DISTINCTIVES OF JOHN WESLEY'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

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WE HEREBY APPROVE THE DISSERTATION

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DISTINCTIVES OF JOHN WESLEY'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
PHD IN HOLISTIC CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

John Wesley serves as an authoritative figure for churches who follow the Wesleyan tradition. His religious education approach towards children was sought after to inform the current practices of these churches. The present research entitled "Distinctives of John Wesley's Religious Education of Children in Eighteenth-Century England," aims to address the gap in the existing Wesleyan literature on the religious education of children, identify distinctives of John Wesley's selected sermons on religious education of children by comparing Wesley's sermons on the topic with those of his contemporaries, and supply the Free Methodist Church of the Philippines a Wesleyan foundation for the religious education of children in order to strengthen their current beliefs and practices in this area.

In the review of related literature, the researcher found that there was a lack of literature comparing Wesley's sermons on children's religious education and his contemporaries, especially on sermons using Proverbs 22:6. The researcher used Gale's Eighteenth-Century Collection database and entered the parameters of "religious education" as subject, "London" as place of publication, and "train up a child" as keyword in the database to bring up the list of contemporaries. The research found out that Wesley differs in at least five areas in his overall philosophy of religious education of children compared to his contemporaries. These religious education of children distinctives include Wesley's understanding of God's involvement through the Holy Spirit in helping children understand spiritual truths and respond to him genuinely, his belief that God can use children to actively participate in the evangelistic mission of the church,

his discernment related to the original design of human beings prior to the fall, his recognition of the spiritual diseases of human beings after the fall, and his perception of the breaking of the will of children, although this last comes with precautions in its implications.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work primarily to our Lord Jesus Christ who called me into pastoral ministry. In pastoral ministry I have found my calling, passion, and fulfillment in life. This dissertation was one of those areas in my pastoral ministry that I desired to accomplish because of my wish to become effective in ministry. Also, I would dedicate this work to my whole family—Dr. Nativity Petallar, Zoe Lara Gil Petallar, Uriel Dell Mark Petallar, and all my relatives who supported, trusted, and prayed for me to finish my degree.

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First, I honor and thank the Lord for helping me throughout this journey. Second, I would like to thank my wife, Dr. Nativity Petallar, who kept on pushing me to finish the race in this educational endeavor even though she was greatly affected by my slow progress and tendency to do ministry first rather than finishing my dissertation work. Third, I would like to thank my children, Zoe Lara Gil Petallar and Uriel Dell Mark Petallar who kept on teasing me to finish my dissertation. Fourth, I would like to thank my father Samson, my mother Georgina, my brothers—Jaysam, Jurdan, Jayson, and Johnrey. Fifth, I thank my First Free Methodist Church of Manila family and Northern Philippine Conference pastors for giving me a chance to study despite my responsibilities. Thank you all for supporting me by giving me all the time I needed for my studies. Sixth, I thank my Free Methodist Church USA family, namely, Dr. Eric Spangler and Rev. Gerald Coates for the financial resources and opportunity to travel to Asbury to access primary resources for my research. Seventh, I would like to thank Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Asia Graduate School of Theology, and Asbury Seminary for the partnership in the visiting scholar's program. Eight, I would like to thank Dr. Cathy Stonehouse for being a friend to my family, for helping me so I can go to Asbury for my research. Lastly, I reserved this place for my dissertation advisor, Dr. Darin Land and his wife Jill Land. I finished this race because of their patience, unending support, and trust in my capacity to finish my studies. Without such dedication I would not have finished the race. In following your example, I will pay it forward to others.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

John Wesley, the recognized founder of Methodism, from which the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church (PGC) traces its theological roots, reflected on the idea of effective religious education of children. In his work, *On the Manner of Educating Children*, he acknowledged that understanding the real essence of religion and the approaches of religious education were key factors to an effective religious education of children.[1] Wesley, as a minister, knew what he believed and understood the appropriate approaches to achieve the desired results of what he believed. When Wesley's religious educational approach was criticized for its methods, Wesley did not waver in his stand, for he understood what he was doing and what he believed. In the same way, the researcher saw the importance of children's ministers in the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church learning from Wesley's ideas on religious education of children. They ought to know why they are doing what they are doing. Therefore, grounding children's ministry theologically from a Wesleyan perspective is an important concern for the researcher and a key motivational pursuit as a pastor. These truths were revealed to me in my personal journey.

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[1] John Wesley, "A Thought on the Manner of Education," in *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 13 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 475. Wesley's understanding of religion and his approaches to the religious education of children will be dealt with more fully in the chapter section about Wesley's sermons.

"I know that I was called by God to pastoral ministry because I was interested in theology." This was my answer to the oral interview question during the entrance examination for Light and Life Bible College in Butuan City, the Philippines. My pastoral vocation was affirmed when I entered into our Bible college. I felt peace, and I was interested in the subjects being offered. This was in contrast to my experience in my first semester at the St. Joseph Institute of Technology when I enrolled for the course in Electronics Engineering. My parents forced me to enroll in a secular school, with the desire that when I became an engineer, this would alleviate our poverty. However, from the moment I sat in the chair in my classroom for my first subject, I did not find any interest in learning. Automatically, my mind just wandered and waited for the class to end. This served as a stark contrast to my interest in learning about theology.

The researcher's theological interest was further fueled when the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church (PGCFMC) held a conference on children's ministry hosted by the 4/14 Pilipinas Movement, which is an affiliate of the 4/14 Window Movement in July 2016. After the conference, the researcher realized that enthusiastic acceptance of the 4/14 Window movement posed some problems. The first one was that enthusiasm without a good theological foundation can lead to a mechanical approach towards children's ministry. Thomas Oden in his work has warned about this when looking at spiritual growth by numbers, "Spiritual growth is reduced by some to a spreadsheet operation. Bean counters and number crunchers pretend to measure personal maturation, focusing on technique and quantification at the expense of spiritual empowerment."[2]

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[2] Thomas C. Oden, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity: A Plain Exposition of Teaching on Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 16.

The second problem was the different theologies of children that inform children's ministry. The 4/14 Window Movement is an interdenominational ministry with different theological persuasions which influence its practices toward children and its theology of children. It is not the researcher's intention to discredit other denominations' successful ministries with children, but the researcher's desire is for the Free Methodist Church to discover and appreciate its own theological distinctives and contribute to the knowledge of children's ministry within the 4/14 Window Movement.

Thus, the researcher's journey in finding the Wesleyan theological distinctives regarding the religious education of children began. Blevins and Maddix correctly declare, "Theology should inform Christian Education."[3] Therefore, I the researcher is persuaded that Wesleyan theology should inform Christian education in the PGCFMC. Now, as a Filipino Free Methodist pastor, I will endeavor to add to the wealth of knowledge in the Wesleyan tradition regarding religious education of children as the researcher compares Wesley's perspectives to those of his contemporaries.

Background of the Study

Wesleyan theological distinctives regarding the religious education of children are a strong emphasis in contemporary Wesleyan scholarship. Several prominent scholars have produced significant studies on this topic. As early as 1992, Susan Willhauck sought to uncover John Wesley's understanding of childhood religious faith in order to address criticisms regarding Wesley's view of children and approaches to Christian

[3] Dean Gray Blevins and Mark A. Maddix, *Discovering Discipleship: Dynamics of Christian Education* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2010), 22.

education.[4] Then, in 1999, Dean Blevins identified the means of grace as an important religious education approach in the Wesleyan tradition that would serve as a counter influence to the approach which arose from American Evangelicalism dominance.[5] In the year 2001, Mark Maddix saw the need to identify the extent of John Wesley's theological influence among Nazarene pastors, Christian educators, and professors in the field of Christian education.[6] Then, in the year 2013, Colleen Derr sought to identify John Wesley's teachings and practices for faith formation of children, which was a supplemental work to the list of Wesleyan literature on the subject of faith formation in children.[7] Three years after, in 2016, Joel Holmes in his master's thesis investigated the educational theories that made Methodist education in eighteenth-century efficacious.[8] These scholars were great contributors to the recovery and influence of religious education of children in the Wesleyan tradition.[9]

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[4] Susan Etheridge Willhauck, "John Wesley's View of Children: Foundations for Contemporary Christian Education" (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 1992), iv.

[5] Dean Gray Blevins, "John Wesley and the Means of Grace: An Approach to Christian Religious Education" (PhD diss, Claremont School of Theology, 1999).

[6] Mark A. Maddix, "Reflecting John Wesley's Theology and Educational Perspective: Comparing Nazarene Pastors, Christian Educators, and Professors of Christian Education" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001), 8.

[7] Colleen R. Derr, "John Wesley and the Faith Formation of Children: Lessons for the Church" (PhD diss., Regent University, 2013), iii.

[8] Joel Holmes, "John Wesley and Religious Education in Eighteenth-Century England" (Master's Thesis, Regent University, 2016), 6.

[9] The writer also recognized the works of the following scholars who touched on the subject of Christian Education in Wesleyan Perspective: Peter Benzie, "As a Little Child: Children in the Theology of John Wesley" (Thesis, Laidlaw-Carey Graduate School, 2020); Martha F. Bowden, "Susanna Wesley's Educational Method," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2022): 51–62; Gayle Carlton Felton, "John Wesley and the Teaching Ministry: Ramifications for Education in the Church Today," *Religious Education* 92, no. 1 (1997): 92–106; Henry C. James, "Wesley's Conception of Religious Education and Conversion" (Master's Thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 1960); Alfred H. Body, *John Wesley and Education*, 1st ed. (London: The Epworth Press, 1936); Philip II McKinney, "John Wesley on the Formative Reading of Scripture and Educating Children," *Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministry* 4, no. 1 (2013): 12–24; Linda Ann Ryan, *John Wesley and the Education of Children: Gender, Class and Piety* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018); Lorinda Lewis Roberts, "John Wesley's Formative Reading of Scripture as an Applicable Model for Family Discipleship" (Doctor of Educational Ministry, diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018); Terrell E. Johnson, "A History of Methodist Education and Its Influence on American Public Education" (PhD diss, Southern Illinois

However, upon examining the current literature on John Wesley's religious education of children, I have not found any comparative studies between John Wesley's sermons on religious education of children and that of his contemporaries. The lack of such knowledge in the existing scholarly literature limits the ability of pastors, Christian educators, theologians, church members, and practitioners from the Wesleyan tradition to promote and appreciate the distinctive value and contribution of John Wesley's approach to the religious education of children. Moreover, research in this area will allow us to see both the strengths and weaknesses or limitations in Wesley's approach to the religious education of children. Adding this research to the list of Wesleyan literature on religious education of children will help to promote, defend, and improve the current religious education of children in the Wesleyan tradition.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is threefold: The first purpose is to address the gap in the existing Wesleyan literature on the religious education of children, as described above. An exhaustive search of the library holdings of both APNTS and Asbury Theological Seminary, as well as online, reveals no significant research comparing John Wesley's sermons on religious education of children and those of his contemporaries. The second purpose is to identify distinctives of John Wesley's selected sermons on religious education of children by comparing Wesley's sermons on the topic with those of his contemporaries. The third purpose is not a direct focus of the dissertation but a

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University at Carbondale, 1989); Catherine Stonehouse, "Children in Wesleyan Thought," in *Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Applications* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004).

desired outcome or use of the study, namely, to supply the Free Methodist Church of the Philippines a Wesleyan foundation for the religious education of children in order to strengthen their current beliefs and practices in this area.

Research Questions

In order to fulfill the intended purpose of the research, the researcher formulated several research questions. Here are the main research questions and sub-questions for this dissertation.

1. According to the studies of prominent scholars, what are the different influences in the context of eighteenth-century England that were foundational to John Wesley's approach to the religious education of children? [10]
    a. What was the informal learning that shaped Wesley's understanding of the faith formation of children?
    b. What was the formal learning that shaped Wesley's understanding of the faith formation of children?
    c. What were the nonformal learning experiences that shaped Wesley's understanding of the faith formation of children?
2. According to past educational theorists, what were the prevailing philosophies of education in eighteenth-century England?[11]
    a. What was the philosophy of education of John Locke?

[10] The terms informal learnings, formal learnings, nonformal learnings are based on the work of Mark Maddix. Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 39.

[11] The researcher followed the work of Maddix in limiting the research to those philosophers whose influence on Wesley can be clearly demonstrated. Although Wesley's contemporaries were not described as philosophers at this time, they operated in a discernable philosophical framework.

   b. What was the philosophy of education of John Milton?
   c. What was the philosophy of education of William Law?
   d. What was the philosophy of education of John Amos Comenius?
   e. What was the philosophy of education of Jean Jacques Rousseau?[12]

3. What were the philosophies of education of John Wesley's contemporaries, based on their sermons?[13]
   a. What was the philosophy of education of Daniel Waterland?
   b. What was the philosophy of education of Phillip Doddridge?
   c. What was the philosophy of education of Benjamin Dawson?
   d. What was the philosophy of education of Andrew Kippis?
   e. What was the philosophy of education of George Jerment?
4. Although Wesley was not described as a philosopher at this time, he operated in a discernable philosophical framework: What was John Wesley's philosophy of education based on three selected sermons Wesley wrote in 1783?
   a. What was John Wesley's foundational reason in conducting religious education of children?
   b. What were John Wesley's approaches to his religious education of children?

[12] I am including Rousseau because Wesley commented on Rousseau's work twice in his work. See John Wesley's writing *On the Manner of Educating Children* and Wesley's Journal entry dated February 3. 1770.

[13] As with his contemporaries, Wesley was not described as a philosopher in eighteenth-century England, but he also operated in a discernable philosophical framework.

5. What are the distinctive characteristics of John Wesley's approach to religious education of children as seen in his sermons compared to those of his contemporaries in eighteenth-century England?
    a. What were the foundational distinctives of Wesley's thought concerning the religious education of children compared to those of his contemporaries?
    b. What were the distinctives in approach of Wesley's religious education of children compared to those of his contemporaries?
6. What are the implications of this study for the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church for its practice of the religious education of children?
    a. What foundational reasoning in performing religious education of children should the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers adopt in light of John Wesley's ideas?
    b. What approaches in performing religious education of children should the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers adopt in light of John Wesley's ideas?

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be important throughout the dissertation. Therefore, clarifying the terminology warrants special attention. The working definition of terms from the researcher's perspective are as follows:

Approaches to Religious Education—refers to the aspect of the philosophy of education which focuses on the methods selected in order to achieve the desired purpose or aim of religious education of children.

Philosophy of Education—refers to the whole understanding of the religious education of children, which covers the foundational reasoning, purpose, aim, or motivation in conducting religious education of children; it includes the biblical view, theological view, experiential view, and personal view of children among the preachers.

Religious Education—refers to the religious faith formation of children.

Distinctives—refers to the aspects of Wesley's perspectives on the religious education of children that differ from those of his contemporaries. It does not refer to other aspects of Wesley's life and theology.

Significance of the Study

Although there have been various studies of John Wesley's approach to the religious education of children, none has yet studied John Wesley's religious education of children sermons in the light of the sermons of his contemporaries. There are also limited literature resources about Wesleyan religious education of children produced by Asian scholars, especially from a Filipino perspective. A Filipino perspective will add depth to the current Wesleyan resources on the religious education of children. Research from a Filipino perspective is needed because John Wesley's approach to the religious education of children was perceived as cruel or oppressive, especially regarding the issue of discipline. The researcher is speaking here from a personal and scholarly level. I was a student in Dr. Marcia Bunge's class Child in Christian Thought. Upon presentation of my report on Wesley's view of children, I received criticism from both the professor and my classmates. Criticisms were mostly directed at the view of the sinful nature of children, or human depravity, and the perceived discipline, or using of the rod approach, of Wesley. Thus, it is important to clarify such understanding to have proper application in the

Filipino setting, especially with regard to the question of corporal punishment. A critical retrieval and recontextualization are necessary to eliminate the possibility of using Wesley's ideas as a license to promote corporal punishment.[14] This is where the researcher's work comes in.

Critical Retrieval

Elements that will shape the critical retrieval of Wesley for the twenty-first century Filipino context will necessarily include the luminaries of the Holistic Child Development field such as Lev Vygotsky, Erik Erikson, Lawrence Kohlberg, and James Fowler.

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) introduced a theory of learning which he termed the "zone of proximal development."[15] He based this on his understanding that children's cognitive capacities, compared to adults, are limited and lacks maturity. However, he also believed that the learning capacity of children can be expanded through the help of adults. By having an awareness of the current intellectual capacity of children and a lesson intended for the children to learn, adults can help bridge the gap between the children's limited knowledge and the intended lesson. In short, adults will help children connect the dots for new knowledge to be comprehended.

Erik Erikson's (1902-1994) psychosocial developmental theory describes how people develop in their personality as they go through different experiential dilemma in

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[14] This idea comes from Dr. Cathy Stonehouse. She suggested that I make myself aware of the context of 18th-century England and the 21st Century in order to properly contextualize the possibility of applying Wesley's idea of breaking the will.

[15] Lev Vygotsky, *Thought and Language*, ed. Alex Kozulin (London, England: The MIT Press, 1986).

their relationship with others. There are a total of eight experiential dilemmas that human beings go through that shape their personality. The dilemmas of each stage are basic trust vs. basic mistrust, autonomy vs. shame and doubt, initiative vs. guilt, industry vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, intimacy vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, and ego integrity vs despair.[16] Using the first stage as an example, Erikson presented the dilemma of trust and mistrust between an infant and his or her caregiver. In this stage for example, the infant is hungry. As the mother continually responds to meet the physical hunger of the infant, a sense of trust is established in the baby. If the baby's needs are not met, a sense of mistrust develops. Thus, the constant interaction of the caregiver and the infant allows the child to develop a healthy view of self and people around them. Therefore, adults should see the importance of building trust among infants through constant care. According to Erikson, the first four stages are typically accomplished during childhood.

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987) explored the moral development of children. His moral developmental theory is concerned more with the process that leads to decision-making rather than on the content—what is right or wrong. He posited three levels of moral development, which are the pre-conventional level, the conventional level, and the post-conventional.[17] With these three levels, Kohlberg observed the maturity of one's perception in the decision-making process. As an example, in level one, the child's perception of right and wrong is anchored in physical pleasure or pain. When the child

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[16] Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1963), 247–269.

[17] Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education," in *Moral Development, Moral Education and Kohlberg: Basic Issues in Philosophy*, ed. Brenda Munsey (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1980), 91–92.

experiences pain, he/she tends to make future decisions based on escaping pain. This holds true for the child's perspective. When the child's experience is pleasant, he/she tends to make future decisions in favor of receiving or satisfying the feeling of pleasure again. So, the moral decision of the child tends to be based on whether he/she receives physical pleasure or pain. The pre-conventional stage decision process focuses on the child, while the conventional stage focuses on the community and the post conventional stage focuses on principled decision. An awareness of this developmental sequence promotes understanding a child's morality and formulating a childrearing approach.

James Fowler (1940-2015) espoused the faith development theory. He described faith as "a person's way of seeing him or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose."[18] For Fowler, faith development progresses as children grow cognitively—as they learn language, symbols, and concepts—and these factors shape the faith development of children as they encounter people around them. These encounters inform children about their surroundings and help them form sense and meaning. Although not considered a formal stage, the infancy and undifferentiated faith stage offers a useful example. In this stage, as the child interacts with his/her caregiver, the child unconsciously interacts with the caregiver's worldview, culture, and value or, as Fowler describes it, the caregiver's faith.[19] The child starts to learn life through the caregiver, and this encounter starts to affect and shape the child's understanding of the world. According to Fowler's formal stages, children develop from merely accepting their

[18] James W Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 4.

[19] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 117–199.

caregiver's faith orientation until they reach maturity as individuals who have arrived at their own understanding of the meaning and purpose of life.

Methods of Research

For the purpose of this study, historical research will be conducted to discover the distinctive aspects of John Wesley's approach to the religious education of children in contrast to the approaches of his contemporaries. Bruce Berg gives several reasons for conducting historical research. These reasons include "to uncover the unknown; to answer questions; to seek implications or relationships of events from the past and their connections with the present; to assess past activities and accomplishments of individuals, agencies, or institutions; and to aid generally in our understanding of human culture."[20] Uncovering the unknown will be the underlying motivation of this research since there are no comparative studies of John Wesley's sermons on the religious education of children and those of his contemporaries known to the researcher despite an extensive search for them in the APNTS and Asbury libraries and the internet.

Johnson and Christensen understand the importance of uncovering the unknown. They observe that "significant events often go unrecorded."[21] What they mean here is the importance of addressing gaps in existing literature because certain data has been unexplored or unstudied. In the present endeavor of the researcher, a comparative study between Wesley and his contemporaries' sermons was found to be absent in the existing bodies of literature. Thus, the research will serve as a valuable resource complementing

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[20] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 3rd ed. (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1998), 200.

[21] Burke Johnson and Larry Christensen, *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*, 4th ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2012), 412.

the current existing literature on John Wesley's approach to the religious education of children. It will bring more depth to the existing literature.

The researcher will study and compare the sermons of John Wesley with those of his contemporaries. To select the contemporaries to compare to John Wesley, the researcher used Gale's Eighteenth Century Collections Online database and used the search parameters of "religious education" as subject, "London" as place of publication, and "train up a child" as keyword in the database to bring up the list of contemporaries. A total of nineteen entries appeared in the search from the oldest to the newest date of publication. Among these entries, there were three without definite or known authors that the researcher did not include in the dissertation. The researcher used Proverbs 22:6 as part of the criteria or search parameters because this is the text used by Wesley in his sermon on the religious education of children. Therefore, Proverbs 22:6 will serve as a point of reference and comparison with his contemporaries' sermons. The researcher also did not include entries of James Hervey and Sayer Walker because they did not use the text in Proverbs 22:6. An entry of Daniel Fisher was excluded because it emphasized spelling and reading. The entry of Edward Auriol Drummond dated 1800 was excluded as well because Wesley died before this year. Thus, the researcher limited the study to five sermons. The researcher selected the sermon entries of Daniel Waterland, Philipp Doddridge, and Andrew Kippis. The entries of Benjamin Dawson and George Jerment were also included though they were labeled as a discourse. The researcher labeled the discourse entries as equivalent to sermons due to the explanation of Jerment that the discourses were composed for the pulpit.[22] These contemporaries' sermons will be

[22] George Jerment, *Parental Duty: Or the Religious Education of Children, Illustrated and Urged, in Several Discourses.* (London: Ritche and Sammells, 1791), vii.

compared with Wesley's sermons in order to reveal the distinctives of Wesley's approach to religious education of children.

The plan for this dissertation work is to divide each chapter which will later substantiate the chapters on Wesley's sermons and those of his contemporaries. By doing so, the comparative study will be substantive and well informed, revealing whether or not there is a distinctive in Wesley's approach to religious education compared to that of his contemporaries.

There are a total of six chapters in this dissertation. Chapter I presents the problem and its background. Chapter II discusses John Wesley's eighteenth-century background, which will include the factors that shaped his philosophy of religious education of children. Chapter III discusses various philosophies of education in eighteenth-century England, with special attention to those aspects consonant with the findings of Chapter II. In Chapter IV, the approaches to religious education of Wesley's contemporaries as viewed through their sermons are discussed, and a short analysis also is presented if they have been influenced by the philosophers under study in Chapter III. In Chapter V, John Wesley's religious education perspective through his sermons is discussed and an analysis comparing him, the philosophers, and his religious contemporaries is presented if they influenced Wesley's view. In this chapter, the researcher compares Wesley and his contemporaries' perspectives on religious education of children, which will reveal whether Wesley's religious education of children perspective possessed ideas distinct from those of his contemporaries. Chapter VI contains the conclusion and recommendations, especially for the researcher's national context.

CHAPTER II:

JOHN WESLEY AND HIS EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH BACKGROUND

John Wesley's perspective on the religious education of children was influenced by several factors. These factors involved Wesley's own personal experiences, starting from his family, his school experiences, and his ministry journeys. These factors will be considered within four subsections, namely, informal influences, formal education, and nonformal experiences--as patterned on Mark Maddix--and a section on Wesley's experiences of the educational system. These factors will help the researcher understand Wesley's perspective on religious education of children and help inform the analysis of Wesley's sermons on the religious education of children.

John Wesley's religious education of children needs to be viewed in the context of his family background. John Wesley was the son of Susanna and Samuel Wesley. He was born at Epworth, in Lincolnshire on June 17, 1703, and died at the age of eighty-eight on March 2, 1791. Wesley was the fifteenth child out of nineteen, of whom nine died in infancy.[23] He was baptized by the name John Benjamin—a combination of the names of his brothers John and Benjamin, who both died in their infancy.[24] Wesley was an ordained elder in the Church of England.

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[23] See: L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A., Founder of the Methodists*, 5th ed., vol. 1 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 15. And John Telford, *The Life of John Wesley* (1886. Reprint, London: Epworth Press, 1947), 11.

[24] Jonathan Crowther, *True and Complete Protraiture of Methodism or the History of the Wesleyan Methodists* (New York: Daniel Hitt and Thomas Ware, 1813), 13.

John Wesley's parents were religious people, and they were influential to Wesley's ministry. His father, Samuel Wesley, was an ordained minister in the Church of England and also an educator. According to Michael Henderson, the elder Wesley encouraged John to pursue theological and biblical studies in preparation for ordained ministry.[25] His mother, Susanna Wesley, on the other hand, encouraged him as a divinity student to focus on the practical experiential aspect.[26] Both of his parents were from a dissenting family who later joined the Church of England. The dissenters did not conform to the Act of Uniformity, which led them to lose their profession and authority as ministers in the church, thus depriving them of their source of income.[27] Susanna Wesley in her letter to Samuel Wesley dated October 11, 1709, revealed that she was raised in a Dissenter family but later decided to join the Church of England.[28] According to Adam Clarke, the Dissenters—including Wesley's great grandparents and parents—suffered greatly when the Act of Uniformity was implemented in 1662.[29] The Act of Uniformity forced all ministers in England to abide by every condition of this act in all religious services, such as prayers, Sunday worship, sacraments, using only, for example, the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments as practiced by the Church of England.[30] Another contemporary of Wesley, Andrew Kippis, whom we will encounter again as one of the sermon authors studied in Chapter IV, also gave reasons why Dissenters left the

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[25] Michael D. Henderson, *John Wesley's Class Meeting: A Model for Making Disciples* (Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 1997), 41.

[26] Henderson, *Class Meetings*, 41.

[27] Adam Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family: Collected Principally from Original Documents*, ed. George Peck, 2nd ed. (New York: Lane & Tippett, 1848), 22.

[28] Susanna Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, ed. Charles Jr. Wallace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 71.

[29] Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, 16.

[30] Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, 22.

church of England. He said, “They must protest against interference of human authority in matters of religion and against the imposition of articles of doctrines which are of men’s devising.”[31]

Susanna and Samuel Wesley rejoined the Church of England. Still, the large number of members in John Wesley’s family was financially challenging. John Wesley himself had a first-hand experience of this difficulty during his childhood and even during his time in Oxford. His mother recorded their financial challenges in her writings. Susanna wrote a letter to her brother Samuel Annesley, Jr. in India, giving a picture of their relationship problems which involved financial accountabilities.[32] Susanna herself informed Rev. Hoole in her letter dated August 24, 1709 how she was not able to save their properties during the fire.[33] She also expressed hope that John Wesley would be out of debt in her letters dated August 19, 1724, and September 10, 1724.[34] Charles Wallace, the editor of Susanna’s complete writings, identified the number of Wesley family members as a factor of the family contributing to the difficulty in providing the family’s needs.[35] From these letters, it is evident how Susanna had difficulty raising the large family, especially after the rectory fire. This is an important factor to be considered because it will help the researcher understand the child-rearing approach of Susanna Wesley toward her children, especially John Wesley.

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[31] Andrew Kippis, *A Sermon Preached at the Old Jewry, on Wednesday the 26th of April, 1786, on Occassion of a New Academical Institution, Among Protestant Dissenters, for the Education of Their Ministers and Youth* (London: H. Goldney, 1786), 34.

[32] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 93.

[33] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 67.

[34] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 103–104.

[35] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 92.

Informal Influences

Understanding John Wesley's upbringing can shed light on both his personal development and his approach to the religious education of children. One of the influences on Wesley was his mother, Susanna.[36] Scholars like Clarke, Maddix, Blevins, and Holmes referred to Susanna's childrearing influence on Wesley at home, while Benzie and Felton emphasized Susanna's influence on her educational skill.[37] Being raised by his mother, Wesley was exposed to her motivation and beliefs and character and values.

One of the motivations of his mother regarding the religious education of her children was her concern for the salvation of her children. In one letter to Samuel Jr., she expressed to him how she was concerned for her children's eternal happiness.[38] This theological motivation moved her to spend time with her children for family prayers, teaching them the Lord's prayer, and reading the Bible.[39] At the same time, upon the continuous absence of her husband at home, Susanna took seriously the responsibility of taking care of the spiritual lives of her children.

As a result, she conducted a home evening Sunday evening worship in her household. Wallace suggests that Wesley was nine years old at this time.[40] He further says that the evening home worship may have influenced Wesley in the formation of the

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[36] See Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 42.; Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 62.

[37] Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, 342; Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 41; Blevins, "John Wesley and the Means of Grace," 42; Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 21; Felton, "Ramifications for Education," 94; Benzie, "As a Little Child," 30.

[38] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 72.

[39] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 369–371.

[40] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 14.

society and class meetings which was not intended to compete church services.[41] At first, her husband objected on her initiative. Yet, she persisted. In her letter to Samuel, Sr. dated February 6, 1712, she told him that in his absence, she could not disregard their children's souls, which she viewed as a talent committed to her by God and for which later, she believed she would be held accountable by God.[42] As a result, her commitment to Sunday family evening meetings later gained influence upon her neighbors who joined them from where she claimed the gathering reached more than two hundred attendees.[43] Subconsciously, as a child, Wesley was exposed to and molded by his mother's theological belief and commitment to their spiritual nurture that shaped their activities at home.

The commitment of Susanna to the spiritual lives of her children was reinforced after a rectory fire. The fire took place in their house and almost took the life of John Wesley. In her account, she recalled how her husband attempted to rescue John but had given up because of the flames.[44] She describes how timely the rescue of Wesley was, coming just before the ceiling collapsed.[45] His mother interpreted the rescue as a miraculous one. From then on, his mother had a different perspective or approach to raising John Wesley. In her meditation dated May 17, 1711, she said, "I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child . . . that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of thy true religion and virtue."[46] George Stevenson also

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[41] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 78.
[42] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 79.
[43] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 80.
[44] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 65.
[45] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 67.
[46] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 235.

claimed that John Wesley's escape from the Rectory fire "induced his mother to pay special attention his mental and religious training." [47]As a result, she resolved to be more intentional and dedicated in raising up John Wesley.

The spiritual nurture of Susanna's children was affected by their dispersion after the rectory fire. Susanna recorded that her children acquired bad behaviors as they were exposed to other children and servants.[48] When they moved into their new house, Susanna spent time reversing these influences. She redoubled her efforts to recover the religious principles she had taught to her children before the fire. Although the researcher did not notice in Wesley's writing any mention of this event or that his mother was so concerned during their dispersion, still, subconsciously, Wesley remained exposed to his mother's commitment to their spiritual lives.

On the other hand, for John Wesley, the rectory Fire clearly had an impact on his view of life and ministry. He recalled this memory in his later years. In his journal of February 9, 1750, he wrote, "About eleven o'clock it came into my mind that this was the very day and hour, in which forty years ago, I was taken out of the flames. I stopped and gave a short account of that wonderful providence."[49] He even suggested that on his gravestone, it would be written, "Here lieth the Body of John Wesley, a brand plucked out of the burning."[50] Thus, this rectory fire was a life-changing event both for Wesley and

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[47] George J. Stevenson, *Memorials of the Wesley Family: Including Biographical and Historical Sketches of All the Members of the Family for Two Hundred and Fifty Years; Together with a Genealogical Table of the Wesley, with Historical Notes, for More than Nine Hundred Years* (London: Paternoster Row, n.d.), 330.

[48] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 372.

[49] John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, Standard., vol. 3 (London: The Epworth Press, 1938), 453–454.

[50] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 2 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 309. This journal entry was dated November 26, 1753. Benzie said, it did not appear in his actual tombstone. (Benzie, "As a Little Child," 23).

his mother. It was indeed influential for his mother's approach in raising Wesley. It was also formative for Wesley as he brought this to his memory.

Susanna's spiritual nurture efforts toward John Wesley came to fruition when her son asked for advice on child-rearing and religious education. The influence of his mother was reflected also in a journal entry and in Susannah's writings. Wesley wrote to his mother inquiring of her child-rearing approach. Her reply letter dated July 24, 1732, recalled the way she raised her children. Among Susanna's child-rearing methods, she included: designated time for sleep, fearing the rod and crying softly, three meals per day, controlled food choices, family prayer, conquering the will, reading, no loud noises, Bible memorization; singing of psalms, private prayer, sabbath day, no sinful action, controlled punishment, assigning household chores, no lying, fulfilling promises; no stealing, and no work until able to read well.[51] These methods were evident in Wesley's sermons and the methods in Kingswood school.[52]

One of Susanna's influences was in the area of forming the mind or conquering the will of children.[53] His mother held three reasons for this as she incorporated it in her child rearing methods. These reasons included, first, a practical one. Susanna understood that early discipline would lessen the frequency and severity of corporal punishment.[54] Second was a philosophical perspective. She said, "Conquering the will is the "only strong and rational foundation of religious education, without which both precept and

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[51] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 369–373.

[52] It will be discussed later in the section of eighteenth-century educational system.

[53] As stated in my Chapter I, this is one of those examples of why there were many critics of Wesley. The critics I am referring to here were my classmates and professor during my class with Dr. Marcia Bunge.

[54] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 370.

example will be ineffectual."[55] Susanna believed that when children learn to submit to their parents, submission to God will follow. The third was theological in nature. She believed that self-will is the "root of all sin and misery."[56] Susanna understood that sin will always result in bad consequences and, therefore, self-will would just cause problems for children. Naglee reasons that the primary way of breaking the will of a one year old is the rod; He believes that it is during this year that reason dawns for a child to know right from wrong, and so, when one understands his/her mistake, he or she is to be corrected.[57] These all served as her guiding principles in forming the mind of the child. The theological reason was the most important guiding principle for her in the religious education of children. The ultimate goal was to bring the child into obedience to the will of the parents so that it would later be obedient to the will of God.

As discussed in Chapter I, the researcher was criticized upon reporting on John Wesley's view of children, especially on the issue of spiritual diseases inborn in children and the breaking of the will. However, there were several scholars who did not see this view on breaking the will of children as oppressive. These include Bowden, Naglee, Maddix, and Holmes. Bowden explains that this breaking of the will of children was better understood as the "elimination of selfishness."[58] Naglee understands that it "never meant to crush one's unique personality."[59] She points out that the Wesley children matured in spite of their experience of their will being broken.[60] Maddix, on his part,

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[55] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 370.

