

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RELATIONSHIP:
PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND EDUCATION

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5.1 WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE?

Since here there is reflection about the idea of a philosophy of life, from the outset it must be well understood that such a reflection will not be an explanation of a particular philosophy of life but merely and only of the phenomenon “philosophy regarding living” that is related to the particular nature of being human. But, in order to acquire a more lucid grasp of it, it will be necessary to fathom any philosophy of life in its essences. Therefore, the following is offered:

5.1.1 *The particularity of a philosophy of life*

When the concern is with universally valid findings such as the fact that all persons, groups and people hold philosophies of life that, indeed, are based on a particular hierarchy of value preferences, then this is not primarily concerned with which particular philosophy of life is the best but rather with a philosophy of life in its particularity. Even so, a specific group or people do view their specific philosophy of life as the best. Now it cannot be denied that different persons do not rate different values such as fairness, honesty, truthfulness, justness, chastity, etc. equally high and his rating is viewed (by him) as the best. The foundation of the particularity of a philosophy of life lies in this fact. However, when a person or people act on the basis of the central values held by them, i.e., those to which he gives highest preference, he or they then give expression to a particular philosophy of life. Thus, it is obvious that a community or people who hold and exercise such particular views of life, just because they are ready to unconditionally obey the underlying values and demands of propriety (norms) that speak from these values, show themselves as a part of or member of a community.

5.1.2 *The demanding character of a philosophy of life*

As already indicated, a philosophy of life embodies the practical natural expressions of a human being, i.e., the person in his willing and valuing dialogic (active) involvement with the world and life within which he experiences, lives and moves. In other words, this takes up the incomplete and incomplete-able person in his unending being on the way to a world suitable for him, i.e., that must be made habitable in light of particular demands of propriety. A philosophy of life, thus, in no way is something for only particular matters but commands a person to make something of a matter in the sense that it continually calls him to a particular way of acting in all circumstances, i.e., acting in accordance with the demands of propriety that speak and make an appeal to him from his particular philosophy of life.

A philosophy of life embraces the idea of a life worthwhile from which a person can never withdraw himself because he is continually confronted with values and their implied norms to which he must give form by taking a position with respect to everything that surrounds him. Thus, it is clear that a person is continually subjected to obligations in the sense that they demand of him that his life of choices will progress in a particular direction. Thus his philosophy of life allows him to never be untouched by his daily actions and conduct since he is continually subjected to its unconditional validity and demands.

5.1.3 *The historicity of a philosophy of life*

Philosophies of life are not already finished quantities. They have been and they continue as still becoming (Oberholzer). Therefore, a philosophy of life must be qualified as a historical matter in a two-fold respect: It is historical because its origin lies far in the past. For example, It is not unknown that the roots of the South African philosophy of life, to which Protestant Christianity was the greatest contributor, goes back to the Greek and Roman life views, but especially back to the influence of Jerusalem, as carried by the Holy Scriptures and further by the Church Fathers and the Church Reformer, Calvin. In this country, after colonization, the South African philosophy of life was also influenced by Protestants and Huguenots. Thus, a philosophy of life has a long history—so long that the life view that is held by a people is older than they are.

In the second place, a philosophy of life is historical because human existence, as individual existence, plays itself out in a particular social-cultural milieu that has a particular formative influence on a particular person. As a morally independent becoming person subject to the demands of a particular hierarchy of value preferences, content is given to his form of living. Consequently, the fact that someone holds a particular philosophy of life is never attributable to his own creativity or ingenuity (Oberholzer).

5.1.4 *A philosophy of life is not biologically inherited*

As a bearer of a philosophy of life, a person usually inherits material goods and also such things as intellectual abilities, physical build, color, temperament, etc. But his philosophy of life that directs him day to day and thus is a rule of conduct for his life is no biologically inheritable matter since he acquires it throughout his life on the basis of the intentional influencing by others. And he acquires it by virtue of the fact that from childhood he gives responses to the normative influence of the particular values that he learns from home, school and church as well as the everyday practices around him.

5.1.5 *Difficulties in perpetuating a philosophy of life*

Since a philosophy of life is something that is acquired, it also is no matter that can be completed. Viewed in this way, it is obvious that it does not have a static character but always shows a dynamic in the total event of living. This fact of a dynamic philosophy of life indicates that it is subject to changes in the sense that circumstances in changing situations can exercise a modifying influence on it. Although it can be said that a philosophy of life only acquires a degree of constancy when moral independence has been entered, on each person's way, life-rousing as well as life-declining moments arise that possibly can modify a philosophy of life. In this case, one thinks of matters such as repentance, recognition, safety, despair, desperation, disappointment, etc. that are all part of the human way of existing.

5.1.6 *The ideality of a philosophy of life*

In another way, a philosophy of life is an ideal matter by which it is meant that it is not a concrete-visible or manageable object. As an

ideal matter, a philosophy of life keeps a person on the path to an idea of being human. It is for this reason that there is mention of the openness of a person. In his acting and conduct in each day he gives expression to what must be. This idea captures him and saturates his manner of being on the way to his own world in which he must properly dwell.

