

EDUCATION
for
UNCERTAINTY

Ronald Goldman

THE ESSEX HALL LECTURE 1967



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EDUCATION *for* UNCERTAINTY

A WISE OLD PROFESSOR of mine once gave me some good advice in that he said there was one formula for opening an address which was appropriate for any and every occasion whatever the subject. The opening he recommended was: 'Ladies and Gentlemen; as Adam said to Eve, as Anthony said to Cleopatra, and as no doubt many characters in history have said to each other: we live in an age of transition'. It is true that we live in an age of transition today in that we are facing, as always in the history of man, adaptations to new pressures and new forces within our society. It is also true to say that the speed of social change has intensified. The world in which we grew up was vastly different from that in which our children are being brought up. It is vastly different again from the world of our grandparents. In fact, I would have thought that the gap between the generations is wider now than it ever has been. We find it difficult to understand our children because the experiences of our own childhood and our own deprivations are no longer altogether relevant to these modern times. And, because of this, we frequently find ourselves out of sympathy with children and young people. This gap has opened up because mass media have made possible the communication of ideas much faster and more universally, so that trends, fashions and changes occur at a much speedier rate than they have done previously in the history of mankind. I would venture to suggest that change has occurred much more speedily in the last ten years than was experienced in the previous thirty years, and those years, of course, included the years of war, which increased technological and industrial changes considerably.

It is my task in this lecture to look at the kind of education, particularly that which involves religious and moral values, which is suitable for an age of transition, suitable for a period of history when change is occurring more speedily than ever before, and where many of the old values are apparently disappearing. We need to re-examine not only the contents of education from a religious and moral point of view, but our aims and objectives and the means by which we hope to realise them. For I would assert that, far from being up to date in religious and moral education, we are still nineteenth century in many of our assumptions. These assumptions are based on nineteenth century psychology, nineteenth century educational practice and nineteenth century theology. I therefore consider it an urgent matter that we make considerable reappraisals of our objectives and our aims in religious education for the last third of the twentieth century.

Perhaps one aim which we are only beginning to crystallise in our day school system is what has been described as an open-ended approach to religious and moral education, education for personal choice rather than education towards certain acceptable and accepted values and beliefs. This is why I have entitled this lecture 'Education for Uncertainty', for when we are dealing with religion and morals it seems to me that we are dealing neither with certain set values nor with a corpus of knowledge of what have been called 'ready-made answers to irrelevant questions'. The human dilemma remains the same in all generations: how to live with enough confidence or certainty to overcome the uncertainties and the problems that face us. However, though knowledge in many disciplines now allows of a much higher degree of certainty than previously, it is becoming more and more difficult to assert dogmatically that certain other things are true. This is particularly so in the world of values, and one can see in modern theological discussions something of the strains and tensions of this necessary dialogue about the nature of religious and other truths, and of the validity of revelation in our time.

Historically, in times of great uncertainty men have been able to fall back on certain infallible truths, and these have been mediated through acceptable authorities. We have always, of course, had heretics and those who have dissented from infallible authority, but until the onset of modern times infallible authorities have, on the

whole, been acceptable to very large numbers of people within our civilisation. There arose naturally the concept of an infallible church, which to this present day is not questioned by large numbers within the Roman Catholic faith (although many of the theologians within the Roman Catholic church are questioning it, some very vigorously). Protestantism, having found an infallible church unacceptable, moved towards an infallible Bible, but towards the end of the last century, and even more in our present day, Protestants have begun to discover that modern biblical scholarship has undermined belief in the infallible scriptures. Few believers would question the inspiration of the scriptures, but apart from a fairly cohesive minority of fundamentalists, the infallibility of the scriptures has now been rejected by intelligent believing Christians. Professor Burnaby wrote of this dilemma of Protestant Christians, taking the argument much further: 'If we are content to do without an infallible church and have no longer an infallible bible to take its place, we can no longer look for guidance to an infallible Christ.'¹ Now, I would agree with this statement, since Burnaby suggests that we have no infallible Christ to whom we can turn because the record of what he says and does is inaccurate and partial; we can no longer be certain that the words reported in the scriptures as belonging to Christ really are those of Christ. The liberal Christian, therefore, is faced with the problem of authority and the opposite of uncertainty.