[56] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 370.

[57] David Ingersoll Naglee, *From Font to Faith: John Wesley and the Nurture of Children* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1987), 176.

[58] Bowden, "Susanna Wesley's Educational Method," 60.

[59] Naglee, *From Font to Faith*, 176.

[60] Naglee, *From Font to Faith*, 176–177.

claims that the household of Wesley was not oppressive.[61] Holmes explains, "The ability to master a child's will was considered the decisive factor in character development."[62] The researcher will add his thoughts on this subject later on after the comparative study with Wesley's contemporaries.

It is evident that John Wesley's upbringing under his mother's care was explicitly influential to the formation of his approach to religious education of children. Her great influence on his ideas on the religious education is evidenced in their correspondence. The Sunday evening home worship experience, the rectory fire event, and the dispersion of the family are seen only as implicit. The rectory fire indeed was imprinted in his mind and was recalled in his journal entry. This had somehow shaped Wesley's view of life and ministry, including ministry to children. The evening home worship and the dispersion were not explicitly discussed by Wesley in his writings, only by his mother. Yet, the influence of his mother's spirituality which Wesley was exposed to can be implicitly credited. There is more to uncover in Wesley's religious education of children perspectives by looking more deeply in his other childhood experiences, educational experiences, and ministry experience. In the next section, the researcher will continue to explore the different factors that influenced Wesley's religious education of children perspectives.

Formal Education

John Wesley's educational experiences outside his home are another factor to be explored. His Charterhouse and Oxford educational experiences will be discussed

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[61] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 46.
[62] Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 41.

specifically since these are relevant areas as we discuss Wesley's religious education ideas.

John Wesley's education in the Charterhouse was an important part of his life. His time there brought about a spiritual crisis. His journal entries reveal his struggle in this educational experience with other children in contrast to his home education. This crisis informs his perspectives on the religious education of children.[63] In his journal entry dated May 24, 1738, Wesley reflected on his time in the school. Two reflections are directly related to his time there. First, he wrote, "I believe, till I was about ten years old I had not sinned away that washing of the Holy Ghost which was given me in baptism; having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God; in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed."[64] The following quote sheds light on Wesley's writing in *A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children* especially his thoughts on true religion:

> Second, he wrote,
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> > The next six or seven years were spent at school; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I hoped to be saved by, was, 1. Not being so bad as other people. 2. Having still a kindness for religion. And 3. Reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers. [65]

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[63] Benzie suggests that Wesley was 10 years old at the time when he was sent to Charterhouse School. Benzie, "As a Little Child," 32.

[64] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 98. A long quote is necessary for the following paragraph, for there are several insights that need to be captured. This quote help the researcher shed light on Wesley's writing in *A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children* especially his thoughts on true religion.

[65] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:98. In the same work, Wesley recognized that he did not yet have a notion of inward holiness at that time.

Indeed, Wesley's time in Charterhouse served as a spiritual eye opener for him, as he was exposed to a different kind of educational setting outside his home. According to Telford, the seizing of foods like meat by the older students affected Wesley.[66] This is also supported by J. H. Whiteley who says that the older students used their physical advantage to oppress younger students.[67] Wesley used this as an experiential testimony and proof of his sermon "On the Education of Children," as Wesley argued that not all who are trained from their early years will remain faithful to their training.

Wesley's words in his journal regarding his time in Charterhouse reveal the significance of his childhood religious education at home. He recognized how he had not sinned greatly. Yet, he recognized also that upon the absence of those outward restraints, he had sinned much more. There, Wesley's childhood training did not fully stop the worldly influences upon him.[68] This was not Wesley's first experience of being influenced by bad behaviors. His mother's account of their dispersion after the rectory fire is the first account. His report on his time in the Charterhouse is the second account, although he was already an older child at this time. However, he still credited his religious training at home. Recognizing his words, "not being bad as other people," reveals how his religious trainings restricted him from becoming worse. This is also supported by his words that he had continued with the spiritual disciplines—"reading the Bible, going to church, praying." These spiritual disciplines played an important role, serving as a constraining agent which hindered the full influence of the world upon him.

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[66] Telford, *The Life of John Wesley*, 26–27.

[67] J. H. Whiteley, *Wesley's England: A Survey of XVIIIth Century Social and Cultural Conditions*, Reprint. (London: Epworth Press, 1945), 268.

[68] This also would serve as an experiential testimony and proof of his sermon "On Family Religion," as he argued that not all who are trained from their early years will remain faithful to their training.

Seaborn looks at the significance of Wesley's upbringing in counteracting such a negative portrayal of Wesley. He credits Wesley's upbringing as an antidote for these negative influences. Seaborn argues that it kept him from vices, and it distinguishes his upbringing from that of other students.[69] In this way, he gives a more positive portrayal of Wesley, crediting the important influence of his religious education at home for his ability to be less impacted by bad influences.

As Wesley saw his experience in Charterhouse to have been a challenging one, this was influential to the formation of his approach to religious education of children. Because of this experience, he identified things he did not agree with in the school and developed alterations to correct them in the design of his Kingswood school. Gary Martin Best says that Wesley's own experience as a boy at Charterhouse "made him realize that real education was often replaced by unruly and even promiscuous behavior, with younger boys bullied and corrupted by their elders and with masters unable and unwilling to control the situation."[70] Derr described the school as "[lacking] any form of significant discipline."[71] Tyerman described Wesley's time in this public school, saying Wesley "entered the Charterhouse a saint, and left it a sinner."[72] The maltreatment of other children with the passive engagement of schoolmasters was indeed eye-opening for Wesley.

With these observations, we see that public education during his time was indeed a concern for Wesley. He himself criticized the public schools in his preaching, urging,

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[69] Joseph William Jr Seaborn, "John Wesley's Use of History as a Ministerial and Educational Tool" (ThD diss., Boston University School of Theology, 1984), 43–44.

[70] Gary Martin Best, *Wesley and Kingswood* (Bath, England: Kingswood School, 1988), 3.

[71] Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 65.

[72] Tyerman, *Founder of the Methodist*, 1:22.

"At all events, then, send your boys, if you have any concern for their souls, not to any of the large public schools, (for they are nurseries of all manner of wickedness), but private school, kept by some pious man, who endeavors to instruct a small number of children in religion and learning together."[73] It can be observed that Wesley critiqued the sending of children to large public schools. This critique was due to his concern for the admission of all sorts of children, especially those from unbelieving households, and for the faithless schoolmasters who could corrupt the pious children.[74] Wesley's personal experience in Charterhouse School with other children served also as a point of reference of such a reality among pious children. A work credited to Bristol Grammar School in the eighteenth-century sheds light on the perspective of Wesley that there was an absence of religion, Christian instruction, and pious teachers in public schools.[75] John Body remarks on the example of the Grammar School, saying that for Wesley, "Religion and education must go together."[76] Although the Bristol Grammar School was concerned with virtue, Wesley was concerned for the souls of children. Yet both showed concern for the possibility of unchristian influences that children might acquire from other children or through bad experiences with them. As discussed earlier, Wesley himself had a bad experience during his time in Charterhouse.

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[73] John Wesley, "On Family Religion," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Sermons III 71-114*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 342–343. This was the comment also of J. H. Whitely where he said, "Public schools are the nurseries of all vice and immorality. Whiteley, *Wesley's England*, 268.

[74] John Wesley, "A Plain Account of Kingswood School," in *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 13 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 290. The Kingswood school will also shed light to this which will be discussed later in this section.

[75] Bristol Grammar School, "Some Thoughts on the Common Method of Education in Publick Schools" (London: S. and F Farley, 1750), 14–16. Catherine Stonehouse comments that the ideas which lacked religious content were made even more severe through the ungodly teachers and ungodly children from unbelieving homes, (Catherine Stonehouse, "Children in Wesleyan Thought," in *Children's Spirituality*, ed. Kevin E. Lawson and Scottie May, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019), 139).

[76] Body, *Wesley and Education*, 47.

John Wesley's concern and critique of the school system was also evident in his work, *A Plain Account of Kingswood School* (1781), in which he continued to discuss his concerns about the school's setup during his time. First, he was concerned about the school's location, being situated in a great town, which enticed students to do many things, and also about the children around the school, who could divert their learnings or religion. Second, the careless admission of all sorts of children concerned him, especially of those from unbelieving homes. Third, he showed concern about schoolmasters who had no religion at all and whose teachings were contrary to true religion. Finally, his last concern was focused on the content and delivery of subjects in the schools, for he saw them as defective—in his view, there was little concern with subjects such as arithmetic, writing and others; the books were from inferior authors; and instruction started from difficult levels instead of easy ones.[77] Thus, we have a reflective view of the school system of his time, from which Wesley learned and developed a school that would address those concerns.

Accordingly, Wesley set up the Kingswood school. He states that he set up a school which would house children, schoolmasters, and servants not far from the town. He procured masters who were godly. He procured a limited number of pupils, all coming from Christian households and who were willing to learn and obey rules.[78] From his statements, it is clear that these were all reactions and resolutions to his critiques of school in his time. At the same time, Wesley limited the number of enrollees because he recognized the difficulty of handling large numbers of children and the risk of children

[77] Wesley, "A Plain Account of Kingswood School," 290–293.
[78] Wesley, "A Plain Account of Kingswood School," 292–293.

corrupting each other.[79] Still, it can be observed that he sought to minimize the corruptive influence of unbelieving children. His desire to avoid the corruption of learners is evident in his work. The choice of school location was an indication of his effort to minimize the influence of the surroundings on the learners. The limited admissions of children can be traced back to his Charterhouse experience and the concerns he expressed about school admissions, as discussed earlier.

Aside from focusing on the external corruptive influence, Wesley was wrestling also with the idea of holiness. This idea was initially evident in his pursuit of the priesthood. It is also evident in Wesley's inclusion of the ideas of William Law in his sermon "On the Education of Children" and other personalities such as Bishop Taylor, and Thomas à Kempis.[80] Wesley recognized the influence of the work of Law entitled *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life.* In his own work, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, Wesley shows that he was persuaded by Law's work that he must be "all devoted to God, to give him all [his] soul, body, and substance," that is, he should not be half Christian.[81] In the same work, Wesley records other influences, including Bishop Taylor's *Rules and Exercises of Holy Living*, and Thomas à Kempis's *Christian Pattern*, which emphasizes not only the giving of all his life to God but also the giving of all his heart to God.[82] All of these influences, encountered while he was in Oxford, were formative to his understanding of a life of holiness. For Henderson, these books provided

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[79] Wesley, "A Plain Account of Kingswood School," 293.

[80] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 49.

[81] John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection as Believed and Taught by the Reverend Mr. John Wesley from the Year 1725 to the Year 1777* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1971), 11.

[82] Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection as Believed and Taught by the Reverend Mr. John Wesley from the Year 1725 to the Year 1777*, 9–10.

Wesley with the behavior-shaping tools of both his personal life and his public methodology."[83] Maddix on his part described that such influence lead Wesley to live a regulated way of life.[84] In response to these books, Wesley began to embrace lifestyle changes which later would be reflected in his sermons about the religious education of children.[85]

In addition to these books, Wesley's activities in Oxford were influential in his religious education of children. In Oxford, Wesley became the leader of The Holy Club, which was a significant formative activity of John Wesley.[86] His small group's activities included: reading classics and books on divinity, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and visiting the prisoners.[87] Wesley included fasting as advised by Mr. Clayton.[88] This small group ministry in general was part of the ministry approach of John Wesley. Tyerman recognizes the Sunday worship meetings in Wesley's house led by his mother were "influential in Wesley's view of group formation, but his experiences at Oxford provided the beginning of his disciplined methods."[89] At the same time, this small group influence can also be attributed to his visit in Herrnhut, where children were divided into different classes.[90] These activities were formative to his spiritual life, and, at

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[83] Henderson, *Class Meetings*, 41.

[84] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 49.

[85] Cf. Henderson, *Class Meetings*, 42.

[86] Wesley's Holy Club were sometimes called the Sacramentarians, the Godly Club, The Enthusiasts, The Reforming Club, The Methodist, or The Supererogation-men Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:11–13.

[87] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:6–9.

[88] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 13 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 304.

[89] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 103. Maddix cited Tyerman in this quote. However, as the researcher looked back at the quote, this is Maddix own words which was more of a synthesis of Tyerman's work on Wesley's activities in Oxford.

[90] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, Complete and Unabridged., vol. 1 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1986), 140–141.

the same time, can be seen as a preparation for his life's work.[91] John Wesley's learning did not end in Oxford. His perspectives on religious education of children continued to expand in its horizon. Wesley's ministry in Georgia and his Aldersgate experience will be discussed in the next section. His experiences and learning in those places will add depth to his perspective on religious education of children.

Nonformal Experiences

Wesley's mission to America was another factor that contributed to his spiritual maturity. Maddix says, "These nonformal learning experiences were instrumental in his overall theology and educational practices."[92] In his journal entry dated October 14, 1735, Wesley recorded his main motivation in going to Georgia: "To save our souls, to live wholly to the glory of God."[93] However, this desire did not come to fruition. Roberts and Holmes say that Wesley had difficulty implementing legalistic practices in his missionary work.[94] Hammond refers to Wesley's "high implementation of High Church Anglican practice."[95] Due to his failure, Henderson says that the mission work to the Indians was abandoned.[96] Near the end of his journey, Wesley testified "I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh, who shall convert me? Who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief?"[97] Although Wesley's efforts resulted in failure, Maddix sees a

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[91] See James, "Wesley's Conception of Religious Education and Conversion," 15. And Johnson, "Methodist Education," 28.

[92] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 51; Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 30.

[93] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:17.

[94] Roberts, "Formative Reading," 36.

[95] Geordan Hammond, *John Wesley in America: Restoring Primitive Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 159.

[96] Henderson, *Class Meetings*, 44.

[97] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:74.

positive in the overall spiritual journey of Wesley. He writes, "Wesley went to be a missionary to the Indians, but found his experiences were a means to his own spiritual growth."[98] This experience allowed him to open his horizons and learn from the practices of others regarding the religious education of children.

Any discussion about the influence of his American sojourn on Wesley's developing thought must include the crisis he experienced on his way there. The hurricane experienced by Wesley with the German Moravians on board ship was a faith crisis moment for him that caused a re-examination of his theological persuasion regarding salvation and holiness. This experience was foundational to his theological persuasion and had a direct impact on his approach to religious education of children.[99] In this hurricane experience, Wesley struggled with the fear of death. Wesley's journal was full testimonies of his fear of death during his travels dating from November 23, 1735, January 17 and 23, 1736.[100] In contrast to Wesley, the Moravians, despite the severity of the storms, remained calm. In Wesley's curiosity about the behavior of the Moravians, he asked one of them if the person was afraid. The person replied, "I thank God, no . . . our women and children are not afraid to die."[101] This crisis moment did not stop there. Wesley continued to seek an answer to his dilemma. He asked Mr. Oglethorpe and Peter Bohler as he struggled to make sense of his faith crisis. When Wesley was asked about his assurance of salvation, he recognize that his answers were futile. [102] Although Wesley was a graduate of Oxford, was raised by his mother religiously, was raised by his father with

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[98] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 52.
[99] Cf. Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 75.
[100] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:19–20.
[101] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:22.
[102] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:23.

academic leaning, and was an ordained minister, God was still working in Wesley, especially with his unbelief that brought fear of death. Wesley recognized his unbelief and expressed his need for salvation.[103] He recalled his confession of unbelief in his journal entry on May 24, 1738.

After his return to England following his American mission, John Wesley's Aldersgate experience was a turning point in his life. At this time, his faith crisis from the voyage experience with the Moravians was resolved. It was on May 24, 1738, when he recognized that he had experienced a change of heart and now had faith in Christ. He said, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."[104] After the Aldersgate experience, Wesley was driven to preach focusing on inward religion. Wesley gave a definition of his understanding of inward and outward religion which he believed the Methodist possessed. He said, "The sum of our doctrine with regard to inward religion is comprised of two points: the loving God with all our hearts, the loving of neighbors as ourselves. And with regard to outward religion, in two more: the doing all to the glory of God, and the doing to all what we could desire in like circumstances should be done to us."[105] This was evident in Wesley's ministry.[106]

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[103] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:72; Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:101.

[104] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P Heitzenrater, vol. 18 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1988), 250.

[105] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P Heitzenrater, vol. 20 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 397.

[106] In Wesley's journal on Sept 4, 1738, he encouraged the English to "pursue inward holiness; the renewal of their souls in righteousness and true holiness." Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:158.

It was at Aldersgate that his spiritual dilemma was resolved. Wesley records that he renounced "all dependence, in whole, or in part, upon my own works or righteousness; on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up."[107] This explains the efforts of John Wesley in all piety and charitable works while in Oxford and even in his mission to America. We see in these words that all his works had been grounded in his own righteousness, not in the righteousness of Christ. This is the reason why he had struggled with his unbelief and lack of peace when faced with the reality of death. Indeed, this Aldersgate experience was a crucial theological foundation for Wesley that shaped his view of life and ministry. Maddix reasons that this spiritual resolution came to serve as the "primary goal and aim of Methodism" and "shaped his educational endeavors as it centered on the transformational power of experience."[108] Maddix, on his part, emphasizes the relationship of Wesley's theology and his educational perspective. This transformative experience of Wesley influenced how Wesley viewed ministry with children.

Wesley's transformative experience in Aldersgate, which influenced his theological view, is augmented when we include Wesley's first-hand experience of the transformative experience of children with God. His personal witness of the faith of children and testimonies of children experiencing genuine faith is indeed evident in his writings.[109] This includes his ministry with children, what he learned from the methods of other people on how they ministered with children, and the testimonies of others who witnessed the working of God in the lives of children, especially in his Kingswood

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[107] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:102.

[108] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 55.

[109] Some of the testimonies were written in the section on Kingswood School.

school. Regarding the former, Wesley's ministry with children was recorded during his time traveling. He recorded testimonies, encounters, and ministries with children in his letters and journal entries. In his journal entry dated February 3, 1738, he recorded his early experience with children in Georgia. He reports, "Many children have learned how they ought to serve God, and to be useful to their neighbour. And those whom it most concerns have an opportunity of knowing the true state of their infant colony and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations.[110]

Wesley also recorded his first-hand experience at Kingswood school. "And almost as soon as we began, God gave us a token for good, four of the children receiving a clear sense of pardon."[111] He also witnessed children's spirituality after the preaching of Mr. Berridge, testifying,

> Afterwards at church many cried out, especially children, whose agonies were amazing. One of the oldest, a girl ten or twelve years old, was in violent contortions of body, and wept aloud, I think incessantly, during the whole service; and several much younger children were agonizing as this did . . . but some women, and several children, felt the power of the same almighty Spirit.[112]

The witness of Wesley on other spiritual experiences of children in Kingswood School were recorded also in his journal entries. He witnessed God's work in the lives of children personally. He reports in his journal dated Oct 7, 1768, "The grace of God is still working among them. Some are still alive to God, and all behave in such a manner that I have seen no other schoolboys like them."[113] The schoolmasters reported to Wesley that there was a move of the Holy Spirit among the children in Kingswood, where children

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[110] John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, Standard., vol. 1 (London: Robert Culley, nd), 435.

[111] Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:301.

[112] Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:345.

[113] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P Heitzenrater, vol. 22 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 160.

experienced the power of God, justification, peace with God, and conversion.[114] All these spiritually transformative experiences were evidence of the reality that God indeed works in the lives of children. Such divine intervention was not limited to adults but included children.

These spiritual experiences of children through the moving of the Holy Spirit are believed to be a crucial foundation to Wesley's perspective on religious education of children. This fact highlights how Wesley's approach would also be rooted in divine intervention or capacity in ministering to the children. Here Wesley became convinced of the ability of God to open the hearts and minds of children, as well as the receptivity of children to the divine intervention. Because of this experiential evidence, Wesley's approach developed from mere informational, to experiential and transformational. We can see that Wesley himself was convinced of the great potential of religious education--not only that it was necessary, but that it was possible.

Other nonformal experiences that contributed to the educational perspective of Wesley were his experiences of the different ministries with children. Wesley recorded his encounters and what he learned from other ministers of children. On the ship during his travel to Georgia, he witnessed a Mr. Ingram instructing the children.[115] In Savannah, Wesley recorded an account of the methods he observed ministers using when they worked with children. He reported that the catechism of children was done with the lowest class before morning class and the older children at the evenings.[116] In Herrnhut,

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[114] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 22:129–131.

[115] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:18. Wesley also heard testimony of Mr. Oglethorpe of him teaching children. Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:24.

[116] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:45. The researcher assumed that the lowest class were small children.

Wesley witnessed the methods of educating children in an orphan house. There he observed: the division of small, middle, and big children into classes, a weekly conference concerning the institution of the youth, the daily routine which included classes, prayer, public service, catechism, instruction by hymns, shaping their wills.[117] Wesley was informed also of the methods of teaching children in Jena. The methods applied were similar to Herrnhut: children were divided into classes separating small and big children, there were daily routines and schedules, and there was catechism and learning the Holy Scriptures that served as foundations of faith.[118] In Wesley's journal entry, he approved the Moravians' way of educating their children.[119]

From these observations of Wesley's nonformal experiences and the discussions from previous section on informal and formal influences, we can see similarities of practices which the researcher assume helped form Wesley's perspective of religious education. In the informal influence, the daily routine and spiritual disciplines were being strengthened by these practices inside his home. It was discussed earlier that in Wesley's upbring there were disciplines and routine in the house. At the same time, the initial practice by his mother of spending time with each of the children in Wesley's home, the Sunday home church by his mother, the small groups in Oxford, and the small group practices seen in the nonformal influences strengthened the idea of small groupings with children. The shaping the will and breaking of the will are concepts that were also strengthened. We have seen also the expansion of such practices outside the home. It can be safely assumed that the practices of his upbringing were distinct not only in the

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[117] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:141–145.
[118] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:156.
[119] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:332.

Wesley home but were also observed by Wesley elsewhere, as evidenced in the discussions above.

Sunday school can be added into the discussion of the ministries to children that Wesley witnessed and practiced. Sunday school was widespread in the eighteenth century.[120] The early recognition of the Sunday school movement credited to Robert Raikes came about through the work of George Horne, whose work was published in 1786.[121] Horne attributed the Sunday school movement to Robert Raikes.[122] According to Robert Raikes, the motivation behind the movement was due to many children loitering in the streets every Sundays engaged in fighting.[123] Therefore, to address this problem, Raikes engaged in educating this children. According to Raikes, in the Sunday school classes children were educated in religious matters and their behaviors were reformed.[124] Based on Raikes's account, the Sunday School Movement was focus on addressing the effect of poverty, illiteracy of children, moral problems, and peace and order in the community.

Horne, on his side, gave an overview of the Sunday school movement. He first identified the object of the movement, namely, the children of the poor because they composed the majority of the population, and if they were left without religious values, it

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[120] In the Gale database, typing Sunday School as keyword resulted in 1,375 monographs, with the oldest date of publication in 1706. Adding London as place of publication as another parameter it resulted in 771 monographs. When the parameter used was document title, there were 37 resulting monographs.

[121] The Gale Primary Sources of Eighteenth-Century was used here, The researcher entered Sunday School with document title as parameters. George Horne's appeared as the oldest work.

[122] George Horne, *Sunday Schools Recommended in a Sermon* (London: Clarendon Press, 1786), 4.

[123] Robert Raikes, "An Account of the Sunday-Charity Schools, Lately Begun in Various Parts of England," *The Arminian Magazine*, 1785, 41.

[124] Raikes, "Sunday-Charity Schools," 42.

would threaten the harmonious existence of the society.[125] With emphasis on the poor children who worked six days, and as Raikes wanted to improve the condition of the children every Sunday, Sunday school was established in an effort to elevate the value and security of children, and to contribute to the formation of their character both for the society and for work.[126] Horne's work has religious, biblical, and theological emphasis regarding the Sunday school movement. It emphasizes the value formation of children and the benefits of the society from the work of the movement.

On the other hand, some scholars attribute Sunday school to Wesley or the Methodists rather than to Robert Raikes. Byrne does not identify Raikes as the pioneer of the movement, asserting instead, "Wesley anticipated the idea in Georgia 1737; Rev. Theophilus Lindsay started one in his parish in 1763, and Hanna Bell supervised one in 1769."[127] Tyerman even refers to Miss Cooke, a Methodist young lady who suggested the Sunday school idea to Raikes.[128] Gross claims that Wesley was the strongest supporter of the Sunday School movement.[129] Stonehouse supports Gross, saying, "Methodists expressed their care for the souls of children through the Sunday School."[130] Byrne also claims that Wesley's support of Sunday school was in part "due to [Raikes] non-sectarian emphasis."[131] James adds that "Wesley had organized and conducted a Sunday School in

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[125] Horne, *Sunday Schools Recommended in a Sermon*, 5–6.

[126] Horne, *Sunday Schools Recommended in a Sermon*, 10–13.

[127] Herbert W. Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning* (Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing Company, 1997), 129.

[128] L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A., Founder of the Methodists*, 5th ed., vol. 3 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 415.

[129] John O. Gross, *John Wesley, Christian Educator* (Nashville, TN: Board of Education The Methodist Church, 1954), 16. Gross refers to Wesley's journal entries, letters, and Methodist Conference Minutes to support his claims, citing Conference Minutes in 1748 and Wesley's journal entry cited above.

[130] Stonehouse, "Children in Wesleyan Thought," 135.

[131] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 129.

Savannah, Georgia, as early as 1737, fifty years before Robert Raikes."[132] These scholars note the connection between Wesley's endeavors for the religious education of children and Sunday school.

Sunday school was indeed influential to John Wesley. By the time of his journal entry dated February 26, 1737, Wesley already had encountered this idea of ministry to the children. Byrne says that Wesley promoted Sunday School in the Methodist Societies.[133] In this account he recorded a letter reporting the teaching of children to read and write while at the same time receiving catechism every Saturday and Sunday.[134] In Wesley's testimony, he commented on the potential of such schools to become "nurseries for Christians" because children were "restrained from open sin, taught good manners, and read the Bible" by masters.[135] Wesley, before his death, wrote to Charles Atmore telling him, "I am glad you set up Sunday School."[136] He noticed that these schools were on the rise and had a good contribution to the religious education of children. The attendance included both boys and girls, especially poor children, whom Wesley described as children who truly "fear God and some rejoicing in his salvation."[137] The children were reported as themselves ministering to the poor in their community by group to "exhort, comfort, and pray for those who are sick."[138] Although Wesley, did not elaborate whether this was part of the curriculum of the Sunday school or on the initiative

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[132] James, "Wesley's Conception of Religious Education and Conversion," 55.

[133] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 129.

[134] John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock, vol. 1 (London: Robert Culley, n.d.), 322.

[135] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, Complete and Unabridged., vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 284.

[136] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 13 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 119.

[137] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3:414.

[138] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3:414.

of the children themselves as a byproduct of the Sunday school curriculum, Wesley expressed his amazement at what he saw in this church. Wesley's witness of the attendance and the impact on the spiritual lives of children--especially the religious content of Sunday school--served as a motivational factor in his encouragement of Sunday schools in Methodist Churches.

In addition to Sunday school, Wesley recorded other educational practices he witnessed. Wesley was observant of the different school systems he saw during his time. Wesley recorded in his journal entry dated Aug 21, 1738, stories of the rise of schools in Jena, which he dated as covering the years 1704, 1724, and 1728. He reported on experiences of children being "awakened, praying, and building one another;" on the schoolmasters and their work; on how the school was run there—children six to twelve years old being taught to read, taught Holy Scriptures, and being catechized and instructed about principles of Christianity; also children with designated time for work.[139] These observations seemed to express a positive view of the Jena school systems, in contrast to the complaint he had made about public schools earlier.

Even after the establishment of Kingswood School, he continued to seek out positive educational school practices. On Sept 19,1775, Wesley notes a boarding school run by Miss Owen in Publow, of which he remarked, "Everything fit for a Christian to learn is taught here," and how children received his exhortation with eagerness.[140] On Sept 27, 1781, he describes the school by Miss Bishop--who replaced Miss Owen--as a school "worthy to be called a Christian school."[141] In his June 1, 1782, journal entry, he

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[139] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 1:154–156.

[140] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 22:466.

[141] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 23, *Journal and Diaries VI*, ed. Reginald W. Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 224.

notes the school of Lady Maxwell, who taught principles of religion to poor children.[142] Lastly, he comments on Miss Price's (a Quaker) boarding school, describing the children there as "plain in their behavior as well as apparel."[143] These journal entries provide insights into Wesley's personal visitation of different boarding schools run by women. Wesley even reports that he "spent a little time with the children at Miss Harvey's school."[144] These records allow the researcher to understand that Wesley's approach to religious education was not just a by-product of his imagination, but rather, was molded through his different actual observations and experiences of schools and children in different places. Furthermore, judging from Wesley's positive view of the Jena educational system, Wesley seemed to emphasize in his observations the religious aspect of the system.

John Wesley built his own school system, known as the Kingswood School. It is necessary to discuss his experiences in the school system he designed. As observed in this chapter, Wesley experienced education at home, in Charterhouse, and in Oxford. It was also observed that in his writings, he critiqued the school systems, commenting on both positive and negative aspects. We have also discussed Wesley's personal experience with ministry to children. Now, the researcher will give an account of Wesley's Kingswood School, where he implemented his own educational perspectives.

John Wesley and his Methodist group established the Kingswood School in the midsummer of 1748. Wesley had a purpose for the school in mind. In his *Short Account of the School in Kingswood, Near Bristol* (1768), Wesley gives insights into his design of

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[142] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:241.
[143] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:346.
[144] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:339.

the school. Several observations about his school are that the school was designed to train up children in every branch of useful learning; only boarders aged from six to twelve years old were allowed; he desired that children be brought up to fear God; and that children were to obey the rules and should not be taken home by their parents.[145] In Wesley's rules, there were designated times for rising and sleeping, singing, meditation, and prayer; no playing was allowed; children were to walk or work in the presence of a master; no water or food was to be given between meals; and fasting was encouraged upon personal decision, as was public service.[146]

It is clear that John Wesley's setting up of a new school with emphasis on true religion was a byproduct of his experiences in his school, in his visitations with other schools, and reading educational tracts of his time.[147] From these, Wesley had been given more insights which he implemented in his Kingswood school, including the different critiques and motivations in setting up the school. Wesley's work, *A Plain Account of Kingswood School* (1781), elaborates on these. First, he identifies several critiques of the schools of his time: (a) For him, the schools were located in large towns which tempted students to so many things and to the children around, which could divert the students' learning or religion; (b) The unregulated admission of all sorts of children concerned him, especially of those from unbelieving homes, as their presence inside the school could affect other children; (c) He showed concern for children under schoolmasters who had no religion at all and whose teachings were contrary to true religion; (d) Moreover, he showed great concern for the content and delivery of subjects in the schools. He saw

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[145] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:283–288.
[146] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:285–289.
[147] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:289.

them as defective—for him, there was little attention given to subjects such as arithmetic, writing and others; the books were by inferior authors; instructions started from difficult levels instead of the easy ones. [148] These critiques served as a motivation for him to implement changes in putting up a school of his own.

Thus, Wesley set up a school that would address his concerns. Accordingly, in the same work, he explained his changes: He set up a school not far from the town which would house the children, schoolmasters, and servants. He procured masters who were godly. He procured a limited number of scholars, all coming from Christian households and who were eager to learn and obey rules.[149] This was because he recognized the difficulty of handling large numbers of children and the risk of children corrupting each other.[150]

Furthermore, the religious emphasis of his educational system was made clearer. In his writing he explained that the ultimate design of the school was not just to equip children for their future as they learned reading, writing, language, etc. His aim was "to form their minds through the help of God, to wisdom and holiness, by instilling the principles of true religion, speculative and practical, and training them up in the ancient way, that they might be rational, scriptural Christians."[151] This stated aim made clear that the Kingswood school existed with a great emphasis on the religious training of the children. His later work, *Remarks on the State of Kingswood School* (1783), supported his earlier work. In it he declares, "My design in building the house at Kingswood was to

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[148] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:290–293.
[149] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:290–293.
[150] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:293.
[151] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:293.

have therein a Christian family; every member whereof, children excepted, should be alive to God, and a pattern of all holiness. . . to educate a few children according to the accuracy of the Christian model."[152] Indeed, the religious aspect was paramount in his educational system. Wesley's understanding of religion and Christianity was made clear in his other works. He considered Methodism to be a church following the old Scriptural Christianity.[153] This old Scriptural Christianity as understood by Wesley is a religion rooted in love where believers love God and others and engage in different acts of charity works.[154]

Wesley had emphasized his desire that in his Kingswood school children would be instilled with principles of true religion and would be raised or formed into scriptural Christians. Wesley understood that true religion, however, was not about abstaining from sin or doing good deeds; it was about being transformed into Christlikeness, loving God and others, and producing the fruit of the Spirit in one's life.[155] Wesley understood that Scriptural Christians are those people who are filled by the Holy Spirit, who possess the mind of Christ, produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives, love God, and love others.[156] [157] He insisted on the transformation of life among those who put their faith in Christ as a byproduct of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This transformation is primarily focused on the inward change that manifests itself in good works as well as

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[152] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:301.

[153] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:404.

[154] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 21, *Journal and Diaries IV*, ed. Reginald W. Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 20; John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 5, reprint (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 37–52.

[155] Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:476.

[156] John Wesley, "Scriptural Christianity," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Sermons I 1-33*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 160.

[157] John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler, Sermons I 1-33., vol. 1 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 160.

other ways. According to Oden, Wesley was seeking this kind of Christian community which the Oxford students and faculty failed to produce.[158] In Wesley's letter to Mr. T. H., Wesley refers to the Holy Club as an example during his Oxford days in which the members, united, helped one another with the desire to achieve Scriptural Christianity,[159] showing that this theological view had been a motivation of Wesley in his life's ministry, including ministry to children as manifested in his educational perspective.

However, John Wesley's Kingswood School encountered some setbacks along the way that Wesley tried to address. These setbacks were a learning curve for him and shaped his approach to the religious education of children. In his later writing, he states that his assumption that his rules and methods were easily understandable to others--as he himself clearly understood them--proved to be false. He learned from this mistake and acknowledged his shortcomings, saying, "However, after above twenty years' trial, I am convinced this was a supposition not to be made. What is as clear to me as the sun at noon-day, is not so clear to everyone."[160] Thus, we see that the shortcomings in the early years of the school contributed to the maturation of his approach to religious education of children.

