of the pre-Reformation heritage. It is also true that the Anglo-Catholic tradition has demonstrated a separateness as well, often showing a certain amount of cynicism when Evangelical spirituality is mentioned. This is evidenced in the Jesuit, David Lonsdale's review of Gordon's *Evangelical Spirituality*. He there admits: "To those like myself, inclined to be suspicious and even dismissive of this tradition, this book offers a valuable corrective" (1992B: 239). As a consequence, both traditions have remained in ignorance of the strengths of the other tradition. As Lonsdale notes, the recent ecumenical movement "has done much to temper the traditional hostility and incomprehension between Evangelicals on the one hand and Roman Catholics and Anglicans of a 'high' persuasion on the other" (1992B: 238). He also concedes that there is still a long way to go in bringing the different Christian traditions together.

In this chapter I will briefly highlight major strengths of these two traditions and then compare the understanding of the meaning and practice of spirituality. Not only do the different traditions have distinctive strengths, they also have important features in common. As Galilea notes, while there may be many and different Christian spiritualities, the essential core for all is the same. For Galilea that core is: "they always deal with following Jesus" (1988: 5). Each tradition deals with the same issue and suggests ways, some common to all traditions, of how to follow Jesus. It is precisely because of this meaningful commonality that each tradition can learn from the other. It is with this in mind that a comparison between the Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic traditions are discussed. This may not be dealing explicitly with the overall purpose of this thesis -- the integration of Christian spirituality into evangelical Christian education -- it is, however, implicitly related. It will also form an important basis for the discussion on integration in Part III, as I shall seek to focus on the commonalities between the two traditions, since these highlight the areas considered crucial by all Christianity. It is my contention that a Christian spirituality for the contemporary evangelical South African church must incorporate the strengths of other traditions. And, since this is already happening, often unwittingly, it is wise to be able to consciously incorporate or discard features from other traditions. The South African church that hopes to survive post-apartheid South Africa, will be the church that has moved beyond the

'isolationist mentality' so prevalent today. In a recent seminar in Washington D.C., Richard Rohr termed this isolationist attitude the "Yugoslavian mentality", meaning that ethnic groups are isolating themselves in order to defend themselves against attacks from other race groups (1993). It is thus a world, and not just a South African phenomenon. The intent of this chapter, therefore, is to bridge the gap between the two traditions under investigation in this thesis, to encourage the Church in South Africa to more faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

1. Strengths Of Each Tradition

One of the great strengths of the Evangelical tradition is that spirituality, however it was named, is recognised to be for all Christians, regardless of their position in the church. This is unlike the Anglo-Catholic tradition, and more precisely the Roman Catholic position that has viewed spirituality to be the domain of a select few -- those in religious orders or the priesthood. Only recently has the Catholic church acknowledged that the call to 'holiness', that is spirituality, is the calling of all Christians. It is a universal call (Rakoczy 1992B). And yet, as Houston remarks, Catholicism still considers the religious life [8] to be superior to that of lay Christianity. He writes, "thus the dilemma of Roman Catholic spirituality today is that still too much focus is being placed on 'the religious' to the detriment of the 'ordinariness of lay living'" (1991C: 181). They have much to learn from the Evangelical tradition.

A strength of the Anglo-Catholic tradition has been their ability to "guide their interior lives." Thus, spiritual disciplines that enable the development of self-knowledge and self-awareness are well developed. This is unlike the Evangelical tradition of training in spirituality, which Parker describes as "mostly informal, sporadic and fragmented" (1991: 138). Houston agrees and laments that "many evangelical leaders have few insights into how to guide their interior lives, let alone that of their flocks" (1991C: 185). It is very evident that a mutual learning between the different Christian traditions would greatly enhance the spirituality of each tradition.

2. Comparison Between the Two Traditions

This comparison will not consider all the elements of spirituality already discussed in the chapters on each tradition. Instead, I will highlight only the most crucial aspects, attempting to show where each tradition differs or agrees on significant issues. This discussion will be confined to the consequential elements in the understanding of the meaning, purpose and development of spirituality. It will also highlight those issues that are most commonly discussed in contemporary literature on Christian spirituality.

2.1 Meaning and Purpose of Christian Spirituality

Four features stand out as important identifying marks in the understanding of meaning and purpose in Christian spirituality. These are i) knowledge of God as

relationship; ii) conformity to the image of Christ; iii) the Holy Spirit and grace; and iv) union with God. Only the last point, union with God, is exclusively a Catholic understanding of the goal towards which the Christian should strive. Although, as Houston notes, the Evangelical emphasis on "fellowship with God" could be an alternative to the Catholic focus on union (1993: personal notes).

2.1.1 Knowledge of God, understood as relationship

Both traditions agree that a central issue in Christian spirituality is knowledge of God, and understand that to mean a relationship with God that is intimate and personal. Without this relationship with God, there can be no genuine Christianity. It is also agreed that knowledge of God is meant to involve a relationship of love with God. Thus, Ewert Cousins maintains that there "is a primacy of love in Christian spirituality: love of God and neighbor, and God's love for the world" (in Hanson 1990: 43). John Wesley argued that "the perfection of love is the end of Christian living" (in Gordon 1991: 33), thus agreeing that love is central. Love, first and foremost of God, then of self, others and the creative order, undisputedly has primacy. However, the difference between the two traditions is seen in how this love is expressed. For the Anglo-Catholic loving God involves solitude with him in meditation and contemplation, while their activities have been more in the social arena than in evangelism. The Evangelical has placed a greater emphasis on loving God through evangelistic activity, often with little time for solitude and

contemplation, the daily Quiet Time taking the place of solitude. Despite this difference, there is place in each tradition for time alone with God and time in the world for God. There is no question that a spirituality that does not also lead us into the world of pain and suffering is not Christian, and neither is a spirituality that does not take time out to simply *be* in God's presence. This latter has been a serious weakness in much contemporary spirituality, especially Evangelical spirituality. There has been too great an emphasis on activity. As a result, truly loving God has been inadequate. Parker Palmer urges that we "recover from our spiritual tradition the models and methods of knowing as an act of love" (1983: 9).

Another obvious difference between the two traditions is the emphasis on the rational. This is important to the Evangelical, but not to the Anglo-Catholic. It means that knowledge of God tends to degenerate into knowing about God and having correct theological constructs, rather than knowing God in an intimate and personal relationship that results in changed lives. Transformation has always been the intention, even in Evangelical spirituality, as already noted in a previous chapter. When knowledge is purely rational it can mean that a person relates to ideas about God, rather than to the person of God. Whatever its problems, the rational emphasis has meant that learning biblical content has been significant to the evangelical wishing to grow in spirituality. By and large evangelicals do have a better knowledge and understanding of biblical

content than do Christians from other traditions. This emphasis is not one to be belittled or discarded. However, as Kelsey comments, "Knowing God through an exercise of logical reasoning does not always provide the same knowledge as overwhelming experience" (1972: 34). Because of the evangelical emphasis on the rational, knowing God has tended to be more of "an exercise in logical reasoning," even though evangelicals are taught that knowing God should be life transforming. Houston gently criticises the evangelical emphasis on the rational in his article, "The Independence Myth." He notes there that "emotional education of our inner lives" is a low priority in our churches. The church, he maintains appears to believe that building faith through logical inference can be a substitute for "the covenant bonds of love in Christ, and of fellowship with other believers" (1990: 32). Loving God is not as non-threatening as knowing about God. In one of his numerous books, Henri Nouwen refers to love as being difficult, and suggests that Christians often find substitutes to avoid "the hard task of loving" (1989: 59). Christian spirituality demands that we work at this hard task of loving. The emphasis in the Anglo-Catholic tradition on the heart rather than the head, can bring a balance into the Evangelical position. Knowing about God is as important as knowing God, as Sheldrake suggests in his remark that "the roots of Christian spirituality lie in seeking the answer to the question, 'what kind of god do we have?'" since "we live what we affirm" (1987: 11). The Psalmist makes an identical point in lines about idols,

idol-makers and worshippers. He claims, "Their makers become like them, and so do all who put their trust in them" (Psalm 115:8 REB). Knowing God as he has revealed himself and not as we think or would like him to be is thus essential. This highlights that each tradition is important with significant contributions to make to the other. There can be no relationship when there is a refusal to know about God, thus a rational approach has its proper place. But it is also true that there can be no loving-relationship when the primary focus is the pursuit of rational understanding of the knowledge of God. The whole person, with mind, emotions, intellect and physical, must enter into the relationship with God.

