

Institute of Christian Teaching

Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists

**CHALLENGES OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION IN THE ZAMBESI UNION: AN ACTION PLAN**

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INTRODUCTION

With education as one of the main organs by which the Seventh-day Adventist Church can hope to achieve its goal of winning and grooming young people for God's eternal kingdom, it is imperative for the Zambesi Union to evaluate and determine the effectiveness of its educational work in Zimbabwe since it gained its independence in 1980. This should be done with a view to identifying factors that contribute to counter-productivity, reviewing the role of the Seventh-day Adventist teachers in the movement, and formulating new strategies that will improve efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

For these reasons, therefore, this paper attempts to highlight the concerns and ideals related to Christian Education and to list some suggestions for consideration by the Zambesi Union Mission.

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM

For about thirty-five years before the Second World War, the Southern African Division, presently known as the Eastern Africa Division, accepted the colonial government's grants-in-aid funds to develop and operate its church schools. The acceptance of the aid was prompted by the "cordial relations between the mission and government since their aims were so similar and the mission was doing so much that the government found itself unable to do."¹ However, as educational needs and demands to meet them increased, the government, unable to raise adequate financial resources for African education, appealed for more funds from overseas. In response to the appeal, the British Parliament, by the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 and 1945, set aside "120 000 000 pounds for the development of economic resources and social services of the colonies."² Portions of those funds were re-assigned to the advancement of African Education in Southern Rhodesia. That financial boost sponsored an increase in the grants-in-aid given to the schools and caused the colonial government to assume "more responsibility for co-ordinating and directing the educational work of the churches."³

The church's influence and control over its schools and teachers in Southern Rhodesia gradually waned away. Following that, the colonial government reorganized the whole educational system and established public schools for educating the African masses. The reorganization process culminated in the birth of the Unified African Teaching Service in 1953. The Service continued in various forms until 1987, well after Rhodesia had gained its independence in 1980 and had become Zimbabwe.

In 1987, the Ministry of Education and Culture in Zimbabwe introduced the Public Service and encouraged all teachers, who at that time were all under the Unified Teaching Service, to join the Public Service whose provisions were slightly different from the Unified Teaching Service. Consequently, schools were re-classified to become either 'government' or 'non-government'. Under the non-government schools banner were all mission schools, rural and urban council

schools, mine schools and other private schools. Teachers in the non-government schools were also encouraged to join the Public Service, and almost 95% of the teachers in the country are now Public Servants. The rest either remained in the Unified Teaching Service or are completely private and not receiving any grant from the government.

The evolution of the educational system from the church's responsibility to Unified African Teaching Service, to Unified Teaching Service and finally to the Public Service has had crippling effects on the progress of the Seventh-day Adventists' missions in Zimbabwe from 1953 to date. However, for the Zambesi Union, the adverse effects of the changes reached unbearable levels as early as 1955. The Union began to take a serious look at the issue and discussed several possible courses of action. Among them were: to relinquish all control over education; to form a partnership with the government in order that "all grant-aided schools should become at the same time State schools and religious schools, with governing bodies representative of the African local authorities and the African Church or Churches..."; or to employ and pay its own teachers. Each of the options had both positive and negative implications, but the church had two main questions it needed to answer: How viable was the church's mission under such conditions? To what extent could the church compete with the government in terms of paying teachers' salaries since the government was offering more attractive salaries to its teachers? This meant that teachers would have to be paid more than other church workers if the church wanted to keep them.

In trying to answer such questions, the church studied the whole issue in the light of this statement by E.G. White:

God calls for men whose hearts are as steel, and who will stand steadfast in integrity, undaunted by circumstances. He calls for men who will not dare to resort to the arm of flesh by entering into partnership with worldlings in order to secure means for advancing His work - even for the building of institutions. . . For thousands of years Satan has been gaining an experience in learning how to deceive; and to those who live in this age he comes with almost overwhelming power. Our only safety is found in obedience to God's word, which has been given us as a sure guide and counsellor. God's people today are to keep themselves distinct and separate from the world, its spirit, and its influences.⁴

The problems the Union faces at present make it rather difficult to ascertain what option the church resorted to at that time. The Zambesi Union as it stands is made up of three conferences, viz.: West, Central and East. It runs a network of 93 primary and secondary schools situated in various parts of Zimbabwe. There are 24 secondary schools and 69 primary schools. It has no tertiary schools. All the schools are either receiving full or partial government grant. Full grant here means the government pays all teachers, pays per capita grant for all school children every year and contributes in one way or another to the construction of classrooms and/or teachers' houses, etc.