So, Wesley identified and analyzed those shortcomings in his work. He also raised several critiques of adults and of the children themselves. These are some of his observations: (a) The housekeepers and maidservants did not attend to the children properly. (b) The masters did not correct the failures of the former and instead some had issues also with their character and behavior, and did not impose the rules of the school,

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[158] Oden, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity: A Plain Exposition of Teaching on Christian Doctrine*, 222.

[159] Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:388.

[160] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:289.

e.g., they instead played with the children and did not watch over the children. (c) As a result, aside from the school staff's corrupting the children, the children were corrupted by their fellow students--also due to the negligence of the adults.[161] His complaint about the disregarding of the rules in the school is also recorded in his journal entry dated Sept 8, 1781. In his complain, Wesley highlights the rule on rising in the morning and laments, "I can plan, but who will execute! I know not, God help me."[162] Likewise, in his journal entry dated July 25, 1749, he also complains that the rules were "habitually neglected."[163]

These frustrations are echoed in his work on the *Remarks of the State of Kingswood School*. This last published work was written 35 years after the opening of the school. Here he again complained about the neglect of the rules in the school both by the children and, most especially, the adults. He comments, "At present the school does not in anywise answer the design of the institution, either with regard to religion or learning . . . The children are not religious. They have not the power, and hardly the form, of religion."[164] It can be observed that Wesley's complaints were mostly directed at the rules not being implemented by the adults in charge of the education of children. Wesley himself recognized the difficulty of finding such god-fearing masters and servants. He reports, "I found it no easy thing to procure such as I desired."[165] However, the different complaints do not automatically suggest that the school of Wesley was a failure. These dates only give a specific time in which he found challenges in his established schools.

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[161] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 20:393–394. See also Wesley journal entry Sept 6, 1771.
[162] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:222.
[163] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 20:292.
[164] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:302.
[165] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:292.

So, in the following section, we will seek to examine the different positive events in the life of the school. By doing so, we will be able to see Wesley's successful endeavors.

John Wesley himself witnessed spiritual victories in his Kingswood school as he ministered to the children. In the early days of Kingswood school, John Wesley sounded the cry of victory when four children experienced justification.[166] His journal entries reveal several testimonies of the spiritual conditions and encounters with children in Kingswood. In his journal entry dated September 16-28, 1770, Wesley records children responding to the challenge of serving God engaging in prayer—they were crying, convinced, and some demonstrated behavioral changes.[167] He further observes that children responded to the working of God and possessed "deep heart conviction from God and that children who were most affected learned faster than the rest."[168] In his journal entry dated March 8, 1768, he records that several children were "serious and that they were in better order."[169] On two occasions, Wesley expresses joy as he saw the school being run just as he designed it to be. On March 5, 1784, he observed how rules were observed and the children were in good order and that the masters were just as he wished for.[170] The same is true in his entry on July 21,1786, where Wesley records his pleasure at how rules were being observed and how the management of children reflected that of the wisdom from above.[171] These testimonies were a motivation for Wesley to continue in running the school. Even though Wesley expressed challenges earlier in his

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[166] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:301.
[167] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 22:250–252.
[168] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 22:251–252.
[169] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 22:120.
[170] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:297.
[171] Wesley, *The Works of Wesley,* vol 23, ed. Ward and Heitzenrater, 23:440.

Remarks on the State of Kingswood School, he was still optimistic because he saw that "no school is better than the present school."[172]

The events surrounding Kingswood School provide insights into Wesley's endeavors in carrying out the religious education of children. The negative and positive events both show how Wesley was firm in his content and methods. There seem to have been no huge changes in his philosophy of education through those years. He only complained about the non-execution of the rules and the difficulty of finding such role model schoolmasters as he had envisioned. Yet, the challenges and the victories give us insights on both the feasibility and the difficulties of his approach.

Summary

This chapter has given us a background of different influences on Wesley in developing his religious education perspective. These influences included the informal educational experiences of Wesley in his childhood days under the care of his mother and the rectory fire experience. The formal educational experiences of Wesley were comprised of his Charterhouse and Oxford school life. The nonformal educational experiences included his missionary journey and experiences with children, his Aldersgate experience, school visitations and observations, observations of children's spiritual experiences, and his Kingswood School experience.

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[172] Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:302.

The next chapter will focus on the discussion of eighteenth-century philosophers' viewpoints on education. These philosophers were identified based on Maddix's work. They will also provide more insights on Wesley's educational perspectives.

CHAPTER III:

PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

This chapter will discuss different philosophies that influenced John Wesley's understanding and approach to the religious education of children. I used Mark Maddix's work to limit and identify the different philosophies that Wesley engaged with.[173] Specifically, this chapter discusses the philosophies of Amos Comenius, John Locke, John Milton, William Law, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The researcher acknowledges that this is not an exhaustive work in the study of the philosophers. The researcher primarily limits his study to the primary works of the philosophers regarding education. Although Maddix did not include the work of Rousseau, I have added it because John Wesley reacted against Rousseau's approach to the education of children. Wesley's critique of Rousseau will add depth to his distinctive approach towards religious education of children.

The philosophies that Wesley encountered during his lifetime led to the evolution and formation of his own philosophy of education. Although Wesley was not known as a philosopher, he displayed the capacity to be one. In John Byrne's work, he shows how Wesley possessed such ability as a scholar; his writings reveal quotes from philosophers such as Socrates, Aquinas, Bacon, and Locke, and even involved critiques of their works (including Rousseau); his methodology—his observations, investigation, written record,

[173] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 61.

comparison, and induction from experience—were used by philosophers also.[174] There were some he adapted and some he rejected. Though not an interest exclusive to Wesley, according to Alfred Body, the main concern of Wesley's criticisms of the school system of his time was the lack of religion and religious motive.[175] Body is correct. As discussed in the previous chapter, Wesley himself wrote several critiques regarding the school in his time and even critiqued the failure of religious education due to a poor understanding of religion and the manner of instructing children which led to its inefficacy. These were part of the motivation of Wesley towards the pursuit of religious education of children. To understand these motivations more fully, the researcher will now discuss the respective philosophies of education that are most relevant for understanding Wesley's approach.

John Amos Comenius

John Amos Comenius was born in Moravia in 1592 and died in Amsterdam in 1670. Anthony says that Comenius, who received a Lutheran theological education, was called the father of modern education.[176] Comenius was a Moravian educational reformer.[177] His work entitled *The Great Didactic* will be the primary focus of this section to gain insight into his philosophy of education.

In his *The Great Didactic*, Comenius reveals several foundational ideas towards religious education of children. The starting point of his ideas regarding education was his view of humanity in relationship to God. This is the prevailing thought of his first

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[174] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 67–73.

[175] Body, *Wesley and Education*, 47.

[176] Michael J Anthony, *Foundations of Ministry: An Introduction to Christian Education for a New Generation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1998), 47.

[177] Margaret Drabble, ed., *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 5th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 218.

three chapters. There he emphasizes the idea that humanity was created and destined to be God's companion for eternity.[178] He believed that "the ultimate end of [humanity] is beyond this life," and that the present life was no other than "a preparation for eternity."[179] He makes clear in a later chapter that "the ultimate end of [humans] is eternal happiness with God."[180] His educational perspective was founded in this theological belief. From here, he laid out the importance and necessity of religious education of children. This perspective looks at educating children in the present towards their future life with God in eternity.

In order to achieve humanity's purpose, Comenius recognizes the human capacities endowed by God. These capacities are "erudition, virtue, and religion."[181] As explained in his work regarding erudition and religion, he states that humanity was equipped with the capacity to know and understand things, and at the same time has the capacity to have a relationship with God and recognize him as the source of all things.[182] These capacities are distinct from other creations, making humans unique. However, the ultimate design of such capacities was to achieve humanity's purpose, that is, to be a companion of God in eternity.

As discussed above, the endowments were only capabilities to understand, form a relationship with God, and live life according to God's ways. As Ulich, the editor of the book *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom* explains, although humanity was created with these capabilities, "It does not give knowledge, morality, and religion

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[178] John Amos Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, ed. M. W. Keatinge (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1896), 177.

[179] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 179–184.

[180] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 189.

[181] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 190.

[182] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 189.

themselves."[183] Children still need to be taught. They still need to learn through their senses.[184] From this concept alone we can see the need for religious education. On top of that, Comenius also considered the effect of the fall on human beings. In answer to the argument of the weakening of these faculties due to the fall, Comenius argues, "I reply, weakened, yes, but not extinguished."[185] He continues reasoning, "It is much more difficult now that it can have been in the state of perfection, since not only are things obscure, but tongues are confused."[186] With his consideration of the fall, Comenius highlights the important role of conducting religious education of children. This is where education will play its part towards achieving the goal.

Comenius also saw the necessity of the establishment of schools. He understood that schools were the right avenue for education. He gave several reasons for this. For him, school focuses on specialization, parents do not have enough time to instruct their children, and children learn better in large classes.[187] In support of the latter, he reasoned, children are more easily led "by example than by precept."[188] So, he saw the great role of modeling in the education of children. Moreover, he supported the idea that both sexes should be sent to school, no matter their economic status or where they live.[189] Thus, he was inclusive and nondiscriminatory in his approach. His reason was anchored in the idea that both sexes were created in the image of God and were endowed with the same

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[183] Robert Ulich, *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom: Selections from Great Documents* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947), 341.

[184] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 195.C

[185] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 237. The faculties here will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

[186] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 206.

[187] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 215.

[188] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 216.

[189] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 218.

capacities and purpose. So, for him, none should be deprived of learning. Comenius gave additional ideas about the school system. He suggested that children must stay the whole time in school "until their training is complete," and so "they must persevere in their studies."[190] He added that the school must be "situated in a quiet spot, far from noise and distractions."[191]

Comenius's educational perspective was a byproduct of several observations of the school system of his time. He observed the lack of schools in small villages, and he saw that schools were primarily built for the rich; the methods of instruction were severe and created dislike of learning among students; and there was a lack of emphasis on piety and virtue.[192] From these critiques, it is clear that Comenius saw the defective practices of the contemporary educational system which he sought to address. Therefore, Comenius promoted an educational practice that addressed all the above critiques.[193] From his reasoning described above, it can be seen that he wanted a school that would produce learning, character, and relationship with God. All of these were geared towards eternal life with God.

Comenius's educational critiques focused on time, arrangement of subjects, and the kind of methods used in instruction.[194] Regarding the latter, he wanted methods that would entice love for learning, not antipathy. At the same time, in the subjects or lessons, he wanted natural progression of learning, where the capacities of the comprehension of children were greatly considered, and learning would be slowly built up according to

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[190] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 269.
[191] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 277.
[192] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 229–231.
[193] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 233.
[194] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 248.

their comprehension.[195] This was Comenius's perspective on how the problems in the educational system of his time could be addressed. This was how he believed effective education could be done.

Another philosophical foundation of Comenius's educational philosophy lies in his teaching approach. For him, the art of instruction was to be borrowed from the operations of nature.[196] In one example, he used the idea of a fish: if a person ought to learn to swim, he should use his hands as the alternative for fins.[197] For Comenius, approaches that did not consider the natural way of things would be defective. By learning from the principles observed in nature, one would be successful and efficient in their educational endeavors.

This idea was evident in nine principles which Comenius offered in order to conduct effective instructions. These principles were:

1. Nature observes a suitable time.
2. Nature prepares the material, before she begins to give it form.
3. Nature chooses a fit subject to act upon, or first submits one to a suitable treatment in order to make it fit.
4. Nature is not confused in its operations, but, in its forward progress, advances distinctly from one point to another.
5. In all the operations of nature, development is from within.
6. Nature, in its formative process, begins with the universal and ends with the particular.

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[195] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 266, 274.
[196] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 252.
[197] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 250.

7. Nature makes no leaps, but proceeds step by step.

8. If nature commences anything, it does not leave off until the operation is completed.

9. Nature carefully avoids obstacles and things likely to cause hurt.[198]

We see in these principles that Comenius had greatly considered the cognitive capabilities of the child which the teacher must take into account. He also gave thought to the timing of instruction. According to Comenius's philosophy, education should start early. He believed that the minds of children can easily be bent and formed in their early years and difficult to alter in their later years.[199] He understood that children's experiences around them received through their senses will be instilled in their minds.[200] Therefore, education of children--especially in the development of their character--is important because it will be difficult to alter in their later years.

Comenius's writings also emphasize the progression of learning, focusing on moving from easy lessons to more difficult ones, He wanted to make sure that the lessons are prepared in accordance with the cognitive capacity of children. He wanted to start from what the children understand and build from there. He did not want to overwhelm the minds of children with many lessons but rather to focus on one at a time. With this, the child will learn substantially and enjoy their studies

There are additional ideas in Comenius approach to education. He highlights praise and discipline. Comenius encouraged parents and teachers to stimulate learning among children. With regards to praise, he believed that it would make children "like the

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[198] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 263–278. Comenius' emphasis on nature was overly biase.
[199] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 209–210.
[200] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 210–211.

lessons and their teachers and have confidence in them."[201] By this, he asserted that praising children for their accomplishments or giving them rewards would stimulate their desire for learning. On the other hand, Comenius promoted discipline only for moral issues and not for academic exercise.[202] He wrote, "An offence against God is a crime, and should be promptly and sternly corrected."[203] However, even with such promotion of discipline, he was cautious with the implementation. He made clear that extreme measures were to be done only when gentle methods failed and were exhausted. [204] He even discouraged parents from punishing children out of anger or dislike.[205]

John Locke

John Locke was born in 1632 at Wrington and was baptized on August 29. According to Byrne, Locke was "the most prominent educator of the early eighteenth century."[206] Peter Gibbon claims that Locke's work *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* was "the most celebrated treatise on education throughout the eighteenth-century."[207] This is evidenced by the mention of Locke's name in the work of Susanna Wesley and John Wesley.[208] Locke is also mentioned in the works of Philipp Doddridge

[201] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 282.
[202] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 402–403.
[203] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 403.
[204] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 404.
[205] Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, 401.
[206] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 130.
[207] Peter Gibbon, "Discovering Childhood: John Locke on Education," *Humanities* 41, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): n.p.
[208] See: Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 501. And Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:455.

and Andrew Kippis.[209] Rousseau also refers to Locke.[210] These eighteenth-century writers demonstrate the wide influence of John Locke.

In Locke's educational philosophy, the understanding of the mind plays an important role. He believed that the mind was like a "white-paper, void of all characters, without any ideas."[211] Therefore for him, all knowledge comes from experience through the senses and how the mind processes information.[212] This serves as foundational principle in his education of children. For him the main goal of education "is to set the mind right, that on all occasions it may be disposed to consent to nothing but what may be suitable to the dignity and excellency of a rational creature."[213] This basic understanding guides Locke's educational philosophy.

With this concept of the mind of children, Locke saw the vital role of education. For him, what the child will become or how they will behave as adults—good or bad, useful or not—depends on their early education.[214] He asserts that children's minds can easily be shaped this way or that and so due diligence is needed in their early instructions because it will shape what kind of person they will be.[215] So, early education of the

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[209] See: Philip Doddridge, *Sermons on the Religious Education of Children; Preached at Northampton* (London: Portsmouth, 1790), 28; Andrew Kippis, *A Sermon Preached at the Old Jewry, on Wednesday the 26th of April, 1786, on Occassion of a New Academical Institution, Among Protestant Dissenters, for the Education of Their Ministers and Youth* (London: H. Goldney, 1786), 2, 45.

[210] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Rousseau's Emile or Treatise on Education*, trans. William H. Payne (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1909), 299.

[211] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding*, 6th ed., vol. 1 (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1710), 67.

[212] Locke, *Humane Understanding 6th*, 1:67–68.

[213] John Locke, *Locke on Politics, Religion, and Education*, ed. Maurice Cranston (New York: Collier Books, 1965), 157.

[214] John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, 7th ed. (London: Printed for A. and J. Churchill, 1712), 3.

[215] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 2.

children's mind is a necessary and strategic step in raising them up. It should be given high importance and value.

In Locke's educational theory, early discipline is seen as an important step in educating children's minds. Locke suggests that children be disciplined early and occasionally.[216] He states that children will have desires, but that not all desires are for their own good or benefit. So, for him, the goal of such discipline is to teach children to submit their will to the reason of others, so that they will then submit to their own reason when they grow up, to their advantage.[217] By doing so, children will learn virtues and get rid of vices or bad habits. They will be able to discipline or control themselves by their reason as they recognize what is beneficial or bad for them and for others as they mature.

Another goal of discipline for Locke focuses on governing children early. He declares that respect for parents when they are old starts with parental submission in the children's younger years.[218] Parents are to inculcate early in the minds of children the authority of parents. By doing so, it will not be difficult for children to submit to parents when they are mature. In order to achieve this, discipline, love, and friendship are to be instilled in the minds of children.

Although Locke promotes discipline with rod or strict hand, he does not promote it recklessly. He contends that the age and constitution of children should be considered, and most especially, he insists that severe discipline or constant beating is counterproductive to education.[219] Accordingly, he argues that frequent beating should be

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[216] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 36.
[217] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 37.
[218] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 44.
[219] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 47.

avoided.[220] It should be rarely used and only in extreme cases.[221] Whipping should be the last remedy,[222] used only "when gentler ways have been tried and proved unsuccessful."[223] Thus, it is clear that Locke does not promote extreme correction.

In order to win children's obedience and respect towards their parents, Locke taught that there is a time that the rod of correction should pass. He states, "Fear and Awe ought to give you the first power over their minds, and love and friendship in riper years to hold it."[224] As children grow mature in reason, another approach--one based on relationship--is preferred. By following a relationship-based approach, children understand the correction being done to them as part of the love and friendship shown by parents, and they will see it as an act of kindness and love towards them. Thus, to bring children to obedience and respect to parents in their older years, parents ought to transition to love and friendship in later years rather than continuing with the rod of correction.

Byrne identifies factors that contributed to Locke's ideas of discipline or correction. First, he describes two kinds of parents. He writes, "There were those who coddled and pampered their children to the point where they become pests. Others were too severe with their children. Kind parents were too foolish and severe parents were monsters."[225] Bryne understands that these were contributing factors in Locke's approach to discipline or correction. A second issue he explains is the cruelty of school masters. So,

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[220] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 59.
[221] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 52.
[222] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 105.
[223] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 106.
[224] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 46.
[225] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 130.

in addition to parents, Bryne acknowledges Locke's critiques of the educational system. He states, "The school masters were cruel, and schools were viewed as dens of iniquity to him."[226] Earlier, Whiteley had made similar observations. He points out, "Locke bewailed the poor quality of some schoolmasters, grieved over the mixed herd of unruly boys, the lax morals and the rowdy ways . . . He stressed the importance of good company, of making learning attractive, of banishing drudgery and overmuch memory work."[227] All these factors provide greater understanding of the perspective of Locke towards the correction of children. At the same time, it adds depth to our understanding of the educational system of that time.

Returning to Locke's understanding of the mind as blank paper, this also holds true in Locke's thoughts on the notion of God among children. This was important to the discussion of religious education of children since theology was part of the educational endeavors of the time. According to Naglee, Locke rejected Plato's doctrine of innate ideas.[228] Naglee explains that the popular belief at that time was "that the idea of God is stamped upon the soul of man from birth as a constituent part of his essential nature."[229] However, Locke disagreed with this and postulated that the senses, perception, and reasoning allow humanity to come to know God through the evidence revealed in the creation. J. Caleb Clanton gives four reasons why Locke refuted the claim that the idea of God is innate in children. Clanton argues that Locke would explain (1) innate ideas of God could not be found in newborn babies; (2) ideas of God were not universally

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[226] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 130.

[227] Whiteley, *Wesley's England*, 270.

[228] David Ingersoll Naglee, "The Significance of the Relationship of Infant Baptism and Christian Nurture in the Thought of John Wesley" (PhD diss, Temple University, 1966), 155.

[229] Naglee, "Christian Nurture," 155.

possessed by humanity—e.g., atheists; (3) there was no consistency in the belief in God among people who believe in God; (4) and, if the idea of God was innate, then it should be clear and uniform, but this does not appear so.[230] However, even with this view, Locke still believed that knowledge of God was attainable. He believed that God has given us faculties to know him through our senses, perception, and use of reason.[231] Therefore, religious education of children for Locke was still possible, and consequently, instilling the knowledge of God in children early was an important task. Locke states, "[It] ought very early to be imprinted on [the child's] mind a true notion of God, as the independent Supreme being, Author and Maker of all things, from whom we receive all our good, who loves us and gives us all things; and, consequent to it, a love and reverence of this Supreme being."[232] Included in Locke's ideas on the instilling of knowledge of God is the instruction to pray and praise Him, and to be truthful and good-natured.[233] In this way, children will learn to understand God and His role in their lives and in the world. At the same time, children will be able to care for others also.

Locke, on the other hand, cautions parents on instilling fear of spirits, goblins, or apprehensions of fear in the dark,[234] as this kind of fear in children is counterproductive. Once it sinks into their minds, it will be difficult to reverse and will terrorize children, especially when alone.[235] Therefore, adults should refrain from this methodology to control children.

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[230] J. Caleb Clanton, "John Calvin and John Locke on the Sensus Divinitatis and Innatism," *Religions* 8, no. 2 (December 31, 2017): 10.

[231] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding*, 7th ed., vol. 2 (London: Printed J. Churchill, 1715), 239.

[232] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 203–204.

[233] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 205–208.

[234] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 205.

[235] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 206.

In approaching religious education of children, Locke proposes several ideas. Locke suggests that when the child begins to talk is the time when a child should begin to be taught to read.[236] However, Locke does not want to force reading as a task to children which might discourage enthusiasm in learning.[237] Instead, he envisions approaching it as play or recreation to encourage learning. He also encourages learning by heart through repetition.[238] In here he included the learning of the Lord's prayer, the Creeds, and Ten Commandments. By the latter, he means that even before having the ability to read, children can already learn by repetition. The whole goal for each approach seeks to instruct children to learn with depth and to engrave lessons in their minds. In this approach, he considers the different capacities of children and at the same time the kind of material children are to learn.[239] For example, for him, it was easy for children to learn through biblical stories because they are easily retained in the minds of children. Meanwhile, for other lessons, he advocated methods such as catechism, a question and answer approach.[240] Locke saw these approaches as the best way to motivate children to learn, help them retain lessons in their memory, and make the teaching comprehensible to them as their understanding enables them.

Another area Locke touches on for parents was moral training. Here, he emphasizes the idea "not to think meanly of ourselves, and not to think meanly of others."[241] Locke emphasizes here one's behavior before others. He encourages parents to

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[236] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 226.
[237] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 227.
[238] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 234.
[239] Locke, *Humane Understanding 6th*, 1:235.
[240] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 236–237.
[241] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 211.

instruct children to conduct themselves in a civil manner, in which they must show respect to other people and not to boast of themselves highly before others.[242] This behavior before others was to be expected among children.

In summary, John Locke's philosophy was rooted in his belief that the mind possesses no innate knowledge. All knowledge is a byproduct of one's encounter with the world through the senses. He recognized the contributing factor of the experiences of the child, as well as the influence of parents and other adults in the education of children. He recognized the uniqueness of the child with the child's different capacities and tempers. He also recognized the parents' roles, responsibilities, and limitations. He observed and described the characteristics of children. He articulated what he regarded as the optimal approach and the erroneous approach to education in his point of view.

John Milton

John Milton was born on December 9, 1668, in London. He was raised in a Puritan context, and his work *Tractate of Education* was published in June 1664, when he was 35. Milton's tractate is not a theory of education but rather a teaching method.[243] Nevertheless, this work will be the primary focus of this section to uncover Milton's educational philosophy.

Milton expresses his motivational idea regarding education in an early statement of his work. Milton writes, "The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue,

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[242] Locke, *Concerning Education*, 211–212.

[243] Tyrus Hillway, "Milton's Theory of Education," *College English* 5, no. 7 (April 1944): 376.

which being united to the heavenly grace of faith makes up the highest perfection."[244] Although his idea is theologically loaded, the work is not entirely about religious education of children.[245] It barely speaks of approaches nor lessons on regaining knowledge of God to love or imitate him.

Instead, Milton emphasizes promoting an educational system that would seek to prepare children to "perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war."[246] Milton's educational endeavor focuses on rearing citizens.[247] Thus, Milton intends that children in his school will be taught in the "knowledge of virtue and the hatred of vice."[248] With the absence of religious education emphasis, the work of Milton focuses more on secular studies. This seems to serve as the focus of Milton's educational endeavors.

In Milton's educational perspective, he presented several critiques of the educational system of his time. These critiques involved: (1) too much time (7 or 8 years) spent on learning Latin and Greek; (2) too many idle vacancies in schools and universities; (3) teaching first intellective abstractions of logic and metaphysics instead of easy examples.[249] Milton realized how such approaches wasted children's time in school just to learn these languages or terms. Thompson explains that, for Milton, "The study of

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[244] John Milton, *Tractate of Education*, ed. Edward Morris (London: MacMillan and Co., 1895), 4.

[245] The researcher does not include discussion regarding different subjects presented in the tractate and focuses only on selected approaches and those with religious content.

[246] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 9.

[247] Elbert N.S. Thompson, "Milton's 'of Education,'" *Studies in Philology* 15, no. 2 (April 1918): 169.

[248] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 15–16.

[249] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 5–7. According to Thompson, when Milton criticizes the idea of too many idle vacancies, he is referring to the frequent saints day, (Thompson, "Milton's 'of Education,'" 160).

language is not an end in itself but simply a tool for the attainment of knowledge." [250] Graves comments that Milton is more concerned with content or ideas and real-life application than learning specific vocabulary.[251] For Milton, the real message being portrayed beyond the use of words and the significance of that message in real life is more important in education. Another concern was the process of the educational system, which emphasized the difficult subjects first instead of the easy ones, which for him later discourages learning among children. These were some of the motivations of Milton in his contribution to educational perspectives.

In Milton's tractate, one of his approaches to education involves his concern with the capacity of the school and the length of stay in the school. He states, "First, to find out a spacious house and ground . . . should be at once both School and University, not heeding a remove to any other house of scholarship."[252] With this, Milton, is proposing that children stay in the same school for the duration of their study.[253] From his perspective, the school thus serves as a boarding school for the children. He said that the number of students to be accommodated should be calculated according to the convention of a foot company or two troops of cavalry.[254] The students enrolled in this boarding school range in ages from twelve to twenty-one.[255]

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[250] Thompson, "Milton's 'of Education,'" 165.

[251] Frank Pierrepont Graves, *Great Educators of Three Centuries: Their Work and Its Influence in Modern Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), 2.

[252] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 10.

[253] According to Riley, Milton limits his students to boys with the idea of preparing them for public service, William Riley Parker, "Education: Milton's Ideas and Ours," *College English* 24, no. 1 (October 1962): 4.

[254] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 10. The usage of war military language was due to the issue of war during his time. According to Thompson, Milton saw the need for schools to prepare children in such a crisis, (Thompson, "Milton's 'of Education,'" 172)..

[255] Graves, *Great Educators of Three Centuries*, 6.

In Milton's educational perspective, there is also some religious content. Part of the schedule of the day was religious in nature. He proposes, "After evening repast, till bedtime, their thoughts will be best taken up in the easy grounds of Religion, and the story of Scripture."[256] He further instructs, "Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of Theology, and Church History ancient and Modern."[257] Here Milton incorporates religious aspects and contents in his educational endeavors. However, Milton does not provide much detail regarding his choices, but simply incorporates the subjects by name in his curriculum.

This sums up the most relevant aspects of Milton's educational perspective. Even with these limited ideas, Milton still had some influence on John Wesley which will be discussed in Chapter V below on the content of John Wesley's sermons.

William Law

William Law, who lived 1686-1761, was born at King's Cliffe, Northamptonshire. Law published many works, and two of his most famous works are *A Practical Treatise on Christian Perfection* and *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life.*[258] According to Stapleton, although Law was ordained, he was deprived of fellowship and church appointments due to non-allegiance to George I.[259] On top of this, Stapleton argues that Law lost some of his acolytes, including John Wesley, when Law praised Jakob Boehme's mystical writings.[260]

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[256] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 12.

[257] Milton, *Tractate of Education*, 17.

[258] Michael Stapleton, *The Cambridge Guide to English Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 508.

[259] Stapleton, *The Cambridge Guide to English Literature*, 508.

[260] Stapleton, *The Cambridge Guide to English Literature*, 508.

Two chapters written by William Law reveal his educational perspective. These writings are addressed to both sexes. He raises the issue of the lack of piety among men, e.g., humility.[261] He also talks about the issue of pride among daughters.[262] In essence, both chapters cover the topic of humility but differ in application as Law addresses specific gender roles.

The comments on humility or pride have their roots in Law's understanding of the fall and human nature. In both chapters, William Law explicitly reveals his understanding. In the first chapter on men, he writes,

> Had we continued perfect, as God created the first man, perhaps the perfection of our nature had been a sufficient self-instruction for every one [*sic*]. But as sickness and diseases have created the necessity of medicines and physicians, so the change and disorder of our rational nature have introduced the necessity of education and tutors. And as the only end of the physician is to restore nature to its own state, so the only end of education is to restore our rational nature to its proper state. Education, therefore, is to be considered as a reason borrowed at second-hand, which is, as far as it can, to supply the loss of original perfection. And as physic may justly be called the art of restoring health, so education should be considered in no other light, than as the art of recovering to man the use of his reason.[263]

In this statement, Law asserts that education is a product of necessity due to the fallen nature of human beings. Thus, religious education is a necessary tool in addressing the rational defects brought by the fall.

In his work titled "Educating Daughters," he gives more of a detailed understanding of the effect of the fall in humanity. Law describes children as fallen spirits

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[261] William Law, "How Unfavorable the Spirit in Which Men Are Educated Is to the Growth of Humility," in *Wholly for God the True Christian Life: A Series of Extracts from the Writings of William Law*, ed. Andrew Murray (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1894), 271.

[262] William Law, "How in the Education of Our Daughters the Spirit of Pride Is Fostered," in *Wholly for God the True Christian Life: A Series of Extracts from the Writings of William Law*, ed. Andrew Murray (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1894), 279.

[263] Law, "Men," 271–272. I have chosen to include this long quote verbatim because Wesley quoted Law's idea on this point of his sermon.

with manifestations of corruption and disorder both in temper and passions, which affects both reason and action.[264] However, he clarifies that the corrupt nature is not the only one existing in humanity since the fall. He believed that humanity has a dual kind of existence. In his terms: "We had two hearts within us; with the one we see, and taste, and admire reason, purity, and holiness: with the other we incline to pride, and vanity, and sensual delights."[265] With such understanding, his educational endeavors focus on preserving and perfecting what is "rational, holy, and divine in our nature, and to mortify, remove, and destroy all that vanity, pride, and sensuality which springs from the corruption of our state." [266] Therefore, for Law, education is both an important tool necessary in addressing the effect of the fall and the continuation of the original design of God in humanity.

Now, understanding Law's idea of education and where his idea of reason was anchored is important for our discussion also. He emphasizes the importance of the recovery of reason in his approach to education. In talking about recovery of reason, Law acknowledges the valuable lessons and wisdom acquired by ancient people--including the Christian saints--which were used in the educational system to help improve lives.[267] This wisdom fuels Law's thrust on the relevance and importance of religious education of children in addressing the corruption of human nature and the preservation and perfecting of the other nature as stated in his statement above.

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[264] Law, "Educating Daughters," 283.
[265] Law, "Educating Daughters," 284.
[266] Law, "Educating Daughters," 284.
[267] Law, "Men," 272–273.

Upon recognizing the effects of the fall, Law criticizes the educational frame of mind during his time, especially regarding the issue of pride and humility. He states, "The first temper that we try to awaken in children is pride . . . we stir them up to vain thoughts of themselves, and do everything up to puff up their minds with a sense of their own abilities."[268] By this he meant that parents are persuaded by the idea that feeding the "ambition, and a desire of glory, are necessary to excite young people to industry"[269] However, Law disagrees with this. Instead, he proposes humility—the real temper which will lead to motivation. He uses Jesus and the apostles as great examples of humility in their character and vocation.[270] He also uses Paternus, who taught his children to worship and adore God, love neighbors, and hate and despise all human glory.[271] Therefore, for Law, confronting the wrong practices and embracing wisdom is the main goal of education. Thus, education should teach children "how to think, and judge, and act, according to the strictest laws of Christianity."[272] This makes clear the purpose of educational endeavors.

Law's other work, "Educating Daughters," adds depth to his educational perspective. First, in alignment with the cultural expectations of his time, Law affirms a specific vocation for mothers. According to Law, mothers should focus on the childrearing aspect of their duties.[273] Mothers' significance is connected to the upbringing of children, from which the result—either good or bad physically and

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[268] Law, "Men," 274.
[269] Law, "Men," 275.
[270] Law, "Men," 276.
[271] Law, "Men," 277–278.
[272] Law, "Men," 274.
[273] Law, "Educating Daughters," 280.

mentally— depends on their childrearing.[274] Thus, by his explanation, with fathers working outside, mothers spend more time in nurturing children. Accordingly, they exert greater influence on the development of the child. This is one reason Law saw the significance of religious education of children.

Besides the importance of embracing their role, the methods of mothers are a concern of Law in his religious education approach. Again, with his belief on the corrupted nature of children, Law criticizes parents for their childrearing approach in his time. He was concerned about parents spoiling daughters with worldly pleasure (delight in beauty and a fondness for finery), which for him produces pride and affectation.[275] For Law, developing such tempers among children produces an absence or lack of piety among them. So, he felt that the method current in his time was not helping produce piety among children.

To address this issue, Law encourages parents to train their children in preparation for their role, to remind children that they are fallen spirits; to keep their body healthy to be useful, available for charitable duties and pious living; to see parental labor as a service to them and others; and to pray and practice humility.[276] These interventions and principles of nurture address his theological beliefs concerning the nature of humanity, his view of the role of women in the home, and his concerns with an adult mindset that promotes vanity among daughters.

In summary, Law's two chapters discussing the nurture of children seek to address the lack of piety among children and the issue of pride. The root cause for him lies in the

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[274] Law, "Educating Daughters," 280.
[275] Law, "Educating Daughters," 280–281.
[276] Law, "Educating Daughters," 282–287.

educational system or mindset of that time. He laments that the educational mindset fuels children's pride. With his belief in the corrupt nature of humanity, he seeks to prevent such pride from developing or growing within them.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Jean-Jacques Rousseau lived from 1712-1778. He was born in Geneva to Isaac and Susannah Rousseau and was one of fifteen children.[277] Though Mustafa Onder recognizes, Rousseau as "one of the forerunners of the Enlightenment movement," in his article "J.J. Rousseau, *Emile* and Religious Education," Onder criticizes the educational model of Rousseau.[278] He points out that Rousseau's model was "not practiced in any country in the world."[279] Dung Bui Xuan and Thanh Bui Xuan explain that Rousseau's educational approach "rejects the formal teaching methods of his time, believing that they lead to the suppression of natural inclinations in a child."[280] Rousseau preferred experiential knowledge to book knowledge. Even with such a negative critique, Rousseau must still be explored in order to add depth in the pursuit of finding the distinctiveness of Wesley's religious education of children.

