A COMPARISON OF THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF SOME STUDENTS OF
INDIANA STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
WITH THE BELIEFS OF THEIR PARENTS

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In Partial Fulfillment
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by
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Committee on thesis:

[Signatures]

Representative of English Department:

[Signatures]

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A comparison of religious beliefs, importance of the church, influence of religious beliefs on school work, opposition of denominations, prejudice and possession.
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Statement of the problem: "How real is religious belief changing today?" Can a noticeable difference be seen in denominations? What influences are more instrumental in molding religious beliefs? What an answer to these questions was study was made. The religious beliefs of representative
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Change is one inevitable aspect of human behavior. Self-advancement, self-regression, or mere change is a part of the history of man. There has been much slow, gradual change, but shorter periods of time also evidence change in the habits, customs, and thinking of people. Where is the man of three score years and ten who does not like to entertain his grandchildren by describing the changes he has seen in his lifetime?

One aspect of man's life which influences his thought, character, and happiness is his religion. Considerable research and writing have been done concerning social change in almost every phase of life, but comparatively little has been done in religion. The last three quarters of a century have brought noteworthy changes in the religious thinking and practices which make a very interesting study.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. How fast is religious thinking changing today? Can a noticeable difference be seen in one generation? What influences are most instrumental in moulding religious beliefs? For an answer to these questions this study was made. The religious beliefs of representative
college students of Indiana State Teachers College who are church members have been compared with the beliefs of their parents in order to discover (1) if there is a marked degree of change, and (2) to try to ascertain the influences most potent in moulding religious thinking.

**Importance of the study.** The Christian religion in the past has been a great motivating force in colonization, education, and in establishing governments of equity and justice as well as in determining many important details of man's action. It has been felt that the rising importance of science and the growth and influence of secularism has thrown religion into an eclipse, especially among educated people.¹ This atom age, however, is reconsidering the importance of religion. Studies of this nature, therefore, seem timely at present. Statistics show an increase in the number of churches and an increase in the total church membership which is probably commensurate to the increase in population.² The strength of religious groups cannot be measured alone by numerical and material growth, however. The interior strength of faith is very important.³

If it can be discovered whether the religious faith of church members is growing or diminishing it may be possible to estimate more accurately the strength of organized religion. It appears that no comparative study of this type is on record.

II. SOURCE AND LIMITATION OF DATA

Source of data. The only possible means of gathering data for this study seemed to be by the questionnaire method. The files of the personnel department of Indiana State Teachers College showed those students who had a church preference, and what that preference was. The same cards gave the names and addresses of the students' parents. The replies to a questionnaire sent to representative students and to their parents furnished the data for this study.

Limitation of the data. Data from a questionnaire is always dependent upon the cooperation, sincerity, and accuracy of expression on the part of those who receive the questionnaire. It is never faultless. It can never be absolutely accurate. Moreover, the subject of religious beliefs is one that some people do not care to discuss. The percentage of returns was low; therefore, the data was somewhat meager. It was not required that the questionnaires be signed. No doubt in some cases students answered whose parents did not
answer, and visa versa.

The writer realizes that this study touches only the fringe of the interesting topic of religious change of thinking in this generation. It is believed, however, that the study does reveal some trends of present day religious thinking in the community served by Indiana State Teachers College.

Citations:
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

An increased amount of literature has been published during the last few years on religious subjects showing a revival of interest in this field of thought. A very limited amount has appeared, however, which is actually diagnostic of present day beliefs or of change in religious thinking.

Lincoln Barnett,\(^1\) reported a nation-wide survey made by the *Ladies Home Journal* concerning the present religious beliefs and practices of the American people. This survey found that ninety-five per cent of the American people believe in God, seventy-six per cent are church members, twenty-six per cent think of God in intimate relationship to their lives, and seventy-three per cent profess belief in some kind of after life. Further questions tested peoples' ideas of a good life and the extent to which they carry out their own ideas.

Emma Beckman\(^2\) has written an interesting account of the religious attitudes of a high-school class of eighty-one seniors. After spending some time getting acquainted with these students and winning their confidence, she interviewed


each of them. She concluded from her experiment that young people give thought to the spiritual side of life. Catholics and Lutherans, she found, have the most effective foundations in religious habits, and the doubts in other churches are of doctrinal rather than spiritual values. Lutheran young people use the Bible more than others do. Most young people think of religion in terms of what it can do for them; prayer is a habit and is used to ask for fulfillment of a personal satisfaction. In conclusion, she decided that there comes a time when the individual turns to a Power higher than himself.

A short article by Helen K. Mull reports a comparison of the religious thinking of Freshmen and Seniors in a liberal arts college. The Watson Test of Religious Thinking (Advanced Form A) was used for the comparison. In this college religious instruction was offered as an elective, and many of the seniors had enrolled in the courses. The author’s conclusion was given in the somewhat vague sentence, "There is some indication, then, that the religious thinking of seniors is of a higher order, as measured by the Watson Test, than that of Freshmen." She did not explain what she meant by "higher order." She added this further conclusion, "Courses in religion, though a factor in the improvement of

---

religious thinking, are not the only influence at work. It is impossible to tell from this study what the other factors are, whether the home background, the general maturing of thought and feeling, the curriculum as a whole, or the social atmosphere of the college."

In the two volume work presenting President Hoover's investigation of recent social trends, Luther C. Fry has a chapter entitled "Changes in Religious Organizations." Mr. Fry has pointed out certain religious changes that took place in the twenty years prior to 1933. The changes which he discusses include: (1) Change in attitudes and beliefs, especially as they have been effected by science, and the resulting rise and influence of Fundamentalism. (2) The competition of organized religion with secular interests and agencies. (3) The decline of dogma and the merging of some Protestant denominations. (4) The increased interest of organized religion in social, economic, and family problems. (5) The growth of the membership of the church and the comparative size of the denominations. (6) The church wealth increase and expenditure. (7) Ministers, their training and supposedly waning influence. (8) The increased emphasis upon religious education in the churches. (9) The expansion of socio-religious youth

organizations. (10) The growth of co-operative religious organizations. (11) The growth of American foreign missions. (12) The changes that have taken place in church programs.

This information, while it is pertinent, is not up to date.