5.1.7 *The meta-scientific character of a philosophy of life*

A philosophy of life is a matter of conviction and certainty regarding the meaningful and proper that makes the human way of existing what and how it is. This certainty and conviction reach above and beyond human rationality. Convictions indicate that a person is ready to unconditionally accept with a complete confidence in a particular certainty. These matters of acceptance and confidence are not matters of the intellect but of emotions. Therefore, a philosophy of life is a meta-rational matter by which is meant that it can never be rooted in the theoretical nature of a person and thus can *never* be the result of scientific reflection. It is only a matter of creed, a confident and faithful knowing such that Oberholzer describes a philosophy of life as the total conviction regarding the life-valuable and life-obligatory and humanly demanding.

5.2 VIEW OF BEING HUMAN, AXIOLOGY AND DOCTRINE FOR EDUCATING AS CORE COMPONENTS OF EACH PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

5.2.1 *Core components in their interconnectedness*

Where the above title is an indication of three core components of a philosophy of life, it must be indicated that it would be incorrect to view them as isolated because in human existence nothing is ever disconnected. Rather it is a matter of *distinguishing* but only for the sake of theorizing, describing and interpreting. The issue of distinguish-ability is so important that the dedicated reader and student will note in the following discussion that even though these components are presented in isolation via subtitles, they cannot really be considered in isolation.

5.2.2 *A view of being human and a philosophy of life*

1) Preconditions for a view of being human

Where the previous explication focused on a philosophy of life, for many it has come to light that such an explication is not possible without implicating a human being in his active association with the world and life. Hence, this means that with the idea of a philosophy of life one enters the human terrain since, in the entirety of reality it is only a human being who carries out a way of existing in which a philosophy of life shows itself and becomes realized. This statement requires some observations of the human way of being. But before this is ventured, it must first be stated that such a view of being human in no way must be interpreted as making human being an absolute because that would fall into humanism. It is merely observing being human in his daily activities. To subject a person to an interpretation of this active associating with everything that is, it necessarily must rest on suppositions. When one then proceeds to a description and interpretation of a view of being human, there are necessary preconditions that must be met.

- a) First this asks for a critical look, description and interpretation so that the danger is neutralized that there is an involvement that has nothing to do with determining the essence of being human.
- b) Second it is assumed that a person must be seen and understood in terms of the humanness of his being human. It often happens that there is an effort to explicate being human from non-human dimensions or perspectives, especially from the animal kingdom. In truth this is nothing more than an attempt to view being human in terms of what he is not, i.e., to really not see him. Rather, one must go to being human, *there where* he lived experiences and lives to see how he really is as a human being, with what he is concerned and what he embodies.
- c) A third condition would be that with such a view of being human there must always be an awareness that thinking about being human will not and cannot ever be completed. In other words, finished and final answers about being human are entirely beyond his sphere of possibilities. There are always searching questions and answers regarding being human by which it is unquestionably acknowledged that he is fundamentally more than what he knows of himself (Jaspers),

that he is not graspable and cannot be captured in a definition, and even to a lesser extent is he reducible to a so-called average. Thus, it is no wonder that Immanuel Kant has asked how a way of existing such as that of being human is possible.

2) World orientation of the human being

From the above preconditions for viewing being human it has become clear that by systematic and critical thinking there must be a search for that by which a human being is, for what makes him a human being and for what is involved in his becoming a person and thus what keeps him concerned. As already indicated, it is clear that to do this, one must go to where human being *is* in the world. The word “in” means that he continually establishes relationships with a world that he chooses and by which he is chosen (Buytendijk), a world with which he carries on a dialogue, that he experiences affectively and cognitively, assimilates and masters as a world for himself. This assimilating can be realized because he is essentially a distanced perceiver who can also distance himself from himself in order to reflect on himself. As possibility of distancing, he thus questions himself because in the first instance he wants to know: “Where am I?” This question about where he is does not indicate a search for a specific place but gives evidence of a being conscious as a being conscious of the self, i.e., by which it is made possible for him to appropriate the world for himself as his own world. In varying situations he builds daily on this world by making it habitable for himself. Making habitable means that he continually fills what surrounds him with particular contents, thus also philosophy of life contents through the relationships that he establishes with everything that is.