The researcher will primarily focus and limit his study on Rousseau's work *Emile, or On Education*, specifically on the religious aspect of education. From this, the researcher will identify Rousseau's religious educational philosophy. This philosophy

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[277] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, trans. W. Conyngham Mallory (N.p.: Brintano's Inc, 1928), 4.

[278] Mustafa Onder, "J. J. Rousseau, *Emile* and Religious Education," *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 6, no. 7 (2018): 1539.

[279] Onder, "J. J. Rousseau, Emile and Religious Education," 1539.

[280] Dung Bui Xuan and Thanh Bui Xuan, "Rousseau's Philosophical and Educational Innovation in Vietnam Today," *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 12, no. 4 (2021): 201.

will then be compared to the writings of Wesley and his contemporaries to see if they borrowed from Rousseau or were in any way similar or different from Rousseau's philosophy of education.

Rousseau held the idea, "Everything is good as it comes from the hands of the Author of Nature; but everything degenerates in the hands of man."[281] Payne commented that the use of the word nature comes from the influence of Spencerian school model to which Rousseau subscribed, understanding it as "the world of matter and of physical forces, personified as an intelligent and infallible guide."[282] This first statement of Rousseau in his book *Emile* serves as the guiding principle in his view of education. There are several ideas in this statement that are relevant to the idea of the religious education of children. One such idea focuses on children's innocence. The other one focuses on the educational aspect.

Regarding the former, it can be observed that Rousseau frequently refers to the innocence of children—e.g., "I see but one good means of preserving the innocence of children; and this is, that all those who surround them respect and love it."[283] Willhauck remarks that, as a naturalist educator, Rousseau held the belief that children were naturally good, and this belief posed a direct challenge to those who believed in child depravity.[284] Calderon sees two implications of this belief, namely, the preservation of

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[281] Rousseau, *Emile*, 1.

[282] Rousseau, *Emile*, 1.

[283] Rousseau, *Emile*, 199. Another statement of Rousseau is, "On this earth where Nature has made the first paradise of man, beware of acting the part of the tempter by trying to give to innocence the knowledge of good and evil" (Rousseau, *Emile*, 63).

[284] Willhauck, "John Wesley's View of Children," 27.

natural goodness and virtue, and the preservation of individual freedom.[285] From this point of view, it is clear that Rousseau's aim in the education of children was to preserve, protect, and nurture their innocence. This serves as the foundation of Rousseau's motivation in education.

Thus, regarding the educational aspect, Rousseau, as mentioned already, declares that everything degenerates in the hands of human beings. In another statement, Rousseau states, "I do not regard as a system of public instruction these ridiculous establishments called colleges."[286] This statement reveals Rousseau's concern about the educational system of his time. Ornstein and Levine explain that in Rousseau's thinking, society "ignored the child's natural interests and inclinations."[287] Instead, it imposes its idea on the children, which Rousseau aims to free them from, according to Calderon.[288] For Maddix, Rousseau's method "opposes academic pursuits and favors life experiences in childhood education."[289] So, describing the application of Rousseau's educational approach, Peckover sums it up saying, "The best thing that humans can do for their own education is to participate in and avoid interfering with, Nature's way."[290]

Another idea implicit in Rousseau's statement deals with his understanding of children, especially their cognitive abilities. Rousseau understood that infants (1-5 years old) are incapable of right reasoning and even older children (5 to 12 yrs old) cannot yet

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[285] Jose F. Calderon, *Foundations of Education*, 1st ed. (Manila: Rex Bookstore, 1998), 362. Calderon remarks that this society includes "the state, the church, and the aristocratic society," (Calderon, *Foundations of Education*, 362).

[286] Rousseau, *Emile*, 7.

[287] Allan C Ornstein and Daniel U Levine, *An Introduction to the Foundations of Education*, 3rd ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985), 115.

[288] Calderon, *Foundations of Education*, 362.

[289] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 66.

[290] Christopher Peckover, "Realizing the Natural Self: Rousseau and the Current System of Education," *Philosophical Studies in Education* 43 (2012): 85.

discern good from bad.[291] Equipped with this understanding, Rousseau's educational approach can be understood as a child--focused approach. It greatly considers the natural cognitive learning capacity of the child. It allows children to learn in a natural way. Calderon explains that children learn through their senses through observation, investigation, and experience.[292] So, adults should not be allowed to impose or superimpose their ideas on children. Instead, they must allow children to develop their ideas, make sense of their experience, and understand things from their own point of view.

The implications of Rousseau's educational perspective include the religious education of children. So, as discussed above, when it comes to the religious education of children, Rousseau insisted that it should not start early. In his own work, he talks about not instructing the child about religion or God even at the age of fifteen because he believed they were not yet capable of understanding it.[293] From this reasoning, it is evident that he put much value on the cognitive capacity of the child to understand God before receiving instruction. William Payne agrees with this, explaining that for Rousseau, the absence of clear comprehension, underdeveloped logic, and inadequate notions of God were bases for the non-instruction of children about religion.[294] John Darling presents two more clear explanations of Rousseau's beliefs. First, he claims that faith—i.e., faith in God—needs to be understood; without such understanding, there will be no genuine faith produced in children. [295] Second, Rousseau held views such as that

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[291] Calderon, *Foundations of Education*, 365.

[292] Calderon, *Foundations of Education*, 363.

[293] Rousseau, *Emile*, 230.

[294] Rousseau, *Emile*, 231.

[295] John Darling, "Understanding and Religion in Rousseau's Emile," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 33, no. 1 (1985): 24–25.

premature exposure to religious language results in error, and this erroneous learning will be permanently embedded as the child grows into adulthood.[296] In other words, Rousseau did not want to risk forcing religious education on children who were not yet cognitively ready to understand all the mysteries behind it and consequently live all the days of their life believing a wrong understanding of God.

On the other hand, Onder's explanation of Rousseau's approach to children's religious education is more about self-discovery as they mature cognitively. Onder explains that children ages 12-13 focus their questions more on the basic natural order, while after this stage, they begin to realize that beyond this greatness and order there is an originator.[297] Onder summarizes this saying, "[The child] discovers the creator without need for any guide and teacher."[298] Rousseau would agree with this statement since, for Rousseau, "The natural progress of his intelligence carries his researches in that direction."[299] Aside from not forcing children to learn religious things and ways, parents are to wait for the right time, when the cognitive capacity of children is already ripe for them to understand and reason in order to have genuine faith.

In conclusion, Rousseau's concept of the religious education of children embraces the belief that children are innocent, and he wanted not to corrupt this innocence by enforcing adults' worldview in them. The adults are to wait for the cognitive capacity of children to ripen before instilling faith in them because faith not understood by children is not genuine faith at all.

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[296] Darling, "Religion in Rousseau," 26.
[297] Onder, "J. J. Rousseau, Emile and Religious Education," 1542.
[298] Onder, "J. J. Rousseau, Emile and Religious Education," 1542.
[299] Rousseau, *Emile*, 232.

Summary

These are the philosophies that Wesley swirled around during his days. Comenius focused on the relationship of human to creator. He focused on preparing children in the present toward a future life with the Creator. John Locke founded his philosophy on the idea that the mind is a tabula rasa. John Milton focused on repairing the ruins of our first parents. William Law focused on the fall of our first parents which resulted in various spiritual diseases and, at the same time, brings the necessity of education for children. Jean-Jacques Rousseau focused on the idea that children are neither good nor evil. Instead, evil within children is the byproduct of the adults around them.

With these differing reasons and motivations regarding the education of children, the philosophers also proposed different approaches to education. Rousseau is unique among them. He did not recommend educating children early, while Locke and Comenius encouraged it. Rousseau differed also in his theological beliefs about the effect of the fall. Other philosophers like Comenius, Law, and Milton recognized the effects of the fall which dictates the importance of education. With regard to discipline, Locke and Comenius both promoted it, though they said also that severe discipline should only be employed when all gentle approaches were exhausted. Furthermore, for Comenius, discipline is to be applied only for moral failures, not for children's studies. Comenius and Locke both agreed also on the acquisition of knowledge through the senses. On the other hand, Comenius and Law promoted inclusive education for both sexes. In addition, Comenius and Milton also promoted the idea that children should carry out their studies in one place.

In the chapter on John Wesley's sermons, the researcher will explore more how Wesley embraced or rejected these philosophies. Together with Chapter II, which discussed Wesley's eighteenth-century background, and Chapter IV, contemporary views of children, Wesley's sermons about the religious education of children will be understood.

CHAPTER IV:

JOHN WESLEY'S CONTEMPORARIES' SERMONS ON THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

In this chapter, the researcher will talk about five selected contemporaries of Wesley in eighteenth-century England. These contemporaries are: Daniel Waterland, Philipp Doddridge, Benjamin Dawson, Andrew Kippis, and George Jerment. The researcher will compare their perspectives on religious education to that of Wesley. The research seeks to discover John Wesley's distinctives in his religious education of children approach using a comparative study of sermons with his contemporaries.

The sermons studied in this chapter are arranged according to each sermon's year of publication. The chronological arrangement is as follows: Daniel Waterland (1723), Benjamin Dawson (1759), Andrew Kippis (1786), Philip Doddridge (1790), and George Jerment (1791). All these preachers used Proverb 22:6 as their scriptural text for the sermon: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (KJV). Waterland, Dawson, and Kippis preached only one sermon each using this text. Doddridge preached a total of four sermons using the same text, all of which were published the same year. Finally, Jerment, in the same year, preached five sermons using the same text from Proverbs. A total of twelve sermons by contemporaries of Wesley were studied in this research.

The sermons of these five contemporaries vary in their purpose, message, design, and audience. Waterland's sermon served to echo or remind his audience of the prevailing methods and importance of religious education. Kippis highlights the lack of academic

institutions and the need for them. Jerment, on the other hand, developed his sermons as an expression of his gratitude to God for the victory he had received from his personal trials and near-death experience. Dawson and Doddridge both lament the neglect of religious education. These sermons will be explored for their views of children, philosophy of education, and the approaches towards the religious education of children. This arrangement is based on the research questions the researcher employed to compare John Wesley and his contemporaries.

Daniel Waterland

Daniel Waterland (1683-1740) is the first contemporary of Wesley under study in this research. He was born at Walesby in the Lindsey division of Lincolnshire, on February 14,1683, his second wife to Reverend Henry Waterland.[300] Daniel Waterland was an Anglican theologian whose influence restored sound Trinitarian teaching against the so-called Arianizers.[301] As an Anglican theologian, he came from the same tradition as Wesley, who also came from the Church of England. In fact, he promoted baptism as dictated by the Church of England, by which Wesley also abided but they differed in their preferences.

Waterland preached one recorded sermon on the religious education of children. This sermon was preached in "St. Sepulchre on June 6, 1723, during the anniversary meeting of the children educated in the Charity Schools in and about the cities of London

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[300] Daniel Waterland, *Religious Education of Children: Recommended in a Sermon Preach'd in the Parish-Church of St. Sepulchre, June the 6th, 1723. Being Thursday in Whitson-Week; at the Anniversary Meeting of the Children Educated in the Charity Schools in and About the Cities of London and Westminster* (London: J. Downing, 1723), 8.

[301] F. L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 1440–1441.

and Westminster."[302] In this sermon, he makes it clear that he is not seeking to add new perspectives or approaches to the religious education of children but rather just selecting ideas from the existing understanding and practices that were already commonly accepted.[303] Rather than seeking to refute other perspectives on the religious education of children nor promote a new discovery which could add to the discussion about religious education of children, he seeks only to contribute by collecting generally accepted views on the religious education of children during his time and explain them in his sermon.

His sermon on the religious education of children only has two general points: (a) The first point deals with the rules and direction of the religious education of children. (b) The second focuses on motives for enforcing the use and exercise of religious education, with concluding applications.[304] The researcher will draw from these to discuss Waterland's religious education of children sermon, beginning with the philosophy behind the religious education of children, to be followed by his view of children, and then his approach to the religious education of children.

Philosophy of Education

Daniel Waterland gives several reasons or bases for his religious education of children perspective. His bases focus on the children, the parents, and the public aspect. When it comes to children, he promotes the importance of early religious education among children. He lists the many advantages of it. He reasons that children trained at an early age are "supple and pliable … easily bowed and turned this way or that," and at the

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[302] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 2.
[303] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 4.
[304] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 5.

same time, early instruction will be "fixed and preserved."[305] Nevertheless, he also recognizes that children religiously trained at an early age may still wander, although they do not easily do so and such cases were believed to be rare.[306] So, this idea with all its advantages serves as a motivating factor in conducting early religious education training among children. Waterland held the same idea as Comenius and John Locke on the idea of early education. They all believed in the advantage of early education of children and the disadvantages of late education of children.

With regard to parents, Waterland focuses on the benefits to them in raising up pious children. First, he emphasizes the quality of life of the parents by contrasting it with the result of not raising God-loving and God-fearing children. He claims that parents who have not raised pious children will produce hard and stubborn children who will later despise them and pay no reverence to them in their old age.[307] Waterland thus reveals the danger of negligence by parents in religious education. His idea focuses on the direct consequence to parents themselves. Second, he emphasizes the result of being with children in heaven.[308] He recognizes how being with each other in eternity is mutually beneficial for the child and the parent. Here Waterland not only focuses on the earthly consequences, but also on the spiritual. All of the ideas discussed serve as evidence for Waterland of the importance of conducting religious education of children, and especially the benefit for parents.

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[305] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 20.
[306] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 21.
[307] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 22.
[308] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 23.

Waterland does not stop with the consequences to parents. His ideas extend also to the greater community and the possibility of the quality of life they will have if they fail to raise godly children. Here he focuses on the community and the church. When it comes to the community, he again emphasizes the benefit by also contrasting the quality of life when children do not receive religious education. He reasons that godly children will contribute to the "security, peace, and welfare of any state or people," while ungodly children produce "rebellions, rapines, murders, and other monstrous impieties."[309] By painting such a picture, Waterland establishes the importance of conducting religious education of children for the benefit of the community. The community needs such god-fearing children to produce the desired quality of life or state in the community.

When it comes to the church, Waterland emphasizes the benefits that the church will reap upon conducting religious education of children. He presents these children as an asset of the church. As the children understand the teachings and their roles in the church, their contributions will make the church "flourish and prosper."[310] By this, he means that children will become the number one supporters and will be ornaments of the teachings and practices of the church.[311] By doing so, the children will bring success to the overall health and success of the ministry of the kingdom of God.

Thus, the beneficiaries of religious education of children are not only the children, but include the parents, the community, and the church also. For Waterland, religious education of children produces a better quality of life among its recipients. These

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[309] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 24.
[310] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 24.
[311] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 24.

perceived advantages of religious education of children serve as a primary basis of his philosophy of religious education.

Waterland also had another philosophy, which is written under the heading of his sermon on rules and directions. The researcher will include the first rule in the philosophy part, while the rest of the rules fall under the approaches to education part. The first rule is to baptize infants as part of the religious responsibility of parents. He informs parents and godparents to publicly baptize children according to the rules and orders of the Church of England, and only by pouring water upon the child instead of immersion.[312] Waterland supported pouring instead of immersion which he believed came from the primitive model which was excluded in the rule of the church, about which he was unhappy.[313] However, for Wesley, washing, dipping, or sprinkling were all fine since the Scripture does not specify any one method.[314] This is not included as one of the approaches, as Waterland himself says that, after infant baptism, nothing is to be done to the child but prayer because he believed that caring for the health of the infants while unable to speak did not fall under his understanding of religious education of children.[315] For Waterland, the ability of a child to speak or learn will be the starting point of religious education of children proper. This means that the cognitive ability of the child was greatly considered by Waterland.

All of the above shaped Waterland's perspective on the religious education of children. Therefore, for Waterland, religious education of children is a necessary task for

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[312] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 6.

[313] Daniel Waterland, *The Works of the Rev. Daniel Waterland*, ed. William Van Mildert, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1823), 6.

[314] John Wesley, "Treatise on Baptism," in *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 10 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 188.

[315] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 7.

parents and everyone involved in the life of the child. With an emphasis on the benefits towards the child, the parents, the community, and the church, Waterland promotes religious education of children.

View of Children

In his sermon, Waterland does not explore his view of children in much detail. Rather, it is found scattered throughout the sermon. There are two theological views of children that Waterland talks about without delving into the details. The first theological view is found in his statement that children have souls, and the second view is that children are depraved human beings. Waterland warned parents that children in their young age will learn stubbornness, curse, or swear, telling lies.[316] He understood that without religious education, the natural product of a deprave nature were "rebellion, rapines, murderers, and other monstrous impieties."[317] When Waterland states that children have souls, this means he believes that they are valuable beings. At the same time, he also recognizes that children were affected by the fall, or sin. This understanding of children serves as a basis for Waterland's thoughts on the religious education of children.

Approaches to Education

Regarding his specific approaches, Waterland recognized that religious education is the primary responsibility of natural parents, but extends to godparents, teachers, and

[316] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 9.
[317] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 24.

other adults, although the latter have limitations unlike the parents.[318] To all these adults, but especially to parents, the religious education of children is entrusted. Waterland offers directions for parents in conducting the religious education of children.

Waterland's first approach focuses on prevention of learning bad habits and instilling virtues. He states that children around age three or four years old may contract acceptable or unacceptable values, which parents were to prevent or encourage accordingly.[319] Aside from his ideas on the impact of early instruction of children, the motivation behind instilling virtues was that he viewed the child as having a soul which would last in eternity.[320] For him, therefore, due care of children was needed. This concern for the souls of children served as a motivation for his religious education approach and also informed his approach.

Developing his concern for the souls of children, he identifies those bad habits that need to be prevented and the virtues that ought to be cultivated. The bad habits include stubbornness, cursing or swearing, and lying which children will learn. On the other hand, the virtues he identifies are sincerity, honesty, piety, modesty, sobriety, and fear of God.[321] He explains that the ill habits will hinder children from becoming virtuous children. As he points out that children might pick up both virtues and bad habits from their surroundings, he encouraged parents to be aware to identify bad habits in order to prevent them and to instruct early virtues in the children's minds.

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[318] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 5.

[319] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 8.

[320] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 8.

[321] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 9–12. Other explanation and elaboration of this will be under the subject of approaches to religious education.

Waterland held the idea of frequently instilling fear of God among children. He advises, "Let but children have a list of these and the like examples of divine vengeance lodged in their memories, by frequent inculcating, and by repeated inquiries how they retain or resent them, and it will be to them a standing lesson of religious awe and reverential fear of Almighty God, that they shall not dare to offend him in any known instance."[322] This idea of instilling fear of God in children is presented as an alternative and antidote to the issue about stories of apparitions, which for him was unhealthy fear. He instead suggests that same approach to fear of apparitions for his approach of instilling fear of God. This means that for him, God is the right person to be feared. However, the researcher has some reservations regarding this idea. From the researcher's point of view, the practice of using fear of apparitions to make childrearing easy is usually used by parents who use fear to control children's movements and make them easy to spot while parents are busy with other things. When the same approach is applied to instill fear of God among children, the researcher sees this as a form of spiritual abuse.

Waterland's second approach focuses on submission to parental authority. He advises, "Maintain a just authority over them, either correcting or encouraging them."[323] He discusses both the necessity and benefits of such an approach. Regarding necessity, he has two perspectives in mind. He points out the importance of parental reason as an example or guidance in their adult conduct and to manage their passions while their children are young.[324] For Waterland, the benefit of teaching children submission is that it

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[322] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 11–12.
[323] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 12.
[324] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 12–13.

will produce "gentle and tractable, dutiful and well-disposed children."[325] He contrasts and critiques the effects of excessive fondness on children. For him, such doting produces "pride, sturdiness, ill manners, contempt, and rudeness."[326] Therefore, for Waterland, submission to parental authority rather than giving children all their wants and desires is a more beneficial approach in the religious education of children.

Also in his parental authority approach Waterland promotes the idea of correction of children. However, he adds several precautions in its implementation. Waterland does talk about using the rod in his sermon, but it is only a brief mention. He does not explore much on the idea of using the rod. He referred to it when he talks about children lying. He refers to the learning of lies by children, especially when they can escape the rod by a lie. These precautions are important in order to discourage excessive or extreme correction of children. He suggests some limitations in conducting correction of children. First, it should be with just and reasonable severity. This means that parents are to consider the different tempers of children, and stronger correction is to be used only when a gentler approach fails. Second, correction should not be done out of anger, passion, or resentment. Lastly, it should be done in proportion to the seriousness of the offense.[327]

Waterland's approach to the religious education of children aims to instill virtues among children. He encourages parents to "bring [children] to church, instruct them duly in their catechism and their daily prayers."[328] This responsibility of parents is aimed to instill in children these sacred duties. Waterland acknowledges that children may neglect

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[325] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 13.
[326] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 13.
[327] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 14–15.
[328] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 16.

the care of their souls when distracted by worldly affairs if they are not trained in their younger years.[329] When children are compromised—acquire bad habits— it will lead to unfavorable consequence that might imperil their souls.

Waterland's approach to religious education focuses on intercession. Waterland instructs parents to "pray and intercede with God for those children under their care."[330] Waterland says, "It is God alone that can warrant the success of them."[331] He further explained that without God's grace and blessing the religious education of children endeavor will come to nothing. This understanding relates to the first theological belief, i.e., that children have souls. Yet at the same time, Waterland here discusses the limitations of human endeavor and the necessity of divine aid to succeed in the religious education of children.

The final approach mentioned by Waterland in his religious education is the setting of an example to children, or modeling. He exhorts parents to "set good examples before children, and to keep them from the sight of bad ones."[332] Waterland provides an experiential and theological reason for this. He explains, "It is bad example commonly which first shows them the wrong way, and a certain depravity of nature, prone to follow, confirms them in it after."[333] In all his discussion, Waterland emphasizes society's influence as a contributor of ill or bad habits acquired by children. Although he cites the depravity of human nature, he does not emphasize it as the primary factor in the development of ill habits among children.

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[329] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 16–17.
[330] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 17.
[331] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 17.
[332] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 17–18.
[333] Waterland, *Religious Education of Children*, 18.

These are all the approaches of Daniel Waterland. He encourages parents to prevent children from acquiring bad habits and instead to instill virtues while they are young. He additionally promotes submission to parental authority as part of the training of children. Along with such authority comes the idea of just or reasonable correction of children. He then encourages parents to train children to attend church services, instruct catechism, and pray daily as part of instilling virtues among them. He urges parents to practice intercession, recognizing the human limitation and need of divine aid. Lastly, he encourages parents to be a role model for children to imitate.

Benjamin Dawson

Benjamin Dawson (1729-1814) was a presbyterian minister.[334] Benjamin Dawson's work regarding the religious education of children is subtitled "A Discourse," but still uses the text on Proverbs 22:6. However, although not technically a sermon, the researcher considers his work as useful to the present study because it achieves the same goal of identifying Wesley's religious education of children distinctives. Walter Wilson says that Dawson descended from a Nonconformist group.[335] According to Wilson, Dawson was one of the seven sons of Eli Dawson who left the Dissenters group, served as rector of Burgh of Suffolk, and dedicated his work on children to his mother.[336]

Benjamin Dawson's discourse seeks to address the neglect, deficiencies, and failures of religious education. He saw how important religious education was. He claims,

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[334] Leslie Stephen, *Dictionary of National Biography: Damon—D'Eyncourt*, vol. 14 (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1888), 220.

[335] Walter Wilson, *The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches and Meeting Houses, in London, Westminster, and Southwark: Including the Lives of Their Ministers, from the Rise of Nonconformity to the Present Time*, vol. 4 (London: W. Button and Son, 1814), 315.

[336] Wilson, *Dissenting Churches*, 4:316.

"The advantages of a religious education, both to individuals and society, are so great and many, and at the same time so very obvious."[337] However, he was alarmed by the neglect of religious education. He blamed such neglect of religious education on the wrong manner in which it was conducted. He writes, "It is, notwithstanding, too often badly conducted, either unprofitably, or sometimes even to the real heart and prejudice of youth."[338] His sermon has two points: "Point out what it is proper for every parent to teach his child and shew the way and manner in which this is to be done, with a direction or two respecting the temper and actions of children."[339]

Philosophy of Education

Dawson suggests two primary tenets of his philosophy of education. The first tenet focuses on how instruction is to be conducted, namely, according to the capacities and importance to children. The second tenet focuses on the content of religious education, namely the knowledge of the one true God, knowledge of the savior Jesus Christ, and knowledge of the state and condition of humankind.

Dawson believed that children should be taught about religious things that are "suited to their capacities, obviously true, and of great moment and concern to them" because it will produce interest in learning.[340] Dawson recognizes that it is counterproductive to teach children things they cannot understand and those of no significance to them. Compared to the earlier contemporaries, Dawson is first to

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[337] Benjamin Dawson, *Some Assistance Offered to Parents with Respect to the Religious Education of Their Children, In a Discourse from Prov. XXII. 6.* (London: C. Henderson, 1759), 1.

[338] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 2.

[339] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 2.

[340] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 3.

recognize the importance of things being taught that have significance to children. By doing so, religious instruction will become exciting for them. The others focus on the words to be used, words that children use and understand.

The second tenet of Dawson's philosophy focuses on the content of religious education. The content is subdivided into two parts. The first one is the knowledge about the one true God, and the second one is the knowledge of the savior Jesus Christ and the nature and state and condition of humankind.

Discussing the second tenet, Dawson first instructs that children be taught about the "knowledge of the one true God."[341] Teaching children about the knowledge of the one true God is possible because "the belief of a God is connatural with the mind of man [*sic*]" and there is a need for it because "the human mind was distorted."[342] Dawson understood that the mind is capable of the knowledge of God and of being taught.[343] Equipped with this understanding, he believed that religious education of children is possible. This serves as a basis for the possible success of religious education of children.

On the other hand, Dawson implies the idea of the depravity of children, which makes religious education necessary. He states, "The light of reason is much dim'd in [humanity] and clouded with innumerable prejudices, and [humanity's] irregular passions clogg [*sic*] and bear down the higher and more excellent powers of the understanding, [humanity] is often led into error and absurdity."[344] Implied in this idea is Dawson's belief that the fall led to the distortion of human understanding. In this, he aligns himself

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[341] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 4.

[342] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 4.

[343] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 4.

[344] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 4. The contents of the knowledge of God involve: (a) There is one God (b) He is powerful (c) He governs the world by his providence. (d) He is perfectly holy- rewarding the good and punishing the wicked (e) He is unchangeable. Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 5.

with Waterland. This idea of distorted understanding as part of the fall explains the depravity of human beings as a result of the fall. These two theological concepts of human beings contribute to the understanding of conducting religious education to children.

Dawson also instructs parents that children be taught about the "knowledge of a savior by a plain account of the nature, situation and circumstances of [humanity] as moral and religious beings."[345] In this second instruction, Dawson wants parents to inform children how they have fallen short or have sinned against God. Not only that, but he also wants to emphasize the effects of sin upon them. However, he wishes also to inculcate in them knowledge of the savior Jesus Christ who was sent to earth, suffered and died, and was resurrected from the dead for them. By doing so, he informs them of their problem and the solution to their problem in Jesus Christ.

Lastly, Dawson admonishes parents to "teach your children, what they are to do as well as what they are to believe."[346] He emphasizes that knowledge and practice go together. For him, it is not enough to have knowledge alone. Faith includes action. Dawson was addressing children's responsibility both to love God and love others, using the first great commandment-- loving God with all heart, mind, soul, and strength, and the second commandment--loving neighbors. This does not mean that the other laws are disregarded. But what he means is that these first and second great commandments are the summation of the laws which children ought to obey and live in such way.

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[345] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 5.
[346] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 9.

View of Children

Dawson held two beliefs about children, as is evident in our discussion of his philosophy and will again be later in the approaches section. However, he did not elaborate on his theological views of children. As discussed above in the philosophy section, he implies that humanity is depraved. This includes children. Therefore, the understanding and affections of children are distorted. The other belief is focused on the developmental aspect of children. He considers the cognitive development of children in their learning. With this understanding, the religious education approach must be adjusted to the cognitive capacities of children. These are the beliefs about children implied in the sermon of Dawson.

Approaches to Religious Education

Dawson suggests several approaches to instructing children. The first and second approaches are to instruct children gradually and by degrees. Regarding the former, he wants to instruct children "gradually, beginning with the plainest things, and not being eager to have your child appear uncommonly forward in having learnt many things soon."[347] Clearly, he takes into account the limitations of the cognitive capabilities of children. He also provides different reasons for doing so. His reasons include the idea that to bombard children with too much information will lead to superficial knowledge, bewilderment of their understanding, losing their first principles and being led into a wrong train of thinking and reasoning.[348] Thus, Dawson desires to focus on the quality of learning more than quantity of learning in order to accommodate the mental capacities of

[347] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 11.
[348] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 11–12.

children to learn things. This approach of Dawson seeks to counteract what he saw as an unproductive and erroneous approach to religious education of children.

Dawson's second approach is to instruct children by degrees. He advises, "Deliver your instruction by degrees, neither over hastily, nor in a confused and unconnected manner."[349] This is related to his first rule. The former focuses on the content, while the latter focuses on the manner. In Dawson's perspective, the second approach may be understood chiefly as the art of education because his entire aim involves winning the hearts of the children by making the religious education a pleasurable and delightful activity for them.[350] For him, this approach increases the knowledge of children, and thus the effectiveness of religious education is anchored.

The last teaching approach of Dawson includes care for the tempers, or emotions and behaviors of children. Dawson urges, "You are to take especial care of their tempers and behavior."[351] Dawson's understanding of children's temper, natural bent, or inclination is very important for his religious education perspective. His reasons include the idea that children are created with tempers or natural bent and inclination to serve God's purposes; also, that their tempers are not wrong themselves but important to society because they are geared towards society's benefit.[352] This can be compared to the analogy of the body which has different parts but each part has an important role for the overall health of the body. With this understanding, Dawson's approach is geared towards

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[349] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 12.

[350] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 12.

[351] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 14. Theological reasons were included in the philosophy section.

[352] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 14–15.

managing the tempers or natural bent of children, as God designed them to be. This is one of Dawson's motivations in conducting religious education of children.

In addressing the tempers, natural bent, or inclination, Dawson includes the idea of correction in his approach. He encourages parents to "manage children artfully, breaking them insensibly to that course of action, and accustoming them to those objects, which are worthy the pursuit of rational and intelligent beings."[353] Even with such an approach, he opposes harsh measures. He reasons that harsh measures "might tend to only break their spirits and sour their tempers," and "make them callous to all corrections, and lessen their regard to authority."[354] By contrast, he promotes "gentle admonitions, affectionate reproofs, convincing them of their faults" and even encourages parents to sometimes "pass by or take no notice of some mistakes of children."[355] In sum, Dawson promotes breaking of children's temper or natural inclinations but without harsh measures. However, in order to do this, the role of parents to constantly supervise the children is required. He acknowledges that some may lose their way. Nevertheless, for him, admonitions, reproofs, and convincing them of faults are already enough to address the behavior of children.

Andrew Kippis

Andrew Kippis (1725-1795) was born in Nottingham. He was a presbyterian.[356] He was a Presbyterian who later subscribed to Socinian teachings.[357] In his writings, he

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[353] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 15.

[354] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 15–16.

[355] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 16.

[356] Sidney Lee, ed., *Dictionary of National Biography: Kennett—Lambart*, vol. 31 (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1892), 195.

[357] Lee, *Biography: Kennett—Lambart*, 31:195–196.

implies that he came from the Protestant Dissenters group.[358] Wilson reports that Kippis's parents were "ejected by the Act of Uniformity."[359] He further states that Kippis rejected the teachings of Calvinism.[360] Wilson says that Kippis was at one time under the care of Dr. Doddridge in his academic life. He wrote this sermon dated 1786 "on the occasion of a new academic institution among Protestant Dissenters for the education of their ministers and youth" (The researcher recognizes that the title of Kippis's sermon uses the word "youth." However, he often uses the words 'child' or 'children' in his sermon. Thus, the researcher infers that he uses the word 'youth,' 'child,' or 'children' interchangeably. The researcher from this point forward will use the word 'child' or 'children' in this chapter. Kippis had two objectives in this sermon which were the training of young men for Christian ministry and instructions for civil life.[361] From this sermon, I will extract Kippis's philosophy of education, his view of children, and his approaches to the religious education of children.

Philosophy of Education

Firstly, Kippis's philosophy of the religious education of children will be discussed. He understood that the text in Proverbs 22:6 was not absolute, and he acknowledged that there were children who would go astray even though they were trained early. However, even with such cases, he still saw the importance of religious education for children. For him, religious education was still the proper method in

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[358] Kippis, *Sermon*, 4.
[359] Wilson, *Dissenting Churches*, 4:103.
[360] Wilson, *Dissenting Churches*, 4:104.
[361] Kippis, *Sermon*, 33–34.

pursuing the right path.[362] He presents several optimistic reasons for why pursuing religious education of children is still necessary. His first reason focuses on the cognitive aspect of learning. He believed that there is a great possibility of success when we create an early impression and understand the constitution of the mind, for we are creatures of instruction, association, and habit.[363] By this he means that children's minds can comprehend and learn, especially when the lessons are reinforced. He recognizes also the benefits of early training of children. He believed that even if tempted, they will not easily fall into sin and if they fall into sin, the lessons that remain will help them return to the right path.[364] For him, these are benefits of conducting early religious education of children.

Kippis also believed that education produces some positive benefits among the children, asserting that children trained early in religious ways will become good citizens in the community. By good citizens, he means adults who live according to Christian principles. These people will be "distinguished by their devotion, integrity, and benevolence."[365] With such kind of people, the community will greatly benefit. So, from a civil point of view, religious education is important.

Kippis professes several theological beliefs that serve as the foundation of his religious education philosophy. These include his understanding of the nature and situation of humanity; the present and future life; and the different stations in life. In

[362] Kippis, *Sermon*, 29.
[363] Kippis, *Sermon*, 29.
[364] Kippis, *Sermon*, 30.
[365] Kippis, *Sermon*, 31.

addition to these theological beliefs, Kippis expounds other, non-theological foundations which he saw as necessary or a motivation for conducting religious education of children.