The World Almanac of 1948 (pages 573-574) compares the number of religious bodies, local churches, and total membership of churches in 1947 with the same in 1936. The comparison is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Religious Bodies</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>253,762</td>
<td>73,673,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>199,302</td>
<td>55,807,366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charles Clayton Morrison's book, Can Protestantism Win America?⁵, and Kenneth Scott Latourette's book, The Christian Outlook,⁶ both, give information and ideas which help to stimulate thinking on present day changes and trends in religion, but they do not deal directly with the subject of this investigation.

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Careful searching, then, reveals that very little, if anything, has been written on the subject of the study presented in this thesis.
CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND TREATMENT OF DATA

I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

To devise a questionnaire which will give a picture of a person's religious beliefs is not an easy task. Moreover, many people have an aversion to questionnaires, and many do not care to express their religious beliefs. It was the desire of the investigator to construct a questionnaire that would be answered by a maximum number of recipients, but one which would at the same time give a basis for comparing the religious beliefs of the two groups being investigated.

The personnel cards of the students on file in the personnel department of Indiana State Teachers College stated their church preference but they did not give information as to actual church membership. It seemed important to know whether or not the students and their parents were actually church members. The first question asked for this information. In order to help get an idea of the strength of home influence on religious thinking it seemed important to know something of the religious status of the subjects' parents. The second question, therefore, asked whether or not the parents were church members. The beliefs and the
consequent behavior of the subjects concerning church membership and attendance were investigated in the next group of six questions. Following this, a group of six questions investigated beliefs concerning deity, immortality, the Bible, and the rather vaguely defined experience of conversion. It was thought that feeling concerning the importance of the church in society could best be estimated by comparing it with the school. The next three questions were devoted to this inquiry.

Concerning the influences which help to shape religious beliefs, in addition to the home influence referred to above, the investigator considered the fact that many people think of the secular schools as having been instrumental in weakening the religious influences of the home and church. Questions were included in the next section which would test this assumption.

Are people of more education more religious, or more orthodox in their religion, than people of less education? The level of education of the parents was investigated in the interest of this question. Does urbanism influence church membership and religious beliefs? Question four made it possible to answer this concerning the subjects of this study. The logical place for this question seemed to be in the first part of the questionnaire even though the logical time for treating it seemed to be further on in the study. The same
is true concerning a comparison of church denominational influence. The denominational identification was asked for in the second question.

The investigator considered the fact that some people might not be able to express their beliefs in the wording of this questionnaire. Space was left where the subjects were asked to write in any of their beliefs that had not been covered.

II. TREATMENT AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

It was near the end of the school quarter immediately preceding the Christmas holiday season when the plans for this study were drawn up. Busy students, occupied with preparations for the quarter's examinations, would not welcome a questionnaire form to fill out then of all times. Their parents at home were busy sending out Christmas greetings and making the other usual preparations for Christmas. Certainly it was a poor time to send out questionnaires. For various reasons, however, it seemed advisable to try.

The information cards in the personnel office of the college were made accessible. The alphabetical arrangement of the cards was followed, but care was exercised to use only the names of students who indicated a church preference. For this reason a great many cards were passed over. Further care was taken to list students that would give a fair
distribution from each of the four classes. Only a negligible number of graduate students were included in the list. By far the largest percentage of students who gave a church preference named the Methodist Church as the preferred denomination, so in order to get a better distribution of denominations some of the Methodist cards were passed over. No difference was made concerning color or sex.

In the final list of 240 names it so happened that sixteen main denominations were represented. Various divisions of the leading denominations were not counted separately. There were sixty-two Freshmen, sixty-six Sophomores, sixty-seven Juniors, forty-five Seniors, and six graduate students in the list. Only eight colored students happened to be recorded. As to sex, 145 of the cards represented men, whereas only ninety-five gave women's names. Of these classifications only the church denominations could be identified in the returns since most of the questionnaires came back unsigned.

As might be expected the returns were slow coming in, and low in number, but the committee guiding the investigation decided that they furnished sufficient basis to be of some comparative value. The study was continued with usable forms from 115 students and 144 parents. In some cases the parent's forms represented the beliefs of both the father and mother of the same student, but all were counted the same.
A comparison of the beliefs of college students and their parents concerning church membership. The first point of interest in studying the questionnaire returns was to

**TABLE I**

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS WHO STATED THAT THEY ARE CHURCH MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of cases</td>
<td>Percent of cases</td>
<td>No. of cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church members</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86.95</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not church members</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

find out the proportion of students stating a church preference who were actually church members, and to know the proportion of parents that were church members. Table I shows this proportion. It is very likely that those who were not church members were not much interested in answering the questionnaire. A large per cent of them, probably, were among those who failed to respond. The aim was to make the comparison among church members, in as far as this would be possible, and for this reason the high percentage in this
group was considered to be an advantage.

The first comparison of the study is revealed in Table I. Church membership of the parents who answered exceeded that of the students who answered by 6.75 per cent.

What are the leading reasons for church membership? Table II shows that the majority of both the students and parents are seeking in church membership the satisfaction of sincere religious desires for Christian inspiration and service. It is noteworthy, however, that the number of parents who are church members for this reason is twelve per cent higher than the number of students. The influence of parents which led to church membership among both groups is not very high, and there is little difference between students and parents in this respect. Not much interest was shown in the social opportunities of the church, or in church membership for the sake of appearance. This later factor did give some basis for comparison, however. Only 2.8 per cent of the parents considered this factor important, while 7.8 per cent of the students checked this item.
### TABLE II

**REASONS WHY STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS ARE CHURCH MEMBERS***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. cases</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>No. cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For religious inspiration and service</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>68.</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the social opportunities it offers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because one or both of my parents are</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>church members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because it gives a more respectable</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appearance in the community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some checked more than one reason. If they did this and evaluated their answers according to directions only the reasons checked (1) were counted. If there was no evaluation, all checked were counted.*
Among the other reasons that were given for church membership were found in the following reasons:

Parents: "It is my duty to myself, my family, and my country."
"Father was a minister."
"Because I wish to spend eternity in Heaven."
"The church is not adequate but it is better than nothing."
"I think it makes a better citizen, and is educational."
"Because of the helpful influence of the church in a community."

Students: "It gives me a general feeling of well-being."
"For salvation."
"I was hounded by my parents and the minister."
"I like to associate with the type of people who attend church."
"I feel the need for an improved moral life."
"It just makes me feel better."
"Because I believe in organized religion."