3) Elucidating (the meaning of human) existence

According to Jaspers a human being also is confronted with the question of “Who am I?” With respect to this question there are almost as many answers as there are thinkers. Human being has been viewed as a rational animal, as a political animal, as adventurous, as a structure-in-function, and more. Because of the mystery he is for himself, adequate answers are never found about being human, and he is also *more* than each definition that tries to explain him. Thus the proper approach certainly will be to return

to the person in his lifeworld and to postulate a view of being human in terms of the following subtitles as he reveals himself in reality.

a) *Human being as castness (thrownness)*

The patriarch Augustine has said: "For God ... seemingly unthinking and at random has cast us into this world as into a stormy sea ..." which implies that the human being entirely without his effort, i.e., without his own choice, has arrived on earth. Thus he is a cast being, he is born an individual (solitary) and in need of support. In his solitariness (individuality) he remains accountable for his willful acts of choice. But it is in his solidarity (co-existentiality/fellow humanness) that he searches for stability, constructs a philosophy of life and then vertically or horizontally holds onto somebody or Someone; i.e., by reaching beyond to what is more than he is himself. With reference to the child-in-education, initially there are choices made *for* him until later choices are made *with* him until eventually he must *himself* choose and carry the full responsibility for them. It is thus a stability that he finds in his co-existence with others and although that refers to a being cast on others, on fellow persons and/or God, whose existence he can never deny. How he accepts his castness and makes something of it expresses the philosophy of life that he holds. For a fatalist, e.g., his being cast will mean something different than it does for a Christian who sees his castness as a task.

b) *Human being as possibility*

It was already stated that a human being comes into the world in need of help. And although he cannot rely on natural instincts, drives, etc. to insure his survival, in his impotence he certainly is entirely possibility (Viljoen). Thus, a human being is open to the world in the sense that he is free of these determinants and is free to choose by virtue of his evaluative consciousness. Freedom of choice implies acting in such a way that it is not only possible for him to exist but to conduct a way of living. Now, because he can do this there is a dynamic or motility in human existence. Consequently, it is possible for him to step out of himself and go out to others and things so that he is always present elsewhere, always ahead of himself. Therefore, his existence is no mere

existence as a being delivered to natural laws as is a stone or a plant but an ever self-exceeding existence and the fact that he has a philosophy of life at his disposal is evidence of this.

c) Human being as dialogue

Viewed in light of the fact that by virtue of his consciousness a human being is always elsewhere, his associations and destination are also outside of himself. Thus it is in dialogue with the reality around him that he understands himself. It is because he can say “I” that a “you” is already acknowledged. To be human means to be by and with fellow humans. It is only in the “you” and the “this” that the “I” becomes existentially illuminated. A human being only experiences himself in his dialogic association with everything that is, and he carries out this dialogue as a totality, which means that he is completely and totally dialogue and his philosophy of life is an indication of the particular contents of this dialogue. As initiator of the conversation, he is initiator of relationships, but he is not only an initiative. He is also a field of tension of values since, as one being addressed from outside of and Above himself, he must continually answer and the quality of his answer is evidence of the quality of the realization of his philosophy of life. As an addressed and answering being, his historicity also arises, as such. This means that a person not only has a past, a present and a future but that he is also born into a particular historical tradition from which he can never disconnect himself. Because he finds himself in the present in terms of the past with the future he also ventures to carry on a dialogue with that which is in advance of him, by which he can be qualified as entirely future-anticipating. The nature of this future anticipation is evidence of his philosophy of life.

d) Human being as a value-striving and value-realizing being

As mentioned, a human being does not merely exist but also directs his life in accordance with the demands that particular values present to him and indeed values that express his philosophy of life. As such his existence is changed into a way of existing characterized by the realization of values, thus of a philosophy of life that then arises as essential in a culture, as a human-made world. On the basis of a person’s striving for

particular values and their implied norms that carry his daily choices, an obligatory unrest is awakened in him—not an unrest that refers to restlessness, anxiety or fear but rather to a never ending being underway, within which he gives evidence that he is not absolutely contented with everything forever (Luijpen) and thus is continually bringing about changes in things for the sake of improving them. Thus he designs the unknown and uncertain future but not without continually redesigning it. And he does this fearlessly and in full responsibility in the light of his philosophy of life, i.e., with the certainty of having a foothold or place to stand. And now it is precisely this certainty and conviction that express his philosophy of life and that make this foothold possible, not as a matter of rational-critical thinking, i.e., not of the mind but of the heart. Because a human being does not live primarily in his knowing, willing and distinguishing association with reality but in his valuing and preference-giving view of life in its dynamic course. With this valuing and preference-giving association with all areas of life where one does not *describe* but *prescribe* what is and ought to be in the situation, one enters the domain of a philosophy of life that can be theorized as a matter of universal validity for all persons but that in its contents is a meta-rational matter—is the mysterious and essential guiding star on a person's unknown and uncertain way into the future.