As a researcher, for whom statistics and quantifiable evidence are important instruments, I have learned to live with the statistical term called 'probability'. This means that in educational experiments we can talk of a level of confidence in which, for instance, we may achieve results in a sample series of tests in which, in all probability, ninety-nine times out of a hundred the results will tend to be the same. It is my view that in theology we have thought too much in terms of infallibility, authority and certainty, when indeed we should be thinking in terms of probability. Now, of course, I do not say that the truths of revelation or the values by which we live can be held statistically at a ninety-nine (or even ninety-five) per cent level of probability. All I am suggesting is that when we are seeking to understand the nature of religious and moral education we must help our young people to live with a growing area of uncertainty, an area in which they have to make up their own

minds and make responsible choices on the evidence presented to them.

Many of our forbears, and even to-day some fellow believers, consider that the task of religious and moral education is to hand down a corpus of knowledge and a set of values which will ensure the continuance of the faith. In doing this these believers are no different from believers within religious systems all over the world (and also within humanist systems, such as Marxist communism). The continuation of the faith and its extension into the next generation is regarded as a basic necessity if faith is to survive. But Christians share with all value systems in the world this basic and important change in the temper of people to-day. In some systems they can repress revolt and criticism for several generations but this, in our present day and age, cannot continue indefinitely. Here is a young man, the son of a respected leader of the Mormon church but unable to accept the fundamental scriptures of the Latter Day Saints, leaving home and family to breathe the free air of California. Here is the Indian student fleeing from what he regards as the irrational faith of his forefathers and breathing the free air of London. Both of them are refugees from a system of indoctrination. In China, Russia and Poland we see the upheaval of intellectuals against the dogmatic truths of the value systems in which they live. Some are free to be refugees and leave the environment; some stay within it and fight against it.

This temper of questioning and of not accepting as basic truths what elders say is due to several causes, and I would like to look at these in relation to our task as Christian educators. First of all, in a general sense we are now living in a highly technological society where the materialistic way of life which we enjoy (not without a great sense of guilt and puritanical misgiving) is a reality with which we must live. To those of us who were weaned in the poverty of the thirties and the austerity of the forties, the affluence of the sixties is somewhat difficult for us to understand. In the last ten years technology and science have caused a production revolution greater than anything we have experienced in previous generations. The younger generation has not the misgivings that we have about this. Television, hire purchase, space exploration, cheap clothes to be worn and thrown away before they are fully used—all these are part of its normal world, and affect not

only the habits of young people, but their values and the ways in which they look at life. It has also changed the climate in which religious and moral education must take place today. This kind of society, based on the fruits of science, makes for a greater contrast than ever before between the modern world and what I call Bible-society. For in the Bible we find a pre-scientific society, a pre-technological society, a society of small villages and towns, a society which lived by agriculture and hand production, a society where communication was oral, and myths and story-telling were the normal ways in which truths were conveyed, where the language of scripture and its rich metaphors were of the life of the countryside. Moreover, it was a society which firmly believed in the supernatural. We are forced to ask, if we study the Bible in our schools and churches, how relevant that kind of society and its teaching appears to the children and adolescents of to-day. Any teacher knows that this is a crucial question. How may the Bible, how may Christian values rooted in this kind of society, now out of date in sociological and technological terms, be made to appear to be relevant to children and young people?

The temper of our age, which is scientific and technological, is that of search and questioning. Children and adolescents are, quite rightly, less content now to accept Christian teaching as a given body of truth. It is true that some religious teachers have asserted that the old conflict between science and religion has been resolved. It may have been between certain groups of intellectuals, but it is certainly a very live issue in the classroom. And in our primary schools, where science teaching is now much more evident, the conflict of science and religion is certainly not resolved. This probably means that we have to anticipate and encourage much more critical thinking, at a much earlier age, rather than leaving it to the sixth-form discussion group, by which time many attitudes may have hardened and exploration ceased.

A second change in our society is that we are becoming increasingly secular in the way we live. By secular I mean that there are no given religious or ethical values which are acceptable to the majority of the population. This increasing secularity is due to several factors, one of which is a very recent feature, and that is immigration. The recent coming into our midst of immigrant groups from India, Pakistan and

the Carribean countries should not colour-blind us to the fact that immigration has been going on increasingly during the past century and is probably having more important social and other effects on us than was evident from such invasions of immigrant groups as the Normans, the Huguenots and Jews from Europe. Another feature, of course, of our increasing secularity is the decline in church attendance, and alongside the advent of large numbers of immigrants with their different value systems and different ways of life, we have a falling away from traditional beliefs on the part of the host community. In other words, we are becoming a pluralistic society, rather than the pure undefiled Anglo-Saxon community we always imagined that we were. (In fact, this pure society was never more than a myth, but ideologically we protected ourselves from the alien in the midst by our Anglo-Saxon solidarity.) But pluralism means not only ethnic pluralism but value pluralism. The establishment of the church may still continue and be part of the pageantry of regal and national events, but we have ceased to be what was known as a Christian community. I would qualify the statement by saying that we are still Christian in ethos (and many humanists would agree with this diagnosis), but we are not Christian in the sense that we accept the authority from which the ethos stems—a belief in God and Christ that gives the Christian ethic its power and basis.