First, he anchored the purpose of his religious education of children in the "the nature and situation of [humanity]." [366] He understood that human beings were created by God and for God. The biblical creation story serves as his point of reference. He avers, "We are placed here to do the will of our heavenly Father; and this will include in it our faithful and regular charge of the several duties incumbent upon us, in the different characters and relations which we sustain in human life."[367] Thus, he emphasizes the purpose of human existence in light of its relationship with God. Humanity as created by God exists according to the design of its Creator. Therefore, people must submit to the will of the one who created them. Consequently, the meaning and purpose of life revolve only in this relationship. Equipped with such understanding, religious education of children has a clear aim or purpose, namely, to do the will of God. For Kippis, this will serve as the guiding principle in the religious instruction of children.

Second, Kippis emphasizes the present and eternal purpose of human beings as another reason for conducting religious education. He argues, "We are in part designed for the present state. . . .Yet we are principally intended for another, for a better, for an eternal world."[368] By declaring such a view, Kippis seeks to point the perspective of preparing children beyond the present life. He therefore establishes the idea that our future life is the ultimate goal, and the present life is a preparation for it. Through this

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[366] Kippis, *Sermon*, 6.
[367] Kippis, *Sermon*, 6–7.
[368] Kippis, *Sermon*, 7.

idea, he brings balance to his religious education approach which highlights the earthly life endeavors with the future life with God in mind.

Third, Kippis asserts that people were created for different stations or offices in life. In this respect, he specifically differentiates between poor children and privileged children. This view is related to his view of God's design and purpose for humanity. It also shaped his religious education philosophy. When it relates to the underprivileged children he says, "The gospel was designed to make the poor in this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of God," and he uses the scripture found in James 2:5 "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (KJV)" as his point of reference.[369] The verse declares the special place of the poor in God's eyes and how God rewards their faith in Him. Accordingly, their religious education would aim to embrace their station and help them overcome the challenges they face. He explains, "Their acquaintance with Scriptures hath cherished every virtue within them, hath been the spring of their comfort and joy, and hath enabled them to sustain the disadvantages of their situation, with resignation and fortitude."[370] However, he was not totally pessimistic, but also optimistic in his view. He recognizes that, by God's grace, the underprivileged children can also excel in knowledge and move to a higher status.[371] This view addresses the station of the poor and the spiritual needs of poor children to accomplish their tasks or purposes. He does not limit underprivileged children to their current stations. They have

[369] Kippis, *Sermon*, 13–14.
[370] Kippis, *Sermon*, 14–15.
[371] Kippis, *Sermon*, 15.

the potential to rise to a higher station when they are equipped with greater knowledge and opportunities.

On the other hand, Kippis focuses on the opportunities that come to privileged children. This contrasts with his view of underprivileged children. He points out the vast opportunities for these privileged children in their education and life stations. He therefore recommends that these opportunities be "assiduously improved" and their education "should be accommodated to the part they are intended to act in life."[372] In Kippis's emphasis, education should be geared towards the preparation of these children for their future life stations. Religious education serves as an important factor for the character development of these people so they may take on their earthly tasks and so be fruitful and useful in their service to their country and others.

Views of Children

Kippis presents both a theological and developmental view of children. In his work, as discussed in the philosophy section, he holds a theological view that children were created by God to do his will. Yet, in line of this belief, he acknowledges that there are some children who are underprivileged and some who are privileged in economic status. Yet, he understands that those coming from underprivilege might move to a more privileged status with education. Thus, his religious education of children aims to train children in doing God's will in whatever profession or work God has given them and to give educational opportunities for underprivileged children.

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[372] Kippis, *Sermon*, 16.

Kippis also views children from a developmental point of view especially with regard to the cognitive abilities of children, as discussed in the later section on approaches. Like his contemporaries, Kippis saw the value of educating children early. This view is based on the belief that early education will help shape the temper and character of children. In line with this is his conviction that children can learn and understand even in their early years. Thus, religious education of children was a necessity.

Approaches to Religious Education

In order to achieve Kippis's aims with education, he recommends several approaches for the religious instruction of children. First, he claims, "The foundation must be laid in early principles and habits. It is on a well-regulated discipline that everything with regard to the forming the minds and manners of our offspring depends."[373] This is his counterargument to Rousseau's approach, which opposed early education of children. Kippis explains that early instructions and discipline is possible because "we are the creatures of instruction, association, and habit; and according to the principles we imbibe, and the tincture we receive, will be the ordinary tenor of our behavior."[374] He encourages parents to really look after their children and intentionally instill religious principles in their early years. Kippis advises parents to observe their children for any behavioral tendencies that go against what is good and acceptable by the community.[375] Thus, children will know in their young minds and be able to choose

[373] Kippis, *Sermon*, 8.
[374] Kippis, *Sermon*, 29.
[375] Kippis, *Sermon*, 9.

between what is acceptable and what is not. Based on this understanding, Kippis approves of discipline in the religious education of children. It is necessary, especially to accomplish his aim of preparing children for their future life stations, preparation which includes the formation of their character. Therefore, discipline is a key component towards the success of character formation.

Part of the idea of well-regulated discipline is the obedience of children to parents. Kippis states that such obedience is to be "without reserve."[376] For him, instilling obedience and the management of the children's temper are fundamental to the success of religious educational endeavors.[377] The goal of such teaching is to instill fear of the Lord because it is "the best preservative from evil, and the best cherisher of every excellent and becoming quality."[378] Kippis stresses the great role and responsibility parents have towards their children. He expresses how significantly this discipline affects children's quality of life both in their early years and adult life.

The second approach focuses on the cultivation of the understanding of the children.[379] This is an important aspect of imparting religious knowledge to children. He states, "Without some degree of mental instruction, children will not be qualified to understand their duty" nor be able to "regulate their conduct."[380] Kippis is clear in his idea. Knowledge will guide children in how they should behave and perform their duties and responsibilities both to God and to other people. Thus, to achieve the aim and purpose of religious education, parents are to impart knowledge to children.

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[376] Kippis, *Sermon*, 9.
[377] Kippis, *Sermon*, 9.
[378] Kippis, *Sermon*, 10.
[379] Kippis, *Sermon*, 11.
[380] Kippis, *Sermon*, 11.

The religious content Kippis focuses on to impart to the children is Protestant doctrine, especially that of the Dissenters. He advises, "Every child, according to his [*sic*] years, capacity, and station should be instructed in the principles and duties of natural religion, and in the contents of the Savior's revelation; and every child of Protestants at least, ought to be made acquainted with the grounds of the reformation from popery."[381] He claims that such knowledge instilled in the minds of children will "make them good men [*sic*], good citizens, and good subjects of the moral government of the supreme being."[382] In delivering this content, he advocates teaching truths which are "plain, practical and manifestly useful."[383] For him, the effectivity of any religious education considers the mental capacities of children, their interests, and the practical application of the knowledge for their role in the community.

Kippis suggests that the instruction of children should be done in a manner that has the likelihood of producing interest in children in order to help them stay on the right path and not deviate.[384] He promotes an approach that catches children's interest in order to instill the instructions given to them, convinced that through this approach, children can be trained towards the right direction and purpose for their lives.

In addition to the content of religious education, Kippis asserts that children should be taught with consideration of their varying circumstances and purpose in life. He states that education should be "conducted on liberal principles, and pointed to great objects."[385] Kippis means that the education given to children is the instructions that is

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[381] Kippis, *Sermon*, 12.
[382] Kippis, *Sermon*, 13.
[383] Kippis, *Sermon*, 12.
[384] Kippis, *Sermon*, 5.
[385] Kippis, *Sermon*, 18.

necessary in producing good citizens and stimulating the interest of children.[386] This focus of Kippis is geared towards the formation of the character of children and preparation for their future stations in life. This belief is interrelated with his theological view that humanity was created for both the present and future life in eternity. Therefore, religious education of children should consider this in order to achieve children's purpose both now and in the future.

Third, Kippis focuses on the substance or quality of learning in education. He emphasizes depth of learning. He says, it "should be laid rather deep than wide."[387] He found it an erroneous approach to instill large amounts of information at once. He criticizes "the frequent errors of the present age, that too much is taught at once, the consequence of which is, that scarcely anything is well taught."[388] He adds, "A gradual opening is best suited to the nature of the human mind, the powers of which are weakened by being overloaded."[389] Kippis pays careful attention to the age and capacities of children in this view. This is evident in his approach to discipline, which will be discussed later. But for Kippis, what is important is that children learn the instructions and principles being taught to them. Understanding and becoming virtuous and pious children through religious education is an essential criterion of the success of education.

Fourth, Kippis disagrees with the encroachment of government lawmakers in the area of the education of children.[390] As a Dissenter, Kippis sets forth several objections for such interference. He is cautious about entrusting education of children to public

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[386] Kippis, *Sermon*, 18.
[387] Kippis, *Sermon*, 19.
[388] Kippis, *Sermon*, 19.
[389] Kippis, *Sermon*, 19.
[390] Kippis, *Sermon*, 21.

teachers "whose principles and views might be totally opposite" to children's parents and would "deprive parents of their rights . . . to direct the minds of their children."[391] At the same time, Kippis is aware of the issues caused by bad parents. He acknowledges, "I am deeply sensible of their ignorance, their folly, their weakness, and their wickedness."[392] In other words, Kippis sees both the weakness of the interference of legislators in the education of children and, at the same time, the limitations of parents who are unqualified for religious instructions.

Fifth, Kippis seeks to balance the relative benefits of public and private education. He states, "A mixed education may possibly be the most deserving of choice" because "private education is more favorable to virtue; and a public one to spirit, vigor, address, and a fitness for bustling in the world."[393] His preference of a mixed educational approach addresses the problem between the interference of legislators and the weakness of nonreligious parents in the education of their children.

The sixth principle focuses on the venue of the school which he finds necessary to the success of his religious education approach. Thus, Kippis offers several reasons to locate schools in a metropolis. He gives an example of the Congregational Brethren Academy as his first defense. He claims that this academy was "still upheld without reproach in the vicinity of this great city."[394] Kippis has recognized the different schools that exists in the metropolis along with the Dissenters Academies and this Congregational Brethren Academy. Kippis reasoned that the Congregational Brethren Academy remained

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[391] Kippis, *Sermon*, 21.
[392] Kippis, *Sermon*, 22.
[393] Kippis, *Sermon*, 23.
[394] Kippis, *Sermon*, 47.

successful in producing respectable and faithful ministers of the gospel.[395] In addressing the issue of the different temptations found in schools situated in a city, he argues, "There is no situation that is without its temptations, and its peculiar temptations."[396] For him, the cited example proves that the location of schools in the metropolis is not a hindrance to the effectiveness of religious education of children. Yet, he also advises a preventive and interventive approach by "guarding against [those temptations], implementing rules of a collegiate life, and exercising a prudent and vigilant discipline."[397] The researcher recognizes that the usage of the word collegiate is different from today. In Kippis's time, they were targeting children aged 15-18 years old. In a resolution dated March 10, 1786, it was ordered that "no Divinity-students be admitted under the age of 16 years; nor any lay students under the age of 15 years nor above the age of 18 years."[398] But today, under the definition of children by UNICEF, children are those ages 18 years old and below.[399] This view of Kippis demonstrates a consistent work-driven approach which always looks to the future stations of children.

His second defense for locating schools in a city is that cities at that time offered opportunities for boys to become apprentices and work towards a better station in life. If schools were located outside the city, it would prevent children from finding work "there as apprentices, as clerks in public offices, as preparing for mercantile and other professions, and as students of inns of court."[400] The idea of having a school situated in

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[395] Kippis, *Sermon*, 46–47.

[396] Kippis, *Sermon*, 47. In a letter dated March 28, 1785, where Kippis was part of had validated the promotion of opening schools in metropolis. It said, "This situation, we have reason to believe, is, all circumstances considered the most favorable for our purpose."Kippis, *Sermon*, 71.

[397] Kippis, *Sermon*, 47.

[398] Kippis, *Sermon*, 67.

[399] See: https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version.

[400] Kippis, *Sermon*, 48.

the metropolis was advantageous for Kippis, for it offered great opportunity for experience, especially with his focus on the different work-related offices in life. He found support for his view in the different existing religious schools which served as examples and validation for his position.

These are the key views of Kippis with regard to his religious education of children. He took a thoughtful approach to religious education to achieve his aims and purpose. Kippis focused on raising pious citizens who would be assets to their community.

Philipp Doddridge

Philipp Doddridge (1702-1751) was a Dissenting minister, the son of Daniel Doddridge, and was born on June 26, 1702. He was a presbyterian.[401] He gave four sermons regarding the religious education of children using Proverbs 22:6 as his text. His works on children included Sermons on the Education of Children, The principles of the Christian Religion, in Verse, for Children and Youth, and Sermons to the Young People.[402] His sermons examine four different topics related to the religious education of children. These are "(a) the way children should be trained up, (b) considerations to the necessity of religious education (c) the manner towards religious education, and (d) application to different characters, relations, and circumstances in life."[403]

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[401] Leslie Stephen, *Dictionary of National Biography: Diamond—Drake*, vol. 15 (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1888), 159.

[402] *New and General Biographical Dictionary; Containing an Historical, Critical, and Impartial Account of the Lives and Writings of the Most Eminent Persons in Every Nation in the World, Particularly the British and Irish; . . . A New Edition, in Eight Volumes, Corrected, Enlarged, and Greatly Improved; . . .*, vol. 4 (London: Printed for the Proprietors, 1795), 339.

[403] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 7–8.

Philosophy of Education

Doddridge offers several major reasons why parents ought to engage in the religious education of their children. These served as a motivation in his attempt to win the parents for this responsibility. There are three positive reasons in encouraging parents to conduct religious education of children. He states, "The attempt itself is pleasant; you have a great reason to hope it may be successful; and success is of the highest importance."[404]

Thus, the first major reason is rooted in Doddridge's understanding that the employment of religious education is a pleasant endeavor. The basis for this is theological in nature. He explains that we are created by God to find joy in seeing our children excel in their lives.[405] He asserts that the effort of parents towards the religious education of their children brings present satisfaction as well as future satisfaction or happiness.[406] This pleasant rejoicing in every endeavor, progress, and success made by the children will be experienced. Therefore, he seeks to encourage the parents to embrace their role. He urges that it be a motivating factor to engage in this responsibility.

Doddridge's second major reason centers on the idea of success. He concedes that religious education has a high probability of success rather than certainty of success.[407] He admits, from experience, that not all children given religious education in their early years remain faithful, but rather that some lose their way. This is why he spoke only of probability, not certainty. Yet, it did not discourage him from promoting the religious

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[404] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 30.
[405] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 31.
[406] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 31.
[407] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 33.

education of children. He provides several reasons why it has a high probability of success. First, Doddridge reasons that religious instruction of children is a very rational method. He says that the minds of children can easily be taught or formed by instruction in their early years. So, for him, it was of great advantage to take the window of opportunity to instill religious principles in children while they are still receptive. Second, he teaches that religious education has been appointed by God and therefore increases the possibility of its success. He uses biblical references such as Ephesians 6:4, Deuteronomy 6:7-9, and Psalms 78:5-8 to establish the idea that God will bless their endeavors because they come from God's commands, and so the probability of success is high. Lastly, he reports that religious education of children was attended with great success.[408] He brings into the discussion those who had been raised in Christian homes. They serve as a testimony of the success of religious education of children. Doddridge's optimism about success is rooted in his understanding of the cognitive abilities of children, from his theology, and from experience.

The third major reason why Doddridge encourages adults to conduct religious education is because of its high importance. He explains that religious education is important because it is geared towards honoring God and supporting religion for the present and future happiness of children, and for the present and future comfort of parents.[409] Regarding the idea of honoring God and supporting religion, he emphasizes the importance of sustaining the religion by raising a new generation of Christians through their children. On the idea of the present and future happiness of children, he

[408] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 32–38.
[409] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 39.

elaborates on the benefits of raising godly children which will result in children reaping a comfortable life away from those vices and follies that destroy the life of others, and, moreover, they will reap eternal life. His section about the present and future comfort of parents is similar. From the perspective of parents, their pleasure in reaping what they sow will increase in seeing their children become godly people who will be helpful to the family and society. But at the same time, it will be of benefit to them to follow God's command towards religious education of children, for it will spare them from judgment in eternity. All of these reasons are aimed at convincing the parents of their duty to develop the spirituality of their children.

In addition to Doddridge's philosophy of why adults should engage in the religious education of children, he also offers a list of contents which he saw as important to teach children. He suggests eight religious concepts to shape children according to his religious education perspective: (a) piety towards God, (b) faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, (c) obedience to parents, (d) benevolence to all, (e) diligence, (f) integrity, (g) humility, and (h) self-denial.[410]

The first concept in the religious education of children for Doddridge is piety towards God. To instill piety among children, Doddridge suggests that children should be instructed on the idea of who is God—that there is no one like Him, that God is real.[411] As a result, children will respect and love God. However, an important related idea is to connect God with Christ. Doddridge explains that this idea about God is foundational to the second concept which relates to the doctrines about Christ.[412] This idea is based on

[410] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 9.
[411] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 10–12.
[412] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 9.

the biblical text of 1 Timothy 2:5 (For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, KJV), and it is an essential lesson for children in gaining their salvation. Imbedded in this instruction is the plight of humanity under sin which requires divine intervention and deliverance. It puts the mind of children in proper perspective with their present condition and helps them appreciate the divine intervention rooted in love and expressed through the coming, suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. This lesson, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, is essential to children's religious education in order for them to have a right approach to God and obedience to Him.

The third concept is obedience to parents. Doddridge declares that it is necessary for children to obey their parents because they are "incapable of judging and acting for themselves on important things" and because "God has committed them into their hand."[413] The former is focused on the cognitive capacity of children and serves as a consideration for parents in the instruction of children. The latter is focused on the biblical and theological command. It serves as a basis to establish the authority of parents and the children's responsibility to God in obeying them.[414] For Doddridge, this lesson must be inculcated in the minds of children because children are to live their life in obedience to God through obeying their parents as informed by the Scripture in Ephesians 6:1—3.

The fourth concept is benevolence and kindness to all. This religious instruction focuses on the idea of love towards neighbors. Doddridge describes the need to instill this in the minds of children. His reasons include the idea that love is fulfilling the law,

[413] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 17.
[414] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 17.

religion consists in doing good, and the selfish temper of children must be controlled.[415] Love is an important concept for Doddridge because believers ought to follow the biblical commands, and children's action and behavior towards others should also be guided by love. With love as the central theme, it moves children from self-focus to other-focus, which includes doing good works. He stresses the importance of children being instructed in this.

The fifth concept is diligence. Doddridge advises that diligence will keep children from temptations and idleness which would result in vice and follies and will prepare them for their calling or future station or employment in life.[416] He warns of the dangers posed by idleness. Therefore, Doddridge urges parents to keep children active and to train them to use their time wisely. With training, children will grow up as responsible adults, especially in whatever vocation they follow.

The sixth concept is integrity. Doddridge offers two important aspects of this concept that need to be instilled in the minds of children. He states that children are corrupted and that simplicity and sincerity are essential to Christian character,[417] and therefore, they need to be instructed in integrity. For example, in order to address the problem of lying, he encourages that the minds of the children be taught a love for truth and candor, and that they be reproved or corrected if found lying, whether deliberately or not.[418] Having this theology of human depravity, he acknowledges that a problem exists

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[415] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 18–19.
[416] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 20–21.
[417] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 22.
[418] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 22.

in children, and he also recognizes how to correct it. Thus, for him, this issue of integrity is an essential concept that needs to be instilled in the minds of children.

The seventh concept for Doddridge is humility. Children are to be taught humility. His reason for this is rooted in the problem of pride which he declares was "the first sin."[419] Again speaking from a theological perspective of human depravity, in order to address pride, children must be instructed towards humility. He notes three areas in children's relationships with others in which they should be humble. These relationships are towards their superiors, their equals, and their inferiors.[420] All of these touch on different levels of one's relationships with others. Children are not only to be humble when the people they are dealing with are people older than them. Children are also to show humility to those people who are their equals and even those inferior to them. They must be taught to humble themselves, taking their pattern from the life of Christ.

The last concept in his religious education perspective is teaching children self-denial. Doddridge says that having such an attitude will produce benefits in their lives. These benefits include carrying the mark of a true follower of Christ; managing their appetites, passions, and humor, which will result in a healthy lifestyle; and, if successful, children will be richer and happier in life.[421] He acknowledges that children's cognitive reasoning is still weak and that pleasing God and going to heaven are reasons that may be used in teaching children self-denial.[422] By teaching children self-denial, he addresses the present and future quality of life of children both here on earth and in heaven.

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[419] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 24.
[420] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 24–25.
[421] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 26.
[422] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 27–28.

Doddridge's first two concepts—piety towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ— are lessons about God to establish faith and relationship with Him. These are important concepts in the religious education of children; just as Kippis emphasizes the relationship of humanity to God, Doddridge emphasizes doing the will of God. The next two concepts—obedience to parents and benevolence to all—focus then on children's relationships with other human beings. This emphasizes the children's need of their parents and the children's responsibility towards other people. The last four concepts—diligence, integrity, humility, and self-denial—focus on self. This emphasis is an important aspect of religious education which focuses on the problem of self.

Views of Children

In this section, the researcher will present the theological views of Doddridge concerning children. He expressed two theological views about children. One focuses on the consequences of sin and the effects of sin on human nature, and the second focuses on children having a soul. These views are not written in a specific section or discourse but are found scattered in his sermons.

The first theological view of children describes the effects of sin on human nature and the consequence of sin. He espouses the doctrine that human nature, including children, was affected by sin. He describes children as "born with corrupted nature, perverted by sinful examples and ignorant of God."[423] In addition to noting the corruption of nature, he also speaks of the consequences of sin among children, i.e., that they are

[423] Here were the different pages of the quotes: "Tainted with innate corruption" Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 58., "Sinful creatures" Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 53., "Corrupted nature, perverted by sinful examples, ignorant of God" Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 86.

under God's wrath and curse, surrounded with snares, and in apparent danger, and that they must be pardoned, sanctified, and accepted in Christ, or must perish forever.[424] This being the spiritual state of children, he expresses the necessity, importance, and urgency of conducting religious education among children. This understanding of human depravity shapes his philosophy and approaches to the religious education of children.

The second theological view involves his understanding that children have a soul. Therefore, he encourages parents to care for their children's souls. He urges, "Let it be your care to draw it out for the nourishment of your children's souls."[425] This shows that he sees the value of children and the necessity of religious education. He asks rhetorically, "Are they rational and immortal creatures, that must exist forever in heaven, or in hell?"[426] He warns parents of the consequence of their neglect, explaining that the neglect of these souls will result in judgment by God.[427] Thus, Doddridge raises the importance of conducting religious instruction of children. At the same time, he informs the parents about the seriousness of their parental responsibility towards children.

Doddridge's theological view of children adds depth to his perspective on the religious education of children. These two theological views of children serve as a strong basis for why parents and adults ought to care about the religious education of children.

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[424] Here were the different pages of the quotes: "Wrath and curse" Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 13. "Surrounded with snares and in apparent danger" Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 58. "Displeased a Holy God, must be pardoned, and sanctified, and accepted in Christ. Or must perish forever" Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 53.

[425] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 54.

[426] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 85.

[427] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 88.

Approaches to Education

Doddridge also offers his views on the manner in which children ought to be instructed as well as precautions. The manner of instruction that he promotes is described in four ways, namely, "plainly, seriously, tenderly, and patiently.[428] At the same time, he gives some precautions which include concerns regarding parental authority and affection among children, temptations, modeling, help from others, and divine help.[429] These will complete Doddridge's approaches to the religious education of children.

Doddridge encourages parents to instruct children plainly. By plainly, he means to instruct children with religious lessons which are necessary.[430] To achieve this, he recommends that the children be taught vital theological truths first. These theological truths should remind children that they are sinful creatures in need of pardon in Christ and that they need to live a holy life, with a goal of spending time in eternity with God.[431] These lessons are described by Doddridge as basic and foundational to the religious education of children before they dig more deeply in other lessons. However, the content is not his only focus. He also considers the mental capacities of the children receiving instruction.[432] In order to deliver these basic truths to them, he encourages adults to use words that are easy and familiar to children.[433] In this way, children will be able to understand the lessons and live according to the theological lessons they have learned. For Doddridge, effective instruction for children includes the basic theological truths and

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[428] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 52.
[429] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 63.
[430] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 53.
[431] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 53–54.
[432] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 54.
[433] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 54–55.

should lead children to understanding. In consequence, children will effectively know themselves in relationship with God.

The second instruction is to teach children in a serious manner. Doddridge points out the tendency of children to take instructions lightheartedly.[434] He gives as an example of this childish behavior the use of the name of God in a playful manner. For him, in a situation like this, parents are to remind children of who God is and to approach or use His name reverently. Because of the depravity of human nature and the judgment of God, children need to be taught the seriousness of their condition. This is why he encourages parents to instruct children seriously. However, this serious manner of instruction should be accompanied by a tender and affectionate approach.[435] This is Doddridge's third point. In comparison to the first manner, which is more cognitive in nature, the second and third manner focus on the affective aspect of children. Winning the children's hearts to be interested in learning is his objective here. Without the interest of children in listening, religious instruction will fail.

The fourth way in which he encourages parents to instruct their children is "patiently." He acknowledges that children may forget their instructions and that the process of inculcating religious education may take time. Therefore, he encourages parents to be patient by continuously repeating their lessons if children forget, knowing that children learn in degrees.[436] Again, Doddridge considers the cognitive capacities of children, especially in their difficulty retaining lessons. He also reminds parents that frequency of instruction or constant reminders will result to the edification of the

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[434] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 56.
[435] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 57.
[436] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 60–61.

believers.[437] With such an understanding of the nature and capacities of children, Doddridge seeks to encourage parents to make necessary adjustments towards their approach to the religious education of children.

Doddridge's advice regarding the instruction of children does not stop here. He continues with some precautionary measures in the religious education of children. Without them, the parental instruction might be in vain. These precautionary measures include maintaining authority over the children, securing children's affection, keeping children out of the way of temptation, being a suitable example, accepting assistance in the education of children, and praying to God for his blessing.[438]

The first precaution regards parental authority. Doddridge encourages parents not to lose nor lessen their parental authority but to maintain it. One example he raises on this point is the use of the rod of correction. For him painful methods of correction should be done only when other gentle approaches fail.[439] Based on Proverbs 22:15, Proverbs 23:13-14, and Proverbs 19:18, he explains that physical correction is sometimes necessary, especially since it has biblical references to support its use.[440] He even contrasts what he describes as the indulgent approach of the priest Eli towards his children which failed to train disciplined children.[441] However, he adds some precautions with this approach. For him, painful physical correction should not be frequent, nor severe, nor be done in an unbecoming manner.[442] Doddridge does not see these biblical

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[437] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 61–62.

[438] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 63–79.

[439] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 64.

[440] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 64–65. The biblical references were: Proverbs 22:15, Proverbs 23:13-14, and Proverbs 19:18.

[441] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 65.

[442] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 67–68.

references as a license for extreme use. He remarks that extreme correction will only harden the hearts of children. This is why he encourages use of the rod only as the last remedy, and says that it should not be used out of passion.[443] Although there are times when children need harsher measures, the use of extreme correction will be counterproductive and will only distance the heart of the children towards their parent without considering those precautionary measures. For him, the success of religious instruction results when children continue to respect their parents and listen to them.

The second precaution concerns the affection of children. Doddridge warns parents not to lose the affection of their children. As stated earlier, the effect of extreme correction may result in the hardening of the hearts of children. He comments, "The more your children love you, the more will they regard your instructions and admonitions."[444] Winning the hearts of children makes them receptive to instruction. Therefore, parents ought to display kindness both in their expression and use of words and even ignore small mistakes.[445] Doing so will support and strengthen the parental authority and increase the success of the religious education of children because the children themselves will heed the instruction.

The third precaution deals with temptations. Doddridge warns, "Bad company is undoubtedly one of the most formidable and pernicious entanglements."[446] He now moves his focus of influence from parents to other people. He advises parents that bad influences can undo their efforts. These bad influences might come from companions in

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[443] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 67–68.
[444] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 69.
[445] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 70.
[446] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 71.

the house, such as relatives and servants, or in the schools, such as school masters and tutors, or in their workplace, and even in marriages.[447] A companion's bad character or irreligiousness can hinder the success of the religious education of children. Therefore, these temptations should be watched out for and avoided.

The fourth precaution regards parental example. This precaution is connected also to parental authority. Here, Doddridge cautions parents not to become a stumbling block to their children. Parents' bad behaviors will contradict their instructions. Thus, it will lead to the loss of authority to instruct and influence children.

The fifth precaution has to do with assistance from others. Doddridge addresses the issue of parental pride. He laments, "There is in many people a kind of parental pride," which he defines as people who are "so confident in their own way, and do so majestically despise the opinion of others."[448] He points out that the wisdom to effectively instruct children is not limited to the parents only but is also available through the accumulated wisdom of others with experience.[449] In order to take advantage of this, he encourages parents to accept assistance from others if they want to succeed in their endeavors.[450] Doddridge regards external assistance as a necessary help for parents to broaden their understanding and learning for the success of religious education.

The last precaution focuses on the idea of divine help. Doddridge urges, "Be earnest in prayer to God for his blessing on your attempts in the education of your children."[451] He recognizes the limitations of human endeavor and knowledge, and the

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[447] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 72–73.
[448] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 77.
[449] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 77.
[450] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 75.
[451] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 79.

superiority of God's knowledge and divine aide. He points to God as the Creator of humanity, with full knowledge of his Creation and the power to endow necessary gifts to accomplish the task.[452] With this theological understanding, he cautions parents not to be self-dependent and self-sufficient. Instead, he encourages them to be reliant on God who holds the keys to knowledge and power for the success of the religious education of children.

These sum up the advice and precautions of Doddridge to parents and other adults involved in the instruction of children regarding their approach to religious education. In general, he considers the cognitive capacities of children, the affections of children, the importance of God, and the wisdom of others as important contributors to success. Doddridge was confident in his advice because he saw himself as the product of a religious education.[453] From his experience and the knowledge he acquired, he spoke of this with authority and encouraged others to do the same.

George Jerment

George Jerment (1759-1819) will be the last contemporary of Wesley included in this study. Jerment was born in Scotland. He was a member of the Secession Church.[454] Morrison describes Jerment as a person raised by religious parents who encouraged him to pursue ministry.[455] Jerment's religiosity was unparalleled and made him stand out

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[452] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 80.

[453] Doddridge, *Education of Children*, 78.

[454] John Morrison, *The Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society with Brief Sketch of Methodism, and Historical Notices of the Several Protestant Missions. from 1556 to 1839*, vol. 2 (London: Fisher, Son, & Co., 1840), 482.

[455] Morrison, *Fathers and Founders*, 2:484.

among his classmates.[456] The target audience of his sermons were the Dissenters were located in Bow-lane and Union Society.[457] He labelled his work as discourses but prepared them for the pulpit as well.[458] Jerment's reasons for composing these sermons in 1791 were the encouragement and usefulness of the material and an expression of gratitude to God for salvation from his near-death experience.[459] These five sermons total 177 pages. His sermons cover the implications of the text in Proverbs 22:6, the means and manner of educating children, enforcement of duties, answers to objections, and concluding remarks. [460] In the following section, Jerment's philosophy of education, view of children, and approach to religious education will be explored.

Philosophy of Education

Jerment presents two primary foundations for his religious education of children. The first foundation focuses on the essence of children's religious education. The philosophical bases of Jerment's ideas about this essence include Scripture, the importance of religious education to civil education, the importance to society, the welfare of the church, and the glory of God in the world. The second foundation focuses on parental responsibility. In this section, the researcher will examine not only these foundations, but also the means and manner of conducting religious education for children.

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[456] Morrison, *Fathers and Founders*, 2:484.
[457] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, vi.
[458] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, vii.
[459] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, vii.
[460] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 6.

Jerment cites several compelling reasons for conducting religious education of children. He states, "The Scripture enjoins nothing unimportant."[461] Therefore, he presents the text of Proverbs 22:6 as an important task of parents towards their children. Though he recognizes the importance of civil education, he nevertheless places higher importance on the religious education of children.[462] He even uses the of example of God's care for his people in truth, justice, holiness, goodness, mercy, and love as a model for parents.[463] By doing so, he establishes the importance of religious education of children. He emphasizes how parents ought to copy the example of God in their own childrearing practices. Thus, the scriptural reference serves as Jerment's foundation for the religious education of children.

Jerment also acknowledges the relevance of the religious education of children to society and the church. He points out how religious education stimulates children with "principles of honesty, sobriety, industry, and benevolence."[464] For him, society will benefit from children being given religious instruction because it will produce pious and good children, and, in the future, workers who will be dependable and trustworthy. Basically, Jerment is saying that children with these qualities will not be a headache to the society. But it is not only society at large that will benefit but also the church. He adds, "The welfare of the church is deeply interested" because children will "supply the place of their parents in religious society."[465] He declares that the quality of the children's character and their steadfast faith are necessary for the overall health of the church, so

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[461] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 17.
[462] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 17.
[463] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 101.
[464] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 18.
[465] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 18.

that the church can continue to be a light and good testimony in the community and will continue to transmit their faith and doctrines. However, for Jerment, the most important part of religious education focuses on God. He purposes raising children to serve their Creator for His glory in the world.[466] This theological view counterbalances the overemphasis on human beings' value and efforts and instead redirects attention to God. In this way, he promotes not simply raising good children, but religious children.

Another topic Jerment places emphasis on is the great contribution of children's religious education to all stakeholders: the children themselves, the parents, the family, the society, the church, and God. Religious education has direct impact both for the present world and the world to come when children grow up with a character of honesty, sobriety, industry, and benevolence, and become essential contributing agents for the betterment of the society.

Next, Jerment's philosophy turns to the parental responsibility towards religious education of children. He explores the importance of religious education from the parental point of view. He spends much time elaborating on the importance of parents and their responsibilities. He identifies eleven important factors explaining why parents ought to conduct religious instruction of children. From these factors, the researcher extracts additional foundations of Jerment's perspective on the religious education of children.

The first factor of the importance of parents in the religious education of children the charge they are given. Jerment states, "The religious education of [children] is a duty especially incumbent on parents."[467] (He uses the words "youth" and "children"

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[466] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 19.
[467] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 22.

interchangeably, so, for the sake of consistency, the researcher uses the word "children" here.) He places special emphasis on the role of mothers. In the preface of a work of Gibbons published in 1804, Jerment comments on the great influence of mothers to their children because they are "entrusted with the earliest part of education"[468] because mothers spend great amounts of time with children in their early years. They greatly influence and shape their children's characters. Therefore, the role of parents is foundational to the work of other adults in the religious education of children. He warns that all will be in vain if religious education at home is neglected.[469] He underscores the significance of the home in raising up religious children. Other avenues serve a supplementary role to religious education in the home. Thus, if parents neglect their part, the endeavor of others will collapse.

