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THE CATECHISM AS AN ESSENTIAL COURSE
IN LUTHERAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A Thesis
presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Education
Asbury Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Christian Education

by
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Each man has his or her own individuality or peculiar way of presenting truths. This may also be true of denominations. The writer was privileged to have been reared and trained in a Lutheran environment and to have taught in Lutheran and Methodist churches and in several public high schools.

Lutheranism is particularly concerned with guiding youth and has given serious thought to the best methods of helping young people solve their problem. Guiding youth has always been a difficult duty. The easiest task was that of teaching facts. For Lutherans the problem was solved by giving youth a concise guide which it could use as its own philosophy of life and apply in meeting life's every need.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The question arises as to the ultimate benefit of education, whether it be secular, religious, or Christian. What is man here for? Is he here just for the present or to prepare for eternity? Certainly it is only as one knows the objective of life, that one can wisely decide of what children's education should consist. Shall youth be adequately trained to meet increasing problems? Doubtless, the answer is "yes." The secular schools are offering many varied courses to prepare for life. But, however varied or specialized a young person becomes in his qualification for a chosen field, has he the character and personality that goes with this? Life is a mad scramble for material possessions, luxury, and amusements? Why are the schools emphasizing character building? What has gone wrong? Can character be built without religion? McElhinney and Smith state that religion must be included as a source of character because of its great emotional appeal and effect upon beliefs. The schools have not realized very fully the powerful spiritual resources to be found in religion for character formation. The fear of God is not only the beginning of wisdom but also one of the most powerful sanctions of restraints in conduct

to be found anywhere.¹ Today this life of speed calls for something that is moral and spiritual, fundamental, dependable, applicable, authoritative, thorough, concise, and, figuratively speaking, at one's finger tips in times of stress and testing. What better specialized course could be offered to meet such requirements than a catechism course?

What is meant by this topic, "The Catechism as an Essential Course in Lutheran Christian Education"? The word Catechism denotes a study of doctrine. It is arranged in the form of questions and answers. Every church has its doctrine, but here the primary concern is to teach the Lutheran church doctrines given in the briefest form possible, summarizing all those truths which are essential to salvation. The word Essential expresses the thought that the course is needful to the individual in giving him a clear, concise statement of the Lutheran doctrines which are absolutely necessary to save his soul. Heretofore he has received them piecemeal throughout his Sunday School training. This course has been given for two years, preferably two hours weekly, for from seven to ten months. The word Lutheran would include all Lutheran synods or bodies, while the word Christian defines itself. Being Christian, it cannot be simply religious.

¹ McElhinney and Smith, Personality and Character Building (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1942), 134-135 pp.

Christian means following the teachings of Jesus, being like Him through regeneration.

Importance of the study. It is frequently asked, "Why is the study of Catechism in the Lutheran church important?" All through the years of Sunday School training the Bible material has been taught, but not in a concentrated systematic course, namely as methodically arranged condensed doctrines. Many adverse criticisms have been heard of catechetical training, but valid proofs were lacking to one who has been given a thorough catechism course just at the threshold of youth's critical period. For the aim in a catechism class is not just to have children gain a knowledge of their church doctrine, which was taken from the Bible, but to learn to know Christ, the Head of the invisible church, as their personal Saviour.

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to bring to the reader's attention (1) Solution to the adolescent's crying need for a code of conduct because of his cataclysmic physical changes within and the many "isms" he will encounter without.

(2) A code of conduct which will give him a permeating sense of security and enable him to live according to the standard of God.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF CATECHETICAL TRAINING

The catechism was a system of instruction, arranged in the form of questions and answers, which was first used in the schools of Judaism and the early churches and which helped preserve a knowledge of Bible narratives. The Didache is one of the earliest books of instruction. Harnack states "There is no known primitive Christian writing which, with originality in arrangement and form, so combines dependence upon older writings."¹ He further states that it was written some time between 70-160 A.D.² It contains instruction on the way of life, the way of death, laws of Christian morality, deals with baptism, fasting, prayers, and with eucharistic prayers.³

In the Apostolic period the converts were admitted into Christian fellowship through baptism, without any previous instruction in the articles of the Christian belief. That such was the case is recorded in Acts on the Day of Pentecost. In a few short years many of the new converts slipped back into their pagan and Jewish beliefs and practices. To help the young converts, the church provided a system of instruction before and after baptism, following the counsel

¹ Adolf Harnack, "Didache," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, 1950, III, p. 421.

² Ibid., p. 423.

³ Ibid., p. 421.

given in Luke, "That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed (Luke 1:4)." And in Galatians, "Let him that is taught communicate with him that teacheth in all good things (Gal. 6:6)." Later with the Gentile element coming into the churches, the instruction was probably undertaken by teachers as given by Paul: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues (1 Cor. 12:28)."

With the rise of heresy in the fourth century, detailed doctrinal teaching was given. This led to an extended period of preparation and probation to save the church from the scandal of apostasy.

After peace was made by the church and proclaimed by the first Christian Emperor, the need for Christian training was all the greater. The profession of the Christian faith now was a step toward honor and power rather than toward martyrdom. With the influx of pagans, the church became secularized.

In about the eighth or ninth century, the first regular Catechism was compiled. The first Catechism in Germany was printed in 1470. The Waldenses of France, the Brothers of the Common Life in Germany, the Brethren of Bohemia, all used a Catechism printed in 1498 based on St. Augustine's

"Enchiridion." The revolt against the Catholic church preceding the Reformation caused the Catechism to become more widely publicized or numerous. With the invention of printing there was an increase in catechisms printed both by Protestants and Catholics, who strove zealously to instruct their members and win new recruits.

Coming up to the fifteenth century, the masses lived in spiritual darkness ground between the two classes, the nobility and the clergy. Illiteracy prevailed everywhere. Even most of the aristocrats and clergy were ignorant. The Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's prayer were memorized in Latin, but few understood what they learned. Some clerics and bishops, who were not too interested in the world and carnality, would do some instructing, for the Councils in the Middle Ages had made such instruction obligatory. The priests who were too indolent hired incompetent, uneducated, untrained drill-masters to conduct a school where children memorized but were never instructed in the Commandments, Creed, nor the Lord's Prayer. In the age preceding the Reformation religious instruction had reached a point of its lowest efficiency. Quoting Luther in the Preface to the Small Catechism:

The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I, too was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare publish this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small, plain, simple form. Mercy! Great God! What manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and, alas! many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach, so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it. Nevertheless, all maintain that they are Christians,

have been baptized, and receive the common holy Sacraments. Yet they do not understand and cannot even recite either the Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs;. . . .²

In the sixteenth century preachers used the Ten Commandments for sermonic material. Accordingly Luther in the summer of 1516 first began preaching sermons on the Ten Commandments, which were republished in 1518. In 1519 there followed the New Exposition of the Lord's Prayer. The Exposition of the Decalog had been highly praised, but the Lord's prayer received even greater commendation. The literary Censor of Venice, an enemy, said concerning Luther's Exposition: "Blessed are the hands which wrote this; blessed, the eyes that shall see it; blessed, the hearts that believe the book and cry to God accordingly."³ In 1520 he wrote an Exposition of the Creed. The Creed, which heretofore had been divided into twelve parts, was now divided by Luther into three articles corresponding to the Trinity or the Three Persons. Along with the Creed he included the Short Form of the Ten Commandments and also the Short Form of the Lord's Prayer. Luther explained the relation of the

² Mueller, J. T., J. G. Walch, and A. Rechenberg, "Enchiridion", Concordia Triglotta (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 535.

³ Tho. Graebner, The Story of the Catechism (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), p. 20.

three parts of his Short Form of Catechism as follows:

From the Commandments a person learns to know his disease and perceives what he can and cannot do. In the Creed he is taught where to find the remedy, grace, by which he will be able to obey the Commandments, by being shown the offer of divine mercy in Christ. The Lord's Prayer teaches us how to desire and obtain these gifts, namely, through the proper, humble kind of prayer. Thus he shall be saved by a life in accordance with the divine will.⁴

The law is the schoolmaster to lead men to the knowledge of sin and to bring them to Christ. It was of highest importance that the law be placed first in the instruction course. Paul says, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Man must first learn his position in relation to God before he can judge his position, whether he is in fellowship or out of His fellowship.

Luther continued to work and re-word the Catechism material. In 1523 he published material on the Sacrament. Five years later he preached his first series on the five chief parts of the Catechism. The Small Catechism, the Gem of the Reformation, was published in German in 1529. It included five parts: The Decalog, Creed, Lord's Prayer, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. This book was especially written for children. In the same year the Larger Catechism for the clergy and the school masters also appeared. These two books had an untold influence upon the people and were valued next to the Bible. Spaeth writes:

⁴ Ibid., p. 23.

It may be claimed that the whole catechetical work of the first fifteen hundred years of the church reaches its climax in Martin Luther's Catechism. But, with all the conservative features which characterize Luther's catechetical work, there are some which are original with him, and for which he deserves full credit as the first great restorer of Pauline theology in the church.⁵

Luther's Catechism was translated into several languages: Dutch, Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Austrian, Hungarian, Scandinavian, English, French, and Belgian. Many years later Hindu and Chinese translations were added. The most comprehensive explanation of the Catechism ever published is the Norwegian one by Pontoppidan, with its seven hundred and fifty-nine questions and answers. Many of the questions and answers are brief, which makes the book small.

In time all the principal divisions of the Protestants, --the Anglican church, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptists, etc., each had their own Catechism.

The colonists brought their Catechisms with them to America--the Swedes in 1638, the Dutch in 1623, as did the Germans. The Swedes began doing missionary work among the Indians, translating first the Catechism and then the Bible into the Indian tongue. A copy of the first Catechism in the Indian tongue, printed by King Charles of Sweden in 1696, is preserved in the library of Augustana College, Rock Island,

⁵ Adolph Spaeth, "Catechism," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, 1911, XII, p. 254.

Illinois.

The first American edition of Luther's German Catechism was printed by Zinzendorf in Philadelphia in 1744. Because it reflected his own peculiar views, the Lutherans could not use it. The first American or English translation on American soil was made in 1749 by Peter Brunnholtz, a German pastor, who was assisted by Peter Koch, a Swede. Paul Henkel's translation of 1811 was used extensively in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. In 1816 Mr. Mayer, pastor of the Lutheran church in Philadelphia, issued an English edition of the Catechism which, more than any other, determined the text of the accepted English version in America. The English translation was later carefully revised, and found its final shape in 1899. Later on the various Lutheran church bodies each had their version. The principal catechisms used in America were the Lutheran, Heidelberg, and Westminster.

From 1790 to 1815 the Catechism was the book of instruction. Bibles which had to be printed abroad were too expensive. Some of the Reformed churches did adapt the doctrinal instruction to the capacity of the child. Because of the Sunday School, by the middle of the century the Bible was regarded as primary curriculum material, the Catechism, as secondary, though still important.