After the war, within a decade of the country's gaining its independence, about seventeen Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools were built with more than 60% of the funds from the Government. The rest of the money was levied by parents. There has been very little, or nothing in most cases, which the church has contributed towards the development of the schools and construction of teachers' houses, the state of which at the moment leaves much to be desired.

Only 2,2% of the church schools receive partial grant, i.e., in the form of per capita grant only.

Approximately 1 500 men and women teach in church schools, about 65% of whom are members of the church, or at least claim to be, and only 1% of these are paid by the church and the rest by the government. About 20% of the SDA teachers were trained in church colleges, either at Solusi or at Lower Gwelo many years ago. The rest are products of government or other non-SDA teacher-training colleges.

From the above statistical approximations, some areas of concern surface:

- a. SDA teachers in church schools, are paid by the government.
- b. The majority of teachers in church schools, do not have a foundation of Christian philosophy of education from their training.
- c. There is an unhealthy ratio of SDA teachers to non-SDA teachers.
- d. The teachers live in uncomfortable houses.
- e. Church schools are below standard in terms of equipment, buildings, furniture and other facilities.

It is very difficult to dismiss the thought that the above-listed are among the main causes for the following problems which the Union faces in its educational field:

1. There is a natural tension that exists in the minds of teachers as to where they should direct their allegiance. To the majority, it is apparent that they give their allegiance to the source of their income more than where their tithes and offerings go. Others seem to be trying to serve two masters to whom they give minimal service while they wish to draw maximal benefits from both. For instance, while they contribute towards the Public Service pension scheme, they question what the church is doing for them. There is a strong feeling among many that the church reflects a favourable attitude towards pastors and other church workers because it provides better accommodation, and more allowances such as medical, educational, housing and income tax assistance, to pastors and other workers while the teachers get nothing from the church. They are reluctant to render any financial or material support for boosting church-related projects.

2. On several occasions, non-SDA teachers are employed by church schools and as a result, the church's influence in schools is diluted since such teachers "educate for earthly citizenship rather than for God's eternal Kingdom," and their presence tends to destroy or weaken the true educational philosophy of Adventism and to weaken the spirit of sacrifice involved in tithes and offerings, which is God's plan for supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the school work.⁵
3. The evangelistic spirit tends to be low. Some teachers are not keen to go to church, let alone to participate in the church's programmes. This has very negative implications upon the pupils and the community they serve. Some even prefer travelling to other places for fun or for shopping on the Sabbath. This is quite contrary to what E.G. White says about the need for teachers not to divorce themselves from church activities.⁶
4. The feeling that they are government employees seems to cause some to yield to the temptation of doing work even on the Sabbath, such as taking part in national census, marking examinations, engaging in politically-motivated activities, going for sports or attending some meetings.
5. There seems to be a mercenary and grasping spirit among some teachers, because embezzlement of school funds, school building funds, church money and examination fees have become quite prevalent in our church schools. The spirit of sacrifice whereby teachers could help slow learners after school or during the holidays is gradually disappearing, as some teachers argue that extra teaching should be done when there is extra money paid to them.
6. It is a common thing for teachers to respond more quickly to the government's demands than to the church's requests. This is seen mainly when it comes to meetings called by the church education directors. They do not respond as much as when called to district or regional meetings scheduled for Saturdays. There is, also, more reluctance in sending terminal reports to the church offices than when any information is needed by the Ministry of Education.

These and many other isolated problems are experienced in the church schools. However, one cannot say with utmost accuracy that all these are directly related to teachers being paid by the government. Other reasons could be given to explain why certain Christian teachers behave in the way they do. One way of dealing with such a problem could be to help teachers understand the relationship between the church and the school and what the church expects of all teachers that teach in church schools for the church as the responsible authority which the government recognises and appreciates.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CHURCH

The church's expectations of a Christian educator could be defined from the angle of a Christian worldview or the philosophy of Christian Education. The same

could also be explained by defining the goals of Christian Education, about which E.G. White says: "In the highest sense, the work of Education and the work of redemption are one, for in education, as in redemption, other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."⁷

She further explains that Christian Education "has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world, and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come."⁸