Concerning church attendance it is shown in Table III that the percentage who are faithful in every Sunday attendance was consistently high in both groups. The other answers concerning church attendance showed that the two groups varied little with each other in this respect. No student, however, indicated that he never attended church though 1.2 per cent of the parents checked this answer.
### TABLE III

**FREQUENCY OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>of cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who attend nearly every Sunday</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who attend occasionally</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who seldom attend</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who never attend</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answering question</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table IV shows that the parents considered church doctrines to be more important than did their children. Since 11.56 per cent more students followed the denominational footsteps of their parents than had their parents done before them, are we to infer that the present-day parents exercise more denominational influence over their children than was true a generation ago? Or does denomination mean less to present-day young people? Five per cent more parents than students chose their denomination because it offered them a church that was convenient. This does not seem quite consistent with the above nor in harmony with the information shown in Table V.

In Table V, page 21, it is seen that 2.44 per cent more students than parents expressed a willingness to attend the church of a different denomination if one of their own were not convenient. A high percentage of both groups indicated this attitude, however. A much lower percentage indicated that they would join a church of a different denomination. On this point 16.7 per cent more parents than students showed such a willingness. Does this mean that the students feel more loyal to their denomination than parents do? Or does it mean that church membership means less to the students than it does to their parents, and they would not join any church? The denomination meant a great deal to one Lutheran student who wrote, "I would drive fifty miles to attend a church of my own denomination."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>In fav-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of cases</td>
<td>of cases</td>
<td>or of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of the doctrines it teaches</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>64.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because it is the denomination of my parents</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because the church I belong to is the most convenient for me to attend</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because I like the pastor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because I like the local members of this church</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See note on Table II.
### TABLE V

**STUDENTS' AND PARENTS' ATTITUDES CONCERNING ATTENDING AND JOINING A CHURCH OF A DIFFERENT DENOMINATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>of cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would attend another church</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>84.34</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would not attend another church</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those uncertain</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who left question unanswered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would join another church</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would not join another church</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those uncertain</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who left the question unanswered</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speakers in this group: one parent and one student, and one student gave the name quoted above. The question was open-ended and a wide variation of opinions concerning the origin of students' parents is shown.
The majority of both parents and students indicated that the profession of an active Christian faith was the most important requisite for church membership. (See Table VI). Four per cent more parents than students, however, considered this to be most important. About the same ratio of difference in the same direction was expressed concerning a required amount of religious instruction, which was considered to be the item of second importance. The most noticeable difference of opinion between students and their parents in respect to church membership qualifications was on the suggestion that merely the desire to join was sufficient. This was considered so by 23.47 per cent of the students as compared with only 7.6 per cent of the parents.

A comparison of beliefs concerning deity, immortality, the experience of conversion, and the Bible. "Do you believe in the existence of God?" "Yes, but --," answered one student. The other answers, however, were clearly "yes," "no," or "uncertain." Table VII, page 24, shows the comparison found of the beliefs of students and their parents concerning deity and immortality. Only one person, a student, indicated atheism. Four parents and ten students took the middle ground of agnosticism on this point; one parent omitted the question and one student gave the answer quoted above. There was more doubt and a wider variation of opinion concerning the virgin
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated a required amount of religious instruction</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated consent of parents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated the profession of Christian faith</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated that the desire to join was sufficient</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated the recommendation of the pastor or church committee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who gave other qualifications</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who left the question unanswered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Note on Table II.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>In fav-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of cases</td>
<td>of cases</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated belief in the existence of God</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated disbelief in the existence of God</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated uncertainty about the existence of God</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who did not answer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated belief that Christ is the divine son of God of virgin birth</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated disbelief that Christ is the divine son of God of virgin birth</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated uncertainty about the deity of Christ</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who did not answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated belief in immortality of the soul</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated disbelief in immortality of the soul</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated uncertainty about immortality</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who did not answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>6.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
birth of Christ than on belief in God. One student said he believed Christ to be the Divine Son of God, but not of virgin birth. Over 11.8 per cent more students than parents were uncertain about this question.

Exactly the same percentage of students who believed in the virgin birth believed also in immortality of the soul. Likewise, nearly the same percentage of parents who disbelieved in the virgin birth disbelieved also in immortality of the soul. However, there was no consistent pattern of answers to the two questions, and since there seems no apparent reason for this similarity it is assumed to be a mere coincidence. As in the question concerning the virgin birth of Christ there was a significant number more students than parents who were uncertain, so it was in the question of immortality in that 9.94 per cent more students were doubtful. Seven per cent of the parents left this question unanswered whereas all but one of the students answered the question.

Even though the term conversion is a common term of religious language yet it is difficult to define it so that people of various denominations will have nearly the same understanding of what is meant. A few Catholics and Lutherans, and a Congregationalist indicated that the term was not understood. Otherwise the question was checked without comment. As Table VIII shows, there was a wider difference in the beliefs of students and their parents on this topic.
TABLE VIII
A COMPARISON OF BELIEFS CONCERNING CONVERSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated belief in conversion</td>
<td>61 53.04</td>
<td>106 73.61</td>
<td>20.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they did not believe in</td>
<td>16 13.97</td>
<td>13 9.03</td>
<td>4.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated uncertainty about belief</td>
<td>29 25.22</td>
<td>14 9.72</td>
<td>15.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who did not answer concerning belief</td>
<td>9 7.82</td>
<td>11 7.64</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had experienced</td>
<td>35 30.43</td>
<td>93 64.58</td>
<td>34.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had not experienced</td>
<td>45 39.1</td>
<td>22 15.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those uncertain about a personal experience</td>
<td>27 23.47</td>
<td>12 8.33</td>
<td>15.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who did not answer concerning the</td>
<td>8 7.</td>
<td>17 11.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience of conversion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The highest percentage of difference found in the study.
than on any other questioned. Of the parents, 73.61 per cent indicated a positive belief in conversion. But only 53.4 per cent of the students gave affirmative answers to this belief. Here for the first time in the questionnaire we find a difference of over twenty per cent. The peak of difference in the whole study is reached in the answers to the question, "Do you feel that you have experienced this type of conversion?" The affirmative answer was given by 64.6 per cent of the parents but by only 30.43 per cent or less than half that number of students. Just over 15 per cent of the parents, as compared with 39.1 per cent of the students, said they had not experienced conversion. Only 8.3 per cent of the parents were uncertain concerning this matter whereas 23.47 per cent of the students were in perplexing uncertainty.