Because of the great demand for graded series, the Lutherans adopted their first series in 1895, to be used for

Sunday School instruction, but the Catechism still continued to be used by the Lutherans for Confirmation training. Today visual aid helps have been added to meet the demands of present day education. Luther used illustrations in his Catechism.

Some estimates of the Small Catechism, made by various writers, quoted by Graebner, are as follows:

Dr. Th. Harnach quotes Andreas Fabricius to this effect: "Yonder sun has not seen, next to the Holy Scriptures, a better book than the Catechism of Luther. It is the very blood and marrow, the purpose and sum of the Bible, the source and end of Christian testimony."⁶

Dr. Charles Porterfield Krauth of the American Lutheran church has often been quoted: "The Catechism is a thread through the labyrinth of divine wonders. Persons often get confused, but if they will hold on to this Catechism, it will lead them through without being lost. It is often called the 'Little Bible,' and the 'Bible of the Laity', because it presents the plain and simple doctrines of the Holy Book in its own words. Pearls strung are easily carried, unstrung they are easily lost. The Catechism is a string of Bible pearls. The order of arrangement is the historical, the Law, Faith, Prayer, Sacrament of Baptism, and all crowned with the Lord's Supper - just as God worked them out and fixed them in history."⁷

Dr. Philip Schaff, the Reformed Theologian, gives this appreciation of Luther's Catechism: "It exhibits his almost apostolic gift of expressing the deepest things in the plainest language for the common people... As it left far behind all former catechetical manuals, it has, in its own order of excellence and usefulness, never been surpassed."⁸

⁶ Tho. Graebner, op. cit., p. 134.

⁷ Ibid., p. 140.

⁸ Ibid., p. 141.

Prof. McGiffert of Union Theological Seminary says:
"In 1529 appeared his Luther's Large and Small
Catechisms, the latter containing a most beautiful
summary of Christian faith and duty, wholly devoid of
polemics of every kind, and so simple and concise as
to be easily understood and memorized by every child."⁹

⁹ Ibid., p. 143.

CHAPTER III

BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE CATECHISM

There is found in the Bible no basis for a certain system of numbering the Commandments. (Compare Mk. 10:19 with Matt. 19:18,19). The Lutheran and Catholic churches have retained the division made by Augustine, about 400 A.D. They made their division on the interpretation of the first Commandment from Ex. 20:2-6. The whole five verses show that it is one continuous thought. The plural pronoun "them" in "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them" refers back to the plural "gods" (v. 3), rather than to the "graven image" (v.4) which is singular. The Reformed and the Greek Catholics followed the division of the Jews (Josephus and Philo) and the early Christians (e.g. Origen), who treat this Commandment as a separate one, which prohibited image worship, while the first prohibited idolatry and commanded monotheism. Then, for the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, the Lutherans and Catholics noted that the Jews treated them as separate commandments, and therefore assumed the Jews had retained the correct tradition. The Reformed group did not divide the Tenth. They said it was refuted by the comparison of Ex. 20:17 with Deut. 5:21; for in Deuteronomy (as also in the Septuagint version of Ex. 20:17) the order is transposed, and the neighbor's wife put before the neighbor's house. Also

Paul enumerated the Commandments of the Second Table (Rom. 13:9) referring to the Tenth with the words, "Thou shalt not covet" without indicating any such division. Luther also made a number of other changes intended for the Jew only.

The following are the Ten Commandments as taken from the Bible (Ex. 20:2-17):

- I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. (v. 3)
- II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain. (v. 7)
- III. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. (v. 8)
- IV. Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth. (v.12) There are a few changes in the words.
- V. Thou shalt not kill. (v. 13)
- VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery. (v. 14)
- VII. Thou shalt not steal. (v. 15)
- VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (v. 16)
- IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house. (v. 17a)
- X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's. (v. 17b)

The law served as a mirror and rule. God gave commands as "Thou shalt" or "Thou shalt not". They informed man as to his duties toward God. The threat of divine wrath and the promise of reward Luther removed from their original place in the prohibition of images to the end of the Decalog, making it an answer to a question: "What does God say concerning these Commandments?" This made the threat or reward applicable to the transgression or keeping of the entire law. Quoting from Luther's Large Catechism:

"For I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."¹⁰

Man has not the strength to keep the law. God has made a way of escape from the curse of sin and given man a source of power to walk according to the precepts of the law which was and is man's school-master. Such deliverance and strength was found in the Gospel, which Luther placed in the Second Part, summarily called the Creed, the "I believe" of the reader's or speaker's confession of faith. This Creed was and is most widely known of all Christian Creeds and is known as the "Apostle's Creed". The law demanded, threatened, and condemned; the Gospel, as found in the Article, made promises, gave, and sealed the soul into forgiveness, life, and salvation. The Gospel drew and still draws man to Christ, works faith, and thus gives eternal life. It alone offers balm and healing for the soul, restoring man to true peace of heart, and the hope of eternal glory. As has been mentioned previously, the Creed was divided into three parts rather than twelve. Luther grouped the material around God's work of love--Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification or God the Father, Christ's redeeming work, and last the work of the Holy Spirit. In the Second Article the chief events

¹⁰ Mueller, J. T., J. G. Walch, and A. Rechenberg, "Enchiridion," Concordia Trigdotta (Smith Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 673.

of the life of Christ were kept together under the main thought, Redemption, and became the very heart and soul of the whole Catechism. The Third Article outlines the evangelical way of salvation. The Holy Spirit is the Agent who guides souls to Christ. The following are the Articles:

- I. Of Creation - I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
- II. Of Redemption - And in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
- III. Of Sanctification - I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Third Part of the Luther's Small Catechism is the Lord's Prayer. It has three parts: the Introduction, the Seven Petitions, and the Conclusion. No human being can keep the Ten Commandments perfectly, except through close fellowship with Christ in Prayer. The devil with all his powers together with the world and man's own flesh, opposes every believer's endeavors. Therefore, nothing is so necessary as to turn to God, to call upon Him. There is no nobler prayer for a believer to repeat. It shows him God's love. To know what and how to pray, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself

taught His disciples both the form and the words. Luther explains:

For thus we have heard in the Second Commandment: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, that we are there required to praise the holy name, and call upon it in every need, or to pray. For to call upon the name of God is nothing else than to pray. Prayer is therefore as strictly and earnestly commanded as all other commandments.¹¹

Luther thus informed his readers that prayer was obligatory for every Christian. The following are the chief parts of the Lord's Prayer:

Introduction - Our Father who art in heaven.
 First Petition - Hallowed be Thy name.
 Second Petition - Thy Kingdom come.
 Third Petition - Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 Fourth Petition - Give us this day our daily bread.
 Fifth Petition - And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 Sixth Petition - And lead us not into temptation.
 Seventh Petition - But deliver us from evil.
 Conclusion - Amen.

The Fourth and Fifth Parts of the Small Catechism are about the Sacraments of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper, both of which were instituted by Christ and therefore stand as God's Commandments. In the institution of the Sacrament of Baptism the Lord commanded, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 5:19). He that

¹¹ Mueller, J. T., J. G. Walch, and A. Rechenberg, "Enchiridion", Concordia Triglotta (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 535.

believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mk. 5:16).¹¹ To Luther the Baptism Sacrament was important because it was God's command. We find the following quoted in his Large Catechism:

For it is of the greatest importance that we esteem Baptism excellent, glorious, and exalted, for which we contend and fight chiefly, because the world is now so full of sects clamoring that Baptism is an external thing, and that external things are of no benefit. But let it be ever so much an external thing, here stands God's word and command which institute, establish and confirm Baptism. But what God institutes and commands cannot be a vain, but must be a most precious thing, though in appearance it were of less value than a straw.¹²

Luther in his explanation of this Sacrament, stated that it was faith alone that made the person worthy of receiving profitably the saving divine water. Without faith it profited nothing, notwithstanding it was in itself a divine super-abundant treasure. Therefore this single word (He that believeth) effected this much that it excluded and repelled all works which man could do...For it determined, that whatever was not faith availed nothing nor received anything.¹³ Without faith there was no life. Where there was not the true faith, there also could be no true Baptism. Quoting from the Catechism: "Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water used according to God's command and

¹² Ibid., p. 733.

¹³ Ibid., p. 71.

connected with God's word."¹⁴

The Fifth Part is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. What was it? God's own Word, which was added to the bread and the wine made it a sacrament of Christ's body and blood. After the consecration the bread and wine were still bread and wine. They were not transmuted into Christ's body and blood as the Catholics maintain. The Reformed church stated that the bread and wine were symbols. In quoting from the Catechism:

It is the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given unto us Christians to eat and to drink, as it was instituted by Christ Himself.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.

"After the same manner, also, He took the cup, when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; This cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."¹⁵

Christ's work was accomplished, yet it could not come to man in any other way than through the Word. What were the benefits? He who abides by and believes the Scriptures and the Gospel and believes in the Word for forgiveness of sin by faith,

¹⁴ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), p. 67.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 71.

in partaking of the Lord's Supper receives the blessing and power promised to each recipient. This feast, instituted by the Lord, was to be partaken of often in remembrance of Him. The Lord's Supper was only for those whose heart, conscience, and conduct was right with God. A Sacrament, taken in unbelief was a condemnation to the soul.

CHAPTER IV

THE CATECHISM IN RELATION TO THE ADOLESCENT'S FOUR-FOLD NATURE

An adolescent's nature is four-fold: Physical, Intellectual, Social, and Spiritual.

Physical. Between the ages of twelve to twenty, youth passes through a marked growth of the body and its functions and organs. He experiences many physical changes. There is an irregular continuous growth, but every part of the body, every organ, every tissue of the body develops at an uneven rate, at times being almost stationary, then growing by leaps and bounds. This causes youth often to be extremely awkward, self-conscious, and clumsy. He lacks poise and self-control.

Physical health, the functioning of the bodily organs, affects the mind, and in turn the moods, attitudes, beliefs, temperament, et cetera can either make or break the physical life. The innate drives such as hunger, thirst, love, sex urge, fear, pleasure may cause men to rise to higher heights or may force them to go to the opposite extreme, and become bestial. It is only as reason as well as cultural and spiritual training are in the ascendancy that these innate urges can be held in check. Due to the physical structure developing too rapidly for the nervous system, traits may appear such as stammering, laziness, a sense of inferiority,

bashfulness, moodiness, sensitiveness, day-dreaming introversion, extra-version, hyper-activity, et cetera. Educators agree that the body is the medium of the personality in the expression of all its aspects, not only physical, but emotional, intellectual, and social. Because the boy is so unattractive and gawky, Pringle has said, "Nobody loves a boy except his mother."¹

This rapid growth brings with it an abundance of physical energy and activity. Healthy adolescents are full of life. They must be active, and it should be purposeful and constructive activity. Formerly the demands of home and family life, duties, or chores utilized some of this surplus energy. Today modern conveniences, crowded living conditions, home responsibilities, and duties have been reduced to a minimum. The girl has been emancipated. No longer is she the petite, demure, polite girl under proper chaperonage. Today she spends her time in healthful sports, strenuous athletics, often in the same activities as those that boys participate in. This has called for a knowledge of her body, how to keep it healthful and under control, such as no age has ever required before. There must be for her a code of conduct which allows for clean cut, upright expressions of her superabundant vitality.

