

THE HISTORY OF THE BLUEFIELD BIBLE PROGRAM 1939-1989

by

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of _____ and _____. Two remarkable women, who had a burden and a vision for the young people of Bluefield but who, unlike many who dream and do no more, turned their vision into a reality. Through determination, forthrightness, and compassion, they developed and implemented the plan for Bible in the Bluefield Schools.

Fifty years ago _____ and _____ spent countless hours traveling to look at similar Bible programs, working with the county and state boards of education, drawing up a constitution and most of all, convincing the Bluefield community of the need for Bible in the schools.

Their diligence was rewarded and in the September, 1939, the Program began. For the next forty-two years these women gave untiringly and selflessly to the Program. They helped raise money, hire teachers, and settle problems. They soon became the public's connection to the Program. All of these tasks were done with graciousness, wisdom and tact and yet with a directness which reflected that they were absolutely

convinced of the importance of the Program. Without question, the work of these two women made the Program as strong as it is today and in return the Program has taken on their personalities.

In these days of shaky morals, "me-ism" and no commitments, many people would do well to set these women up as examples to follow, and, in so doing, make an impact on generations yet unborn.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"Bible in the public schools ... isn't that illegal?" That comment tends to be the first made when a discussion of Bible in the schools occurs. The 1948 *McCullum*¹ decision did conclude that religion classes on school premises were unconstitutional. Nevertheless, the academic/objective study of the Bible has had the approval of the courts throughout the historical debate over religion in the schools and approval of academic/objective study was clearly delineated in the 1963 *Schempp* decision.² (Both the *McCullum* and the *Schempp* decisions will be discussed further in Chapter five.) These two positions, viz., religion classes ruled unconstitutional but the academic study of the Bible adjudged constitutional, that the Supreme Court has taken has been the subject of much confusion in the United States. This study is an effort to clear up some of the confusion that still exists over religion/Bible in the public schools.

DEFINITION OF BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS

The writer, having spent ten years teaching Bible in a public school, believes the meaning of Bible in the schools has become hazy, and thus has contributed to the confusion over religion/Bible in the public schools. "Bible in the schools" is a general title for programs which operate in the public schools to teach students the history and literature of the Bible. Two forms of these programs exist. The first form of Bible in the schools consists of a program which is integrated into the existing school curriculum. Regular teachers, whether History, Literature, or perhaps World Cultures, employed by the state, offer an elective class on Bible history and literature or a unit on Bible integrated into History, Literature or World Cultures classes. These teachers may have training in biblical studies but often their training has not been in Bible education and they present the book from the frame of reference for the particular class they teach.³

Another form of Bible in the schools is typically supported by non-tax dollars by raising money from the community to pay the teachers. The classes are elective, often taught only one day a week in grades kindergarten through ninth grade but everyday and for credit in the high school. These classes are conducted in the regular classrooms during the

school day. Teachers are trained in Bible education and must, in a non-sectarian manner, teach only Bible history and literature. The Bible classes are not religion classes nor are they a study of comparative religions, neither are these classes integrated into the various subject areas. These classes are strictly a study of the Bible.

There are variations within this second form, the most significant being the body of people who organize and control the program, usually referred to as the committee. The committee could be a particular religious group, or be the local ministerial association. In other instances the committee could be a religiously/ denominationally mixed group with a common goal of Bible education.⁴

The Bluefield Bible Program of Bluefield, West Virginia operated consistent with the second form: a program separate from the regular school curriculum, although taught in the school building by trained Bible teachers who are hired by a committee of mixed religious beliefs and paid by community donations. The Bluefield Bible Program started in 1939 and continues today, although in a slightly different form the last three years (this will be further explained in Chapter six), celebrating its fiftieth year in 1989. Its history is full and intriguing. Nonetheless, before the history of the Bluefield Bible Program (here after referred to as "the Program") is explained in detail, it is necessary to understand first

the methodology used to uncover the program's history and secondly the national historical setting of religion in the schools.

METHODOLOGY

Reconstructing the history of a fifty-year old program must begin hundreds of years earlier. Describing the struggles the United States has had as a nation with religion in the schools is vitally important to understanding religion's role today. Equally important is a description of the state and local scenarios.

National, State and Local History - Sources

The national history on this subject follows this section and the state history on religion in the schools consumes the entire second chapter. At the beginning of the third chapter, the history of Bluefield as a locale is briefly described. All of these histories were researched through primary and secondary sources.

The national history was obtained strictly through secondary sources, of which there are a plethora, on the subject of religion in the schools. West Virginia history, on the same subject, was much narrower. Some primary sources were available and three trips to West Virginia

University, Morgantown, West Virginia, and two trips to the state archives in Charleston uncovered books, diaries, journals, and newspapers which were primary sources. Secondary sources were also used.

The brief history of the city of Bluefield was gained largely through consultation of primary sources. These were, for the most part, found in the city library and the Eastern Regional Coal Archives situated within the city library. Few secondary sources on this history were available.

Bluefield Bible Program - Sources

The history of the Bluefield Bible Program can only be reproduced through primary sources; no secondary sources exist. Primary sources which exist are the following: minutes of some recent committee meetings, financial records for the past twenty-five years, the constitution and by-laws, a small amount of curriculum material, various legal correspondence (non-profit status, bank records, etc.), an almost complete set of newspaper articles/correspondence concerning recent controversies, and an assortment of miscellaneous items.

As is the case with most small organizations (this one started with one teacher), most business was done over the phone or during private conversations with no records kept. Discovering this fact made it

necessary to begin developing an oral history of the Program.

No list of teachers who had taught through-out the program's fifty years existed. Since these teachers would be vital in the history, the first step was to reconstruct an accurate teacher list. This proved to be the most time consuming project but also the most valuable.

The first teacher was well remembered and easily located. She identified the next teacher and in turn the next teacher identified the next. Eventually a list of sixty-five teachers was composed and is, by all reliable accounts, accurate.

Corresponding with these teachers was the next step. The correspondence took two forms: personal interviews and written interviews by mail. The criteria employed to decide which form of correspondence should be used for which teacher is as follows: proximity, time they taught (the first ten years were so sketchy, personal interviews were vital), and the amount of information available on a certain period (if only one person could be contacted concerning a particular set of years, a personal interview was important).

Trips to Richmond, Virginia; Columbia, South Carolina; and Asheville, North Carolina, for personal interviews produced indispensable information. For instance, an interviewee in Richmond happened to recall, during the interview, the name of one of the first

committee members who had left Bluefield in 1948. With the person's name and the name of the church she possibly was attending, calls were made and the person located for an interview which revealed information no one else could know.

Both the personal interviews and the written interviews were initiated by a letter of introduction. In the case of the personal interviews, a phone call followed the introductory letter and an interview time was set up. The personal interviews were taped and transcribed for filing. The written interviews were filed. Eventually, the response of each teacher was filed with all correspondence included. Of the sixty-five teachers, fifty-one have responded in some way.

The personal interviews were comfortable and candid. Each interviewee was extremely receptive and eager to help, as well as to "catch up" on the news of the Program, the people, and the city.

Since 1989 is the fiftieth year of the Program, some of those interviewed urged that a reunion be organized. The reunion was held April 29, 1989. Thirty-one former and present teachers and twenty others who were/are committee members or spouses of the teachers or committee members attended. Among those attending were five teachers from the Program's first ten years, including the first teacher. More information and interviews were a helpful result of the reunion. In

addition a scrapbook was compiled of pictures and histories of as many teachers and committee members as responded. The scrapbook became a valuable reference.

Besides teachers and committee members, two other types were sought for interviews. Religious leaders or prominent religious families of the main religions in Bluefield were contacted and in most cases interviewed.

Sorting and organizing this oral history and other primary sources enabled the writer to develop the only history written on the Bluefield Bible Program which begins in Chapter three.

The next section, and Chapter two will discuss the national and state histories (respectively) concerning religion in the public schools.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF AMERICA

The Shifting Scene

The place of religion in the public schools has shifted throughout the 350 years of educational endeavors in this land. At first religion and education were closely intertwined. Today religion, if not totally avoided, seldom occupies even a minute portion of the curriculum.

According to David L. Barr and Peter S. Bracher, who wrote a chapter

in *The Bible in American Education*, cultural changes and legal changes accounted for the major shift of the place of religion in American education.⁵

Culturally America's make-up of people has changed from a basic homogeneous population (ethnically and religiously) to a many faceted, heterogeneous population. This somewhat drastic change understandably caused adjustments in school curricula which were previously saturated with the beliefs and dogma of the homogeneous society.

The second reason for the shifting away from religiously saturated education involves legal changes. The changes in legal matters which would affect education are inextricably tied to the cultural changes. As the population grew more diverse, legal issues began to make room for the diversity. After the ratification of the First Amendment, its interpretation was questioned and often re-interpreted to conform to a group's thinking. This process has occurred numerous times since the ratification and has caused reorganization of religion in the school curriculum.⁶

Today the results of such reorganization --- a nearly religionless curriculum --- generates heated discussions. Both those who agree with the reorganization and those who disagree, use the religion clauses of the First Amendment to support their view.

The Controversy

In 1940 the Supreme Court ruled that the First Amendment religious restrictions were legally binding upon each state.⁷ The Supreme Court had first actually incorporated the First Amendment into the Fourteenth Amendment due process clause in 1931,⁸ but it was nine years before it was applied to the religion clauses. These actions were significant in prompting the thinking which created much of the recent controversy over religion in education. Although the heterogeneous population had, for the most part, created the diverse thinking, the legal action by the Supreme Court secured it.

Nevertheless, the question which still causes the religion in education issue to be controversial is how the religion clauses are interpreted. In other words, what did the framers have in mind when they constructed the wording of the First Amendment? There are two opposing views in answering this question. Some believe the religion clauses, though specifically designed to avoid government run by an established church (or churches), were not meant to hinder religion as a source for public good. This group is sometimes referred to as "nonpreferentialists" which means that the idea of the First Amendment is that one religion should not be preferred over another but that religiousness should be encouraged. Much evidence exists that this is the correct interpretation of the framer's

viewpoint. Richard John Neuhaus, in his book *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America*, supports this position and eloquently describes the dangers of a "public square" (society) stripped of religiousness.⁹

On the opposing side there are those who believe in a strict separationist view of religion and education. *The Establishment Clause: Religion and the First Amendment*, written by Leonard W. Levy, persuasively describes why he believes the framers of the First Amendment did not intend what the nonpreferentialists assert. Levy cites interesting examples of government actions during and around the time of the writing of the First Amendment supporting his view that the writers intended the Amendment to enforce complete separation between religion and government.¹⁰

Thus the controversy continues over religion and education even two hundred years after the First Amendment was written. However, a brief history of the past controversies illuminates the path the discussions have taken. To facilitate the explanation of this brief history of religion in the schools of America, four time periods, or phases, have been constructed in which a general description of religion in the schools can be discussed. It is important to recognize that these are arbitrary phases which did not occur simultaneously across the various regions of the nation in the way

described or in the time described. The following is a figure that shows the four phases that will be discussed giving approximate time periods and a sentence summary of each phase.

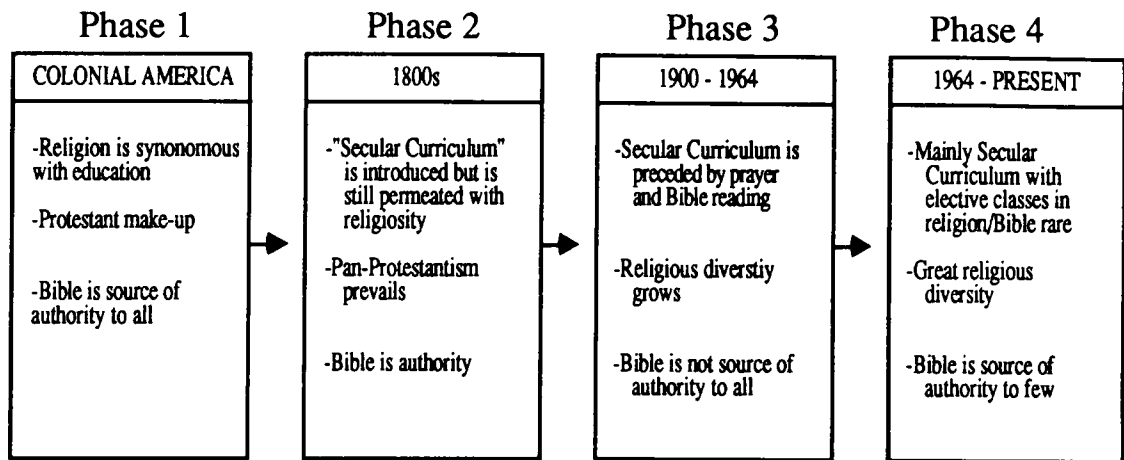


Figure 1: Phases of Religion in Public Education

Phase One (Colonial America) -- Phase one, a longer period of time than the other three phases, represents a time in America when within its smaller population there existed more unity concerning religion and its place in education. In colonial America education was desired for children so that they could learn to read the Bible and thus live morally. Much of their education came from reading the Bible and other religious books, as well as some secular books.¹¹

As early as 1647, when the "Old Deluder Satan Act" was passed by the Massachusetts legislature encouraging education of the young to deter Satan's persuasive ways, education and religion were seen as necessarily inseparable.¹² According to Winthrop Hudson, author of *Religion in America*, "[u]niversal public education had been fostered as a counter to the project of that 'old deluder Satan' to keep people from the knowledge of the Scriptures."¹³

The relative homogeneous religious make-up of the majority of most colonies in America (the Calvinists in New England, the Anglicans in the south, etc.) ensured little disagreement over the desirability of religious instruction and the centrality of the Bible in that instruction.¹⁴

Phase Two (1800s) -- The American Revolution ushered in the nineteenth century. The signing of the Constitution (1787) and

ratification of the Bill of Rights (1791) reflected a united America. The First Amendment seemed to promise religious freedom but within ten years the wording of that promise was questioned.

In 1805 President Thomas Jefferson was asked by the Danbury Baptist Association to declare a day of fasting and thanksgiving. Jefferson declined, uttering in his letter the now famous phrase "a wall of separation between church and state."¹⁵ This statement created growing uncertainty about the interpretation of the First Amendment religion clauses.

At the same time successful attempts at common schooling with a structured curriculum were underway, although there was considerable variation in the times and places of origin.¹⁶ The curriculum included secular subjects such as arithmetic, history, geography and writing, but religiosity permeated the school day. In other words, textbook illustrations, appeals for discipline, and good work habits were rooted in a Protestant ethos.¹⁷ Therefore the curriculum was secular in name but it was presented in a strongly religious setting.

Horace Mann's efforts in education were significant during this time. His unofficial title, "Father of the American Common School" reflects his contributions to schooling efforts. At the same time, America was becoming increasingly diverse both ethnically and religiously. Between

1820 and 1860 large numbers of Roman Catholics emigrated to America.¹⁸ Their entrance into the schools, along with new European religious intellectualism (deism, Darwinism, etc.) influencing some Americans,¹⁹ caused religion in the schools to be a major item of question.

Horace Mann and many others wrestled with the controversy over what is sectarian and what is piety and how religion should be taught in the schools.²⁰ Jefferson added to this controversy by advocating an educational system free of imposed religious beliefs.²¹ Though the religiosity which permeated the schools began to be questioned, it was only, however, how it should be included that was being questioned.

America continued to be pan-Protestant, at least in its leadership, and the controversy which did exist centered around Protestant differences, or how religion should be included in the school curriculum. The Bible also continued to be a source of authority, but this would change in the twentieth century.

Phase Three (1900 - 1963) -- "The United States Immigration Commission reported that in 1909 57.8 percent of the children in the schools of the nation's thirty-seven largest cities were of foreign born parentage."²² This cultural phenomenon had a lasting effect on the public

schools. These immigrants, whose children were enrolled in the schools, had greater diversity in religious backgrounds than previously existed in America.

Gradually the secular curriculum, which had been saturated with religiosity, became more academic. "Americanism", which would hopefully make good citizens of these immigrants, eventually became the emphasis in education. Nevertheless, the day in most schools still began with a required devotional time of Bible reading and prayer.²³

This pattern continued throughout the time period, and yet these schools were considered to be operating under a philosophy of separation of church and state. In his book, *What Happened to Religious Education?*, William Dunn states that "[a] close study of state constitutions, state statutes, and court decisions shows that the principle of separation of church and state in education was almost completely accepted throughout the United States by 1900."²⁴

The growing non-Protestant population objected to the use of the Protestant version of the Bible in the devotional times. They also protested other emphases of pan-Protestantism that still existed in the public schools. At the same time, some Protestants declared that there was not enough religious instruction available to students. Several corrective measures were taken by Protestant enthusiasts. Some

communities offered credit for outside Bible study connected to their own churches.²⁵ Others offered religion classes on a released-time basis.²⁶ (Students would be released at a certain time, usually last period, to attend religion classes of their choice.) Also during this time a number of communities, especially in the southeast, offered elective Bible classes supported by community funds as described on pages one and two of this chapter.²⁷ These new strategies had little long-lasting success and by mid-century the Supreme Court was asked to rule on issues regarding religion in the schools.

In 1948 the Court declared unconstitutional released-time programs on school premises (*McCullum v. Board of Education*).²⁸ Four years later the Supreme Court heard *Zorach v. Clauson* which dealt with released-time programs off school grounds.²⁹ The Court upheld the constitutionality of these classes.

Ten years later another form of religious instruction was brought to the scrutiny of the Supreme Court. In 1962 the Court declared unconstitutional, in *Engel v. Vitale*, the recitation, during morning exercises, of a school-sponsored prayer composed by the New York State Board of Regents.³⁰ The next year the Supreme Court also ruled unconstitutional the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and devotional

reading of the Bible (ten verses without comment). This watershed case is referred to as the *Schempp* case.³¹

Hence, devotional Bible reading, which was once the source of common core religion in America, was considered a violation of the First Amendment. Nonetheless, these historic cases did not ban an academic study about religions or the Bible. Phase four addresses America's response to these rulings.

Phase Four (1964 - Present) -- Justice Clark, writing for the majority opinion in the *Schempp* case and Justice Brennan, concurring, both carefully explained that courses about religion and about the Bible are constitutional if presented objectively within the secular curriculum.³² These statements have become the guideposts by which today's educators must find direction in offering any religion/Bible class.

Post-*Schempp* developments which introduced courses about religion/Bible were not slow in coming.³³ Unfortunately, the line between teaching religion/Bible and teaching about religion/Bible is so obscure that most educators choose to avoid the problem by not offering classes at all.³⁴ (The term religion/Bible will now be used since the Supreme Court separated the two as distinctively different in a school curriculum. Before this time it seems religion and Bible were considered the same.)

This phase of religion/Bible in the schools also has not escaped controversy. The public schools today are being depicted in some quarters as "religionless."³⁵

SUMMARY

To summarize these phases, a lengthy quote from *The Bible in American Education: From Source Book to Textbook*, is sufficient:

The Bible, which had once functioned in public education as a sign of the core of shared values, was reduced to a largely symbolic role by the middle of the twentieth century. Perfunctory readings of a biblical passage without comment began each school day in thousands of classrooms across the nation. ...eventually, as the pressures for acknowledging diversity grew stronger, there were objections to reading the Bible at all. ³⁶

A textbook analysis done by Dr. John A. Nietz, who analyzed the content of all textbooks from colonial days up until 1915, substantiates the above quote. The following is adapted from his extensive work.

TABLE 1.1: TEXTBOOK CONTENT

DATE	RELIGION	MORALS	OTHER SUBJECTS COMBINED
BEFORE 1776	85 %	8 %	7 %
1776 - 1825	22 %	25 %	53 %
1825 - 1875	7.5 %	23 %	69.5 %
1875 - 1915	1.5 %	7 %	91.5 %

SOURCE: John A. Nietz "Some Findings from Analyses of Old Textbooks." *History of Education Journal* 3 (Spring 1952) 79-87.

These phases describe the path religion/Bible in the public school has taken on the national level. Nevertheless, each state (and sometimes areas within the state) had its own path and time periods in which its schools moved through the phases of religion/Bible in public education. Since the Bluefield Bible Program has operated in West Virginia for fifty years, the historical review of religion/Bible in the state's schools is necessary. The next chapter, therefore, describes in more depth the particular way West Virginia moved through these phases.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER ONE

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- 31 *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp*.
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- 34 Barr and Piediscalzi, p. 190.
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CHAPTER TWO

RELIGION/BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF WEST VIRGINIA

Any history of West Virginia would not be complete without at least a brief reference to the history of Virginia. Prior to 1863 West Virginia constituted a third of the State of Virginia. Sharing boundary lines and the name Virginia did not, however, ensure a mutual sharing of histories, since the people and the conditions in western Virginia differed widely from those of the eastern side. The impact of differences in geography, ancestry, occupations, political views, and religious views are a few of the strongest that must be reviewed.

EASTERN/WESTERN VIRGINIA DIFFERENCES

Geography

The immediately obvious difference between the two sections is the topography. Eastern Virginia's rolling hills called the Piedmont, and flat

land referred to as the Tidewater area include rivers deep and broad enough for transportation through eastern Virginia. The rich soil prospered the cultivation of tobacco.¹

Western Virginia's mountains, in many places high and close together, created a rugged terrain, where small rivers running down the mountains could not easily be used for transportation. Although the rugged mountains prohibited the land from being used for profitable plantations, the earth under that land was rich in mineral resources.²

Ancestry

When the settlers came to Colonial Virginia, the Tidewater and Piedmont areas supplied their needs and were sufficient for their small population. For one hundred years (1620-1720) Virginians lived in the eastern lands. The few inhabitants in western Virginia were Indians and a few brave trailblazers.

By 1730 the British, becoming fearful that the French would begin settling and controlling the western mountains of Virginia, sought to hinder the efforts of the French offering land grants to speculators who would bring settlers into western Virginia. One thousand acres were given to the speculator for each family of settlers that came to western

Virginia. This grant included the promise of religious freedom. To avoid losing the eastern Virginians to the west, the land grant agreement included a stipulation that the settlers could not be from eastern Virginia.³

At this same time period (mid-1700s) many indentured servants in the New England towns, having completed years of servitude in exchange for passage to America, were looking for land to settle. Since most of the acreage around the New England towns was already owned, many of these former indentured servants found their way to western Virginia under the land grant policy.⁴

Predominately, the western settlers were of German and Scotch-Irish⁵ ancestry and did not share in the eastern loyalties to England.⁶

Religion

Neither did these new westerners share the loyalty to the Church of England found in the east. They had experienced hardships prior to their arrival in America which, in many cases, prompted their coming. Most of these immigrants, religious dissenters of Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist doctrine,⁷ had been mistreated in their homeland due to religious

beliefs and had endured numerous religious wars. Consequently, government controlled by the Church, or by any privileged group, was opposed by them. Attracted by the promise of religious freedom, additional ethnic groups arrived bringing with them their diverse religious beliefs.⁸

Occupations

In addition, the two sections of the state contrasted occupationally. The terrain contributed to this difference. Easterners, able to take advantage of the flat, fertile lands, had large planting areas of tobacco, corn and other crops. These great plantations, customarily owned by one family, needed many people to work the land. The workers were often slaves either bought or hired.

The new western settlers, on the other hand, were often small farmers. They did not own as much land as the plantation owners, nor was the landscape suitable for large fields of crops. These families typically did not own slaves both for economic and for ethical reasons. Some of the families were hunters and still others eventually became miners.⁹

Politics

Intertwined within these differences was a polarization of political beliefs. Some easterners were still somewhat committed to British ideas even after the Revolution. The westerners were very reluctant to support the British Government or the Church of England. Historian Charles Ambler wrote that, "During the years immediately preceding the Revolution the Valley and the Piedmont formulated an effective opposition to the political rule... ." ¹⁰ In addition, though the plantation owners had more leisure time to turn their thoughts and concerns to politics, the rigorous life of the small farmer in the west gave little time or desire for political activity. ¹¹

In the fifty years after the Revolution, the differences in the two sections of Virginia increased. As the west grew and counties were formed, congressional representatives were assigned. The congressmen did not, however, represent the same number of people in the west as they did in the east. There were more congressmen to represent fewer people in the east than in the west where fewer congressmen represented more people proportionately. (In 1815 the western portion, with a white population of 233,469, had four senators. Eastern Virginia with a white population of 342,781 had twenty senators. ¹²)

The apportionment problems caused much distress to the people of Virginia. The rights of suffrage were also dependent upon the amount of land owned and many westerners did not "qualify." The people of the west, being under-represented in every way were not seeing the results they desired in the General Assembly; the easterners feared making concessions to the westerners lest the plantation owner's needs be overlooked.¹³

These significant and weighty differences between eastern and western Virginia would never be solved. During the Constitutional Convention of 1830, some concessions were made but eastern dominance still prevailed.¹⁴ The slavery issue, whether for economic or for ethical reasons, also came to the forefront of controversy during this time. Each side defended its position biblically,¹⁵ economically, and socially.¹⁶

Civil War loyalties became the climactical controversy which would ultimately and permanently divide the two sections of Virginia. The conflicts were considered too important on each side to hope for reconciliation. In June 1863 the western section of Virginia seceded from the state to form the Union state of West Virginia. In his book *Sectionalism in Virginia*, Charles Ambler writes, "The natural features of her territory and the different elements in her population made such

conflict inevitable."¹⁷

Imbedded in all of these differences, whether geographic, ethnic, religious, occupational, or political was the added dimension of educational needs. Throughout the pre-Civil War days this dimension did not escape the general controversial climate between eastern and western Virginia.

EARLY EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS

Unfortunately, the earliest attempts at education in Virginia were short-lived. The University of Henrico, established in 1619 near Richmond, and the East Indian School begun in 1621 near Charles City were both destroyed in 1622 by an Indian raid.¹⁸

Later, during the pre-Revolutionary period, education had scant support from the British government. Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, in a 1671 report said, "[t]hank God there are no free schools or printing presses, and I hope there will be none for a hundred years, for learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world and printing has developed these and other libels."¹⁹

Early efforts at educating the young of Virginia were also affected

by the diversity between the two sections of the state. After the Revolution the Established Church no longer invested in educating Virginia's children as it had previously.²⁰ In eastern Virginia the wealthy people provided tutors for their children, the poor were offered rudimentary education in the form of charity schools, and the almost non-existent middle class had to provide for their children through subscription schools. In western Virginia, where the citizens were predominantly poor, these charity schools were scarce. The few in the middle class had to rely on subscription schools.²¹

Neither charity nor private schools were popular in the west. The frontiersmen preferred subscription schools as described by James Callahan in *History of West Virginia*,

The typical west Virginia school grew out of pioneer conditions; the hardy frontiersmen meeting, selecting the site for a school house, and hiring the teacher who taught all and as many as could be sent by the parents for a term of indefinite length.²²

The distance between the homes and the difficulty of travel in the western mountains made even these efforts almost impossible.

The necessity of a public school system that did not rely heavily on family income and that was not hampered by geography became a priority

to the people of western Virginia. The same priority was not shared by the easterners who preferred and could afford private schools, and who consequently put more emphasis on funding for the universities.²³ The following statements are typical of the controversial feelings that would hinder for years the founding of a school system. Writing in *Semi-Centennial History of West Virginia*, James Callahan said,

In the constitutional convention of 1829-30 resolutions submitted by western members for the encouragement of public education were opposed by eastern men. The easterners feared the adoption of a system by which the people of the East would be taxed for the education of the children of the west.²⁴

The westerners would eventually blame the "ignorance of the youth of western Virginia on the people of eastern Virginia,"²⁵ and would blame the system of education in Virginia for encouraging a two-class society.

ATTEMPTS AT EQUALIZED EDUCATION

Virginia eventually took minor steps toward a system of education. In 1779 Thomas Jefferson provided the first impetus for an establishment of state-wide free education. His "Bill for the More General Diffusion of

Knowledge," although never enacted, became a seminal idea which stimulated further movements.²⁶ The "Aldermanic School Law" partially fulfilled Jefferson's dream. This 1796 law gave the responsibility of a proposed system of free education to three men in each county who were referred to as Aldermen. Their duties were to decide on district boundaries and to see to all fiscal matters. The Aldermen had to be elected through a predetermined process which was specified in the law.²⁷ Unfortunately most counties did not carry through with the election provisions and thus the implementation was never widespread.²⁸

In 1811 another attempt was made at equalizing educational opportunity. This came in the form of a Literary Fund. Monies for the fund came from fines, penalties, forfeitures and escheats. The fund was divided among the counties according to the number of school age children within the county.²⁹

Eighteen years later the General Assembly of Virginia made an effort to convert the charity schools to common schools. This District Free School Act would provide for school development through a combination of private and public money. The 1829 Act stated that if the families of the district provided three-fifths of the money needed to build a school, the school commissioners of the district were empowered to

supply the other two-fifths of the amount needed.³⁰ Once again this plan failed primarily because of the amount of money required.³¹

Probably the most important meeting on education held in western Virginia took place in 1841 at Clarksburg. The purpose of this meeting was to create pressure to cause the General Assembly to organize a genuinely free school system. Representatives from nineteen counties attended the meeting. Sixteen of the counties, however, were in western Virginia leaving only three to represent the east.³² This attendance record is another indicator of the lack of interest in free schooling in the east.