As is seen in Table IX, beliefs of students and their parents concerning the Bible were fairly harmonious except on the question of infallibility. Here we have 52.1 per cent of the parents believing the Bible to be the infallible word of God, as compared with only 31.3 per cent of the students hold this belief. A lower but significant difference is seen in that twenty per cent of the students checked that they considered the Bible mainly as a book of religious literature while only 11.11 per cent of the parents checked this answer as expressing their view of the Bible.
TABLE IX
A COMPARISON OF BELIEFS CONCERNING THE BIBLE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>In favor of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cases</td>
<td>cases</td>
<td>of or of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cent</td>
<td>cent</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who described the Bible as a book of myths
4  3.48
3.48

Those who described the Bible as a book of religious literature
23  20.
16  11.11
8.89

Those who described the Bible as a book of inspiration for Christians
45  39.1
50  34.71
4.39

Those who described the Bible as the infallible word of God
36  31.3
75  52.1
20.8

Those who gave their own description
10  8.7
8  5.62
3.08

Those who omitted the question
2  1.74
1.74

Total
115
144

*See note on Table II.

The statements of students and parents were not always
comparable. But these questions seemed to be answered
without difficulty by all for those answering them. One notice
about this is a very poor question. They are not really
involutions but the church has such these and failed or one
suggested to make-up differences. Thus said every child
A comparison of beliefs concerning the importance of the church. How important is the church in the community? Table X shows some indication of how these students and parents feel concerning this question. Only two persons, parents, suggested that they would like to live where there was no church. A few (3.2 per cent more students than parents) indicated that they were uncertain about the matter. An average 95 per cent, however, felt that they wanted a church in the community where they lived. One Salvation Army student said she would like to go to a community where there was no church and start one! So the church was considered to be important, and almost equally so by both students and parents. But just how important is it considered to be?

It was supposed that both students in a teachers' college and their parents would consider the school to be a very important institution. To compare their estimate of the importance of the church with that of the school would indicate something of the measure of importance with which they held the church. It might also give some comparison of the strength of secularism as it has influenced both generations. But these questions seemed to be the most difficult of all for those answering them. One student wrote, "This is a very poor question. They are individual institutions but the church had both once and failed so --!" Some refused to make any difference. Some said they could
TABLE X

BELIEFS CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>In fav. of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cases</td>
<td>cent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they would like to live in churchless community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would not like to live in a churchless community</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who were uncertain</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who felt that a church was a greater force for good than a school</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>11.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who felt that a school was greater force for good</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>17.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who felt they were of equal importance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who omitted the question</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would rather have churches closed than schools</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>13.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would rather have schools closed than churches</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would not vote for this question</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who wrote in &quot;Leave both&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who omitted the question</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>114.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All the figures above 1400 religious schools.

Total: All the figures that would a parent's religious
not imagine a situation which would necessitate closing either the churches or the schools. That question, indeed, does seem far-fetched; nevertheless it gave some comparisons. Table X shows that 11.7 per cent more parents than students considered the church a greater force for good in a community than a school, and 17.3 per cent more students than parents considered the school to be the greater force for good. A relatively high percentage of both students and parents did not answer this question.

A high percentage of difference is seen in the comparison concerning closing either churches or schools. The figures of Table X make it seem that there is predominating feeling among these students to the effect that secular education is more important than religious education. However, some indicated that they felt that religion could also be taught in the schools. On the other hand, some who differed from these suggested that the churches would continue the educational program if schools were closed, while schools might not give religious education. It is interesting to note that while fourteen per cent more parents than students said they would not vote at all, eighteen per cent more students than parents ignored this stupid question concerning such an unlikely situation! 

The influences which help to shape religious beliefs. One-third of the students indicated that school experience had What are the influences that mould a person's religious
beliefs? No doubt almost everyone would hold different religious beliefs from those he does had he experienced a different environment than that which he has known. Religious beliefs are not inherent; they are learned. What are the sources of that learning?

Quite naturally, home influences would be first considered. It should be remembered that all of the students questioned had a church preference and that a large majority of them (86.95 per cent) were actually church members, while an even greater percentage of the parents are church members. Table XI shows the proportion of each group whose parents were church members. Seven per cent more students than parents came from homes where both parents were church members, but the percentage of both groups is high in this respect, as would be expected. Only three students and two parents had come from homes where neither parent was a church member.

It is generally believed that school influence is second only to home influence in the lives of young people. Since it was expected that most of the parents had not had educational advantages equal to those of their children, the questions of the questionnaires differed for this part of the study. Table XII, page 34, shows something of the effects that school experience has had upon the religious beliefs of the students who answered. Is it surprising that more than one-half of the students indicated that school experience had
### TABLE XI

A COMPARISON OF THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP STATUS OF THE PARENTS OF ALL CASES QUESTIONED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church status of parents</th>
<th>Students No.</th>
<th>Students Per cent</th>
<th>Parents No.</th>
<th>Parents Per cent</th>
<th>Difference in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who stated that both parents were church members</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>75.65</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>6.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who stated that one parent only was a church member</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21.74</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29.</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who stated that neither parent was a church member</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>144</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XII

STUDENTS' INDICATION OF THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL EXPERIENCE UPON RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who stated that school experience had caused religion to seem more important</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who stated it had caused religion to seem less important</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated that it had effected no change</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who said high school instruction had influenced a change in their religious thinking</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who said college instruction had changed their religious thinking</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who named other influences such as maturity, associates, army, and grade school</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who said there had been no change</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who omitted the question</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of cases 115

Their school experience was considered to have caused religion to seem more important. Those who stated it had caused religion to seem less important, those who indicated it had not affected them, and those who named other influences such as maturity, associates, army, and grade school were included. Those who said there had been no change and those who omitted the question were also included.

Some students indicated that their religious thinking had been changed by their high school instruction but not of those who indicated that
caused religion to seem more important to them? And does it seem more surprising when it is remembered that Indiana State Teachers College is a secular school where there is no Protestant religious organization on the campus and where there is no religious element in the convocations? An examination of the comments which students have written on the questionnaires concerning this question helps to make clear the reason why this large percentage have felt that school experience has caused religion to seem more important to them. The following quotations are some of these comments written with the positive answers to this question:

"I see more definitely the need of religion."

"It has made me become more religious conscious."