¹ R. W. Pringle, Adolescence and High School Problems (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company,), p. 47.

Intellectually. Youth is changing intellectually. It is critical and demands reasons for almost everything. It forms its own ideals and rules. Youth today is characterized by an open frankness. It examines and questions. Merely because an idea is conventional or a principle has been accepted is no guarantee to inquiring minds of youth that development and improvement are impossible. From the nursery to the graduate school will be found that freedom of expression. Related to this frankness and open-mindedness, is an attitude of self-reliance, assurance, and spontaneity. Today as a class, these adolescents are not over-zealous students, but are content to "get by", an attitude which is exemplified by the grown-ups. Every youth lives two lives--the real life, with its environment in home, school, shop, and street, and the ideal life with its aspirations and romance. Nothing is too high, too vast, too improbable for the dreams of youth. Youth has undue confidence in its own ability.

Socially. An adolescent craves fellowship and is a very sociable creature. He is restless under authority, often resenting control or chafing under it. He likes and loves members of his own and of the opposite sex. It is a trying period. He desires to break away from restraints and customs. What is to be his standard of conduct in order that he may grow up to be an asset to himself, his community, and God?

"Our youth today faces more problems before he is twenty than his grand-parents faced in a life-time."²

Failure to understand the social cravings and needs of young people will breed unhappiness, moody introversion, deceitfulness, and, at worst, rebellion with a passion to escape. Outwardly they conform to parental regulations, but within is a feeling of rebellion, bitterness, and cynicism. With some, parental restriction leads to deception in order to satisfy her or his desire for fun and the companionship of friends in social gatherings. Those repressed at home will often, when away from home, turn to be loud and uncouth, casting aside common sense in order to be a pal, "a good sport." Morally, youth faces an unprecedented social license in high schools and colleges. There is also the drinking and smoking evil. It is a thrill "just to be sports" or "go with the crowd". Thus classroom engagements are secondary in their busy life of pleasure.

In the homes where children are not greatly favored, there is no adequate training given to guide those childish and youthful desires and urges in a way that will make for stability of character and personality. Many parents seem to assume that young people grow like "Topsy." Thus unguided

² Paul Landis, Adolescence and Youth (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1947), p. 153.

and unloved their children turn for their standard of codes of conduct to the unwholesome streets, gangs, movies, or dance halls.

He who strikes out to form his own standard of conduct, finds himself, too often, baffled and defeated in his new found experience. Elders who are open minded enough to note the change in their children, will cooperate with youth's ideals, energy, and enthusiasm.

A youth who has been loved, given security, comforts, and responsibilities, one who is trained to face his problems honestly, having learned God's standard, who has learned to control his emotions, to respect the wishes of others, to co-operate with his elders, friends and schoolmates, will inevitably mature, not only physically but also socially and emotionally.

Spiritually. Young people should not be left to themselves to choose moral codes. Adults should look ahead and understand the problems youth must face. Many parents and Sunday School teachers do not know the "why" of faith nor do they understand youth today. A youth reared in a Christian home begins to doubt when he comes into high school, where he spends five days out of the week in the scientific world. Norman Cox enumerates the causes for the spiritual crises from the ages of fourteen to nineteen years on a four-

fold basis: First, it is founded in a definite physiological condition, for the young people are making the transition from childhood to maturity. Secondly, deep-seated psychological changes help explain the faith crisis. Youth is attempting to rationalize life and wants proofs. Tradition is not held too high. In the midst of their introspection they find religion making various and difficult demands. It commands them to recognize a responsibility to God and obligation to Jesus Christ, His Son. Thirdly, the spiritual crisis of youth has a social basis. There is an almost impassable chasm socially between youth and adulthood. Modern youth wants to be amused. Fourthly, the religious crises of youth have a definite spiritual basis. Care must be taken in the primary and junior years to prepare the soil and sow the seed. The Holy Spirit will surely bring forth blessed conversions and a wonderful spiritual experience if the child is rightly taught, but if not, there is a period of doubt. Therefore they must have a guide. Guides can teach beliefs to others, but cannot give to them their faith. Faith has to be an acquired spiritual possession as a result of obedience to God's will.³ Adolescence is a period of high frequency of conversion as well as of backsliding, or the up and down religious experience. Those who have had early Christian

³ Norman Cox, Youth's Return to Faith (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1938), 28-44 pp.

training have more stability. If emotion is made central in life rather than faith, they have nothing stabilizing. Leaders should create in the mind of youth the consciousness that there is something very definite to be saved from and saved unto. Youth must be fortified against the evils within and evils without. If a boy or girl, not properly instructed, looks for feeling as an assurance to conversion, he is frequently disappointed and doubt and disbelief take place. Forewarning youth of faith crises will not cause him to escape the experience but will forearm and help him solve the problems. He will be able to withstand the buffeting of adverse circumstances and temptations, and able to remain whole and sound in the stresses of modern life. The spiritual and mental urges and drives that are awakened, if not restrained by an inner monitor of a more powerful force, will carry the inexperienced youth into wrong activities and beliefs; he will fall victim to false "isms" or cults.

Youth possessed of a logical mind is in search after sound principles upon which to build faith such as are given in the Catechism which are based upon the Bible. It is aware of the fact that there are heights and depths in the religious life, it is possessed of a craving for worship that goes beyond man's reasoning or scientific investigation and can only be realized by faith. Youth desires the simple "right from the shoulder" type of religion. They desire to strip away all

formalism, dogmatism, or remove any other hindrances so that the heart of the truth may be reached.

A young person's study of science--chemistry, physics, et cetera, has opened up a new and larger viewpoint of his environment and universe. Knowledge of these natural laws, and their utilization, give him greater happiness, progress, and success in life. Study of science contributes to character building in that a student will have respect for facts and truths, exactness in reasoning, and a deep, humble appreciation for God above Nature. Having very briefly touched upon youth's four-fold nature, what of the problems facing him?

CHAPTER V

CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION AND CONDITIONS WHICH YOUTH MUST FACE

Conditions of environment cause young people untold problems. Only a few will be considered here. They are: Naturalism, materialism, and industrialism; also worldliness, delinquency of adults, and cults.

Naturalism. The theory of naturalism is that the world came into existence solely by natural causes. Of course supporters of this theory believe that there is no God due to the so-called enlightened age. Especially in the colleges and universities, one finds many educated unbelievers. Many a student has had his religious faith shattered either in high school or college by unbelievers and skeptics. Intellectualism without Christ leads to moral bankruptcy. In a naturalistic philosophy of life, the doctrine of God, sin, and the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus has no room. When the Biblical accounts of the fall of man, the need of a Saviour and His work of Redemption is ridiculed, the Christian parent, pastor, and teacher must be ready to meet the challenge. Davies states that our youth feel entirely self-sufficient. They are unconscious of their deep need of religion; they are more concerned about germs, labor grievances, or financial instability than about prayer and prophets. He

believes that they have been victimized by the idealizations of science at the expense of their souls.¹

Historically there has always been a conflict between Science and Faith, but not between real science and real religion. John Dewey, a naturalist, is the outstanding advocate of the progressive system of education, a system which has no need of God.

Materialism. A world without God is materialistic. Who can not see the mad scramble for earthly, worldly possessions and pleasure? This nation has been known for its rich natural resources, but has come to a place where waste must be replaced by economy. To the youth, money, the "effervescent material," is his criterion of success. The society in which the adolescent finds himself is so ably described by Averill:

If human society was ever in a crucible, surely that time has been within the last decade. No one is quite sure where he is, or whither he or anybody else is bound; everyone is confounded and driven hither and yon by conflicting opinions and contentions; old landmarks have been swept away, and new currents introduced, whose undertow is threatening to drag society from its moorings. With ideals shot to pieces, men are probing blindly and helplessly about them for guidance and enlightenment.²

¹ Paul Landis, Adolescence and Youth (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1947) p. 184, citing R. Davies, "Are Students Losing Their Religion?" Christian Century, 56:767-769, June 14, 1939.

² Lawrence A. Averill, Adolescence (Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936), p. 350.

Man is too busy for a few moments with God and certainly far too busy to take an hour or two off to attend church. His God is possessions or pleasure. Instead of seeking the spiritual values or truths, honesty, righteousness, and peace, he seeks more real estate, more to eat and drink or wear, or more pleasure, with no thought of service, sympathy, and social uplift. Sheatsley writes that in this age of materialism and atheism, the existence of a personal God who has concern for men's morals, welfare, and social relations should be stressed.³

Industrialism. Industry has grown far too rapidly for man to adjust his living conditions to it. The machine age has injected into life a restlessness and instability of character that demands excitement, adventure and "thrill". Many break under the strain, for they cannot stand the pace in modern industry. Landis states: "He may die of high blood pressure; but it is better to die of high blood pressure at sixty-five than to die of tuberculosis at thirty or of dysentery at six months."⁴ Industry is not wrong, but drawing people into centers creates problems that man has not been

³ Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), p. 49.

⁴ Paul Landis, Social Policies in the Making, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1947), p. 554.

able to cope with successfully. Rapidity and complexity of culture is at the root of most of our current social difficulties. Problems like low wages, or unreasonable labor demands, unemployment, child labor, clashes between owner and laborer, or between the employee and employer, or grinding toil, or housing problems are difficult to solve and have led to strikes, which are expensive and wasteful, or the greed of worker or employer. Woman, rather than rule the world by "the hand that rocks the cradle", has chosen to rule the world through her own career in business. If there are children, they are left to drift. Labor has been led to feel that, as industry prospers, labor should receive continuous improvement in living standards. Labor does not give proper consideration to cost and maintenance of production. He who has not a firm spiritual foundation falls into a state of mere existence.

Entertainment. How is youth going to spend its leisure? The urge for amusement and sociability is often so strong that young people will not hesitate to neglect their obligations and responsibilities. Youth craves the limelight. Excitement, change, adventure, which are expressions of the nervous restlessness in this mad age of speed, tends to urge the youth to do what will give it "thrill or kick", what is a drink, or drugs, or a smoke for sociability, or a drive in

a luxurious car to some movie, and then to a roadhouse.

The adolescent sees much that is low, sordid, contemptible. Unethical business methods test moral stamina to the utmost.