Despite the poor showing from the east, the representatives considered the meeting successful. Four years later a convention was held in Richmond for the purpose of bringing before the General Assembly a bill which would provide for an effective free school system. The results of the Richmond meeting of 1845 were two-fold. The aristocratic easterners controlled the meeting giving their opinions a majority. The easterners desired each county to select the type of school system it wanted. The westerners dissented wanting a state-wide free school plan that would be supported by taxes.³³

The ensuing law passed in 1846 by the Virginia Legislature was three-fold: 1) it required the division of each county into districts; 2) it

provided for a uniform taxation which would support the schools; and 3) it required the approval of two-thirds of the voters to put the law into effect.³⁴

For the western Virginians this legislation was met with mixed feelings. It certainly was a step toward public education but the same negative aspect of the previous Act was present. The scattered settlements, rugged roads, poor means of communication, and taxation controversy were obstacles causing many counties never to achieve the two-thirds vote required. By 1860 only three western counties had appropriated the funds for a public school.³⁵

The results of the Richmond meeting of 1845 would be the closest Virginia would come to public education before the Civil War; for, as the pre-Civil War problems began to escalate, the concerns of a free school system were set aside. They were not, though, forgotten. After western Virginia seceded from Virginia, one of the first Acts of the West Virginia Assembly was a provision for free schools.³⁶

In summary, the schools of western Virginia before the Civil War had no systematic order of support, no required curriculum, and no pattern of operation. Therefore, any kind of analysis of the subjects (specifically religion/Bible) that were taught or the manner in which they

were taught would be very difficult. Nevertheless, there are some pieces which can be put together to form a probable picture.

RELIGION/BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS OF PRE-1863 WESTERN VIRGINIA

According to A.R.Whitehall's *History of Education in West Virginia*, most of the earlier schools in western Virginia were run by "Reverends." These clergymen were hired by the parents who had established a subscription school ("old field school") in some remote area. The "Reverends" saw teaching as part of their "calling" and their instruction periods were charged with the same unction as their Sunday sermons.³⁷

In some of the earliest records of schooling efforts in western Virginia, almost all of the counties (where information was available) reported using the Bible or New Testament as a textbook.³⁸ Since the schools did not provide books, students brought their own, if they had any, from home. Thus, the Bible, and sometimes other religious books became the text.

During this same pre-Civil War era, the "Bible and Tract" societies

began to crusade through the mountains of western Virginia and pass out tracts and Bibles. Although many people could not read, the presence of the tracts and Bibles in their homes became an incentive to learn to read. One frontiersman put it this way, "Well you have give (sic) me no peace until I got a man to come and larn (sic) them [the children] to read them." The Bible and Tract societies were largely responsible for putting into the homes the Bibles and religious books carried to school.³⁹

It may certainly be concluded that, with clergymen as teachers and the Bible as the most common text, there was an understanding and intention that religion/Bible would be a large part of the education received. Pre-1863 western Virginia schools intentionally included religion/Bible (in this case, pan-Protestantism saturating textbooks and the educational philosophy). Nevertheless, there can be no definitive conclusion as to an overall prescribed program of religion/Bible because of the inconsistencies in curriculum and purpose between one school and the next and the lack of records.

RELIGION/BIBLE IN WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS FROM 1863-1935

After secession from Virginia, West Virginia did begin to establish free schools. West Virginia free schools would gradually become uniform although it was a very slow process. As uniformity evolved it became easier to try to reconstruct what emphasis might have been given to subjects in the free schools.

1863-1890

W.R. White was the first State Superintendent of Free Schools in West Virginia. By 1865 the State published a *State Superintendent of Free Schools Annual Report on the Free Schools*. In the 1866 report Mr. White gave an overview of the school situation.

It will be seen that in this State, school houses are 'few and far between'. Some of the buildings called by that name are almost in ruins, others are cheerless and comfortless log structures, prisons to both teachers and pupils. ... Action should be had at once. The people are clamoring for schools and school houses. Our citizens are allured away 'to the West' by the 'public spirit' they witness everywhere. The erection of school houses will kindle such a spirit among us. It will establish the affection of the people for their own State, and invite the intelligent immigrant who has been reared where these

'gauges of civilization' -- the school houses -- are familiar scenes.⁴⁰

At this time there were 133 school houses in West Virginia.⁴¹

Determining whether or not religion/Bible may have been taught in these schools is a difficult task. If the question could be decided by a simple review of the following prescribed textbooks⁴² the answer would be no, religion/Bible was not in the curriculum of these schools.

READING, SPELLING, ELOCUTION

McGuffey's New Revised Readings
McGuffey's New Eclectic Spelling Book
Kidd's Elocution and Vocal Culture

MATHEMATICS

Ray's Arithmetic
Ray's Test Examples
Ray's Elementary and Higher Algebras
Evans' School Geometry for Beginners
Robinson's New Geometry and Trigonometry
Robinson's Progressive Table Book

GRAMMAR

Pinneo's Primary and Analytical Grammar
Pinneo's English Teacher and Guide to Composition
Kerl's Treatise for High Schools

GEOGRAPHY

Mitchell's New Revised Geographies
Cornell's Outline Maps

Gyot's Physical Charts
White's Class Book of Geography for Examinations

HISTORY, NATURAL SCIENCES, &C

Goodrich's Common School History
History of United States - Quackenbos
Natural Philosophy - Quackenbos
Philosophy of Natural History - Ware and Smellie
Rhetoric (sic) - Quackenbos
Chemistry (New Edition) - Youman
Geography of the Heavens - Burritt
Astronomy (Elementary) - Robinson
Geology - Dana
Mineralogy - Dana
Botany - Gray
Anatomy and Physiology - Cutter
Penmanship - Spenser
Dictionary - Webster

None of these books would give evidence of a state-prescribed study of religion/Bible. Nevertheless, it is not always the prescribed curriculum that truly reflects the intentions of a school. A look at other school related activities does indicate that a saturation of religion/Bible in the school routine was expected during the time period of 1865 - 1890.

The following serve as examples of these activities. In the "By-Laws and General Rules for the Schools of the District of Wheeling" (largest district at that time), the different articles refer to the dates and times school would be in session, the admission policies, etc. Article Three of By-Laws and Rules states that, "In opening the schools in the morning,

some portion of the Holy Scriptures shall be read...after the reading of Scripture, the teachers and pupils shall repeat the Lord's Prayer."⁴³ This type of religious exercise was also expected statewide. The "Constitution and Schedule" for the Free Schools, adopted at a convention in Charleston, states that, "[t]he teachers had to read or have read at least one chapter from the Bible everyday at the opening of school."⁴⁴

Another source which reveals an indirect saturation of religion/Bible in the schools is the *West Virginia Journal of Education*. For approximately one year, 1878-1879, West Virginia had its own Journal dealing with educational issues. The journal was edited by Reverend J.R. Thompson, who was president of West Virginia University during the journal's publication.

The editors published only forty-three issues but within these few issues a strong religious emphasis is found. The journal speaks to both college and school situations but even the references to collegiate experiences are indicative of the temper of the state on this issue. In one issue J. R. Thompson chose to include an article about the movement of Bible Study in colleges. The movement at Randolph-Macon College is described as "a daily Bible Class, which meets every morning from 7 to 8. Beginning with earnest prayer for the enlightening influence of the Holy

Spirit, we pursue the topical study of the Word for one hour." Later in the article, when a hypothetical excuse of time pressure was used to not attend these morning studies, the written response was, "Isn't it a fact, fellow students, that we really haven't much time for anything but the study of God's word?" The editor of the *West Virginia Journal of Education* endorsed this movement and said it was eminently practical.⁴⁵

Other indicators of the State's expectations regarding religion/Bible in Free Schools are references to West Virginia University. An advertisement for the University ends with the description of the type of moral and religious instruction and worship available on the campus. It promises a healthy environment for both.⁴⁶

In June, 1878 President J.R. Thompson gave the West Virginia University Baccalaureate sermon entitled, "Life a Failure Without Christ." The Journal published the entire sermon, which was highly evangelistic and Protestant in character.⁴⁷

Another issue of the journal included an article called "Christianity in American Colleges." In this article J.R. Thompson reported the percentage of college students in the country who professed the religion of Jesus Christ (25,000 out of 60,000). The article concludes with a plea that, "[e]very friend of public morals and virtue, as well as every lover of

our Lord Jesus Christ, will unite in the fervent prayer that the 60,000 students now in American colleges may become earnest, practical, devoted Christians."⁴⁸

The *West Virginia Journal of Education* would be considered today a journal which promotes religion. Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe how the editor wanted the journal to be perceived. In the first column of the very first issue the editor defined the "Scope and Spirit" the journal would take. Within this discussion, these words were printed, "Nor is this to be a religious paper, in the denominational or ecclesiastical sense. It will not concern itself with any of the questions in dispute between the various sects of the Christians of this State."⁴⁹ This article appeared on the same page as the article mentioned above, "Christianity in American Colleges."

What was perceived as religious then and what is perceived as religious today differ greatly. Further evidence of this observation is seen in two other articles. An article entitled "The Charge of Godlessness and Shiftlessness against the Public Schools" appeared in the March, 1879 issue.⁵⁰ As the title suggests, the author of the article felt the schools were Godless and shiftless. A week earlier the journal published an article comparing elementary education in the United States with similar schools

in Europe. The article concluded that European schools gave more attention to religious instruction than schools in the United States.⁵¹ Even with the expected religious activities in the schools, many perceived the schools as not being religious.

The time period 1865-1890 could thus be summarized as having no prescribed courses of religion/Bible but a strong saturation of Protestant religious expectations and activities.

1890-1915

The next twenty-five years were unsettling for America. The industrial revolution, the influx of immigrants, and World War I brought changes to almost every area of American life including education. Yet, though numerous changes were affecting the expanding schools, the treatment of religion/Bible in these schools altered very little. There continued to be a consistent absence of actual Bible or religion classes while at the same time a saturation of Protestant religion.

The absence of religion or Bible classes is seen in the yearly publications of "Course of Study Manuals" in West Virginia. From 1890 to 1915 there is no course described which reflects a religious nature. A

list of courses found in the "Course of Study Manual" for the year 1894 serves as an example.⁵²

Reading	Physiology
Spelling	Grammar
Writing	Civil Gov't
Arithmetic	Bookkeeping
Language	Gen'l History
Geography	History

In 1895 a book was printed with a list of all the textbooks used in the West Virginia Schools and their contract prices. No religious books were included.⁵³

Once again, a scrutiny of other aspects of the school experience reveals a different image than that given by the absence of courses or textbooks on religion. By 1904 the "Course of Study Manuals" included songs, poems, readings, and short programs for school exercises, some being unquestionably religious. Many of the songs were Christian hymns. Notice, for instance, this stanza from one of the hymns in the manual:

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all,
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all. ⁵⁴

Another hymn, "Come Thou Almighty King," was sung one verse at a time while the students read selections from the Bible alternately. The third stanza of this hymn reads,

To thee, great One in Three,
The highest praises be;
Hence, evermore;
Thy sovereign majesty,
May we in glory see,
And to eternity, Love and adore.⁵⁵

Pages with many Psalms quoted in full were also contained in the "Course of Study" book.⁵⁶

An autobiography written by Andrew Woofter describing his school days in West Virginia confirms the position taken above that no direct religion/ Bible classes were mandated but that indirect religious saturation existed in the schools. Andrew Woofter's schooling began in 1904. After completing his schooling he attended college and became an educator. His schooling took place in three or four different counties as a result of his family moving. Therefore his experiences give more insight into the religious climate of West Virginia schools.

In his second year of school (1905 or 1906) Woofter recalls that revival services were being held at the Trinity Church in Gilmer County where he was, at that time, attending school. Woofter recorded that the

entire Walton School attended morning services. Each morning at 10:30, for as long as the revival continued, the students would go to the church for a preaching service. Woofter reminisced that the students went because the teacher felt it would have been a worse offence to the community for them not to go to the morning services than for them to go.⁵⁷

Three years later, at the Turkey Run School of Jackson County, Woofter recorded that his class would stand and repeat, in unison, the Lord's Prayer or the Twenty-third Psalm during opening exercises.⁵⁸

While writing his autobiography Andrew Woofter would, at times, make reflective commentary as an educator. One of these instances concerned the amount of time given to the study of Shakespeare and the lack of time spent studying the Bible.

Why spend so much time on Shakespeare? Why spend so little time on the Bible? I believe time spent on these two studies is unreasonably out of proportion. Study of the Bible should be required in the English work of the public schools. Why? It has in it the best literature to be found.⁵⁹

Woofter's autobiography corroborates the other findings. Religion/Bible was not a prescribed course but religiosity in the classroom was expected. It was assumed that teachers would have a knowledge of the

Bible. To insure this, a book was printed in 1913 called, *Handbook of Information about the Old Testament*.⁶⁰ The book is a concise overview of the Old Testament written specifically for teachers.

The 1890-1915 time period did not produce noticeable change in the West Virginia schools regarding religion/Bible. No directly prescribed courses in religion/Bible existed but indirect religious emphasis, in this case devotional activities, was expected.

In the next two decades this combination would be slightly altered. As America became increasingly pluralistic, the pan-Protestantism that saturated the West Virginia schools was to diminish, raising concerns in the community and a resulting interest in offering religion/Bible study classes.

1915-1935

The State Course of Study Manuals would again show that religion/Bible classes were not directly prescribed in the years between 1915-1935. The following list of the elementary required classes in 1923 is a representative illustration.⁶¹

Reading	Physical Education
English	Drawing
Spelling	Music
Writing	Agriculture
Geography	Nature Study
History/Civics	Manual Training
Arithmetic	Home Economics
Health	

The saturation of pan-Protestantism began to decline during this time period. This observation is confirmed by reports which show displeasure with the discovery of declining religious influence in the public schools of West Virginia. In his report to the West Virginia Education Association, Richard Aspinall stated,

There is much prejudice against "Bible Study" in colleges and high school largely because of denominational strife. ...There is so much lack of knowledge as to what the Bible says that its teachings are usually taken for granted. ...A sure sign that the Bible is not carefully studied is that there is so much argument about it. ...Well instructed teachers would soon overcome the silly prejudice against reading the Bible in our common schools.⁶²

Concerns of this nature led to a statewide effort to promote a movement which would give credit for Bible study. In 1917 the West Virginia Education Association was introduced to a program called "High School Credit for Outside Bible Study."⁶³ In brief, the movement

proposed to give school credit to students who would study the Bible methodically outside of the school setting. The study would be clearly outlined with the number of classes and the amount of recitation hours specified. In order to receive school credit a non-sectarian test would have to be passed. This study could be done at home or the churches could set up class periods as long as the requirements were met. Some community groups (e.g. YMCA) also offered the courses.

The movement became popular in other states in the first decade of the twentieth century. By 1917 eighteen states had begun to incorporate the plan in some form into their school systems. The plan presented to the West Virginia Education Association was the same plan adopted by Indiana and North Dakota. A summary of the conditions of the plan follows:

Credit on any high school course of Bible study taken outside the high school, will be given under the following conditions:

1. The character of the work done must be equal in every respect to the regular high school classroom work. This means well qualified teachers, suitable classrooms, reference books, maps and any other needed helps, a 40 to 45 minute recitation period, with a corresponding time for study, and the maintaining of a studious atmosphere throughout the work.
2. Each pupil taking bible study for credit shall report to

the principal at the regular time and place for the examinations. The same standards and the same passing mark is required as for any other subject. If the faculty permits, the teacher shall conduct the examination at the regular classroom. But no examination shall contain any question of a sectarian nature. There is no objection to teaching any special church catechisms or other sectarian matter; but nothing of a sectarian nature shall have to do with credit on the subject.

3. The bible shall be the textbook. Any version may be used. ...If desired the International Sunday School Lessons may be used.

4. Any condition not provided for in the above will be adjusted by the high school principal and the superintendent subject to review by the Board of Education.⁶⁴

The cooperation needed between the state and churches was seen as having seven advantages according to Aspinall: 1) it would standardize Bible study and Sunday school teacher qualifications; 2) it would dignify and encourage Bible study; 3) it would create more incentive; 4) it would possibly reduce sectarian differences; 5) it would increase parent interest in religious education; 6) it would coordinate public schools with private and parochial schools; and 7) it would benefit the life and conduct of the public schools as well as uplift the church schools.⁶⁵

The West Virginia Education Association went on record as being in favor of the Plan, and a committee of three was established to

investigate the plan and report back to the Association.⁶⁶

In 1919 the committee of three composed of M.P. Shawkey, J.C. Timberman, and W.H. Kendricks, reported to the Association. After investigating many similar programs, the committee recommended that the State adopt verbatim the Indiana Plan. (The Indiana Plan adopted its format from the North Dakota Plan.)⁶⁷ The Indiana Plan was almost identical to the plan proposed to the committee two years earlier.

These provisions were added:

The amount of credit allowed ... one High School credit for any two of the four parts of the syllabus. (Two parts on each Testament.) The basis of this plan be as follows:

- a) - The teacher seeking high school credit shall meet the academic and professional requirements of teachers in the High School in which credit is sought.
- b) - Each class must have a separate room for its meetings which shall be equipped with tables, maps, charts, black boards, cases for books and a reference library of at least six volumes; one of which must be a good Bible dictionary; another a good Bible Encyclopedia and another a good Concordance.
- c) - The recitation period shall be a minimum of 45 minutes. It is expected that at least twice as much time will be spent in lesson preparation as in recitations.⁶⁸

The entire syllabus and examination questions of the North Dakota Plan

are found in Appendix A.

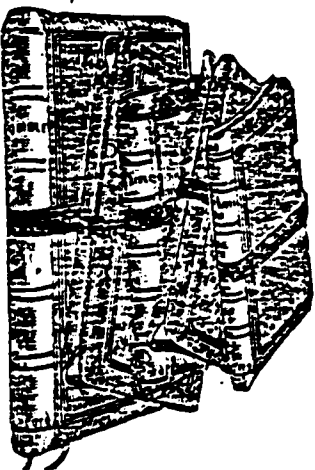
Three years later the West Virginia Education Association was again recorded as endorsing the Bible Study Plan.⁶⁹ The following advertisement found in a 1923 educational journal does confirm that West Virginia implemented the plan.⁷⁰

Bible Study Reference Library

BELOW WE LIST A NUMBER OF EXCELLENT HELPS AND REFERENCE BOOKS THAT WILL HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE

High school credit can now be obtained for a course in Bible study, and the plan has been endorsed and adopted by the State Board of Education.

The outline of this course is contained in "The Bible Study Syllabus" published and supplied by us at 30 cents per copy. Quantily prices are as follows: 13 to 50 copies, 27 cents each; over 50 copies, 24 cents each.



To take this course, a reference library of at least six volumes is required and the following books have been recommended:

Archaeology and the Bible—Barton (461 pages) ----- \$3.50
 Dictionary of the Bible—Hastings (992 pages) ----- 7.00
 Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible—Strong (1808 pages)----- 7.50
 Harmony of the Gospels, A—Sterns and Burton (283 pages)----- 1.50
 (NOTE—As the names imply, the last two items are not books, but charts and maps.)

How We Got Our Bible—Smyth (163 pages) ----- 1.00
 Landmarks of Church History—Cowan, Lile and Epistles of St. Paul—Conybeare and Howson (1008 pages)----- 2.00
 Lile and Times of Jesus, the Messiah—Edersheim (2 Vols.)----- 4.00
 Set of Maps—Kent and Madson (Com-
 plete set of 8 on wooden roller and tripod stand) ----- 7.50
 Chart of Old Testament and contempo-
 raneous History—Honline----- 2.50
 (NOTE—As the names imply, the last two items are not books, but charts and maps.)

THE JAMES AND LAW COMPANY
 Any Book Published CLARKSBURG, W. VA.

How long the Outside Bible Study Plan survived in West Virginia is not clear. No records were found pertaining to its success or failure.

Why the results of the Plan could not be found can only be conjectured:

Was it not popular? Was it too difficult to carry into effect? Did the War and the Depression redirect educational efforts? or Was it successful but not consistently recorded? Whatever the reason, a 1927 Master's thesis written on religion and morals in the high schools of West Virginia did not mention the Bible Study Plan.⁷¹ Lack of mentioning the Plan in a thesis targeting religion raises suspicion as to the Plan's success.

The thesis does, nevertheless, disclose other important information about religion/Bible in the schools of West Virginia. A survey was submitted to 108 West Virginia High Schools on moral and religious training. The results became the basis for the thesis. A few of the survey answers further explain the extent religion/Bible was taught in the schools during the 1920s. When asked if and when religious instruction was given to students, the resulting tabulation showed that forty-three schools said religious instruction was given in chapel services, eighteen reported that Bible class provided the instruction and four said the Bible was simply read. Other schools said religious instruction occurred incidentally in English, History, Social Sciences, and clubs.⁷² The author of the thesis

concluded that "83% of the pupils in the high schools of West Virginia are receiving some moral and religious education ... although it is the aim in only 20%."⁷³ The difference between moral training and religious training was not presented.

The number of schools in West Virginia offering religion/Bible instruction would decrease substantially in the 1930s. A survey of educational programs in West Virginia revealed that no high schools reported offering Bible as a class in the 1935-36 school year. (See the last entry of the partial list that follows.)

Table 2.1: High School Subject Offerings, as Listed by State Reports for Various Years, and by Seventy-Five Sample High Schools.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>1935-36</u>	<u>1945-46</u>	<u>1955-56</u>	<u>75 Samples 1956-57</u>
English I	X	X	X	X
English II	X	X	X	X
English III	X	X	X	X
English IV	X	X	X	X
Publ. Speaking	X	X	X	X
Busin. English	X	X	X	X
Journalism	X	X	X	X
Writing			X	X
Reading			X	X
Spelling			X	X
Literature			X	X
Libr. Science			X	X
Dramatics			X	X
Core			X	X
Bible		X	X	X

Source: "A Survey of the Educational Programs of the West Virginia Public Schools," 1957, Typescript, p. 336.

Whether the classes were offered other years that decade or offered in the elementary schools was not discovered. Nevertheless, within eight years from the 1927 survey/thesis until the 1935 survey results, eighteen high schools either ceased having the Bible classes or stopped reporting them.

SUMMARY

Before West Virginia seceded from Virginia, the few mountain schools, though lacking in uniformity, shared a religious nature. The clergymen/ teachers and the books brought from the homes of the students resulted in education and religious education being almost synonymous.

When in 1863 West Virginia became a state, one of the first endeavors of the General Assembly was to provide free schools. During the years 1863-1890 the schools became more uniform and prescribed books and courses were mandated by the state. Although none of the books or prescribed courses were religious, a strong indirect saturation of religion/Bible through other non-prescribed activities of the schools (i.e. opening exercises, special programs, overall religious expectations, etc.) prevailed. The years between 1890-1915 saw little change in the status of

religion/Bible in the schools of West Virginia.

Between 1915 and 1935 the indirect religious overtones began to lessen. This occurrence caused a united effort for high school credit of outside Bible study. The program was implemented but very little is known about its success or failure. By 1935 no high schools reported offering a Bible class. This situation was to change in 1939.

The previous Table (2.1) shows that Bible classes in West Virginia schools were once again reported as offered in the 1940s and 1950s. Unfortunately the survey did not reveal how many schools offered Bible as a class. It can only be ascertained from the survey that at least one county school system offered Bible to the students as an elective class.

The Bible program begun in Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia, in 1939 has been the most enduring and well-known in the state. It has survived for fifty years during which the country has gone through numerous changes relative to religion/Bible in the public sphere.

Under what circumstances did this program begin and what circumstances have sustained it? The rest of this study will be given to an examination of these factors which have influenced the program's continuation for half a century.

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CHAPTER TWO

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CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORICAL INFLUENCES ON THE FORMATION OF THE BLUEFIELD BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM

Although its population today numbers less than 15,000 people, Bluefield, West Virginia, is the largest city within a fifty mile radius. Within the public schools of this small city operates a Bible Program sustained by the approval, concern, and total financial support of the community. (A Bible program, as seen in Chapter one, is being defined as a non-sectarian teaching of the historical and literary works of the Bible in the public school, supported by community donations.)

It has been once estimated that 1,000 communities in the southeast maintained such programs, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s.¹ Though the majority of those programs no longer exist, Bluefield, for fifty years, has continued to support and maintain its Program amidst various changes and challenges.

To understand the development of such a program, it is necessary first to consider the history of the city of Bluefield.

HISTORY OF BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA

Location

Mercer County, in which Bluefield is the largest city, was established in 1837. This new county, formed from portions of Giles and Tazewell counties before West Virginia became a state, took its name from General Hugh Mercer, who served in the Revolutionary War. The county seat, Princeton, was named from the last city in which the General fought and in which he died.²

Nestled in the southern section of the Appalachian Mountain range once known as Wright Valley, Bluefield is the southernmost city in the state.³ The city's proud slogan, "Nature's Air- Conditioned City," is attributed to the high altitude of 2,612 feet. Due to the elevation and mountain breezes, hot weather occurs so infrequently that the Chamber of Commerce has a standing offer of providing free lemonade any day the temperature reaches ninety degrees or above. Numerous summers have gone by when the Chamber did not serve lemonade once.⁴

First Settlers

Though Indians roamed the area before the Revolutionary War, the first

settlers in Bluefield were Andrew Davidson and Richard Bailey. These two Revolutionary soldiers settled in the area in 1780 and built the Davidson-Bailey fort as protection for their families from hostile Indians.⁵ Both men built homesteads and although they encountered devastating raids by the Indians, permanently settled in the area.⁶

Name and Incorporation

For the next 100 years the area was scantily populated, and contained fewer than five farms. As late as 1879 the city area, as it is known today, was owned by three men: Joseph Davidson, George P. Bailey, and John Higgenbotham.⁷ In 1880 these three families gave an eighty-foot right of way to Norfolk and Western Railway that extended through the town east to west.⁸ The Higgenbotham farm was used as a flag station, and as a result the area was first called "Higgenbotham Summit."⁹ Eventually the "Higgenbotham" was dropped making "Summit" the name of the community.¹⁰

In 1882, the railway extended to the Pocahontas Coal Field bringing the possibility of a new way of life to the area. By 1885 the community of Summit had approximately 500 people. While filling out papers for the establishment of a post office, the name of the new post office needed to be supplied on the form. The residents debated over a name. As the story

goes, they observed the beautiful fields across the Higgenbotham farm, blue from the blossoms of the native "chicory." Someone suggested calling the post office "Bluefields" and that name was written on the form. On January 11, 1886, the post office, established as "Bluefields," opened. No record of the dropping of the "s" has been found. ¹¹

On November 16, 1889, during a public election the decision was made to incorporate Bluefield as a city. This was twenty-six years after West Virginia seceded from Virginia. Four days later the certificate of incorporation was approved and issued.¹² One year later the Census report showed a population of 600 people living in Bluefield.¹³

Business

The United States Census report of 1900 shows that Bluefield had a population of 4,644, an increase of over seven-fold from ten years earlier. In 1910 the population of 11,188 made Bluefield the fifth largest in the state.¹⁴ This substantial amount of growth in twenty years can be attributed to the coal and railway business.

Bluefield is situated directly southwest of the great Appalachian Fault which divides the marble and limestone from the rich coal deposits.¹⁵ The discovery of coal in West Virginia came as early as 1742,¹⁶ but it was 100 years later before the valuable deposits in the southwestern area were

discovered and forty more years before a way was devised to bring the coal out of the rugged mountains.¹⁷

As mentioned above, the first railroad into the Pocahontas Coal Field opened in 1882. One year later the first shipment of coal came out of West Virginia on the Norfolk and Western Railway headed for Norfolk, Virginia.¹⁸ The combination of coal and railroads became the perfect marriage for a small city to grow and become prosperous. (Although the Pocahontas Coal Field was the area mined, the business aspect of coal mining was handled in Bluefield.)