A third factor which affects our intentions about Christian education is the change in educational theory and practice which has occurred in the last decade or so. Research in this period has established a much sounder basis for curriculum and teaching method in many subjects. Learning theory has also made a vital contribution to our understanding about the way children learn and how teachers communicate. We are beginning to expect that our pupils and students should be encouraged to think honestly and rigorously in their education, whatever the subject—and they are beginning to expect it also. The nineteenth century model of rote-memorised learning, acquiring of facts without insight, the straight talk-and-chalk, and get-it-into-your-notebooks approach, the treating of the learner as a passive recording machine—all these are aspects of an outmoded model. We recognise that good teachers to-day stimulate those they teach to participate in the learning process, to be active learners, to be members of small groups

engaged upon projects, to become interpreters, translators of what is learned into a purposeful, meaningful and relevant aim. From the University of Sussex down to the infant school we see the move to join subjects together, not to isolate them as separate fields of knowledge. The Newsom Report is a symptom of the application of primary school thinking to the wider area of secondary schooling. The Plowden Committee again underlines the active nature of the child as a learner, and many of the curriculum recommendations made recently by the Plowden Committee reinforce this new approach to the curriculum.

The subjects where these changes are most likely to be found are in the field of science, where Nuffield science and Southampton mathematics are necessarily exploratory and involve new learning techniques. Another area where they are to be found is in the use of creative English and, although many schools will still dismally concern themselves with the analysis of language, others are much more concerned with the excitement of language and the creative power of words; parsing, correct grammar and the use of punctuation are incidentals, not exercises to be taught in a conditioned, rote-learning manner.

Now good teachers, aware of these current trends in curriculum and methods, have found that religious education stands out so often like a sore and rigid thumb. On the whole we are not helping children to be rigorous and adventurous in religious thinking. We may pay lip-service to their rights of personal choice and to the excitement of the exploration of knowledge, but we are strangely hesitant where this is concerned in the world of religion and morals. Some time ago some colleagues of mine (some seven of us who had engaged in research in religious education) wrote an open letter to local education authorities in which we suggested that we are not helping pupils to discriminate in the field of religious thought. We asserted that the subject tends to give them the impression that religious instruction is the imposition of a ready-made system of beliefs and moral rules. It is very obvious that older pupils react against this and, quite rightly, ask instead for an opportunity to work out their own interpretation of life and to argue through the conflicting religious and moral views that are held, not only by themselves, but also by the pluralistic society to which they now belong.

So in this respect religious education has for many years remained

unaffected by the educational revolution apparent in other subjects. Children are being taught many subjects by evoking their experience and by encouraging them to decide what that experience implies in order that they may discover truths for themselves. Meaningful religious education, as meaningful scientific education, implies that they should be involved in the pursuit of their own religious education rather than being taught by the teacher from the front. This of course implies a revolution not only in methods but in materials, and as yet we have only just begun to explore what kinds of materials we should use in the classroom or Sunday school to make it possible for children to participate fully in their own religious education. The secret of Nuffield science, of Southampton mathematics, and of creative English is that there are provided, for both teacher and child, materials which are suitable for building up this new approach to the subjects.

A further change, which is now beginning to make its impact felt, is the nature of research findings which have developed in the last decade. In the last ten years we have had over a hundred investigations into religious education, religious beliefs and religious development.² Many of them concentrated upon the day school situation, but many have yielded valuable insights into pre-school children, college of education and university students and adults generally. The churches have not been slow to see the implications for their own educational programmes for their own children and young people. We now know much more than we did about the process of religious belief and disbelief, about religious thinking and misunderstanding. We need to know much more, but we know enough to make some generalisations. The evidence converges on a number of important points:

Much religious education is ineffective at the level of Bible knowledge. After ten years of exposure to agreed syllabus content, most school leavers lack even the most elementary knowledge of Bible events, people and chronology.