5.2.3 *Doctrine of values and philosophy of life*

In light of the fact that here there is mention of a doctrine of values as a core component of a philosophy of life, for clarity, a distinction must be made between a study of values or axiology as a science and a doctrine of values as a meta-scientific matter. Where an axiology is concerned with what is, i.e., the universally valid, the fundamental, the form of values, a doctrine of values is involved with what *must* be because it *ought* to be. If an axiology is concerned with theorizing about values in their universal validity and necessity, then a doctrine of values gives particular contents to these values by which there is then movement on the level of the particular. It will not be inappropriate at this stage to provide more insight by means of an example of the widely known triad: *a value, its implied norm* and *inculcating the norm*. In their coherence, they always take a three-fold course:

- 1) If a value such as *honesty* is broached, then
- 2) the norm implied by or correlated with it might be, *You must not steal.*
- 3) thirdly, and lastly, inculcating this norm then amounts to, *If you steal you will go to jail.*

Indeed, there are religious, national, political, esthetic, pragmatic, economic, social values and more. And if now *Christian-Protestant* values such as love of one's neighbor, chastity, justice, compassion, unselfishness, fairness, tolerance, honesty, etc. are paired with *national* values such as patriotism, loyalty to country, conservation of the soil and preservation of identity, then it becomes possible to espouse a doctrine of values in terms of these pairs of values as a particular matter that forms the cornerstone in this country, i.e., that lies at the basis of the Christian and national as moments of a philosophy of life that is held in South Africa and is also written into law.

But now, at the same time, it must be clear that when there is mention of Christian and national values they must not be viewed as contrary but as complementary, in which case the Christian values are primary and do not take a secondary place. In South Africa we proceed from the standpoint that the national values are overarched by the Christian, and indeed in the sense that all White South Africans (not only speakers of Afrikaans) must be aware that their devotion, anchor is in this soil as their own and that their existence here is mandated by God's Plan. The mandate to which they are subjected is that here they decidedly must do *something*, i.e., they must cultivate and work this land. God is a God of love, mercy and patience but if we in our daily being underway do not show *love* and *loyalty* in this land and will not have and work it, He can give it to someone else to work, manage and maintain. By virtue of His almightiness we know that He can raise children for Himself out of the stones of this beautiful land to work it with loyalty and respect, but He doesn't do this. As long as we are willing to do what he has called us, as addressees, to do, i.e., to work at the problems with which we are confronted on our soil and indeed to the best of our insights and confidence in the blessings, help and guidance from Above then we have met our obligation. If we do not do this He can

spit us out of his mouth, and He teaches us this in the Scriptures. Here National values are overarched by the Christian values and, therefore, these values are not contrary but complementary.

Let us now take the national value of “preservation of identity” which the Whites in this country hold in high regard, then it can correctly be said that out of our Christian convictions we also strive to preserve our own identity from other races, e.g., by providing separate living spaces for them. Because as human beings we all are of equal value in His view and we must all be obedient to the same values. It is on the basis of the Christian values of loving one’s neighbors, compassion, justice, etc. that the White South African trusts his fellow persons and shows the greatest tolerance—even against abuse outside of our borders. He provides his countryman—irrespective of race or color, their own living spaces and before that he gladly endeavored to see that everyone exercised their right to a unique culture (Viljoen).

But it also is the case that human beings simply are created *unlike* in that all do not have the same intelligence, interests, cognitive abilities, possessed culture, ability to assume responsibility, etc. Thus to want to make all persons the same is to crush the preservation of a unique identity. And just because of this, the philosophy of the United Nations Organization Charter that “all men are born free and equal” does not have any bite at all.

As already postulated, it is an essential characteristic of a philosophy of life that it gives expression to itself through its underlying values. The consequence is that where in the course of this argument there is mention of Christian and national values, then the idea of the Christian and the national as moments of a philosophy of life can rightly be broached. But then here one asks for an open ear, tolerance and a deep consideration regarding the explication that follows since no person in his meta-scientific pronouncements will be guilty of moving in so many areas that with a discussion of the Christian and the national as moments of a philosophy of life he merely lands in the political arena. In other words, the hope is expressed that it has become clear in the previous discussion that the philosophy of life concept of “the national” has nothing at all to do with the fact that it is under the

National Party government that it was legislated into law. It is certainly from the heart so that as a moment of a philosophy of life, in its essence it is stripped of any semblance of “Afrikaner-ism”. It cannot be denied that this is a historical-political concept that for many South African citizens still carries the stamp of an Afrikaner-ism and thus is not acceptable to all of them, but just because of this the Education Law of 1967 says that teaching must have a broad national character by which all White groups in the population are included. Indeed, with this an appeal is directed to those for whom this, as a philosophy of life moment, is not acceptable to sit on all political biases based on the past and to assert “South Africa is my home” without substituting other differences in conviction.

Viewed metabletically, it must always be kept in mind that the world and life do not stand still. In other words, that which continually makes an impression on a person in his daily involvement, definitely does not remain unchanged just as little as does the content that during the course of time has given value to life obligations. With this it will become clear that for the sake of the conservation and preservation of a unique South African soil and identity, all White groups in the population are called to a national unity, and indeed a Christian-national unity that eventually will result in a purely Christian unity among all racial groups because in South Africa there also are non-White Christians. In truth this is a differentiation that is already underway. And in essence this is not a differentiation between White and non-White but between Christian and non-Christian because among Christians there are non-Whites and among non-Christians there are Whites. It is my modest opinion that this differentiation eventually will be what is going to prevail in the world. Thus, finally, whenever we speak of national we mean attached, anchored in our own soil—not to a home elsewhere but here with just the one creed that *South Africa is my home*. Any person who says this avows to the idea of the national Law, just as when someone says that the Scriptures are the highest authority for him, necessarily the Christian creed.