From the early Christians, both traditions can learn about the kataphatic and apophatic ways to understanding and relating to God. By and large, the Evangelical tradition ignores or rejects the kataphatic and apophatic traditions. The kataphatic suggests elements of idolatry since it relies on images and the use of the imagination. The apophatic seems to contradict the enlightenment given to the believer by the Spirit, and thus the promise given by Jesus that the Spirit will guide us into all truth (John 16:13). While both criticisms present us with caveats to be taken seriously, it does not mean that these traditions are to be rejected. God does speak through and uses images and the imagination, including dreams. But it is also true that God remains transcendent, totally other, and thus beyond human imaginations and images. He is truly the Great Mystery, and

must be approached with reverence at all times.

2.1.2 Conformity to Christ, understood as conformity to God/Christ's will

Perhaps the most important element that is common in both positions is the one of Christlikeness, and is generally understood to mean conformity to the will of God/Christ. Both traditions view this element as fundamental to Christian spirituality. All Christians are earnestly seeking ways to be more genuinely like Christ in his life, death and resurrection. It is, therefore, tragic that these two traditions have remained, to this day, so separate and critical of each other. If anything should bring Christians together it should be the desire to be more perfectly Christlike. A task of Christian education should be to enable the Christian and the local church to overcome the cultural problems of "which Jesus?" bringing us to a more authentic picture of the Jesus of the Gospels, as well as encouraging greater community between the different approaches to Christianity. It is worth noting here that evangelical Christian education in particular, sees Christlikeness as the essential purpose of Christian education, and thus this will be referred to in Part III.

2.1.3 The Holy Spirit and Grace, recognised as essential for spirituality

Another point of agreement in both traditions, though not generally self-evident, is that Christian spirituality is not a result of human endeavour, but is always a gift of God's grace through his Spirit. The importance of the Holy

Spirit and grace is more explicitly evident in Evangelical than in Anglo-Catholic spirituality. As already noted, it is not uncommon for an evangelical in particular, to judge Anglo-Catholic spirituality as attempting to achieve salvation through works. This is probably because an Anglo-Catholic spirituality has a more formal and detailed teaching on spiritual exercises than the Evangelical position. It is also a result of a different understanding of the Holy Spirit in the two traditions. Houston points out that the Catholic tradition has tended "to eclipse the role of the *person* of the Holy Spirit, and see the Holy Spirit more as an emanation of God" (1993: personal notes). He adds that, as a result, pneumatology has always been weak in Catholicism. This is not so in Evangelicalism. The emphasis on grace and the Holy Spirit has led the Evangelical to belittle the role of spiritual exercises. Discipline in practicing spiritual exercises must be kept in tension with the truth, as Hingley points out, that "the true prayer begins when we come to the end of our best efforts, and admit our helplessness to the Holy Spirit." Hingley also suggests that this is the teaching of Paul in Romans 8:26 (1990: 89). In other words, there are practical disciplines the Christian carries out, while at the same time he or she relies totally on God's grace. Such a reliance is always precarious as the desire for license or legalism is never far away, and thus it is always a matter of faith in God. Gordon aptly comments that since God's grace requires an active response, Christian spirituality "presupposes the practice of spiritual disciplines" (1991:

4). However, it should always be remembered, not only by those practicing spiritual exercises, but also by those teaching them, that "the activities constituting the disciplines have no value in themselves" (Willard 1988: 138). Their only value resides in God's gift of grace coming through his Spirit.

2.1.4 Union with God, understood as the pen-ultimate ~~purpose~~

The elements thus far discussed, while often interpreted or practiced differently, are common in both traditions. The point of greatest contention and misunderstanding is the Anglo-Catholic understanding of the ultimate goal of spirituality to be union with God. The purpose for being Christian is to achieve a union with God that is both perfect and final. However, union has been viewed as an elitist state only for a select few, which Houston points out, referring to St Teresa's seventh mansion in *The Interior Castle* as an example (1993: personal notes). Union with God is often described as being similar to the union of husband and wife in marriage, hence the popularity of the wedding love song in the Bible, Song of Songs. For the evangelical, union with God happens at the initial moment of conversion, rather than at some later stage in the person's journey of faith, and is usually referred to as fellowship with God. The entire Christian life is thus understood as being lived in union with God, that is, "in Christ", to use a common Pauline expression (cf Ephesians 1:7, 13, among others).

However, while union is understood as an accomplished fact, it still needs to be lived out in existential reality. This means that the evangelical is also, in the experiential sense, striving to achieve union with God. Houston, in his essay on spiritual reading, maintains that spiritual reading will help "us find intimate union with God" (in Edwards 1984: 189). He thereby acknowledges that union is something towards which the person strives. There is, thus, more general affinity between these two traditions than is usually recognised.

2.2 The Development of Christian Spirituality

The very fact that each tradition proposes disciplines to enable the Christian to grow in spiritual maturity and to achieve various goals, such as Christlikeness, union, relationship with God and others, suggests that both believe that spirituality is developmental, requiring a certain degree of discipline in the practice thereof. How development proceeds and should be practiced has numerous variations both within each tradition and between them.

2.2.1 Stages of spiritual development

While both traditions believe that spirituality is developmental, it is primarily the Anglo-Catholic tradition that recognises and teaches progressive stages in spiritual growth. Such a view allows a person to be a beginner, making mistakes, falling often and learning, but still progressing, albeit "slowly, silently". Teresa of Avila never expected beginners to be in the seventh mansion or at

the fourth water. John of the Cross anticipated that those desirous of growing intimacy with the Triune God, would first go through the painful experiences of the Dark Nights. The concept of stages also allowed a discerning spiritual guide to lead the directee through a process to growth.

The concept of stages is, by and large, absent in Evangelical spirituality, even though the Christian life is understood to be

a pilgrimage of learning, a voyage of discovery, in which our mistaken views are corrected, our distorted notions adjusted, our shallow opinions deepened and some of our vast ignorance dismissed (Stott in Gordon 1991: 298).

The beginner in the Christian life is often given the same instructions as the more mature Christian, with the same expectations placed on both. The daily Quiet Time of "reading the Bible and praying" is never meant to stop or change very radically. Little to no recognition is given to a beginning stage almost entirely different to later stages. Teresa's concept that stage one requires much labour and that stage four is nothing but enjoyment, is totally foreign in evangelicalism. While Jesus never gave specific teaching on stages in prayer, it seems that he too recognised that a beginner in prayer would need simple and basic forms. When asked by the disciples to be taught how to pray, Jesus' response was "When you pray, say. . ." (Luke 11:2). There followed what today is known as "the Lord's Prayer" or "the Our Father". The beginning stage, for Jesus, was simply reciting a set prayer. Presumably, this would change as the person progressed in the spiritual life, and certainly the prayers in the Pauline epistles bear witness to this. The

Evangelical insistence on a "once-for-all" conversion experience has tended to lead to a belief that perfection is instantaneous. There has, therefore, been little recognition given to the concept of growth through stages. The contemporary interest, especially in evangelical Christian education, in faith development, is introducing the concept of stages to evangelicalism, and the realisation of a gradual growth process.