The second factor is a theological view of the stewardship of children. Jerment states that children are entrusted by God to their parents.[470] To support his claim, he refers to Psalm 127:3, which emphasizes that children are a heritage from the Lord. On this basis, he asserts that children are "conferred to parents," and are "not our exclusive property," but are entrusted to them.[471] It is therefore important that parents understand their responsibility because parents will be accountable to God regarding these souls.

The third factor adds depth to this responsibility of parents toward their children's religious education. Where the previous discussion focuses on the children themselves, the third factor focuses on God, the parent-children relationship, and the sacrament of

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[468] Thomas Gibbons, *Memoirs of Eminently Pious Women, Who Were Ornaments of Their Sex, Blessings to Their Country, and Edifying Examples to the Church and World*, with a Preface by George Jerment., vol. 1 (London: W. Nicholson, 1804).

[469] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 22–23.

[470] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 86.

[471] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 86–87.

baptism. Jerment says, “Parents are bound by the strongest ties to educate their children,” for they are “commanded by God,” and because they are “of the nearest relationship” with the children, and lastly, they are also “bound by the sacred ties of baptismal engagements.”[472] As he understood that parents are commanded to care for the souls of children, such commands make the religious education of children an important task for parents to carry out. Not only that, he also remarks on the significance of their influence in the lives of the children as they spend more time with them than other adults. He even reminds the parents of their vows in the baptism of children to care for their spiritual health. All of these reveal how Jerment recognized the importance of the role of parents towards their children.

The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh factors are connected to the previous factors. Because children are committed or entrusted to parents, these factors focus on the accountability of parents to God. Regarding the fourth factor, Jerment states, “Parents must render an account to God of their conduct with respect to children” and their negligence “cannot go unpunished.”[473] Clearly, he views the religious education of children a highly important task for parents because they will be held accountable before God. The fifth factor supports this claim by referring to biblical accounts as a warning for negligent parents. He recounts that parents were “visited with awful judgments” and refers to stories of the Israelites and Gentiles in general on how the neglect of religious education draws “vengeance, displeasure, and reproof from God.”[474] His usage of the biblical accounts buttresses his argument that the religious education of children is an

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[472] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 89–91.
[473] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 113–114.
[474] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 111.

important matter which might lead to serious consequences for the parents before God if neglected. The seventh factor adds yet more depth to this parental accountability, for Jerment points to the fact that children have a soul, which is more valuable than the body.[475] He explains that the soul is an immortal being.[476] Being as important as it is, the soul requires spiritual nourishment. Highlighting the importance of children's souls, in the case of neglectful parents, brands them as "murderers of their souls."[477] These three reasons focusing on the command of God, biblical testimonies, and children having souls show the importance and seriousness of parents' responsibility towards the religious education of their children. He seeks to discourage negligence on the part of parents.

In connection with the seriousness of their role, Jerment admonishes parents further. As the eighth factor, he warns the parents that they are "apt to neglect the religious care of their children."[478] With this caution, Jerment emphasizes that they too should mind themselves on the way "they should go."[479] He adds that not only might they neglect religious education but that they may also become a stumbling block for children. The bad behaviors, examples, and words that children can adopt from their parents will lead them astray. Thus, he emphasizes parents' responsibility towards their children and not towards sin.

In connection with the earlier discussion, the ninth factor focuses on equipping parents to prepare themselves for their role. Jerment advises, "Parents and teachers of

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[475] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 84.
[476] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 85.
[477] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 23.
[478] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 32.
[479] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 32.

children should be well instructed themselves with respect to the way of religion."[480] In this respect, he addresses parents as instructors. They are key to the success of the religious education of children because they are the instructors who instill knowledge in their children. If they are ill-equipped, they will lead children astray. Jerment argues that parents who are not equipped in the proper way are "unfit for the office of a guide" because an erroneous understanding of the biblical truths is "dangerous and fatal both to the instructor and the instructed."[481] Parents are a key element for the success of religious education. Equipping them is necessary.

The tenth factor lists the advantages that parents possess which help them towards success in the religious education of children. Jerment states, "Parents have many advantages for the successful performance of this duty."[482] He identifies factors such being there with their children in their young and tender years and having opportunity for daily conversation with them.[483] He takes into consideration the cognitive state of children during their younger years. This is the time when they are moldable. As will be mentioned in the discussion of Jerment's views of children, he describes the minds of children as a blank sheet and their understanding as growing gradually. This is one of the advantages of the early training of children. Having more time with children increases the influence and success of parents in instructing their children compared to the limited time of others. These advantages were explored by Jerment in order to establish the relevance of the responsibility of parents towards the religious education of children and its success.

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[480] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 26.
[481] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 26–27.
[482] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 92.
[483] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 92.

The eleventh factor draws attention to the benefits both to parents and children themselves. Jerment says, "Parents may expect to derive great comfort to themselves, and to procure manifold blessings for children, from the performance of this duty."[484] The benefit to parents relates to honor and shame, as they will earn respectability and be filled with admiration and respect while escaping reproach and disgrace in their older age.[485] On the other hand, when it comes to the advantages to children themselves, he focuses on their "true peace and pleasure."[486] These are tied to the idea of misery and of honor or reputation. For him, they will escape "shame and ruin" but lay a "solid and manly [*sic*] character, consistent and worthy conduct, of all that is useful, respectable and lovely."[487] In short, the religious education of children is a desirable endeavor because it provides great benefits to the child, the parents, and even the society. Therefore, these benefits for children and parents served as another foundation for the importance of the religious education of children.

The twelfth factor calls forth the responsibility of those parents who have undergone or have experienced the benefits of religious education themselves. Jerment says that these parents are "obliged by this circumstance to train up their children in the path of religion."[488] He refers to the sacrifices of the people before them. Without the religious instruction of grandparents to parents, the children then suffer the consequences too, as discussed earlier. He encourages parents not to undervalue their own parents' sufferings and efforts, but instead to imitate them and do the same for the next

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[484] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 93.
[485] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 94.
[486] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 94.
[487] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 95.
[488] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 105.

generations. This idea serves as the last motivation for religious education of children through the lens of the responsibility of parents.

These are the philosophical views of Jerment regarding the religious education of children. In the next section, additional insights into his understanding will be discussed through his view of children. This will add depth to our understanding of his perspective on religious instruction of children.

Views of Children

Jerment's views of children are foundational to his perspective of religious education. His views of children include the idea that children are naturally ignorant, and they are naturally depraved. From these views, he shapes his approach to the religious education of children.

Jerment begins by saying that children are "naturally ignorant of religion."[489] He even calls children "atheists in disposition and practice."[490] This view of natural ignorance of religion is rooted in his understanding of the infant mind, which he describes as like "a sheet of paper without any characters inscribed on it." At the same time, he believed that the mind grows in knowledge through their "instinctive perceptions, feelings and motions."[491] The researcher presumes that Jerment borrowed this idea from John Locke, understanding that the mind can comprehend and grew in knowledge gradually.[492] Therefore, he speaks of the children's capacity to learn and their need of

[489] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 7.
[490] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 9.
[491] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 7–8.
[492] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 7.

religion. This proves the necessity of inculcating knowledge of religion to children and serves as a foundation to his perspective on religious education of children.

Jerment's second commentary on children comes from his theology. He states that children are "naturally depraved. . .Wicked in heart; averse from good, prone to evil."[493] He uses scripture references such as Isaiah 53:6, Genesis 6:5; 8:21, Psalm 51:5, and Jeremiah 17:9.[494] He even explains that the "heart was like a sheet of paper, not filled with fair characters, nor even empty, but blotted all over containing the principles of every vice."[495] He was persuaded that depravity was "evident in Scripture, observation, and experience."[496] From this understanding, he argues, "The way in which they would go, and the way in which they should go, are different and opposite."[497] In short, children possess a great tendency to evil, and without the intervention of religious education, children will go astray. Therefore, intervention measures through religious education are needed.

To address their natural depravity, the religious education of children should start early.[498] He calls original sin "a deadly poison" and sees early instruction as an antidote, for it "seasons the vessel, and usually preserves it from gross and outward pollution."[499] Jerment refers to the divine promise in Proverbs 8:17, which emphasizes seeking and finding. Thus, he concludes that the absence of early religious instruction to children is detrimental to their spiritual growth. Without it, children will instead acquire false notions

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[493] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 10.
[494] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 11–12.
[495] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 12.
[496] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 11.
[497] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 10.
[498] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 24.
[499] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 24.

of religion, carelessness about it, and even habits of vice.[500] For him, it is essential that parents instruct their children early about faith and religion. By doing so, children will learn basic principles and live accordingly. It will also serve as a guard against vice and its negative effects. Moreover, he advises parents to consider the cognitive capacity of young children. "As soon as children are capable of knowing the meaning of words, and even of uttering them," spiritual instruction should start.[501] In this, Jerment agrees with Locke, and early religious instruction is therefore seen as necessary and strategic.

Jerment's view of children was rooted in his understanding that children have no idea of religion or anything pertaining to God and morality, and that they tend to do evil due to their depravity. These two ideas served as foundations for his approach to the religious education of children.

Approaches to Religious Education

In this section, the researcher will explore the specifics of Jerment's approach to instructing children in religion. His approach has two parts. The first addresses the means or methods to instill religious education in children. These involved the following: by instructions, by advice, by reproof, by correction, by authority, by example, and by prayer.[502] The second part advises parents on the manner of conducting religious education of children. He states that parents are to do this task seriously, prudently, gently, affectionately, cheerfully, resolutely, diligently, humbly, and singly.[503] The list is

[500] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 25.
[501] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 25.
[502] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 41–58.
[503] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 61–73.

important for comparison of approaches with Wesley and his other contemporaries. The approaches will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Regarding the first part of the approach of Jerment, which focuses on the ways or methods, he first emphasizes instruction as a necessary means to instill knowledge. As stated earlier, Jerment believed that the mind was like a blank sheet and the heart was corrupted. In order to address this, instruction is a necessary means to "instill good principles in order to restrain corruptions, purify the heart, and direct the practice."[504] He held the belief that the "understanding was the leading faculty of the soul, the eye of the mind, key of the heart."[505] However, these good principles should be taken from the Bible which Jerment describes as the "fountain of religious knowledge."[506] Biblical truths must to be instilled because "knowledge without religion is downright atheism, and religion without knowledge is only a blind zeal."[507] The goal is to instill religious knowledge in children in order to conform their minds, hearts, and practices to the biblical truths. Moreover, he suggests that the mode of instruction should be "question and answer."[508] His aim is that the children understand the lessons being presented to them. He emphasizes making sure that children understood what is taught over mere memorization.

Jerment then focuses on advice. He regards advice as supplementary to instruction. He says, advice "chiefly addressed to the heart . . . [and] tends to seal instructions."[509] It differs from a formal set of instruction and consists of the parent

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[504] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 42.
[505] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 41.
[506] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 42.
[507] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 41–42.
[508] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 44.
[509] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 46.

engaging with their child as a friend.[510] He considers the affective side of authority and the affective side of the parent.[511] The goal is to win the hearts of the children and advice solidifies the instruction endeavors of parents. However, he notes how important the character and behavior of a parent is for the effectivity of their instructions to children. He also observes how children may respond either with openness of heart or a closed heart to parental instructions. Winning the hearts of the children by engaging their affection is key to success in instruction. Therefore, he exhorts parents to create an atmosphere or relationship conducive to reinforcing instruction through their advice.

Reproof is the fifth necessary means in the religious education of children for Jerment. The necessity of reproof arises from his understanding of the corrupt nature of children as discussed earlier in the section on his view of children. He explains that the corrupt nature will manifest frequently in various forms among children, and therefore, reproof is necessary.[512] He defines reproof as imparting wisdom with the aim of correcting the child.[513] He uses Proverbs 10:17 and Proverbs 15:10 as his biblical references. However, he clarifies that a rebuke can be either "gentle or severe, according to the offence, the age and temper of the childs."[514] At the same time, Jerment comments that reproof done in the presence of others is more effective than in private for it creates shame.[515] Nevertheless, reproof is indeed another approach needed for the effectivity of

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[510] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 46.

[511] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 46.

[512] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 48.

[513] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 48.

[514] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 48.

[515] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 49. Speaking from a researcher's point of view as a Filipino, the researcher would advise a greater caution using reproof done in public because Filipinos are from a family-oriented and shame-based culture. Generally, Filipinos hide failures to save face and protect the honor or name of the family. So, reproof done in public may produce rebellion among children towards their parents. It may be counterproductive, especially in light of Jerment's encouragement of advice as a way of winning

the religious education of children. For him, there are times that children need advice and other times that they benefit from reproof. Both target the affections and minds of children in trying to persuade them to obey instructions. However, the difference between advice and reproof lies in their respective approaches to the child. Advice seeks to reinforce understanding in a friendly manner, while reproof seeks to reinforce it like a foe who uses shame as its tool to persuade the heart and mind of a child.

Correction is the sixth approach of Jerment. When he speaks of correction, he is referring to corporal punishment and reproof.[516] This approach also arises from his scriptural understanding.[517] However, he gives several cautions regarding the use of corporal punishment. He is clear that the rod should not be administered in the heat of passion and should be used with just severity because the primary aim is not bodily pain but the affection and hopes of children.[518] Jerment asserts that corporal punishment is sometimes necessary because the children may soon "despise the instructions, advices, and reproofs of [their] superior."[519] He recommends corporal punishment as an additional approach when other means fail. In combination with his ideas on advice and reproof, correction is another layer of instruction that address the limitations of advice and reproof.

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the heart. Shame, on the other hand, may lost the heart of children towards their parents. Therefore, the depth of the child-parent relationship might play a great part here on the effectiveness or failure of reproof done in public.

[516] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 51.

[517] Jerment used several biblical passages such as Proverbs 22:15, Proverbs 19:18, and Hebrews 12:11

[518] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 51–52.

[519] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 51.

Next, Jerment discusses the authority of parents in the religious education of children. He describes parental authority as both a "natural and sacred right."[520] By "natural," he is referring to the common acceptance of parental authority, while parental authority from the basis of a sacred right focuses on the scriptural teaching that children should obey their parents. He uses Ephesians 6:1 and Colossians 3:20 to establish the authority of parents over their children. He sees parental authority as necessary in religious education. Parents employ their authority to teach their children "to read the Bible, to pray, to attend family-worship, to hear the gospel, and to pay at least external obedience to the divine commandments."[521] However, for Jerment, parental authority has its own limitations in cases where it interferes with divine precept. Moreover, parents will be held accountable by God in judgment day.[522] Thus, he warns parents against neglect of children and abuse of their authority over them. With such accountability awaiting them, he exhorts parents to action. It makes religious education of children necessary.

Jerment next gives counsel on the importance of parental example. He declares that example is "more effectual than precept" because "children possess a powerful principle of imitation" and "adopt the customs and acquire habits of those with whom they are most conversant."[523] He urges parents to take advantage of this reality, and he advises them to become a role model through their example of the religious instruction they give their children. By doing this, children will follow their parents' example, and the religious instruction will be successful.

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[520] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 53.
[521] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 55.
[522] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 54.
[523] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 56.

Prayer, as the ninth approach, is the most important one in instructing children. It is important because, as he says, “All the means of a religious education will prove ineffectual without divine blessing” for the “capacity to teach and learn is the gift of God.”[524] This theological belief plays the most important role of all because the effectivity of religious education relies on God. Jerment reminds parents of the limitations of human endeavor and the importance of divine favor. His definition of the capacity to teach and learn captures both the teacher's and the children’s need to seek divine help and favor.

Now we turn to Jerment’s ideas about the manner of teaching that should be employed. Here he focuses on how parents ought to approach their responsibility. He tells parents that they must instruct their children seriously, prudently, gently, affectionately, cheerfully, resolutely, diligently, humbly, and singly.

Jerment’s first advice to parents is for them to conduct religious education seriously. For him, parents should know the difference between pleasure and business, and between play and learning.[525] He states that religious education of children is neither play nor pleasure. He recognizes that children like pleasure and play, and they might approach religious education with insincerity. Although he concedes that children need to play, yet, for him, children can only enjoy playtime as a reward after their religious study and not during study.[526] Otherwise, the children will not take their religious study seriously. Jerment seeks for children to value religious education. Therefore, he advise

[524] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 58.
[525] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 61.
[526] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 61.

parents that they take religious education seriously so that their children will take it seriously also.

Secondly, Jerment advises parents to conduct religious education prudently. He emphasizes the importance of being watchful in religious education. He defines this as having "proper attention to means, time, place and other circumstances," towards educating children, especially in discerning their "capacity, temper, and inclinations."[527] He suggests this to parents because of the great value of wisdom in conducting religious instruction effectively. Accordingly, parents ought to be observant and consider the different factors that lead to effective religious education of children.

Jerment's third suggestion is for parents to be gentle towards children in their approach. He reasons that gentleness is the character of Christ and that we ought to imitate Him, for without it, parents are not qualified to teach.[528] This character is a necessity for parents in order to accommodate the young minds, their limitations, and their weaknesses. If they teach without gentleness, parents may overburden children or become inconsiderate to these young minds. As a result, children might dislike the religious education.

Jerment's fourth piece of advice to parents is to be affectionate to their children. He clearly recognizes the importance of winning the hearts of children in order to succeed in instructing them. He says, "You will be able to do little in cultivating the understanding, if you gain not the heart."[529] As discussed in the previous paragraph, children are seen as having young minds, limitations and weaknesses, and therefore,

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[527] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 62–63.
[528] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 63–64.
[529] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 64.

prone to mistakes. Affection is to be partnered with prudence to guide parents in adjusting their response to children's limitations and weaknesses, with the intent of winning their hearts towards instruction. At the same time, affection regulates the authority of parents and helps to balance their implementation of strict correction of their children.[530] Affection, therefore, is a necessary element towards effective instruction of children.

Next, Jerment encourages parents to be cheerful in their responsibility for religious education of children. He describes their efforts in conducting religious education of children as a delightful endeavor because it concerns the spiritual lives of children and the community in general.[531] This delight is anchored in the many benefits to parents and others. He speaks enthusiastically of how religious education of children "earns ample rewards; gratifies parents and the Christian; strengthens the bonds of parental love; and is unspeakably pleasant to see them grow."[532]

Cheerfulness is followed by resoluteness in Jerment's list. He acknowledges not only the pleasant outcomes or benefits of providing religious education but, at the same time, the challenges that come with it. He warns, "Religious education of children is difficult," and "Patience is necessary" for parents.[533] He enumerates some examples of the difficulties parents may encounter with children in the course of their religious education endeavor. These include the uniqueness of every child in receiving and responding to parental instructions; the impatience of children in learning; and the management of both positive and negative expectations.[534] Therefore, he encourages

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[530] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 64.
[531] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 66.
[532] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 66.
[533] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 15.
[534] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 16.

parents to do their task diligently. In spite of the challenges, he says that parents should not "shrink from it or forsake it," but to "endure afflictions," assuring them that there is "sufficient grace" from God for them to do this task.[535] His goal in encouraging parents was for them not to give up on religious education of children, even when they meet challenges. He encourages them to be faithful in their calling.

The seventh characteristic in Jerment's list of advice to parents is diligence in their responsibility. Using the text of Deuteronomy 6:6-9, he urges that religious education of children be done "carefully and minutely."[536] By this he means that religious education should be done holistically, including all the daily life activities as exemplified in Deuteronomy. He counsels parents to really fix important religious truths upon the minds and hearts of children so that they may be grounded in them. In order to do this, Jerment advises using all daily life activities to instill religious truths, not only Sunday services.[537] Parents who thus do their religious tasks diligently will fix the lessons in the minds of their children and they will not easily forget them.

Parents are then told by Jerment to be humble. Pride provokes God when parents ascribe their success in the religious education of children to their own endeavors.[538] Humility is indeed necessary, not only for parents, but also for the children themselves. He cites several biblical passages on humility and against pride. These were some of the biblical references used by Jerment—1 Peter 5:6, Proverbs 15:33. Philippians 2:5, and Isaiah 57:15. This attribute is necessary for parents because they serve as models and

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[535] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 67.
[536] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 68.
[537] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 69.
[538] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 70.

examples to children. His aim is for parents to instruct children in humility and "suppress vanity founded on beauty of person, finery of dress, and light accomplishments" in them.[539] At the same time, children are to learn to be humble toward superiors, equals and inferiors.[540] The character of humility is necessary for parents in order to inculcate humility also in their children.

Jerment's final advice to parents is to instruct children singly, that is, that parents should focus only on God. He states, "The honour of Him who made and redeemed us should be the chief end of parents, in directing the education of their children."[541] He warns that misdirection to any end, whether be it the parents reputation or children's secular interest, will result in the withdrawal of divine blessings.[542] Therefore, Jerment exhorts parents to make the honor of God their ultimate goal in the religious education of children. If they do so, they will set the minds and hearts of their children towards God only.

Jerment's instructions to parents demonstrate the importance and seriousness of conducting religious education of children. Effective religious education involves several aspects in order to cover the various concerns in the religious education of children. He advises parents to focus their attention on God. They must remind themselves that the ultimate focus is on God for both the content and success of their endeavors. Jerment speaks also of the need for parents to focus on their work in order to sustain their endeavors despite the different challenges they face. His advice to parents is holistic in

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[539] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 70–71.
[540] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 71.
[541] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 73–74.
[542] Jerment, *Parental Duty*, 73.

nature as it seeks to cover many factors in conducting religious education. It covers the roles of parents who are instructing, the child as recipient of instructions, and God as the subject and object of all religious education endeavors.

Summary

John Wesley's contemporaries held similar philosophies concerning the religious education of children. All the philosophers considered the idea of early education of children. They considered the benefits, the cognitive capacities of children, and the lasting effect of early education. They have ideas similar to those of Locke and Comenius. All of them run contrary to Rousseau in his idea, which was against early education. They also recognized the crucial role of parents in the religious education of children. Waterland, Jerment and Kippis were against excessive use of correction. In this, they were similar to Locke and Comenius. On the other hand, Dawson stopped short of using corporal punishment but promoted rather a gentle approach. Doddridge emphasized winning children's affection. They all also recognized God and the need of God's help or blessing for effective religious education. Kippis did not have a fully elaborated view on this like his other contemporaries. The researcher views this as an implied idea from his statement on recognizing the blessing of God. Dawson and Waterland's recognition of God was implied while Doddridge, Jerment, and Kippis stressed more greatly the role of God in the effectivity of religious education. Waterland, Doddridge, Dawson, and Jerment also considered the depravity of children in their philosophies. They were similar in this way to Comenius, Law, and Milton. In addition to seeing children from a negative view, Waterland, Doddridge, Jerment, Kippis also looked at children positively. Their positivity

included the belief that children have souls and seeing them as an asset in the church or community.

CHAPTER V:

JOHN WESLEY'S SERMONS

In this section, I will be discussing John Wesley's sermons regarding the religious education of children. There are three sermons discussed in this section: "On the Education of Children," "Family Religion," and "On the Obedience of Parents." The primary text I am using is "On the Education of Children" since it uses the biblical text of Proverbs 22:6, which will be compared to Wesley's contemporaries. The other sermons are included because they supplement ideas discussed in the primary sermon. Drawing from these sermons, the researcher will discuss Wesley's philosophy of education, including his view of children and his approaches to the religious education of children.

Philosophy of Education

In Chapter II, the researcher explored the different possible factors that might have contributed to John Wesley's religious education of children philosophy. These included his mother, his theology, his own childhood experiences and experiences with children, his educational experience, and his reading of philosophers. In this section, I will explore Wesley's religious education of children.

John Wesley holds several ideas on the importance of religious education of children. His ideas cover biblical bases, personal experiences, testimonies of spiritual experiences of children, theological beliefs, and other educational philosophies, which were discussed in the previous chapters and will be referred to in this chapter. First of all,

he, used several biblical texts in his sermons on religious education of children. The text of Proverbs 22:6 was one of these in addition to Joshua 24:15 and Colossians 3:20. In his sermon "On the Education of Children," he viewed this verse as the way to raising godly children, though by experience he recognized that some children depart from their early pious years of training.[543] For him, even with such limitations, he still believed this was the most effective way of nurturing faith among children and achieving desired results.[544] Thus, Wesley was persuaded that religious education of children is important for the faith formation of children as written in the Scripture.

The other two sermons, namely "On Family Religion" and "On Obedience to Parents," cannot be dismissed either. They present further biblical authority for religious education of children. The sermon "On Family Religion" emphasizes the importance of family religion to the expansion and sustainability of the church. The role of parents is seen as essential in accomplishing that goal. So, in addition to focusing on raising pious children, Wesley's religious education endeavors also go side by side with the sustainability of the church. The sermon "On Obedience to Parents" explores the responsibility of both children and parents. In this sermon he emphasizes the limitations on the authority of parents according to Scripture.[545] Anything that is in direct contradiction of the Scripture is not to be followed. The researcher would use the example of Exodus 20:15, "You shall not steal," as an example of the limitation of parental command. If a parent instructs children to steal, for Wesley, the children are not

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[543] John Wesley, "On the Education of Children," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Sermons III 71-114*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 348.

[544] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 348.

[545] John Wesley, "On Obedience to Parents," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Sermons III 71-114*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 365.

bound to obey the parental command because it runs contrary to the Scriptural command. This means that Scripture possesses a higher authority than do parents. At the same time, Wesley emphasizes the responsibility of parents to form the minds of their children.[546] This emphasis is taken from his sermon "On the Education of Children." These sermons were founded on Wesley's understanding of the implications of these passages.

Theological perspectives form another foundation of Wesley's religious educational approach. There are several theological reasons explaining why he was passionate about the religious education of children. These theological perspectives include his view of humanity prior to the fall, his view of humanity after the fall, his view of Divine intervention, his view of the parental role, and his view of children's spiritual experiences. Wesley's theological perspective will be discussed in two parts: philosophy and view of children. In the philosophy section, the researcher will discuss Wesley's theological view of humanity before the fall, his view on divine intervention, and his view of the parental role. In the view of children section, the researcher will discuss Wesley's view of humanity after the fall and his view on the children's spiritual experiences.

Wesley's view of humanity prior to the fall was an important factor considered in Wesley's religious education of children philosophy. In his sermon "On the Education of Children," he brings into discussion William Law's argument that if humanity had remained perfect as originally created, there was supposed to be no need for education.[547] Wesley's understanding of humanity's original design is also an implied goal in his

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[546] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 367.
[547] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 348.

religious education of children endeavors which seeks to recover humankind's original design and purpose through the help of God. Though he borrows this idea from Law, Wesley differs from him theologically. Law believed in the dual nature of humanity, in which holiness and the fall co-exist. Meanwhile, for Wesley, humanity was totally depraved without the intervention of the grace of God.[548] This separates Wesley from Law's anthropological understanding.

Wesley understood that humanity was originally created perfect. Wesley claims, "God created [men] upright."[549] He states that humans were created with understanding, with affection, and with liberty. He believed that humans' original understanding was "just, clear, swift, and comprehensive."[550] At the same time, Wesley believed that affection and liberty were dependent on the rational endowment. Wesley explains that the human will originally "followed the dictates of such an understanding. [Humankind] affections were rational, even, and regular. . . . Love filled the whole expansion of his soul."[551] He believed that human liberty was perfect. He explains, "[humankind] was made with an entire indifference, either to keep or change [his] first estate."[552] He concludes, "The result of all these–an unerring understanding, an uncorrupt will, and perfect freedom–gave the last stroke to the image of God in [humankind] by crowning all these with happiness."[553] Thus, according to Wesley's explanation, he believed that humanity prior to the fall was created with understanding, affection, and liberty, which

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[548] John Wesley, "Original Sin," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 2, *Sermons II 34-70*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1985), 176.

[549] John Wesley, "The Image of God," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 4, *Sermons IV 115-151*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 293.

[550] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 4, ed. Outler," 293–294.

[551] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 4, ed. Outler," 294.

[552] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 4, ed. Outler," 295.

[553] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 4, ed. Outler," 295.

were perfect, as God designed them to be. In other words, prior to the fall, these faculties were not corrupted. They functioned according to the purpose of their design. This was the original state of human beings prior to the fall. If the view of humanity after fall--which will be discussed in the view of children section--is considered, this would mean that the recovery of the original design and purpose was a motivation now for Wesley's religious education endeavors. He was not seeking to create a new outcome for religious education, but rather seeks healing of the spiritual diseases to recover what was lost. These spiritual diseases will be discussed later. He looked at the desired outcome of his religious education by looking backward to the past, especially to the view of human nature prior to the fall, to inform his religious education of children endeavor.

To understand more about Wesley's idea of humanity prior to the fall, several scholars have also looked at Wesley's understanding of the Image of God. Prince examines Wesley's understanding of perfection of the natural and moral image of humanity.[554] The moral image as Wesley states it consists in "righteousness and true holiness."[555] Byrne, on his part, states that the moral image was to see, love, and obey God the Father.[556] Additionally, Byrne says, "Man lost the moral image of God, holiness and righteousness."[557] From this point of view, together with the discussion above about the different faculties, Wesley's understanding of the creation of humanity prior to the fall was for holiness and righteousness. This idea serves as a point of reference and a contributing factor for Wesley's religious education of children philosophy.

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[554] John W. Prince, *Wesley on Religious Education: A Study of John Wesley's Theories and Methods of the Education of Children in Religion* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1926), 17.

[555] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 4, ed. Outler," 75.

[556] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 51.

[557] Byrne, *John Wesley and Learning*, 52.

The recovery of humanity's lost original perfection thus served as a goal for Wesley in his religious education of children. He uses Law's metaphor of how sickness and diseases necessitate medicines and physicians, and so also the disorders of the rational nature require treatment. Thus, it will be evident in the section of the view of children how he endeavored to inculcate the knowledge of God to address atheism, train the will to address the issue of liberty, and nurture the affections to address the love of the world. Wesley again follows William Law's thought, "Education therefore is to be considered as reason borrowed at second-hand, which is, as far as it can, to supply the loss of original perfection. And as physic may justly be called the art of restoring health, so education should be considered in no other light than as the art of recovering to man his rational perfection."[558] Thus, Wesley's pursuit of his religious education of children is also rooted in his understanding of the original design and perfection of humanity prior to the fall.

Wesley has made clear the importance of the role of God in addressing humanity's problem. Wesley insisted that, in this endeavor, God alone is the physician of the soul as God addresses fallen human nature, which Wesley describes as spiritual diseases.[559] Consequently, this is God's business, healing the soul of humanity, including the children. At the same time, it is a reminder for all parents and children's workers of the limits of our human capacity. Since this involves our fallen human nature, Wesley made sure parents and children's workers were seeking and depending on God in all their endeavors.

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[558] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 348.
[559] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 349.

Indeed, God is willing to help so that children learn and are saved. Wesley makes clear in his sermon "On Family Religion," "When the Holy Ghost teaches, there is no delay in learning."[560] This divine intervention was another motivation for Wesley to conduct religious education of children. All of it is due to the ability of God to heal children and help them learn.

In connection to this, several scholars credit Wesley's doctrine of prevenient grace for the religious education of children. Catherine Stonehouse emphasizes that this grace "makes it possible for children, even very young children, to respond to God's seeking love."[561] She viewed Wesley's theology as "child friendly."[562] In addition to the idea of response, Felton emphasizes that through this grace, "No person is left impossibly mired in sin; everyone can turn toward God; self-centered willfulness can be dissolved in the fires of divine love."[563] According to Holmes, "The age of the person was irrelevant for God's purposes. To a child at any age, God can grant grace that leads to faith in Christ and justification. If God provided them the grace necessary for salvation, then it was necessary for adults to teach the children how to lead a holy life.[564] Charles Rishell remarks, "By nature children of wrath, by grace children of God, and the latter stronger than the former."[565] All these scholars agree with Wesley that God makes it possible for children to respond to God through his prevenient grace. This doctrine supports the view

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[560] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 341.

[561] Stonehouse, "Children in Wesleyan Thought," 130.

[562] Stonehouse, "Children in Wesleyan Thought," 128.

[563] Felton, "Ramifications for Education," 95.

[564] Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 41.

[565] Charles W. Rishell, "Wesley and Other Methodist Fathers on Childhood Religion," *Methodist Review* 18, no. 5 (October 1902): 781.

of God as the physician of the soul and addresses the issue of the fallen human nature of children. This doctrine does not leave children helpless, but rather hopeful.

The third idea focused on in Wesley's educational philosophy is the personal experiences of children's spirituality which served as another foundation in his approach to the religious education of children. The doctrine of prevenient grace at work in the lives of children was supported by Wesley's actual experiences with children's spiritual encounters with God. As revealed in the Chapter II, Wesley was convinced of children's ability to have genuine spiritual experiences. This helped solidify his view that when the "Holy Ghost was at work, there was no delay indeed in learning."[566] It helped Wesley's view that God truly can heal children's spiritual diseases as he saw children being transformed by the gospel. Therefore, Wesley's religious education of children was not just a byproduct of his biblical or theological view but can be validated also by experience and reason. This solidified Wesley's philosophy of the religious education of children.

At the same time, this is where Wesley differs from Rousseau, for Rousseau does not want to educate children early. He does not want adults to corrupt the mind of children by teaching their worldview. He only wants the children to learn and discover things on their own. However, for Wesley, the view of the inner working of God in the lives of children serves as a motivation to conduct religious education early. Wesley urges adults to educate children because God is at work in their lives. They can understand religious things with God's help.

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[566] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 341.

The final idea of Wesley, evident in his writings, shows that he really thought deeply about his arguments concerning the religious education of children. His sermon "On Family Religion" makes the case for the significant role of the religious education of children towards the sustainability of the church over the years, surpassing common belief in the life span of a revival, which was considered to be limited to thirty years.[567] His argument on the role of parents even in their choices on school, profession, and marriage life partners displays the extent of his concern for the spiritual life of children. The sermon "On the Education of Children" also makes a case for the necessity of religious education of children, especially as he looked at the spiritual condition of the children and, the role of God and the role of the parents. This is true as well of his sermon "On the Obedience of Parents." His work "A Thought on Manner of Educating Children" also makes his case for the effectiveness of religious education by its exposition on the manner and understanding of true religion.[568] These are examples of how Wesley thought profoundly about the religious education of children and was convinced of its importance and necessity.

Going back to the discussion of the role of God, Wesley emphasized that God is in the mission to reach out to children. Nevertheless, he made clear that this does not diminish the role of parents or adults in the religious education of children. In his writings, there is much evidence of the responsibility of parents. First, he emphasizes that, in God's plan, the parents will serve as co-workers with God. [569] Second, he explicitly emphasizes what parents should and should not do. He asks, "And is it not the

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[567] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 335.

[568] John Wesley, "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children," in *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1872; reprint, 1979), 475.