"It has caused me to question [probably meant examine] beliefs more than before."

"Through relationship with broad-minded professors I have come to regard my religion as more than church connected activities."

"It has brought a generally better insight yet there have been moments of rationalization and frustration."

Just over twelve per cent of the students stated that there school experience had caused their religion to seem less important. Those who answered to that effect, for the most part, checked the answers without comment.

Some students indicated that their religious thinking had been changed by their high school instruction but none of these gave comments. Over forty per cent stated that
college instruction had been instrumental in changing their religious views. The courses especially mentioned in this respect were science, sociology, English (the literature classes), and philosophy. Some of these students included in the forty-one per cent were a part of the fifty-six per cent of the first item in Table XII and some were a part of the twelve per cent in the second item. The following comments were written on answers to this question:

"College had given me a broader meaning to my religion."

"College has helped me to see more clearly what I really believe in."

"Dr. --- has made me see that a belief in religion is possible without losing sight of fact."

The parents had proportionately been less influenced religiously by school experience according to the answers of these questionnaires. No table was made out to show the results of their answers but it was found that twenty-nine per cent of the parents felt that their school experience had influenced their religious beliefs. Some remarks were written on their papers, such as,

"Public school education helped me in the study of God's work, therefore I could make my own decisions. I would say it helped me mentally."

"The education I acquired [high school] had a tendency to confuse instead of enlightened me."

"School liberalism made my thinking and broadened my ideas. I became more tolerant of other opinions."

1 The professor's name was omitted by the investigator.
"I had some good religious teachers who taught fairness and goodness, and practiced it themselves. In grade school they had the day start with a prayer."

"We repeated the Lord's prayer and twenty-third Psalm each morning. This gave us an awareness of God and a desire to learn more about Him."

"Had some fine teachers."

Some of the parents had attended religious schools for a part of their education, especially among the Catholics and Lutherans but some others as well. Two of these, a Catholic and a Lutheran, who had had only grade school training, wrote as follows:

"My parochial grade schooling, along with my home instruction, provided the basic fundamentals of my religious beliefs, and practices."

"It [school] increased my understanding of the Word of God and enhanced my basic religious convictions."

The following are from college trained parents who attended religious schools for some of their education:

"School impressed me with the necessity for a conviction, explained more fully the doctrine of the Army [Salvation Army], and afforded me the opportunity of practicing what I was being taught."

"School experience very decidedly influenced my religious beliefs. Nature songs, etc. which I learned in grade school had much to do with concepts I formed."

College trained parents who had not attended a religious school made these comments:

"School liberalized my thinking and broadened my views on the Bible. I became more tolerant of other denominations."

"It intensified my belief in Friends [Quaker] beliefs."

...
that I had heard all my life from my family."

"In a girl's college I was required to attend my own church once a week and chapel services. This made me more alert to religious thinking."

"Somehow I came to feel that no one denomination preempted others in directing our lives here to the future world to come."

Table XIII shows the students' ideas concerning the influences which have been strongest in shaping their religious beliefs. The strength of parents' influence predominates in the highest number of cases, but in less than fifty per cent. The pastors' and Sunday School teachers' influence was not shown to be quite as great as that of friends and associates, although the difference is negligible considering the number of cases. Class-room instructors have exercised an influence exceeding that of others for just over nine per cent. This is sufficient, however, to show that the influence of class-room instructors counts with some.

Is there less difference in the religious beliefs of college students and their parents when the parents have about the same level of education that the students have? Table XIV, page 40, shows the educational standing of the parents as it was revealed by the questionnaire. This is not, of course, an absolutely accurate picture. Some who checked that they had graduated from high school or college did not check that they had also graduated from grade school. The number who graduated from high school, however, includes all
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence Description</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated class-room instructors</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated friends and associates</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated parents</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated pastor or Sunday School teacher</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated others such as a particular friend, wife, or self alone</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See note on Table II
TABLE XIV

THE EDUCATIONAL STANDING OF THE PARENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Standing</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had graduated from grade school</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>66.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had graduated from high school</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>51.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had graduated from college</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had attended grade school*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had attended high school*</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had attended college*</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Presumably these attended but did not graduate.
who graduated from or attended college, and this is the number used for this comparison. These parents are what have been termed educated parents for this study. There were seventy-four of them, which was approximately fifty per cent of the total number of parents.

Nine items were found in the former tables where more than fifteen per cent of one group differed from the other group in that particular belief. These nine items were listed in Table XV for a comparison of that percentage of difference with the percentage of difference of only the educated parents and students. Examination of this table shows that in two items there is a noteworthy difference in these percentages. In Table IV it was seen that over sixteen per cent more parents than students preferred their church because of its doctrine. Only a little over twelve per cent more educated parents than students preferred their church for this reason. In Table V it was seen that over twenty-four per cent more parents than students would join a church of a different denomination from their choice if their own were not available. Nearly eight per cent fewer educated parents said they would join a church of a different denomination. Is this difference merely a coincidence? The above mentioned difference noted in this table indicates that doctrine means a little less to educated parents than to the whole group. Does the second difference then indicate that church membership
### TABLE XV

A COMPARISON OF THE BELIEFS OF MORE EDUCATED PARENTS* WITH THOSE OF STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Educated parents</th>
<th>Difference in percentage from above tables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of cases</td>
<td>No. of cases</td>
<td>In favor of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated choice of denomination because of doctrine</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated choice of denomination because of parents</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who would join church of another denomination if one of the present were not available</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who felt that the desire to join is sufficient requisite for membership</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23.47</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated belief in deity of Christ</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated belief in conversion</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53.04</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who indicated they had experienced conversion</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who described the Bible as the infallible word of God</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who felt the school was a greater force for good than the church</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 115  74

*This includes all those who graduated from high school and those who attended or graduated from college.
means less to the educated group than to the whole group? The number of cases used in this study is not sufficient to justify a conclusive statement to this effect. The other high differences as seen in the former tables remain consistently high in this table, with too little variation to be considered noteworthy.

Do urban influences affect the difference between the religious beliefs of students and their parents? A comparison was planned in order to investigate this question, but when it was noted that only a little over thirty per cent of the people came from cities of over 10,000 population it was considered that the comparison would be of little value with such limited data.