Since Christian education and redemption are one, it means that a Christian teacher and the church are fighting for a common cause. A Christian teacher in a church school cannot afford to work against the church, unless he is a nominal Christian in which case the church can do better without him. As White says that the purpose of education is "to bring man back into harmony with God, so to elevate and ennoble his moral nature that he may again reflect the image of the creator,"⁹ the Christian teacher in the work of education is on the church's errand to seek and bring men and women to God, and help them live a "life marked by excellence as seen in the responsible decisions and actions of the educated product."¹⁰

Properly read and understood, these definitions and goals of Christian education seem to suggest that the world needs nothing less than a Christian-educated citizen, and it is a Christian teacher who, by playing his educational role fully and honestly can facilitate the production of such citizens.¹¹ It is the desire of the SDA church to integrate its worldview with all learning and teaching that takes place in its schools and to achieve this goal through and by individuals who understand, accept and promote it. Such individuals are none other than Christian teachers, for there is "no Christian education without Christian teachers."¹²

With this understanding, therefore, one can safely magnify the role of a Christian teacher in education. With regards to the Zambesi Union, one may need to make the observation that the main issue under consideration is not whether the teachers are paid by the government or by the church, but that, regardless of that, they are Seventh-day Adventist Christians, and as such their role in government-funded schools is not very different from other church members serving God in different capacities. Their responsibilities to God and man could be equalled to that of Daniel, Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego in Babylon and Persia. They were Christians serving and paid by non-Christian governments, and worse still, they were in captivity. However, when it came to whom their allegiance should go or whether or not they should exercise their faith in idolatrous states, they openly chose to obey God rather than man.¹³ They rendered unto Caesar what belonged to Caesar but not at the expense of their faith in God. What teachers in the Zambesi Union need is to strengthen their relationships with God, to commit their lives in faith to God and to trust Him to lead, guide and protect them as He did for the Hebrew men. Our teachers should:

a) **KNOW CHRIST**

From Dr Rasi's reflection that "faith is both a gift of God and a human response to God's trustworthiness . . . and that it has the power to sustain us in an imperfect fallen world,"¹⁴ it sounds reasonable to suggest that the teacher's first task is to link his life with heaven if he should do anything acceptable before God. In fact, the wise man puts it well by saying, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."¹⁵ and Christ perfected the thought when he said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God . . ."¹⁶ One may ask how this can be done. Paul says by reading and listening to God's Word.¹⁷ The Christian teacher should study God's Word, live it and share it with the non-SDA teachers, students and the community where he is serving. To emphasise this point, E.G. White counsels that "before a person is prepared to become a teacher of the truth to those who are in darkness, he must become a learner. He must be willing to be counselled."¹⁸ The teacher, therefore, must have faith in God first and establish a personal relationship with Christ before he can speak for and about Him.¹⁹

b) **FEED THE FLOCK**

The work of a Christian teacher is the same as that of a pastor. As a pastor is charged with the responsibility of shepherding his church members, the Christian teacher is expected to "care for the individuals under his tutelage".²⁰ As a shepherd leads his flock to green pastures, the teacher should, by precept and example, help his pupils develop and exercise their faith in God. The values which the teacher wishes to impress on the minds of his pupils should be seen as an integral part of his own life. If it is important to praise God in song and prayer and to return tithes and give offerings, the teacher should demonstrate this in his own attitude and lifestyle. Some pupils, like sheep, may know that they are lost but are ignorant of how to return home, while others, like the lost coin, may not even know that they are lost in sin, and others, like the prodigal son, may know they are lost in sin, may know the way home, but may be ashamed of making a decision to accept Christ. It is the honourable duty of a Christian teacher to seek and to lead all lost students to salvation by talking and listening to them and even praying with them.²¹ A teacher's example cannot be over emphasized. Don Dinkmeyer says, "Children learn more from what we do than from what we say. Moralizing not backed by example is wasted."²² Echoing the same sentiments, Martin Brumbaugh says, "We teach more by what we are than by what we know," and, quoting Emerson, further declares, "What you are, thunders so loud, I cannot hear what you say."²³

c) **DEVELOP CHARACTERS**

A Christian teacher should help in the development of students' characters because by such will their future be determined. According to James,

teachers will be judged more strictly than other people.²⁴ This could be one reason why characters determine one's destiny. Zig Ziglar, quoting Charles Reade, once wrote, "When you sow a thought, you reap an action, when you sow an action, you reap a habit, when you sow a habit, you reap a character, and when you sow a character, you reap a destiny."²⁵