Despite the lack of teaching in Evangelical spirituality on specific stages, there can be traced certain common elements between the two traditions. Regardless of Lovelace's suggestion that the three Ways of classical mysticism reverses the biblical order, Evangelical spirituality, especially in its foundational forms such as Pietism and Puritanism, was as equally concerned with purgation. Recognition of sin and repentance were equally crucial in true Evangelical spirituality, as in Anglo-Catholic spirituality. This was referred to in previous chapters on these two traditions. Both recognise the pervasiveness of sin and the consequent need for repentance and purgation. The primary differences between the two traditions lies in the fact that Evangelical spirituality did not establish this as an essential beginning stage. Lovelace claims this to be true, remarking that the awareness of God's holiness and our sin are always preconditions for personal renewal (1985: 20). This implies that the purgative way is a way the Christian constantly returns to. This same point is implied in Bishop Ryle's assertion that growing in grace

means that the person's "sense of sin is becoming deeper, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, his love more extensive, his spiritual mindedness more marked" (in Gordon 1991: 216). The Evangelical tradition would be greatly enhanced with a more formal understanding of stages, seeing purgation as one stage, always with us, but to be followed by other stages. It is worth noting that evangelical Christian education in the United States has become very developmental. However, their understanding of developmentalism is drawn, not from the early Christian tradition, but from the contemporary behavioural sciences. This means that it is psychological rather than theological. Therefore, Piaget, Kohlberg, Eriksson and others become their source. This is seen in the work of James Fowler, *Stages of Faith*. His book is considered seminal and is used extensively, but it is founded upon the behavioural sciences rather than the Christian tradition of theology. It forms a major part of Perry Downs' soon to be published manuscript on Christian education from an evangelical perspective (1993: unpublished copy).

2.2.2 *Disciplines for spiritual development*

To the casual observer, the practice of spiritual disciplines greatly varies in each tradition. But a closer examination reveals that there is much in common between them. For both traditions growth requires the disciplined practice of spiritual exercises which revolve around scripture and prayer. The evangelical, Bishop Ryle, believed that "Christian growth is a result of disciplined toil and

self-exertion." According to Ryle, the spiritual disciplines of "prayer, Bible study, regular attendance at worship, corporate prayer, listening to sermons and taking Holy Communion" (in Gordon 1991: 222) are obligatory. Those in the Anglo-Catholic tradition might use different terminology, but would not fault the essence of Ryle's contention. Both traditions exhort their followers to centre their spiritual life around scripture and prayer. It is how scripture and prayer are used that gives each tradition their distinguishing marks, and these will be explained.

The evangelical approach to prayer and scripture is influenced by their emphasis on the rational and activity. Because of the emphasis on the rational, scripture must be understood. This means that the important question to use when reading scripture is: "What does it mean?" Bible study takes precedence over meditation and contemplation. Although, as noted earlier, Bible study should lead to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. A second significant question with which evangelicals approach the Bible relates to the emphasis on activity. Evangelicals are encouraged to study the Bible and, in doing so, to ask, "What must I do?" This often becomes the only question, as a result, Bible reading tends to focus on the epistles, rather than other biblical passages, including the Gospels, Psalms and most of the Old Testament. The 'doing' question is most readily answered in the numerous imperatives of the New Testament Epistles that relate more specifically to present Christian

living. The narrative, poetry and prophecy of the rest of the Bible, while considered important, to be read regularly, are not nearly as popular as the Epistles. The questions of meaning and doing are almost impossible to answer from other sections of the Bible. For instance, the latter chapters of Ezekiel, concerned with the building of a new temple in Jerusalem, has baffled the best Old Testament scholars through the ages, let alone the 'ordinary' Christian, and has little, if any applicable value for today's Christian. To approach this section of the Bible with the question, 'what must I do?' is to make a mockery of these chapters and of the spiritual exercise of Bible reading.

The rational and activism emphases of evangelicals also affects how they pray. As Parker notes, prayer consist primarily of "petition and intercession" (1991: 132). It is not unusual to describe prayer as 'talking to God,' where 'talk' consists of petition and intercession. The Bible is used to help a person know how to petition and intercede aright. Many of the petitions relate directly to the activities the evangelical is involved in or concerned with. While adoration and confession are understood to be crucial aspects of prayer, proportionately they form a very small part of the evangelical prayer.

These two emphases on understanding and doing have given the evangelical an advantage. Biblical literacy is usually higher and active Christian ministries more numerous among evangelicals than in other Christian traditions. The great disadvantage has been that evangelicals tend to lack

intimate, whole person experiences with the living God.

The Anglo-Catholic emphasis on meditation and contemplation, and thus on being, can greatly enhance, and be itself enhanced by the Evangelical position. Scripture is approached, not with the all important meaning and doing questions. Rather, if there is a prior question, it is "Who is our God?" and "How can I love him more meaningfully?" Thus, meditation, which actively involves the imagination in the scenes and words of the passage, offering them back to God in prayer, often leads to contemplation, or "the prayer of quiet". In this prayer, the mind is at rest, nothing apparent is happening, and yet loving encounter with God takes place. Prayer consists more of adoration and confession, than of petition and intercession.

CONCLUSION

In both traditions, scripture and prayer form the focal point of spirituality. Both traditions, as stated, can and must learn from each other. Bible study without meditation and contemplation will be nothing more than an intellectual exercise with an accompanying accumulation of biblical facts, provided the participant remembers what he or she has learnt. Meditation and contemplation without the enrichment of bible study could degenerate into a sentimental exercise that might make the participant feel good, but will not enable him or her to truly love God. This means that the evangelical church of South Africa dare not isolate and separate itself from the understandings of the

Anglo-Catholic traditions if it desires a genuine spiritual formation of its members.

PART III

AN INTEGRATION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY: SOME GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Christian education and Christian spirituality, while often discussed as separate disciplines, have much in common. In fact, the two cannot really be separated as has so often happened, both in practice and in the literature. In the contemporary climate of Western Christianity this is changing, as is evidenced by the gradual growth of literature and practice attempting to bring the two together. There is also today, as already noted, a greater awareness that "Spirituality is not a sub-division of Christian discipleship. It is the root, the source, the life" (Leech 1992: 17).

For some, such as the Quaker, Parker Palmer, education in and of itself is a spiritual activity since it does bring about transformation (1993: personal conversation). But this only highlights the need for a Christian education to incorporate and integrate the teachings and practice of Christian spirituality so that Christian transformation takes place. But it is equally important for Christian spirituality to be underpinned with Christian education, that is with the teachings of Christianity and the traditions of the church. This is so because of the nature of spirituality in general. As Leech cautions us, "The spiritual world is

not universally benign. Without careful cultivation and discipline, it can be extremely dangerous" (1992: 3). One of those dangers, according to Leech is the temptation for spirituality to become an illusion, failing to engage in reality and deal with the issues of justice and righteousness in our own individual lives as well as in the society in which we live (Leech 1992: 3), so crucial to the contemporary South African context. Another obvious danger is ignorance and thus attempting spiritual disciplines without knowledge of the Christian faith. Ignorance can easily lead a person astray, and when the person is involved in spiritual matters, such as meditation, this can be extremely dangerous, as Leech suggests. It is, therefore essential that Christian education and Christian spirituality be integrated in the local church. It is also essential as education without spirituality often becomes a mere intellectual exercise without any true encounter with the living God. As Leech rightly insists, "It is vital that we work to end the gulf between academia and the life of prayer, between head and heart, between 'rational' discourse and devotional life. . . ." (1992: 236). In this thesis I contend that this will happen when spirituality is taken more seriously in Christian education.

In this section, I will present some guidelines for this integration to take place, specifically within the South African Evangelical church. However, before making those suggestions, it will be helpful to draw from the previous chapters and highlight the already existing commonalities

between these two areas under discussion. This will form the basis for chapter 8 and give the underlying perspective for the final chapter in this thesis.

CHAPTER 8

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND SPIRITUALITY

INTRODUCTION

The gap between Christian education and Christian spirituality is not at all wide. There is much that already exists within each of these areas that is common to both. For the purpose of my thesis, I will highlight primarily two basic areas of commonality -- that of purpose and practice. Within each of these areas, I will briefly refer back to some of the components of spirituality that are most reflective of the Evangelical church.

1. Common Purposes

A number of purposes are common in both Christian education and Christian spirituality. In this section, I will refer to only four that have particular reference to the Evangelical tradition. These are i) conformity to the image of Christ, ii) knowledge of God, understood as relationship; iii) growth to maturity; and iv) service in the world.