[569] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 349.

part of all those to whom God has entrusted the education of children, to take all possibility of care, first, not to increase, not to feed any of these diseases (as the generality of parents constantly do), and next, to use every possible means of healing them? [570] Third, Wesley emphasizes stewardship. He reminds the fathers, "Next to your wife are your children: immortal spirits whom God hath for a time entrusted to your care."[571] And fourth, in his sermon "On Obedience to Parents," the authority of parents is emphasized. Wesley asks the children, "Do you now understand what is your duty to your father and mother? Do you know, at least do you consider, that by divine appointment their will is law to you?"[572] This position is evident in the sermon "On the Education of Children." He asserts, "The will of the parent is to a little child in the place of the will of God."[573] Lastly, Wesley emphasizes accountability, saying, "Every child, therefore, you are to watch over with the utmost care, that when you are called to give an account of each to the Father of Spirits, you may give your accounts with joy and not with grief."[574] All these words of Wesley serve as evidence of the important role of parents for the religious education of their children. The last quote even stresses the seriousness of this task. It again proves a working aim for Wesley in his religious education of children philosophy.

Several scholars offer their evaluation of Wesley's perspective on the role of parents. Heitzenrater writes that Wesley also "relied upon people as instruments of God's

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[570] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 352.
[571] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 337.
[572] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 371.
[573] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 354.
[574] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 337.

will and exemplars of godly minds and lives, as imitators of Christ."[575] Holmes emphasizes the "responsibility of Christian adults to control and modify the sinful behaviors that arise in children because of their inherently sinful nature."[576]

In summary, Wesley describes several foundational reasons as to why he believes in the religious education of children. These reasons include the biblical texts, his theological beliefs, and his experiences with children. Now, the researcher will turn to Wesley's view of children as part of his philosophy on the religious education of children.

View of Children

Wesley's view of children was also foundational to his religious education perspective. He held both a pessimistic and optimistic view of children. The former focused on the spiritual diseases among children. The latter focused on the value of children as created by God. Both these views were foundational for Wesley in his approach to the religious education of children.

Wesley's sermon "On the Education of Children" emphasizes and identifies these several spiritual diseases. He asks, "What are the diseases of [his] nature? What are those spiritual diseases which everyone that is born of a woman brings with [him] into the world?"[577] He names such spiritual diseases as "atheism, self-will, pride, love of the world, anger, [deviating from] truth, [and to] speak or act contrary to justice."[578] Having this understanding of spiritual diseases found in children at birth, Wesley goes on to

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[575] Richard P Heitzenrater, "John Wesley and Children," in *The Child in Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia J Bunge (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 292.

[576] Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 42.

[577] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 350.

[578] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 350–352.

inform parents that children are "fallen spirits; that they are fallen short of that glorious image of God wherein they were at first created."[579] Wesley's understanding of a child born of this world with spiritual diseases serves as another point of reference and a contributing factor in his insistence on the necessity of religious education among children.

Wesley's view of depravity differs from Rousseau's view of innate goodness among children. For Maddix, this is where Wesley rejected Rousseau.[580] As discussed in Chapter III above, Rousseau believed that children are innately good and corruption is due to adults around them. But for Wesley, corruption is innate, and disregarding this innate corruption by adults will only feed those spiritual diseases among children. These two understandings have different implications for the education of children.

Wesley viewed children as atheists, apart from the grace of God, seeing them as atheists from the moment children were born. This is the first innate spiritual disease he identified among children of fallen humanity. He declares that children possess "no knowledge of God at all, no fear of God at all, neither is God in all [his] thoughts. Whatever change may afterwards be wrought, (whether by the grace of God or by [his] own reflection, or by education), [he] is, by nature, a mere atheist.[581] In his sermon "On Original Sin" Wesley uses a story of two children who grew up without religion as they were never taught of it and never heard any human voice.[582] He uses this story to

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[579] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 356.
[580] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 216.
[581] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 350.
[582] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 2, ed. Outler," 177–178.

emphasize that children would be the same when it comes to knowledge of God; they will have none without intervention.

He continues, "And having no knowledge of God, we can have no love of God: we cannot love him we know not."[583] The problem of atheism has a direct influence on one's affection for God. Wesley declares that all humanity in their natural state, apart from the intervention of God's grace, are "idolaters."[584] With this view alone, Wesley establishes the necessity of conducting religious education of children. Such a state of children necessitates intervention.

Children are born with the spiritual disease of self-will. This is his second view of a child of fallen humanity. Wesley talks a lot about the issue of self-will and the curing of this disease both in his sermon "On Education of Children" and in "On Obedience to Parents," while the sermon "On Family Religion" focuses more on intervention regarding self-will. Wesley asserts that fallen humanity was corrupted in their view of self in relation to God. Wesley says, "It may be said that every [man] is by nature, as it were, [his] own god. [He] worships himself. [He] is, in his own conception, absolute Lord of himself."[585] He views this as "the original idolatry."[586] In his sermon "Original Sin," he elaborates that "Satan has stamped his own image on our hearts in self-will also. … I *will* do my own will and pleasure, independently of that of my Creator."[587] Thus, for Wesley, with this kind of human state, breaking the will was a necessary thing to do "to save [a

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[583] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 2, ed. Outler," 178.
[584] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 2, ed. Outler," 179.
[585] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 350.
[586] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 353.
[587] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 2, ed. Outler," 179.

child's] soul."[588] Accordingly, it can be seen how Wesley saw self-will as a big issue that needed to be dealt with in his religious education of children. Therefore, this spiritual disease was another motivating factor in his approach to the religious education of children.

This concept of the spiritual disease of self-will was indeed influenced by Wesley's mother. As discussed in Chapter II in the section on his mother's influence, Susanna Wesley believed that self-will was the root of all sin and misery and that religion was about doing the will of God. This theological view, combined with Wesley's belief on prevenient grace as discussed in the philosophy section, may be seen as a counter view to Jean Jacques Rousseau who saw the child as good—corrupted only by his/her surroundings. At the same time, it addresses John Locke's view of the child as *tabula rasa*. It is also a counter view to the theological perspective of seeing the child as entirely corrupted. This view of Wesley's, addressing spiritual diseases while holding also the doctrine of prevenient grace, makes him different from the philosophers. There will be more discussion on the issue of self-will, but it will be dealt with in the approaches to religious education of children section.

Wesley also taught that children were born with the spiritual disease of pride. This is the third facet of his view of a child born from fallen humanity. Wesley describes it thus: "Another evil disease which every human soul brings into the world with [him], is pride—a continual proneness to think of himself more highly than [he] ought to think."[589] This issue of pride is reflected in Wesley's other sermons. Wesley understood pride as an

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[588] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 367.
[589] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 350.

inward sin.[590] Pride in humanity needs to be addressed.[591] Wesley explains it as a by-product of a "carnal mind which is in enmity against God" and also the very thing that destroyed the angels.[592] For Wesley, this issue of pride needs to be addressed among children.

Next to pride is the spiritual disease of love of the world. This is the fourth aspect of the issue of spiritual disease inherited by children. Wesley claims,

> Every [man] is by nature a lover of the creature, instead of the Creator; a lover of pleasure, in every kind, more than a lover of God. [He] is a slave to foolish and hurtful desires in one kind or another; either to the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life . . . The desire of the flesh is a propensity to seek happiness in what gratifies one or more of the outward senses. The desire of the eye a propensity to seek happiness in what gratifies internal sense, the imagination, either by things grand, or new, or beautiful. The pride of life seems to mean a propensity to seek happiness in what gratifies the sense of honour.[593]

In Wesley's explanation, we see his belief that children always have these sinful inclinations in them. Wesley describes this also as part of the manifestation of a carnal mind. These inclinations are something in need of intervention for children as part of their religious education.

William Law and Wesley shared the same idea in regard to addressing pride and vanity or love for the world. They saw pride and vanity among children as part of the effect of the fall and the corruption of nature. They understood the need to educate children about this problem of human nature. They both encouraged parents not to feed the pride and vanity among children.

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[590] John Wesley, "On Sin in Believers," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Sermons I 1-33*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 320.

[591] John Wesley, "The Means of Grace," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Sermons I 1-33*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 378.

[592] John Wesley, "Justification by Faith," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Sermons I 1-33*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 192.

[593] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 350–351.

The rest of Wesley's list of spiritual diseases found in children at birth are anger, lying, and speaking contrary to justice. On the subject of anger, he states, "The ancient philosopher defines it, a sense of injury received, with a desire of revenge."[594] He asks, "Now was there ever anyone born of a woman who did not labour under this?"[595] About lying, he claims, "A deviation from truth is equally natural to all children."[596] Finally, he comments about injustice, "Everyone is likewise prone by nature to speak or act contrary to justice. This is another of the diseases which we bring with us into the world."[597] For Wesley, parents are to be aware of these spiritual diseases.

These sum up the spiritual diseases. These are contributing factors that shaped his religious education of children approach. Explaining these factors gave Wesley a clearer understanding of what should be done for children as part his religious educational goal. At the same time, he points out what parents ought to watch out for in their actions to avoid feeding these diseases unknowingly. This understanding of spiritual diseases gave beauty to Wesley's religious education approach since he, grasped the problems and created solutions that would counteract them. But seeing these problems among children was not the only facet Wesley had in mind.

As mentioned above, Wesley holds a positive view of children. In fact, his sermons also reveal the value of children. In the sermon "On Family Religion," he tells parents that children are "immortal spirits whom God hath for a time entrusted to your care."[598] In his other works, particularly his letter to Ms. Hetty, he declares that children

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[594] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 351.
[595] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 351.
[596] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 351.
[597] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 352.
[598] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 337.

are, "glorious monuments of divine grace."[599] This inherent value of children is part of his greater understanding of human beings. In fact, his sermon on "What is Man" presents the value of human beings, including children. The implication of John Wesley's understanding of the value of humanity including children will break the view of children as little adults. Wesley now has viewed children from a biblical or theological point of view as God's creation and no longer from the adult perspective which dominated the eighteenth century. He compares humanity to other parts of the creation. He compares them in "magnitude and duration" and concludes with optimism despite humanity's limitations.[600] He states, "The almighty Creator hath shown that regard to these poor little creatures of a day which he hath not shown even to the inhabitants of heaven, who kept not their first estate. He hath given us his Son, his only Son, both to live and to die for us![601] This understanding raises the importance and value of children in their own right. For Wesley, children are not a burden or liability, but important individuals created by God, for whom He has given His life. The accountability given to parents as discussed earlier solidifies such value of children in the eyes of God as created in His image.

John Gross argues that Wesley never viewed children as children, but only as souls that needed salvation. [602] Maddix and Blevins support this idea. They write, "We must remember that Wesley viewed children through the lens of eighteenth-century England."[603] I partially disagree with Gross, who looks at children through the lens of evangelism. Blevins himself recognizes that the narrative stories of children serve as a

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[599] Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:83.

[600] John Wesley, "What Is Man?," in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Sermons III 71-114*, ed. Albert C. Outler. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 456–458.

[601] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 463.

[602] Gross, *John Wesley, Christian Educator*, 9.

[603] Blevins and Maddix, *Discovering Discipleship*, 71.

means of grace even to the Methodists. He concludes, "Wesley intended the inclusion of these children's lives as part of the narrative of the people called Methodist, not only as a form of historical reporting, but also as a means of grace for those who would read their accounts. Wesley believed that children's spiritual lives provided a valuable witness for the Kingdom of God."[604] This means that children were not only objects for evangelism but also subjects for evangelism. In the introduction to Wesley's three sermons by Outler as discussed earlier, Outler indicates the value of children towards the whole continuation of the revival. Children are seen as key valuable players. I would add that children are seen as valuable from an ecclesiological lens. Wesley argues, "If family religion be neglected—if care be not taken of the rising generation, will not the present revival of religion in a short time die away?[605] Maddix, on the other hand, recognizes how Wesley considered the cognitive capacities of children as created by God in his educational instructions, acknowledging their uniqueness in understanding compared to adults. He says, "Wesley's educational practices are developmentally sensitive for the most part, and he considered the uniqueness of each person."[606] For Wesley, the value of children is not only anchored in an evangelistic point of view, nor in just an ecclesiastical point of view, nor only in a developmental view. The value of children as discussed above is also anchored in a theological view, in which he saw them as immortal spirits or monuments of divine grace. Thus, children in their own right as created in the image of God are important just as God sees them as important.

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[604] Dean Gray Blevins, "To Be a Means of Grace: A Wesleyan Perspective on Christian Practices and the Lives of Children," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 43, no. 1 (2018): 66–67.

[605] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 335.

[606] Maddix, "Theology and Educational Perspective," 73.

The next section will now discuss the approaches of Wesley towards the religious education of children. Here we will see the implications of his philosophy of education and his view of children. The next section will present the necessary methods Wesley had in mind to achieve his goals in religious education.

Approaches to the Religious Education of Children

John Wesley promoted several approaches for his religious education of children as written in his sermons under study. These approaches will be the conclusions of his philosophy of education. As mentioned above, in Wesley's sermon "On the Education of Children," he addresses the issue of spiritual diseases that children are born with. In this sermon, he proposes two approaches that address the issues of the spiritual diseases he understood. He states, "And is it not part of all those to whom God has entrusted the education of children to take all possible care, first, not to increase, not to feed any of these diseases. . . and next, to use every possible means of healing them?"[607] In these approaches, the former has to do with deprivation, or not feeding the diseases. The latter one has to do healing or curing the disease through various means. The two approaches complement each other.

Evident in Wesley's work are several concerns for how parents sometimes feed the spiritual diseases of their children. For example, the absence of conversations about God with the children in their household is one way of feeding atheism.[608] Allowing children to have their own way is another thing that parents do which feeds the disease of

[607] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 352.
[608] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 352.

self-will.[609] These concerns of Wesley were a byproduct of his belief in human depravity. Having understood the human problem, he warns parents how their childrearing practices feed the diseases instead of healing them. As a result, raising awareness of the spiritual diseases is one of his intervention strategies for how not to feed the diseases among children. However, Wesley does not stop there. His other approach involves healing the spiritual diseases. In the following section, his approaches towards healing the spiritual diseases will be discussed.

The disease of atheism is the first one Wesley seeks to address. For him, the clue to commencing religious education among children is based on their cognitive development. He admonishes, "From the first dawn of reason, continually inculcate, God is in this and every place."[610] Wesley's optimism was rooted in the involvement of God. He states, "We may counteract, and, by the grace of God assisting us, gradually cure, the natural atheism of our children."[611] Thus for Wesley, healing the disease of atheism comes through instilling the idea of God through religious education. However, he recognized the limitation of human endeavor and the need for divine help to make it effective and successful.

Wesley also offers a solution for the healing the disease of self-will. He urges parents, "Break [a child's] will the first moment it appears."[612] Derr explains that for Wesley, after the sinful act of our parents, humanity is now "self-focused, self-determined, and following after one's own will, and posited that this self must be broken

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[609] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 353.
[610] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 353.
[611] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 353.
[612] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 354.

early and exchanged for obedience."[613] Accordingly, Wesley provides several reasons for breaking the will. First, the goal of breaking the will is "to bring his will into subjection to yours that it may be afterward subjected to the will of God."[614] However, he clarifies that submission to parents is not required when it runs "contrary to the law of God."[615] Second, he describes subjection of the will as supplementary help for children in their tender years due to their lack of wisdom and experience.[616] Third, he sees obedience to parents as part of a child's duty towards God.[617] Lastly, he sees it as a means to save their soul.[618] These, for Wesley, are several foundational and theological reasons for why he encourages parents to break the will of children.

Wesley's concept of breaking the will was influenced by his mother, whose letter is recorded in his journal, and also it appears in his sermon "On the Obedience of Parents." His mother also professed several theological reasons for advocating the conquering of the will. Her reasons involved the idea that "it is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual."[619] She believed also, "Self-will is the root of all sin and misery . . . religion is nothing else but the doing of the will of God, and not our own."[620] Lastly she reasoned, this was the way to form the minds of children in slow degrees, at once, and

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[613] Colleen R. Derr, "The Role of Obedience in Child Faith Formation: Insights from the Teachings and Practices of John Wesley," *Christian Education Journal* II, no. 2 (2014): 376.

[614] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 354.

[615] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 365.

[616] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 366.

[617] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 363.

[618] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 367.

[619] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 370.

[620] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 370.

sooner.[621] These are all theological reasons she gave for her concept of breaking the will of children.

Wesley did not copy word for word the theological reasons of his mother in explaining his concept of breaking the will. But he seems to have had similar ideas in mind. Both Susanna and John Wesley were convinced that subjection of the children's will to God is the ultimate purpose of the practice. Both describe self-will as destructive, but Wesley promotes breaking a child's will as a means to save their soul, while Susanna states that self-will is the root of sin and misery. Meanwhile, they seem to have similar intent when Susanna explains it as a way of forming their minds while Wesley views it as a supplementary help in children's tender years. For Wesley, seeing it as a sense of duty towards God seems to be distinct, or it may be a concept expounded from Susanna's view of doing the will of God and not our own.

Some people see such practices as cruel. Bowden suggests that Susanna's idea of breaking the will is more a matter of eliminating the child's selfishness and not an eradication of a child's personality.[622] Speaking from Wesley's personal experience, he held that breaking of the will is not cruel,[623] and he provides several reasons why he did not see it as cruel. His own upbringing is one of the reasons he uses to argue that it is not cruel nor counterproductive. He testifies, "My own mother had ten children, each of whom had spirit enough, yet not one of them was ever heard to cry aloud after it was a year old."[624] He refers also to the practices of a woman of Sheffield and Mr. Parson of

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[621] Wesley, *Susanna Wesley: The Complete Writings*, 370.
[622] Bowden, "Susanna Wesley's Educational Method," 60.
[623] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 368.
[624] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 354.

Greenwood who shared the same success to that of Wesley to support his claim.[625] Wesley did not seem to be bothered nor hold a grudge against his mother. This experiential view of Wesley, together with the testimonies of others, convinced Wesley of the better effect of this childrearing approach. However, the researcher recognizes the eighteenth-century context and the limits of Wesley's experiential view to his time. The researcher recognizes the lack of child rights in that time and the new discoveries of child development theories that inform our day today.

Wesley also uses biblical references to support his claim on the use of correction. One is Ephesians 6:4, which conveys the idea that the will of children can indeed be broken by discipline in their infancy.[626] Others references include Proverbs 13:24 and 19:18, from which he questions if we are wiser than Solomon or God, who knows better His creation.[627] These are the biblical references Wesley used to support his claim. However, the researcher recognizes that the texts in Proverbs as part of the wisdom literature are not to be seen as an absolute command. Wesley uses the same book when he delivered the sermon "On Family Religion." He himself does not interpret it as a universal rule but a general rule only.[628] If other arguments above and below are considered, Wesley does not use the rod as a primary tool to educate children.

In addition to the argument above, Wesley clarifies the issue of breaking the will and why it is not cruel for him. Wesley places limits on the practice of breaking the will. One of the limits he conveys regards the extent of parental authority. For him the

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[625] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 354–355.
[626] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 366.
[627] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 339–340.
[628] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 335.

submission of children is limited. He asserts that a child should submit only when the command is according to the will of God and not if it is contrary.[629] This parameter will refrain parents from abusing their authority over children. For Wesley, children can disobey their parents if obedience would be contrary to God's word. This is because Wesley saw God's authority as a higher authority than their earthly parents. So, children ought to follow God's commands when parental commands go against them. Another limit that Wesley uses is to apply correction or use of rod as the last resort. He states,

> Your children, while they are young, you may restrain from evil not only by advice, persuasion, and reproof, but also by correction; only remembering, that this means is to be used last—not till all other have been tried, and found to be ineffectual. And even then you should take the utmost care to avoid the very appearance of passion. Whatever is done should be done with mildness; nay, indeed, with kindness too.[630]

It is clear from Wesley's argument that he did not promote cruelty toward children. Derr remarks that if Wesley's whole teaching is considered, his methodology is gentle and reasonable.[631] Even when all gentle approaches fail and the necessity of correction arises, Wesley still focuses on the welfare of the children. This is proven by his words not to do it in the appearance of passion and to do correction with mildness and kindness, too. Therefore, Wesley's breaking of the will should not be understood as a cruel or abusive approach to religious education when all his parameters and theological reasons are considered.

Wesley was not alone in his views on correction. John Amos Comenius and John Locke shared similar ideas of correction or of using of rod to discipline children. None of them, however, promoted a reckless view of correction. They encourage parents to

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[629] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 365.
[630] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 339.
[631] Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 217.

exhaust all possible gentle methods of correction. They only encourage physical punishment as a last resort. Likewise, all three discourage using it out of anger. These philosophers, together in consideration with the parameters discussed above, justify Wesley before those who view him as cruel. The researcher recognizes that there were three views of childrearing approach in that time. There were those who pampered children; those who subscribed to the approach of Comenius, Locke, and Wesley; and those who used the rod in extreme ways. The group with Wesley seems to be in the middle of these three. They did not subscribe to the spoiling of children nor to the reckless use of the rod on children.

Returning now to the healing of the spiritual diseases, Wesley promotes a two-pronged approach also in addressing pride. He discourages praising children and, at the same time, encourages teaching them humility. Wesley warns of the danger of feeding the disease of pride. But he also offers intervention through the teaching of humility. Wesley recognized that by praising children--especially for things that were not praiseworthy, parents feed the disease of pride.[632] Wesley says that in order to counteract a child's pride, parents should teach the children that they have fallen short of the image of God as fallen spirits, and if they act with pride, they are like the devil.[633] However, Wesley was quick to defend parents who commend their children, as long as they do it sparingly and bring their focus not to self but unto God who gave them success. [634] In this way, pride can be prevented because it takes away a human view of success and points towards God. Wesley and Law had a similar understanding of pride. They viewed pride as a by-product

[632] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 355.
[633] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 356.
[634] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 356.

of the fall. They recognized that pride within human nature needs to be addressed. They recognized the importance of education in addressing the issue of pride. Both of them advocated counteracting pride and teaching humility instead.

Pride and love for the world are interconnected. As discussed in Chapter V above, love of the world for Wesley includes desires of the eyes, desires of the flesh, and pride of life. When it comes to love of the world, Wesley warns a mother "not to cherish in her children the desire of the flesh, their natural propensity to seek happiness in gratifying the outward senses."[635] Both Law and Wesley saw the need for children to be educated away from pride and love for the world. They both saw the importance of not feeding this temper among children.

When it comes to anger, Wesley quotes a biblical reference as an approach in dealing with this spiritual disease. He uses Romans 12:17-19 and comments, "'That ye resist not evil,' not by returning evil for evil. Rather than this, 'If a [man] take away thy cloak, let him take thy coat also.' Remind [him] of the words of the great Apostle . . . 'avenge not yourselves. For it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," saith the Lord."'[636] In this, Wesley is conveying the message of not avenging oneself and to let the Lord take vengeance for them. This is how he wanted to approach the issue of anger. On the other hand, when it comes to falsehood, Wesley instructs parents, "Teach them to put away all lying, and both in little things and great, in jest or earnest, speak the very truth from their heart. Teach them that the author of all falsehood is the devil. . . . Teach them

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[635] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 357.
[636] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 359.

to abhor and despise, not only all lying, but all equivocating, all cunning and dissimulation."[637]

Regarding injustice, Wesley counsels, "Teach them the love of justice, and that in the least things as well as the greatest . . . habituate them to render unto all their due, even to the uttermost farthing . . . press upon your children to walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and gave himself for us; to mind one point, God is love; and [he] that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in [him]."[638] All of these are part of Wesley's approach to the religious education of children, especially as he tackled the different spiritual diseases inborn in every child.

In continuation of his approach to religious education, Wesley provides more detailed ideas on how instructions are to be conducted. He advises, "You should particularly endeavor to instruct your children early, plainly, frequently, and patiently."[639] The first rule is to instruct children early. Wesley says this should be done "from the first hour that you perceive reason begins to dawn."[640] He asserts, "Whenever the child begins to speak, you may be assured reason begins to work."[641] There are several factors that convinced him to start early. One motivation can be traced from his childhood experiences under the early religious education of his mother as discussed in Chapter II. Another can be traced from his theological belief in divine intervention, which makes religious instruction understandable through the working of the Holy Spirit as discussed above. Examining Wesley's reasoning on the early instruction of children, it is evident

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[637] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 359–360.

[638] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 360.

[639] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 340.

[640] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 340.

[641] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 340. Aside from speaking, Wesley referred to running also as the start of the religious instructions, (Wesley, *Wesley's Letters*, 13:477).

that he greatly considered the cognitive development of children. Thus, he encourages parents, "Use such words as little children may understand, just such as they use themselves. Carefully observe the few ideas which they have already, and endeavor to graft what you say upon them."[642] He reasons, "[God] alone can apply your words to their hearts; without which all your labour will be in vain."[643] Wesley displays awareness of the child's cognitive development, divine influence, the effect of his own upbringing, and even the genuine spiritual experiences of children as discussed in the previous Chapter II as considerations in the early education of children.

John Locke and Comenius had also promoted early education. They, as well as Wesley, took the cognitive capacities of children into consideration. Wesley seems to agree with both Locke and Comenius, who understood that the mind can easily be bent or shaped, but difficult to alter once matured, although Wesley did not use the term "bent." Hence, they all advocated using this window of opportunity to educate children to develop their character. By contrast, Rousseau differed from these three since he discouraged adults from conducting early education among children.

The rule of teaching children early is followed by a second rule, to instruct children plainly. In addition to consideration of the cognitive capacity of children, Wesley "Regard not how much, but how well, to how good purpose, they read."[644] Derr agrees: "Wesley encouraged a dialogue approach to instruction that encouraged children to engage the content and reflect on it through a series of questions."[645] Holmes remarks,

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[642] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 340.

[643] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 341.

[644] John Wesley, "To All Parents and Schoolmasters," in *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 14 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, n.d.), 217.

[645] Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 252.

"Rather than use convoluted language or vocabulary, it is best to speak words that match the cognitive level of the person receiving instruction.[646] Wesley's goal was to make sure children would understand the lesson by speaking plainly. Derr explains, "It was to be done in a way that built on the child's preexisting knowledge."[647] Derr, at the same time, captures the purpose of this rule. She says that children are expected to "reflect on the content and move from low-level learning, of remembering, to understanding and applying."[648] This approach was shared by Comenius in educating children by building up from their existing knowledge.

So far, we have seen that Wesley promotes early education and plain teaching as important parts of his approach to religious education of children. The third rule is to instruct frequently. Wesley reasoned that the soul is more important than the physical body and it should be fed frequently.[649] Holmes understands that, for Wesley, "Constant repetition was necessary for effective learning to take place."[650] Therefore, Wesley saw it as a necessary and effective method to instill knowledge in children.

The final rule is to instruct patiently. Patience and perseverance are a needed quality for a teacher to be effective in the religious education of children. Wesley tells his listeners, "Never leave off, never intermit your labour of love, till you see the fruit of it."[651] Derr points out that Wesley recognized that children learn differently than

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[646] Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 48.

[647] Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 249.

[648] Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 249. Cf. Max D. Engelhart et al., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*, ed. Benjamin S Bloom (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956).

[649] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 341.

[650] Holmes, "Wesley in Eighteenth-Century England," 48.

[651] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 342.

adults.[652] Yet at the same time, Wesley also acknowledged the developing cognitive capacities of children. He recognized the impatience of children in learning. He states, "The inconceivable dullness of some children, and the giddiness or perverseness of others, would induce them to give up the irksome task, and let them follow their own imagination."[653] Presented with such a challenge, Wesley insists on the need of adults to be patient in their responsibility to instruct children if they wish to bear fruit. So, for Wesley, parents need the help and intervention of God to help them have patience.[654] Therefore, Wesley saw perseverance as an important attribute that parents or teachers need to possess with the help of God for effective religious education of children.

As we have seen, Wesley's approach to religious education of children has two main prongs—not feeding the diseases and healing the diseases. The first focuses more on prevention. The second focuses more on intervention. Yet, in all of these efforts, Wesley acknowledges the limitation of human endeavors and the necessity of divine intervention to succeed in religious education.

Summary

Table 1: Comparison of Wesley and His Contemporaries

	Philosophy	View of Children	Approaches
Waterland	• advantages of early education • benefits to children, parents, community, and church • baptism of infants through pouring	• children have souls • humanity is depraved	• prevention of bad habits and instilling virtues • frequently instill fear of God • submission to parental authority

[652] Derr, "Wesley and Faith Formation," 261.
[653] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 342.
[654] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 342.

			• correction of children with precautions on the extreme using of rod • instill virtues • intercession • setting an example/modeling
Dawson	• instructions should be according to the capacities of importance to children • content includes knowledge of one true God, Jesus Christ, and state and condition of humankind	• humanity is depraved • children have cognitive capacities	• gradually • by degrees • care of tempers, emotions, and behaviors of children • oppose harsh measures • promotes gentle and affectionate approach
Kippis	• Proverbs 22:6 is not absolute command • positive benefits to children, society • nature and situation of humanity/ children are created by God and for God • children are created for different stations of life	• children created to do his will • children are viewed from a developmental stage focusing on cognitive view	• start early with regulated discipline, obedience to parents • cultivate understanding, instructions should generate interest • focus on substance in learning • gov't lawmakers should not interfere in education • seek balance to public and private education • location of schools in the metropolis
Doddridge	• religious education is a pleasant endeavor • there is great reason it may be successful, success is of highest importance • content of religious education includes piety towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to parents, benevolence to all, diligence, integrity, humility, self-denial	• children are born with corrupted nature, perverted by examples, and ignorant of God • children have a soul	• plainly, seriously, tenderly, patiently • precautions regarding parental authority, losing affection of children, temptations/bad company, modeling/bad parenting example, parental pride, divine help/limitation of human endeavor • when gentle approach fail, painful methods

			should be done with precautions
Jerment	• religious education is important according to Scripture, for the society, the church, the children, and the glory of God • religious education is a responsibility of the parents	• children are naturally ignorant or religion • children are naturally depraved	• by instructions, by advice, by reproof, by correction (corporal punishment should be done with precautions), by authority, by example, by prayer • seriously, prudently, gently, affectionately, cheerfully, resolutely, diligently, humbly, singly
Wesley	• religious education of children is anchored on biblical bases, personal experiences, testimonies of spiritual experiences of children, theological beliefs: breaking of the will, role of God, responsibility of parents, stewardship	• children are born with spiritual diseases: atheism, self-will, pride, love of the world, anger, deviating from truth, speak contrary to justice • children are immortal spirits, monuments of divine grace, greater value of humanity compared other creation • children are a means of grace (not just objects but subjects for evangelism)	• not feeding the spiritual diseases but healing the spiritual diseases • use of rod but with precautions • early, plainly, frequently, patiently

Wesley's religious education perspective is anchored on several factors. The biblical references from which he founded his sermons and educational perspective were explained by Wesley. He also included his theological view of humanity both before and after the fall. His view of children which considered their relationship with God, God's intervention, and the actual experiences of children through their unique cognitive capacity in response to God's work served as other contributing factors in his philosophy of the religious education of children.

In the next chapter, a comparison of Wesley's sermons on the religious education of children to those of his contemporaries will be discussed. The findings will address the gap in existing literature and provide more insights into Wesley's religious education of children as it is compared to his contemporaries.

CHAPTER VI:

THE DISTINCTIVES AND IMPLICATIONS OF JOHN WESLEY'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

In this chapter the researcher will compare Wesley with his contemporaries and discuss the implications of the study on the practices of the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church (PGCFMC) pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers. The fifth research question focused on whether there were distinctive characteristics of John Wesley's approach to religious education of children as seen in his sermons compared to those of his contemporaries in eighteenth-century England. The research sub-questions focused on whether there were foundational distinctives of Wesley's thought concerning the religious education of children compared to those of his contemporaries. The sixth research question on the other hand will focus on the implications of this study for the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church for its practices of the religious education of children. The sub-research questions focus on whether Wesley's foundational reasoning in performing religious education of children should be adopted by the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers and whether there are approaches in performing religious education of children that the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers should implement in light of John Wesley's ideas. These research questions represent the goal of the whole dissertation. Having now answered the preliminary research questions related to Wesley's background in Chapter II, the selected philosopher's educational view in Chapter III, the contemporaries' sermon

in Chapter IV, John Wesley's sermon on religious education of children on Chapter V, let us now turn our attention to the final and most important questions to which we have been driving from the beginning of the dissertation. All these questions will be answered in the following paragraphs.

Wesley's philosophy and view of children included his belief in the biblical authority, his understanding of humanity before the fall and after the fall, his view of divine intervention, his testimonies and testimonies he heard on the actual spiritual experiences of children, his commitment to parental authority and responsibility. Wesley's approaches included ideas to instruct children early, plainly, frequently, and patiently. Wesley's philosophy and view of children which form his distinctive foundation and his approaches will serve as the source for comparison with his contemporaries to identify Wesley's foundational distinctives and distinctive approaches to the religious education of children.

John Wesley's Foundational Similarities with His Contemporaries

Wesley had several foundational similarities in his philosophy and view of children with his contemporaries. Similarities with Wesley included his view of parental responsibility and the need for divine help. Recognition of parental responsibility and accountability of parents were shared by other contemporaries such as Waterland and Kippis. The role of parents in the religious education of children was a common belief and practice which was shared by all of his contemporaries. Included here was the intent of parental modeling for the religious education of children. Wesley and his contemporaries saw the importance of parental modeling in the effectiveness of religious education of children. The belief on the accountability of parents before God for the

religious education of children was shared also by his contemporaries. This view on parental accountability served as motivation in conducting religious education of children.

The idea of divine help and intervention for success in the religious education of children was not distinct to Wesley alone. His contemporaries Waterland, Doddridge, Jerment, and Kippis also recognized the need for God's grace and help in order to succeed. They recognized the limitation of human endeavors in the religious training of children. However, Dawson and Waterland on their part did not talk about it. In terms of the optimistic view of children, Wesley's religious education perspective was not distinct either. Wesley's belief that children have souls was shared by Waterland, Jerment, and Doddridge. Having this idea of children elevated the value of children. Because of this understanding, they all saw the necessity of conducting religious education of children.

These were the three similarities of Wesley compared to his contemporaries on the religious education of children. The next paragraph will focus on Wesley's foundational distinctives which highlights Wesley's philosophy and view of children. This will emphasize the motivation behind Wesley's overall philosophy of education while the approaches will be discussed later.

John Wesley's Foundational Distinctives

The research presented in this dissertation reveals four foundational distinctives regarding Wesley's philosophy and view of children compared to that of his contemporaries. The researcher recognized that the foundational distinctives outnumbered the similarities using Wesley's philosophy and view of children as point of comparison to that of his contemporaries. John Wesley's view of God's involvement,

optimistic view of children, and view of humanity before the fall and after the fall was identified by the researcher.