If one's character truly determines whether one will be in heaven or hell, how careful then should teachers be, who play such a major role in developing students' characters? It goes without saying that teachers should ensure that pupils' eyes, ears and minds are exposed to a wholesome, open and hidden curriculum and to all that is conducive to proper character development. This includes how they talk to pupils and how they treat them inside and outside the classroom. Don Dinkmeyer believes that "character tends to be an accurate reflection of the way in which the individual has been treated or feels he has been treated."²⁶ E G White stresses that character formation is the most important object in education. It is the work of a lifetime, and it is for eternity. It is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings and it is the harvest of life.^{27, 28, 29}

This is a role that all Christian teachers should understand, as failure to fulfil it may mean eternal doom to a pupil. This understanding is the very element that makes a difference between secular and Christian education. The value of education is measured by its thrust on character development. As George Akers once remarked, "Any education that neglects studied attention to character development is not worthy of the designation."³⁰

The truth of these remarks is seen in the way the world hungers and thirsts for citizens with noble characters. No wonder that in the political and industrial world there is always very close scrutiny of one's character before one can be nominated a leader or an employee. William Barclay, quoting the former president of America, Calvin Coolidge, wrote:

We do not need more material development;
 We need more spiritual development.
 We do not need more intellectual power;
 We need more moral power.
 We do not need more knowledge;
 We need more character.
 We do not need more government;
 We need more culture.
 We do not need more law;
 We need more religion.
 We do not need more of the things that are seen;
 We need more of the things that are not seen.³¹

This shows how important character development is and how vital it is for teachers to have good characters too, for how can a poor-charactered teacher

develop good characters in his pupils? Isn't it true, as Martin Brumbaugh argues, that, "everywhere the character of the teacher is counted a vital part of his equipment," and that "even in secular schools the teacher is required to possess a good moral character"?³²

EDUCATE FOR SPIRITUAL AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Since true education should prepare a student for service in this world and in the world to come, our educational system should aim for both spiritual and academic rigour. It should not focus on the spirituality of its students at the expense of academic growth. Teachers should seek to establish an acceptable balance between spiritual, social, academic and physical aspects of the school curriculum. In other words, students should be helped to pass their school leaving examinations well and be accepted into tertiary schools. It is the teachers' duty to appeal to his students' self-esteem and encourage them to aim at attainable heights. It is said that one can lead a horse to water but cannot make it drink. Les Brown believes that it is not enough to lead it to water, but one should create a thirst in it to make it want to drink. So it is with a teacher, he should be both a facilitator and a motivator.³³ In fact, teachers should seek to acquire and use Christ's method of teaching which was characterised by "patience, tactfulness, sympathy, insight into the problems of others, the ability to convey a sense of personal concern to them, ability to gain their respect and confidence, firmness when needed, flexibility and impartiality."³⁴

The teacher should, in his teaching, encourage clear and independent thinking and responsible behaviour.³⁵ Dr Rasi suggests that students could be encouraged to think critically and analytically if teachers would make their lessons interesting and would create a conducive learning environment that encourages pupils to express their feelings and ideas freely, thus establishing a healthy relationship with pupils. Let pupils learn to put their ideas clearly and coherently on paper.³⁶ Holmes enriches this thought by saying that thinking critically is one of the identifying marks of an educated person.³⁷

It becomes important that pupils be exposed to the realities of life and prepare to live responsibly in the world. Many students and youth seem to have lost the meaning of life, morality and education, as Holmes has observed.³⁸ Teachers could use Dr Gibson's biological approach to explaining the value of life by first explaining creation and its objectives as God planned it.³⁹

Another way could be to explain the essence of God's creation in answering such philosophical questions as: What am I? What am I here for? What is the highest purpose of my life? Where am I going when this life is over? When these questions are answered fully, within the parameters of the Christian world view, pupils will have a better idea about the preciousness of life and how to protect it. This is a very important task of a Christian teacher because, if pupils leave school

without answers to the questions asked above, a situation as Billy Graham once related could occur:

A college girl who was fatally injured in a car accident . . . , before dying, said: “Mother, you taught me everything I needed to know to get by in college. You taught me how to light my cigarette, how to hold my cocktail glass and how to have intercourse safely. But mother, you never taught me how to die. You better teach me quickly, Mother, because I’m dying.”⁴⁰

Suppose the above words were directed to a teacher; what could be the implication of the college girl’s confession? “Teacher, you taught me everything but you did not tell me what I am, why I am here, or the purpose for living and the ultimate goal of life.”