Coal was supreme at that time in history. John Rankin, author of *The Early History and Development of Bluefield, West Virginia*, wrote that coal was, "...the energy behind modern life, industry, trade and commerce, ... recognized as the symbol of industrial supremacy."¹⁹ This supremacy, which endured the depression and bloody mine wars of the 1920s, caused Bluefield to be the gateway and central location of business for the rich Pocahontas Coal Field, as well as being the central point on the railway of Norfolk and Western.²⁰

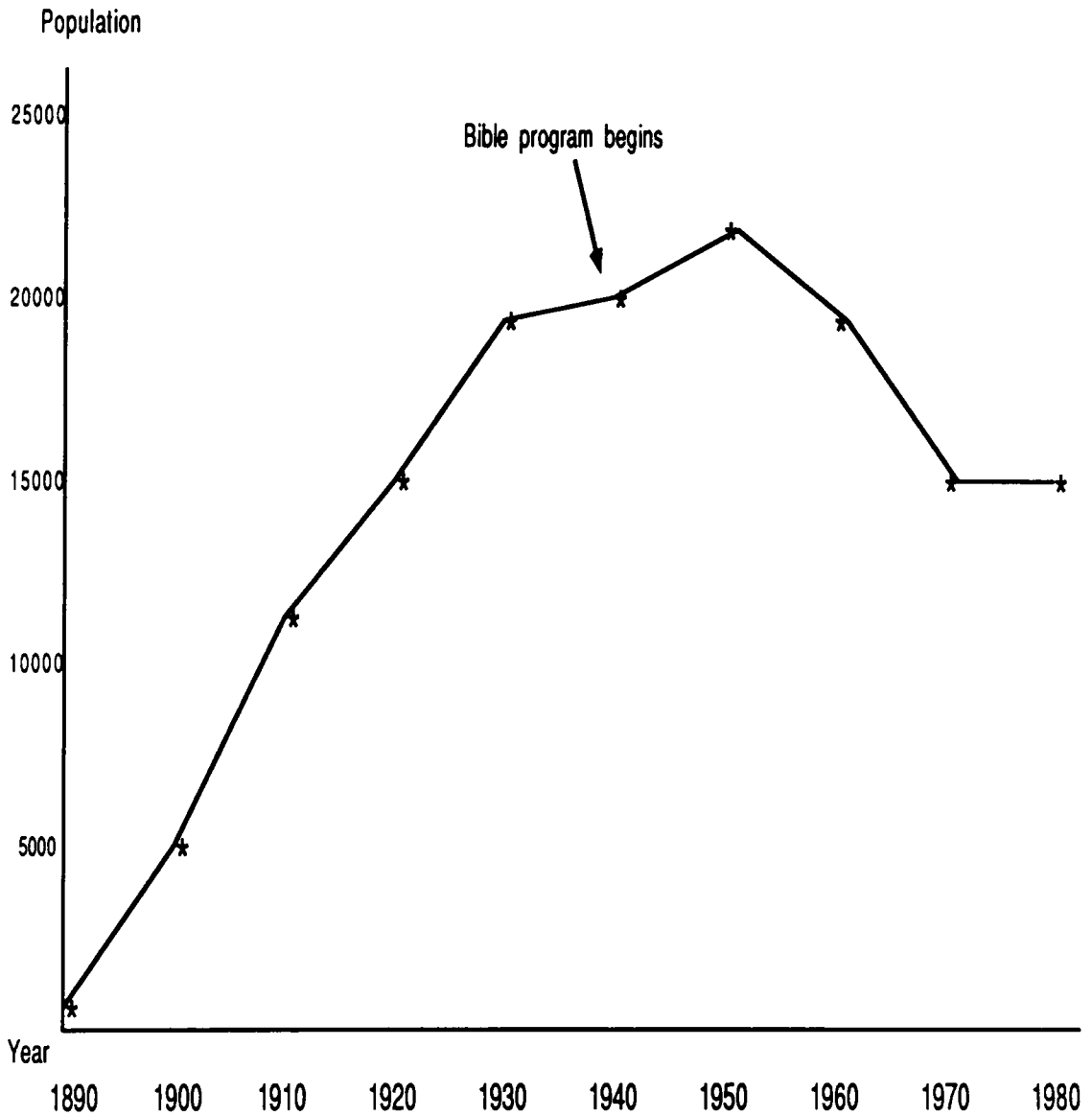


Figure 2: Population of Bluefield, WV at each U.S. Census, 1890 - 1980

SOURCE: *West Virginia Blue Book*, v. 22, p. 581; v. 38, p. 737; v. 57 p. 1000; "The Greater Bluefield Area Community Profile," Flyer, n.d.

Resulting from the tremendous growth of Bluefield, a petition to make Bluefield the county seat came to popular county election in 1898 and 1906. The petition was defeated both times indicating that more people in Mercer County favored the Princeton county seat location.²¹

Bluefield's railroad business went beyond the transporting of coal. For many years the Bluefield railway station had more passenger business than any other city in West Virginia.²² Hence, the Norfolk and Western Railway and the Pocahontas Coal Field initially were responsible for the growth of Bluefield. In 1939, its semi-centennial year, Bluefield was heralded as having a population of approximately 25,000 people²³ and its peak population occurred in the late 1940s (see Table 3.1).

During this exciting time of growth and prosperity and during the semi-centennial year, the Bluefield Bible Study Committee was formed.

THE SETTING OF THE BLUEFIELD BIBLE PROGRAM

City

Literature written in celebration of Bluefield's semi-centennial in 1939 supplies a great amount of information about that time period in Bluefield's history. The following advertisement is an example of the descriptions of Bluefield in much of the literature.²⁴

BLUEFIELD

WEST VIRGINIA - VIRGINIA

Residential Center Of The Great Pocahontas Coal Empire

~~This modern city with the progressiveness of the North and the culture and hospitality of the old South beckons to the man who wants to give his family the better life amidst an ideal environment.~~

A splendid system of improved highways into every part of the area puts Bluefield within easy driving distance of scores of coal operations, enabling a man to live in Bluefield and yet work a good many miles distant.

Mr. Out-of-Towner, have you ever considered how easy it would be for you to enjoy Bluefield's multiple advantages by making your home here?

The fact that 319 new homes have been built in Greater Bluefield in the last three years is proof that recognition of its residential virtues is growing at a rapid pace.

The Semi-Centennial Edition of the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* (December 14, 1939) listed many of the advantages that the city of Bluefield had to offer. The following is a description of some of those advantages.

Because Bluefield isn't an industrial city, its charm as a good place to live is undeniable. Peopled largely by Virginians of old, distinguished lineage, Bluefield is inviting as a spot to enjoy the delights of a cultured environment and an intellectual atmosphere, with 98 percent of its population of native-born American stock. Bluefield takes pride in its citizenry - a large percentage of home ownership, well salaried, well-paid people, freedom from labor strife, "floaters" and slums, are pleasing attributes.²⁵

Bluefield was also described as the premier convention city of the state.²⁶ The first telephones came in 1889 and fifty years later were plentiful.²⁷ Electricity ran through the city by 1924²⁸ and by 1939 all but one trolley had been replaced by a bus transport system.²⁹

It was to this thriving city, which people had every reason to believe would become a major metropolis, that two businessmen were drawn, Mr. James M. Godwin and Mr. Robert H. Moore. Each came for employment in the coal business. Sara Godwin and Margaret Moore, the wives of these businessmen, would eventually become the co-founders of the Bluefield Bible program.

No other time in the city's history would be as "ripe," for a Bible program to begin, as the late 1930s. Moreover, Mrs. Godwin's and Mrs. Moore's backgrounds had prepared them for the leadership roles they would have in the future. These women continued, from the beginning of the Program until their death, to play the most significant and enduring roles in leadership of the program. Their personalities, compatibility, graciousness, dedication and community status, as well as their forthrightness, are considered by many in the community to be the most important ingredients of the continued success of the Bible program.³⁰ For this reason a discussion of the background and personalities of the co-founders is in order.

Leaders

Mrs. James (Sara) Godwin was not originally from Bluefield. Nevertheless, experiences she had as a child and young adult gave her a concern for young people in the Bluefield community.

Born into a large family in Lumpkin, Georgia, Sara was the daughter of a peanut farmer whose income was stretched thin by family needs. When Sara was a young child (seven or eight) her mother died, leaving the father to care for the children. He married his wife's sister, Sue, so she could care for the children. This responsibility proved too much for

him and within a few months after his first wife's death, the father deserted the children and his new wife. The children remained with Aunt Sue. Sara's high school years were spent studying and working to help in supporting the family. Even during her first year in college, Sara worked and sent half of her paycheck to Aunt Sue who was caring for the younger children.³¹

One of the older sisters, living in Pocahontas, Virginia, was married and had children of her own. During Sara's first year in college when her sister became ill, she did not hesitate to set her college experience aside and unselfishly go to her sister to care for the children (her nieces and nephews). After her sister improved, Sara began to look for a job in that area of the country. Although she only attended college one year and was not able to return, she was an avid reader and a thoroughly "self-educated" woman.

The Pocahontas Coal Field and the Virginian Railway were doing a great amount of business during that time. Sara decided she wanted work as a station agent on the railway. Her gender made that goal difficult, but with persistence (a quality that would surface time and time again) she secured a job as station agent at Slab Fork, West Virginia. She held this job during the turbulent time of the mine wars which were being experienced in Slab Fork as well as other areas. Sara, for this and other

reasons, developed a "tough" side.³²

The following incident, told by her son, reveals a little more about her "tough" female side.

After she had been pinched seven, eight, ten times and sexual slurs had been made at Slab Fork, she invited the town leaders and others out to a field behind the station and she gave them a plain and fancy exhibition of marksmanship of a forty-five automatic! From that time on she wore the forty-five strapped to her hip. Now when she wasn't on duty she carried a twenty-five automatic in her pocketbook ...they didn't fool with her anymore!³³

Eventually, Sara was promoted and she became station agent at Kegley, West Virginia. While she maintained that position, she met her future husband, James M. Godwin. They married and set up housekeeping in Bluefield where James Godwin held a job as a mine inspector. Though Mrs. Godwin never worked on the railroad again, her strong personality and determination were merely redirected.³⁴

In her early years of marriage, Mrs. Godwin became interested in selling life insurance, but once again, it was unheard of for a woman to be involved in that type of employment. Mrs. Godwin persisted and eventually a man named Spillor Hicks gave her a job selling life insurance. Within three years Mrs. Godwin stood before a group of 4,000 agents in Philadelphia and received the award for top producer in the United States

for that company. Some of the men began to say that she attained this honored position by "swinging her hips." This accusation annoyed her to the point that she won the award again the next year just to prove she handled the job properly and seriously. According to her son, "...if Mother had been thirty-five and alive today she would have been at the head of the women's liberation movement."³⁵

There was a very tender side to this "tough" lady and it manifested itself in several ways. When her paychecks from the insurance company became three times larger than her husband's, Mrs. Godwin recognized that this was an embarrassment to him and in her son's words, "she just decided that the money was not worth the problems it created ...so she quit."³⁶ Involving herself with community projects and volunteer work, she soon became known as a prominent and respected worker.

Although Mrs. Godwin worked with a number of organizations, her attention and time was mainly spent working with juvenile delinquents. Her work with these delinquents brought her in contact with Judge John M. McGrath. As her concerns for these adolescents increased, she approached Judge McGrath and asked for his advice on decreasing the delinquency problem in Bluefield. His advice was to work with children before they become delinquents and to instill moral values in them prior to delinquent

behavior.³⁷ Judge McGrath's advice would eventually become the seedbed for the Bluefield Bible program.

Mrs. Robert (Margaret St. Clair) Moore grew up in Tazewell, Virginia. Her mother's father was a surgeon in the Civil War and later became director of the Western State Hospital in Staunton, Virginia. Thus, Margaret's mother lived in Staunton until she moved to Tazewell after teaching school in Wytheville, Virginia. Margaret's father graduated from Washington and Lee, eventually establishing a law practice in the growing area of Tazewell, Virginia. Her parents made their home in Tazewell; and, to continue with the very successful practice, they stayed in Tazewell their entire lives.³⁸

When Margaret was a teenager, she attended Mary Baldwin school and eventually graduated. After this initial education, she attended Wellesley College in Massachusetts. (Because of the flu epidemic during World War I, she became very ill and almost died. After postponing her education, she did complete three years at Wellesley.) Two of her classmates were eventually famous, Mai Ling Soon (Madame Chiang Kai-Shek) at Wellesley and Tallulah Bankhead at Mary Baldwin. One of her English teachers was Katharine Lee Bates, writer of *America the Beautiful*. After graduation from Wellesley and a tour of Europe, Margaret returned to marry Robert Moore who was just finishing his service in the Navy.³⁹

They settled in Bluefield, West Virginia, where Robert became actively involved in executive positions in Virginia Smokeless Coal Company and Jewell Ridge Coal Corporation. The business became very lucrative in the golden years of the coal business in Bluefield.

Mrs. Moore became highly active in community affairs. After her four children became of school age, she revived the Community Concerts Association, an organization run by Columbia Artists Management, which had been neglected in Bluefield but which became very successful through her efforts. Many prominent people performed both in Bluefield and in Mrs. Moore's own home.

Mrs. Moore also supported the Y.W.C.A. serving on numerous committees in various capacities, co-chairman of the Y.M./Y.W.C.A. building fund . She actively served on Boards of four different charitable organizations and served, in various roles, her two Alma Maters. In 1966 Mrs. Moore received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award from Mary Baldwin College (formerly Mary Baldwin Seminary) for her "meritorious service to the college," specifically a quality of life whose unselfish service is the fundamental principle.⁴⁰

There were other community interests that Mrs. Moore "lent her name to" because her name had become one associated with well organized, important and successful community efforts. Amidst all these worthy

endeavors, Mrs. Moore became most noted for her part in initiating the Bluefield Bible program, which for many years consumed much of her time, thought and energy.⁴¹

THE CONCEPTION OF THE BLUEFIELD BIBLE PROGRAM

Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore were two diverse people; different backgrounds and different personalities led them to different interests. Nevertheless, they both attended and actively participated in the same church, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Bluefield, West Virginia. They also both sent their sons to the same private boys school, McCallie School, in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Eventually, through these mutual contacts, the two women realized they had a common interest and concern for young people in the Bluefield area: Mrs. Moore through her work with the Y.M./Y.W.C.A, and Mrs. Godwin through her work with juvenile delinquents. Their united concern turned into a decision to pursue some avenue of action that might encourage, train and guide young people toward a more moral and upstanding lifestyle. The particular avenue they would take to meet this goal was not evident until repeated visits to their sons' school in Chattanooga.

Dr. McCallie's Work

For many years J. Park McCallie was Headmaster of a boys preparatory school named McCallie School. Dr. McCallie also, in 1922, became chairman of the Religious Work Committee of the Y.M.C.A. of Chattanooga. While involved in his appointment at the Y.M.C.A. , it discouraged him that much of the religious work done through the Y.M.C.A. had been abandoned.⁴²

In response to his disappointment with the Y.M.C.A. , Dr. McCallie conceptualized a plan for the public schools whereby students could receive Bible training much like he offered the boys at the preparatory school. The following is his formalized plea to the local people:

As head master of a boy's preparatory school, I have seen what the Bible, taught as a regular daily class, with tests, promotions, reports, and credits attained for diploma for graduation can do for young boys... . It is a shame that public school youngsters can't have the same privilege as pupils in a private school, where they find it the most interesting and rewarding subject they study. It has made possible the Honor System of conducting examinations without cheating, diminishes dishonesty, lying, profanity, and bullying, and is altogether the most worthwhile course we have. Can't the same thing be offered the public schools as an elective study and as a gift, apart from all taxes, by the Y.M.C.A. in cooperation with the Y.W.C.A., the P.T.A. , members of churches, and other individuals who see its value? Remember that not 50% of youth are in any Sunday School; some principals say 75% never receive Bible instruction.⁴³

The Chattanooga Plan

The earnest plea inspired action. Forming a five member committee consisting of representatives of the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., a Baptist church, a Presbyterian church and the public school English supervisor became the first step. As a result of the efforts these committee members put forth, the City Commission authorized the free, elective classes in Bible that began in September, 1922.⁴⁴

The "Chattanooga Plan" as it was called, produced a great amount of attention and interest from other cities. Eventually over 400 cities in the southeastern states undertook the plan.⁴⁵

As they became exposed to the Chattanooga Plan of Bible study in the public schools, Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore grew extremely interested. Nevertheless, they did not adopt that particular plan. Instead, they began to organize an effort to present a similar program to the Board of Education, but one without a "Christian" emphasis.⁴⁶

The Pilot "Test"

In order to strengthen their position on incorporating a Bible program into the Bluefield schools, Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore developed a ten question "test." The questions were general Bible knowledge questions

that asked for knowledge of elementary facts in the Bible. A copy of the test has not been recovered, but these three questions are remembered by the first teacher, who kept the test results for many years:

1. Who was Jesus' Mother?
2. Who baptized Jesus?
3. Who built the Ark?⁴⁷

The women gave the test to school aged children in the city and tabulated the results. Few facts were known by the children. The two women presented the results of the test to various groups and the biblical ignorance shocked the parents and leaders of Bluefield.⁴⁸ Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore gathered substantial amount of support through the pilot test results, but much more work needed to be done.

County and State Board of Education Approval

The two women took their plan of Bible study in the Bluefield schools to the county Board of Education and received approval. Although records of the Board meetings do not go back past 1942, other written materials verify this approval.⁴⁹ Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore also contacted the state Board of Education in Charleston and received approval of the program.⁵⁰

Constitution and By-Laws

At this juncture the two women drew up the Constitution and By-Laws for the committee that would be chosen to carry out the duties. The committee membership was to be composed in the following manner:

The membership of this committee shall be composed of one representative from each of the following groups so long as they choose to participate: The Bluefield Ministerial Association furnishing a Protestant minister, the Roman Catholic Church, the Jewish Synagogue, the Parent Teacher's association, the Young Women's Christian Association, a member of a faculty of the Bluefield city schools, a member of the faculty of Bluefield College, and so long as they may reside in Bluefield, Mesdames James M. Godwin and Robert H. Moore, the two individuals who have been the most active in the initiation of this movement in Bluefield.⁵¹

Whether or not representatives from each of these categories was secured is not known. The officers became Mrs. Moore, President; Mrs. Godwin, Vice President; and Mrs. Kenneth Smith, Treasurer.⁵²

The educational qualifications of those who would teach were also spelled out in the Constitution.

Only those teachers who possess the due academic and professional requirements of the teachers in the high school in which credit is sought, having at least twenty-four hours in the Bible and correlated subjects, shall be employed to teach the Bible in the high school of

Bluefield. It shall be further required that they shall possess the necessary experience in teaching the same.⁵³

Other items set forth in the Constitution were the schedule for the Committee's monthly meetings (the first Monday of every month, September through June, at four o'clock in the office of Ramsey School)⁵⁴ and the process through which the Constitution could be properly amended should the need arise.⁵⁵

Finally, the Constitution noted the official name of the program as "The Bible Study Committee of the Public Schools of Bluefield, West Virginia."⁵⁶ The last page of the Constitution consisted of the By-Laws which indicated the responsibilities of the Officers and the Committee.⁵⁷

With the community support, the state and county Board of Education approval, and the Constitution and By-Laws drawn up, Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore were ready to hire their first teacher.

The First Teacher

Once again the women turned to Dr. McCallie for assistance. Coincidentally, he had just received a letter of inquiry from a woman named Catherine Walker, who was interested in teaching in the Chattanooga Bible program. Dr. McCallie, not having an opening for her in Chattanooga, wrote back and told her about the Bluefield Program.

Catherine Walker had just completed her master's degree from Columbia Bible College in Columbia, South Carolina. She interviewed for the job in Bluefield and taught a demonstration lesson. The Committee hired Catherine and the classes were set to begin in September, 1939.⁵⁸

SUMMARY

All the planning and preparation for a Bible Program was coming to an end. The city's history and its situation in 1939 were positive factors which contributed to the successful preparations for the Program. The co-founders, whose personalities seemed "tailor made" for their positions, were also vital links to the future stability of the Program. As the Program began to be formalized through the study of the Chattanooga Program, a pilot test and county and state approval, the dream of the co-founders (that every child in Bluefield have an opportunity to study the Bible) was coming true.

During the next fifty years the Program would grow to include twenty different schools and to collectively employ sixty-five teachers. The operational procedures of the Program are significant to its success. These procedures are laid out and discussed in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE BLUEFIELD BIBLE PROGRAM

Operating a program that functions within a school district but not under the district's control must be done in an orderly and efficient way. The Bible Program has had to follow the school district's guidelines without receiving the benefit of the district's organization and state privileges.

When the Program first began, with one teacher, the operational strategies were minimal. The two women mentioned in Chapter Three, Mrs. Godwin and Mrs. Moore along with Thelma Smith, whom the co-founders recognized to be a strong personality and who, therefore, was asked to be Financial Chair, became the core planners for any of the Program's needs. Since the people involved in decision making were few in number and only one or two teachers were affected by the decisions in the beginning of the Program, most of the decisions were made over the phone or in a private meeting, and no records kept.¹

As the number of teachers and committee members increased, operational procedures had to be developed to include more formal guidelines for functioning. Thus the Program's operational structure differs today from what it was in the beginning.

To reflect this difference in procedure from the beginning, the divisions of this chapter (teacher qualifications, teacher training, teacher responsibilities, curriculum structure, financial procedures, and the Black Auxiliary) will each be subdivided when appropriate into the following periods: Earlier (1939-1964), Later (1964-1986) and Recent (1986-1989).

These time periods were selected for specific reasons: in 1963 the *Schempp* decision caused some minor restructuring of the Program, and in 1964 the Program was twenty-five years old. Those two events were, therefore, used as a dividing factor for reconstructing the operation of the Program. Also, in 1986 a major restructuring was carried out after the "Bluefield Decision," making the last three years of the Program structurally different from the previous forty-seven. (These important incidents will be explained in detail in Chapters five and six.) It should be noted that not all topics in each division reflect a significant change resulting from these incidents mentioned and, therefore, some will be subdivided in a different manner from the majority.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Earlier (1939-1964)

As stated in the Constitution and By-laws of the Bluefield Bible Program, teachers were to "possess the due academic and professional requirements of the teachers in the high school in which credit is sought, having at least twenty-four hours in the Bible and correlated subjects."²

Since the first teacher would be hired to teach high school, the constitution was written with that in mind. Nevertheless, elementary classes began to be taught even during the first year. The constitution was not amended to reflect the addition of elementary or junior high classes, but the same qualifications were required of all teachers with one exception. The high school Bible teacher was required by the Committee to have a master's degree. This requirement was much stricter than even the public school requirements at that time which for many more years allowed employment of teachers with two-year certificates.³

Besides having twenty-four hours of Bible, the constitution required teachers to possess "due academic and professional requirements." The Committee only hired teachers who had received at least a bachelor's degree (in education, Bible, or Bible education). The teachers during this time period were also to comply with the professional requirements of the state of West Virginia.⁴

The Committee actually had stricter requirements than the state of West Virginia when the program first began. In the 1930s and 1940s many public school teachers (especially elementary) nation-wide held only a two-year normal school degree.⁵ This was also the pattern in West Virginia.⁶ As late as the mid-1940s special certificates and emergency certificates were issued to people with less than a four-year bachelor's degree (this was most widely done during World War II in order to keep the schools open).⁷ It was not until the mid-1950s that a more rigid system of teacher requirements was enforced by the state.⁸

Apart from state requirements, the Committee expected the teachers to be effective teachers. In addition to being interviewed, prospective teachers were scrutinized during a demonstration lesson which the teachers taught in front of the Committee before employment. (Usually the prospective teacher was in Bluefield interviewing and thus a typical class situation could be used for the demonstration lesson.)⁹ In a few instances teachers were hired in the summer without the Committee having the benefit of watching a demonstration lesson.¹⁰

After the teachers were hired, the Committee continued to observe teacher performance. In order to ensure that the teachers were teaching within the guidelines of the Program's Constitution (e.g. keeping a neutral* stance toward the interpretation of the Bible) and teaching effectively, the

Committee began to supervise and observe the teachers (two to three times a year).¹¹

Thelma Smith, herself a certified teacher, was designated as the first supervisor over the teachers. (To once again demonstrate the personalities of Margaret Moore and Sarah Godwin, before they assigned the supervisory duties to their long-time friend, Thelma Smith, they contacted the school she taught in for ten years and inquired as to whether or not she was in fact a "good" teacher!)¹²

After Thelma Smith moved from Bluefield in 1948, Amelie "Emily" (Ewbank) Mitchell, a former Bible teacher, became the next supervisor. When Emily Mitchell moved from Bluefield in 1959, Isabella Breth became the third supervisor and continued in that capacity until 1986.¹³

Later (1964-1986)

Very little changed with regard to the qualifications of the Bible teachers as the number of Bible teachers slowly increased to ten. The most significant change came from outside the Committee. The State Department of Education began to increase requirements for the regular

* Originally the term "neutral" in the context of religion/Bible in the public sector meant teaching the Bible in a way that would not offend the different religious sects. More recently, neutrality has included teaching the Bible in such a way that would also be neutral toward religion or irreligion. The Committee has also accepted and enforced the more recent definition of neutrality.

public school teachers. By 1969 the second, third and fourth class certificates were practically non-existent.¹⁴

The Committee continued to require that the high school Bible teacher have a master's degree. In the early 1970s two more requirements were added. The high school Bible teacher was to hold not only a master's degree in Bible but also English or history certification. The Committee felt this requirement would strengthen the quality of teachers. The second requirement added was that the Bible teachers must have had student teaching experience in Bible (emphasis added).¹⁵ The addition of English certification was at the request of the Mercer County Superintendent of Schools who at that time was Clinton Lilly, who added this requirement since credit was being given for the Bible class. The Bible Committee required the addition of student teaching in Bible.¹⁶

It is important to note that during the last twenty-five years most of the Bible teachers held certificates from the state of North Carolina which certifies in Bible. (The requirements for certification in Bible are the same as any other subject area.) Since the state of West Virginia does not certify in Bible and the Bible Committee employed privately, certification had not been sought even though all standards for certification were required by the Bible Committee.

Although the Committee's standards were not scrutinized by the state,

the Committee was very strict in enforcing them. From time to time individuals who had a teaching certificate and had taught "Sunday School" would inquire about teaching Bible. Even though the person felt qualified to teach Bible, especially by state standards, the Committee members would not lower their standards of at least twenty-four hours in Bible and later, student teaching experience in Bible.¹⁷

Recent (1986-1989)

When the Bible Program was taken in under the Mercer County Board of Education, all previous requirements were enforced and a requirement was added that Bible teachers have state certification. Since the state does not certify in Bible, the certificate given to the teachers was referred to as an Enrichment Certification. As its name implies this type of certification is given to personnel who, though not holding a standard teacher certification, teach enrichment classes to students. The supervision of the Bible teachers during this time has been delegated to the Social Studies and English supervisors of the Mercer County Board of Education. During the three years under the Board, these supervisors have been Rosanna Reaser (Social Studies) and Gayle Wise (English).

TEACHER TRAINING

The majority of the Bible teachers employed during the history of the program (approximately fifty-five of the sixty-five) were trained at Columbia Bible College in Columbia, South Carolina. Columbia Bible College and Seminary, as it is called today, is four-year college and graduate school offering a major in Bible with minors in various areas including Education.¹⁸

When interviewees were asked why so many teachers were chosen from the same college, several reasons were given. In the following paragraphs a summation of these reasons will follow within the time periods already set up.

Earlier (1939-1964)

The first teacher, Catherine Walker, was from Columbia Bible College. Her vivacious personality, deep dedication and excellent teaching style won the hearts of Bluefield. It has been said by those involved with the Program that these traits of the first teacher probably brought more acceptance of the Program to the community than any other single factor.¹⁹ As the years went on and the Program expanded, needing more teachers (see table 4.1) or replacing teachers, Columbia Bible College

became a familiar and trusted source of properly trained teachers.²⁰

Coincidentally or otherwise the teachers who were hired from other institutions (three in the first seven years) were not successful teachers and stayed only one year.²¹

Table 4.1: Number of Teachers Employed by Years

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NO. OF TEACHERS</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NO. OF TEACHERS</u>
1939-40	1	1978-79	7
1940-46	2	1979-83	8
1946-47	3	1983-84	9
1947-61	4	1984-87	10
1961-68	5	1987-88	8/6
1968-78	6	1988-89	5

The most long lasting contact with Columbia Bible College came through Sara Petty. She was a good friend of Catherine Walker, both having completed their master's work at Columbia Bible College during the same time period. In 1945 when Catherine Walker was leaving Bluefield to begin a similar program for a church in North Carolina, Sara Petty was asked to apply for her position. She came to Bluefield, met the Committee and taught a demonstration lesson. She was asked to come but did not accept the offer. That same year she was asked by the President of Columbia Bible College, Dr. Robert C. McQuilkin, to begin a Bible Teaching minor at Columbia Bible College. Sara Petty accepted this challenge and developed the department.²² From that time on trainees of Sara Petty became candidates as new teachers in Bluefield. Very few schools were offering training in Bible teaching and Columbia Bible College, because of acquaintances, past performance of alumni/ae, and proximity, became the first source contacted when teachers were needed.²³

In 1953 Sara Petty became Dean of Women at Columbia Bible College. Nancy Havlick and Sarah Overstreet became the directors of the Bible teaching minor.