1.1 Conformity to the Image of Christ

A concern of the Christian church down through the ages has been the need to live in conformity to Christ's image. This was not discussed specifically as a purpose in this thesis, since it is subsumed under a greater purpose. However, it

is often stated as the purpose of Evangelical Christian educators. Lawrence Richards stands as an outstanding example, even retitling his definitive work on Christian education as *Christian Education: Seeking to be Like Christ*. This purpose was considered to be the most important element common to both Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic spirituality, in fact an element common to traditional Christianity regardless of culture or generation. It has been understood by the Christian church to be the purpose for which God ordained us (see Romans 8:29 and Ephesians 5:1).

The problems related to what it means to be like Christ, and even with "which Christ" need to be addressed effectively within the local Church. This is most certainly a problem for Christian education to take seriously. Here in South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, fundamentalism is on the increase. Christian fundamentalism has always offered a simplistic understanding of what it means to be like Christ, as is evidenced in the approach followed by Accelerated Christian Education. This approach, perceives Christlikeness to consist in following distinct character traits Jesus supposedly possessed. Such a perception leads to legalism, the antithesis of genuine Christlikeness. This was discussed in a previous chapter.

There is also the danger of posing Jesus in cultural guise, as Melvin Tinker describes in his article, wondering "which Jesus?" is a person to be like. A person's picture of Jesus, maintains Tinker, can be as culturally bound as the

"Gentleman Jesus" of Victorian England (Tinker 1987: 9). One could also add the cultural "Mr Nice Guy" Jesus of the United States, or the revolutionary Jesus of many oppressed people of the world, including South Africans. While it is true that Christian spirituality, and therefore Christian education, should be concerned with the liberation of the oppressed, and those genuinely seeking to be like Jesus, will be concerned with justice and mercy, this must not be understood in terms of a contemporary revolutionary. Just as Jesus is not a British "Victorian Gentleman" nor an American "Mr Nice Guy", so too he is not a revolutionary in the contemporary violent understanding of that concept.

However, since Jesus came specifically to "proclaim release for prisoners. . . to let the broken victims go free" (Luke 4:18 REB), and being Christian means enjoying the freedom that God gives (Galatians 5:1), it also means that a spirituality of education, to be Christian and relevant to South Africa, will, by its very nature, be liberative, concerned with the liberation from oppression both external and internal, societal and political, church and gender domination. A Christian education that takes seriously the teachings of Christian spirituality will also be concerned with teaching the truth concerning what it means to be like Christ. This will mean seeking to be honest about our cultural bondages and personal biases.

1.2 Knowing God in Intimate Relationship

A second common purpose is the desire to know God in

intimate, personal relationship. Not only is this the common goal in both Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic spirituality, it is also the concern of Christian education. It forms an important part of Thomas Groome's seminal work on religious education, *Christian Religious Education*. He reiterates this in his latest work, *Sharing Faith*, writing, "the heart of the Christian faith is not a dogma" but Jesus Christ whom Christians are to know in a relational sense (1991: 440). The Evangelical, James Houston, makes a similar point, referred to in an earlier chapter, stating that love, rather than knowledge is essential for our well-being (1992B: 191). This was also discussed as important to an understanding of what it means to be Christian. And, if a purpose of Christian education can be understood as enabling people to be priests to our God, then knowledge of God is cardinal.

However, knowledge of God can never be isolated from knowledge of self, others and the world. One of the tragedies of Evangelical Christianity in this country has been its tendency to avoid knowing the world. It thus failed to deal with the oppressive structures in our society, since it failed to discern what was really happening. In teaching the Bible and even theology, it failed to teach the relation of that to the society in which we live in ways that were authentically relevant to this country. It is encouraging to note, as Leech does, that there have been recent changes among evangelicals in this country, who now attack, not only apartheid, but also "the

pietism that has justified oppression" (Leech 1992: 36).

A Christian education concerned with spiritual formation will seek to foster deep personal relationship with God, self and others. In other words, it will seek for what Parker Palmer refers to as "wholesight". This is allowing the whole self, empathy, intuition, compassion, faith, reason and sense "to know in relationship" (Palmer 1983: 54). This will mean that participants in the educational process in the church need to be taught truths about God in ways that leads to relationship with the Triune God, others and themselves, as well as nature. I will return to this point in the final chapter as it is crucial.

1.3 Growth to Maturity

Both Evangelical Christian spirituality and Evangelical Christian education are concerned with growth towards maturity. Paul's description of his ministry of teaching given in Colossians is taken seriously. Paul there writes, "We teach everyone. . . so as to present each one of you as a mature member of Christ's body" (Colossians 1:28 REB). For the Ephesians, Paul desired that they would "no longer be children", easily led astray or duped by false teaching, but instead that they would "fully grow up into Christ" (Ephesians 4:14-15 REB).

While it was suggested that growth to maturity as a purpose of Christian spirituality could lead to self-absorption, and should rather be seen as a benefit than a purpose, it remains true that the Christian educator should be concerned

with enabling others to move on to maturity. Christian education will need to teach people the content in ways that bring about genuine maturity, and thus spiritual formation and transformation.

As already discussed, how maturity is defined does vary. Whatever else it means, it will always involve change from areas of comfort and the known, into areas that are unknown and that are, therefore, uncomfortable. Since change is both desirable and dreaded, an important need of the Christian educator is to come alongside in compassion, showing mercy rather than sacrifice (cf Matthew 9: 13), giving the encouragement and teaching to help people move into those new areas of growth. It is at this point that an understanding of faith/spiritual development becomes so helpful, as well as the role of educator as spiritual guide. I will return to this at a later point.

1.4 Service into the world

Evangelical Christian education and spirituality have always been concerned with Christian service. One of the dangers, as already noted, has been the tendency for this emphasis on service to become mere activism with little time for reflection and contemplation. It has almost become a status symbol to experience "burn-out" due to "burning the candle at both ends". It has also been true that in the Evangelical church, service has been understood in rather limited terms in recent times. Thus, only "proclamation" of the Gospel, in various forms of preaching, teaching and

witnessing, has been encouraged. Weightier matters of justice and mercy, both in society and the church, have been neglected as a result.

A Christian education that seeks to incorporate Christian spirituality must lead people to recognise that service as priests for God in the world today, is far more than "proclamation". It will also need to address the evangelical problem in the West, also evidenced in South African churches, of activism. "Burning the candle at both ends" is not conducive to spiritual formation. Service, in whatever forms it takes, requires skills of critical reflection accompanied with prayer and meditation, and will lead to matters of justice and mercy. This means that Christian spirituality must be "incarnated". According to Magesa, this is the spirituality that is needed in Africa. He claims that Africa needs a spirituality that "acts and so offers tangible results in terms, that is, of bringing about peace, justice and reconciliation among men [women] just as Jesus came to do" (in Shorter 1978: 74).

While these four common purposes are not the only purposes in Christian education and Christian spirituality, they represent the interests of evangelicalism, and thus have important consequences for the Evangelical church in South Africa. I will refer to them again in the final chapter, showing how they give direction for a Christian education that seeks to incorporate Christian spirituality.

2. Common Practices

A number of practices stand out as common in both Christian education and Christian spirituality. These will be briefly highlighted at this stage, with more detail given in the final chapter on guidelines. The areas of common practice most within the Evangelical tradition are i) the role of scripture; ii) the role of the Holy Spirit and grace; iii) the role of the educator/spiritual director; and iv) the understanding of development.

2.1 The Role of Scripture

Suffice it to stress at this point that scripture is considered to be central in both Christian education and Christian spirituality. It forms both the means to and the content of Christian spirituality. It is also God's revelation to us for today. As Groome notes,

Though the Bible is in human language and reflects the cultural mores in which it first emerged, it is an inspired and normative source of God's word of this faith community; access to it can be a revelatory event of divine-human encounter for people in the present (1991: 434).