5.2.4 Doctrine for educating and philosophy of life

Just as a distinction was made between a study of values (axiology) and a doctrine of values a similar distinction must be made between a study of education (pedagogics) and a doctrine for educating

because a doctrine regarding educating, as is a view of life, is a meta-scientific matter and as such it is not concerned with what is but with what must and ought to be. So viewed, a doctrine for educating necessarily must make prescriptive pronouncements regarding educating so that in advocating such a doctrine we will be delimited by three matters, i.e., the educator-ship of the parents, the educator-educand relationship and the view of labor as a criterion for a philosophy of life.

1) The educator-ship of the parents

If there should be a question about what ought to occur in the family with an eye to educating children one need not return any further than to the Christian-Protestant marriage formulary because here educating comes forth most clearly as an indissoluble connectedness of parent and child.

In the marriage formulary we learn that *“through marriage humankind must be built and that the parents must educate their children in the true knowledge and fear of God, to His glory and to their salvation”*. Here there first is a discussion of the obligations of the future parents as a mandate to build humanity but in the concluding prayer it is said that God is pleased to give children. In the experience of both truths, i.e., in the “building” of mankind and in the “giving” by God is the art of marriage. Firstly, the *building by man* cannot merely be submissively left to God, while, secondly, man in this connection must not merely proceed in his own idle ways (Wielenga).

The demand to educate that arises in the performance of the marriage ceremony is one of the most beautiful but also most difficult obligations that can be imposed upon the marriage partners. However, it is fortunate that they are met half way with respect to the fact that those who *beget* children remain responsible in their life for rearing them (Strasser) because everyday reality unquestionably shows that this is a God given natural yearning of each parent. In the course of each day one sees in the orderliness of God’s creation that parents will sometimes not only feed (voed) but educate (opvoed) their children at their own cost. Therefore, a child will not leave home and hearth before he has become morally independent.

The task of educating, as an aim of marriage, is briefly but masterfully stated in the marriage formulary in three facets that are variations of one thought, i.e., parents must educate their children:

- a) “In the true knowledge and fear of God,
- b) to His glory, and
- c) to their salvation.”

In the first place, “knowledge and fear of God” not only implies knowledge of the reality created by God but also knowledge of God himself. And since educating, in its deeper dimension, is really conscience forming, the above knowledge and fear of God imply a knowing by one’s conscience. This forming of conscience requires patient sacrifice and most of all love, but also genuine as well as Scriptural knowledge as human knowledge.

In this way the other aims are also reached, i.e., “to His glory” and “to their salvation”. By accompanying the child-in-becoming “to His glory” all rights of possession of the child, and also of the parents as educators, are elevated. It is known that with heathen people it was customary to view the State as the highest aim and the most important owner of children. And even in our contemporary world, i.e., in communist oriented countries, the individual and the state are deified. Therefore, it is good and right that a married couple, by their marital union, learns of the predominating aim: “to His glory”. Because God has gladly given (children) to him, they are much more children of God than of their parents. Indeed, a child is the absolute property of God and it is a property right that He never gives up. In its essence married couples are only foster-parents, in the true sense of the word, who are temporarily entrusted with the child under the mandate of God.

“To his salvation” also belongs to this mandate because “to His glory” and “to his salvation” are two sides of the same matter, i.e., God’s glory and the happiness of His creature. Only by glorifying God can His creature be happy and true happiness reaches to His glory. Thus, salvation is the crowning quality of the parents as educators such that when it figures in child life and after there certainly is no greater reward than this largely imposed task. For

the parents this is a long and sometimes tedious but not meaningless way because in this way the marriage acquires sense and meaning as a point of contact for child guidance to Heaven.

2) The educator-educand-relationship

It is an essential characteristic of human being that he, in his ways of existing, is continually in relationship with all that is. In other words, it is given with being human that he continuously establishes or initiates relationships on the basis of which he is not described as something with characteristics but as an initiative of relationships to a world that he chooses and by which he is chosen (Buytendijk). The essence of such relationships that a person establishes with something or someone is that it immediately calls a specific situation into being that requires a person to *act* or participate in the situation. When one reflects on the educator-educand-relationship then it is undeniable that the role that the educator is responsible for will largely be determined by the degree of need for help of the educand. And the greatest role he takes by virtue of his being addressed from Above is that he is not only a surrogate initiative for the child-in-education but also a surrogate conscience and thus a surrogate responsibility.

In order to now broach a doctrine for educating in light of the educator-educand-relationship the author will venture into a possible distinction in the Christian-Protestant baptismal vows in which the deepest sense of the idea of surrogate responsibility is considered. In the closing argument of these vows the parents are reminded of their obligations, i.e., "... the children, as inheritors of the Kingdom of God and His Covenant, (must) be baptized". The parents assume so much responsibility in this relationship that the child to be baptized can only be a Covenant child through the intermediation of his parents in the situation and because the child is not yet even aware of his existence. And indeed the infant is no less involved in this event because he is, no less than his parents, called to experience and live the Covenant. But since he is still too small to even accept the Covenant, the responsibility falls on the parents as educators to accept this in behalf of their child and also to hold this Covenant before him. Thus, the parents remain the child's surrogate responsibility in the child-God-relationship.