Wherever young people turn, they can see or hear about lotteries, card games, raffles, slot machines, betting on games and races, prize fights, and the like. Then there are the movies, which could be of such great value in character development. The chief themes of hundreds of pictures investigated were found to be love, crime, and sex.

Studies have been made to learn the effects motion pictures have upon children and youth along the lines of health, emotions, mind, and morals. Their morals were affected through false ideas of evil, the portrayal of loose ethics in regard to home life, companionship, and free love marriages which seemed to have happy endings. Crime pictures dealt with practically every type of vice: murder, theft, swindling, bribery, banditry, and the like. The sex pictures showed loose living, sexual impropriety, adultery, seductions, abductions, and many other sordid acts.

Where is the dividing line between good and evil? Even thoughtful parents are bewildered and cannot guide their youth. He who is in fellowship with God will experience the guiding "still small voice." Amusement is a necessity but it is of paramount importance to differentiate between wrong and right amusements.

To the rural youth God's great out-of-doors provides limitless opportunities. To the urban youth parks afford opportunity for out-door activities, and there are the museums, libraries, and clubs. But any youth should be connected with a good church to help him in his social life.

Delinquent adult. One hears so frequently that young people are not what they used to be. Critics of the age are those who now picture their youth through rose-tinted glasses. They have forgotten their own doubts, uncertainties, harmless pastimes, and lust for pleasure during adolescence. One must remember that life has changed in many ways. Today's real tragedy is not the decadence and immorality of youth so much as the shortcomings of many of its elders which threaten the collapse of home life. Instead of offering guidance, many parents have permitted their children to work out their own code of conduct. The parents' obligation to the home as the trainers of youth has been pushed aside for selfish purposes, a career, money, allegiance to their clubs, amusements, social engagements, and other activities. To many, home has become merely a place to eat and sleep. Those parents who have been caught in the industrial mill of hardships should be given consideration. The other types of parent who make a mad scramble for wealth,

social prestige, and pleasure, are to be censored for their indifference in caring for their children's future, not sympathizing with them and helping them solve their problems, nor winning their confidence by making pals of them.

Beside the evils of society and lust for material gain by adults, there is the lowering of the ideals in marriage relations. By dissolution of one union and entering into another, man really enters into legalized promiscuity, and more or less becomes a polygamist. Youth witnesses this inconsistency and infidelity and concludes that marriage is a failure. The movies and press have been responsible for some of this. They have sanctioned immorality, lawlessness, and looseness of morals by letting the guilty husband or wife come out all right in the end.

Society is reeling, confused, and perplexed. Modern parents have let slip self-restraint and self-control. They are known for their easy morals, loosened marriage bonds, and irreligion. What patterns have modern youth? True, the training of youth has become complicated, but can youth drift and find in time a haven of secure spiritual values? There must be a charted course in their moral and religious training, a course with deep spiritual values, and this can be found in the Catechism, which is based on the Bible.

Industrial conditions, together with social interests, entertainment, or sports, render it well nigh impossible for all the members of the family to be together except perhaps for a few hours at night when they are asleep. The absence of the family altar, regular church attendance, Bible reading, and other spiritual exercises have caused the modern home to deteriorate. Yesterday's moral standards have been cast overboard. As some one has said, if the controlling principles of this nation's basic national institutions, the home, church, school, and state, are not held high, the home becomes a center of vice; the church, an organization without faith, love, or hope, and a place of amusement rather than of worship; schools become places where keen-minded criminals are trained, while the government will become an institution of injustice, dishonesty, graft, and corruption. It is imperative to have a standard, a brief catechetical course which youth can store away in his sub-conscious mind to be available in every time of need. Why Catechetical instead of the Bible? A Catechism gives short summaries of religion or principle doctrines of faith extracted from the Bible in the way of questions and answers which are familiar and delightful, like conversation and dialogue. This method arouses the interest of the young mind through participation.

Cults. The last problem is the rising number of "isms"

coming into the various communities of this nation both politically and religiously. In the first place, some of the religious education is inadequate to lay a firm foundation with which to combat the scientific explanations, skepticism, and growing cults. Another weakness in our day is poor church attendance. The conclusion drawn is that most denominations do not appeal greatly to the soul. There are poorly prepared sermons, and hypocritical lives of many Christians.

There are many cults that vie with one another in gaining the attention of youth and adults. Cults or beliefs like Russelism, Free-Masonry, New Thought Modernism, Christian Science, Spiritualism, Atheism, Mormonism, or Catholicism are often mentioned. Each claim the infallibility of their doctrine. A false presentation of science has shaken youth's faith in the Bible, others have received their false interpretation of the Bible truths.

The word "Cults" comes from the Latin "cultus", meaning worship. They combine some elements of Christianity with those of other faiths and thus form a new belief or faith. These new leaders who claim superior revelation usually make proselytes from other religious denominations. "For such are false prophets, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. (II Cor. 11:13)." These modern erroneous systems are growing rapidly. Strange to say,

people blindly accept their doctrines rather than avail themselves of the precious Scripture truths. Cults offer human means of attaining salvation as by works. Christianity, a supernatural religion, which does not compromise with man, but states clearly that man must be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son, is not generally favored. In the following paragraphs only a few doctrines of the various cults will be mentioned, to illustrate what youth must be prepared to meet when challenged.

The Russelites or Jehovah's Witnesses claim to accept the Bible. In reading their books one notes that quotations are made without regard to their context. They deny the doctrine of the Trinity. "God is a solitary being from eternity, unrevealed and unknown."⁵ Jesus, before coming to earth, was the archangel Michael. Jesus was not God's Son. He was not human and divine. When he died, he remained dead and there was no literal resurrection. There is no Holy Spirit. Man does not die for his own sins now but for the sins of Adam. The ransom given by Jesus guarantees every man in the millennium a second trial for life everlasting. There they will have the gospel preached to them. The atonement was for the first Adam. "It was not pain and suffering in dying but death-extinction of being, that is the penalty of death."⁶

⁵ Keith L. Brooks, Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error (Chart) (Los Angeles: American Prophetic League, n.d.)

⁶ Ibid., Chart.

The wilfully disobedient of the second trial will experience the second death which is extinction.

Christian Science is a cult which many intellectuals accept. To them God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, or Principle. Matter does not exist. Prayer to a personal God is a hindrance. Mary Eddy writes: "Jesus is the off-spring of Mary's self-conscious communion with God."⁷ As commented by Witner: "Man is said to be incapable of sin, sickness, and death."⁸ These are only illusions. There are no atoning merits in Christ's shed blood, for there is no sin.

Mormonism is sex-saturated and favors polygamy. Brooks states that Adam is father and God and the only God who was once man.⁹ The Kingdom of God is the Mormon priesthood and to it all must be obedient, for they are part of God. Jesus, the son of Adam-God and Mary, married at Cana to Mary and Martha, therefore, a polygamist. God and Jesus have bodies but the Holy Spirit is a spirit. The only way the Spirit can be conferred is by the laying on of hands by the

⁷ Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health (Boston: Joseph Armstrong, 1901), p. 335.

⁸ Safara A. Witner, Galilean Fisherman (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Bible Institute, 1945), p. 165.

⁹ Keith L. Brooks, Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error (chart) (Los Angeles: American Prophetic League, n.d.)

Mormon priesthood. Christ's atonement was only for Adam's sin and not for personal sins. These can only be redeemed by obedience to Mormon church ceremonies and a life of good works. Baptism by immersion wipes out sin and is necessary for salvation. The living saints may be baptized for the dead, therefore, they must know their genealogies. All will be damned who are not Mormons or Latter-Day Saints.

In modern theology, God is man. Jesus Christ is divine in the same sense as all are divine, and is the world's greatest ethical teacher. There was no virgin birth and no literal resurrection. Man is in a process of evolution out of animalism. God requires man to do good. God is too loving to send any one to Hell.

Very briefly some problems which youth must face have been noted. There is the belief that God is not and all nature came into existence by natural causes. Also there is the problem of man being so earthbound, so materialistic. His goal is not heavenward but earthward. The machine age has brought in countless problems, problems that only God can help solve. There are the limitless opportunities for leisure time, but which should be chosen? Not only has he his own problems to think about, but frequently his parents are in more need of guidance than youth. "If the sheep go astray, what of the lambs?" Man is born religious and, when science chills his religious hope in God, the only firm foundation, he becomes fertile soil for "isms" and cults.

CHAPTER VI

AUTHORITARIAN TEACHING AND THE NEED FOR A MORAL STANDARD

Because youth is living in a period which is morally unstable, he should be given a standard of morals based on something authoritative and lasting. Man is living for a purpose higher than just this world. To realize this purpose he must be educated with reference to that end.

A construction engineer is thoroughly familiar with the laws governing the construction of a building. When he follows them, he is certain his building can stand the severest tests. Can a motorist drive as he pleases, or an air-pilot land his ship at his own pleasure, or a chorus render the composer's music without following the director and the fundamental laws of music? Can the farmer sow seed without taking into consideration nature's law? Any one with common sense will say that whatever work there is to be done, definite principles must be adhered to. Physically his body operates on dependable principles. Why not principles for moral living? Dewey, a naturalist, advocates progressive system, but nature has laws.

If so, then youth must have a standard, a guide. By some, the moral standards of yesterday have been cast aside, and youth is seeking to formulate its own moral codes. "Progressive" educators discarded the time-tested ideals, traditions, and customs for the right of children to choose for

themselves according to their interests in social and moral issues. John Dewey was the father of this progressive, naturalistic, and atheistic system of education. He firmly believed the child should learn by experience and not by ideas of past generations. Content was secondary. The child had his life to live. All Dewey's teaching was child centered. Such a system would omit the transmissive method of teaching which is the method by which the Bible truths can be taught as given in the Catechism training. Without a standard, chaos and bitter disappointments follow.

McElhinney and Smith state that the youth of today at every turn of the road face new and perplexing moral situations. Neither their experience nor their training is sufficient in many cases to give them an adequate preparation for meeting these situations.¹ There is "a growing realization that strong personalities do not result from haphazard methods or from an unguided yielding to inclinations."²

¹ Robert McElhinney and Henry L. Smith, Personality and Character Building (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1942), pp. 34-35.

² Ibid., p. 160.

Principles and standards apply to religious relations as well as to material ones. It would seem then that some fixed standard is necessary. Most men agree there must be some measurement or standard for youth. A code of morals does not solve all the problems. His standard of morals must have back of them an authority or power that will compel observance and respect. To the Protestant the Bible is the authority. Liberalism seeks to make the common moral consent of society or the dicta of science the standard, but society is unstable and shifting, with a consequent shifting of moral standards. They desire to attain adequate social adjustments and relationship, rather than a relationship with the Creator in preparation for the future life; this makes their standard uncertain. Liberals have broken away from the Bible. The Lutheran takes his stand on the Bible alone. Can liberals prove that the Lutheran is loser to be in fellowship with God? What the Bible commands has to be done. History is one of the best tests. When Israel obeyed, she prospered and was blessed, living in abundance. Youth must have a reliable, tested standard of ethics. What better, brief, concise guide can one find than the doctrines of the Catechism with their explanations? Yes, some may say why not the New Testament?