The teacher can be of little or no help to his pupils unless he understands the value of life and is qualified to be a Christian teacher.

Well, what if the teacher does not understand the value of life or is ignorant of the Christian world view concerning life?⁴¹ That would be disastrous and he could face a situation similar to the one described below:

Greeting his pupils, the master asked:
 What would you learn of me?
 And the reply came
 How shall we care for our bodies?
 How shall we rear our children?
 How shall we work together?
 How shall we live with our fellow men?
 How shall we play?
 For what ends shall we live?
 And the teacher pondered these words,
 And sorrow was in his heart.
 For his own learning touched not these things.⁴²

Doesn’t this quotation re-emphasise the point that a teacher cannot give what he does not have?

SHINE

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”⁴³ This suggests that a teacher who reflects the character of Christ in his relationship with his pupils, fellow teachers, and government officials will surely cause men to glorify God. Both the quality and quantity of his work will speak louder about his God. Knight observes that good relations in and outside the classroom result in success.⁴⁴

Teachers in the Zambesi Union Mission, like many teachers elsewhere, are always interacting with government officers, some of whom are anti-SDA. I propose that the only way to win their respect is by trusting and worshipping God as the Hebrew men in Babylon and Persia did. "They trusted him and defied the King's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God," and because of their allegiance to God, King Nebuchadnezzar said, "Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble."⁴⁵

These men were promoted even without applying for it. The same thing happened to Daniel. The Bible states that he had "exceptional qualities, . . . he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent, Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God." Because of his transparent lifestyle, King Darius decreed that, "people must fear and reverence God". So Daniel prospered during the reign of Cyrus the Persian.⁴⁶

With these examples, our teachers in this Union can be encouraged to stand out and glorify God--and still expect promotion and prosperity. Do we have any reason to fear the exposure of our identity?

Doesn't Paul reassure us enough when he says, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength."⁴⁷ Don't we feel encouraged when Christ says, "And surely I am with you always"?⁴⁸ We don't have to struggle alone; in fact, we can do nothing without Christ.⁴⁹

ACTION PLAN

A. SENSITIZATION OF UNION LEADERSHIP

Having stated what I think are the roles of teachers in the Union schools, I would like to suggest that the teachers be charged with this great responsibility of integrating faith and teaching. I would like also, to pose a challenge to the Union leadership thus: "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?"⁵⁰

This does suggest that the Union leadership's attention should be drawn to the educational needs and issues cited above and to the fact that its support and involvement are imperative if any improvements should be realised. When these have been discussed with the Union officers, the matter should be referred to the Union Board of Education for further study and assessment of professional implications of the suggestions given below.

B. Although at the moment all headmasters in our schools in the Union are Adventists, consistent attempts should be made to remind them of and familiarise them with the church's aims for running Christian schools. The Union should provide occasional seminars for both primary and secondary school headmasters. Such seminars could be held at the Union, at Solusi College, or near places of interest such as Victoria Falls, Matopos, Inyanga camp grounds or other feasible resort centres.

Appropriate speakers could be invited through the Division, or from local institutions such as Solusi, to give lectures on topics such as the integration of faith and teaching, the relationship between the church and education, excellence in education, etc. Officials from the Ministry of Education and Culture could be invited to also provide needed information, etc. During, or preceding such seminars, headmasters could write and present papers on agreed topics, discuss and critique one another's papers or discuss topics from selected texts such as Gaebelain's "The Pattern of God's Truth," etc. The first of such seminars should be held in Bulawayo, April, 1994.

C. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

As already stated, there are many teachers who were trained in non-SDA colleges; therefore the Union should suggest to Solusi College that they study the feasibility of offering intensive in-service courses during the August school holidays for teachers who may have missed the foundation of Christian education during their training. The following courses could be offered:

RELB 205; 206 (Christian Beliefs)
EDFN 315 (Philosophy of Christian Education)
HIST 404 (History of the SDA Church)

The Union should study the question of who should bear the cost and what incentives should be given to those who have completed the proposed courses.