A comparison of denominations. As has already been stated, seventeen denominations were represented among the students' and fourteen among the parents' papers. Of these the Methodists were the most numerous with fifty parents and thirty-eight students in that group. The Baptists were next in number with twenty parents and fourteen students. Five denominations were represented with ten or more of both students and parents from each. A comparative denominational study was made from these, even though the numbers were small.

What was considered to be the key items which showed the greatest percentage of difference between students and
parents were chosen from each of the above comparative tables. Comparisons of students with their parents were then made according to denomination concerning these beliefs. In all of the items but one the parents had shown the higher percentage in the former tables. In the one concerning church membership of parents, the students had shown the highest. Table XVI shows in percentages the results of this denominational comparison. Space on the chart would not permit showing both the number and percentage of the cases as was desired. The reader should bear in mind that with the small numbers the difference of even one case makes apparently significant percentage difference; therefore the percentage difference is of little value except where the difference is considerable.

A study of the table reveals some interesting comparisons. The Lutherans were all church members as were the Catholics, except for one Catholic parent. All of the Christian parents were members, but two students of this denomination were not. The Lutherans showed the highest percentage who were church members for religious inspiration and service. The group where fewest were members for this purpose was the Christian student group. Here, too, we have the widest difference between students and parents, with 21.5 per cent more parents than students expressing that they were members for this purpose. This is over fourteen per cent more than the
### TABLE XVI
A COMPARISON IN PERCENTAGES OF SIGNIFICANT BELIEFS BY CHURCH DENOMINATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Lutheran</th>
<th>Methodist</th>
<th>Baptist</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Percentage difference from above tables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. in each denomination</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3P</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated church membership</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>10P</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated church membership for religious inspiration</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>14.5S</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated nearly every Sunday church attendance</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>9P</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated doctrinal reasons for membership in their denomination</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>7.5P</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>50P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who would attend church of different denomination</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>5P</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who would join church of different denomination</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35P</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated that profession of Christian faith should be main qualification for church membership</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>53P</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated belief in the existence of God</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>8P</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>9P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated belief in the deity of Christ</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10P</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated belief in the immortality of the soul</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>24P</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated that they had experienced conversion</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>43P</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>35P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who described the Bible as the infallible word of God</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23P</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>20P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who felt that the church was a stronger force for good than the school</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13P</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who stated that both parents were church members</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>9P</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of students who indicated that school exerted the most influence on them, and made religion seem more important</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who stated that college instruction had influenced a change in their religious beliefs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent who indicated that their parents had exercised the strongest influence on their beliefs</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: S denotes student; P denotes Parent; Dif P denotes percentage of parents more than students; Dif S denotes percentage of students more than parents.
difference between the total number of students and parents. The Catholics, who are known to be consistently faithful in church attendance, were seen to be the most faithful of any of these groups in this respect. Only one parent, but two students, indicated that they did not attend each Sunday. Lutherans were next highest in attendance while those of the Christian Church, both students and parents, indicated the least church attendance. The widest amount of difference between students and parents, however, was found in the Lutheran denomination where the students were found to be more faithful in attendance than the parents. This difference was caused by only two people, however.

Again the Catholics were in the lead in the matter of doctrinal purpose for denominational choice, while the Methodists, on the average, seemed to care the least about doctrine. The widest difference between students and parents on this point was found in the Lutheran denomination where fifty per cent more parents than students chose their church because of its doctrine. The differing students had made their choice because of their parents. The Baptists were the most willing; even one hundred per cent willing, both students and parents, to attend a church not of their denomination if their own were not available. The Lutheran students were one hundred per cent willing concerning this item also, but their parents differed from them by three people or thirty per
cent. Very few Catholics indicated a willingness concerning this item, but the proportions of the other denominations might have been as low if they had had in mind that a Catholic church would be their only alternative. Concerning joining the church of a different denomination, the Baptists again were the most willing but the percentage was considerably lower than concerning attendance. None of the Catholics indicated a willingness to join another denomination. The greatest difference between students and parents in this question was found with the Methodist in that thirty-five per cent more parents than students indicated willingness.

The Christian church group had the highest percentage who felt that the profession of Christian faith should be the main qualification for church membership. The Catholics, whom we have already noted felt that religious instruction was more important, had the lowest. In the Catholic group we also had the widest percentage of difference between students and parents in that no parents indicated this qualification as being of prime importance while fifteen per cent (only two people) of the students indicated it to be so.

The Lutherans had no doubters concerning the existence of God; likewise, there were none among the Catholic parents. In all of the other denominational groups, both among the students and their parents, there were agnostics. The one atheist of the entire list was a Baptist. The fifteen per
cent difference between Catholic students and parents was the widest percentage of difference found in all. The Catholics had the highest percentage who believed in the deity of Christ. Only one, a student, deviated from this. It seems strange that two should doubt the existence of God but believe in the deity of Christ. Nine more Methodist students than parents denied or doubted the deity of Christ. The percentage of difference between Baptist and Lutheran students and parents was about the same as that of the Methodist, but the numerical difference was less. The denomination with the highest percentage of doubters concerning this question was the Methodist.

No Catholic students and only two parents considered that they had experienced conversion. Only one Lutheran student indicated an experience of conversion, but fifty per cent of the Lutheran parents indicated such an experience. The Christian and Baptist groups showed the highest percentage who believed they had experienced conversion whereas the highest percentile difference between students and parents in this respect was found in the Methodist group, a difference of forty-three per cent as compared with a difference of thirty-four per cent in the total number. The Lutheran denomination indicated the most faith in the Bible as the infallible Word of God. One parent and three students did not describe it as such. The Methodist were the least inclined
to use this description of the Bible. Only thirteen per cent of the students thought of it as such, but here we have the widest difference concerning this question in that forty-three per cent more parents than students used this description.

More of the Catholics than of any other group considered that the church was a greater force for good than the school. Students and parents were very closely agreed on this point in that four of each did not consider it such. Fewer Methodists considered it so, while the widest percentage of difference between students and parents on this question was in the Methodist group.

All but one Lutheran student and two Lutheran parents indicated that both of their parents had been church members. The same was true of the Catholics. The fewest Methodists, on the average, stated that both parents had been church members. With this question, the widest difference between students and parents was found in the Christian group where thirty-six per cent more parents than students indicated it so. There was an opposite difference of almost seven per cent more students than parents in the total group who had stated that both parents were church members.