The Catechism not only quotes from the New Testament, but also the Old Testament. Secondly, the Catechism contains

questions, the answers to which youth desires and needs to know. They have met the needs of many generations already. The Catechism contains a summary of the principle religious truths in a simplified organized form and presents them in dialogue form. It is unique and has as yet not been replaced by any better form. Time and again one hears it said that he who has had a thorough Catechism training knows what and why he believes.

CHAPTER VII

THE CATECHISM AND MORAL STANDARDS

Is the Catechism authoritative? The Catechism is based on the Bible. Is the Bible authoritative? Authority involves two factors: Veracity and power to bind. History shows that through three thousand years, the Bible is a true and compelling force. What book has there ever been in the entire world and down through the ages that has been able to take man, show him his sin, and lead him into the way of an abundant life of true joy, peace, and unending happiness? What book can claim such unity as the Bible? It is composed of sixty-six books, by forty-four different authors, and written over a period of fifteen or sixteen hundred years. There is a decided difference between the Bible and any other book, no matter how good and inspirational it may be. Authors may pray for guidance in writing books. No matter how excellent the authors may be, none of them dares claim his books are the books of God. The verdict of time that a book has value is the surest. The Bible has been completed now for nearly two thousand years, and previous to its compilation the separate books were read in the form of scrolls. There could have been no one but God to direct and dictate to men the writing of the Book of Books. One of the questions in the Catechism is:

4. But how can their word be the Word of God?

II Pet. 1:21. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

I Cor. 2:13. Which things also we speak, not in the words which men's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth.

II Tim. 3:16. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.¹

Mr. Halley has this to say about the Bible:

The Bible is GOD'S WORD in a sense that No Other Book in the world is God's Word

The Bible is in itself the one outstanding Miracle of the Ages, bearing high its own evidence of its Superhuman Origin; and we have it today essentially as it came from the hands of God.²

The following are notable sayings about the Bible as being authoritative:

W. E. Gladstone: "I have known ninety-five of the world's great men in my time, and of these eighty-seven were followers of the Bible."

"The Bible is stamped with a Speciality of Origin, and an immeasurable distance separates it from all competitors."

Napoleon: "The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it."

Patrick Henry: "The Bible is worth all other books which have ever been printed."

Sir Isaac Newton: "There are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history."³

¹ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), p. 1.

² Henry H. Halley, Pocket Bible Handbook (Chicago: Henry H. Halley, 1946), p. 21.

³ Ibid., 16-17 pp.

Archaeology has proven many times the authority of the Bible. Barton states that the discoveries in Babylonia and Assyria which give light on Biblical narratives are numerous. The sites of many cities such as Ur of the Chaldees, Erech, Babylon, Ashur, Nineveh, and Calah have been excavated and documents found which have a bearing on the Bible in one way or another.⁴

Does the Bible have binding force? Liberals may say that the Bible possesses authority because it is only taken for granted by the human race. History shows that man has passed thousands of laws but has utterly failed in their enforcement. Man has not been able to pass a set of laws, as stated by Sheatsley, that is sufficiently exact and to the point to serve as an adequate moral standard. And even if such a standard could be formed, adequate authority for its enforcement would be lacking.⁵ Logically, then, he concludes, that the authority of the Bible is superior, infallible, farther-reaching, heart searching, demanding than man's best measures. The Bible becomes an all-sufficient guide for religion and morals, such as cannot possibly be found elsewhere. For this reason man assumes that the Bible was given

⁴George A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible, (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1946), p. 73.

⁵Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), p. 66.

to him by God. The Bible then becomes the authority in the Catechism. All other ground is "shifting sand".

The Lutheran Catechism presents the Bible which meets the requirements of a moral standard for adolescents and can stand the test of the modern scientific, industrialized, skeptic society. Since it is based on the Bible, as indicated in Chapter III of this Thesis, it is authoritative. Youth needs an authority like the omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient Almighty, as worded by our Psalmist:

The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: The Lord shall have them in derision.⁶

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.⁷

The Catechism studied by the Lutheran Adolescent, an authoritative means of grace, is arranged in five parts with questions and answers of explanation, depicting the steps taken by a sinner to attain sainthood. The Ten Commandments reveal sin and bring conviction to the sinner. Quoting:

19. Of what benefit, then is the Law?

1. It points out to us our sins and the wrath of God toward sin.

⁶ Ps. 2:2-4.

⁷ Ps. 139:9-10.

Rom. 3:20. Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.

2. It makes us anxious to seek Christ.

Gal. 3:24. The law is to become our tutor to bring us to Christ.

3. It points out to the believer what fruits his faith must bear.

Ps. 119:105. Prov. 6:23. For the Commandment is a lamp; and the law is a light.⁸

The Creed shows to the convicted sinner the way of salvation. Assured of his salvation, he is given in the Lord's Prayer the ideal example of prayer. The last two parts are commands. After a sinner believes, he is baptized, for baptism without faith in the Word is no baptism. Then to live Christ, the saint through the Sacrament of the Altar must feed upon the Word, the bread and wine only acting as vehicles. Through a spiritual use of the Word of God, God's Grace is imparted to all. The Word is the instrument by which the Holy Spirit brings the believer to a knowledge of the truth, to repentance, to faith in Christ, and to a bestowal of the necessary gifts for a new life.

The Catechism, which contains choice portions of God's Word, should be made youth's daily companion. Youth should diligently strive to know its teaching, should make God's ideas his ideas, should locate some of God's precious promises, should read them over and over, and appropriate them.

⁸ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), pp. 5-6.

The Lutheran adolescent who has learned how the Bible came to man will have a firm foundation on which to stand when the skeptics, deceivers, and false teachers attack the Bible. Skeptics must disprove those statements before they can state or begin to prove that any other book is superior.

The Law ^{was} divided into two parts: Man's relation to God and to his neighbor. In Mark's account, Jesus beautifully brought out this fact in answer to the question as to which was the chief commandment. In various catechisms, the quotation was either taken from Mark or Luke. The following was taken from Mark, who quotes from Deut. 6:4:

Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment.

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.⁹

The two commandments cover the whole of life and constitute the basis of all practical Christianity.

Jesus indicated that to keep the commandments, man must begin with God. The omnipotent God must be placed above all things. Youth must have proofs that there is a God. Quoting again from the Explanation of the Catechism which is so essential to the Lutheran adolescent:

117. How do you know there is a God?

⁹ Mark 12:28-31.

1. From the world's creation, its preservation and government.

Rom. 1:19,20. That which is known of God is manifested in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived by the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.

2. From conscience, which is troubled when I do evil and rejoices when I do good.

Rom. 2:15. They (the Gentiles) show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them.

3. From the Holy Scriptures, wherein He most clearly reveals Himself.

John 1:18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

118. What is God?

God is a spirit, who is eternal and almighty; all knowing and everywhere present; wise, good, and merciful; holy, true, and just.

John 4:24. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.

Ps. 90:2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.10

The foregoing quotations disprove that God is only principle, idea, or a solitary being of the Russelites, or that Adam is God advocated by the Mormons, or impersonal as advocated by the Spiritualists, et cetera.

In studying the Catechism, man soon discovers what he ought to do and what he should leave undone. Landis

¹⁰ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), pp. 25-26.

states:

Although there is some psychological advantage in a pedagogy that tries to omit the "don'ts" and "musts" because of their restrictive influence on life, it is certainly a dangerous world in which youth grows up without consciousness that there are "don'ts" and that there are "musts".¹¹

Youth comes to recognize as he grows into adulthood that there are many "don'ts" and "musts", and the sooner he learns that, the easier it is for him to become a happy, usefully functioning member of society.

The second table of the law has to do with the neighbor and his social relations--"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself", which calls for a number of "dos" and "don'ts". Sheatsley tells that in those last six or seven commandments, --depending on how you divide the decalog,--all human relations or social obligations are gathered into a few words so that wherever he may be in life, whatever the environment, he may the more readily adjust himself socially and morally, and know how to judge the situation, and then proceed to action. This kind of religious education will give the children, as they grow up, a broad moral basis for all the social problems that will come into their lives.¹² Sheatsley further writes that the Word of God as a law is not meant to be a mere outward law or standard written on stone or paper, not an out-

¹¹ Paul Landis, Adolescence and Youth. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1947), p. 193.

¹² Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), p. 12.

ward authority, but an inner spiritual and moral power. It is given to be regulative of his moral and spiritual conduct, not from without, but wholly from within. As the objective word, it is the standard by which the lives of youth are to be measured. As a spiritual force, it lies within and issues in motivations that lead him to do the things written without.¹³ In reading through Part I on the Law, any one will be amazed at the amount of material included within its pages, quotations from both Old and New Testament that are to be memorized and stored away in an adolescent's sub-conscious mind for the time of spiritual need.

Young people are to love, honor, esteem, obey, and regard their parents in their hearts as God's representatives. They should respect and be subject to them even if they are lowly, or poor, for they are God's gift. If parents or superiors are sinful, as so many of the delinquent parents are, the Catechism teaches, "No; we ought to obey God rather than man." (Acts 5:20).¹⁴

The other commandments speak of living pure, clean lives in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. Two of the Biblical quotations for transgression of "Thou shalt not kill"

¹³ Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), pp. 134-135.

¹⁴ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), p. 15.

as given in the answer to question 78 are, "Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice (Ephesians 4:31)" or "Who-soever hateth his brother is a murderer....(1 John 3:15)".¹⁵ The explanation of "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" is "We should fear and love God so that we do not deceitfully belie, betray, backbite, nor slander our neighbor, but apologize for him, speak well of him, and put the most charitable construction on all that he does."¹⁶ Because of the loose morals that prevail today, a few quotations given on the commandment of adultery, clearly and distinctly teach that no one has a right to live an unclean life.

44. What is the sixth Commandment?

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

45. What is meant by the sixth Commandment?

God forbids the breaking of the marriage vow and requires all of us to be chaste in thought, word, and deed.

Matt. 5:8. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

I Cor. 6:19-20. Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: Glorify God therefore in your body.

.....

Eph. 5:3-4. But fornication, and all unclean-

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 20.

ness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints; not filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks.¹⁷

A student who knows the Ten Commandments will learn in daily life how frequently these Commandments will serve as a guide in time of decision.

Luther assigned the second dominating place in the Catechism to the Creed. He, in his Large Catechism, wrote that thus the first part of the Christian doctrine had been given, in which he had seen all that God wishes him to do or to leave undone. Now followed the Creed, which set forth to him everything that he must expect and receive from God, and taught him to know Him fully.¹⁸ The three great works of God-- Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, are three fundamental facts of our salvation. No salvation is complete unless God the Father, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier are included. The law leads men to knowledge of sin, the Creed to a remedy for sin, and the Lord's Prayer to a way of Christian Life.