Later (1964-1986)

The Bible teaching minor was phased out in 1965 but was revived again

in 1973 when Sara Petty resigned as Dean and once again became director of the Bible teaching minor. In 1978, after Sara Petty retired, Mary Faith Phillips became Director and continues in that position today.

During Sara Petty's second tenure as director she placed student teachers in Bluefield with the Bible teachers as cooperating teachers. This proved to be an excellent source of future teachers. The student teachers were carefully trained and observed (by request of the Mercer County School Superintendent, the cooperating teachers could not leave the classroom in case a controversial issue arose). These student teachers were also repeatedly reminded of the non-sectarian purpose of the Program and of the necessity of avoiding controversial issues by directing the inquiring student to ask his or her pastor/priest/rabbi or parent for clarification.²⁴

These student teachers were more aware of the need for careful teaching and thus more prepared to teach in the public school Program than most other candidates. Consequently, when new teachers have been needed, former student teachers have been contacted. Thirteen of the last sixteen teachers hired were former student teachers in the Program.

Though the frequency of having teachers come from the same school has been a point of controversy from time to time, the Committee contends that these teachers proved to be the most successful and the most aware of the legal issues involved in teaching Bible in the public schools.²⁵

Additionally, they knew of no other college which gave students student teaching experience in Bible in the context of the public school situation, and there was no reason to jeopardize the program just to have other training schools represented.²⁶

Appendix B is a list of all the teachers who have taught in the Program each year. This list did not exist previous to this study. The names were compiled through interviews and were verified (after minor changes) at the reunion. According to all available sources this is an accurate and complete list.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Often the classroom responsibilities of the Bible teachers were the same as those of the regular public school teachers. On the other hand, because of the independence of the Program, other responsibilities were expected of the Bible teachers. As changes affected the Program, responsibilities were also altered. Once again the same time periods are used to recreate, as accurately as possible, the responsibilities of the Bible teachers in the classroom and out of the classroom.

Earlier (1939-1964)

High school - The high school Bible teacher's responsibilities were identical to the regular public school teachers including assigning grades which were recorded on the permanent grade cards (credit was given for the high school Bible class).²⁷ The high school Bible teacher was also required to attend all faculty meetings and share in other faculty responsibilities such as working on assemblies, having a homeroom, and keeping study hall. In addition to these responsibilities the high school Bible teacher sponsored a Bible Club. At the end of the year a student was chosen to receive the Bible medal which represented high Bible grades and outstanding character. Until 1982 it was named the "Westminster Medal." After that it was renamed "The Sarah Godwin Medal" in memory of Sarah Godwin (co-founder of the Program).²⁸

The high school periods usually ranged from forty-five to fifty minute periods. The preliminary classroom procedures for the elective Bible class were typical (taking roll, making announcements, passing back papers, etc.). After the preliminaries, there would be prayer and then a Bible lesson which was part of a chronology through the historical sections of the Bible with an application to the daily life of the student. After the lesson, worksheets were often used to once again review the facts of the lesson. The worksheets were developed the first year of the Program by Catherine

Walker who quickly saw the need of them since no text book or workbooks were available for the Bible class. Day by day she developed these worksheets and each year she revised them.²⁹

A second teacher was hired in 1940 to begin teaching elementary classes. During this time period three of the elementary schools in Bluefield were first through ninth grade (seventh through ninth was still considered junior high). The remainder were typical elementary school of first through sixth grade. From 1939-46 the high school Bible teacher would teach high school in the morning. In the afternoon she would travel to elementary schools and teach fourth through sixth grade classes which were often doubled up in order to schedule all the classes into the week. By 1946 there were enough high school students signing up for the Bible class to necessitate a full-time high school teacher and therefore a third teacher was hired to take elementary classes.³⁰ A fourth teacher was hired in 1947 to relieve the burden of large class sizes.

For the next fourteen years the Committee employed four teachers yearly, a number that adequately handled the student load in the Bluefield schools. Typically a teacher was assigned to either high school, junior high, lower elementary (first, second and third) or higher elementary classes. At times an imbalance in class load necessitated some overlapping.

Elementary - The elementary classes were taught in the regular

classroom once a week. The Bible teacher was considered to be very much like an itinerant Music or Art teacher in that the regular teacher "turned the class over" to the Bible teacher.³¹

Elementary Bible class consisted of several activities. Often classes began with taking roll (after class sizes were down to twenty-five or thirty). Learning to look up Bible passages through a game called "Bible Drill" (only in grades four through six), collectively memorizing specific passages or the order of the books of the Bible, and singing Bible-related songs consumed approximately ten minutes of the class period. The rest of the thirty minutes was spent on the Bible lesson. The teachers would always use visualized lessons (usually flannelgraph) and integrate into the lesson a modern application to the student's life. Either at the beginning or the end the teacher would pray.³² The Bible teacher also asked students if they had attended their church or synagogue the previous week and a roster of attendance was kept. This roster was not used for awards or grades of any kind. Its only purpose was to help encourage church/synagogue attendance in the community.³³ At the end of the year certificates were distributed to students for attendance in Bible class and for memory work.

Junior high - Junior high Bible classes were taken once a week during study hall or non-required classes. The Bible teacher would schedule students who were interested in taking Bible during those periods

designated. As classes changed each period the student could report for Bible. The class periods were between forty and fifty minutes long (it varied from year to year). Roll was taken and a roster of church/synagogue attendance was also kept under the same circumstances as previously mentioned. Some memory work was assigned but usually the period was spent on a new lesson. Junior high students also kept a notebook with written work which corresponded with the lesson. Grades were assigned to each student but they were not recorded on a student's regular report card. The grades were put on a separate Bible card and were calculated from tests and worksheets.³⁴ (Samples of the worksheets are in Appendix C.)

At the end of the year certificates were given to ninth grade students who participated in the Bible class during seventh, eighth and ninth grades. Also, award Bibles were given to a ninth grade girl and ninth grade boy who had the highest Bible grade and displayed outstanding character. Toward the end of the year a comprehensive Bible test was given to ninth graders who chose to take it. The student with the highest grade was awarded a Bible with an olivewood cover. This two-to-three hour test was referred to as the Olivewood Test. More recently (since 1982) the Olivewood Bible is given in memory of Margaret Moore (co-founder of the Program).³⁵

Since the elementary and junior high Bible teachers would travel from school to school, they were often not assigned duties outside of their classroom. Faculty meetings were attended if the teacher was at a school which scheduled a meeting when the Bible teacher was there.

By the mid-1950s the Bible Committee required all the Bible teachers to meet with the supervisor every Tuesday after school. The purpose of these meetings was to collectively "talk through" the next lesson discussing historical backgrounds, lesson content, and possible controversial areas.³⁶

Student participation during this time period was extremely high. Many elementary Bible teachers reported one hundred percent participation in every school, others reported ninety-nine percent attendance. Most elementary Bible teachers taught approximately 1,000 students a week. Junior high enrollment averaged seventy-five percent with the teachers teaching close to 700 students a week. Because high school classes met daily teachers would teach between 120 and 150 students. High school enrollment averaged out to be about thirty-five percent by the end of the three years a student would spend in high school.³⁷

Most of these classroom responsibilities stayed the same throughout the fifty years of the Program. The changes that were made will be discussed in the next two divisions.

Later (1964-86)

The high school classroom procedures and responsibilities have changed less throughout the fifty years than any other grade level division. The fact that the high school Bible class was elective, for credit, and scheduled as a regular class in the master schedule, probably attributed to its consistency throughout the years. In 1977, however, one major addition was approved. Beginning that year and continuing until the present a second year Bible class was offered. The second year class curriculum which differed from the first year will be discussed in the section entitled Curriculum Structure. The high school Bible electives, first and second year, continued to have high enrollment as over forty percent of some graduating classes took Bible one or two of the three years in high school.³⁸

Eventually, after a new high school was built, Bluefield had two junior high schools which no longer had elementary classes operating within them (a process which took place in the late 1950s). One Bible teacher was assigned to each junior high and the classes were set up the same as before (e.g. students could elect to take a one-day-a-week Bible class out of study hall or out of a non-required class). By 1982 one new junior high was built and all junior high students in Bluefield (approximately 1,000) attended the same school. Once again the Bible classes were offered in the

same manner but classroom space was not available for Bible classes and thus the teachers traveled from room to room teaching in the room of a teacher who had a planning period that particular hour. Keeping and distributing Bible notebooks when the teachers were traveling became impractical. Therefore in 1983 the junior high Bible notebooks were no longer used. The junior high Bible grade cards were still used but the Bible grades slowly became a grade of cooperation and conduct rather than a grade that was earned through testing and worksheets. Junior high attendance in Bible was usually seventy percent during this period.³⁹

Keeping a roster of church/synagogue attendance in junior high and elementary schools stopped in the early 1970s. Since the roster served no purpose and could cause possible embarrassment (such an incident was relayed to one of the Bible teachers where a student was embarrassed to say she had not attended church) the Committee stopped the procedure. In the early 1980s prayer during Bible class was changed to a moment of silence by a decision of the Committee. (Since the classes were elective the Committee still permitted prayer up until this time but much public discussion in and out of the state on the issue of prayer in the schools prompted this decision.) More recently, even the moment of silence has been stopped by a decision of the Committee.⁴⁰

Another procedure which was altered in the elementary school Bible

classes was the singing. By the late 1970s, the Bible Committee and Bible teachers discussed the practice of singing in the Bible classes. The Committee determined that many of the songs used, or requested by the students, could be construed as religious in nature. Once again the Committee instructed the teachers to stop using any songs except those songs where words were directly out of the Bible passage and would enhance memorization of classic verses or lists (e.g. the twelve disciples names in song form).⁴¹

During this time period elementary schools on the outskirts of Bluefield started requesting Bible classes. The number of Bible teachers gradually grew to a total of ten in 1984 because of this expansion. In 1982 the Bible Committee became increasingly aware of the need to monitor the Bible lessons to ensure that guidelines were being followed. Therefore they required all teachers, with the exception of the high school teacher, to write out their weekly lessons word for word and have it read and approved by another Bible teacher. Writing the lessons out word for word was feasible since Bible teachers in grades one through nine taught only one lesson a week. This process was used, and is still used in some form, to point out possible controversial or religiously slanted statements in the teacher's lesson. As tedious as this new requirement was, the teachers often felt it strengthened their lesson and it created a "mentoring" system which

was especially helpful to the new teachers.⁴²

The Bible curriculum was set up in a unique way which contributed to the thoroughness of the lesson planner. This innovative curriculum is discussed in detail in the following section.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Surprisingly, only minute details have changed in the structure of the curriculum of the Bluefield Bible Program in the past fifty years. This phenomenon, according to past and present teachers, is attributed to the excellent insight of Catherine Walker, the first teacher. Her unique planning and foresight created a curriculum that has been very efficient and practical.⁴³ Since, with few exceptions, the curriculum has not changed throughout the fifty years, this section will not be divided into time periods. The divisions will instead be "High school curriculum" and "First through ninth grade curriculum" in order to describe the curriculum more fully.

High School Curriculum

The first year high school Bible classes are virtually Old Testament and New Testament survey courses. Old Testament survey is taught first

semester and New Testament survey second semester. The surveys basically follow the historical development of the testament. In the Old Testament survey the books of poetry and the prophets are integrated into the appropriate historical references. The same is true with the New Testament. The Epistles are dealt with in the historical context of the book of Acts. Revelations is not taught. When second year Bible was introduced the course became an advanced Bible course taken only by students who had already had the first year Bible course. The advanced course included an indepth study of the first year curriculum but with more concentration on the background and artistic forms of the sections.⁴⁴

Most of the high school students, who had taken Bible in grades one through nine, were well prepared for the survey courses through the elementary and junior high classes (although there was no pre-requisite in order to take the first year Bible class).

First Through Ninth Grade Curriculum

Very soon into her first year of teaching in Bluefield, Catherine Walker realized she could not prepare a different lesson for each fourth, fifth and sixth grade class (which she taught in the afternoon), prepare for her morning high school lessons and still be an effective teacher. After attempts at juggling the curriculum, Catherine Walker developed the

three-year cyclical curriculum that is still used today. This curriculum has students in grades one through nine studying the same material at the same time which gives the teacher more opportunity for thorough study and lesson preparation. In three years a student will have completed a study of the historical sections of the Bible. By the end of his/her ninth grade year the student has been through the Bible passages three times. The following is a schematic representation of the curriculum.

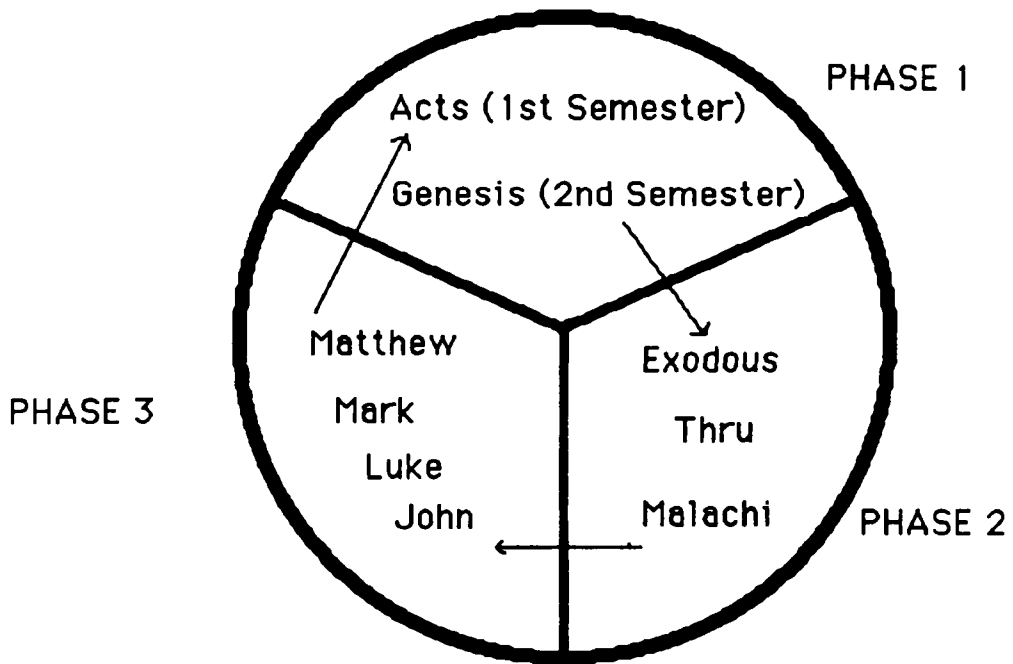


Figure 3: First through Ninth Grade Curriculum Cycle

If a student enters first grade and the teachers are teaching Phase 3 (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) then that student's nine year study in Bible class, if he/she chooses to take Bible every year would be as follows:

Grade 1 - Phase 3	Grade 6 - Phase 2
Grade 2 - Phase 1	Grade 7 - Phase 3
Grade 3 - Phase 2	Grade 8 - Phase 1
Grade 4 - Phase 3	Grade 9 - Phase 2
Grade 5 - Phase 1	

The only variation to this three year cycle is that the fourth, fifth and sixth grade lessons are more advanced in content. Some material is purposely left out of the primary grade lessons because of the difficulty of the material (e.g. the transfiguration of Jesus; the sacrifice of Isaac). These lessons are incorporated into the curriculum at the next level of instruction. The junior high students also receive the same material but once again, the lessons are taught on a higher level of understanding and in some cases new lessons are introduced that could not have been taught earlier due to time constraints or maturity levels of students.⁴⁵

This innovative curriculum proved to be an efficient, effective plan. It provided all elementary and junior high Bible teachers with one preparation a week. The only exception to this would be the few times the same lesson was not taught to all grades because of reasons stated above. With one preparation a week, the elementary and junior high teachers were

expected to have a very interesting and attractive lesson which included visuals, puppets, stories, object lessons, etc. Some believe the three year cyclical curriculum has been a large contributing factor to the popularity of the program.⁴⁶

Throughout the entire curriculum the individual lessons are simply taught according to the Bible account. No comments on Bible criticism issues such as inaccuracies, interpretation or infallibility are to be included in Bible lessons. The Committee requires its teachers to teach in a way that neither affirms nor disclaims the Bible passage.⁴⁷ Once again the teacher's neutrality was monitored by Committee observations and supervision. The requirement of writing the elementary and junior high lessons out word for word aided the Committee in this capacity. Because Bible lessons were monitored, and efforts were continually made to understand and comply with court regulations, the guidelines given by the Attorney General in 1985 (see Chapter six) when the county Board of Education took over the Program, did not necessitate curriculum changes. In the next section the Committee's most time consuming task, raising money, is discussed.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

All money used to support the Bluefield Bible Program for the entire fifty years of its history has come from community donations: businesses, churches, individuals and clubs (Kiwanis, sororities, etc.) have contributed to the Program. At the same time, the entire budget of the Bible Program, with the exception of a small amount allocated for teaching materials, has been designated to the teachers' pay roll. No other person working in the Program has received any income from the money collected for the Program. All Committee members are volunteer workers.⁴⁸

Throughout most of the history of the Program, the Financial Chair has had the responsibility of overseeing the raising of the money, although, as the Program grew, the Financial Chair eventually designated others to work with churches, business and outlying communities. A Treasurer was also designated to be responsible for all financial record keeping. These added positions helped alleviate the growing responsibilities of the Financial Chair. Remarkably, only two people have filled the position of Financial Chair in fifty years. From 1939 to 1948 Thelma Smith fulfilled the duties of Financial Chair and since 1948 Mildred Addington has continued in that capacity.

Earlier (1939-1964)

With only one teacher to be paid the first year of the Program, the Committee met its financial goal of \$1,200.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, the Committee kept no financial records before 1960. However, through the corroboration of past teachers' records and recollections, approximate figures have been determined. (See table 4.2)

Table 4.2: The year by year budget of the Bluefield Bible Program

1939-40 = \$1,000	1964-65 = \$15,638
1940-41 = \$3,150	1965-66 = \$15,694
1941-42 = \$3,150	1966-67 = \$16,349
1942-43 = \$3,350@	1967-68 = \$18,030
1943-44 = \$3,500@	1968-69 = \$18,686
1944-45 = \$3,650@	1969-70 = \$22,753
1945-46 = \$3,800@	1970-71 = \$23,398
1946-47 = \$5,000†	1971-72 = \$24,840
1947-48 = \$8,000†	1972-73 = \$26,692
1948-49 = \$8,500@	1973-74 = \$27,985
1949-50 = \$9,000@	1974-75 = \$33,087
1950-51 = \$10,000@	1975-76 = \$34,116
1951-52 = \$11,500†	1976-77 = \$39,377
1952-53 = \$13,000@	1977-78 = \$39,372
1953-54 = \$14,000@	1978-79 = \$59,639
1954-55 = \$14,300@	1979-80 = \$62,151
1955-56 = \$14,500†	1980-81 = \$91,352
1956-57 = \$14,800@	1981-82 = \$96,308
1957-58 = \$15,000@	1982-83 = \$103,425
1958-59 = \$15,300@	1983-84 = \$102,814
1959-60 = \$15,500@	1984-85 = \$112,674
1960-61 = \$15,883	1985-86 = \$143,213
1961-62 = \$16,268	1986-87 = \$199,735
1962-63 = \$16,000*	1987-88 = \$179,766
1963-64 = \$15,870	1988-89 = \$116,000*

Sources: @ = estimated from previous and following budget;
 † = estimated from monthly income records gathered from former teachers;
 * = predicted budget in the Bluefield Bible Program yearly brochure.
 All other yearly budgets are taken from the Treasurer's records.

For the first ten to twelve years of the Program, the teachers were paid on the same scale as the regular public school teachers; but, in the early 1950s while the regular public school teachers' salaries were slowly increasing, the Bible teachers' pay scale remained stationary.⁵⁰ For the rest of this time period, Bible teachers' salaries were below the state scale for public school teachers. The sole reason for the difference in pay was the concern that the community would be unable to support the increased cost.⁵¹ (As stated previously, the community financially supported the Program through donations while the regular public school teachers were paid through tax money.)

A practice that began during this period that enabled parents to donate money was a student collection drive. Envelopes were distributed to the students and then collected by the homeroom or regular classroom teacher. This collection was typically carried out in late November and referred to as the Thanksgiving offering. The offerings were responsible for less than five percent of the yearly budget.⁵²

Later (1964-1986)

During the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Bible teachers continued to be paid on a scale somewhat lower than regular public school teachers. The Bible teacher's salaries were approximately twenty-five percent below the salaries

of other public school teachers until the mid-1970s when the difference spread to nearly fifty percent. At this time, public employees in West Virginia were getting raises to meet inflation. The Committee responded in 1978 with substantial raises which once again brought the difference between Bible teachers' salaries and regular public school teachers' salaries to approximately twenty-five percent.⁵³

In the early 1970s the Committee stopped the Thanksgiving offering contributions because the state no longer allowed students to be asked to pay for any part of their education (supplies, special campaigns for equipment, etc.).⁵⁴ However, an additional source of income for the Program at this time came through memorial gifts which were initiated in the early 1980s and have amounted to between three and seven thousand dollars a year.

Recent (1986-1989)

In 1986, the year when the Bluefield Bible Program came under the Mercer County Board of Education, it was required that all Bible teachers be paid on the same scale as the regular teachers, though financially the Program was still supported by the Bluefield community. This ruling became effective in April of 1986 and nearly doubled the Committee's budget for the 1986-1987 school year.⁵⁵ Although the budget was met in full through great effort on the part of the fund raisers, it was evident to the

Committee that such a large budget could not be met on a consistent basis year after year.⁵⁶

The Committee concluded that curtailment of the Program had to be made for financial reasons. Consequently, classes were discontinued in schools that had consistently failed by a large sum to reach their quotas. Schools that had not met their quotas, yet had consistently come close to it, had only grades one and two discontinued. In addition, teachers' class loads were increased. The first semester of the 1987-1988 school year was begun with eight teachers. At the start of the second semester, the Committee cut the staff back to six teachers; and, when two resigned at the end of the school year, the Committee did not fill the vacant positions. Thus in the 1988-1989 school year, the Committee employed four full-time Bible teachers and a fifth teacher one day a week.⁵⁷

Despite problems, throughout the fifty years of the Program the budget has been met every year and never has a pay roll been delayed for lack of money in the account.⁵⁸

The estimated total of contributions (calculated from table 4.2) made by the greater Bluefield community in the fifty year period is 1.9 million dollars.

BLACK AUXILIARY

Earlier (1939-1964)

When the Bible Program began, the Bluefield schools were segregated and the Bible Program was offered only in the white schools. The black community, however, supported its own Bible teacher for many years. This financial support was entirely separate from the Program known as the Bluefield Bible Program. Nevertheless, the Bluefield Bible Program was the impetus for the Black Program. Ethel C. Froe, who taught from the late 1930s to 1959 was the first black teacher and the organizer of the Black Program.⁵⁹ During the later part of Ethel Froe's tenure, Effie Brown substituted for her when the need arose.⁶⁰ In 1959, however, Ethel Froe resigned from Bible teaching in order to go to West Africa with her husband who worked for the United States Department of State. After Mrs. Froe's resignation, the Black Program was discontinued.⁶¹

Later (1964-1986)

Bluefield schools were completely integrated (de facto) in 1969 when the black schools were closed, although a few black students had attended the white schools for several years on their own initiative. In 1977 the Bluefield Bible Auxiliary group was formed for the purpose of supporting the

Bluefield Bible Program through the black community. Bake sales, concerts, dinners, seminars and similar projects were sponsored to raise funds for the Bluefield Bible Program.⁶²

Recent (1986-1989)

After the Bible Program was brought under the Board of Education, the functions of the Auxiliary group did not change. The Auxiliary continues to support the Program financially and otherwise. The most recent Auxiliary officers are: Effie Brown, Ella Davis, Nellie Brown and Virginia Hebert.⁶³

SUMMARY

Teacher qualifications, teacher training, teacher responsibilities, curriculum structure, financial procedures and the Black Auxiliary were the basic categories that I have used to describe the characteristics of the Bluefield Bible Program. The Committee oversaw the entire program until in 1986, the Program was placed under the Mercer County Board of Education. (A list of all known Committee members can be found in Appendix D. The list may not be complete.) Throughout the first forty-seven years of the Program, very little had changed in its structure and organization. Nevertheless, the Bluefield Bible Program has not been

without controversy. From the first years of its existence there was intermittent opposition to it, and during the years 1986 - 1989 a major controversy arose.

The next two chapters will develop the issues which surrounded the controversies over the Bible Program. Chapter five will deal with the first twenty-five years and Chapter six with the last twenty-five years.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 Interview with Thelma Smith, former Committee member, 30 April 1989.
- 2 "Constitution of the Bible Study Committee of the Public Schools of Bluefiled, West Virginia," Typescript, 1939, Article 4.
- 3 Interview, Smith.
- 4 (This meant accreditation from the state. At this time, according to Mrs. Smith, accreditation simply meant getting approval from the state. A trip to Charleston [the state capital] and a conversation with Dr. Henry Clay, a Senator at that time who was a first cousin to Thelma Smith, helped secure the accreditation for the Bible Program.) Interview, Smith.
- 5 David B. Tyack, *Turning Points in Amercian Educational History* (Waltham, MA: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1967), p. 450.
- 6 William W. Trent, *Mountaineer Education* (Charleston, WV: Jarrett Printing Co., 1960), p. 150.
- 7 Charles H. Ambler, *A History of Education in West Virginia* (Huntington, WV: Standard Printing and Pub. Co., 1951), p. 661.
- 8 Trent, p. 159.
- 9 Interview, Smith.
- 10 Interview with Peggy Ross, former Bible teacher, 13 January 1989.
- 11 Interview, Smith.
- 12 Interview, Smith.

- 13 Scrapbook of the Bluefield Bible Program, kept in personal files of the Committee.
- 14 B. G. Pauley and C. O. Humphreys, eds., *Educational Needs Assessment Report* (Charleston, WV: n.p., 1969), attachment D.
- 15 Interview with Eleanor Rupp, present Bible teacher, 14 June 1989.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Interview with Isabella Breth, former teacher, supervisor and Committee member, 10 December 1989.
- 18 Catalogue, Columbia Bible College and Seminary, 1988-89.
- 19 Interview, Smith.
- 20 Interview with James M. Godwin, Jr., son of one of the founders and former Committee member, 2 February 1989.
- 21 Interview, Smith.
- 22 Interview with Sara Petty, director of Bible teaching at Columbia Bible College, 18 February 1989.
- 23 Interview, Smith.
- 24 Interview, Breth.
- 25 Interview, Petty.
- 26 Interview with Robert H. Moore, Jr., son of one of the founders, 11 December 1989.
- 27 Interview with Catherine Walker, first teacher, 12 January 1989.
- 28 Interview, Ross.
- 29 Interview, Walker.
- 30 Interview, Walker.

- 31 Interview, Walker.
- 32 Interview with Diane Carver, former Bible teacher, 26 June 1989; Interview with Una Mae Mangrum, former Bible teacher, 22 June 1989; Interview with Mary Faith Phillips, former Bible teacher, 16 February 1989.
- 33 Interview with Helen Goodwin, former Bible teacher, 18 February 1989; Interview, Walker.
- 34 Interview with Margaret Powell, former Bible teacher, 19 February 1989; Interview, Phillips.
- 35 Interview with Amelie Mitchell, former Bible teacher, 3 February 1989; Interview with Emma Cooper, former Bible teacher, 20 July 1989.
- 36 Interview, Phillips; Interview, Goodwin.
- 37 Interview with Blanche Carper, former Bible teacher, 22 February 1989; Interview, Walker; Interview, Rupp.
- 38 Interview, Rupp.
- 39 Interview with Anita Cooper, former Bible teacher, 18 February 1989.
- 40 Interview, Carver; Interview, Emma Cooper; Interview, Rupp.
- 41 Interview, Mangrum; Interview, Carver.
- 42 Interview, Emma Cooper.
- 43 Interview, Emma Cooper; Interview, Rupp.
- 44 Interview, Rupp.
- 45 "Curriculum Guide," photocopy, n.d., kept in personal files of the Committee.
- 46 Interview, Anita Cooper; Interview, Emma Cooper.

- 47 Interview with Elizabeth Feuchtenberger, Committee member, 22 July 1989; Interview, Breth.
- 48 Interview with Mildred Addington, Committee member, 8 December 1989.
- 49 "Bible in the Public Schools of Bluefield, West Virginia," Brochure, 1988-89, n.p.
- 50 Interview, Smith; Interview, Walker.
- 51 Interview, Addington.
- 52 Pauley and Humphery, p.4; "Bible in the Public Schools of Bluefield, West Virginia," Brochure, 1960-61, n.p.
- 53 Charles Hoge, "Bluefield Bible Teacher's Fund Comparative Salaries," photocopy, 1978, kept in personal files of Committee.
- 54 Interview, Rupp.
- 55 Hoge.
- 56 Interview, Addington.
- 57 Interview with Eva Easley, Committee member, 22 July 1989; Interview, Rupp.
- 58 Interview, Addington.
- 59 Interview with Virginia Hebert, Committee member, 29 April 1989; Interview with Effie Brown, Auxiliary member, 29 April 1989.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Scrapbook, "Bluefield Bible Auxiliary Group."