In the relationship in which the educators and young educand are situated, the child is, as any other child, accepted and born in sin. But because God has accepted him as His child, given him a place in His Covenant, while the parents are obligated to bring to the child the divine message of the Covenant and to teach him more broadly about the baptism within which he is received. Thus, with the baptism the parents are obligated to a Christian education of the child because they already, by virtue of divine command, and because of the bond of love and blood (Oberholzer) are the natural educators. The educative content in this educator-educand-relationship is very clear. Until the time that the child is able to give sense and meaning to reality he must be appealed to by his parents to know and experience that while he is still small something particular and hallowed has happened to him in very solemn ways, i.e., he was baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. This baptism in the name of God guarantees that he will not be a heathen child but a child of the Covenant. Also, now by means of genuine guidance of the child it must be indicted that where initially the parents have made choices *for* him, henceforth he must increasingly accept responsibility for *himself* choosing.

If the third baptismal question is now examined, i.e., "... do you promise and is it your intention to the best of your abilities to teach this child (of whom you are the father, mother or witness) the doctrine or let him be taught it?", then it is clear that after this content there is essentially nothing new except that in this part there is a solemn request regarding what had already been expressed in the baptism doctrine. In the three baptismal questions the parents avow and promise to accept the educative task in behalf of the child as a child of the Covenant but, as already shown, this promise essentially is a promise to God because all parents are subjected to a particular obligation to Him and indeed an obligation because of gratitude for the child that He has presented to them.

Now one arrives at the last part of the third baptismal question, i.e., "... to teach this child to the best of your abilities or let him be taught?" from which appears the idea of Christian education by which the teacher is not only called to be a surrogate responsibility but also a surrogate parent. In other words, where the parents because of their own inabilities or other circumstances beyond their

control cannot fully keep their promise, they are obligated to transfer part of their educative task to one or another authority and indeed in this case the Christian school where their baptism can be educated in correspondence with the content of the Christian baptismal vows. This transfer to the school by the Christian parents means that they can, might and ought to demand that the school that supports them in fulfilling their educative responsibilities must be a Christian school.

Thus viewed, such an institution by virtue of the intense responsibility of the parents cannot function outside of the parental authority and then it is obvious that each parent has the right to demand that their Christian-Protestant philosophy of life will be carried into this educative practice.

Finally, the idea of educating is discussed for the third time in the baptismal vows and indeed in the prayer of giving thanks from which it is said: “ ... so that they might be educated in a Christian and pious way”. Essentially in this prayer the church is implored to provide a Christian education as a benefit from God. But with this the surrogate responsibility of the parents is not at all decreased by virtue of their delegated vows because one day an accounting will be exacted regarding their affirmation of the baptismal vows—an accounting that will be weighed on that particular day and if it is found to be too meager or light the parent-educator as well as the teacher-educator must become aware that in their being addressed to establish a pedagogical relationship with that child they have failed and his path to Heaven has been obstructed because they have not been bound by the word of God.

3) Viewing labor as one criterion for a philosophy of life

Labor in the family and school-pedagogical situations as far as the child-in-education is concerned is always a matter of beginning-labor-under-guidance that must and ought to eventually result in meaningful adult labor. Where educating is attuned to guiding the child forward to adulthood, this adulthood necessarily will be expressed in all areas of society such as also in the *vocational system* within the overarching *system of labor*. In other words, in his being educated the child gradually and progressively is directed to enter a future vocation with sufficient independence and

responsibility and thus arrive at self-realization. Therefore, educating and the vocational system must not be viewed as two contrary concepts or areas but as complementary and as such can only be *distinguished* but never separated.

Where there was mention of responsibility and independence, now they can be further supplemented with matters such as acceptance and maintenance of authority at work as well as positive human relationships, and it can now be asked what all of this really has to do with a doctrine for educating and a philosophy of life. The answer decidedly is: Only everything! Because in these so aptly postulated work attitudes once again one finds an underlying *value structure* as this becomes expressed in a view of labor as part of a philosophy of life. As such, this view of labor must obey and affirm the demands of one's philosophy of life. I.e., the genuineness of a philosophy of life and the obedience of its demands never speaks so strongly as from a view of labor. Consequently, it indeed is not what a person says that he is, to which value is attributed, but what he wholeheartedly does out of his own convictions (Landman).