The first paragraph of the Apostles' Creed opens with an all inclusive statement as to who was and is the master mind back of nature. The scientists state that the "laws of

¹⁷ Evangelical Catechism (St. Louis: Eden Publishing House, 1920) pp. 31-32.

¹⁸ Mueller, J. T., J. G. Walch, and A. Rechenberg, "Enchiridion", Concordia Triglotta (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 679.

nature can not be bribed".¹⁹ The Catechism gives the opening statement of the Creed with the explanation:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has created me and all that exists; that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, my eyes and ears, and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul, together with food and raiment, home and family, and all my property, that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life, protects me from all danger, and guards and keeps me from all evil; and that He does this purely out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all of which I am in duty bound to thank, praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.²⁰

They realize there is a power behind those laws. As long as they cannot prove who is the Master mind, then who is the Master mind, if not God? The one-celled animal is in nature in great numbers. They have never evolved any further. There are certain cells for man and certain cells for birds. Archaeological study shows that fossils of animals are found in the oldest rock, which fact contradicts evolution. There are no fossil remains of any creature or animal that could be man. Evolution has failed to explain the complexity of of the eye. When evolutionists and scientists can prove

¹⁹ Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), p. 116.

²⁰ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), p. 27.

without a shadow of a doubt their theory that the world and all therein came into being and is kept by evolution, it is then time to discard the Biblical account of Creation. So far they have been unsuccessful. There are some things that will always remain unexplainable, as who can explain why the black cow who eats green grass, gives white milk and cream, and why white cream churns into yellow butter? We are not gods. "It really takes more proof to be a Christless atheist than a whole-hearted Christian believer."²¹ The pastor, parent, or youth leader can never force an adolescent into believing, but rather present truths, facts, and theories and let him weigh them; if guided right, he will accept the Bible truths by faith, faith that he cannot afford to lose. If he retains his faith, then he will also believe that "By faith we understand that the worlds have been formed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath been made out of things which do not appear (Heb. 11:3)." Some Bible verses quoted in support of the various answers under this first article are as follows:

Ephesians 3:9. God created all things.

Hebrew 1:3. He upholds all things by the word of His power.

Acts 17:25. He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.

²¹ Norman Cox, Youth's Return to Faith (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1938), p. 126.

Ephesians 5:20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.²²

Many think they have no need of a Redeemer, for they do not acknowledge sin. Jesus said that he who is whole needs not a physician. However, in life one cannot ask a criminal or a harlot if there isn't a just retribution for "that something", and what is "that something", if it is not sin? What caused the publican to say, "God, be merciful to me a sinner (Luke 18:9-14)?" What a man sows that will he reap. Why cannot man be consistent enough to realize that the master mind behind nature also is the ruler in the moral world? Certainly the heavenly Father is kind, but He is also just, holy, and righteous. Every doubter should take the Word of God and with an honest desire learn whether the "Word of God is living and active, and sharper than a two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12). Plainly a book that searches man's inmost self, and lays it open before his eyes, must be the mouthpiece of Him who knows all things. What prompted Nicodemus to come to Jesus? He, an upright man, must have felt a need of something. Note Jesus' answer in John 3:5-6.

²² Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), pp. 28-29.

The purpose of Christ's coming was to redeem the world. Incarnation, atonement, and resurrection are the three basics in Christianity. He must be enthroned in the lives of the adolescent. They must not only believe in or about Christ, but obey Him. Christ within has an answer for every need. To have Christ enthroned, there must be a change of heart, a change that amounts to a new birth which man calls conversion or regeneration. Old things are passed away, and he will see God and his fellowmen in a new light. The change was not brought about by his own efforts or powers, but by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. When the reader takes the Catechism, and goes through the pages on the Second Article of the Christian Faith, he sees that the Adolescent is given a complete knowledge of Jesus, who He is, what He came for, what He accomplished, what He means to himself, and how he may avail himself of Him. The following are a few of the questions and answers as taken from the Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism:

148. Is it essential to know Jesus Christ?

Yes; this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3)

Acts 4:14. Neither is there salvation in any other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

152. What does the Bible say about Christ being true God?

The Bible calls Him the only begotten Son of God, and the one with the Father.

The Bible also expressly calls Him God.

John 10:30. I and my Father are one.

John 5:23. That all may honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father that sent Him.

I John 5:20. This is the true God, and eternal life.

John 1:1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 3:16; Col. 2:9, 1:16,17; Heb. 1:3; Micah 5:2; John 2:25.

157. What does the name Jesus signify?

A Saviour.

Matthew 1:21. Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.²³

Faith in Christ or disbelief in Christ marks the difference in the destinies of men. He who links his life with Christ will conquer.

The Third Article treats of five points: the Holy Spirit; the Church; forgiveness of Sins; Resurrection of the Body; and the Life Everlasting.

No one can believe in Jesus Christ by his own reason or strength or come to Christ; but the Holy Spirit calls the soul through the word, reveals to him what he should do

²³ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), p. 43.

or leave undone. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent and man cannot escape from the Spirit and presence of the Lord. A Catechism question and answer is as follows:

197. Who is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the true God together with the Father and the Son.

I Cor. 2:10. The Spirit searcheth all things, yes, the deep things of God. ²⁴

If He knows the inmost secrets of the mind of God, He is omniscient,--But omnipresence and omniscience are divine attributes. The Bible ascribes to the Holy Spirit divine names, divine works, divine attributes; hence He is "true God."

"The work of the Holy Spirit is to call, gather, enlighten, sanctify, and preserve".²⁵ When the Holy Spirit calls men through the Gospel, He informs them that "all things are now ready", that salvation has been fully prepared for them, He invites, urges, pleads. Quoting from the Catechism:

207. What is meant by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit?

That He brings home to our hearts a living knowledge of the truths of the Gospel.

John 16:13. When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth.²⁶

²⁴ Ibid., p. 44.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 44.

He gathers, that those who respond, repent of their sins, by faith believe in Jesus Christ, and are saved, are numbered in the holy Christian Church of Christ. He sanctifies, cleanses, purifies, and preserves him. Man has been unable to create faith in his own heart, neither is his own power adequate to preserve him in the faith. "Ye are kept by the power of God. (1 Peter 1:5)."

Even as the Catechism has taught the Adolescent how he may come to Christ and be saved, sanctified, and preserved, so is he also given knowledge as to the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Quotations are as follows:

245. What becomes of the soul of the believer after death?

His soul goes home to God, where it rests from all strife and sorrow, in blessed fellowship with Him, until the resurrection of the body.

Luke 23:43. Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

Rev. 14:13. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

246. What is the resurrection of the body?

The bodies of the dead shall be made alive and shall be reunited with their souls.

John 5:28,29. The hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto resurrection of judgment.

248. Where do the resurrected bodies go?

The believers enter into life eternal; the condemned into eternal death.

Matthew 25:46. These shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life.²⁷

Luther states in his Large Catechism that,

"These articles of the Creed divide and separate Christians from all other people upon earth. For all outside of Christianity, whether heathen, Turks, Jews, or false Christians and hypocrites, although they believe in, and worship only one true God, yet know not what His mind towards them is, they abide in eternal wrath and damnation. They have not the Lord Christ, and, furthermore, are not illumined and favored by any gifts of the Holy Spirit....The Ten Commandments are written in the hearts of all men; the Creed, however, no human wisdom can comprehend, but it must be taught by the Holy Ghost alone. The doctrine of the Law never made a Christian. The doctrine of faith brings pure grace, and makes us godly and acceptable to the Father."²⁸

The new convert as well as the mature Christian needs to pray to keep in contact with God. Prayer is simply listening to and talking with God, giving Him praise and thanks for His goodness, and asking that one's needs be met. He calls upon God sincerely, with confidence that He will hear. He approaches the throne of grace, with profound reverence. His prayer, both in form and content, is made within the sphere of the Word of God. He will answer either "yes" or "no". "Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by

²⁷ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Fergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), pp. 52-53.

²⁸ J. T. Mueller, J. G. Walch, and A. Rechenberg, "Enchiridion", Concordia Triglotta, (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 697.

prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. (Phil. 4:6)." Spaeth explains that in the third part of the Catechism, Luther treats the Lord's Prayer as the fruit of justifying faith, the embodiment and demonstration of the new life, in the spirit of sanctification and adoption. It sets forth the life of the Christian as the life of the child of God, with all its privileges and duties, its need and dangers, its hopes and resources.²⁹ Christian life is a partnership with God. There are those who have never learned to pray. There comes a time when help is needed desperately, but they do not know how to pray. The reader recalls the experiences of the Rickenbacker group. Fortunate is the boy or girl who has learned how to pray! The Catechism has as one of its questions, "What is it to pray?" with the answer, "Prayer is the conversation of the heart with God for the purpose of praising Him, asking Him to supply the needs of ourselves and others, and thanking Him for whatever He gives us".³⁰ This is followed by a number of Bible quotations. What a wonderful opportunity the pastor here has to lead his pupils into the deeper life of prayer!

The Catechism teaches the what, when, why, and how to pray.

²⁹ Adolph Spaeth, "Catechism", Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, 1911, XII, p. 255.

³⁰ Evangelical Catechism. (St. Louis: Eden Publishing House, 1929), p. 59.

263. For what should we pray?

We should pray for all that furthers God's cause, as well as our neighbor's and our own welfare, both spiritual and temporal.

Matt. 6:33. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

John 16:23. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you.³¹

The Lord's Prayer is an ideal example of prayer and will remain the prayer of prayers, to be prayed frequently, for it gives comfort in the lessons derived from its content; it reveals God's love for His creation; it enumerates every need which God faithfully and abundantly provides.

To the three fundamental parts, Luther added the Fourth and Fifth Part, called the two sacraments--Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Here a simple, living faith of true believing hearts is required. Lutherans call the two sacraments also the "means of grace", or, quoting from the Catechism, "A sacrament is a holy ordinance made by God, in which He gives and confirms His invisible grace through outward and visible means".³² When Jesus told His apostles to go out and conquer the world by spreading the gospel, He definitely mentions

³¹ Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism (after Dr. Erick Pontoppidan). (Pergus Falls: Ugeblad Publishing Company, 1940), p. 56.

³² Intersynodical Catechism Committee, Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism of 1529 (Minneapolis: Lutheran Free Church Publishing Company, 1929), p. 81.