CHAPTER FIVE

EARLIER CONTROVERSIES

In a democracy such as the United States, formed with expectations of religious freedom, and populated with many diverse religions, religion in public education will probably always be controversial. The study of the Bible as history and literature is not necessarily religion. However, educational history reflects that many people perceive such study to be religious and thus Bible-in-the-schools is also controversial.

The size, location and relative homogeneous make-up of Bluefield may have kept the Bible Program from strong opposition. Nevertheless, there have been instances in the past of discontent with the Program, and more recently, open controversy has broken out.

This chapter will describe the discontent and opposition that existed in the first twenty-five years of the Program (1939-1964). Subsequent chapters will present opposition to the Program during the years since 1964.

RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES

Protestant Discontent

The majority of religious affiliation in Bluefield is Protestant and over twenty Protestant denominations are represented in Bluefield.* The co-founders of the Bible Program were both members of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Bluefield; and, therefore, many people began to refer to the Bible Program as the "Presbyterian Project." Although, from the beginning, the Presbyterians were very favorable to the Program, this title was unwanted by the founders. They insisted it was a community project and the term quickly stopped being used by their request.¹

The little opposition that did come to the program from the Protestant groups came from individuals rather than from churches. In the words of James M. Godwin, Jr., son of co-founder Sara Godwin, "no congregation as a whole opposed the Program."² Dr. C.H. Patterson, who was the minister at Westminster Presbyterian Church for twenty-six years and attended the Ministerial Association meetings also verified this conclusion.³

*The term "Protestant" is being used to include all groups that are historically connected to Protestantism even though some of these groups do not consider themselves to be Protestant.

When the Program began, some opposition came from individuals in the Episcopal church and the Baptist churches.⁴ The Episcopalians, coming from a liberal understanding of the Bible, were skeptical of the class content. The Baptists, though eager for Bible instruction for the children, felt this duty belonged in the churches. Eventually, however, both groups became supporters of the Bible Program usually as a result of efforts by the committee at making the community satisfied with the program (e.g. meetings to explain the Program's purpose). Nonetheless, there were several times when new ministers of these denominations were opposed to the Program.⁵

Periodically, throughout the fifty-year history of the Program, different Protestant ministers opposed the Program for various reasons. The opposition would typically come when a minister moved into the area and assumed the duties in a church which, for the most part, supported the Program but which had some influential leaders who opposed the Program.⁶

For example, in the early 1950s, a new minister in Bluefield announced to his congregation that one of his three major goals was to get Bible out of the schools in Bluefield. Neither the minister nor the goal were very popular with most of the congregation.⁷

The Ministerial Association in Bluefield is and has been an active body

but few of the conservative churches participate.⁸ Twice in the history of the Bible Program a motion was made in the Ministerial Association to go on record as being opposed to the Program. The first time, in the early 1950s, a minister who actually opposed the Program had just recently spent time with a Bible teacher discussing the teaching of Bible. Despite his opposition, he contended that the Bible teachers were teaching the Bible the only way that it could legally be taught. As a result of his comments, the Association did not formally oppose the Program.⁹

Approximately ten years later, opposition to the Program was registered in the Ministerial Association once more. Only one minister voted in favor of supporting the Program. The majority was going to announce the Association's position until the one minister in favor of the Program stated that he would make sure his parishoners knew he was not opposed to the Program by taking out an advertisement in the Bluefield paper showing how each minister voted.¹⁰ Again, the opposition in the Ministerial Association went unannounced.

Bluefield also has a Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints) and Jehovah's Witness population. Usually the Jehovah's Witnesses, who are more numerous than the Mormons, do not take the Bible classes. Some Mormon students have participated in the classes. Nevertheless, neither of these groups have publicly opposed the Program.¹¹

Catholic Discontent

The Sacred Heart Catholic Church has existed in Bluefield since 1895.¹² In 1936 the church began its own Catholic Youth Organization, the purpose of the organization, as stated in a booklet on the church's history, being "...the binding together of Catholic students attending public schools."¹³

At a time just prior to the beginning of the Bible Program, the Catholic church also sponsored a religion class at Bluefield High School that could be attended in the morning before school began. This class was taught by a priest.¹⁴

From the very beginning the Catholic church was involved in the Bible Program with a representative on the Committee.¹⁵ Catholic students participated in the Bible classes in the high school. For many years, however, the Catholic Parish School of Bluefield (grades one through nine) was attended by most Catholic students and thus they did not attend Bible classes in the public school. In 1960 the Sacred Heart School closed. At that time, when the Catholic elementary and junior high students began attending the public school, there was little approval by Catholics for their children to attend the Bible classes.¹⁶ Eventually, however, the Catholic students became just as involved in the Bible classes and clubs as the Protestant students.

According to Mrs. David McGonagle, a parishoner at Sacred Heart for over fifty years, there was never a united stand against the Bible Program from the Catholic church; and, although the church did not budget money for support of the Program, many individuals supported the Program financially and otherwise.¹⁷

Jewish Discontent

Since 1904, the Congregation Ahavath Sholom has existed in Bluefield.¹⁸ It has grown to be a congregation of just under one hundred in the late 1980s.¹⁹ The congregation is a reformed group with some conservative Jews attending. There are also a number of orthodox Jews in the congregation, but in a city the size of Bluefield, it is difficult to practice the orthodoxy (e.g. obtaining the proper food and material for an orthodox Jew is very difficult in Bluefield) and Jewish people in Bluefield are a small minority. On the average only twenty Jewish children attend the public schools throughout all thirteen grades.²⁰

During the fifty years of the Bible Program a number of Jewish children have participated in the Bible classes.²¹ Nonetheless, due to the teaching and perspective of the New Testament in the classes, the Jewish parents on the whole have kept their children from taking the Bible classes.

According to Edna Platnick, a Jewish woman who has lived in Bluefield since 1930 and whose children and grandchildren went to the Bluefield schools, the Jewish discontent started almost simultaneously with the Program. Although there was a Jewish representative (Isador Cohen)²² working with the Program at the beginning, Jewish parents still did not want their children taking the classes. For many years, Jewish children were almost the only young people in the schools not taking the classes.²³ It was difficult for the regular elementary teachers to dismiss the Jewish children from taking Bible classes and, therefore, drawing attention to them and risking potential ostracism.

At times Jewish children in Bluefield suffered emotionally and physically for being identified as Jewish, and their parents viewed the Bible program as another element which contributed to the negative reactions.²⁴ As a result, throughout the Program's history, there have been expressions of discontent from the Jewish population (often in conjunction with the coming of a new Rabbi²⁵).

In the early 1950s, word was spreading that the Jewish people of Bluefield were unitedly planning to take steps to terminate the Bible Program.²⁶ Some Committee members who attended Westminster Presbyterian Church approached Dr. Patterson, their pastor, about their concerns about the Jewish opposition to the Program. The next Sunday,

after they shared their concerns, Dr. Patterson talked about the problem in his sermon, which was broadcast live over a Bluefield radio station. In his talk he asserted that the Jewish community was trying to stop the Bible Program. He then alluded to the fact that many of the Jewish people were merchants in Bluefield and that purchasing from them may be contributing to funds which could be used to stop the Program.²⁷

Those interviewed said that Dr. Patterson was discreet and careful in his talk but that it was clear to the supporters the action that he wanted to be taken. Several of those interviewed said that within hours after the broadcast, the Jewish Rabbi and leaders communicated to the Committee that they had no intention to seek the termination of the Program.²⁸

The Bible Committee did not instigate the potential boycott. Its policy had always been to teach the Bible in a way that would not offend the Jewish population. Nevertheless, the fear of losing the program because of the complaints of the Jewish people, prompted the suggestion of a boycott from individuals outside of, but close to the Committee.

In retrospect the Committee is not proud of the intimidation of the Jewish community by supporters of the Program. The Committee's recent stand toward complaints about the Program from other opposing groups is very accommodating. This is reflected in the controversy of 1985-86 (discussed in the next chapter) in which the Committee, with full

agreement, obliged these groups.

There were subsequent rumors, within the community, of discontent that surfaced at times, but nothing that resulted in the action taken above when boycotting businesses was suggested.²⁹

Much controversy was avoided in all religious segments by the foresight of the founders of the Program and the way in which they and the succeeding Committee members approached the controversies. Many times a personal visit was paid to the offended party by one of the Committee members in an effort to discuss the misunderstandings.³⁰

The Committee also continually reinforced with the teachers the requirement to be non-sectarian and not evangelistic. The importance of this neutrality to the Committee was well known to the Bible teachers. A few years before the death of co-founder Margaret Moore, it came to her attention that one Bible teacher was teaching in a way that could be construed as evangelistic. Although Mrs. Moore was in the hospital and very ill, she had the teacher come to the hospital and she strongly reminded the teacher of the purpose of the Program and instructed the teacher that she discontinue any practices (such as evangelistic songs) that would not be neutral in content.³¹

Nevertheless, legal issues from outside of Bluefield would also begin affecting the Bible Program. Two Supreme Court cases in particular will

be discussed, the *McCollum* case which had a major effect, and the *Schempp* case which had a minor effect on the Bluefield Program.

LEGAL CONTROVERSIES

The *McCollum* Case³²

During the Spring of 1948, several *Reader's Digest* reporters came to Bluefield to write an article on the success of the Bible Program. After completing the interviews, the writers left and the write-up in the widely read magazine was eagerly anticipated by the community. Much to their disappointment the article was never published. Because of a Supreme Court ruling that summer dealing with Bible-in-the-schools, the publishers of *Reader's Digest* felt the article would not be beneficial to the public.³³

That summer the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision which seemed to have ramifications for the Bluefield Program. The case originated from Champaign, Illinois, where a parent, Vashti McCollum, protested a released time program in which religious instruction classes were conducted in the school building. For one-half hour every week, students were dismissed to attend either a Protestant, Catholic or Jewish religion class in other rooms in the school. The parent complained that the released-time program was a violation of the First Amendment

Establishment Clause.

The Court ruled in favor of *McCullum* , stating that the state was not maintaining a neutral status toward religion and that excessive entanglement existed between the school personnel and the religious council which sponsored the program. There were two key issues. The first revolved around compulsory attendance in that the students were exposed to the religious classes because of the required attendance at school although they were not required to attend the religious classes. The second issue cited was that the excercises were taking place on school grounds.³⁴

As the Bible Committee became aware of the *McCullum* case, it began to scrutinize its own program. The members were most concerned about the way the Court interpreted the compulsory schooling requirement as coercive in exposing students to religion.

The Committee wondered if the first through ninth grade students were being wrongly coerced to take the Bible classes by not understanding the classes were elective (high school classes were clearly elective). Fearing that they were possibly going beyond the boundaries laid down by the Supreme Court in the *McCullum* case and that they might not be carrying through with their own non-sectarian, elective purpose, the Committee decided on its own initiative to suspend the first through ninth grade

classes until further inquiry could be made.³⁵

The process of inquiry which was chosen was to write a letter to the state superintendent of schools, W.W.Trent, and ask that he write an opinion of the situation in Bluefield. Dr. Trent in turn, requested the Attorney General of West Virginia, Ira J. Partlow, to write the opinion on the matter of Bible-in-the-school. The following is the letter to the Attorney General from Dr. Trent asking him to write the opinion:

I have received a number of inquiries concerning your opinion addressed to me, dated September 4, 1948, relating to religious instruction in public schools.

With reference to the statement in your opinion that we may assume that the decision in the McCollum case is based strictly on the particular facts involved in that case, the question arises as to what are the differences between the facts involved in the Illinois plan, condemned by the court, and the facts involved in the plans followed in this state in the counties of Mercer and Monongalia, and which plans are approved in your opinion above mentioned.

I think some differences between the Illinois and the West Virginia plans are clearly apparent, but I request that you give me your views.³⁶

Hence it was understood by both the state superintendent and the state Attorney General that the Bluefield Bible Program was not operating in such a way that it would be subject to the same outcome as the classes in Champaign, Illinois. The purpose of the letter instead, was to delineate why the Bluefield Program was different.

The Attorney General's ensuing opinion (which can be found in

Appendix E) cited four ways in which the Bluefield Program varied from the Champaign Program. First, he stated that although the religious teachers in Illinois were not employed by the school system, they were subject to "the approval and supervision of the the superintendent of schools."³⁷ This was not the arrangement in Bluefield. Second, it was explained that the Illinois students, when released for religion classes, were required to attend the classes and reports of their absence or presence were sent to the regular teachers for records. Both of the above citations involved unnecessary entanglement with the school system. The third and fourth points of difference explained by the Attorney General centered on the compulsory attendance law in Illinois which was not in effect in West Virginia.³⁸

After the Committee received the results to its letter from the state superintendent, they felt assured that they could continue the Bible classes in grades one through nine. To ensure that parents understood the elective nature of the classes, the Committee designed a letter which was distributed to all students explaining the Bible classes. Parents who chose not to have their children participate would indicate on the letter and send it back to the regular teacher. If no response came back the students would take the class.³⁹ This was altered in 1985. At that time letters were sent home and the parents who wanted their children to take the

Bible class signed the letter and it was filed. No response was considered to be a negative response. This format changed the responsibility of the paper work to the parents who wanted their children to have the class rather than those who chose the regular curriculum. The Committee felt this was a positive change and the practice continues today.⁴⁰

With all the details in place, the elementary and junior high classes resumed in January, 1949 for the second semester. It would be fifteen years before another Supreme Court decision affected the Bible classes.

The Schempp Case⁴¹

In 1963 a case was heard by the United States Supreme Court that would ultimately alter the course of religion/Bible in the schools. The school district of Abington Township, Pennsylvania, included in its opening exercises a devotional reading of the Bible. Students who did not wish to participate could be excused without penalty. Nevertheless, a Unitarian family -- the Schempps -- protested, saying the practice was unconstitutional. They complained that it infringed upon their First and Fourteenth Amendment rights. Although their children could be excused from the exercise, they believed it would have an ostracizing effect.

The Court combined the *Schempp* case with that of *Murray v. Curlett*. The *Murray* case involved objection by an atheist parent to the

recitation of the Lord's Prayer in Maryland public schools. The practices challenged in both cases were struck down by the Court justices as violations of the First Amendment.⁴²

Surprisingly, this decision had little impact on the Bluefield Bible Program. The Committee and teachers did not believe that the Bluefield Program would fall under the same category as the situations in the *Schempp* case.⁴³ The Bluefield Program had been established as clearly elective, and it was not set up by the state or monitored by the state. Therefore, no alterations were made to the Bible Program due to the *Schempp* case.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, a practice in one of the junior high schools was impacted.

When Emma Stanley Cooper began to teach Bible at one of the junior high schools, the principal of the school asked her to conduct a short devotional over the public address system every morning. She complied and continued the practice for approximately three years.⁴⁵

After the results of the *Schempp* case were publicized, Mrs. Cooper began to question the legality of the morning devotions which were heard by the entire school. The junior high school officials felt the practice, which was non-sectarian, was legal. The Bible teacher continued the practice at the request of the principal. Nevertheless, after reading numerous articles on the *Schempp* decision, Mrs. Cooper came to the

conclusion that the morning devotions over the loud speaker were illegal. Although many people objected to her discontinuing the devotions, she could not in good conscience continue the practice, and, therefore, the devotional exercises were terminated.⁴⁶

SUMMARY

The Bluefield Program has had to deal with both religious and legal controversy. The Protestants, Catholics and Jewish groups have each opposed the Program in different degrees and over different issues. As stated above, however, no congregation as a whole opposed the Program.

Legal issues affected the Program as the country's highest court began to grapple with religion/Bible in the public schools cases. Nonetheless, the Bluefield Bible Program in its first twenty-five years was relatively free of effective opposition.

The Committee and teachers continued to try to be sensitive to the beliefs of all religious groups and to the legal decisions that dealt with religion or Bible in the public schools. The second twenty-five years of the Program's existence would yield more controversy and at the same time more evidence of the Bible Committee wanting to comply with the law and not offend any religious group.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 Interview with Thelma Smith, former Committee member, 30 April 1989.
- 2 Interview with James M. Godwin, Jr., son of one of the founders and former Committee member, 2 February 1989.
- 3 Interview with Dr. C.H. Patterson, former minister at Westminster Presbyterian Church from 1946-1972, 1 May 1989.
- 4 Interview with Robert H. Moore, Jr., son of one of the founders, 11 December 1988.
- 5 Interview with Isabella Breth, former Bible teacher, supervisor and Committee member, 10 December 1988; Interview with Peggy Ross, former teacher, 13 January 1989.
- 6 Interview, Patterson.
- 7 Interview, Godwin.
- 8 Interview with Eleanor Rupp, present Bible teacher, 15 June 1989.
- 9 Interview with Emily Mitchell, former Bible teacher and supervisor, 3 February 1989.
- 10 Interview, Patterson.
- 11 Interview, Rupp.

- 12 *Golden Jubilee Souvenir Book* , Sacred Heart Church, Bluefield, West Virginia, np. 1945, p.19.
- 13 Ibid., p. 35.
- 14 Interview with Robert Harrison, Sacred Heart parishoner, 23 March 1989.
- 15 Interview, Smith.
- 16 Interview, Harrison.
- 17 Interview with Mrs. David McGonagle, Sacred Heart parishoner, 29 June 1989.
- 18 Abraham L. Shinedly, *West Virginia Jewery: Origins and History 1850-1958* (Philadelphia, PA: Press of Maurice Jacobs Inc., 1963), p.105.
- 19 Interview with Edna Platnick, Jewish Temple attender, 20 July 1989.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Interview with Emma Cooper, present Bible teacher, 20 July 1989; Interview with Margaret Powell, former Bible teacher, 19 February 1989; Interview with Lois Bishop, former Bible teacher, letter interview, 22 February 1989; Interview, Rupp.
- 22 Interview with Catherine Walker, first Bible teacher, 12 January 1989; Interview, Cooper; Interview, Rupp.
- 23 Interview, Smith.
- 24 Interview, Platnick.
- 25 Interview, Moore.
- 26 Interview, Breth; Interview, Patterson; Interview, Godwin.
- 27 Interview, Breth; Interview, Patterson.
- 28 Ibid.

- 29 Interview with Eva Easley, former Bible student and present Committee Chair, 22 July 1989; Interview, Rupp; Interview, Breth.
- 30 Interview, Ross.
- 31 Interview, Moore.
- 32 *McCullum v. Board of Education*, 333 U. S. 203 (1948).
- 33 Written interview with Dee Dee Arnold, former Bible teacher, 22 February 1989; Interview, Mitchell; Interview, Ross.
- 34 William R. Hazard, *Education and the Law* (New York: The Free Press, 1971), pp. 86-88.
- 35 Interview, Ross; Interview, Mitchell.
- 36 Letter to West Virginia State Superintendent of Schools W.W.Trent from Attorney General Ira J. Partlow, photocopy, 1948, kept in personal files of the Bible Committee.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Interview, Ross.
- 40 Interview, Rupp.
- 41 *Schempp v. School District of Abington Township; Murray v. Curlett*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).
- 42 Hazard, pp. 102-5.
- 43 Interview, Emma Cooper; Interview, Breth.
- 44 Interview, Cooper.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX

LATER CONTROVERSIES

For nearly ten more years the Bluefield Bible Program operated with no major controversy. In 1972, however, a new superintendent of schools was appointed by the board of education, and he expressed concerns about the program.

CONCERNS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT - 1972

The new superintendent, Clinton D. Lilly, believed that the Bible Program was forbidden according to the rulings of the Supreme Court of the United States.¹ His concerns were printed in the Bluefield paper and the community responded with numerous letters to the editor (twenty-one in five non-consecutive days) which were all in support of the Program.² Superintendent Lilly also received many letters sent directly to him. Once again the letters were overwhelmingly for the Bible Program's continuation.

The Bible Committee responded to Superintendent Lilly's concerns by explaining to the superintendent, orally and on paper, the reasons they felt the Program was legal. This explanation had three categories: 1) they explained the procedures of the Program; 2) they reviewed the majority opinion of the *Schempp* case given by Justice Clark; and 3) they described how the Bible could be taught legally. The *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* carried an article which explained the concerns and explanations.

As a result of these discussions the superintendent did not continue his move toward stopping the Bible Program. Nevertheless, he did request that the Bible Committee require the high school Bible teacher, whose students received credit for the class, to have state certification in either history or English. The Committee complied with the request, and the high school Bible teacher began classes which were required for English certification. Within three summers these requirements were met.³

BRISTOL CASE - 1983

Less than one hundred miles from Bluefield, in Bristol, Virginia, there existed another "Bible-in-the-Schools" program which had operated for forty-two years. The Bristol Program employed three teachers who

taught Bible in grades four and five one day a week. This Program was different from the Bluefield Program in several aspects. The Bristol Program began as a religious endeavor. It was begun by the Bristol Ministerial Association and its original name was the "Bristol Council of Religious Education." Originally, the curriculum contained religious materials and objectives.⁴ Nevertheless, it was similar to the Bluefield Program in that it was a Bible instruction class in the public schools paid for by community contributions.

The Case

In 1983 the Bristol Bible Program became the object of a controversy which eventually went to the United States District Court in Abingdon, Virginia. In this case, *Crockett v. Sorenson, et al.*,⁵ the plaintiffs, Sam and Sally Crockett, alleged that the teaching of the Bible in the fourth and fifth grades was a religious practice and violated the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution.

The Crocketts' daughter had taken the class in her fourth grade year and had wanted to take it in the fifth grade. The mother (a substitute teacher in the county) contended that it took her all summer to undo the teachings, and she did not want her daughter to take the class. The daughter, however, pressured her to let her take the class again. Sally

Crockett felt her daughter would feel embarrassed not to take the class and she also did not know of any alternatives offered for her daughter.⁶

The Bristol Bible Committee, previous to the suit, had been making changes. In 1982 the Bristol Council of Religious Education changed its name to Bible Teaching in Public Schools and classroom procedures which could be considered religious (e.g. singing of hymns) were stopped. The defendants (August E. Sorenson, et al, constitute the School Board of the City of Bristol, Virginia) claimed that their program was within the guidelines of the First Amendment.

The results of the trial, which began on June 27, 1983, and lasted for approximately one week, were diverse. U.S. District Court Jackson L. Kiser concluded that the Bible classes were at that time unconstitutional, which was a victory for the plaintiffs. Nevertheless, Judge Kiser also concluded that Bible in the schools was a legal endeavor, and he laid out guidelines that, if the Bristol Bible Committee would follow, the Program would be acceptable. The defendants were pleased with this part of the decision. The following guidelines were drawn up by the Judge: 1) the Bristol School Board should have complete control of the classes; 2) teachers should be certified in elementary education in Virginia; 3) the Bible course should be taught objectively; 4) the class should be elective; 5) alternatives must be available; 6) private contributions can be used to

support the course but "with no strings attached."⁷

These guidelines were clear and attainable. Nonetheless, the Bristol Bible Committee did not continue the Program because of financial difficulties which stemmed from the cost of the trial.⁸ Ramifications on the Bluefield Bible Program due to proximity and similarity were predicted.

Bluefield's Reaction

Before the Bristol trial began, the high school Bible teacher in Bluefield, Eleanor Rupp, had been informed of the possible litigation in Bristol. With the support of the Bluefield Bible Committee, she attended all of the court proceedings. The purpose of her attendance was to become informed of the judge's understanding of what was legal in regard to Bible in the schools and to make sure the Bluefield Program was in order. After her attendance at the proceedings and after Judge Kiser's decision, the Bluefield Committee and Bible teachers held meetings to examine the decisions and make changes if necessary.

Few changes were made in the procedure of the Bible teachers, but the meetings which followed the Bristol Case were used to evaluate the program and remind the teachers of their commitment to non-sectarian teaching as had always been required. Several issues were dealt with.

First, the brochure was evaluated to see that it clearly stated the purpose of the Program. The brochure was rewritten to be more informative to the community. The committee, as a precautionary measure, began to require that the first through ninth grade objectives and outline be written out and handed in to the supervisor for evaluation a week prior to the lesson being taught. At the beginning of the school year, the Bible teachers' in-service meetings were devoted to the review of the court guidelines. After this review the teachers were reminded that they were required to stay within the guidelines set up by the Committee and that, if they could not be neutral in their teaching, they should not be teaching in the Bluefield Bible Program. Finally, one of the teachers, Emma Cooper, was designated to periodically observe the newest teachers to ensure that they were staying within the guidelines.⁹

No pressure from outside groups was put on the Bluefield Program as a result of the Bristol Case. All precautions and re-evaluations were made as a result of decisions by the Committee and teachers. As a consequence of these decisions, the Committee and teachers were more prepared for the controversial situation that would affect the Bluefield Program two years later.

THE BLUEFIELD DECISION - 1985*

On August 8, 1985, a group of eight parents sent a letter to the state superintendent of schools which explained their concerns with the existence of Bible in the public schools of Bluefield. There were five concerns raised in the letter. First, the group questioned the constitutionality of the Program and the wisdom of the school system in letting it function. Second, they complained that the classes were based on narrow religious views. Third, the group protested that vulnerable elementary students were exposed to these ideas and were ostracised if they did not participate. Fourth, the parents felt that solicitating for funds within the schools to support the Program was "offensive, if not illegal." Finally, the group requested that real alternatives be offered to students who did not wish to take the classes, although they still questioned the legality of the classes.¹⁰ (A copy of the letter is in Appendix F.)

*The writer was a teacher during this decision and many of the comments are from first hand experience. When an endnote is not designated it can be assumed that it is the writer's perspective. Nevertheless, nothing was included that was not verified by others.

The Controversy Arises

This letter was sent to the state superintendent of schools , Dr. Tom McNeel. The parent group did not contact the Bible Committee nor did they send a copy of the letter to the Committee. School began, along with the Bible classes, that September with no hint of dissatisfaction within the community.

On September 10, a little more than a month after the letter was sent to the Superintendent, the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* printed an article titled "Mercer, state school officials to discuss Bible study issue."¹¹ This was the first indication of the parents' complaints against the Program. The article informed the community that two officials from the Mercer County school system were scheduled to meet with the state Superintendent concerning the letter of protest sent by the parents.

The September 10 article invoked questions and suspicions within Bluefield where the Bible classes had been a source of pride. Groups began to protest the complaints of the eight parents almost immediately. Many phone calls supporting the Bible Program followed, to Committee members, Bible teachers and central office leaders.¹² By September 15 churches in the community were becoming informed of the situation and some took action. The First Christian Church of Bluefield paid for space in the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* which said the following:

On Sunday, September 15, 1985, the Official Board of the First Christian Church of Bluefield, West Virginia unanimously passed a resolution to support the Bluefield Bible Study Association to teach Bible in the public schools in Mercer County.

We urge your Church or organization to support Bible teaching in the schools and to publicly announce your support. It is essential that you notify the proper authorities of your support because these people will make the ultimate decisions regarding Bible teaching in the schools.¹³

At the end of this announcement were the addresses of the state Superintendent, the state Attorney General, the Governor, the twentieth district delegates and the state senators. Although the announcement was not printed until September 22, the action was taken on September 15.

On Tuesday, September 17, the planned meeting was held between Dr. McNeel (state Superintendent) and the two school officials from Mercer County. At that time Mercer County was in the process of acquiring a new county superintendent of schools. The acting superintendent was assistant superintendent Dr. I. Sue (Schmelzer) Shephard. She, along with the Director of Elementary Education in Mercer County, R. David Farley, attended the meeting in Charleston.¹⁴ The report of the meeting was summarized in the Bluefield paper the next day.

The paper reported that the meeting was simply an informative meeting in which no decisions were made but that information from both sides of the issue was shared. In this article the protest of the parents was

spelled out as being a concern that the "school system provide educational activities for students who do not participate in the Bible classes."¹⁵ The other complaints of the eight parents were not raised in the meeting. After the information was shared, Dr. McNeel explained that he and his assistants would review the protest against the Program including its constitutionality and report back to the parents. He also indicated that if his staff did not feel qualified to make a decision, then the Attorney General would be asked to decide the issue. No time period was given in which the study would be reported.¹⁶

Within ten days, ten articles concerning the issue of Bible in the schools appeared in the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*. On September 22, four days after the report of the meeting, "friends of the Bible-in-the-Schools Program" paid for a full page in the Bluefield paper. The title of the page was "Bible Program Answers 10 Commonly Asked Questions." These questions and answers centered around the legality of Bible teaching.¹⁷ (A copy of the questions and answers is in Appendix G.)