Seventy per cent of both the Catholic and Lutheran students indicated that school experience had made their religion seem more important. This was the highest percentage. The
Christian students showed the lowest percentage in this respect. Lutherans so thoroughly indoctrinate their followers that none indicated that college instruction had changed their religious views. On the other hand fifty percent of the Baptist students stated that their religious beliefs had been changed through college instruction. Sixty percent of the Lutheran students, but only thirty percent of the Catholic students stated that their parents had exercised the strongest influence on their religious beliefs. The other denominations ranged between these two. The other most important source of influence was friends and associates according to the answers given in these questionnaires.

This denominational study showed less difference between Catholic and Lutheran parents and students than those of the other denominations considered. This can probably be accounted for by the fact that these churches are careful to give religious instruction to the very young children of their members. The widest difference between student and parents is seen in the Christian and Methodist churches.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

One student, whose questionnaire answers showed sincere thought and effort added this note to his paper, "I hope these answers are not as confusing as my ideas on the subject seem to be -- truly a difficult form to complete honestly."

No doubt this student expressed what some others felt, especially among the students. It has been impossible to reveal through the tables the true picture of the data used. A study of the individual questionnaires revealed something of the feelings of the people who answered which figures of the tables could not represent. In the majority of cases the answers were clear-cut and showed definite and sincere positive religious beliefs. There was a second group, very small among the parents but larger among the students, who were apparently sincere doubters of the religious dogma taught in the churches, and were quite confused as to what they really did believe. A third group, quite a minority, seemed unhesitant in expressing certain well-defined doubts. Religion with them had a place but a small and relatively unimportant place. Finally, one student expressed nothing but negative beliefs. The only indication that he reserved any place at all for religion was in that he would not like to live in a community where no church was available and he attended
church on rare occasions. On the whole it was seen that more
parents than students had firm, positive religious beliefs.
Some parents enclosed printed leaflets explaining the beliefs
of their church which they endorsed. Middle-aged maturity,
however, will have settled some of the doubts the parents
may have entertained when they were student age.

The investigator does not consider that the differ-
ences found in this study measure the social change in reli-
gion of one generation in even the limited points covered.
It is thought, however, that the study may have made evident
some apparent trends.

Tables XVII and XVIII show in graduated arrangement
from the smallest to the highest the differences that were
found in the beliefs of students and parents as revealed
through the questionnaire used. A brief examination of Table
XVII, which lists the beliefs held by more students than
parents, reveals negation and uncertainty. Sixteen of the
twenty-nine items are negative or uncertain. All but a
possible four of the remainder\(^1\) seem to indicate weaker
religious convictions than those of their parents. Another
point revealed by this table is seen by looking at the number
of students who made these answers. With the exception of
items six and eighteen, the number of students giving these

\(^{1}\) Numbers 6, 8, 12, 18.
# TABLE XVII

## TABLE IN GRADUATED PERCENTAGES SHOWING ALL INSTANCES WHERE MORE STUDENTS THAN PARENTS CHECKED THE VARIOUS ANSWERS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>More students than parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Table III</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Table IV</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Table VII</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Table XI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Table V</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Table V</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Table III</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Table VI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Table X</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Table IX</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Table VII</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Table X</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Table VIII</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.94*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Table VII</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Table II</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Table VII</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Table I</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Table XI</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Table IX</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Table VII</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Table VII</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Table X</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Table VIII</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Table VIII</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Table VI</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Table V</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Table X</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Table IV</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>19.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Table VIII</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

23. All percentages above this line are considered to be too small for noteworthy significance.
**TABLE XVIII**

**TABLE IN GRADUATED PERCENTAGES SHOWING ALL INSTANCES WHERE MORE PARENTS THAN STUDENTS CHECKED THE VARIOUS ANSWERS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage No.</th>
<th>more parents than cases students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Table V</strong></td>
<td>Uncertain about attending church of another denomination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Table X</strong></td>
<td>Would rather have schools closed than churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Table II</strong></td>
<td>Are church members for social opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Table V</strong></td>
<td>Would not attend the church of a different denomination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Table III</strong></td>
<td>Attend church nearly every Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Table IV</strong></td>
<td>Chose denomination because they like the pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Table III</strong></td>
<td>Never attend church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. Table II</strong></td>
<td>Are church members because of parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. Table VI</strong></td>
<td>Consider consent of parents an important qualification for church membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. Table X</strong></td>
<td>Would like to live in churchless community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11. Table X</strong></td>
<td>Would not like to live in churchless community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12. Table X</strong></td>
<td>Consider church and school of equal importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13. Table VI</strong></td>
<td>Consider profession of Christian faith the important qualification for church membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14. Table IV</strong></td>
<td>Chose denomination because of convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15. Table I</strong></td>
<td>Are members of a church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>16. Table XI</strong></td>
<td>One parent only is a church member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>17. Table VII</strong></td>
<td>Believe in the existence of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>18. Table VII</strong></td>
<td>Believe in the immortality of the soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>19. Table X</strong></td>
<td>Consider church is greater force for good than school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20. Table II</strong></td>
<td>Are church members for religious inspiration, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>21. Table VII</strong></td>
<td>Believe in divinity of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>22. Table V</strong></td>
<td>Would join a church of a different denomination if that of choice were not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>23. Table IV</strong></td>
<td>Members of denomination because of doctrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24. Table VIII</strong></td>
<td>Believe in conversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25. Table IX</strong></td>
<td>Consider the Bible is the infallible Word of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>26. Table VIII</strong></td>
<td>Have experienced conversion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All percentages above this line are considered to be too small for noteworthy significance.*
answers is less than half of the total number of student cases. It is not, therefore, a majority opinion in any case. Most of the church member students are not religious skeptics.

In an over-all examination of Table XVIII it is noticed that four of the items\(^2\) indicate what may be considered comparatively shallow religious thinking on the part of these parents. Both the number of cases checking these items and the percentage more than students, however, is small. In all of the items where the number checking them is large and the percentage more than that of students is over five percent\(^3\) the statements denote what might be considered strong religious beliefs. It is noticeable also that the agreement of the parents concerning beliefs is much higher than that of the students. Eight of these twenty-six items were checked by over one hundred parents, whereas five more were checked by over half.

This study was started with questions. How fast is religious thinking changing today? Can a noticeable difference be seen in one generation? What influences are most instrumental in moulding religious thinking? The evidence of the investigation suggests the following answers:

\(^2\) Numbers 3, 6, 8, 14.