In other words, Christian spirituality with its meditative and contemplative approach to scripture, reminds us that a purely rational approach that teaches content for the sake of content is not good enough. Education needs to integrate into its teaching process the elements of meditation and contemplation which involve the whole person with emotions and desires, not just the intellect. This will mean including elements of silence and reflection, rather than a concentration on words spoken out loud. More detail on

scripture in Christian education will be given in the next chapter.

2.2 The Role of the Holy Spirit and Grace

Because the purpose of Christian education is understood in this thesis to be one of enabling people to be priests for God in the world today, it presupposes the absolute necessity of the Spirit and grace of God. There is no being a priest to God apart from the Spirit. There is also no Christian spirituality without the Spirit and grace of God. It is significant that Leech concludes his most recent book on spirituality with many common themes with those presented by Groome in the conclusion to his recent book on Christian education. One of those common themes is the role of the Holy Spirit. Groome writes, "Christian religious educators are to employ pedagogical processes that reflect the conviction that the Holy Spirit is the dynamic source of people's faith" (1991: 441). And Leech claims that the important factor in spirituality is the recognition that "all Christian life is charismatic, graced by the Spirit," and that without this there can be no Christian spirituality (1992: 229). The pedagogical process in Christian education must be aware of this and rely on the Spirit. This will mean that both the educator and those being taught will need to take seriously Paul's instruction to the Ephesians to "let the Holy Spirit fill you" (Ephesians 5:18 REB), the misunderstandings and various interpretations notwithstanding. This should be axiomatic. However, too many books on Christian education, even those from an

Evangelical perspective, fail to take cognisance of the vital role of the Spirit. In *A Theology of Christian Education*, Richards only refers to the Spirit in his final chapter entitled "The Supernatural in Christian Education". It is two pages in length in a book of over 300 pages.

2.3 The Role of the Educator/Spiritual Director

Christian education, particularly within the Evangelical church, has too often failed to recognise that the role of the educator has much in common with that of the spiritual director in Christian spirituality. However, Christian educators are frequently encouraged to develop personal relationships with those they teach with the intention of enabling them to grow on to Christlikeness, or whatever purpose the educator has chosen. This is the intention of spiritual direction. A more positive approach to spiritual direction within Christian education could greatly enhance the benefits of the pedagogical task. In other words, the Christian educator can and should learn from the spiritual tradition of direction and integrate this into the pedagogical process. Since Christian education is most frequently a group affair, rather than the more common one-to-one of spiritual direction, it can also teach and encourage the group in the ways of spiritual direction. This would mean each person listening to and supporting each other. Group spiritual direction does receive much support from the Shalem Institute in Washington D.C., although very little is written on this practice.

2.4 *The understanding of development*

Christian spirituality has always been concerned with developing "spiritually mature" people who are growing in relationship to God. From the very earliest literature, men and women have suggested various stages that people either naturally go through, such as those suggested by von Hugel, or should be encouraged to go through, as in the classic *Three Ways*, as discussed in chapter five. More recently, Christian education has begun to take seriously the findings of the behavioural sciences related to stages of development within people's lives. James Fowler made use of this work to develop his theory on faith development, detailed in his book, *Stages of Faith*. This has led to a growth in research and understanding in Christian education on faith development, with an accompanying encouragement to use this research as a guide in bringing people to Christian maturity.

In other words, Christian education has realised what Christian spirituality has always known, that people develop in stages and need different things at different stages. Since spirituality has been working with stages for centuries, and Christian education has only begun to use it, the latter can learn much from the approach of spirituality.

CONCLUSION

Since there are these common areas of purpose and practice, it seems natural that Christian education should be more alert to the tradition of Christian spirituality and thus be

more deliberately involved in spiritual formation.

These areas of common purpose and practice form a vital bridge between education and spirituality in the Christian tradition. This chapter began with the caution from Kenneth Leech to avoid the danger of separating head and heart. Christian education, both in the church and in theological institutions, that fails to take seriously the spiritual nature of the task, and thus fails to learn from the tradition of Christian spirituality, is in danger of presenting a "one-sided" affair. Richards choice of a socialisation approach to education in the church was to avoid this happening. In this thesis, I am suggesting that it is the integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education that is needed, rather than a different approach. In other words, no approach, however innovative and courageous will have the desired outcome of spiritual formation unless the traditions of spirituality are taken seriously. Palmer supports this, suggesting that the numerous innovations in teaching techniques ultimately fail since they are an attempt "to change the form of teaching without altering its content." He then adds, "To find a better medium we must find a better message" (Palmer 1983: 30). For Palmer this message is not objective facts but truth, where truth is understood in terms of relationship with the one who claimed, "I am truth" (John 14:6). This is the goal of Christian spirituality, and thus the task of Christian education.

CHAPTER 9

GUIDELINES FOR AN INTEGRATION OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY IN TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

As already discussed, there is much in common between Christian education and Christian spirituality. Integrating the two should not, therefore, be a difficult task. In this section I will present a number of guidelines and suggestions that have arisen out of this research. I will also relate them specifically to the South African Evangelical church. However, it must be noted that since this thesis is concerned with spirituality and education, and since these are universal concerns with universal applications in many instances, these guidelines are not always exclusively or specifically related to the South African church. This is also deliberate as the church needs the constant reminder that it is a part of a universal body, even though its primary interest is with its own context and community.

For the sake of clarity, I have chosen to present these guidelines under four basic points: i) the necessity of handing on the faith through teaching; ii) the necessity of worship of God in the world; iii) the necessity of a community of faith that bears witness to its teaching and worship; and iv) the necessity of service in the world (see

Groome 1991: 444-445). While these are not exclusively the domain of Christian education but rather of the church as a whole, I will highlight those areas where Christian education could be particularly involved. I will also show throughout how these four points are related to a purpose of Christian education that focuses on priesthood as described in Part I.

1. The Necessity of Handing on the Faith Through Teaching

Christians of all traditions and cultures recognise that the Christian faith must faithfully be taught and handed down from generation to generation, from person to person. In recent tradition, this has fallen into the domain of Christian education. The very term 'education' implies that there is a teaching-learning, that is pedagogical, task involved. Christian spirituality can inform more precisely how this teaching-learning process takes place so that spiritual formation takes place. As noted in Part I, the term 'Christian' implies a spiritual activity needing to be rooted in the Christian tradition, while the term 'education' roots the task in a broader tradition that includes the so-called 'secular' sciences. The Evangelical tradition, as already noted, has always recognised that the primary source for teaching the Christian faith is the Bible. While other traditions also stress church tradition, as in the Catholic Church, or the contemporary context, as in liberation theologies, by and large Evangelicals have turned solely to scripture. *Sola scriptura* was an important dogma of the 17th century Reformation, and remains central

to contemporary evangelicalism, as already discussed. It is not my purpose to discuss the merits or pitfalls of this, but to recognise it as an important Evangelical feature, that plays a central role both in education and spirituality in the Evangelical tradition. Because of this, I will here concentrate on scripture, which is not to deny the place of tradition or context, giving suggestions for how it should be used in the church that desires to integrate education with spirituality. I will here consider that the church needs to recognise the authoritative nature, primary purpose, genre and cultural context of scripture, as well as the contemporary context where scripture is being taught.

1.1 Recognise the Authority of Scripture

An important starting point for the Evangelical is with the recognition and acceptance of the authority of scripture. Evangelicals, along with Christians from other traditions, take seriously the claim that "all scripture is inspired". While there are varying interpretations of that statement, it is generally agreed that it means that scripture is authoritative and normative for Christian living. This means that the self-disclosure of God is not merely the ideas of human personalities, but the revelation to them from God himself. This stresses the fact that scripture should be taught with reverence. It is a task that should be taken seriously in the Church. James, in his epistle seeks to emphasise this, warning his readers, "My friends, not many of you should become teachers, for you may be certain that we who teach will ourselves face severer

judgement" (James 3:1 REB).