This was the beginning of an eight month community controversy in which numerous letters were written to the State Department of Education, the Mercer County school officials and the editor of the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*. Only the letters to the editor of the Bluefield paper were published, and, of the many (approximately thirty) letters

written, only two were in protest of Bible in the schools.¹⁸ The following are samples of letters written to the editor of the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*.

Bible study

It is unfortunate that some of the parents at Memorial School decided to expend their energies fighting the Bible instead of the evils in the schools – drugs, alcohol and teen-age pregnancy. I cannot see how a little Bible knowledge can harm a child. It might even help, and help the parents also.

Mrs. Sam Morgan
Bluefield, W. Va.

Bible issue

I am writing in reference to the issue of Bible being taught in the classrooms of the Mercer County schools. First there is the matter of the "separation of church and state." This often misused phrase does not appear in the First Amendment or anywhere in the Constitution. The phrase does appear in a personal letter of Thomas Jefferson written in 1802. (As a matter of fact, Jefferson was neither a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, nor of the first Congress under the Constitution which passed the Bill of Rights). Ironically the Supreme Court has relied on this personal statement by someone who had nothing to do with the writing of the Bill of Rights to uphold their rulings to purge our country of any reference to God. Fortunately the Supreme Court has not based any other rulings on the personal statements made by Thomas Jefferson.

If someone is intent on finding the concept of the separation of church and state, then they may take a look at the Russian Constitution and the 1973 Humanist Manifesto....

I am a product of the Bible classes in the Bluefield schools. These classes did more to positively shape my life, character, and citizenship than the rest of the school classes combined. Those citizens who do not want to participate in the classes freely exercise their right not to do so. Why take away the First Amendment rights of those who want to exercise their freedom of religion? Why should they be treated as second class citizens?

Neal Hawkins
King George, Va.

Bible program

I am writing concerning the Bible in the schools program. I have taken Bible for all nine years of my education. In view of that, I believe I am qualified to comment on the rumors circulating about the program.

Bible class is taught from a strictly literary point of view. Neither personal doctrine nor religion are imposed on any student. (I have even witnessed a Bible teacher refuse to answer a question because it dealt with a personal belief).

The legality of this program has been question also. In 1963, Supreme Court Justice Clark, regarding the ruling of prayer in the public schools, stated in part, "... the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic quality ... Study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistently with the First Amendment." Another misinterpretation is that the Bible program is a violation of separation of church and state. There is no violation since it is not sponsored by any religious group.

The Bible in the schools program is definitely as asset to the Mercer County school system. Few public school systems are fortunate enough to have a Bible program. I hope those few people fighting Bible in the schools will not deprive me and other of this opportunity.

Sidney Peery Cauthen
Bluefield, W.V.

The Controversy Spreads

On September 29, the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* published three articles on the Program. Two of the articles were reiterations of previous events. One article was a report of an interview with an observation of the teaching of with one of the Bible teachers. A *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* reporter sat in on a Bible class and described the class in the article. Pictures of the class in session were also taken and printed. This continued publicity of the controversy created widespread attention.

Surrounding areas began to publish articles regarding the Bible in the schools issue. The most persistent coverage from outside of Bluefield came from the *Charleston (WV) Gazette*. A reporter visiting Bluefield High observed a Bible lesson and interviewed the teacher and several students. Her article appeared in the Charleston paper on September 29. This reporter never returned to the classroom, but she did continue to write articles on the controversy throughout the year.

The issue became even more widespread. On October 2, William Raspberry, a syndicated writer for the Washington Post Writers Group, wrote an article on the controversy in Bluefield and expressed his doubts about the ability of teachers to teach Bible without denominational interpretation. He also stated that "Bible study deserves about as much protection (legally) as, say, aerobic dancing" (parenthesis mine).¹⁹

Raspberry's editorial went nationwide and attracted even more attention. Radio stations, the local television station, and newspaper reporters began to ask for interviews of the Bible teachers, the Committee members, and the protesting parents.

It became clear within a short time what type of article to expect from each reporter. Unfortunately there were many inaccurate statements and accusations made by the people on both sides of the issue. For instance, a few of the community people who wrote letters to the editor depicted the protesting parents as godless communists who were taking away their right to have Bible in the schools.²⁰ These parents were professionals who, with one exception, had moved into the area to practice their profession. Even though the protesting parents never revealed their names, it was inevitable in a community the size of Bluefield that the names would be found out. Several of the protesting parents' businesses were boycotted by patrons who disagreed with their views.

On the other hand, the articles and editorials written by people outside of the area depicted the Bible teachers as narrow-minded, fundamentalist whose anti-intellectual bent made them unable to teach the Bible objectively and with integrity and depicted the supporters as people who would terrorize others to keep the Program.²¹

On October 2, the Daily Telegraph reported that the state attorney

general had been asked to review the Bible-in-the-schools issue.²² The next day it was reported in the Bluefield paper that Chief Deputy Attorney General Michael Clay Smith had been assigned to the project and had told the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* he would complete the study in about two weeks. Smith also reminded the reporter that he would not be setting down rules which would allow for the continuation of the Program but that he would be investigating the question of its constitutionality.²³

As the community waited for the results of Mr. Smith's review, articles and television reports continued. A *Charleston Gazette* reporter, on October 4, raised questions about the training of the Bible teachers.²⁴ In another article, on the same day, the same reporter wrote that the opponents of Bible were fearful to speak out against the program, and she cited in this context a cross-burning which had taken place in Princeton a week earlier which was a result of racial tension.²⁵

Nine days later the editor of the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* wrote an editorial which accused the officials involved of "passing the buck" from the county school officials to the State Department of Education to the Attorney General's office. He also complained that the focus of the issue had changed from "an examination of the constitutionality of the classes" to the way in which the Bible "can be properly taught in West Virginia

schools."²⁶ These articles fueled both sides of the controversy which made the waiting for the opinion of the attorney general even more tense.

The Controversy Decided

Nearly two months after the controversy was publicized, the opinion was handed down. On November 1, the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* headlines read, "State says Bible classes legal."²⁷ The formal statement of the Attorney General was that the decision "advises that West Virginia public schools may offer instruction about the Bible, but cannot advance religion."²⁸ The opinion then took the form of "guidelines" in which any county school system could teach Bible in the schools. Three principles were used to delineate the guidelines: 1) the Bible taught as literature and history is permitted under proper restrictions; 2) the Bible taught as religion is not permitted according to the Constitution; and 3) no one should be compelled to take a course on the Bible because freedom of religion exists in America.²⁹ The cover letter which summarized the principles also explained that changes would have to be made in the Bluefield Bible Program in order to comply with the guidelines. A copy of this letter, which preceded the guidelines, follows:

The Students of Bluefield High School
c/o Principal of Bluefield High School
Bluefield, West Virginia 24701

October 31, 1985

Dear Mercer County Citizen:

I want to respond to your correspondence to me about the Bible study program in the Mercer County schools. My office has issued its opinion today, and I want to tell you what it says. So many of you wrote me that I hope you will excuse this form letter response.

The opinion of the Attorney General was written by Chief Deputy Attorney Michael Clay Smith, my number one lawyer. Mike, by the way, is also a minister, and you can be assured that he gave this matter very careful consideration.

The Opinion of the Attorney General is built upon three principles:

1. The Bible taught as literature and history is permitted (under the proper restrictions), because the Bible is an integral part of our western civilization, and indeed the best read book in the history of the world. If it is important that a man or woman with a high school education know about Shakespeare, then why shouldn't he or she know something about the Bible?

2. The Bible taught as religion is not permitted, because the Constitution says that the State cannot establish or promote a religion. Those who compare Europe, where there are State religions, and the United States, where there are not, are amazed that attendance at places of worship is higher in the United States. All Americans, I think, support the principle established by the Constitution that the government is not to tell us what to believe and how to think.

3. No one should be compelled to take a course on the Bible because freedom of religion exists in America: I am confident our schools can offer alternative programs so as not to ostracize any students who choose not to take such a course.

The opinion of the Attorney General does not mention Mercer County specifically. The opinion is intended to be broad in scope and not designed to resolve the curriculum of any particular county school system. Let me add one point: Some major changes in the current program in Mercer County are needed to preserve its legality under our Constitution. Thus, the Mercer County Board of Education will need to work with its lawyer to implement the specifics that are consistent with our more general Opinion.

Some will probably call those requirements of our Opinion too rigid. I can only say that we are working under the court decisions as we best understand them. Many people would be quite disappointed if not enough changes were made and a court therefore threw out the entire program.

I appreciate your being in touch to share your thoughts on this matter with me, and I hope you will feel free to contact my office if you have any further questions on this important issue.

Very truly yours,

CHARLIE BROWN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

The complete opinion, which included an historical overview of and the guidelines for teaching Bible in the West Virginia public schools, was sent to Dr. Tom McNeel, who distributed it to the proper officials in Mercer County. (The ten-page opinion can be found in Appendix H.)

The nine guidelines which were set forth in this opinion were as follows:

1. Supervision and control of the courses must be under the exclusive direction of the boards of education;
2. The boards should do the hiring and firing of teachers for the Bible courses in the same manner they do for all other teachers;
3. Teachers must hold appropriate state certification as public school teachers;
4. No inquiry should be made to determine the religious beliefs, or the lack thereof, of teacher applicants;
5. The school boards should prescribe the curriculum and select all teaching materials, as with any other courses;
6. The courses should be offered as electives. Children who choose not to take the courses should be offered reasonable alternative courses;
7. The school boards may solicit contributions from any private organizations for the purpose of funding any and all costs of Bible courses. Such contributions shall be received with "no strings attached" other than the understanding that such funds may be earmarked for the Bible courses exclusively;
8. Course content must study the Bible only for its historical and literary qualities, or in the context of comparative religion; and

9. The courses must be taught in an objective manner with no attempt made to indoctrinate students into either the truth or falsity of the biblical materials, or their value for personal religious commitment. At the secondary school level, modern methods of critical scholarship should be utilized.³⁰

The City's Reaction

The reaction to these guidelines was positive on both sides of the controversy. The parents who protested the Program said they never wanted to have "Bible taken out of the schools, but only wanted quality educational time provided for their children who did not take the course."³¹ Hence, they were pleased with the guidelines which required alternative instruction.

The Bible committee responded positively and expressed its confidence that the Program had always operated legally. Nevertheless, the implementation procedures of the guidelines would be the most critical for the Bible Program.³² According to Dr. McNeel, the county officials had three options concerning the opinion handed down by the attorney general: they could follow the guidelines in the opinion; they could consider it as only an opinion that did not need to be acted upon; or they could abandon the Bible Program.³³

The choice was in the hands of the county officials, led by the Superintendent of Schools. The new Superintendent, William H. Baker,

had just been appointed to begin his position on November 18, 1985, and one of his first jobs was to make a decision about the guidelines.³⁴

However, in a November 2 article the President of the Mercer County Board of Education assured the community that "the board will conform to what the state superintendent tells us to do."³⁵

Also on November 2, the editor of the Bluefield paper expressed his discontent with the opinion saying it was a "non-opinion" which was "passing the buck." The editor also stated that he felt the classes should be suspended until needed changes were made.³⁶ Despite these claims, the overwhelming majority of the Bluefield community was in favor of the Program, was pleased with the opinion of the Attorney General and looked forward to the guidelines being enforced.

The guidelines which were at that time not being met were guidelines one, two, three, five and possibly six. Guidelines one, two, three and five all involved the issue of the Program coming under the board of education for supervision and control, for hiring and firing of teachers, for appropriate state certification and for the selection of teaching materials and curriculum. The sixth guideline stated that the classes must be elective (which they already were) and that reasonable alternative courses should be offered. In the secondary schools this was not an issue since the school day was already set up for different classes and choices

each period. Therefore it was the elementary classes which were being targeted with this guideline. Previously, since so few elementary children elected not to take the Bible classes, the alternative to Bible class was working with the regular teacher on enrichment or remedial work. A broader offering in an elective system for the elementary grades was the intent of guideline six.

Three other guidelines, 1) not inquiring into the teacher's religious background as a determination for hiring, 2) keeping the content of the classes to the historical and literary qualities of the Bible and 3) teaching the course in an objective manner, were already being practiced.

Implementing the seventh guideline would involve the transferring of contributions to the county board for disbursement. Hence, what remained to be done was the decision to follow the guidelines and the implementation of them when the new superintendent of Mercer County Schools took office.

When William H. Baker became superintendent on November 18, his decision to comply with the guidelines and his ability to gather all the information and listen to both sides of the issue before setting forth directives, gave the controversial issue needed leadership. The process of presenting recommendations which would bring the Program in compliance with the opinion would take approximately one month to

complete.

During the time that lapsed many predictions were made and suspicions continued about the Program. The Bluefield paper predicted that a change in Bible teachers would have to take place³⁷ and/or that the Bible classes would be dropped.³⁸ Suspicions ranged from the Bible teachers being "uncertified" and thus unqualified,³⁹ to a debate over the reasons why the board of education in Mercer County went into executive session to discuss the Bible issue.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Mr. Baker worked on a proposal to bring the Bible Program into compliance with the guidelines drawn up by the state attorney general's office, and on December 19, 1985, the Mercer County Board of Education voted unanimously to accept Mr. Baker's recommendations.⁴¹

The Decision

These recommendations became the goals for preparing the Program to come under the board's control and for continued operation while under the Mercer County Board of Education. The recommendations, which would bring the Program within all nine parameters set forth in the Attorney General's opinion, were seen by Mr. Baker as falling into four categorical issues. The first issue dealt with the Program coming under the authority of the board of education, the second issue required

that the Bible be taught for its historical and literary qualities, the third issue necessitated Bible being offered as a true elective and the fourth issue, required the approval of accepting contributions for funding the Program.⁴² The Bluefield paper quoted Mr. Baker *verbatim* on recommendations to settle these four issues:

The first issue can be addressed by the board employing the teachers presently teaching Bible. Transcripts of the individuals involved have been submitted to the State Department of Education. This is the first step in the certification process. The State Department tells us that the teachers can be certified providing I assure the State Department that the teachers will only teach Bible and the Bible classes be taught under the Attorney General's guidelines. I have given State Superintendent Tom McNeel my guarantee that these two conditions will be met. Once teachers are hired by the Board, they would be supervised by their building principals and central office supervisors. This is the same procedure we use for all teachers. The instructional material to be used will be presented to the board after the board approves the program.

The second issue of teaching the Bible objectively and for its historical and literary qualities is a little more difficult. I have discussed this issue with the current Bible teachers and they do not believe they have a problem meeting this condition. To monitor this I will assign a language arts supervisor and a social studies supervisor to meet weekly with the Bible teachers. During these meetings the teachers will prepare their lessons under the supervision of the supervisors. This will help us stay within the Attorney General's guidelines.

The third issue of Bible being an elective and that reasonable alternative classes be offered is a problem in the program as it is today. To address this issue, I propose to offer Bible, creative writing and a course in computers as electives. Parents will be asked to select one of the three courses for their children. This will make Bible a true elective and will provide quality alternative classes.

The fourth issue of funding could be a major problem. To

employ the teachers presently teaching Bible classes will cost approximately \$200,000. I don't believe the Board of Education can justify putting money into Bible instruction at the expense of other programs. Therefore, I recommend that the Mercer County Board of Education take control of the Bible program providing the \$200,000 annual cost is donated by outside sources. These funds can have "no strings attached."⁴³

Once the recommendations were approved their implementation would take time. The first two recommendations were a matter of paper work. The Bible teachers were given enrichment certification and the supervising and controlling of the program was resolved. The last two recommendations would be time consuming. Ordering computers and software, scheduling students for the electives, and raising the money to pay the teachers on the same scale as all public school teachers would take over three months to implement.

As the calendar year ended and the top stories of the year were enumerated in the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, the Bible in the schools controversy was mentioned first.⁴⁴ By January 23rd the guidelines had been met and only the logistics of setting up the alternative classes and raising money were left.⁴⁵

Setting up the alternative classes was facilitated by a survey which was sent home to the parents of the elementary students. The results of the survey not only would help determine how to set up the elective classes in

the elementary schools but also would indicate how many Bible teachers would be needed to teach the number who would enroll. The number of Bible teachers hired would in turn determine the amount of money needed to be raised by the community for the remainder of the school year. Therefore the results of the parent survey, which was a deciding factor in implementing the guidelines, became the outcome for which everyone was waiting.⁴⁶

After some delays were overcome, the results of the survey were finally tabulated and reported in the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* on February 4, 1986. These results were as follows:

Table 6.1: A School-by-School Breakdown of the Survey Results

School	No. of Surveys	Bible	Computers	Writing	No Response
Bluewell	219	185	43	1	0
Bramwell	211	47	90	4	0
Brushfork	239	124	99	3	13
Ceres	188	105	73	7	3
Cumberland	141	52	87	1	1
Glenwood	441	254	173	14	0
Lashmeet	228	43	142	8	14
Melrose	244	135	106	3	0
Matoaka	238	64	137	8	29
Memorial	206	111	80	6	9
Montcalm	376	252	108	16	0
Preston	120	94	24	2	0
Ramsey	290	95	107	8	80
Silver Springs	198	88	75	0	35
Straley	244	164	65	5	10
Wade	306	100	157	7	42
Whitethorn	199	115	54	13	17

Source: Bluefield Daily Telegraph, "40% drop: Half select Bible as class elective." 4 February 1986, A-1,2.

The survey answered many questions but it also created another question: Do the parents understand that computer work will be available to the students at other times during the week? The Chair of the Bluefield Bible Committee, Eva Easley, believed that the parents were not clear on that issue. Therefore, efforts were made to clarify that the computers would be used throughout the week by all students.⁴⁷

At the same time some community members were distressed that computer instruction was used as an option since the newness (very few computers were available in any Mercer County school prior to this time) and fascination would be so appealing to the students.⁴⁸ Others, for the most part from outside of the community, continued to question, sometimes even scornfully, the decision to adopt the program and teach Bible as history and literature.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, amidst the continued controversy and debate, the process of absorbing the Program under the control of the board of education proceeded. Through the results of the survey it was evident that ten Bible teachers, the same number of teachers used prior to the opinion, would be needed to teach the students. Formal advertising of the positions for a certain length of time through the board of education was required. This delayed the implementation even further.⁵⁰ A fund drive which would help pay these teachers for the remaining school year also was underway the first

of March.⁵¹

On March 10, 1986, the Mercer County Board of Education hired ten Bible teachers for a 30 day period which would give the board of education time to evaluate the number of teachers needed for the Program. The teachers hired were the same ten who had taught before.⁵² The funds were coming in sufficiently, and the alternative classes were in place and by April 15, the end of the 30 day evaluation, all ten teachers were employed for the remainder of the year.⁵³

All the recommendations which would meet the Attorney General's guidelines were implemented and functioning. For the remainder of the year, the elementary students who elected to take Bible, computer, or creative writing would, at the appointed time, "scramble" to their choice of study. The secondary schools remained the same, but all Bible classes were now under the supervision and control of the Mercer County Board of Education. By the end of the school year all Bible teachers had been observed by the supervisors and all lesson material had been supervised. This most controversial year came to an end, and surprisingly, it ended with both sides of the controversy having gained: the opponents had alternative classes in place; and the proponents were able to keep Bible instruction in the public schools.

The Last Three Years

During the summer of 1986, the Committee continued to raise money for the budget which nearly doubled because of the increased pay scale. It was determined through pre-enrollment forms for the Fall of 1986 that more students were electing to take Bible and, therefore, the number of teachers needed to teach the students who elected to take Bible would not decrease.⁵⁴ Therefore, the same ten teachers were employed for the 1986-87 school year. The social studies supervisor (Gayle Wise) and the English supervisor (Rosanna Reaser) continued to supervise the Bible teachers and their lesson plans throughout the year. These supervisors were very positive and complimentary toward the preparation and presentation of the Bible lessons.⁵⁵ The large budget of \$200,000 for the school year was met by a very narrow margin. The near possibility of not meeting the budget concerned the Committee and it began a reassessment of the financial status of the Program.

The Committee determined that many of the outlying areas were not raising the amount of money needed to pay the Bible teachers in their area (once the program expanded outside of Bluefield but still in the county, each area was responsible to raise the money needed for a Bible teacher). As a result, at the end of the 1986-87 school year when four teachers resigned for various reasons, only two teachers were hired to replace them and the

areas that did not give enough money had their Bible classes cut back. Often cut backs meant dropping the first and second grade classes.

In the next two years these patterns continued. Bible enrollment steadily increased to approximately eighty percent of all students who were offered the classes.⁵⁶ The secondary enrollment, on the other hand, fluctuated very little throughout the controversy. The fund raising, nevertheless, became increasingly difficult because of the increased budget, causing the Committee to not hire new teachers when others resigned.

In the past school year, 1988-1989, four and one-half teachers (one teacher part-time) were employed to teach in all the Bluefield schools and in the outlying schools that continued to fully support their program financially.

SUMMARY

In the last twenty-five years the Bluefield Bible Program experienced little controversy until 1985. In 1972 the Superintendent of Mercer County Schools began to question the legality of the Bible Program, but these suspicions were set aside after consultations, and the Program continued as usual.

In 1983 another Bible Program, in Bristol, Virginia, went through

litigation and was stopped. The two Programs (Bluefield's and Bristol's) were not exactly the same. Nevertheless, the Bluefield Bible Committee took precautions to ensure the Program's continuation.

The most far reaching changes to the Program began in the summer of 1985. Among other things, the Program was brought under the Mercer County Board of Education and now is overseen by the board. At the same time, it continues to be financially supported by community donations.

CHAPTER SIX

ENDNOTES

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- 2 Letters to the Editor, *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, 7,12,15,19,26 November 1972.
- 3 Interview with Eleanor Rupp, present Bible teacher, 27 June 1989.
- 4 "Bible Class Backers Vow to Raise Money," *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, 3 August 1983, p. 22.
- 5 *Crockett v. Sorenson*, 568 F. Supp. 1422 (W.D. Va. 1983).
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 "Bible Class Backers Vow to Raise Money," *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, 3 August 1983, p. 22.
- 8 ~~Phone interview with Luella Stepp, former Bible teacher in Bristol, 22 July 1989.~~
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CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMATION

Bible in the public schools is not illegal. Nevertheless, it is often assumed by many to be illegal, and thus decisions concerning religion and the public sector are seldom settled calmly.

Americans have shifted in their tolerance of religion/Bible in the schools. Initially, religion and education were closely intertwined. Today, however, the schools are regarded as "religionless" by many. Some regard the religionless schools as a negative aspect in education. Cultural and legal changes can be cited as the reasons for the shift of view.

Culturally, the United States has moved from a somewhat religiously homogeneous society to a religiously heterogeneous society. Legal changes in church/state issues have been based on interpretations of the First Amendment by the courts. A number of issues, however, including the proper place of religion/Bible in the public schools, remain the subject of some controversy.

Before the United States became a nation, a child's education was

planned and paid for by the parents. This situation led to a predominantly religious education as churches often provided schooling or ministers were employed to teach groups of children. By the nineteenth century, common schooling slowly began to be accepted, and the curriculum was saturated with pan-Protestant religion and religiosity. At the beginning of the twentieth century a more diverse curriculum became popular, but religiosity still prevailed. By the middle of the twentieth century, public schooling, in most areas of the country, was moving toward total secularization. The watershed 1963 *Schempp* decision decisively changed the role of religion and Bible in the public schools. Although *de facto* secularization would be slow in coming, the *Schempp* decision is recognized by those knowledgeable in the field as the case which legally separated the devotional use of the Bible from the public schools.

It would be erroneous to assume that these phases of the degree to which religion/Bible was included in the public schools were experienced at the same time and in the same way for each state. Within and among states there were many differences concerning religion/Bible in the schools and West Virginia experienced these differences.

When West Virginia was still a part of Virginia, schooling efforts were, for the most part, religiously based. When western Virginia seceded in 1863, common schooling became a goal and yet records show a strong

saturation of pan-Protestantism. As West Virginia schools developed, state requirements and curriculums show a lessening of the pan-Protestantism.

In response to the less religiously based schooling, West Virginia implemented a credit for outside Bible study program in 1919. By mid-twentieth century, however, little was being done in the way of religion/Bible study in West Virginia schools.

One city was the exception. Since 1939 Bluefield, West Virginia, has supported a Bible Program which offers a Bible elective to all students in the public schools of the city.

Bluefield is the southernmost city in the mountainous state. The area which was settled in 1780 by two Revolutionary soldiers, became a city in 1889 and was named "Bluefield" for the fields of blue chicory bloom. Bluefield grew to a population of just under 25,000 with the coal and railroad businesses as the main source of income and attraction.

Two women, whose husbands came to Bluefield because of the coal business, became concerned about the children of this fast growing city. As they worked with juvenile delinquents, Sara Godwin and Margaret Moore decided that more moral training was needed in the schools. Having heard of a Bible Program in the public schools of Chattanooga, Tennessee, they began planning for a similar program in Bluefield. In the early months of 1939 steps were taken to secure county and state approval, raise

money and administer a pilot test of Bible knowledge to area children.

Catherine Walker was hired as the first teacher and by September, 1939, the constitution and by-laws were written and the Bible Program began.

The personalities of the co-founders were significant in the stability of the Program. Sara Godwin, having come out of a difficult background, brought to the Program a tough but warm and solid leadership. Margaret Moore was a stately woman who was determined in her commitments and this determination was reflected in her leadership style. Many believe the Program's success is largely due to their foresight and leadership skills.

The operational procedures of the Bible Program in Bluefield changed very little in the first forty-seven years. Teacher qualifications, teacher training, teacher responsibilities, curriculum structure and financial procedures remained stable until a recent move to bring the Program under the control of the Mercer County Board of Education.

Teachers hired to teach in the program are required to have a degree with at least twenty-four hours in Bible and experience which reflects effectiveness in teaching. A large majority of the sixty-five teachers who have taught in the Program have been trained at Columbia Bible College, which offers a minor in Bible teaching.

The first through ninth grade curriculum is a three year cycle in which the historical narrative of the Bible is covered during a once-a-week

elective Bible class. In high school, a first year elective Bible class is taught which is an Old and New Testament survey course. A second year elective Bible class is also offered which examines more deeply the narrative passages as well as other portions of the Bible. Both high school Bible classes are taken for credit toward graduation. All classes are taught from a neutral interpretation of the Bible.

The monies needed to pay the teachers and the expenses of the Program are raised entirely through community contributions. Individuals, churches, businesses and other groups give money to support the Program which has been very popular in the city. Nevertheless, its popularity has not been shared by all residents. A major controversy in 1985-86 caused some restructuring of the Program, but this was not the first time the Program was contended.

In the first years after the Program began, people in different religious groups expressed discontent over the Program, although no denomination or religious group as a whole ever opposed the Bible Program. In the early 1950s, a segment of the Jewish population in Bluefield expressed dissatisfaction with the Program. A local minister who was supportive of the Program indirectly suggested a boycott of the businesses owned by the dissatisfied people. This intimidation tactic ended their protest. It should be noted that the tactic was not instigated by the committee. The Committee

instead showed a desire to accommodate the wishes of all segments of the community. Periodically, dissatisfaction continues to be expressed but the majority of the community favors the program.

Two Supreme Court cases in particular also had an effect on the Bluefield Bible Program. In 1948 the Committee suspended the elementary classes after the results of the *McCullum* decision. After receiving confirmation from the state Attorney General that the Bluefield classes were legal, the elementary classes resumed. Although the *Schempp* decision of 1963 brought many changes to America's schools, the Bluefield Program was affected only indirectly as one of the teachers terminated a practice of morning devotions over the public address system.

Other, more local controversies were experienced. In 1972 a new Superintendent of Schools in Mercer County where Bluefield is located was hired. He felt the Program was illegal and began a process of removing it. The community, however, campaigned for the Program. After receiving numerous letters in support of the Program and after discussions with the Bible Committee concerning the legality of the Program, the superintendent did not proceed with his plan to terminate it.

Eleven years later a similar Program in Bristol, Virginia, was tried in court. The results were both positive and negative. The Court ruled that Bible could be taught in the schools, but the guidelines that had to be

followed were not acceptable to the Committee and the Program was discontinued. This case was followed closely by the Bluefield Committee and some restructuring was done as a result. Within two years Bluefield had a similar controversy.

The most extensive controversy over the Bible Program arose in 1985. Eight parents wrote to the State Superintendent of Schools in protest of the Program and requested that he respond. The Superintendent in turn asked the Attorney General of West Virginia to compose an opinion. After several months the opinion was completed and the result was that he considered Bible in the public schools to be legal but that it should be under the supervision and control of the school board. Several guidelines were drawn up that would be required of the Bluefield Program.

The County School Superintendent and the Bible Committee collectively decided to bring the Bible Program within the guidelines. The major restructuring was accomplished within five months and the Bluefield Bible Program continues today under the same guidelines set up by the state Attorney General.