D. TEACHERS' RETREATS

Each conference should plan to hold teachers' retreats once every year as exemplified by the West Zimbabwe Conference in 1993. During these retreats, teachers will spend three to four days out in the mountains, reflecting on

God's Word and discussing and sharing ideas related to Christianity and teaching. Pastors could be invited to cater for the teachers' spiritual needs. Time could be given for crafts, artwork or anything that the Conference may decide.

E. INTER OR INTRA SCHOOL SEMINARS

Education directors in the Conferences and the Union, should, during their visits to schools, plan to meet all teachers in a school. Teachers from schools in close proximity can converge in one school to listen to the concerns, ideas and suggestions of the directors, or discuss fundamental beliefs of the SDA church and discuss how teaching could be made effective. Educational videos could be shown and discussed accordingly.

F. TEACHERS' CONVENTIONS

Once every four to five years, Union-wide conventions should be organised for all teachers teaching in church schools. Financially affordable yet refreshing places should be chosen. During these meetings, lasting about one week, teachers will listen to devotional selections and sermons, and meet for lectures and talks presented by knowledgeable and experienced individuals. Suitably qualified headmasters and teachers may be asked to give talks on relevant matters. Teachers may meet in groups to share ideas on assigned topics or to discuss possible improvements to educational standards in church schools. Special occasions should be arranged for teachers to pray together for particular concerns and also to participate in interesting excursions.

G. EDUCATIONAL BULLETINS AND LITERATURE

Education secretaries in the Zambesi Union should meet to discuss the feasibility of publishing an educational magazine for the Zambesi Union. This journal would give teachers and even students the opportunity to share ideas or express views on relevant topics. Incentives to encourage wide participation could be discussed first by headmasters and next by individuals schools. The Union should also study the possibility of ordering The Journal of Adventist Education to be distributed to all our schools.

H. FUND RAISING

It is clear that the church does not have additional sources of income besides tithes and offerings which church members give. Yet more funds are needed to improve educational facilities. There is within the church a stewardship plan, the Conference Advance offering, which is collected once a month. I would recommend that the Union and Conferences set aside one-quarter of that fund for the development of rural schools and the construction of teachers' houses. Small though that contribution may be, I think it will go a long way towards improving the state of the rural schools

and teachers' houses which, at the moment, are far below standard. In addition to that, I would suggest that additional funds be solicited from ADRA. The church should be showing interest in the welfare of its teachers rather than leaving everything to the parents and the government.

I. EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CHURCHES

Union and Conference Education Directors should make arrangements with individual church pastors and local church education leaders to look into the possibility of addressing church members on the essence of Christian education and the role they should play in facilitating its viability and effectiveness. Faithfulness in returning tithes and giving offerings and the laying of sound educational foundations in child training may need to be emphasised.

J. CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES

Union and Conference education directors should work towards establishing a rapport between the church and the government, especially with the Ministry of Education and Culture. This could be done by paying courtesy visits to regional and district offices of the Ministry to have some informal talks with directors and education officers. This, I think, gets us to be better acquainted rather than just visiting them when we have problems. Visits could be effected when there happens to be opportune time to do so during our normal school inspections.

There are times when special functions are held in schools, such as parents' or open days, speech and prize-giving days, openings or dedications of new buildings, etc. These would be the right occasions to invite some of the officers to come, either as observers or to officiate. It is during such occasions that the church, through its headmasters, could articulate the philosophy of the church and its educational system as well as express appreciation to the government for the financial and professional support it gives the church. Also, government officers could be invited when there are seminars run by the church for teachers and headmasters.

Once a good relationship has been built between the church and the government, the church can carefully present the needs and wishes of the church from a friendly platform. It should be noted that there is no indication here that SDA's should compromise or betray their standards in order to establish good relationships.

I think it is important that there should be rapport not only between the church and the government, but also between SDA and non-SDA teachers, between pupils and teachers, and between the school and the community. Love and friendship are the best tools that can be used to convince humanity that Christ is the only reliable and lasting solution to all world problems.

CONCLUSION

The progress and effectiveness of Christian education in the Zambesi Union is dependent above all on our loyalty to God. This applies to pastors, church members, teachers and church leaders. As God has given each one of us a measure of faith, we should play our honest role in responding to and exercising it in our endeavours to proclaim the message of grace to the dark and dying world. This calls for more commitment in integrating our faith with our life styles and uniting our efforts in the advancement of Christian Education.

Lines of communication between the schools and the Union should be kept functional so that the spirit of togetherness and fellowship may thrive among all concerned with the work of education.

ENDNOTES

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