Because scripture is authoritative it requires not only the content-oriented input of education but also the meditative and reflective approach of spirituality. However, the fact that it is authoritative does not mean that it must be taught in authoritative ways that enslave people rather than liberate them. When scripture is taught authoritatively in domineering ways, or in a way that disallows for any possibility of the teacher being wrong, in other words taught too finally, it places the learners in positions of oppression and domination. When the approach is merely content oriented, with either a lecture or discussion type presentation, there is the danger that the material presented becomes dogmatic and oppressive since it fails to allow others to critically reflect and relate to their own particular situations. The meditative and contemplative approaches of spirituality would help to balance that. Palmer suggests that "prayer and contemplation draw me into becoming a participant" (1983: 18), rather than a passive spectator. For this to happen, scripture should be taught in ways that provide opportunity for silent meditation that is then critically reflected upon with the educator, or other participants, acting as spiritual guide/s, as people struggle to come to a relationship of greater integrity with Jesus Christ. Recognising the authority of scripture means taking seriously its role in spiritual formation, and thus in the developing relationship with Christ.

1.2 Recognise the Primary Purpose of Scripture

A second important element in the teaching of scripture is related to an understanding of its primary purpose. Scripture is more than the content of the Christian faith, authoritative for living. It does give content to our faith, just as it also gives guidelines for living out that faith in the world. The primary purpose of scripture goes beyond both of these. It is first and foremost God's self-disclosure, thus its primary purpose is to make God known. It is thus scripture in particular that teaches the church who God is. Scripture has revealed God as both "Transcendent Mystery and Immanent Love" (Groome 1991: 432). This stresses two important factors. Firstly, as Transcendent Mystery, God is unknowable to finite human beings. Unless God had given a self-disclosure, men and women would have no way of knowing him. Since knowing God is so cardinal to both Christian education and Christian spirituality, learning from scripture is essential. But secondly, since scripture also reveals God as Immanent Love, it means that God desires to be known and to enter into personal relations with humanity, to whom he has revealed himself. God is knowable precisely because he both desires to be known out of his infinite love, and because he invites this by revealing, in part, his Mystery.

A Christian education that seeks to integrate Christian spirituality and thus promote spiritual formation, will learn from the spiritual tradition of the Christian heritage that God is Mystery, only knowable as he reveals himself to us, and that scripture is the primary source of that

revelation. This will affect the way Christian education takes place in the local church.

Since God is Transcendent Mystery no particular denomination or individual can claim to have absolute certainty of who God is and how he will act in certain situations. God is far greater than our ideas about him. The educator desiring spirituality must approach any teaching of God with a deep sense of reverence as well as with an open mind, giving people the freedom to question and doubt as they move towards greater spiritual maturity. Dogmatic teaching not only leaves people in error when error is there, but also reinforces oppressive structures, devaluing the worth and dignity of each person.

Not only do we teach about God with reverence, scripture must be taught in ways that reveal rather than hide God. This means that the prior question with which to approach and teach scripture is: What does this reveal about God? and How can I relate more personally to this God? Thus, the first concern is with questions of *being*, that is, they are ontic questions. Much contemporary Christian education either follows the questions of: What does this mean? or: What does it say I must do? or both, in other words, the *meaning* and *doing* questions. For instance, Richards' choice of a socialisation model for doing Christian education reflects his dissatisfaction with much Evangelical education that emphasised the meaning of the text but failed to bring about transformed lives. Richards suggested that a socialisation approach would bring the two together.

However, as is evidenced in his book on teaching the Bible, *Creative Bible Teaching*, Richards' primary concern is with the doing question, a reflection of contemporary Western culture.

Since scripture is revelation of God, the prior question must always be: What does it reveal about God? with the accompanying question: How do I relate more intimately to this God so revealed? In other words, the prior question is an ontological one. While the meaning and doing questions are important, and should not be neglected, they are not the prior questions. Christian spirituality with its teaching on prayer, contemplation and meditation can inform and enliven Christian education. Since spirituality is concerned with being it can guide the educator into an approach that is ontic rather than merely rational or active. However, Christian education greatly assets Christian spirituality precisely because it has been concerned with the questions of meaning and doing. First, it helps spirituality avoid the danger of blundering into an incorrect understanding of God. The Christian who seeks to relate to God, but fails to come to understand the God to whom they seek to relate, is in serious trouble. It is also true that meditation that lacks the insight of the biblical concern for meaning is impoverished. But secondly, the concern with doing helps avoid the danger of remaining detached from the real world in which we live. In other words, it helps the Christian avoid living in an illusory, esoteric world that has no contact with the real world. Thus Christian education that

integrates Christian spirituality will focus on being: Who is God and How do I relate to him, placing the meaning and doing questions as secondary. It should also be noted here that the question related to who God is will automatically need to also ask: What does this mean? However, the doing question will often not need to be asked at all. As people grow in their experiential knowledge of God, they will need less and less to ask: What must I do? They will know because they know God.

1.3 Recognise the Literary Genre and Cultural Context of Scripture

As already noted in chapter 8, scripture comes to us reflecting the cultural context of its day and in divergent literary genres. The most common genres being narrative, poetry and prophecy, with much of the New Testament being in the form of epistles. To teach scripture without recognising this is both dishonest and defeatist. It is dishonest, since it overlooks an obvious truth, and defeatist since to ignore these facts would mean that error will result from the teaching-learning process rather than truth and growth in Christian spirituality.

Not only does this recognition affect the meaning of the text, it also determines how it should be taught. It is not appropriate to only take a rational approach to scripture as though it were all systematic text or that the cultural differences were unimportant. This has been the problem of much Evangelical education with their emphasis on the rational in spirituality. This has meant that the genre, in

particular, becomes secondary, often even ignored. Thus stories are forced into a systematic outline presenting basic points rather than approached as story, unfolding a human and divine drama.

1.3.1 The literary genres

As already noted, scripture comes in a variety of literary genres. The Old Testament is predominantly in narrative, poetic and prophetic form, while the New Testament consists of narrative, in the Gospels and Acts, and epistle form. Scripture is not in the form of systematic text so conducive to the Western rational approach. Its genres invite the whole person, which Palmer describes as being "empathy, intuition, compassion, faith, reason and senses" (1983: 54), into interaction. The rational approach that forces scripture into systematic forms, not only distorts the meaning of scripture, but also impoverishes the learner. Thus, recognising and making the most of the various literary genres is essential. Because of this importance for an integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education, I will briefly describe the primary genres and relate this to the South African context.

1.3.1.1 Story

Story is a vital medium of communication among, particularly the African people of South Africa. It therefore should be an indispensable source for spiritual formation within the evangelical church in this country. Not only is story vital to the South African culture, it is also, as Palmer

suggests, "the essential nature of scripture," rather than the systematic text of Western culture (Palmer undated: 12). This means that scripture "allows us to reflect on our experience and recover the meaning of our lives" (Palmer undated: 12). This is so since stories allow for greater interaction between the characters in the story and those involved in the teaching-learning process.

A classic example of this is found in the life of David after his affair with Bathsheba. The prophet Nathan is sent by God to bring David to a recognition of his sin. Rather than systematically explain to David his sin, Nathan chose to do this through the medium of story. The response is dramatic. David enters into the characters of the story, thus feeling as they would feel and is outraged that a wealthy farmer could show such oppression to the poor helpless farmer. He has no difficulty recognising that Nathan's indictment, "You are the man" was true, thus David can confess, "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Samuel 11 & 12 REB).

The kataphatic approach to meditation allows for this to happen in people's lives as it encourages a meditation that identifies with the scene in personal ways. It teaches Christian adults how to use the story form and benefit from it by drawing him or her into living encounters with the Living God. Christian education that incorporates Christian spirituality will seek to use the stories of scripture in ways that encourage this kind of whole-person identification, and thus allows for scripture to speak

directly to all of life. In this way 'wholesight' can become a reality, since the text invites us into relationship, rather than into mere intellectual discussions or accumulation of facts.