Reflecting on the entire fifty years of the Bluefield Bible Program, it is evident that the Program has gone through various changes for different reasons. The writer believes these changes have been necessary to continue the Program in a legal manner. The Committee was willing to make these

changes since the changes enhanced the neutrality in teaching the Bible which the Committee insisted upon. The changes also ensured that the classes would be completely elective.

An important question must be asked as this historical account is concluded. Would the founders of the Program be happy with the Bible Program as it operates today?

Two points must be made to answer this question: 1) the founders, if they were alive today, would have been affected by the same attitudes that have shaped the thinking and values which have caused the changes in the Program; and 2) the founders were the ones who were the most persistent about teaching the Bible from a neutral standpoint. Therefore, the writer believes that the founders of the Program would be pleased with the Program today. Moreover, the writer believes the Program is closer today to being exactly what the founders had in mind when they conceptualized the Program.

The opposite question would also be interesting to ask. Would the Committee today be satisfied with the Program fifty years ago? The answer would be no. First, today's Committee is much more aware of the need for neutrality in the Bible teaching. Second, the community desires a more neutral teaching to accommodate the various groups in Bluefield. Fifty years ago there was a more narrow view of the place of Bible in the

schools. All things considered, the writer believes that the Bluefield Bible Program has been one of the most successful Programs in the southeast because of the willingness of those involved in the Program to stay within the legal bounds of the court decisions.

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APPENDIX A

SYLLABI AND TESTS FOR OUTSIDE BIBLE STUDY

OFFICIAL SYLLABUS OF BIBLE STUDY FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: SELECTED AND ADAPTED BY THE HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF NORTH DAKOTA, AUGUST, 1912

I. STUDIES IN OLD TESTAMENT GEOGRAPHY

1. Palestine. Palestine is a strip of country at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. It extends east from the sea to the Arabian desert (on an average about 50 miles), and north from the southeastern corner of the Mediterranean to the river Leontes and Mt. Hermon (less than 150 miles).

Physically, Palestine is divided into four regions, or strips, running north and south.

1. The first is a plain along the coast from five to twenty-five miles in width and of great fertility. Here were the chief cities of the Philistines and the famous Plain of Sharon.

2. The second is a hilly zone with elevations from three thousand to four thousand feet high in the north but towards the middle flattening out into the Plain of Esdrachon, watered by the river Kishon. South of this the surface again breaks into hills and becomes more and more rugged until near Hebron it attains an elevation of over three thousand feet.

3. To the east this hill country slopes rapidly to the deep gorge of the Jordan Valley, the deepest depression on the face of the earth. The Jordan rises on the slopes of Mt. Hermon some distance north of the Sea of Galilee and descends rapidly until at the Sea of Galilee it is 682 feet below sea level. It continues to descend through a winding course of nearly two hundred miles (only sixty-five in a straight line) until at the Dead Sea it is 1292 feet below sea level. The Jordan Valley varies in width from about four miles in the north to about fourteen in the south. In the north it is fertile; in the south, alkaline and arid. The Dead Sea is forty-seven miles long and ten miles wide. South of this lake is the gravelly desert Arabah, gradually rising to a height of six hundred feet above the sea level and falling away again towards the Red Sea.

4. To the east of this great cleft of the Jordan and extending to the desert is a pleasant hilly region (Bashan, Gilead, Moab, and Edom) rising to a plateau about 2000 feet in height. This section is well watered and admirably adapted to grazing.

The great variety in the country is conducive to a corresponding diversity in its plants and animals. The authorities mention 113 species of mammals, 348 of birds, and more than 3000 varieties of flowering plants.

2. The Relation of Palestine to Other Lands. Palestine lay on one of the main routes of travel in the ancient world. To the southwest was Egypt with its mighty civilization; to the northeast, Mesopotamia with its powerful empires; across Palestine, between the Nile and the Euphrates, swept for many centuries the caravans and armies of the world. There were four main highways corresponding to the four divisions of the country already mentioned. One road followed the coast, leading from Egypt through the Philistine cities (Gaza, Ashdod, etc.) to Phoenicia (Tyre and Sidon) and so on to the north. A second traversed the central range of hills and the Plain of Esdrachon, passing through Samaria and Jerusalem and so south to Beersheba, where it turned west toward Egypt. On the north it led to Damascus and thence eastward across the desert to Mesopotamia (Assyria, Nineveh, Babylon, Chaldaea, Land of Shinar). A third route followed the Jordan Valley on its eastern side, extending down to Elath on the Red Sea and turning thence to Sini and beyond. On the north this road also led to Damascus. The fourth highway likewise led from Elath, connecting with caravan routes across the desert to the east and proceeding north through Moab, Ammon, and Gilead to the ancient emporium of Damascus. Along these roads and their branches and connections surged the tide of old-world traffic. By the southern routes the Israelites entered the land; by the northern they were, centuries later, led forth into captivity, and in due time returned to rec occupy their ancient home.

Note. Most Bibles nowadays contain maps. The student should carefully study the Old Testament map in connection with

the foregoing outline and locate all the places mentioned. He should also locate the chief mountains, as Mt. Carmel (near the coast), Mt. Tabor, Mt. Gilboa, Mt. Ebal and Gerizim (near Samaria and Shechem), Mt. Pisgah and Mt. Nebo (northeast of Dead Sea), and Mt. Sinai or Horeb (to the southwest). He should also locate the important towns and cities, such as Dan or Laish (in the extreme north), Jezreel, Dothan, Samaria, Shiloh, and Bethel (in the central part), and Jericho, Gibcon, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron (in the south).

II. THE GREAT OLD TESTAMENT NARRATIVES

1. The Creation (Gen. 1).
2. The Garden of Eden (Gen. II, 8-IV, 16).
3. The Flood (Gen. VI, 1-IX, 19).
4. Babel (Gen. XI, 1-9).
5. The "Call of Abraham" (Gen. XI, 27-XII, 9).
6. Abraham and Lot (Gen. XIII, also XV, also XVII, 1-XIX, 28).
7. The Sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. XXII).
8. The Marriage of Isaac (Gen. XXIV).
9. Jacob and Esau (Gen. XXVII-XXXIII).
10. Joseph and his Brethren (Gen. XXXVII, also XXXIX-XI, VII).
11. Early Life of Moses (Ex. I and II).
12. The Call of Moses (Ex. III and IV).
13. The Deliverance of Israel (Ex. V-XV).
14. Israel in the Wilderness (Ex. XVI and XVII).
15. Israel at Sinai (Ex. XIX and XX).
16. The Golden Calf (Ex. XXXII).
17. The Death of Moses (Deut. XXXIV).
18. The Entrance into Canaan (Josh. I-VI).
19. The Great Battle with the Amorites (Josh. X, 1-13).
20. The Defeat and Death of Sisera (Judges IV and V).
21. The Deeds of Gideon (Judges VI and VII).
22. Jephthah (Judges XI).
23. The Life and Death of Samson (Judges XIV-XVI).

24. Ruth, the Faithful Moabitess (Ruth I-IV).
25. The Calling of Samuel (1 Sam. III).
26. The First King of Israel (1 Sam. VIII-XI).
27. The Early Adventures of David (1 Sam. XVI-XVIII, 9).
28. David and Jonathan (1 Sam. XX).
29. David and Saul (1 Sam. XXI-XXXIV).
30. The Deaths of Saul and Jonathan (1 Sam. XXXI and 2 Sam. I).
31. David Made King (2 Sam. V, 1-VI, 15, also VII-IX).
32. The Rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. XIV, 25-XVIII, 33).
33. Rizpah (2 Sam. XXI, 1-14).
34. The Greatness of Solomon (1 Kings II, 1-12; III, 1-XI, 13).
35. The Kingdom Divided (1 Kings XI, 41-XII, 33; also XIV, 21-31).
36. Elijah (1 Kings XVI, 20-XIX, 21).
37. Naboth's Vineyard (1 Kings XXI; also XXII, 20-40; also 2 Kings IX, 30-37).
38. Elijah Translated (2 Kings II, 1-12).
39. Elijah's Marvellous Achievements (2 Kings IV-VII).
40. The Wicked Athaliah (2 Kings XI).
41. The Destruction of Sennacherib (2 Kings XVIII, 13-XIX, 37).
42. The Great Reform under Josiah (2 Kings XXII, 1-XXIII, 30).
43. The Call of Isaiah (Is. VI, 1-8).
44. The Fall of Jerusalem (2 Kings XXV, 1-21).
45. Daniel and his Three Friends (Dan. I-III; also V and VI).
46. The Return from the Exile in the Time of Cyrus (about 530 B.C.) (Ezra I, 1-II, 2; II, 64-VI, 22).
47. Nehemiah leads back another Group in Artaxerxes' Time (about 450 B.C.) (Nehemiah I-IV).
48. Esther, the Beautiful Queen (Ester I-X).
49. The Test of Job (Job I and II, also XLII).
50. Jonah (Jonah I-IV).

III. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF HEBREW HISTORY BEFORE CHRIST

The history of the Hebrews as a distinct people begins with their escape from Egypt and their establishment in Palestine, a dozen centuries or more before Christ.

The first great period includes the era of settlement and conquest and extends up to the beginning of the kingdom under Saul (eleventh century B.C.). See Narratives 11-25.

The second great period, beginning with the accession of Saul, includes the great reigns of David and Solomon, and extends to the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam and Jeroboam (tenth century B.C.). See Narratives 26-35.

The third great period includes the reigns of nineteen kings in Israel (northern kingdom) until its overthrow by Sargon, King of Assyria (eighth century) and of twenty kings in Judah (southern kingdom) extending to the fall of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in the sixth century. The great characters during this time are Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Micah, Josiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel. See Narratives 36-44.

The fourth great period includes the captivity of Judah (sixth century), the return and rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the subsequent control of Palestine by the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans, including the brilliant century of independence under the Maccabees from about the middle of the second century until after the middle of the first century B.C. See Narratives 45-48.

The student would do well to consult a Bible Dictionary or an Ancient History for the chronology and for the relations existing between the Hebrews and the other great nations of antiquity. It is not always possible to be sure of the exact date of a given event, as the various authorities differ; but the student should grasp the historical periods and be able to assign each great event to its proper century. Any recognized system of chronology will be accepted. Various excellent Hebrew histories are easily obtainable.

IV. THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The thirty-nine books are divided in five groups, as follows:

1. The Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy (5 books).
2. The Historical Books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1st and 2d Samuel, 1st and 2d Kings, 1st and 2d Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther (12 books).
3. The Poetical Books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon (5 books).
4. The Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel (5 books).
5. The Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (12 books).

V. MEMORY PASSAGES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

NOTE. Learn any five of the following passages. Each of the passages selected should be carefully committed to memory so as to become an abiding possession.

1. The Ten Commandments, Exodus XX, 9-17.
2. From a speech of Moses, a specimen of Hebrew oratory, Deut. VI, 4-15.
3. The First Psalm.
4. The Twenty-third Psalm.
5. The Forty-sixth Psalm.
6. The One Hundred and Third Psalm.
7. Job XXVIII, 12-28.
8. Proverbs, Chapter III, 1-26.
9. Isaiah XL, 18-31.
10. Isaiah LV.

VI. STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

A. Political Divisions in Christ's Time. The general landscape features in New Testament times are, of course, the same as those

already outlined. (See I, above.) But the political divisions were entirely different. These were as follows:

(a) To the west of the Jordan:

1. Judea, corresponding, in the main, to the old kingdom of Judah and including such places as Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethlehen, Bethany, Ephraim, Lydda, and Joppa.

2. Samaria, occupying the central part of the region around the ancient city of Samaria, extending north to the river Kishon, and numbering among its cities Sychar and Cesarea. Judea and Samaria were under the proconsul Pontius Pilate.

3. Galilee, lying to the west of the lake of the same name and extending north to Phoenicia (Tyre and Sidon). Among its points of interest were Nazareth, Capernaum, Cana, Chorazin.

(b) To the east of the Jordan:

1. Perea, extending from the river Arnon north somewhat beyond the river Jabbok. This region and Galilee were united under the rule of Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great.

2. Decapolis, east of Galilee and stretching off to the southeast, a region of flourishing Greek cities.

3. The Tetrarchy of Philip, extending from opposite the Sea of Galilee north to Mt. Hermon (the probable scene of the Transfiguration). Among its cities were Bethsaida and Cesarea Philippi. Its ruler in Christ's time was Philip, another son of Herod the Great.

NOTE. All these divisions and points of interest should be carefully located on the map.

B. The Life of Christ. The four evangelists differ somewhat in their accounts of the life of Christ. For this there are two causes:

(1) John purposely omits to mention various facts recorded by the earlier writers, intending in his gospel to give additional information rather than to repeat familiar matter. (Because of their general agreement the first three gospels are called the "synoptic gospels.")

(2) The synoptic gospels do not always agree in the order of events; Matthew seems to prefer to treat his matter topically. For example, when recording parables he groups several together, apparently disregarding the exact chronology. See Matt. XIII.

It is, therefore, somewhat difficult to determine the exact order of the events in Christ's life. In the outline given below we shall follow, in the main, the order found in Luke; here and there facts not recorded by him are inserted.

First Period. Childhood and Youth, up to and including the Temptation. Luke I-IV, 13.

Read also Matt. II-IV. Locate places mentioned.

Second Period. The Beginnings of Christ's Active Ministry, or The Year of Obscurity. Read John II-IV.

During this period, after his first miracle in Cana in Galilee, Jesus appears to have worked mainly in Judea. The event marking the close of this period seems to have been the imprisonment of John the Baptist. See Matt. IV, 12, 13; also Mark I, 14; also, Mark VI, 14-20.

Third Period. The Period of Growing Popularity.

Read Luke IV, 14-IX, 50.

During this period, which probably lasted considerably over a year, Jesus worked mainly in the neighborhood of the Sea of Galilee. Among the chief events to be remembered, in addition to the various miracles and parables, are the following: (1) The choosing of the twelve disciples, in connection with which doubtless occurred the Sermon on the Mount (briefly recorded by Luke in Chapter VI, 20-40, and more fully in Matthew V-VII, which should be read). (2) Two journeys north for rest and privacy. The first—into Phoenicia—is not mentioned by Luke, but is described in Matthew XV, 21-31; the second is described in Matthew XVI, 19-21. Here in Peter's confession was made a definite announcement of Jesus' Messiahship, after which he talked to his disciples of his approaching death. (3) The Transfiguration, probably on Mt. Hermon.

Fourth Period. The Final Year of Ministry, or Period of Constantly Growing Opposition.

Read Luke IX, 51-XIX, 10.

During this period, hasting doubtless for something less than a year, Jesus withdrew from Galilee, but not being welcomed in Samaria, journeyed south by a route east of the Jordan (see Mark

X, 1), reaching Jericho shortly before the time of the Passover. In this period should also be placed the visit to Bethany and the raising of Lazarus as recorded in John XI, 1-40, and the subsequent sojourn in Ephraim (John XI, 47-54).

Fifth Period. The Passion Week and the Forty Days.

Read Luke XIX, 11-XXIV, 53; also Acts I, 1-14.

After his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday, Jesus evidently made his headquarters at Bethany, going each day to Jerusalem to teach in the Temple (Luke XXI, 37). The bitterness of the hierarchy daily increased. On Thursday evening he celebrated the Passover and instituted the Lord's Supper, after which occurred his last extended conversation with his disciples. Read John XIV-XVII. Then came the scene in Gethsemane, the arrest and the trials. Of these Luke mentions four. Before whom was each? The Crucifixion followed on Friday and the Resurrection on Sunday, after which occurred the various manifestations and the Ascension.

VII. STUDIES IN HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Note that the influence of Christianity soon extended beyond Palestine. Study in connection with the following outline a map of the Eastern Mediterranean, showing the various voyages of Paul. In the matter of dates there is not absolute agreement among the historians, and so none are given here. The student should, however, adopt some reasonable chronology and follow it consistently.

1. The Progress of the Church at Jerusalem.

Read Acts I-VII.

Get clearly in mind the chief events: The manifestation of power on the Day of Pentecost; Peter's great sermon and its effect; the enthusiasm and devotion of the church; the incident of Ananias and Sapphira; the beginnings of persecution; the appointment of the seven deacons and the death of the first martyr, Stephen.

2. The First Missionary Work of the Church.

Read Acts VIII-XII.

Note that this work was due largely to scattering of the early Christians by persecution.

Note the work of Philip, the first foreign missionary; the conversion of Saul and his work in Arabia and Damascus (read Gal. I, 17, 18); also the work of Peter, and his vision at Joppa; the admission to fellowship of Cornelius, the Roman, and the widening vision of the church; the spread of the gospel to Antioch, the chief city of Asia, and the rapid increase of the church in spite of persecution. Locate all places mentioned.

3. The Great Missionary Work of Paul.

(1) Paul's First Missionary Journey.

Read Acts XIII and XIV.

Follow the route of Paul and Barnabas from Antioch across Cyprus and so on to the mainland through Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, and back again by the same route to Antioch, whence they sailed to Antioch. Note carefully their experience in each city and the evidences of their success.

(2) The Great Council at Jerusalem.

Read Acts XV, 1-35.

This is very important, as at this time the Mother Church gave official sanction to the work among the Gentiles, an essential step toward making Christianity a world religion.

(3) The Second Missionary Journey.

Read Acts XV, 36-XVIII, 22.

Again follow the route of Paul and Silas as they proceeded overland from Antioch by the great Roman road through Tarsus, Paul's early home, and so on across the mountains to the Galatian cities visited on the first journey. Note that instead of going north into Bithynia, as apparently they had planned, they followed the caravan road to Troas, where Paul had the great vision which took him into Europe. Follow his route through Macedonia. Note that his general method of work in each city was to approach the Jews first and then to turn to the natives. Note his varied experiences, especially at Athens and at Corinth, where he remained a year and a half. Recall the friends he made during this trip and follow his return to Antioch via Ephesus and Caesarea.

(4) The Third Missionary Journey.

Read Acts XVIII, 23-XXI, 16.

Note that as in the second journey Paul starts out by visiting Tar-sus, Derbe, Iconium, etc., and then follows the great caravan road direct to Ephesus, the chief commercial city on the *Ægean*, where the gospel had already been preached, somewhat imperfectly, by Apollos. Follow his route, which doubtless took him to the scenes of his former work at Philippi and Thessalonica and thence south to Corinth, where he stayed three months. Observe that on his return he again visited his dear friends at Philippi (note his affection for this church as expressed in Phil. I, 1-5; and IV, 1), and spent a week at Troas, thence skirting the coast to Miletus, where he had goodbye to his Ephesian friends. Follow his entire route on the map to his landing places at Tyre and Cesarea, whence he went to Jerusalem.

(5) Paul's Arrest in Jerusalem and Appeal to Caesar.

Read Acts XXI, 17-XXVIII.

Note the circumstances of Paul's arrest, his address on the temple stairs, his address before the council, the plot against his life, his night ride to Cesarea, his trial before Felix, his two years in prison, his trial before Festus and appeal to Caesar, and his great address before Agrippa. Follow on the map the route of the ship as it sailed along the southern coast of Asia Minor as far as Fair Havens in Crete; then the general course of the tempest-tossed vessel to Melita; and finally the course of the Castor and Pollux to Puteoli and the overland journey by the famous Appian Way to Rome. Note Paul's manner of life in Rome as for two years he waited for his trial.

The details of Paul's subsequent career are uncertain. It would seem that he was released on the first charge, and later engaged once more in missionary work, only to be again arrested. The most definite information is found in 2 Timothy IV, 7-92, a passage evidently written shortly before his death, which is usually dated about 68 A.D. Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D.

VIII. THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The twenty-seven books are divided into five divisions, as follows:

1. Biographical (or gospels): Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (4 books).
2. Historical: The Acts (1 book).
3. Epistles to special churches or persons: Romans, 1st and 2d Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2d Thessalonians, 1st and 2d Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews (14 books).
4. General Epistles: James, 1st and 2d Peter, 1st, 2d, and 3d John, Jude (7 books).
5. Prophetic, or Apocalyptic: Revelation (1 book).

IX. MEMORY PASSAGES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Note. Learn any five of the following passages, as in the case of the Old Testament passages, being careful to commit them accurately:

1. The First Christmas, Luke II, 8-19.
2. The Beatitudes, Matt. V, 9-11.
3. The Lord's Prayer, Matt. VI, 9-13.
4. From Jesus' Last Talk, John XV, 1-14.
5. Paul's Address on Mars Hill, Acts XVII, 2-31.
6. Rules for Life, Rom. XII, 9-21.
7. Paul's Account of Love, 1 Cor. XIII.
8. Faith, Heb. XI, 1-6, and 32-40.
9. Works, James II, 14-26.
10. The New Jerusalem, Rev. XXII, 1-14.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF NORTH DAKOTA, JUNE,
1916. BIBLICAL HISTORY AND LITERATURE. ONE
HALF UNIT CREDIT

(Answer any ten questions; each has a value of ten per cent. Time,
180 minutes)

1. Explain the relation of Palestine to the other lands mentioned in the Old Testament. Draw an outline map of the whole region.
2. Name ten (10) prominent men of the Old Testament who lived before the time of David and explain why each is noted.
3. Name ten (10) prominent men of the Old Testament who lived after the time of David and explain why each is noted.
4. Name ten (10) women mentioned in the Old Testament and explain why each is noted.
5. Name two (2) books of the Pentateuch, six (6) historical books, three (3) poetical books, three (3) major prophets, and six (6) minor prophets.
6. Write from memory one of the Psalms.
7. Name ten (10) prominent men of the New Testament and explain why each is noted.
8. Give an account of five (5) parables spoken by Jesus.
9. Give an account of five (5) wonderful works performed by Jesus.
10. Discuss the work of the Apostle Paul at Athens, Corinth, the Island of Cyprus, Ephesus, and Philippi. When did he visit each place? To which did he write epistles?
11. Write a memory passage from the New Testament, at least 150 words long.
12. Explain the Biblical allusion in each of the following quotations:
 - (1) "Marked even as Cain." — TENNYSON.
 - (2) "A heart as rough as Esau's hand." — TENNYSON.
 - (3) "Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy brute Baal." — TENNYSON.
 - (4) "If to be fat is to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved." — SHAKESPEARE.

- (5) "As ragged as Lazarus when the glutton dogs licked his sores." — SHAKESPEARE.
- (6) "There was a firebrand at each fox's tail
Unleashed in the cornfield." — BROWNING.
- (7) "Fair as Ruth in the old Hebrew pastoral." — WHITTIER.
- (8) "To Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham." — WHITTIER.
- (9) "He preached to all men everywhere
The gospel of the Golden Rule." — LONGFELLOW.
- (10) "Samson stark at Dagon's knee
Gropes for columns strong as he." — EMERSON.

QUESTIONS USED AT GREELEY, COLORADO, FOR BIBLE
STUDY CREDIT IN THE STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGE,
MAY 25, 1913

Directions to Teachers of the Classes

You are expected to read and grade the papers. Judge the papers as a whole. Read for evidences of scholarship and intelligent grasp, rather than for flaws or technical minutiae. The amount of ground that it is reasonable to expect your pupils to cover in this written exercise must be judged not in advance, but rather on the basis of what those who employ their time well actually accomplish. Papers are to be marked S (satisfactory) or the word "Unsatisfactory" written across the back of the paper. When graded by the teacher, they are to be delivered to Dr. Irving E. Miller, of the College.

Directions to Students

Answer, if possible, from three to five questions. Choose these questions from at least two groups. Write according to the standards of composition that prevail in classes in English. Organize your answers in such a way that they will be complete and unified within the space which you can afford to give them in your limited time. You may begin with any question you choose. Do not waste any time copying the question; identify it by indicating the number.

QUESTIONS

Group I

1. What do you understand by the word "Bible"? Explain the significance of the terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament." On what basis is this division into two parts made? What is the "Apocrypha," which is found in some editions of the Bible?
2. Classify the content of the Bible from the literary point of view. Illustrate your answer by specifying some book, books, or parts of books of the Bible that fall under each literary form.
3. Explain briefly (a sentence or two) ten of the following terms: Eden, Pentateuch, Covenant, Patriarch, the Exodus, Decalogue, Theocracy, Monotheism, the Exile, the Restoration, Publican, Pharisee, Sadducee, Pentecost, Dispersion, Epistle, Apocalypse.

Group II

4. Name four different periods in the history of the Children of Israel. Name one man prominently identified with each period and discuss briefly his significance in the life of that period.
5. How was the tendency to idolatry among the Hebrews finally overcome?
6. Compare and discuss the specific functions of the priests and the prophets in the religious and moral life of the Hebrew people.
7. Discuss ideals and standards of home life and child training among the Hebrews.

Group III

8. What do you understand by Biblical canonicity? Tell something of the Canon of the Old Testament.
9. What is meant by "Higher Criticism"? Tell something of its problems.
10. Discuss the place of the Bible in the general culture of the individual.

QUESTIONS ON THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, APRIL 14, 1912

1. What is the meaning of the phrase "The Canon of the New Testament"?
2. Distinguish between a "provisional canon" and the "final canon."
3. Upon what principle were books admitted to the "final canon"? About what time was the "final canon" determined?
4. In what way were the different parts of the New Testament preserved, and how were they first brought together?
5. If the Canon of the New Testament can be arranged into four different groups of writings in some systematic way, arrange the writings so.
6. What is meant by the "Process of Discrimination" as used in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article?
7. What influence had Justin Martyr in bringing together the New Testament books?
8. What was the probable beginning of the use of the New Testament books?
9. What brought about the settlement of the Canon that lasted ten centuries?
10. What questions have arisen in modern times about the Canon of the New Testament? How are they generally answered?
11. To what extent is credit due to the Catholic Church for the preservation of the New Testament writings?
12. In what particulars do the various Christian churches of to-day agree in regard to the Canon of the New Testament?

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APPENDIX C

SAMPLE WORKBOOK SHEETS

Lesson 3

Name: _____

The Boy Jesus and the "Silent Years" - Luke 2:40-52

I. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A PERSON SHOULD LEARN FROM THIS LESSON? _____

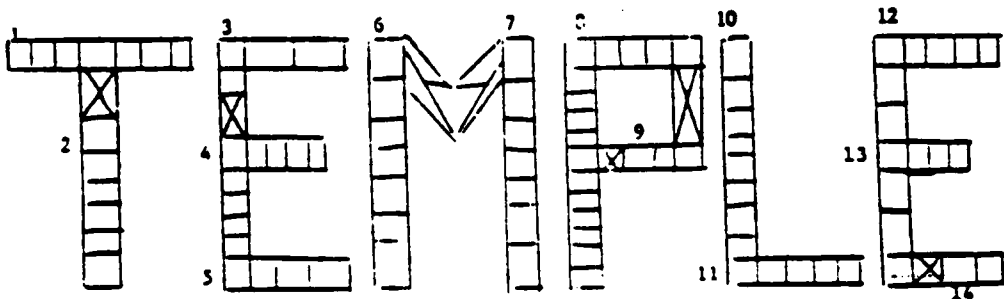
II. True or False:

- _____ 1. We know nothing about the life of Jesus while he was a boy in Nazareth. (Luke 2:39-40)
- _____ 2. During these years Jesus must have learned how to do the job of a carpenter. (Mark 6:3)
- _____ 3. We know that Jesus never disobeyed Mary or God, or in any way sinned. (I Peter 2:21-22)
- _____ 4. As a child Jesus performed many miracles. (John 2:11)
- _____ 5. There is nothing in the Bible about Jesus until He was about 30 years old. (Luke 2:7; Luke 2:42)
- _____ 6. Jesus was trained in the laws of Moses and the religious life of the Jews. (Luke 2:46-47)
- _____ 7. When 7 years old, Jesus like other Jewish boys, was a "son of the Law" and expected to go to Jerusalem to keep the Feasts. (Luke 2:42)

III. Fill in the puzzle finding the words in Luke 2:41-49 as follows:

A means across; D means down.

Now His (1A) went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. When Jesus was (2D) years (3A) they went to Jerusalem after the custom (3D) the feast, and when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child (4A) carried behind in Jerusalem; and (4D) and His mother knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to (5A) been in the (6D) went a day's (7D) and they sought Him (8A) their kinsfolks and (8D) and when they found Him (9A) they turned back to (10D) seeking Him. And after 3 days they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the (11A) of the (12D) both hearing (13A) and asking questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said unto Him, Son, why has Thou thus (12A) with us? And Jesus said, Wist ye not that I must (14A) about my Father's business?



IV. Memory Verse: Luke 2:52 "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

Lesson 14

Name _____

Topic: Conquest and Division of the Land of Canaan

Scripture: Joshua 6-24

I. CONQUEST OF THE LAND

A. Conquest of central Canaan:

1. First city taken because God's people obeyed Him.
 - a. The first city God's people were to take was (Ai, Jericho, Canaan.)
 - b. The way this city was to be taken was that the people were to march around the city walls (1 time, 7 times, 10 times) a day for (4, 7, 6) days. Then on the (6th, 7th, 10th) day they were to go around the city (4, 5, 7) times.
 - c. After the people had followed these instructions exactly, the walls of the city (fell flat, burned up, opened up in two places.)
 - d. (Rahab's family, the king's family, Achan) was saved alive, but every other person was destroyed.