There appears to be in the early years of childhood a willingness to believe anything, but as childhood comes to an end there is a growing air of unreality and irrelevance about the subject as the emerging adolescent begins to think for himself. Yet in many thinking young people there is a spiritual hunger which goes

unsatisfied.

We have tried, particularly in primary schools, to do too much too soon and by the wrong type of syllabus. A diet of Bible stories may retard a child's thinking by simply reinforcing crude, materialistic and literal religious ideas.

In intellectual terms, children appear to pass through three stages of religious understanding. Firstly, there is pre-religious thinking, where the child is incapable of forming a conceptual basis for religious truth. He has to 'feel' his way through fantasy and play at this stage. Then comes a sub-religious stage which rather resembles the crude early Mosaic stage of religion, where everything is thought of in concrete terms and material facts. Finally, if the adolescent gets there at all, he emerges into a personal stage of religious thought able to conceptualise adequately about religion.

The evidence from student and adult populations shows that many stop thinking at the level of stage two—sub-religious thought—and it is this crude religion they reject, or are indifferent to. It represents a level of thinking no higher than a mental age of ten. In adolescence, therefore, at a time when they are capable of the complexity of thought demanded by a religious search (and incidentally, by a study of the Bible), many of them are so bored, or regard the whole subject so negatively, that they are not prepared to think at the rigorous level the subject demands. (One factor at work here is not poor teaching; there is implied in this no criticism of teachers, simply because our training of teachers in this field has been very inadequate. Rather it is the complexity of thought required when dealing with religious truths; religious concepts involving an understanding of an advanced religion, such as the Christian faith, are extremely intricate.)

There is strong evidence to suggest that by ten years of age most children have developed a two-world mentality. One is a theological world where God exists, was specially active in Bible times, but is now in heaven. In it anything can happen, and God can and does interfere in the natural world to help the 'goodies' against the 'baddies'. The other is a world of emerging scientific thought,

of cause and effect reasoning, where God does not exist and the mysterious and supernatural are irrelevant. One of the major causes of this divorce between the two worlds seems to be a widespread misconception about the Bible, how it came to be written and the nature of its truth and authority.

Now these findings may seem to you to emphasise the negative and to highlight 'problems'. I and my colleagues have been accused by those who resist our findings of saying there is nothing right with religious education. We have certainly neither said nor intended this. However, all our findings point to the importance of the junior school years and the need for syllabuses of a different character, based upon the real needs of twentieth century children. As we shall see, diagnosis is only a first step, and some remedies are implicit within it.³

What should be our approach to the teaching of values, religious and moral, in the light of what I have just said, in the light of the technological and scientific changes in our society, the increasingly secular nature of our life, the changes in educational practice in the last decade, and the more recent findings of research into religious development? In constructing a positive answer, a positive alternative to the old kind of religious education, it is important that we look at a number of assumptions. The first with which any new thinking must begin has already been made. It is that participation in education at an active and involved level of motivated learning is essential if religious education is to have a successful outcome. Learners who are involved in terms of acquiring insights and exploring the implications as a result of a personal encounter with the truth they examine are likely to be more effective learners, since they are more motivated and concerned with what they have learned. Religious instruction—and what a nineteenth century expression that is, with its impression of an imposition of a ready made system—must yield to a more open-ended examination of experience. This carries with it the important understanding, clearly accepted by many Christian educators and humanists alike within our state system (and also probably within our Church system), that the valid outcome of good religious education is not necessarily the acceptance of traditional religious thinking or the religious foundation of morals. We now recognise that our religious education may be equally valid if pupils reject Christian belief or

accept another moral basis for life if their decision is based upon adequate knowledge and genuine personal research. Some of our Christian brethren will find such an assertion very difficult to accept, but it seems to be an assumption which must underlie any new approach to religious education.