1.3.1.2 Poetry

A second important genre in scripture is that of poetry. Not only is it found in the Old Testament books traditionally referred to as poetry, but also in many of the prophetic books as well. Poetry is primarily emotional and thus encourages the Christian to move away from a purely rational approach to scripture and enter into the emotions of the poem. Poetry invites the reader to express the emotions of fear, hatred, love, joy, sorrow, and many more. This suggests that the Psalms should be taught not with the sole intention of understanding what the Psalmist was attempting to say, but rather to enter into the emotions of the Psalm. This would mean rejoicing with the Psalms of joy, and weeping with those of lament. Such an approach would also allow for the lost prayer-form of lament. The spirituality of the Christian heritage has affirmed again and again that living the Christian life will always involve experiences of darkness and dryness. It is crucial, as Leech reminds us, that we enable people to build up "resources to live with darkness and desolation" (1992: 203). Particularly here in South Africa, as we live amidst increasing violence and struggle does it become essential that we learn to creatively live with the struggle, with all its pain and suffering. The prayer-form of much of the

Psalter, the lament, is one means that can help people to live their Christian lives in the midst of struggle and violence. Leech suggests that "Lamentation is a necessary part of the spirituality of justice making. It is the flip side of resistance" (1992: 203). Reading the Psalms for what they are, poetry and often lament, can enable people to deal with the struggle of being Christian, and therefore human, in contemporary South Africa.

1.3.1.3 Prophecy

If the Poetry of scripture allows us to lament the struggles and injustices of life, the prophetic scriptures allow us to speak out against these. Prophecy is a reminder that God does not tolerate sin, in whatever form it takes. That in fact, God frequently speaks out against sin and warns of coming judgement. A Christian education for spirituality will need to teach the prophetic sections of scripture with honesty and integrity, taking seriously that God is against sin in all its forms. This will mean admitting that much of this section of scripture is difficult to understand, but overall it presents a view of God that is against injustice and oppression. It presents a view of God that is difficult to tolerate at times. It will require meditation and contemplation, both in solitude and community to accept and submit to. Learning from the tradition of spirituality will mean using silence creatively in the teaching-learning process. As Leech remarks, "Truth is rarely revealed in a straightforward or unproblematic way" (1992: 202), hence the need for silent attention to God's Word. And since the

prophetic sections are the most problematic, this is where a greater attention in the silence is needed.

1.3.1.4 Epistles

A fourth genre is that found in the New Testament alone, the epistle or letter writing form. The epistles of the New Testament have always been a focal point of Evangelical teaching, often to the neglect of other sections of scripture. The epistles lend themselves to systematic study far more readily than do the other genres of scripture, and thus they appeal to the rational emphasis. The Epistles also give specific teaching that is more related to the church of today. A Christian education seeking to integrate Christian spirituality will seek to avoid the purely rational approach to the epistles by teaching the spiritual disciplines of meditation and contemplation in silence, in community and in solitude.

1.3.2 *The cultural context*

Suffice it here to say that the cultural context of the scriptures has very little in common with the cultural contexts in which they are taught. While the African culture in particular, has many points of similarity, such as the emphasis on community rather than the individual, the culture of scripture still differs and needs to be understood and addressed. It is beyond my scope here to discuss this in detail. My intention is to stress that a Christian education that takes teaching Bible seriously, with spiritual formation as its goal, must recognise the

cultural differences and struggle with interpretation.

Recognising the literary genres and cultural contexts of scripture will enable the educator to more effectively promote spiritual formation within the church in South Africa, since it will enable him or her to more faithfully present the teachings of scripture.

1.4 Understand the Contemporary Context

The spiritual traditions developed as a result of men and women of God struggling to live in relationship to God and their world. They recognised that living in relationship to God can never be isolated from living in relationship to the world around us. The way scripture is handled must always reflect the contemporary culture and address the issues within that culture. Since this is a point that has been well discussed in the contextual theology writings, as well as the liberation theologies, and is an ongoing discussion of many scholars today, I will not discuss it in any detail. My intention here is to rather stress that a Christian education that seeks to integrate Christian spirituality will take seriously the context in which it is operating, so that Christians come to more faithful responses to God's Word for this world today.

The Christian faith is handed on through the teaching given in the church. Since the Evangelical church teaches primarily from the Bible, it is necessary for it to teach and use it responsibly by recognising its authoritative nature, its prior purpose to reveal God, its various

literary genres and cultural contexts, as well as understanding the contemporary context in which it is being taught. Along with this, the church educator should also be aware of and use the ways of Christian spirituality in the approach to scripture, such as meditation and contemplation, as discussed in chapter eight.

2. The Necessity of Worship of God in the World

Not only will an education that seeks to integrate the traditions of Christian spirituality take seriously the task of teaching the faith, but also the importance of worship in the faith community. Education for Christian spirituality cannot be divorced from the worship of the church. While education, by its very nature, will focus on and emphasise the teaching-learning aspects, it will also seek to find ways to worship that continue to teach and thus to promote Christian spirituality. In other words, it will take seriously the purpose to enable people to be priests to God in the world. A task of priesthood will always be the worship of God.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to deal with worship in a thorough study. At this point I would only highlight how worship can be a means of allowing education to be more specifically spiritual in the Christian sense.

Worship invites people into the presence of the true God, to recognise, acknowledge and submit to his Transcendent Greatness. As the spiritual traditions recognised, this God is both Transcendent Mystery and Immanent Love. Because he

is transcendent we cannot control him, neither can we know him except as he has chosen to reveal himself to us. Therefore we worship a God who is way beyond humanity. But, because he is immanent, we are able to enter into his presence without fear, knowing that we will receive "mercy and find grace to give us timely help" (Hebrews 4:16 REB).

An important form of worship in the gathered faith community within the Evangelical church is music. This is even more important in the African culture. As discussed in chapter four, music is vital to both corporate and individual spiritual development in the evangelical church. Christian education in South Africa that seeks to be both educative and spiritual, will find ways to more creatively use music. In the Pentecostal, charismatic and African traditions songs are brief and repetitive. While there is always the danger that the music and words of these brief repetitive songs will mesmerise the people, leading to delusions of the work of the Spirit in their midst, there is also the very real work of meditation taking place in which the Spirit of God can move. The spiritual traditions have taught that meditation involves a verbal murmuring. Putting this "verbal murmuring" of scriptural teachings and words to music is just another form of meditation. Not only should this happen with greater frequency in Evangelical churches, but it also needs to be taught, the particular task of Christian education, that repetitive singing is a form of meditation. In other words, not only does Christian education make use of a cultural form in the South African

context, but more importantly it teaches people the tradition of meditation that is taking place in the singing. Repetitive singing should never be to "whip up the emotions" or mesmerise the people. It is always to know God better and to worship him more meaningfully, and to more faithfully respond to his invitations.

The emphasis on worship in Christian education also is a means of helping people develop their priestly responsibility of growing in personal and intimate relationship with God. A Christian education that focuses on enabling people to be priests will seek to both teach and practice the worship of God.

3. The Necessity of a Community of Faith that Bears Witness to its Teaching and Worship

The nature of being Christian is a communal one. This was suggested earlier in this thesis, where the individualism of much contemporary western culture was seen to be the antithesis of the true nature of being Christian. This means that a primary purpose of both Christian education and Christian spirituality is concerned with a community and not just with the individual, which is not to deny the importance of the growth of individuals. The church in the world today needs to establish a community that bears authentic witness to its teachings and its worship. For the South African church this will mean focusing on matters of justice and mercy in incarnated ways. The task of Christian education is to seek to enable people to grow in knowledge of the teachings of the church in such a way that genuine

encounters with God and each other take place, so that Christian community develops.

The communal nature of Christianity also stresses that a Christian education concerned with spirituality will do its teaching within a community rather as isolated individuals. This is so for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the community helps us avoid the dangers of individualism. Palmer believes that "in the gathered life of the spiritual community, I am brought out of the solitude of study and prayer into the discipline of communion and relatedness" (1983: 18). Thus, community forms a natural corrective to individualism. Secondly, within a community the difficulties related to interpretation and understanding the content can be discussed, building on the shared knowledge of the group. Christian teachings have never been easy to understand and interpret. Error has frequently crept into the church precisely because the text is not self-evident. Studying the teachings within a community, bringing one's own understanding to the scrutiny of the community can help the church to come to more faithful renderings of the text. While the educator may have a better background to the text than other participants, it still needs the background and experiences of those studying the text. This means that true Christian teaching will avoid the error of a 'teacher' taking authority and giving the 'correct' interpretation without hearing from the community. In other words, the communal nature of Christianity takes seriously that each individual person

must take responsibility for his or her life, a point referred to in the discussion on Christian education and on spiritual direction, and thus will give the free and friendly space to hear from others.