2. Second city lost because of disobedience.

- a. What command had God given about the things the people found in the city of Jericho? Joshua 6:18,11 _____
- b. Who disobeyed this command? Joshua 7:1 _____
- c. What did he do? Joshua 7:20,21 _____
- d. What happened as a result of this man's sin? Joshua 7:4,5 _____
- e. How was he punished for his sin? Joshua 7:24, 25 _____
- f. After this sin had been dealt with, what did God tell them to do? Joshua 8:1 _____

B. Conquest of Southern Canaan: Joshua 10

1. This part of the land was given to God's people after they had defeated how many kings? Joshua 10:5 _____
2. How was it that they really won this land? Joshua 10:42 _____
3. Name two miracles that God worked in order to help them win this war.
 - a. Joshua 10:11 _____
 - b. Joshua 10:12,13 _____

C. Conquest of Northern Canaan: Joshua 11

1. How did the people take this part of Canaan? Joshua 11:7,8 _____

II. DIVISION OF THE LAND Joshua 13-21

- #### A. How was the land to be divided? Joshua 11:23
- _____

Name _____

Lesson 18...David's Boyhood... I Samuel 16, 17

Lesson 19...David, the second king over God's people... I Sam. 18- II Samuel.

Lesson 20...Solomon, the third king, and the Division of the nation...I Kings 1-12

WHO AM I? (In the blank before each statement, place the number of the person that the statement is about.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Saul | 7. Joab, the captain of David's army |
| 2. Nathan, the preacher | 8. Samuel |
| 3. Goliath | 9. Solomon |
| 4. Rehoboam | 10. David |
| 5. Bathsheba | 11. Jeroboam |
| 6. Jesse | 12. Uriah |

- ___ 1. I was the second king over God's people.
- ___ 2. I anointed the lad who was to be the second king of God's people.
- ___ 3. From among my sons God chose the second king of His people.
- ___ 4. For a number of years I did not know that God had chosen another person to take my place as king.
- ___ 5. I sent my youngest son to take food to his brothers who were in the king's army.
- ___ 6. I dared God's people to send a man out to fight me.
- ___ 7. I was afraid to go out and fight the giant because I had disobeyed God, and I knew He would not help me while I had unconfessed sin in my heart.
- ___ 8. I told the king and my brothers that I would go and fight the giant because I knew God was with me.
- ___ 9. I made fun of the boy that the Israelites sent out to fight against me.
- ___ 10. I defeated the giant with the armor of faith and a sling and a rock.
- ___ 11. After the lad had defeated the giant, he went to the palace to live with me.
- ___ 12. After a time, I became very jealous of the lad; and realizing that God had appointed him to be the next king, I tried over and over to kill him.
- ___ 13. I had to live as a hide-away in order to protect my life until the first king of God's people died.
- ___ 14. I killed myself after I had been wounded in battle.
- ___ 15. After the first king's death, I took over part of the land as king but had to wait 7 years before all of the land came under my rule.
- ___ 16. Once during a war, I was sent to take the king's place in the battle.
- ___ 17. While my men were out fighting, I yielded to the temptation to commit adultery with another man's wife.
- ___ 18. The king sent for me to come to his house while my husband was away in battle.
- ___ 19. I was sent out into the hottest part of the battle and was killed.
- ___ 20. After my husband was killed, I became the king's wife.
- ___ 21. I told the king, "Thou art that man!"
- ___ 22. I begged God to forgive me for my horrible sin, and He did.
- ___ 23. Even though God forgave me, I had to suffer the consequences of my terrible sin, and four of my sons died.
- ___ 24. After my father died, I became the third king of God's people and was known through out all the world for my wisdom.
- ___ 25. I was given by God the privilege of asking of Him one request, so I asked for an understanding heart to be able to judge His people wisely.
- ___ 26. During my reign of peace, God allowed me to build a magnificent temple in which He could dwell.
- ___ 27. After the third king deliberately disobeyed God's commandments, I was told that God would take 10 of the tribes away from the king and give them to me.
- ___ 28. After my father died, I became king and decided to continue to tax the people even more heavily than he had done.
- ___ 29. Ten of the tribes broke away, and I became their first king.
- ___ 30. After the division in the kingdom, I only had 2 tribes left over which I was king.

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APPENDIX E

September 9, 1948

The Honorable W. S. Trent
State Superintendent of Free Schools
Charleston 5, West Virginia

Dear Doctor Trent:

I have your letter as follows:

"I have received a number of inquiries concerning your opinion addressed to me, dated September 4, 1948, relating to religious instruction in public schools.

"With reference to the statement in your opinion that we may assume that the decision in the McCollum case is based strictly on the particular facts involved in that case, the question arises as to what are the differences between the facts involved in the Illinois plan, condemned by the court, and the facts involved in the plans followed in this state in the counties of Mercer and Monongalia, and which plans are approved in your opinion above mentioned.

"I think some differences between the Illinois and the West Virginia plans are clearly apparent, but I request that you give me your views."

In my opinion, the basic differences between the Illinois plan and that followed in this state in the counties of Mercer and Monongalia are the following:

(1) The religious teachers in Illinois were employed at no expense to the school authorities, but the instructors were subject to the approval and supervision of the superintendent of schools.

In the counties of Mercer and Monongalia the religious instructors are selected and employed by a lay committee composed of representatives of various churches, at no expense to the school authorities, but such instructors are not subject to

The Honorable W. W. Trent--2

the approval and supervision of the superintendent of schools
or of any other school authority.

(2) In Illinois students who were released from secular study for the religious instruction were required to be present at the religious classes and reports of their presence or absence were to be made to their secular teachers.

In West Virginia no requirement is made by the school authorities that the students attend the classes for religious instruction, and no report is required to be made of their presence or absence to the secular teachers. The students are merely excused by the teachers, at the request of the parents, for a limited time. Any penalties that may be imposed upon the students for failure to attend religious classes are imposed by the parents. The students are under the control of the religious instructors, not under the control of the school authorities, while they are attending the religious classes.

(3) Illinois has a compulsory educational law which, with exceptions, requires parents to send their children, age seven to sixteen, to its tax supported public schools, where the children are to remain in attendance during the hours when the schools are regularly in session, and parents who violate this law commit a misdemeanor punishable by fine, unless the children attend private or parochial schools which meet educational standards fixed by the state.

West Virginia does not have any law requiring that students are to remain in attendance at school during all the hours the schools are regularly in session.

(4) In Illinois pupils compelled by law to go to school for secular education are released in part from their legal duty upon the condition that they attend the religious classes.

In West Virginia pupils are released or excused for limited periods from their secular studies without the imposition of any condition.

The foregoing differences between the plans of Illinois and West Virginia are, I think, the main differences. However, there are others.

The Honorable W. W. Trent--3

It is obvious that in the operation of the compulsory education system of the state of Illinois there is close integration with the program of religious instruction. There is no such integration in the state of West Virginia.

Very truly yours,

IRA J. PARTLOW
Attorney General

IJP:LES

APPENDIX F

Dr. Thomas McNeel
Superintendent of Schools
State of West Virginia

August 8, 1985

Dear Dr. McNeel:

As parents, we are impressed with your goals for improving education in West Virginia presented in the enclosed editorial. More specifically, we represent a group of parents concerned with the existence of Bible study classes in the Mercer County school system, particularly at the elementary level. We will present briefly our objections with these classes.

First, the unconstitutionality of these classes promotes the appearance that the school system is outside Federal law. Second, the course is not comparative or inclusive of religious history other than that of the predominant fundamental Protestant sects of this community. As such, it does not promote academic achievement, but exists only to perpetuate one narrow religious viewpoint. Third, this program affects most of the elementary students in our county system, a group most vulnerable to both indoctrination and peer pressure. As the program is presently run, those parents who choose to remove their students from the class often find their children the target of ostracism. Fourth, solicitation of funds through the school system by the Bible Committee to finance this "voluntary" program is offensive, if not illegal. Fifth, while we are working now to see that real alternatives to these Bible classes are offered, fundamentally they should not be there in the first place and we question their continued existence and apparent sanction by the West Virginia Board of Education.

We have been in contact with officials at the county level, and have been particularly pleased with the response of the interim superintendent, Dr. I. Sue Schmelzer, in looking for alternatives and in setting curriculum guidelines. The enclosed editorial led us to believe that you might be interested in our efforts, and we would welcome any comments or support you might give us. We would appreciate being informed if there is any action that you might take. You may send your response to: Cynthia Van Dyke, 1004 Heatherwood Rd., Bluefield, WV 24701.

Sincerely,

Enclosures

APPENDIX G

BIBLE PROGRAM ANSWERS 10 COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q. Have the courts said that the teaching of the Bible in the public schools is legal?

A. Yes. In the 1963 ruling regarding prayer in the public schools Supreme Court Justice Clark stated: "It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistently with the First Amendment." (Abington v. Schempp, 374 US 203) This ruling has never been reversed. No court has ever ruled against the teaching of the Bible as history and literature. Any school system that has stopped Bible classes has done so because of aspects unrelated to the actual teaching of the Bible as history and literature.

2. Q. Is there any need for a Bible course in the public schools?

A. Yes. Northrop Frye, the great literary critic of this century, has said, "The Bible forms the lowest stratum in the teaching of literature. It should be taught so early and so thoroughly that it sinks straight to the bottom of the mind, where everything that comes along later can settle on it." *The Educated Imagination*, p. 110. According to Dr. Eileen Phy, professor of English at Alabama State University, John Milton, considered by most to be the second greatest English writer, can hardly be taught today on the college level due to the students' ignorance of the Bible. Literature contains so many biblical allusions that a biblical ignorance cripples any meaningful study.

3. Q. If the Bible can be taught, should not any book on religion be allowed to be taught?

A. It depends on the purpose. If the purpose is to promote a religion, no. If the purpose is the educational benefit of the child, yes. Not all books, though, deserve the same attention as the Bible. The impact of the Bible on the American culture merits for this book far greater attention than is merited by any other book. To cut our children off from the Bible is to cut them off from their cultural roots. This cannot be said for any other single book.

4. Q. Would not a high school course on the Bible adequately meet the students' need of Bible knowledge?

A. By no means. Northrop Frye, as quoted earlier, speaking purely from a literary view-point said, "It should be taught so early and so thoroughly that it sinks straight to the bottom of the mind, where everything that comes along later can settle on it." (Frye, p.110)

5. Q. What does it mean to study the Bible as literature?

A. A survey of books on the teaching of literature reveals a variety of emphases, with the trend today being toward the third approach listed below. See Hans P. Guth, *English for a New Generation*. All are legitimate, educational methods.

1. Historical backgrounds, emphasizing the writer, the setting, and the sources.
2. Literary criticism, emphasizing analysis of style, structure, literary devices and craftsmanship.
3. Relevance to life, emphasizing basic human meaning. (The Commission on English of the College Examination Board writes that the study of literature should bring "the work directly against the reader's own experiences.")

6. Q. If the teaching of the Bible is legal, why is the Bible program not financed by the Board of Education?

A. It could be, but the Board does not have the finances for it. Community funding assures the continuance of the program when the Board of Education has to cut other programs.

7. Q. Should any community group who wishes to start a program be allowed to bring it into the schools?

A. It all depends on the educational value of the program and whether that educational need is already being met. Generally there is a total vacuum of biblical knowledge in the school curriculum which, as noted elsewhere, has created a generation of young people handicapped in their understanding of literature.

8. Q. How do you deal with differing doctrinal interpretations?

A. They are neither taught nor dealt with. When children ask doctrinal questions they are instructed to ask their parents. Explanations of events are given but doctrinal explanations and interpretations are not.

9. Q. Is this a church-operated program?

A. No. The program is led by a committee made up of local citizens and educators.

10. Q. Is this in any way violating separation of Church and State?

A. No. There is no church affiliation. The Bible is not taught as religion but as history and literature according to the guidelines set by the Supreme Court. (See question 1.)

APPENDIX H

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
CHARLESTON 25305

October 31, 1985

CHARLIE BROWN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Dr. W Tom McNeel
State Superintendent of Schools
West Virginia Board of Education
Building 6, Room 358
Capitol Complex
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Re: Academic Study of the Bible
in Public Schools

Dear Dr. McNeel:

Your letter of September 26, 1985, has requested that we define the parameters within which a course in the Bible or a class utilizing the Bible as a main textbook may be taught in the public schools of West Virginia. You also have requested guidance on legal requirements for teachers of any such classes.

Both our state and federal constitutions speak to these points: The United States Constitution simply prohibits the government from imposing "an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." U. S. Constitution, amendment I. Our state constitution establishes the same principles but in broader and more far-reaching terms... The West Virginia Constitution guarantees inter alia that no one "shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry, whatsoever;" it prohibits any tax "for the support of any church or ministry;" and provides that "it shall be left free for every person to select his religious instructor, and to make for his support, such private contract as he shall please." W. Va. Constitution, Article III, Section 15. As can be seen, our West Virginia Constitution takes very seriously the importance of absolute religious freedom, echoing our state motto Montani Semper Liberi ("Mountaineers are always free").

These constitutional principles were established at a time when the religious persecutions of the Reformation and its aftermath were fresh in the mind. Even in the early days of American history, men and women had been sent to the stocks, the whipping posts, and the dungeons "for their religious beliefs, and some had forfeited their lives. In Europe, and elsewhere around

the globe, religious disagreement had led to people being torn apart on the rack, roasted on the spit, and mauled in battle, all in God's name. Today, we see similar turmoil in Northern Ireland and the Middle East.

At the same time it is to be remembered that the constitutional framers were, by and large, religious people. One historian has declared that our American political forebearers saw the "spiritual" as liberating, but they saw the "ecclesiastical" as the enemy. They were in no way hostile to religion; they simply regarded it as a personal matter. See: Elwyn A. Smith, Religious Liberty in the United States (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972).

The courts have examined questions of religion in public education in light of the two religion clauses in the First Amendment: i.e., does the activity tend to "establish" any religion, and does the activity impinge upon anyone's free exercise of religion? It is recognized that the two clauses sometimes seem to be in conflict, and also that one person's free exercise of religion may readily intrude upon another person's right to be free from that particular version of religious ideology.

The Establishment Clause received its classic definition in the Supreme Court's 1947 decision in Everson v. Board of Education, 330 U.S. 1, 91 L. Ed. 2d 711, 67 S. Ct. 504 (1947). The court said the clause meant "at least this":

Neither a state nor the Federal Government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another. Neither can force or influence a person to go or remain away from church against his will or force him to profess a belief or disbelief in any religion. No person can be punished for entertaining or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs, for church attendance or nonattendance. No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institution, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion. Neither a state nor the Federal Government can, openly or secretly, participate in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice-versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect a

"wall of separation between Church and State."
330 U.S. at 15-16, 91 L. Ed. 2d at 723.

More recently, the Supreme Court established a three-prong test for determining whether the Establishment Clause has been violated. First enunciated in Lemon v. Kurtzman, 403 U.S. 602, 19 L. Ed. 2d 745, 91 S. Ct. 2105, reh. denied 404 U.S. 876, 30 L. Ed. 2d 123, 92 S. Ct. 24 (1971), the test asks whether a challenged practice (1) reflects a secular purpose, (2) has a primary effect that neither advance nor inhibits religion, and (3) avoids excessive entanglement between government and religion. If any one of the questions is answered in the negative, the law or practice is unconstitutional. Justice O'Connor has recently elaborated upon the first two prongs of the Lemon test, supra, declaring that the purpose prong "asks whether government's actual purpose is to endorse or disapprove of religion," and the effect prong "asks whether, irrespective of government's actual purpose, the practice under review in fact conveys a message of endorsement or disapproval." Lynch v. Donnelly, 465 U.S. 668, 79 L. Ed. 2d 604, 104 S. Ct. 1355 (1984); see also Wallace v. Jaffree, 472 U.S. _____, 105 S. Ct. 2479 (1985).

The Free Exercise Clause, perhaps easier to interpret than the Establishment Clause, has been construed to mean the right of every person to choose among types of religious training and observance, absolutely free of state compulsion. Abington School District v. Schempp, 374 U.S. 203, 10 L. Ed. 2d 844, 83 S. Ct. 1560 (1963). The West Virginia Supreme Court has cogently declared that where religious freedom is concerned, "the law knows no heresy." State ex rel. Hughes v. Board of Education, 154 W. Va. 107, 174 S.E.2d 711 (1970), appeal dismissed 403 U.S. 944, reh. denied, 10 L. Ed. 2d 854, 91 S. Ct. 2274 (1971). The right to religious freedom includes the right to be irreligious. Wallace v. Jaffree.

It scarcely need be noted here that the courts have utilized the foregoing principles to prohibit many religious activities in the schools. Notable among these are organized prayer, Engel v. Vitale, 370 U.S. 421, 8 L. Ed. 2d 601, 85 S. Ct. 1261 (1962), Abington School District, supra; daily devotional readings from the Bible, Abington School District, supra; posting of the Ten Commandments in classrooms, Stone v. Graham, 449 U.S. 39, 66 L. Ed. 2d 199, 101 S. Ct. 192, reh. denied 449 U.S. 1104, 66 L. Ed. 2d 832, 101 S. Ct. 904 (1980); and most recently, a moment of silence for "meditation or voluntary prayer," Wallace v. Jaffree, supra.

While the courts have barred these activities because they either tended to establish religion through the public schools or

impinged upon the religious freedoms of others, the courts have repeatedly declared that government's posture should not be one of hostility towards religion; rather it should be one of neutrality. Wallace v. Jaffree; Abington School District, supra; Torcaso v. Watkins, 367 U.S. 488, 6 L. Ed. 2d 982, 81 S. Ct. 1660 (1961).

On the one hand, then, it is abundantly clear that the West Virginia schools can never endorse or propagate any religion, and the public treasury cannot be used, directly or indirectly, in support of any particular religious idea. On the other hand, these strictures do not prohibit the public schools from teaching "about" religion, from the standpoint of academic inquiry. Study of the Bible in public schools clearly is not per se unconstitutional. Hall v. Board of School Commissioners of Conecuh County, 656 F.2d 999 (5th Cir. 1981). The Bible has, after all, been central to much of Western history and a source for much of our culture's literature. It could certainly be said that the educated person must know something of the Bible just as he or she must know something of Shakespeare.

Indeed, in its 1963 decision on prayer in schools, the United States Supreme Court said:

(I)t might well be said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization. It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistently with the First Amendment.

Such study is now common in higher education. Both public and private colleges in West Virginia offer courses examining the Bible. The possibility of such courses in the elementary and secondary schools, of course, has caused the present inquiry.

The cases that have reached the courts on use of religious texts for public instruction have come from both ends of the spectrum. In one of the earlier cases, Calvary Bible Presbyterian Church v. Board of Regents, 436 P.2d 189 (Wash. 1968), a group of conservative Christians opposed the University of Washington's course entitled "Bible Literature" because they felt its academic inquiry was too liberal. They wanted to bar the University from teaching Bible at all, but the State Supreme

Court held that the course was a proper academic subject. In a case from New Jersey, however, Mainak v. Maharishi Yogi, et al., 592 F.2d 197 (3rd Cir. 1979), a federal court did prohibit five high schools from continuing their courses in transcendental meditation using a book by the Maharishi Yogi because the courses constituted state establishment of religion.

A key precedent for many of these issues is the Supreme Court's 1948 decision in Illinois ex rel. McCollum v. Board of Education, 333 U.S. 203, 92 L. Ed. 2d 648, 68 S. Ct. 461 (1948), which dealt with an Illinois program in which teachers employed by various denominational groups were sent into the public schools to give religious instruction to students from their denominations when the students' parents requested it. Even though the program was voluntary, and thus did not violate the Free Exercise Clause, the Court said it was unconstitutional because the furnishing of the physical facilities and the students in place (under compulsory attendance laws) constituted an establishment of religion by the state. In that case, of course, the instruction was avowedly religious.

Several cases from the southeastern United States have specifically examined public school courses in the Bible. In a 1970 decision, the Martinsville, Virginia, elementary schools were barred from continuing their Bible courses, which had been taught for a one-hour period each week by teachers employed and trained by a group of local citizens known as the "Religious Education Council." The court held that the McCollum decision controlled, because the private council was, in fact, "a religious group," and both school buildings and students were being furnished for the courses. Vaughn v. Reed, 313 F. Supp. 431 (W.D. Va. 1970).

Thirteen years later, the same court (though with a different judge sitting) held a similar program in the City of Bristol, Virginia, unconstitutional on the same grounds. The court cited the "strong religious overlay that stems from the conception and management of the program by the sponsors." Crockett v. Sorenson, 568 F. Supp. 1422 (W.D. Va. 1983).

One federal appeals court in 1981 considered an Alabama public high school course entitled "Bible Literature." The court found factually that the class "consisted entirely of a Christian religious perspective and within that a fundamentalist and/or evangelical doctrine," and that the textbook used, The Bible for Youthful Patriots, "reveals a fundamentalist Christian approach to the study of the Bible devoid of any discussion of its literary qualities." Hall v. Board of School Commissioners of Conecuh County, 656 F.2d 999 (5th Cir. 1981).

By far the most thorough review of the issues in an instructional program in Bible comes from the case of Wiley v. Franklin, 468 F. Supp. 133 (E.D. Tenn. 1979), involving the Chattanooga and Hamilton County, Tennessee, schools. The case came before the local federal court three times in 1979-1980.

Begun in 1922, the program was financially supported, except for some minimal administrative oversight costs, by a local civic group known as the "Public School Bible Committee." The Committee sponsored teacher selection and assignments (though principals had a right of refusal over any teacher), prepared the Bible study curricula, and conducted teacher training courses. Teachers selected were evangelical Protestant Christians. Among other sources of revenue, the Committee solicited "love offerings" from the parents of the children who participated in the classes. The school boards, in allowing the committee's program to operate in the schools, specifically recited that the courses were to be for purposes of understanding the American heritage and world history. Students could elect not to take the courses, in which case they would go to an empty classroom, the library, or elsewhere. At the time the lawsuit was instituted, the policy was altered so that students had to make a positive election to attend the Bible class rather than opt out of it. Grades were never a part of the student's formal academic record. Bible teachers were not required to have state teacher certificates. The program involved only the elementary levels, and the teachers declared that their instructional method was to "let the Bible speak for itself," with avoidance of any personal interpretation. All critical analysis of the Bible was avoided.

The plaintiff students claimed that their free exercise rights were being violated because they felt coercion and peer pressure to participate in the Bible classes (they reported that some family tensions had resulted from it), and that the straightforward teaching of the Bible constituted religious instruction.

In its first opinion, Wiley v. Franklin, supra, the court declared that the discussion must:

begin with the premise that the Bible is a religious book * * *. Thus, to simply read the Bible without selectivity is to read a religious book and to teach the Bible literally without interpretation is to convey a religious message or teach a religious lesson.

The court then examined the facts and found the Chattanooga program unconstitutional because the sponsoring Committee was

primarily motivated by religious goals, the course content tended to advance the Christian faith (and thus inhibit other faiths), and, because the Committee controlled the teachers and curriculum, there was excessive entanglement between religion and government.

However, the court allowed the city schools to reform their program to comply with constitutional standards, including (1) selection and deployment of the teachers and curriculum by the school board instead of the Committee, (2) elimination of any particular religious commitment or view as a requisite for teachers, and (3) elimination of "all lessons titles whose only reasonable interpretation is a religious message."

Upon a later review, Wiley v. Franklin, 474 F. Supp. 525 (1979), the court held that employment of teachers whose only qualifications were a teacher permit and 12 quarter hours of higher education in Bible literature was an "inadequate assurance" for the teaching of a nonreligious course, but the court gave its approval to the use of teachers holding bachelor's degrees in Biblical literature and regular state elementary teacher certificates or permits. The court also dealt with a specific portion of the curriculum in this opinion, holding unacceptable a lesson teaching the Resurrection of Jesus as recounted in the New Testament. The court said that this New Testament passage forms the central statement of the Christian religious faith, and said its "only reasonable message is a religious message. It is difficult to conceive how it might be taught as secular literature or secular history."

On its third trip before the court, 497 F. Supp. 390 (E.D. Tenn 1980), six tape recordings of actual class sessions were reviewed. The opinion reiterated the standard to be met:

'The ultimate test of the constitutionality of any course of instruction founded upon the Bible must depend upon classroom performance. It is that which is taught in the classroom that renders a course so founded constitutionally permissible or constitutionally impermissible. If that which is taught seeks either to disparage or to encourage a commitment to a set of religious beliefs, it is constitutionally impermissible in a public school setting.' * * *

The court gave its approval to lessons concerning the Israelite's capture of the walled city of Jericho under the leadership of Joshua and a story about the relationship between Saul and David. Both had been presented without biblical

readings. The story of Saul and David was linked to current world affairs. Approval was also given to Jesus' parable of the talents. In the lesson, Jesus was identified as a teacher and the disciples as his students. The emphasis was upon the idea behind the parable that "practice makes perfect" and that a student's talents grow only as they are used.

The Court did, however, bar further use of three other lessons. One dealt with God punishing the Babylonian king, Belshazzar, by destroying his kingdom; the second dealt with Moses' building of the Tabernacle and the Israelites worship of the golden calf; the third told of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone. The Court held that the intent and purpose of these three lessons was to convey a religious message rather than a literary or historical one.

While the courts in the foregoing cases have found that constitutional principles prohibit private civic groups from operating Bible instruction programs because of the religious groundings of the several groups, the same would be true in West Virginia even if the groups were not religiously oriented. West Virginia law places upon duly elected state and county boards of education the duty of operation of the public schools, and this duty cannot be abandoned to private groups. W. Va. Code §§ 18-2-5, 18-5-1 et seq.

Likewise, uncertified and privately employed teachers cannot deliver West Virginia's public education, irrespective of any question of religious orientation. Public school teachers must be employed by county boards of education in accord with Code 18-5-4, and they must be certified as public school teachers by the State Superintendent of Free Schools. Code 18A-3-1 et seq.

In summary, then, West Virginia public schools can offer instruction "about" the Bible, treating it for its academic value as history and literature. This instruction must, however, neither advance nor inhibit religion, and it must be conducted in accord with the general school laws of West Virginia.

Accordingly, it is our opinion that instruction about the Bible can be given in West Virginia's public schools under the following guidelines:

1. Supervision and control of the courses must be under the exclusive direction of the boards of education;

2. The boards should do the hiring and firing of teachers for the Bible courses in the same manner they do for all other teachers;

3. Teachers must hold appropriate state certification as public school teachers;

4. No inquiry should be made to determine the religious beliefs, or the lack thereof, of teacher applicants;

5. The school boards should prescribe the curriculum and select all teaching materials, as with any other courses;

6. The courses should be offered as electives. Children who choose not to take the courses should be offered reasonable alternative courses;

7. The school boards may solicit contributions from any private organizations for the purpose of funding any and all costs of Bible courses. Such contributions shall be received with "no strings attached" other than the understanding that such funds may be earmarked for the Bible courses exclusively;

8. Course content must study the Bible only for its historical and literary qualities, or in the context of comparative religion; and

9. The courses must be taught in an objective manner with no attempt made to indoctrinate students into either the truth or falsity of the biblical materials, or their value for personal religious commitment. At the secondary school level, modern methods of critical scholarship should be utilized.

Because the ultimate test of any such instruction will be classroom performance, such programs will be difficult to administer. It is suggested that school systems desiring to

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offer such courses work closely with their legal advisors in the development and administration of the programs, in accord with the guidelines furnished in this opinion.

Very truly yours,

CHARLIE BROWN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By

MICHAEL CLAY SMITH

MCS/rm

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ABSTRACT

The United States has had an interesting and full history of debate over the place of religion in the public schools and each state has had its own unique history on the same subject. Religion/Bible saturated the typical public school in western Virginia before 1863. After West Virginia became a state, the saturation of religion/ Bible gradually lessened, producing concern among some citizens. In 1917, the State adopted a direct plan for outside Bible study to incorporate elective Bible study class. Since 1935, however, there is no record of any statewide promotion of religion/Bible in the schools. In 1939 Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia, submitted a request to and received approval from the State Board of Education to offer Bible classes in its schools. Adjustments have been made to the program due to judicial or committee decisions. Some of these adjustments have been prompted by national and local controversy over religion/Bible in the public schools. Nevertheless, the existing Bible program has been sustained as a result of its location, community support and dynamic leaders. The purpose of this study is two-fold: 1) to identify and describe the impact various influences such as the co-founders, the community, and the first teachers, had on the Bluefield Bible Program

which contributed to its continued existence to this day; and 2) to create an accurate record of the history and proceedings of the Bluefield Bible Program.