The first foundational distinctive of Wesley is directed on the view of God's involvement in the religious education of children so that they understand and respond to God. Wesley said, "When the Holy Ghost teaches, there is no delay in learning."[655] [656] This view implies that children can indeed learn and understand God's word through the help of the Holy Spirit. Thus this view encourages a genuine response from children to God's work and genuine spiritual experience among children leading to transformation of lives. This makes the religious education of children possible and meaningful both for the adults and children themselves.

Wesley's idea of God helping children understand Him in their religious education through the Holy Spirit is not evident in the work of his contemporaries. The contemporaries—Waterland, Doddridge, and Jerment—believed in the need of divine help for any religious education of children to succeed. However, their focus was more general in nature. They did not emphasize how God or the Holy Spirit will work in the lives of children for religious education to succeed. The contemporaries were focused on the adults' need for God's help in order for them to succeed in their endeavors. In contrast, Wesley emphasized how God's help will make children understand and experience Him despite their limited cognitive capacities. This particular view of Wesley makes his religious education of children optimistic. It prohibits underestimating the cognitive capacities of children. It enlightens adults that God also helps children in their

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[655] Wesley, "*The Works of Wesley*, vol 3, ed. Outler," 341.

[656] John Wesley, "On Family Religion," in *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler, Sermons III 71-114., vol. 3 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 341.

religious education endeavors. Doddridge, as discussed in the section above on his philosophy, believed that the probability of success of religious education was anchored in the command of God, while Wesley believed that success was anchored in the actual help of God in the minds of children.

The researcher recognized that Waterland and Kippis viewed children as being an asset in the church. Wesley also recognized that children were key players in the longevity of the church's existence. Although from a surface reading one might believe that Waterland and Kippis's perspective of children as an asset comes from an optimistic view of children, their assertion pertained to the quantitative aspect of the church. Waterland and Kippis believed that as long as there are children in the church the church would continually exist. But the distinctive approach of Wesley was that he saw children as valuable contributors in the evangelization aspect of the church. As discussed regarding Wesley's sermon in Chapter V, Wesley did not only viewed children as souls in need of salvation, Wesley saw the significant role of children in evangelization for the sustainability of the church. It was also argued by the researcher that inferred in Wesley's work was his understanding that God can deploy children also for evangelism. This meant that they are not only people in need of hearing the gospel but can be God's ambassador for the gospel. By doing this, Wesley moved children from a passive role to an active role. Wesley's doctrine also of prevenient grace made Wesley's claim on the active role of children in evangelism theologically possible. This is because God's divine authority and work is not limited by age.

This distinct view of children by Wesley has significant implications towards religious education of children, i.e., that it should involve lessons on how children

participate in the evangelization of the world. This seems to be absent in the religious education of children from Wesley's contemporaries since they did not talk about the active role of children in the evangelistic effort of the church. This analysis is only based on the study of the selected contemporaries' sermons but not in their other works.

The third religious education of children foundational distinctive of Wesley was his theological idea of humanity before the fall. This view was not shared in the sermons of his contemporaries. The original design of humanity as created in the image of God played a significant role in his approach to the religious education of children. Although this was discussed only in the introductory part of his sermon, it was significant. There are several reasons for its importance, including understanding of the original design, understanding the problem, and knowing the solution.

When Wesley brought forth the discussion of humanity prior to the fall, he was referring to the original design of humanity. His understanding of what and how humanity was as originally created by God—with perfect understanding, affection, and will—served as a point reference in conducting religious education. He understood the design of humanity and how it worked. He understood that God had given them understanding, affection, and liberty so they could have a genuine relationship with Him. He understood what life was before and the human being's purpose prior to the fall.

With this view of humanity prior to the fall, Wesley was able to understand the problem with humanity after the fall. He understood how knowledge of God was withheld by God, thus resulting in the description of children being atheist or deprived of knowing God. He understood that the will of humanity was distorted and biased to self rather than to God. He understood that affection was distorted and focused on self-

pleasure rather than on God. With this recognition, he understood how to address the problem of humanity through religious education. His religious education thus sought to address the understanding, affection, and will of children. This clear understanding of humanity prior to the fall made Wesley unique compared to his five contemporaries. Although his contemporaries talked also about human depravity, Wesley's perspective added depth to his religious education approach. Wesley knew what he was trying to achieve in addressing human depravity in the religious education of children because he considered the original design of humanity in his approach.

The fourth religious education of children foundational distinctive of Wesley was his view of humanity after the fall specifically his understanding of spiritual diseases. As revealed in the previous paragraph, the researcher recognized that Wesley shared the belief that children suffered from the effects of the fall with some of his contemporaries—specifically with Waterland, Doddridge, Dawson, and Jerment. Although these contemporaries talked about corrupted nature, they did not elaborate nor emphasize this problem. Waterland on his part did mention human depravity but did not elaborate on it. Doddridge recognized problems such as lying and ignorance of God. Jerment talked about ignorant minds and corrupted nature. Dawson recognized that the mind was "dim'd and passions were irregular."[657] As discussed in Chapter I in the section on the importance of the study, Wesley's belief in the sinful nature or total depravity of children was criticized after the researcher's report in the Child and Christian Thought class of Dr Marcia Bunge. However, the present research reveals that this belief was shared by the majority of Wesley's contemporaries. To the extent that the five preachers

[657] Dawson, *Assistance to Parents*, 4.

studied in this dissertation can be taken as representative of the common views of eighteenth-century England, such belief was common among preachers in Wesley's days.

Wesley's religious education of children distinctive lies not in his view of human depravity but in his emphasis and elaboration of the spiritual diseases needing healing. His identification of the spiritual diseases emphasized that the problem was from within the child. This was not something introduced from outside influence on the child. Thus, for Wesley, the key to a successful religious education of children was about addressing these spiritual diseases born in children. This served as the emphasis in his sermon. This would imply that since Wesley understood the original design of human beings, he knew that the problem of children focused on the distortion of the understanding, affection, and liberty. Thus, he was more intentionally focused on the religious education of children. In this way, his religious education of children was distinct compared to that of his contemporaries.

As a result of his emphasis on the spiritual diseases of children, Wesley was more theologically driven in his perspective on the religious education of children. He was more focused on the healing of the spiritual diseases in order to live life as God originally designed it. In contrast, his contemporaries tended to focus more on raising good children or responsible citizens. The distinct implication of Wesley's focus on spiritual diseases in need of healing was that it tended to focus on raising up children living a holy life rather than being a good citizen.

The four foundational distinctives that the researcher discovered within the scope of the study, namely, the comparison with five contemporary preachers, makes Wesley stand out in the discussion of the religious education of children. As understood by the

researcher, Wesley's religious education philosophy was optimistic in its essence. Although there is emphasis on the spiritual diseases, these spiritual problems were overshadowed by the other three religious education of children foundational distinctives of Wesley. In fact, even with the identification of spiritual diseases, to use a music theory metaphor, these spiritual problems served only as tensions that when resolved by the other foundational distinctives of Wesley, reveals the beauty of his approach to religious education of children.

John Wesley's Similarities of Approach

Regarding Wesley's distinctive approaches to religious education of children, the researcher found out that Wesley's approaches were not distinct. His contemporaries hold similar approaches. Instructing children early was not distinct to Wesley. All the five contemporaries held the same idea. They recognized the value of early education among children. The young mind was seen as a window of opportunity to sow seeds of faith since it was receptive. Instructing children plainly was not distinct to Wesley either. Kippis, Jerment, Dawson, and Doddridge taught the same idea. They believed in teaching children plainly so they may understand and apply the truths in their lives. This early instruction was one consideration for the effective instruction of religious education of children. Similarly, Wesley's idea of frequently instructing children was not distinct. Waterland, Kippis, and Jerment taught the same idea of frequent instruction. They understood that religious education of children would be challenging because of the cognitive limitations of children which include delay in learning, stubbornness, and forgetfulness. Therefore, they saw frequency of instruction as an important element towards the success of any instruction of children. Lastly, the idea of instructing children

patiently was not distinct to Wesley either. Doddridge and Jerment held the same approach to religious education of children. The same idea in instructing frequently holds true to conducting religious education patiently. To conduct instruction patiently was more focused on the teacher's side of the work while also focusing on the children's side especially in their cognitive learning journey.

As noted in Chapter I above, Wesley's ideas on breaking the will and corporal punishment have been criticized. They have been seen as abusive and unkind. However, seeing it from the eighteenth-century perspective, the use of rod of correction was shared by Wesley's contemporaries such as Waterland, Jerment, and Kippis. In light of this criticism, the idea of corporal punishment must be handled with care. Perspectives of time, culture, child developmental, and politics from the eighteenth-century up to the 21st century have changed.

Wesley, along with these contemporaries, did not promote extreme use of rod or corporal punishment. Based on this research, there were three kinds of child rearing approaches that surfaced in eighteenth-century England—those who pamper their children, those who do not agree with pampering children and discourage extreme use of corporal punishment, and lastly, those who promote extreme corporal punishment. Wesley and his contemporaries—Waterland, Doddridge, and Jerment—belong to the middle category. They encouraged parents to employ all gentle approaches such as advice, persuasion, and reproof. And only when all these efforts failed, they approved the use of corporal punishment as the last resort but with parameters in order to avoid abuse of parental authority. The parameters required that they not have an appearance of passion, but do it with mildness and kindness. Dawson was also similar to Wesley in his

ideas of breaking of the will. Dawson, in his words, encouraged managing children artfully with the goal that children will pursue what is rational and intelligent.[658] Although Wesley was focused on addressing the spiritual disease of pride, Dawson tended to focus on raising good citizens. So, Dawson on his part discouraged corporal punishment, while Doddridge emphasized winning children's affection.

John Wesley's Distinctive Approach

The researcher found one significant distinctive in John Wesley's religious education of children approach compared to that of his contemporaries. This distinctive approach is related to the idea of breaking the will especially when addressing the spiritual disease of self-will. Wesley's contemporaries did not talk about breaking the will of the child. Therefore, the researcher considers it a distinctive approach. Wesley's contemporaries like Waterland, Doddridge, and Jerment indeed talk about correcting the child using a rod, but this is only one side of Wesley's view of breaking the will of the child. Their goals focus more on correcting an offense of a child than intentionally aiming to redirect the child's will to God.

The researcher discerned that this distinctive of breaking the will to address the spiritual disease of self-will was one of the approaches that for Wesley was key to effective religious education of children. Compared to the foundational distinctives discussed above, this is less certain from the explicit writings of Wesley. Nevertheless, this distinctive approach can still be discerned by analyzing the deeper logic of his thought. As discussed earlier in Chapter I, Wesley acknowledged that understanding the

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[658] Benjamin Dawson, *Some Assistance Offered to Parents with Respect to the Religious Education of Their Children, In a Discourse from Prov. XXII. 6.* (London: C. Henderson, 1759), 15.

real essence of religion and the approaches were key factors to an effective religious education of children.[659] This seems to fit the argument of Wesley, since Wesley argued on the breaking of the will of the child in addressing the issue of the spiritual disease of self-will. Since Wesley in his religious education of children was focused on raising pious children not good citizens, self-will was of huge importance to him. Aside from referring to it as the original idolatry, Wesley understood self-will as an important disease that needed to be healed.[660] Therefore, the approach of Wesley involved the breaking of the will. From this point of view, this is the reason why the researcher decided to include this as Wesley's distinctive approach.

Implications for the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church

The sixth research question concerns the implications of this study for the Philippine General Conference of the Free Methodist Church (PGCFMC) in its practice of the religious education of children. Research question six has two sub-questions. The first sub-question focuses on what foundational reasoning from Wesley concerning the religious education of children the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers should adopt. The second sub-question addresses what approaches in performing religious education of children the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers should adopt in light of John Wesley's ideas. All of these questions will be answered in the following paragraphs.

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[659] John Wesley, "A Thought on the Manner of Education," in *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed., vol. 13 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 475.

[660] John Wesley, "On the Education of Children," in *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler, Sermons III 71-114., vol. 3 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), 353.

John Wesley's Foundational Distinctives for the PGCFMC

The foundational distinctives of Wesley identified by the present research are the role of the Holy Spirit in the learning process of children, the optimistic view of children as active participants in the evangelism, and the view of children both prior to and after the fall. These distinctives represent necessary lessons that the PGCFMC Pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's workers (hereinafter, the PGCFMC stakeholders) should embrace. Let us consider each in turn.

First, Wesley's view of the role of the Holy Spirit in helping children understand God should be incorporated by the stakeholders. The cognitive limitations of children need not delay the religious education of children. The PGCFMC stakeholders should incorporate Wesley's theology of the active participation of the Holy Spirit especially when it is partnered in our belief on the prevenient grace of God. The PGCFMC stakeholders should be reminded that God is the only physician of the soul. This means that all religious education endeavors will only be effective and successful if God opens the mind of children to understand spiritual things. This should serve as a guide for the PGCFMC stakeholders that we ought to partner with God and that people are limited without God's aide. Therefore, this should be a motivation for the PGCFMC stakeholders to be more enthusiastic and faithful in their religious education of children because God is also actively working in the lives of children.

Second, John Wesley's optimistic view of children as valuable contributors to the evangelistic mission of the church should also be adopted by the PGCFMC stakeholders when it comes to religious education of children. Wesley recognized the active role of the Holy Spirit in the overall spiritual lives of the children. So the PGCFMC stakeholders

should recognize that God can speak to children and adults can know God more through the children. So now, in the religious education of children, PGCFMC stakeholders should not just look at children as objects of the church's evangelistic endeavors. Rather, children should be equipped as subjects or key players in the evangelistic endeavors of the church. With this view, the church's effort in evangelistic mission will be augmented with the children's involvement. This will be a Wesleyan response in the effort to bring children back into an active role of mission as argued by Gustavo Crocker in his work where he addresses the absence of children in mission endeavors.[661] Therefore, children should not be seen as passive members but as active members to the overall health of the church.

Third, Wesley's theological understanding of the image of God upon humanity prior to the fall should be a part of the lessons in children's religious education. Its importance to the religious education of children is substantial because it will guide the PGCFMC stakeholders what specific lessons should be included in the religious education of children curriculum. This view will allow the development of religious education lessons that will address the problem of children's understanding, affection, and liberty towards God. For example, the PGCFMC stakeholders will sow seeds of scriptural truths to enlighten children about God so that the children will know who God is and their relationship to Him. The knowledge of God is an important factor in the religious education of children. To correct or restore one's affection or love for God, the seed of knowledge about God and self is important. Then once the knowledge and

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[661] Gustavo Crocker, "Towards a New Missiology: Renewing Our Engagement in God's Mission," in *Children and Youth as Partners in Mission: A Compendium of Papers Presented at the 4/14 Window Missiology Conference Seoul, Korea, February 2013.*, ed. Dan Brewster and John Baxter Brown (Malaysia: Compassion International, 2013), 79.

affection is addressed, the liberty—or the decision of children to remain in God till He comes again will follow. Because they know and love God, its natural effect now is that they will follow Him in their lives. They will remain faithful in Him. As a result, the PGCFMC's religious education will produce children who know God, love God, and make God priority in every decision in their lives. This is how important this theological understanding of the substance of the religious education of children by the PGCFMC stakeholders.

Fowler's faith development theory again plays an important role as parents pass this theological belief on to their children. These theological beliefs among parents from the Wesleyan tradition are absent in the natural perspective of children. Thus, parents' continuous engagement with children in childrearing will expose the children to their parents' worldview or theological persuasion.

As a Filipino, the researcher recognizes that Filipinos have a myth about the origin of humanity—a Filipino version of Adam and Eve. The researcher was educated with this myth in his elementary days. The myth was called "Malakas at Maganda" (Strength and Beauty). This myth shared in schools tells that humanity came into existence from a bamboo that split in half. The myth reminds children that they were born with the qualities of strength and beauty, and it is often used to help Filipinos thrive in the midst of difficulties in life.

Wesley would rather teach the biblical account of humanity's creation than the myth of Malakas and Maganda. This unbiblical account of creation would have been seen by Wesley as counter to the benefits of understanding the biblical account with its

explanation of God, humanity's relationship with God, sin, salvation, stewardship, accountability, and humanity's creation in the image of God.

Therefore, the researcher recommends the PGCFMC stakeholders to educate children in the biblical account and Wesleyan perspective of the creation. This can be done by telling children the biblical story of Creation, by instructing them about God as their Creator, by instructing them that they were created in the image of God, and that they were intended to know God, love God, and choose God in their lives. Also, as Wesley viewed it, they should instruct their children about their responsibility to steward God's creation, and that they will be held accountable to God on Judgement Day according to how they use their minds, hearts, and will.

Fourth, the theological understanding of human beings after the fall should serve as another crucial factor in conducting religious education of children. Wesley did not simply elaborate the different spiritual diseases of every human being. He sought to inform Christian educators how far we have lost our way from our original design. Likewise, the PGCFMC stakeholders should inculcate in the minds of their people how far our understanding has gone astray about God. Wesley wanted also to inform Christian educators how human beings' affection towards God was distorted. He sought to inform them that we have misused our liberty and that this freedom tended to be self-centered rather than God centered. Wesley wanted to deliver this idea that humanity has completely gone astray from what God had originally envisioned them. Therefore, understanding of the effects of the fall is a necessary guide for the religious education of children endeavors.

When PGCFMC stakeholders understand the problem of spiritual diseases, the healing of these spiritual diseases is the natural response which they should endeavor to adopt. The PGCFMC stakeholders should teach children about God to address the problem of children's understanding of God. In this concept, the sowing of the seeds of truth in their understanding about God to address atheism is foundational in successful endeavors. The PGCFMC stakeholders should enlighten the children about God so that they know about who God is and our relationship to Him. To correct or restore one's affection or love for God, the seed of knowledge about God and self is important. And once the affection for God is healed, children will choose to live life in accordance with God's will.

Erik Erikson's theory of trust and mistrust suggests that children develop trust with their caregivers through their caregivers' constant show of concern and love in children's times of need. This theory is helpful in addressing the tension between the failures caused by the spiritual diseases and living in obedience to God. Humans are clearly not perfect beings. There will be times of failures due to the spiritual diseases. Therefore, Erikson's theory will be helpful in addressing this concern.

One common characteristic of Filipinos is called *hiya* (shame). In an honor and shame culture, societal pressure plays a large role in influencing the behavior of children. One personal experience of the researcher before was shame caused by the issue of poverty. The researcher was ordered by his parents to borrow money from neighbors so we could buy food to eat. However, because we had been continuously borrowing money, and the researcher was the one forced to face the neighbors, the researcher would pretend

to have met the neighbor and would lie to his parents, saying that they could not lend us money because they were short of money also.

Wesley would oppose the idea of shame that results in lying by children. Wesley saw lying as part of the spiritual disease of children. For him, instead of being fed, the healing of the disease would be of utmost concern. Thus, if Wesley had been exposed to this theory of Erikson, he would have established trust among children by his constant show of affection and love towards them. This constant concern can establish genuine trust among children so that, when children fail, they will remain optimistic in life because they trust the genuine concern of their parents towards them. This will then become a basis also of children's trust towards God in their times of failures. When children know they can trust God, they will learn to love God and choose Him more than any other.

Therefore, the researcher recommends to the PGCFMC stakeholders holding a theological seminar on Wesleyan religious instruction of children in order to correct, supplement, or inform them of our theological persuasion. This can be done by instructing children about their spiritual diseases, while at the same time, instructing children about God's genuine love for them as displayed in the cross.

John Wesley's Foundational Approach for PGCFMC

The researcher will add to the discussion of the breaking of the will the implications of Wesley's view of humanity after the fall. In applying Wesley's idea of the breaking of the will, PGCFMC stakeholders should approach this with precautions. The researcher will highlight two aspects of Wesley's idea of breaking the will of children.

The first aspect has to do with the use of corporal punishment. The second one has to do with healing the diseases of self-will.

The implication of using corporal punishment should be address with caution. The researcher recognizes that the Philippines has practiced using the rod as part of the discipline in childrearing. The researcher recognizes that there have been several attempts already to pass a law prohibiting corporal punishment. However, these several attempts have failed, and prohibition of corporal punishment did not pass into law.[662] There are also different child protection acts that PGCFMC stakeholders should be aware of.[663] The absence of a law against corporal punishment is not a license to beat children. Compared to Wesley's time, the researcher's time already has codified child's rights. The absence of child's rights in Wesley's time is in stark contrast to present attitudes. There are already several Philippine agencies designated to address children's rights. These agencies include the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Bantay Bata 163.[664] Thus, the absence of legal prohibitions is not a license to abuse the use of corporal punishment.

Wesley believed that one of the ways to correct the self-centeredness of children is through the use of the rod. Yet, the biblical passages, especially those found in the book of Proverbs, should not serve as license for the extreme use of corporal punishment. As discussed in Chapter V, Wesley interpreted Proverbs 22:6 not as an absolute command.

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[662] See https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/2/3540. https://web.senate.gov.ph/lisdata/62415579!.pdf. https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/lisdata/83366890!.pdf. https://web.senate.gov.ph/lisdata/1607513313!.pdf. https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/lisdata/1896716095!.pdf.

[663] See https://www.doj.gov.ph/child-protection-program.html.

[664] See https://fo3.dswd.gov.ph/2023/02/dswd-abs-cbn-foundations-bantay-bata-to-work-together-for-child-protection-program/.

This interpretation will be the same in any text in Proverbs implying corporal punishment. As explained previously, Wesley's concept of corporal punishment was shared by his contemporaries. Wesley primarily promoted all gentle efforts in addressing the self-will of children just like his contemporaries. Furthermore, while he promoted the use of the rod, he was quick to place several conditions on doing so. First, the rod should be applied only after all other gentle approaches of discipline fail. Moreover, the administering of the rod is to be done with mildness and kindness. This is because Wesley and his contemporaries were against the extreme and frequent use of the rod. Nevertheless, he firmly disagreed with his opponents' efforts to ban corporal punishment. He insisted that the rod was an indispensable tool for raising godly children.

Lawrence Kohlberg would disagree with Wesley on this point and, in the researcher's opinion, likely would have been able to change Wesley's mind. In his moral development theory, Kohlberg explains the process of how children make moral decisions. He demonstrates that children's sense of right and wrong depends on the pleasure and pain they receive. He shows that the moral views of adults and children are different, something of which Wesley was necessarily unaware. Kohlberg notes that children will express false obedience towards parents because they just want to escape pain. As a result, instead of having a real conversion, moving from self-centeredness to God-centeredness, the use of corporal punishment with children might just create false learning. Children will learn to lie in order to escape punishment. Had Wesley understood Kohlberg's ideas, he likely would have adopted a different perspective.

As a Filipino, the researcher has a mixed view of corporal punishment. The researcher has first-hand experience of spanking and whipping with a belt as part of the

discipline in the home. Although this produced ill feelings towards his parents in his younger days, he did not carry these feelings into adulthood. As the researcher matured, he understood why his parents did it. However, as a word of caution, having no ill feelings in adulthood may be his case because the whipping and spanking were not extreme. In fact, the researcher has also witnessed extreme use of spanking or whipping and saw a negative result where the child became rebellious. In addition, the researcher assumes that Filipinos will have a unified voice in disciplining spoiled children—especially those who might cause harm to others.

In addition to this, the researcher also recognizes the difference between Wesley's context and today's setting in the Philippines. In the former, child protection policies and laws had not yet been implemented. By contrast, now there are laws to protect the welfare of children. There is great emphasis on child rights in the Philippines. Nevertheless, the failure of various attempts in the legislature to prohibit corporal punishment speaks of the view of current leaders. These attempts to pass a law against striking children reveal that there is an outcry to end this Filipino way of discipline. Thus, the researcher recognizes that the Filipino view on corporal punishment is changing. What was acceptable before among the grassroots is no longer as acceptable today. It is just a matter of time before there are enough votes among legislative leaders to pass the law.

It is possible to combine Kohlberg's moral developmental framework with Wesley's perspectives on the goal of corporal punishment. Wesley was applying his theological principle in the post-conventional stage of Kohlberg's moral development spectrum. Wesley assumed that children were able to respond to external input in the same way adults do, namely, in the post-conventional stage. Wesley would likely have

chosen to treat children differently if he had known Kohlberg's research. Specifically, for children in the pre-conventional stage, he probably would not have been so quick to reject pleasure as necessarily worldly. Instead, he probably would have capitalized on the idea of teaching obedience using what is pleasurable to the child. For example, he might have established clear guidelines or house rules for listening to parents in doing household chores that would earn children rewards for obedience and punishment for disobedience.

Similarly, for children in the conventional stage, the child's desire to be recognized as a good child and a law-abiding member of the family probably would have been used by Wesley in achieving his desire to reorient the child's will towards God. He might have created opportunities for children to participate in creating house rules that would be consistent with the common beliefs of the family. By doing so, children would feel happy to participate in family endeavors and be inclined to obey and participate to please their parents. This attitude could later be redirected to pleasing God.

In light of this discussion about the likely changes Wesley would have made if he had known what we know today about child development, child rights, and child protection policies, the following recommendations should be regarded as consistent with the Wesleyan approach to the religious education of children. First, it is recommended that PGCFMC stakeholders not engage in corporal punishment. Instead, it is recommended that these stakeholders engage and strengthen gentle approaches such as advice, persuasion, and reproof. Although Wesley had a good theological basis for breaking the will of the child and reorienting the child's self-centeredness towards God-centeredness, the approach of using the rod is now unacceptable in today's setting given the new understanding of children's moral development and existing child protection

laws. Therefore, the researcher also recommends to the PGCFMC stakeholders that they be instructed on the moral development of children in order to enlighten them on children's thoughts about what is right and wrong for them. The researcher also recommends the development of a child protection policy to be applied by all the stakeholders in the PGCFMC. The researcher further recommends establishing clear rules that the children will know and that will help them avoid punishment. At the same time, children should be allowed to participate in crafting rules, which will help them comply, thus meeting their moral reasoning of pleasing people in authority. This will lead to establishing a later desire to please God.

The implication of breaking the will especially in Wesley's concept of healing the spiritual disease of self-will should be approached with caution. Although the researcher recognizes the theological beauty involved in the concept of redirecting one's self-will to God's will, Wesley's application may seem unkind to children in the 21st century. As stated in Chapter II, one example of this was the idea of limiting the child to three meals a day and not giving anything in between including water would be seen as unapplicable in the 21st century. The reason for this is that Wesley's child rearing approach excluded child play. There were several probable reasons for this. Basically, Wesley on his part had a bad experience with play. As discussed in Chapter II, after the Rectory fire, when the children were temporarily situated in other homes, they learned bad behaviors from other children. Another possibility suggested by Wesley's own writing was his experience in Charterhouse. The lack of adult supervision in Charterhouse during children's free time led to older students bullying him which might have been a significant cause for his unsupportive view of child's play. Lastly, as stated in Chapter II, the same event in

Kingswood school with the neglect of the masters or teachers in children's free time added depth to his negative view of play. Therefore, Wesley had a pessimistic view of child play. Although this seems to be understandable, contemporary empirical research demonstrates the value of adult-guided child play. Therefore, caution is needed in appropriating Wesley's view on breaking the will.

On the other side, Wesley saw the breaking of the will as a necessary action in addressing the spiritual disease of self-will. He taught that the healing of this spiritual disease involves breaking the child's will by not feeding self-will and by teaching the child to submit to parents or authorities. As the child learns to submit to the will of his/her parents, he/she will later on submit to the will of God.

James Fowler might see this as a factor towards the faith development of children. His definition of faith can be seen in Susanna Wesley's theological belief of breaking the will, which focused on reorienting self-centeredness towards God-centeredness. This belief was later embraced by Wesley and informed his ideas about the religious education of children. Indeed, this is an example of how the faith of a parent can inform the faith of their children as they continuously interact with each other.

From a Filipino perspective, the principle of reorienting the self-centeredness of children to God-centeredness through the breaking of the will is a desirable concept. It is a benevolent act in addressing children who are living ungodly lives to spare them from the further consequences of their sinful actions. In the honor and shame culture of the Philippines, it will help the family save face, or, expressed in a more positive way, it brings honor to parents in the eyes of the community.

John Wesley would have agreed with Fowler on the theory of faith development. Just as Wesley's mother influenced him with her theology, all parents—whether intentionally or unintentionally--model their faith or worldview before their children. Raising Christlike children is desirable in the Filipino setting. This concept of the importance of reorienting children toward God-centeredness is also made clear by Christ's example in Gethsemane. In Luke 4:22, Jesus said, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done," (NIV).[665] Christ as the ultimate model of living a Christian life ought to be followed. Therefore, the reorientation of self-will to God's will is a necessary concept worthy of imitation. The example of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane serves as a reminder that willingness to sacrifice one's comfort for God's glory and happiness is an attribute that should be instilled in every growing Christian, whether adults or children.

The researcher recommends educating the PGCFMC stakeholders in Wesleyan theological beliefs of the doctrine of holiness—the reorientation from self-centeredness toward God-centeredness. This can be done by instructing the stakeholders of children's inclination to be self-centered and how we ought to follow the example of Christ.

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[665] I am indebted for this idea to Dr. Kevin Mannoia.

Table 2: Critical Retrieval of Wesley for the Philippine Context

Topic	Wesley's View	HCD Perspective	Filipino Perspective	Critical Retrieval	Recommended Implementation
Humanity/children before the Fall	Humanity had perfect understanding, affection, and liberty	Faith of parents can be exposed to children (Fowler)	Myth of Malakas or Maganda (Strength and Beauty)	Wesley would teach the biblical account rather than the Filipino myth.	PGCFMC stakeholders should be educated on the biblical creation account and the Wesleyan theological understanding of the image of God: by instructing them in how humanity's understanding of God, affection, and liberty were distorted
Humanity/children after the Fall	Children are born with spiritual diseases	Trust and Mistrust (Erik Erikson)	*Hiya* (shame) could lead children to lie.	Wesley would address *hiya* (shame) and lying and establish trust in God	Educate PGCFMC stakeholders in a theological understanding of sin: by instructing children about their spiritual diseases by instructing them about Christ's genuine love for them as exemplified in the cross
Corporal Punishment	Using the rod in discipline of children	Right and wrong differs by developmental stages (Kohlberg)	A spoiled child needs corporal punishment (spanking or whipping)	In spite of Kohlberg's moral development theory and child's rights and policies, Wesley would be firm in his belief that parents should be the guide in light of children's lack of knowledge and biblical	Educate PGCFMC stakeholders not to engage in corporal punishment towards children: by instructing them on how children view right and wrong by educating them in the different child rights and laws on child protection by developing child protection policies in the church

				moral reasoning.	by establishing house rules where children know what will spare them from punishment by allowing children to participate in formulating house rules that will give them happiness seeing that they please their parents and God.
Breaking the will of the child	Reorientation of humanity's self-centeredness to God-centeredness	Children develop spiritually by exposure to caregiver's faith (Fowler)	Ungodly child needs spiritual nurture	Biblically, reorientation toward God-centeredness is exemplified by Christ in Gethsemane	Educate PGCFMC stakeholders in Wesleyan theological belief on holiness—the reorientation of self-centeredness towards God-centeredness: by instructing the stakeholders of children's inclination to be self-centered by instructing the stakeholders to be obedient to God

Conclusions

Upon studying John Wesley's approach to religious education, the researcher is optimistic that Wesley's distinctive foundational reasoning and approach will address the current gaps in the religious education materials in the PGCFMC and help correct misconceptions about Wesley's approach, specifically in the breaking of the will. Above are all the answers to all the research questions that address the implication of Wesley's religious education for the PGCFMC pastors, Christian educators, parents, and children's

workers. The overall philosophy of Wesley on the religious education provides a base for the researcher's point of view,

First, the idea of God's involvement with children in order for them to understand spiritual truths is uniquely Wesleyan. This concept makes the religious education of children child friendly. As a Free Methodist pastor and leader, the researcher is proud of his Wesleyan heritage. Wesleyan theology greatly values children. It highlights divine power over human endeavor to illuminate children to spiritual truths to children.

Second, the researcher appreciates the recovery of John Wesley's view of the valuable contribution of children in the evangelistic mission of the church. Wesley's view will add a voice towards the call to reverse the big omission of children in the mission endeavors of the church as promoted by Crocker. This research can also serve as an additional scholarly resource for the 4/14 Window Movement in helping address the big omission in mission.

Thirdly, John Wesley's reference of the original design prior to the fall was significant. Wesley did not seek to carry out religious education to produce good citizens. Instead, because of this foundational belief, his overall philosophy of religious education of children took a distinctive shape. He intentionally aimed to recover and align his religious education to that of God's purpose. Thus, recovering the perfect understanding, affection, and liberty was unique and encouraged the creation of a religious education curriculum addressing these three aspects of human design and purpose.

Fourth, for the researcher, the emphasis of Wesley on the spiritual diseases of children in his sermon speaking on the education of children, though it sounds pessimistic can now be recognized as the opposite. Instead, it has an optimistic tone. The researcher

understood that it only sounds pessimistic if Wesley's other works are not considered. If Wesley was indeed pessimistic, he would not have promoted the possibility of children learning spiritual things through the help of the Holy Spirit. This includes the possibility of children's active participation in the evangelistic endeavors of the church. When PGCFMC stakeholders take into consideration Wesley's theological view of humanity prior to the fall, they will know that it was necessary for Wesley to talk about spiritual diseases of children because he understood what human beings lost after the fall.

Upon careful consideration of Wesley's sermons on religious education of children and considering the overall tone of his other works, the researcher was convinced that Wesley was not hostile to children even with his idea of breaking the will of the child. The researcher now can confidently defend Wesley from his critics especially when Wesley is read in the context of eighteenth-century England. The researcher was enlightened in the course of the study, discovering that in reality Wesley had many good ideas to contribute to the discussion of the religious education of children during his time and even in today's setting. Upon studying Wesley, the researcher appreciated more the beauty of the Wesleyan theological persuasion. The researcher is convinced that Wesley's perspective on the religious education of children will be helpful in facing today's challenges in religious instruction of children.

These conclusions strongly reinforce the assertion that Wesley was not hostile to children in his perspective on the religious education of children. Indeed, the result of this dissertation brings to light the beauty of the Wesleyan theological persuasion with respect to children. When Wesley is read in the context of eighteenth-century English philosophers and Wesley's contemporary preachers, his distinctive foundations and

approaches to the religious education of children reveal him to be child friendly. Wesley had many commendable ideas to contribute to discussions about the religious education of children both during his time and today. Thus, Wesley's perspective on the religious education of children is helpful for today's religious education challenges. Therefore, PGCFMC stakeholders and similarly located practitioners should confidently—and thoughtfully—consult Wesley's works to undergird and shape their endeavors to teach children about God.

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