\(^3\) Number 14 is an exception to this statement.
1. Religious views are changing. Noticeable differences can be seen in one generation. The majority of both students and parents who belong to the church indicate sincerity of religious desire and purpose. On the part of some, however, there is doubt and uncertainty concerning religious beliefs. This is seen considerably more among students than parents. The church also seems to be of less importance to students than it is to parents. The doubt, as covered by this questionnaire, is centered in the main around beliefs concerning deity, immortality, the authority of the Bible, and especially concerning the experience of conversion.

2. The influences which are most instrumental in moulding religious views are parents, friends and associates, pastors and Sunday School teachers, and school teachers and professors. The influence of friends and associates is about equal to that of pastors and Sunday School teachers.

To answer those who are fearful that secular education weakens the influence of the church this investigation indicates that it may do this for a small per cent of college students who are church members. For the most part, however, it is the opinion of the investigator that secular college education caused these students to examine their religious doctrines to see what they really believed. This examination seemed to result in a strengthening rather than a weakening of their religious convictions. To make a more thorough
investigation of this question a similar comparative study might be made which was not limited to students who gave a church preference but included as well those students who gave none.

A Protestant, non-sectarian religious organization, such as Intervarsity Fellowship, functioning on the campus of Indiana State Teachers College would furnish Christian counsel and fellowship to students who desire it and might help many of the students who are in a haze of religious doubt.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
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Social Studies Department
Indiana State Teachers College
December 12, 1948

Dear Student:

The college records show that you have stated a church preference. You have been chosen as one of a selected group of such college students to answer some questions for a sociological study. Will you be kind enough to fill out the questionnaire below as sincerely and truthfully as you are able to express yourself? We do not mind what your answers are so long as they truthfully express your beliefs concerning these questions. We would be glad for you to sign your name, but if you prefer not it is quite alright for you to leave it unsigned. If, however, you do sign the questionnaire you may be sure that your name will not be publicized in any way. In answering the questions, please check the answer that seems most suitable to you, or write in your own answer. When you have filled in the answers please return the questionnaire to my office. I would appreciate getting it back as early in the week as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in making this study possible.

V. Dewey Annakin,
Professor of Sociology
APPENDIX B

LETTER TO PARENTS

Department of Sociology
Indiana State Teachers College
Terre Haute, Indiana
December 12, 1948

Dear Friend:

The department of Sociology of Indiana State Teachers College is making a study concerning the current religious views of a cross section of selected parents of our students. Will you be kind enough to answer the following questions by checking the answer that most nearly applies to your own personal beliefs, or, if you prefer, you may write in your own answer to any question. Furthermore, if you have a belief that you would like to express we would be glad to have you write a paragraph of your own on the back of the page. We would be pleased for you to sign your name, but if you prefer not, it will be quite satisfactory for you to leave it unsigned. If you sign your name you may be sure that it will not be publicized in any way. Please answer the questions truthfully. We do not mind what your answers are so long as they truthfully express your beliefs concerning these questions. We hope to have the results of the study ready and available to the public in the near future. Could you fill in your answers right away, please, and return the questionnaire to us by return mail or at your very earliest convenience? You will find a stamped envelope enclosed for this purpose. We will very much appreciate this cooperation.

Yours very truly,

V. Dewey Annakin
Professor of Sociology
Indiana State Teachers College
APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Are you a church member?
   Yes___ No___

2. What is your denomination or faith?

3. Are (or were) your parents church members?
   Both___ One___ Neither___

4. Is your church in a town of more than 10,000? ___
   Less than 10,000? ___ In the open country? ___

5. Why are you a church member? (If you wish to check more than one, please number your answers 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. in the order of importance to you.)
   For religious inspiration and service___
   For the social opportunities it offers___
   Because one or both of my parents are church members___
   It gives a more respectable appearance in the community___
   Other reasons ____________________________

6. How often do you attend church?
   Almost every Sunday ___ Occasionally ___
   Seldom ___ Never ___

7. Why do you belong to the denomination of which you are a member? (Follow directions of No. 5.)
   Because of the doctrines it teaches___
   Because it is the denomination of my parents___
   This church is the most convenient for me to attend___
   Because I like the pastor___
   Because I like the local members of this church___
   Other reasons ____________________________

8. If you moved to a town or community where there were no church of your denomination, would you attend one of another denomination?
   Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain ___

9. Under the condition of No. 8, would you join a church of a different denomination?
   Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain ___
10. What do you feel should be the required qualifications for church membership?
   A required amount of religious instruction
   The desire, request, or consent of the parents
   The profession of an active Christian faith
   Merely the desire to join
   The recommendation of the pastor or church committee
   Other reasons

11. Do you believe in the existence of God?
    Yes  No  Uncertain

12. Do you believe that Christ is the Divine Son of God of virgin birth?
    Yes  No  Uncertain

13. Do you believe in the immortality of the soul?
    Yes  No  Uncertain

14. Do you believe in conversion as an act of faith upon entering into a personal Christian experience?
    Yes  No  Uncertain

15. Do you feel that you have experienced this type of conversion?
    Yes  No  Uncertain

16. Which of the following best describes the Bible to you?
    A book of myths
    A book of religious literature
    A book of inspiration for Christians
    The infallible Word of God
    State your own description

17. Would you like to live in a town or community where no church was available?
    Yes  No  Uncertain

18. Which of the following do you feel is a greater force for good in a community?
    A church  A school

19. If either churches or public schools had to stop functioning, which way would you vote?
    Leave the schools and let the churches be closed
    Leave the churches and let the schools be closed
    Not vote at all
Student Questionnaire

20. How has your school experience affected your religion?
   Made it more important to you____
   Made it less important to you____
   Effected no change____

21. If your religious beliefs have changed, what has most
   influenced the change?
   Instruction in high school____
   Instruction in college____
   Other influences________________________

22. Whom do you think has had the stronger influence in
   shaping your present religious views?
   Classroom instructors____
   Your friends and associates____
   Your parents____
   Your pastor or Sunday School teacher____
   Others________________________

Parents Questionnaire

20. Did you graduate from
   Grade school____
   High school____
   College____
   Did you attend
   Grade school____
   High School____
   College____

21. Did you attend a religious school for any of your
   education?
   Yes____ No____

22. Did your school experience influence your religious
   beliefs in any way?
   Yes____ No____
   If so, please describe in what way________________