The second assumption that we can use as a basis for a new approach to religious education is one that has been examined in various ways by educational institutions since the turn of the century. It is the concept that knowledge is a unity and is not divided artificially into subjects, and that nowhere is this more true than in the realm of religion. It is evident that Jesus never taught religion and never used that word. He taught about life and he compelled those who listened to him and those who met with him to look into the depths of experience and find in them a fuller meaning. He taught about the Sabbath day, about ears of corn, about rest, about sharing the father's inheritance, about coins, about playing in the market-place, about sick people, about foxes, wild birds and sparrows, figs and taxes, boys on a farm, girls at a wedding, mustard seeds, yeast and bread. The curious thing is that all the evidence (except that of one gospel, where fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy appears to be the main intention of the writer) seems to point to the fact that Jesus never taught scripture. He sometimes referred to the Old Testament stories or events or sayings in passing, but it is a curious inversion of Christian education that Christian educators seem to be passionately devoted to the teaching of scripture when their founder was not. Jesus was a life-theme teacher. This is why we have suggested that life themes—themes about life which are illustrated sometimes from the scripture, sometimes from a particular part of the Bible—are to be used in religious education, and across-subject teaching is to be encouraged. We have produced materials for the classroom on light⁴, a theme which involves art, English literature, science, poetry and religion. We have a project for younger children on the importance of bread⁵; this is an attempt to help the child systematically to understand the basic realities behind the biblical metaphor which is so frequently used when bread is mentioned. For most children living in the twentieth century, most teachers teaching in the twentieth century need to be reminded of Professor MVC Jeffreys' assertion that 'Religious truth is normal experience

understood at full depth; what makes truth religious is not that it relates to some abnormal field of thought but that it goes to the roots of the experience which it interprets'.⁶ Now some will find in this statement an agreement with the theology of Paul Tillich, and some have dismissed my ideas by saying that all that Goldman appears to be doing is applying the theology of Tillich to the classroom situation. This is not true, although I have stated that religious education must now be conceived not as a teaching of a subject but as the exploration of experience in depth. It is our task as educators to help the pupil to encounter the Christian faith, seen and illustrated in the depth of ordinary experience and also encountered in terms of revelation, to put it alongside his own experience, to examine it, and to discover if it is true for him. Now this is entirely consistent with primary school practice and what the Newsom Report recommends for the secondary school. It is also consistent with the child's need to see religion in general, and the Bible in particular, as relevant to-day and not as isolated phenomena.

A final assumption in new ways of approaching religious education is the need to examine the needs of children and their capacities to understand, rather than fixating ourselves upon the narrow dimensions of Bible knowledge. This means, if we are to take research seriously, that little formal religious teaching should be given in the very early years of a child's life, and that what is given should arise out of spontaneous questions leading to explanations perhaps involving imaginative and artistic expression, and with an emphasis on a very simple form of worship.

The infant child is basically anti-syllabus—not just anti-religious syllabus, but anti-syllabus in every subject, as any wise teacher knows. He wants to explore and to question and to come to terms, by play and fantasy, with the experiences he encounters. Intellectually he may not be able to understand, but he must be allowed to feel his way into experience. To formalise and to make this into a coherent verbal system may in fact present him with a straight-jacket of ideas from which he cannot break loose. In the junior years, again, it is important that we do not too quickly formalise religious education; rather we should explore the daily life of the child, and then help him through exploration of life themes designed to meet his needs. In some of this;

biblical material will be used to illustrate across-subject teaching. Much of the teaching may come under the heading of English, art, history, geography, science and personal relationships. It is only in this way, I believe, that biblical people, biblical concepts, biblical metaphors and biblical values will be linked to modern living and seen to be relevant by children. It is then only towards the very end of the junior school and the beginning of the secondary school that children should engage in a much more systematic exploration of what kind of book the Bible is. For this purpose we have produced a series of four booklets to be used by children called *What is the Bible?*⁷ I am seriously suggesting that we should introduce children of ten and eleven years of age, if not younger, to higher and lower biblical criticism, because if the educator anticipates the child and his problems we should by then be introducing children to a critical and positive exploration of the Bible library. If we do not do it then, when many are within the context of faith (however primitive their thinking may be), they will do the same thing later, negatively, within the context of complete disbelief. It is therefore important that the older child and the early adolescent be introduced to the ideas of myth and legend, to truth and proof, and to the concept that the scriptures are not authoritative as history books but as interpretations of history. In the secondary schools we can face an intensive study of the Bible with much greater confidence if in the early years a staleness and a boredom with the Bible has not been allowed to grow. This, of course, in the secondary schools should never be an academic analysis of the Old Testament and the New, but an exploration of the developing ideas which are to be discovered within the Bible but which are still being asked and pursued to-day. The open-ended exploration of which I speak does not mean that we evade confronting our pupils with a clear statement of what the Christian faith is, what Christians do believe, and what the claims are that Christ makes upon us. What it does mean is that we are going to the very roots of belief by helping the pupil to understand the nature of the major document of religious belief within our own civilisation. This understanding of the Bible is only the last stage; too long we have made it the whole of religious education, and have introduced it too early.

