

November 30, 1960

Miss Ruth Emory  
Board of Education  
Methodist Church  
Box 871  
Nashville 2, Tennessee

Dear Miss Emory:

Thank you for your clear and comprehensive letter of November 22 recapitulating our telephone conversation.

It is with pleasure and interest that I accept your invitation to be the speaker for the South Central Regional MYF Workshop. I am making arrangements to be present at the planning and coaching conference, March 4-8 at Camp Egan, and I will look forward to being at Mt. Sequoyah August 2-11.

The general theme which you have chosen, "Living as a Christian in a Society of Abundance," strikes me as an insightful, relevant, and meaningful choice. I assume that your basic concern here is to inquire into the relevance of the Christian message for the social, domestic, political, educational, and economical orders of our age, which moreso than any other age of history, is an age of abundance. I shall take it to be my responsibility to struggle with this theme at the greatest level of depth which is consistent with the maturity of my fellow conversants.

I trust that you do not conceive of this workshop as merely an occasion for students learning new skills or gimmicks for the oiling of local MYF machinery. Such gimmicks may be useful, but I trust you agree that the basic challenge and concern of such a leadership conference is to raise fundamental and serious questions about the meaning of human existence and relevance of the Word of



of the Church to the contemporary world. I cannot conceal my impatience with much present-day so-called Christian education. I am convinced we must risk raising basic theological questions in an intelligible way for our young people if American Methodism is to experience the same renewal of the Church in our time, which world-wide ecumenical Christianity is now experiencing.

I look forward to further correspondence with you on what you hope might take place in the planning and coaching conference. I feel that I would genuinely benefit from your counsel on this matter.

My best regards to you, to Chuck Mowry, who just joined your staff, and others on your staff involved in this vital task.

Yours cordially and sincerely,

Thomas C. Oden

TCO:sf

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I trust that you do not conceive of this workshop as merely an occasion for ~~presenting~~ students learning new skills # or gimmicks for the effective ordering of local MYF organizations. Such gimmicks may be useful, but I trust you agree that the basic concern of such a leadership conference is to reliaze fundamental and serious considerations about the meaning of human existence, and relevance of the work of the Church to the cntemporary world. I cannot conceal my impatience with much contemporary so-called Christian education. I am convinced we must raise basic theological questions