Oberholzer asserts directly: "Tell me what you value uppermost and what your views of labor are and I will tell you what kind of occupation you will choose and how you will practice it" because, as he continues in his Prolegomena, "The human being does what he is and he is what he attributes value to." Of labor, viewed against a philosophy of life as background, it can be said that it is a mode of human existence; that is, it is given with being human. With this, a particularity (of being human) is already advanced and it may never be asked why a human being works but rather why he must and ought to work. With the aim of advancing a doctrine for educating there is a need for an answer to this question and once again there is a reaching back to the Holy Scriptures where in Genesis 2:15 one finds: "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." That a human being *must* labor is essentially a Paradise task and viewed in the light of the fact that this task from the Lord God had occurred before the existence of Eve and thus also before the Fall means that it cannot be considered to be a direct consequence of the Fall so that it is not a so-called curse or repayment that rests with the laboring person. It must be stated frankly that God had created

human being as a laboring being and Paradise was Paradise precisely because of the fact that a human being must labor in it (Oberholzer). After the Fall, as a consequence of the disobedience of Adam and Eve, the Lord God censured human being and sent them out of the garden of Eden with the judgment, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till you return into the ground” (Genesis 3:19). Although a judgment, a specific normative task appears from these words of God, “*In the sweat of thy face*” because finally this is no longer about *why* a human being works but also and especially *how* he ought to work.

On the basis of the Holy Scriptures it is clear that irrespective of mankind’s alienation from God after the Fall, something of what had originally been created remained unscathed, i.e., his labor. Labor must be seen as one of the greatest blessings bestowed on mankind because the Paradise task of Adam and Eve was an affectionate task as well as an indication that God has decided not to withdraw Himself from mankind and the world. And therefore labor is a divine privilege and thus a prerogative for which gratitude must be shown. In six days God had created Heaven and earth and on the seventh day He had rested. Thus, each man begins each new week with a Sunday, as a day of rest, and indeed with the knowledge that he is sent into the workweek by Christ and in happy expectation through his labor he can think about the deliverance. Thus, we work in faith, expectation and loving dedication (Oberholzer).

The labor to which God calls mankind must also extend to the benefits of fellow persons because thereby he can share the fruits of his labor with those who are in need. But now it also is the case that the work that man must do by virtue of God’s mandate must conform with the positive potentialities that he has received from the beginning because according to the Scriptures it will be demands of him in accordance with what he has received. In other words, mankind must view this as an earthy task in order to follow the mandate of God with surrender and dedication to be industrious in accordance with his talents and gifts and that are to the betterment of himself, in the service of fellow persons and to the glory of God (Landman).

Strikingly, Oberholzer states that, “If a person professes that he is Christian then the greatest test is if he is ready to bear his cross and carry out his work but especially *how* he is prepared to do so. And if one carries this out joyfully and cheerfully all work leads to human betterment but above all to glorifying God. One kind of work, then, is not grander than another. A street sweeper does work that is just as necessary as that of a judge in a court of justice. We are then persons who are called, whatever this calling might be. All work then is a divine calling and being called by which in the very least it is assumed that work is divine or that we ourselves are. It is divine because God calls us.”

From the above Christian view of labor the values that are held and expressed in working speak very clearly. Related to this is an educative problem of enormous scope because the view of labor held by youths, as a value-laden view, in no way takes form as a result of intellectual reasoning. This view has its origin in the meta-rational depth of youth itself and results in an attitude toward work that is only made possible by progressively educating. This directs his life of choices since this is a matter of personal conviction. The view of occupation indicates an acceptance, it is a matter of faith and trust, it is a meta-scientific conviction of the heart because it is grounded in the manifested Word of God. Consequently, this gives the life of each person a task character and the view of labor essentially is a criterion of a philosophy of life.

5.3 EDUCATIVE PRACTICE AS A PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCE OF A VIEW OF BEING HUMAN AND OF LIFE AS FOUND IN THREE CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

5.3.1 *Introduction*

From the first two chapters of this book it certainly has become clear that pedagogics, as an autonomous science, is involved with a systematic reflection, description and interpretation of values as well as their nature and their actualization. On the other hand, educating as a practical matter is concerned with the *realization* of these values in a particular hierarchy of preferences. This does not implied that *all* values are entertained because a philosophy of life, as it is expressed in a particular practice, favors a particular value-preference that demands unconditional obedience.

The home, school and church are not educative places where values are created but where they are preserved and maintained and therefore are passed on in simplest form to tomorrow's generation in these situations as valuable cultural goods, as life contents, but that also are presented for aspiring to and for which opportunities are created for living up to them. It will then possibly be appropriate to examine educating as a matter of practice where the idea of a view of being human and of life is crystallized in these three places.