All this, of course, implies a very considerable revision and reform

of our syllabus. We must move now from a Bible-centred type of syllabus to that of a child-centred type, of which the new West Riding *Suggestions for an Agreed Syllabus* is but the first.⁸ We also need, along with new content to our courses, re-training programmes for teachers in schools and churches who are sympathetic to, and are capable of understanding this new content, the new methods, and the new assumptions which we must make in modern religious education.

Let me conclude this lecture by mentioning a recent concept which has arisen out of the interest in curriculum development in this country, but to which the Americans have long paid attention. I talk of the realisation that any move forward in our understanding of the nature of the educational problems we face and the educational tasks we are engaged upon must be based on a much clearer analysis of our objectives. We have to understand more clearly just what it is we want, in specific terms, rather than enunciating general aims, such as 'making people more moral' or 'more religious'. Although we have had our own educators (such as Meredith and Nisbet) working on this for some years, the work of Benjamin Bloom in the United States is perhaps very relevant to our concerns to-day. To be more precise about our educational objectives is the burden of a book edited by Bloom called *A Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*.⁹

It would be too lengthy to give you the entire range of objectives that are possible in any subject. Let me call your attention to this book as a seminal book in educational thinking, the implications of which for religious education have not yet been considered. Taking one area alone, the area of knowledge, Bloom asks that in any subject we define what we mean by knowledge, and he then outlines various categories of knowledge. For example, much of the knowledge we ask of our children is knowledge of specifics, which includes the knowledge of terminology. Now religious education wastes a great deal of time upon this kind of knowledge, learning the words so that they may be used with some fluency. Almost automatically we use the words Church, Prayer, Jesus, God, Bible. But these are merely acquired words, and their use does not necessarily go with any basic understanding of their meaning. A very young child is reported to have said that she met God in hospital one afternoon, because she had a sore throat and had had to go there and when queried about this she said the doctor looked at her

throat and said 'Oh, my God, just look at this throat'. And then God came in a white smock, looked down her throat and said that it was very bad indeed.

Of course knowledge of specifics also means knowledge of specific facts. Here again, when we talk about religious knowledge we have confined ourselves to knowledge of religious facts about the Bible, knowledge of the names and the events connected with the Prophets of post-exilic Judaism and of the facts in relation to the life of Christ. Now some of these facts are important, and some are useful. But there are other kinds of knowledge defined by Bloom which are much more important. These include ways and means of dealing with specific problems among which Bloom includes, for example, knowledge of trends and sequences, knowledge of classifications and categories, knowledge of criteria and knowledge of methodology. When we apply these words to religious education they give us a terrible fright, but we need to be confronted by them. What are the classifications and categories of religious experience, for example, and how can we help children and young people to understand them? How much knowledge are we helping our children to have of criteria which will enable them to be discriminating in their allegiances, and on what basis shall they choose the value of a certain truth, or the validity of one certain proposition as opposed to another? How far are we helping them towards a knowledge of methods of thinking in relation to a subject such as religion? Now all this is concerned with knowledge, but it is very different from the knowledge of specifics which we have generally taken to be the basic emphasis of much of our education. Then Bloom has another category which he calls knowledge of the universals and abstractions of the subject. Again it is very intimidating to face this specifically in terms of religious education. But how far are we helping children, and later adolescents, to understand the principles and the generalisations that are made in the name of religion? What knowledge have they got of theory and structure, of the theological theories and the structures which are essential if one is to explore the realm of religious thought adequately? Now when you add to these educational objectives in the field of knowledge those in the areas of comprehension, the areas of application, the areas of analysis and synthesis and the areas of evaluation (which Bloom analyses), one can see that the

task ahead in re-defining and reshaping religious education to make it suitable for the end of the century is a very difficult one, a very demanding one indeed, but a very exciting one.

Coming full circle to the title of my address, 'Education for Uncertainty', I think you can now see by all that I have said that if we are to be consistent with the needs of children and young people we must educate them towards belief in something, though the precise nature of that belief will depend very much on the validity of the experiences to which they are exposed and the convictions of the teachers who teach them. But our major concern should be that they should learn to live in a world where infallible truths are no longer acceptable to them or to the vast majority of their fellow-citizens. It is *this* education for living in an uncertain age which is most urgently needed; the nineteenth century model of a cosy Bible-centred world is no longer adequate.

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