

A GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE*

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It can be easily said, and that from history, that emphasis on education is commensurate with the genesis of our denomination. Our holiness fathers from the West to the East realized at such a juncture that education (training) would be a very decisive factor in the development of the denomination.

Architects of such an educational enterprise, Dr. Bresee, Rev. C. W. Ruth, Dr. Reynolds, Rev. Hilliary, and others, would be flabbergasted at the evolution which has been realized in the educational arena of the Church of the Nazarene during the elapsing years, for the denomination has moved very rapidly from the North American continent to be now present on the seven continents which constitute the land component of the earth.

With the internationalization of the Church of the Nazarene, the emphasis which was placed on education by the founding fathers, and perpetuated by successive church leaders, must be kept in the forefront by every generation of Church leaders, for education is a continuous evolution. It is of special interest that Dr. Bresee's Philosophy regarding-educational pursuit is still present in the denomination, hence the varying levels of educational institutions in the international Church and all with the potential for greater development.

Technology has ushered in to a greater extent the age of globalization. I so put it because I could identify with an acknowledgement coming out of a BBC News documentary which states "The term 'globalization' was first coined in the 1980's, but the concept stretches back decades, even

centuries, if you count the trading empires built by Spain, Portugal, Britain, and Holland.” The documentary goes on, “Some would say the world was as globalized 100 years ago as it is today, with international trade and migration.”

The component is not the essential here but the concept is. The educational mission of the Church must take on a genuine global image. The pursuits of our Education Commissioner, Dr. Lambert, are quite indicative of his desire to see such an image assured. Pursuits such as, and these are major as far as I am concerned, 1) the 1999 International Board of Education meeting in Seoul Korea and 2) The Johannesburg Education Conference last July. To my mind, these plus others, which must be seen as departure from traditional positions, to the embracing of new paradigms, which are some of the requisites for a global educational mission of our global church to take shape. Internationalization must give way to decentralization. Such was in evidence in the above.

Michael Adams (2000), in his white paper on “Theology and Global Education,” states, “the simplistic pleasures of linear cause and effect must be surrendered to an understanding of the confluence of multiple events. The “us” and “others” bedrock of hermetic cultures must be abandoned for an appreciation of diversity. In short, we must think and act in a way that is of and for the world.” If a secular educational institution could see the above as germane, how much more must we as a Church educational body. As the denomination continues to expand around the world, so must the educational dynamic. The theme “a global educational enterprise” under which this address is being presented, does lend itself to some measure of elasticity, and I am capitalizing on that. The educational mission of the Church must be viewed from a Biblical perspective. Christ said, “I will build my church.” He also said, “Go ye therefore and make disciples, teaching them to observe all things and lo, I am with you always.” We refer to the

above words of Christ as, 1) a declaration—Matthew 16:15 and 2) a command on the Great Commission—Matthew 28:19, 20.

As the educational evolution continues globally, the minds and hearts have to be in sync, that the declaration and the command of Christ be articulated on the same global scale. A global educational enterprise must enable the following:

1. The best possible quality education should be made accessible to the global Church. I have already alluded in this address to the potential, which exists, in our global institutions. Those that have ahead applied to higher academic offers are even aspiring higher. An example in focus here is Trevecca Nazarene University, which I am sure with much elation and satisfaction observed their historic first graduates from their newly introduced doctoral program. The point I want to make here is, our institutions are at varying levels, and there will be continuing disparity levels, but it must be incumbent on us to incite as much as in us lies the maximization of the potential existing in our global institutions. This global educational enterprise is translated into people.
2. Faculty Facilitation—This I mean to reflect: (a) training (b) re-training (c) exchanging.
3. Student Exchange Program. This is already in effect, but should be greatly encouraged. Rationale—such will result in the following essentials for the global church (a) commonality of our people (b) cross-fertilization of cultures, (c) contextual thinking. Remember in the global church at whatever level or sphere we exist; there can be no emphasis on the “us” and “them”.

4. Curriculum Development. We must, as the educational component of the denomination be committed to serve the present age. If this is going to be realized, we must be prepared to make periodic curriculum adjustments. Our curriculum must bear correlation to the marketplace in which we interact. Such an environment is very competitive today, and we must be prepared to defend who we are and what we stand for and our intent, hence, meaningful and relevant curriculum development. Curriculum development must also bear reflection to the educational needs that exist in the global church. Curriculum development brings into focus people as well as other resources. A global educational enterprise must embrace such.
5. Campus Infrastructure. This must be seen as a vital aspect of our delivery package. I have already stated above that we are in the educational marketplace and there are formidable forces competing. We must be on the cutting edge. To be and to remain on the cutting edge, what we offer as campus facilities must be seen as crucial.
6. The decentralization/accessibility of Nazarene Theological Seminary. We only have one NTS and I do believe that a global educational enterprise must bring into realization the global church benefiting from the institution. Other seminaries are making their offers very accessible, and many of our people are going after the same to our disadvantage. Disadvantage because schools of thought contrary to ours are creating problems for us now, and for the future.

Education is high on the agendas of government, secular and religious organizations. Many of the same are taking it to where the people are, hence the high degree of competition. We have to create an appetite for response to our offerings. No person has to come to our respective

institutions, we have to prepare and execute such a menu, which, in time, will make men, and women want to come and feast on what we offer. The above-mentioned and much more must be done to enable the same.

As educational leaders we represent that nucleus with responsibility for the position we hold in the educational marketplace tomorrow. This responsibility is Herculean in nature, but must be executed in a manner which will allow it to be said of us then that, they were faithful. Let us not lose confidence in knowing that God will give the ability equal to the task. Michael Adams' address reinforces our responsibility: "Educational isolationism, whether physical or intellectual, is not acceptable for stewards of this epoch: an academic that fails to be global in outlook fails in its responsibility to explore, discern and comprehend." My brothers and sisters, I thank you, and special thanks to you my brother and friend, Dr. Lambert for giving me this opportunity.

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References

Adams, Michael (January 2000). "Toward Global Education," White Paper. New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University.