Baptism. Some one has said that sometimes the Baptism and the Lord's Supper are called the "visible Word" in contrast to the spoken Word. The two sacraments, as interpreted by Lutherans, are controversial matters, according to the way denominations interpret them. Lutherans believe small children should be brought to God in holy Baptism. The child as taught in the Lutheran church at the same time becomes a member of the true church and of the denomination, not because of the water, but "water used by God's command and connected with God's Word. The Word...is linked to the water and is its energizing power."³³ Quoting from Luther's Catechism as follows:

It is not the water, indeed, that does such great things, but the Word of God, connected with the water, and our faith which relies on that Word of God. For, without the Word of God, it is simply water and no baptism. But when connected with the Word of God, it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says to Titus, in the third chapter: "According to His mercy, He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying."³⁴

He must be taught to live daily in accordance with the Word of God. When he reaches the age of accountability, if this relation is severed by a known sin, he must repent, but

³³ Erwin Kurth, Catechetical Helps (New York: The Studio Press, 1944), p. 134.

³⁴ Pontoppodan, op. cit., p. 69.

does not have to be rebaptized to restore that fellowship. A great responsibility is placed upon every parent, teacher, church, and society at large. To neglect the child, at any stage in its growth, by any one whomsoever, is a grievous sin. Again quoting from the Catechism:

323. How can we be kept in fellowship with God?

By remembering the grace received, watching and praying, and making diligent use of the Word of God and the Lord's Supper.

2 Tim. 2:8. Remember Jesus Christ.

1 Pet. 1:5. Who are kept by the power of God through faith. (Phil. 1:6).

327. Can a baptized person fall away from God?

Yes, when he forgets the grace he once received, resists the Holy Spirit, and neglects the Word of God and prayer. (Luke 15:11-16; 2 Tim. 4:10).

328. Can a backslider again be received into fellowship with God?

Yes; God gladly receives any sinner who repents.

Matt. 11:28. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Luke 15:20. He arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. (Isa. 1:8).

329. What are the duties of the members of the congregation in baptizing their children?

They shall pray for them and provide for their instruction in the Word of God.

Matt. 28:20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

Matt. 18:6. But whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is

profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea. (Ps. 78:1-8; Deut. 6:6,7)³⁵

He who has not been baptized and taught the Word but comes into the knowledge of God and is saved, is baptized after his confession of faith in Christ. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mk. 5:16a)."

The Lord's Supper, instituted by Christ, is for the repentant, and he who has a true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord (I Cor. 11:27)." There are other verses which prove from the Bible that the Lord's Supper is only for those who are born again. In the following quotations from the Catechism, an adolescent is given an understanding of who may partake of the Sacrament and of what benefit it is to the individual.

366. For whom is the Lord's Supper intended?

The Lord's Supper is intended for true Christians, who are of age and understanding to prove themselves.

I Cor. 11:28. Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.

368. But does not the believer have the forgiveness of sins before he partakes of the Lord's Supper?

Yes; the believer has the forgiveness of sins through Baptism and the Word.

369. How, then, can the forgiveness of sins in a particular sense be connected with this sacrament?

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 69-71.

Because in the Lord's Supper we receive the body and blood of Christ, which were offered up for us, as a sure pledge of the forgiveness of sins.

374. Who, then, receive this sacrament worthily?

. but he is truly worthy and well prepared who believes these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." But he who does not believe is unworthy.; for the words: "For you," require truly believing hearts.

377. Who partake of the Lord's Supper unworthily?

They who do not feel nor repent of their sins, and who do not from their hearts believe in Jesus.

I Cor. 11:29. He that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, if he discern not the Lord's body.³⁶

Luther in his Catechism was positive in his statements. Fundamental truths which constitute Christian belief and life are given very simply. A second merit of the Catechism was its evangelical quality. The doctrine of the Justification by Faith permeates the entire book. Man is reconciled to God through Christ and through faith has forgiveness of sin and righteousness. The phrase "fear and love God" in the explanations of the Ten Commandments mentions reverence together with love as the right motives for moral conduct. Christianity consists not only of refraining from doing certain things, but comprises faith, love, and joy in doing God's will. His gratitude in prayer for all that he owes God in the way of his heartfelt assurance in Christ's redemptive work, in the Spirit's sanctifying influence, and in all

³⁶ Intersynodical Catechism Committee, op. cit., pp. 89-92.

temporal blessings should be deep and constant.

Luther's method of education was guided by two maxims: "Christ, wishing to educate men, became a man, and if we wish to educate children -, we must become like children." In the second place he insists that "the apple must lie next to the rod."³⁷

Character training. Without a question the Catechism has met the moral standard. It has materials for character development and personality training. The Catechism, a concise, essential course, has sufficient material to meet every crisis of adolescence and can build into the adolescent mind and heart a character and personality that far surpasses any man-made scheme of training, for it is based on the Bible.

The Word applied by the Holy Spirit can bring the adolescent into a conscious relation with God, which is bound to purify and strengthen his morals. He has been trained to know, fear, and love God; to believe in Him and worship Him; to know and accept Jesus Christ as the divine Saviour from sin; to experience conversion and sanctification; to hope and rejoice in the eternal home that awaits every true follower; to love his fellowmen, not only for their sake, but for Jesus' sake. This gives real character and personality training, for it is not just a building of character with human forces

³⁷ Th. Graebner, The Story of the Catechism (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), p. 89.

and motivation, but a training that makes room for the work of the Holy Spirit from within. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (I Cor. 2:14)."

CHAPTER VIII

THE CATECHISM AS A MODERN METHOD

Modern educators condemn the Catechism as a method of instruction because of its memoriter method of teaching and its "don'ts" and "musts", also, because it is transmissive and authoritative.

In transmissive teaching the teacher passes the ideas of past generations on to the students. The Bible truths taught are from the Word of God. God is the authority. Why should the creature doubt or question the Creator? Such valuable truths are unquestionally accepted and made a part of one's life. However, Lutherans are more unanimous in favor of it than ever before because of experience and tested results. Have modern educators ever stopped asking the question, "Why are there so many 'don'ts' and 'musts' concerning the physical health of our children?" There are "Thou shalt nots" in health, what is wrong with them in morals? Shall the creature tell the Creator what to do? Shall the child tell the parent what to do? If, where will it end? Has man been able to create man? If God was able to create man, and man has not been able to so far, has he not the right and power to say how His creature is to be trained? His method was that the truths were to enter into the life of the people in their daily living. If an individual repeats a statement or thought often enough, it becomes a part of him.

The enemies of the eloquent prophet Isaiah described very vividly his excellent method of teaching, a method which has been used with good results down through the ages, as evidenced by the Israelites, by Jesus and His follows, Lutherans, and other denominations, who advocate catechetical training. "For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little there a little (Isa. 28:10)." Matthew Henry explains this verse as follows:

It is necessary that the same precept and the same line should be often repeated and inculcated upon us, that we may the better understand them and the more easily recollect them when we have occasion for them.¹

Jesus who is the Teacher of teachers, confounded His enemies more completely by quoting the Scriptures than by any other method. An infidel once said, "Can any man argue against God Almighty?" He was referring to a young man who followed Christ's example by quoting Scriptures to refute this infidel's arguments. Bearden and Carter in their teaching devices state that memory work makes for accuracy and a fuller understanding, besides storing up in the mind beautiful ideas and expressions against the time of spiritual dearth.²

¹ Matthew Henry, "Isaiah" Commentary (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1712, IV), p. 152.

² Elizabeth Steele Bearden and Alice Blanton Carter, Teachers Manual (Chicago: Ginn and Company, 1941), p. 17.

He who stores his mind with choice quotations, will have a store of knowledge that can be commanded at any time its use is desired. Eavey writes: "It is most certain that memorizing has value. Much gain may come from storing words in the memory. At best, however, memorizing is only gathering of materials for the mind to use."³ Evans, an advocate of memory work, gives the best way to proceed in memorizing. The student is to arrange the matter to be learned analytically and synthetically, i.e., take it to pieces and put it together again. By this process he will have learned the selection with a minimum of effort at memorizing.⁴ Memorizing Scripture and literary gems is favored by speakers and writers of today. Moody's great success was attributed largely to his familiarity with and ability to use the English Bible. Kornhauser in his book "How to Study" explains that the common feeling against the use of memory in study arises because memory is thought of as a mechanical or rote memory--a process of "learning by heart". But this is only part, and the less important part, of remembering. The memorizing of connected and meaningful ideas, of material that has been understood and thought about, is clearly a most important part of all

³ C. B. Eavey, Principles of Teaching by Christian Teachers (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1940), p. 164.

⁴ William Evans, How to Memorize (Chicago: Moody Press, 1910), p. 61.

effective study.⁵ Crawford, an authority who is against rote memory, states that routine type of memorizing multiplication tables or other list of items should have meaning put into them. In addition to meaning, the material must have interest and application to daily life.⁶

The above instruction on how to teach memory work is and has long ago been stated by God to Moses in the passage Deut. 6:7-9, which gives instruction on how to teach God's Commandments as recorded in Deut. 5-6. Note the following quotation:

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.⁷

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown comments on these verses by saying that the great principle was made for the earnest inculcation of them on the minds of the young by a system of parental training, which was designed to associate religion with all the most familiar and oft-recurring scenes of domestic life.⁷ For example when the Passover Feast was celebrated, the children would ask certain questions about the

⁵ Arthur W. Kornhauser, How to Study, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1924), p. 40.

⁶ Claude Crawford, How to Teach (Los Angeles: Southern California School Book Depository, 1938), p. 168.

⁷ Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, "Deuteronomy", Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), I, 742.

why and wherefore of the feast. The parents used the occasion to instruct their child in the reason for the feast and God's plan with their nation. Cox writes that by questions and satisfying answers their faith is clarified and foundations are strengthened,⁸ Jewish parents were in harmony with God. The Deuteronomic method used by the Jews was much like the modern method today in that their teaching was experience centered. They used object lessons, et cetera. For as the Jews worked, walked, and sat, if the children asked questions, and what normal child does not, they were given the opportunity of explaining what great things the Father had done. The difference between the method used by the Jews and the method advocated by the liberals of today is that the Jews began with God and were authoritative and the liberals begin with man. The Jewish method is like the best Christian method of today. God is the cause.

This brings also the question of whether or nor transmissive and authoritarian method should be discarded for the progressive method. The progressives state that we should not trouble the mind of the child with ideas of past generations. Christians are transmissive teachers interested in introducing Christ to youth. They are bi-polar or Bible-pupil centered. Transmissive teachers pass on their rich

⁸ Norman Cox, Youth's Return to Faith (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1938), p. 60.

heritage as found in the Bible and adapting it to fit the needs of the student.

Sheatsley gives facts showing that if the method used by the Jews, though utterly repudiated today, made for a strong nation, certainly it should make for strong Christian character today.