Not only is shared knowledge more helpful in dealing with the difficulties of content, but a third important reason for studying in a community is that the community encourages transformation that leads to spirituality. As the Christian community respond to the text and makes decisions about their actions as a result, the community can encourage each person and the group to follow those decisions through. In this way, the community can act as 'spiritual director', helping each person to more authentically discern and follow the will of God for their lives in the world today. This is seeking to help people, as Groome encourages, "to lessen the gap between belief and behaviour". It is a genuine incorporation of the tradition of Christian spiritual direction into Christian education, where not just the educator is spiritual guide, but the entire group. Many evangelical churches encourage people to meet in small groups. This has been a long-standing tradition in evangelicalism, with Wesley's emphasis and dramatic growth through voluntary small groups being a primary example. Since groups already exist in many South African churches, they form a natural means for growth and group spiritual direction. Since an essential task of spiritual direction is to foster listening, this means that Christian education should be concerned with teaching people to listen

empathetically, that is in ways that accept rather than reject, that hear what the person actually says rather than what we think was said. It will also mean that the various stages of spiritual development will be known within the group so that they can guide each other in ways that are appropriate to particular stages, as well as discern when and how to encourage people to move on.

The recognition of the communal nature of Christianity takes seriously the purpose of Christian education to enable participants to be priests to God in the world, where 'priest' is understood not in the canonical sense. As Groome suggests "Christian religious educators are to teach persons as communal beings who are to grow in right and loving relationship with God, self, others, and creation" (1991: 430). Priesthood is not a purely individual affair. It has the responsibility of mediating on behalf of each other, and creation, praying and supporting other members of the Body of Christ, encouraging loving relationships within the community.

The small group is an ideal place for this to happen.

4. The Necessity of Service in the World.

The fourth emphasis on the necessity of service in the world is a reminder that the Christian church does not exist for its own ends. It exists for the world and is required to render service into the world. Leech warns of a serious danger of the contemporary church being more concerned with church membership than the needs of the world (Leech 1992:

222).

Service has always been a central theme in Evangelical spirituality as well as in Evangelical Christian education. However, as was noted earlier, service has often been very narrowly defined and thus the focus has been on various forms of proclamation of the Gospel. Genuine Christian service in the world takes proclamation further, by seeking to take seriously the nature of the Gospel. As is becoming more and more accepted today, as Leech maintains, the heart of the Gospel is the Kingdom or Reign of God (1992: 222). This means that "witness to the Kingdom" (Leech 1992: 222) is the vital task of the church today. This will mean taking seriously the issues within the South African society such as oppression and injustice, racial or gender related.

The task of Christian education that takes spirituality seriously will focus on the Kingdom and proclaim justice, mercy and righteousness in ways that take the church and society beyond proclamation to actual transformation. Christian education not only should provide the teaching that takes the liberating aspects of the Gospel seriously, but also provide the atmosphere of liberation. A teaching that is dogmatic and domineering, while having the right words about Christian liberation/freedom, is oppressive and enslaving. How one teaches is as vital as what one teaches. This emphasis on service is related to the priestly responsibility to mediate between God and the world. The task of a Christian education that seeks to integrate Christian spirituality will be to not only give the

necessary teaching of what it means to be a church serving the world, but also the space for this to actually happen. It is not enough for the church to recognise the issues of the Reign of God. It must also actively seek to "witness to the Kingdom" by dealing with those factors that mitigate against the kingdom in the South African context, such as the oppression and injustices of the apartheid system, along with the accompanying violence. Christian education must recognise the importance of service in the world in order for it to truly represent Christian spirituality.

Conclusion

These four suggestions, no matter how studiously practiced, will be of little value unless the educator takes his or her own spiritual development seriously. In an article on the spirituality of the religious educator Groome maintains that "the heart of religious education is the heart of the religious educator" (1988: 14). A Christian education that seeks to incorporate Christian spirituality will take Groome's statement "to heart". At the end of the day it is who we are rather than what we do or say that will have the greater influence. Seeking to recognise and make the most of teaching, worship, community and service, while helpful guidelines, only have effect if the heart of the educator is "graced by the Spirit". A Christian education for Christian spirituality will be an education in which the educator takes responsibility for his or her own spiritual development. She or he will be a growing person, constantly changing and moving into deeper relationship with God. Such

an educator will be able to offer an education that is both truly Christian and truly spiritual.

CONCLUSION

Christian education has been discussed as a diverse discipline with a variety of ways to understand and define it. Being a recent discipline with no authoritative source, it is obvious that there will be diversity. However, this diversity also reflects the truth that Christian education, precisely because it is for people who are constantly changing, must also be in a constant change process. Since it is also primarily an American discipline, it requires much adaptation for the South African Evangelical church.

Christian spirituality was also seen to be a very diverse discipline. In contemporary society it has become the fashion among a variety of people, both Christian and non-Christian alike. My thesis has been limited to a discussion of spirituality only within the Christian tradition, choosing only two branches of that tradition. Thus, I have not been able to look into the variety within the Eastern Orthodox churches, or even the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. And neither have I focused on any particular culture, even though I have tried to relate my research to the South African evangelical church situation. These omissions do not imply that these other traditions are of less importance. Rather, they merely set limitations to my research.

Parts I and II form the introductory research to the

suggested guidelines for an integration of Christian spirituality into Christian education in the South African context of Evangelical churches. Since there were seen to be a number of elements that were considered crucial in both Christian education and Christian spirituality, these have formed the basis on the final part of this thesis. It was seen to be true that a Christian education that desires to bring about spiritual formation must take more seriously the disciplines and teachings of traditional Christian spirituality. Because Christian education is usually a group event, the spiritual disciplines can be taught and practised within the small group. Not only is this an obvious factor, but it also enables Christians to practice more readily their function as being priests in the Church and in the world. A Christian education that takes seriously a purpose to enable its people to function as priests will also need to take seriously the spiritual disciplines, as the guidelines in chapter nine suggest.

By its very nature, Christian education is a spiritual task and therefore needs the understanding and input of Christian spirituality.

END NOTES

1. Richards' *A Theology of Christian Education* has recently been republished under a new title: *Christian Education: Seeking to Become Like Christ*. This new title is a reflection of his understanding of the purpose of Christian education.
2. The term 'evangelical' is explained in chapter 4.
3. Sager claims to be an evangelical, which he defines as "gospel-oriented" (1990: 9). He is also a Lutheran pastor in the United States.
4. Ellingsen that there is much diversity in the evangelical movement but suggests that the conservative evangelical movement is comprised of Protestants who (1) assume a characteristically critical viewpoint towards Roman Catholicism and the ecumenical movement; (2) insist on or at least remain in dialogue with the concepts of plenary inspiration, verbal inerrancy, and Scripture's propositional character; (3) affirm the Bible's importance for Christian life; (4) prioritize the experiential dimensions of becoming and being a Christian (conversion and sanctification) over the sacraments, the ministry, and ecclesiastical structures; (5) emphasize evangelism and foreign missions; (6) understand Christian ethics in terms of law rather than situationally; and (7) resist official fellowship, in the sense of its implying formal institutional ties, with persons or churches not sharing the preceding commitments (1988: 295-296).
5. Personal religion is the Puritan term for 'spirituality.
6. "It is not that I have already achieved this. I have not yet reached perfection, but I press on, hoping to take hold of that for which Christ once took hold of me" (Ph 3:12, REB). ". . . until we attain to the unity inherent in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God -- to mature manhood, measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ" (Eph 4:13, REB).
7. Psalm 141:2 "May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice."

8. In Roman Catholic circles the terms 'religious' and 'religious life' usually refers to those in religious orders as priests, nuns or monks.

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