5.3.2 Philosophy of life and educating in the family

Of the family, as the primary educative place, where parents live in close connection with the children they have begotten, it is correctly said that here the first possibility for educating arises, especially because a child is a being in need of help and thus is particularly dependent on his parents. It is on the basis of his intimate being-together with his parents that the possibility is created to learn of his parents' spiritual and cultural possessions and to appropriate and assimilate them for himself. It is especially in the family circle where the child is formed in his earliest receptive years by his parents, as his natural educators, in terms of a particular hierarchy of value preferences that their philosophy of life underlies and makes possible. The family institution where the child is received and accepted in love is for him a life space where his active association with everything surrounding him is always subjected to the regulating and judging eye of a parent. But it is under sympathetic, authoritative guidance that he (the child) experiences and increasingly accepts the presented norm-behavioral hierarchy of preferred values. Where a philosophy of life continually exercises an influence it is the task for all parents during the child's becoming to initially choose for him and later with him, but always in light of the power of the demands of a philosophy of life, until eventually he will choose and act in a self-determined, self-normative way. To eventually choose in a self-determined way by accepting responsibility for his acts of choice indicates that a particular life attitude has crystallized in the child during this way of accompaniment and is a matter of relationships to things, others and to God.

5.3.3 *Philosophy of life and educating in the school*

As far as educating in a school context is concerned, it is important to first remember that the school is a second-order educational institution. And it qualifies as such because educating in its most original form educating was a private matter for which in former times the parents took exclusive responsibility. But with the increasing complexity of the cultural contents and demands, in the course of time the parents could no longer effectively carry it out. Therefore, it became necessary for them to initiate and establish what today are called schools where educating, as a practical matter, could take its course in formal ways. As such the school shows itself as an institution with a temporal-spatial character in the sense that it is a *place*, but also a *way* (Langeveld) because the child must be *in* school and go *through* it since he cannot stay there forever. The school as a life-stimulating institution offers many opportunities to give sense and meaning to human existence by directly and indirectly giving form to what is regarded as valuable and worth striving for. But similarly in its educative work it must also voice the historical particularities, i.e., what has made society into what it is. Thus viewed, school indeed is a powerful establishment of ideological moments and a task demanded of it is to continually inquire about the view of being human and of life of the group, society or people whose children are brought into its threshold with the aim of educating them to moral adulthood.

It will thus be expected of the school that a thorough forming will occur regarding a philosophy of life. If it is taken into account that a school educator has already become who he is on the basis of his confrontation with a past reality as a norm-informed reality through experiencing and living his value preferences, it can correctly be asserted that the encounter between educator and educand in a school context in essence is really an encounter with life itself. And when the educator proceeds to make available a particular content interpretation of the form systems of the culture, in its essence, this really has to do with an interpretation of life and indeed because this interpretation has its origin in the educator's philosophy of life (Van der Stoep).

Thus, it is indisputable that giving meaning to and experience the meaning of everything that educators thrust upon the child during

the course of the event of schooling cannot be separated from their views of life. In essence, the connection between school educating and a philosophy of life is made so visible that a school educator's philosophy of life is carried into the classroom with him and executes work enlivened (by his philosophy of life) so that the child, in his turn, can carry out and give expression to that particular philosophy of life.

For example, a Christian educator lives as he does in terms of certain values and norms whose authority is unconditionally acknowledged and whose demands are unconditionally obeyed. As a result, his activities, and in this case especially his educative actions, are so saturated with his Christian philosophy of life that his activity itself is a manifestation of it. Therefore, it also is unthinkable, indeed impossible, for any educator in the context of schooling to take a neutral position in the educative event. To speak of a neutral educating is to speak of something impossible and of things that cannot be understood at all. And when someone asserts that such and such a person in his educative practice conceals matters such as philosophy of life moments or places them between brackets, this will be nothing more than a nullification of the idea of educating because each educator of calling *lives* his philosophy of life. Stated more forcefully: He is his philosophy of life while the child-in-education becomes his philosophy of life and indeed especially in terms of the *example* by which this is exemplified, strengthened by the quality of the matters that are created for emulation.

5.3.4 Philosophy of life and educating in the church

If then the school is a place where a child abides temporarily only because one day he must leave it, then a Christian educator can and might never say the same of the Church as the house and congregation of God. By virtue of its being called, the Church is an institution with a particularly strong educative function. As an institution it had its origin through the particular grace of God, while the members are linked together as a community of true believers and professors of the faith. The Church applies itself to the care and ennoblement of the religious life of its members, while it also watches over the practice of this profession of faith through educating by teaching, organizing and disciplining (Coetzee).

On the basis of its teachings and creed, the Church, as such, holds a particular moral that is also a measure and guide of conduct for the daily actions and behavior of its members. Otherwise, it is an institution about which it can be said that it never is in search of truth because it already has and professes the Truth and this Truth testifies to the future, essence and destination of man as the highest goods for man (Van Staden). Therefore, the philosophy of life that is held here is so imperious that it never will hesitate to judge what is proper and improper and what is worthy of approval and unacceptable (Oberholzer).

5.3.5 *Concluding view*

In what is said so far it must be seen that a child is really a member of the Church from his birth, a matter that is confirmed with the baptism. But it is only with taking the oath of the confession of faith (acceptance) that he becomes confirmed as a member of the Church. So viewed, there is thus a clear connection of the structure of the educative function of the home, school and Church. Where the Church has an obligation to educate from birth to the grave, the commitment of the home extends from birth to adulthood and the school from being a toddler to adulthood. Thus, it is obvious that these three institutions must work closely together in educating children.