

# **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**

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The purpose of studying Christian education is to enable persons to become aware of the seeking love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and to respond in faith to this love in ways that will help them to grow as children of God, live in accordance with the will of God, and sustain a vital relationship in the Community. It also help us to understand and evaluate the relationship between education and social change, and to bring transformation in the church and society.

This course also enhance the understanding of the Biblical and Theological foundation for Christian involvement in Social Change.

## **Unit 1. Education and Social Change**

### **Education**

Etymologically, the word "Education" is derived from the Latin words "educare" and "educere". Educare refers to "to bring up" or "to nourish", whereas the word "educere" means to "to bring forth" or "to drag out".

Education is the basis for development and empowerment for every nation. It plays a vital role in understanding and participating in day to day activities of today's world. It builds one's character and plays a significant role in transmitting one's culture, belief and values to others in society. It helps in creating innovations and meeting the growing needs of every nation. The development of a nation is not measured through the buildings it has built, the roads it has laid down, bridges it has constructed but by the human resources, the nation has developed through a well-defined system of education.

Paulo Freire defines education as a practice of freedom, an act of knowing and a critical approach to reality. It is an act of knowing with a dialectical movement, which goes from action to reflection and reflection upon action to a new action. He emphasizes that education is a powerful instrument in the struggle of liberation. And it is an act of knowledge and process of transforming action that is to be exercised on reality. According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia, education in the broadest sense is any actor experience that has a formative effect on mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense education is a process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another.

### **Christian Education**

To define Christian education is indeed a significant task because of the many different views, opinions, and questions involved. Indeed, it has changed substantially over the years of its existence as well.

Its definitions must therefore take into consideration the historical period involved, for clearly how one would define it at the turn of the century is vastly different from its meaning and purpose today.

### **Some Definitions of Christian Education:**

Randolph Crump Miller: “Christian education is the effort to make available for our generation-children, young, People and adults – the accumulated treasures of Christian’s life and thought, in such a way that God in Christ may carry on his redemptive work in each human soul and in the common life of man.”

Beth E. Brown: Christian education is the interaction with truth and its implications for life under the guidance and power of Holy Spirit, so as to affect change in the life of the learner this change being conformity to the image of Christ. Included here we find the elements of the image of Christ. Included here we find the elements of the interaction of truth with application to life working with the Holy Spirit.

Limatula Longkumer: Christian education is a life -long process of the church activity educating deliberately, intentionally and unintentionally the whole community of the people of God in faith, to live out the meaning of Christian faith in their lives and to transform the individuals and communities and thereby bringing wholeness and transformation in the society and in the whole creations.

We can look the Christian education from **two** perspectives:

**First**, from the narrower sense, Christian education is understood as an exclusive activity of the church for reserving a particular set of religious belief, customs and Judeo-Christian traditions. It becomes mainly doctrinal, sacramental and moralistic.

**Second** from the broader sense, Christian education is a shift toward a more holistic and comprehensive approach in which, education for social transformation is advocated. It is to help the learners to develop critical analysis and evaluation of their lives and the society in which they live.

All these definitions include the significant basics that evangelicals will consider important such as: Bible- based, theologically sound, Holy Spirit empowered, the elements of teaching/learning/growth/equipping, change, the Church, evangelism and service. Christian education then is more than merely teaching Christians. From the above definitions we get the idea that Christian

education is all round development in learning certain things and it is based on the scripture and the Christ

### **What is Social Change?**

Social change is the transformation of culture and social organization/structure over time. In the modern world we are aware that society is never static and that social, political, economic and cultural changes occur constantly.

### **Christian education and Social Change**

Christian today finds themselves in a world of several on-going changes. Scientific, technological advancements, political, social, cultural, economic and other changes etc in our society have become rapid and inevitable, these changes can be classified under social change. Social change is primarily the restructuring of human social institutions and social conditions: family, community, consciousness, religion, political systems, financial institutions, culture, science and technology and many more. The various form of social change has direct impacts on our life affecting and influencing our individuality, rights, livelihood, community formation and human relations and interactions, it requires human responses. In such a context Christians as responsible human beings cannot be blind and ignorant to these changes and the challenges they bring to the to the whole of human life and earth. Christian's engagement in social change has stronger application for us Christians in India. Our society is undergoing many changes and these changes may have concerns for our life. Among them, identity, justice and human rights concerns are important. Especially the increasing hostile environments towards Christians in India invites us to engage actively rather than withdrawing or detaching from these realities.it is through these engagement in social change that we make Christian message more relevant and significant.

### **Factors responsible for Social Change.**

There are some following factors/reasons which lead to social change

#### **Culture**

Culture is a system that constantly loses and gains components. There are three main sources of cultural change, the first source is invention. Inventions produce new products, ideas, and social patterns. The invention of rocket propulsion led to space travel, which in the future may lead to inhabitation of other planets. The second source is discovery. Discovery is finding something that has never been found before, or finding something new in something that already exists. The third source is diffusion. Diffusion is the spreading of ideas and objects to other societies. This would involve trading, migration, and mass communication. The 'mass media' is a vital factor in the speed of social change. It permits rapid diffusion of ideas, making these manifests in the private and relaxing environs of the home, where audiences are at their most easily influenced by emotions.

**Conflict**

Another reason social change happens is due to tension and conflict between races, religions, classes etc.

**Idealistic factors**

Idealistic factor includes values, beliefs and ideologies. For example: - Freedom and self-determination and Capitalism: not only the type of economic system, but also ideology, connected set of values and ideas emphasizing positive benefits of pursuing one's private economic interests, competition and free markets.

**Demographic Change**

Change occurs from an increase in the population or human migration between the Places or country to country.

**Social Movements and Change**

Change can also occur from people joining together for a common cause. This is called a social movement. This can make good or bad impact on the society.

**Environmental factors**

Change can be through the impact of environmental factors such as drought and famine. The degree of natural disasters between different countries and regions also lead the different social changes between the countries.