The Jews...have maintained to the present the strongest civilization of which history has any record: they have been cut and quartered as no other people everywhere, have been without a country for more than 1800 years, and much of the time without a home, yet they have maintained their racial identity and integrity, and are today yet, though scattered and peeled, a factor in civilization that must be reckoned with, I shall not try to account for these things, but it is a fair question whether their driving the fundamental element of Judaism into their children has not had much to do with their remarkable tenacity in keeping their heads above water; which raises the further question whether modernism, by shelving the commandments and our catechism, and chasing children around over the field of nature and human experience for traces of God and for moral motivation is clearly not losing some things elemental to sound religious and moral education and training.⁹

If the foundations of these precious truths of God are laid in the child mind and up through the growing years, then, when the child comes to the period of adolescence, a course in Catechism would be a summarizing of the Christian fundamentals into a "work kit" ready for application.

The Catechism as taught today stresses the great doctrines in relation to man's needs. These, as has been

⁹ Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), pp. 234-236.

stated, are explained by the question and answer method, supported by Bible quotations. Eavey writes that questions lay at the very heart of the teaching methods of Jesus: the four Gospels record more than one hundred questions asked by Him. The catechetical instruction, a system in the Middle Ages, has yet a definite hold on certain phases of religious instruction, for in it the question was central. Today, in spite of the great multiplicity of methods, much teaching is done by means of questions, either as the chief method or as used with other methods. The questions stir to action and also guides the direction of the acting.¹⁰

Furthermore, a method which is strikingly modern, Luther used illustrations, for Dr. Reu remarks: "From the standpoint of method it is noteworthy that Luther added pictures to his Catechism, taken mostly from Scripture."¹¹ Graebner has inserted small cuts of these pictures in the chapters of his own book. One pictures Moses part way up Mount Sinai with the two tables in his hands. At the bottom of the Mount are the people standing around about a pedestal upon which is a calf. In the upper right hand corner are heavy clouds.

¹⁰ C. B. Eavey, op. cit., pp. 252-253.

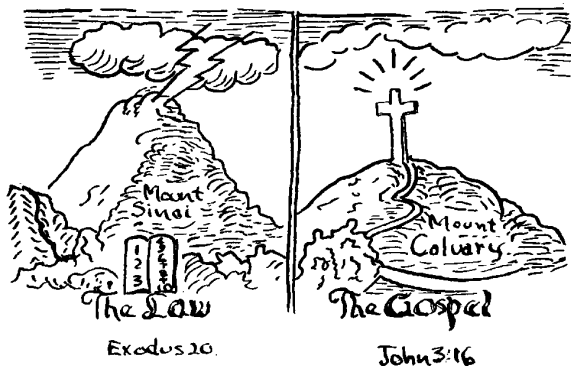
¹¹ Th. Graebner, The Story of the Catechism (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), p. 9

Following the catechetical methods of implanting precious Bible truths upon the hearts and minds of children and connecting the facts taught with their lives will bring salvation and a life of sanctification to all who study the Catechism and apply it.

In addition to the Catechism text with its explanation, a book of about seventy-five pages, the teachers of the Adolescent class uses work books, object lessons, et cetera, which clarify the Catechetical lessons. Sample pages taken from these books illustrate what is being done.

LAW AND GOSPEL

Two Main Doctrines



Two doctrines stand out in the Bible like two mountain peaks.
The two doctrines are the LAW and the GOSPEL.

The DIFFERENCE between

The Law and the Gospel

Old Testament New Testament



LAW
GOSPEL

Shows
Shows

Our Our
Savior

Prophecy

Fulfillment

Aid to Memory

LAW
S.O.S.
What we are to do
Damns
Preached to impenitent

GOSPEL
S.O.S.
What God has done
Saves
to troubled

The G-O-S-P-E-L

in a sentence.

God so loved the world that He gave His
Only-begotten
Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not
Perish, but have
Everlasting
Life.

-John 3:16.

GOSPEL

Anglo Saxon - Godspell	}	that Jesus is my Saviour
Good-spiel		
Good news		
Glad Tidings		

LAW AND GOSPEL

1. What are the two chief doctrines of the Bible?
The Law and the Gospel.
2. What is the Law?
The Law is the holy will of God.
3. What does God tell us in the Law?
God tells us in the Law how we are to be, what we are to do and not to do.
4. What is the Gospel?
The Gospel is the good news that Jesus is my Saviour.
5. What is the difference between the Law and the Gospel?
The Law shows us our sin; the Gospel shows us our Saviour.
6. Which Bible verse is known as the Gospel-in-a-Sentence?
John 3:16: "God so loved the world, etc."¹²

The following questions are taken from a Workbook in Religion "Living God's Word" by Edwin A. Jiede used in conjunction with Edwin Kurth's Catechetical Helps:

¹² Erwin Kurth, Catechetical Helps (New York: The Studio Press, 1944), pp. 7,8,10.

IV. Law and Gospel

The two main doctrines of the Bible are the Law and the Gospel. Place an "L" or a "G" before each statement to indicate whether it refers to Law or to Gospel.

-1. Jesus suffered and died to save sinners.
-2. The Ten Commandments tell us how God wants us to live.
-3. The doctrine of sin is clearly shown in Both Testaments.
-4. God loves all people.
-5. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."
(Matt. 22:39)
-6. "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10)¹³

LESSON EIGHTEEN

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS (Justification)

The worst thing in the world is sin.
The greatest blessing is the forgiveness of sin.

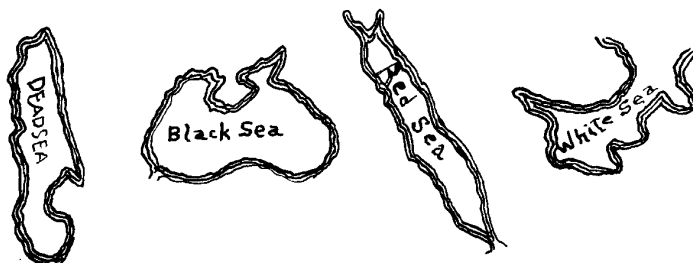
GOD FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, THROUGH THE GOSPEL, DAILY AND RICHLY FORGIVES ALL SINS TO ME AND ALL BELIEVERS.



The tri-colors of salvation are:
Black - my sinful heart
Red - my Saviour's blood
White - my cleansed and redeemed soul.

Make yourself a little book containing these three pages: Read it often. As you look at the black page, for instance, recall those Bible passages which speak of sin, etc.

¹³ Edwin A. Jiede, Living God's Word (New York: The Studio Press, 1947), p. 4.



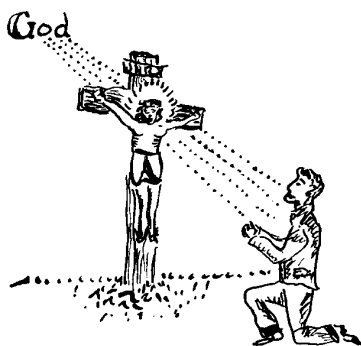
A MAP THAT CAN GUIDE TO HEAVEN

The DEAD SEA pictures the natural condition of man's heart, dead to God, to good. "Dead in trespasses and sins."

The BLACK SEA is a fit picture of the evil of sin, its results, its defilements; and that "all have sinned."

The RED SEA reminds us of the "fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins." As the children of Israel passed from slavery in Egypt through the Red Sea, so we pass from the slavery of sin through the Red Sea of the Savior's blood into the promised land.

The WHITE SEA represents the sinner forgiven through Christ. "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Ps. 51:7.



God sees Christ and is satisfied; the sinner sees Christ and is satisfied.

THE SIN-BEARER

Sin was borne by Christ. Sin is not counted against the sinner. The sinner is acquitted, declared free. "Not Guilty" is the verdict. He is justified.

It was customary in olden times to throw a debtor into prison. If another paid his bill, he would be released. The merit of another was counted as though it were his own.

The lamb was most frequently used in sacrifice. The priest laid his hand upon the creature offered for sin, and while the sinner confessed his iniquity over the head of the sacrifice, the sin was typically transferred to the victim, which was therefore called sin and guilt. Thus God laid upon His Son the iniquities of us all. He became SIN for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.



THE CENTRAL TEACHING

This then is the central teaching of the Bible that all who believe receive forgiveness of sins and are justified before God, not by works, but by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith.

After all, there are only two religions in this world, God's and man's. Man's religion, no matter under what name it may travel, is always based on self-righteousness. God's religion, the only religion the Bible knows, is based on Jesus' blood and righteousness. Man's religion says, First you must do, then you shall live. God's religion says, First you must live, by grace through faith in Christ, then you shall do. Man's religion says, You are saved by character. God's religion says, You are saved by grace.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

1. Who forgives us our sins daily and richly? God forgives us our sins daily and richly.
2. Why does God forgive us our sins? Because He is gracious and merciful.
3. For Whose sake does God forgive us our sins? For Jesus' sake.
4. What has Jesus done for you? He has lived and died for me.

5. Is there anything in or about you to deserve forgiveness?
No; I receive forgiveness according to the riches of God's grace.
6. For whom has Jesus won forgiveness? For all men.
7. Where does God tell us that He has forgiven us? In the Gospel.
8. Is the Gospel also in Holy Baptism and in the Lord's Supper? Yes.
9. Who receives the forgiveness which Jesus has won?
All who believe the promise of the Gospel.
10. What, then, is the central teaching of the Gospel?
This, that all who believe receive forgiveness of sins and are justified before God, not by works, but by grace, for Jesus' sake, through faith.¹⁴

There are also PROOF TEXTS that go with the above question.

Following is a sample of a worksheet for this lesson:

Lesson Eighteen

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

(Justification)

.

1. The Forgiveness of Sins.

A) Fill in the missing words.

1. grants forgiveness of sins daily and richly to and all because He is and
2. God forgives sins for sake.
3. Jesus has lived and for me.
4. I receive according to the riches of God's grace.
5. Jesus gained forgiveness for all
6. God tells us of forgiveness in the and also grants it through the Gospel in the two
7. All who the promise of the Gospel receive forgiveness.

¹⁴ Erwin Kurth, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

8. The central teaching of the Gospel is this that all who believe receive of and are before God, not by, but by, for Jesus' sake, through

B) Arrange the thoughts into a sequence which best tells the steps of Justification by faith.

. . . . Jesus took on Himself the guilt of my sin and suffered the punishment in my stead.

. . . . I received the forgiveness Jesus earned by believing that God has declared me justified for Jesus' sake.

. . . . My heart was by nature dead to God, black from the evil of sin.
In this condition I could not stand before my God, for I deserved nothing but punishment.

. . . . The blood which Jesus shed washed the guilt from my heart and made it "white" in God's sight.¹⁵

¹⁵ Edwin A. Jiede, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

CHAPTER IX

WEAKNESSES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Why are not the Lutherans satisfied with just Sunday School training? Why is a catechetical course a necessity? Even though the Sunday School has rendered invaluable services to the Lutheran church in this country, they must acknowledge it also has its weaknesses.

The first handicap is lack of time. The period of actual instruction is from twenty to forty-five minutes at most, and only once a week. How much is one able to do in that short a time? Five periods a week is not considered too much for secular training. How much more than a half hour or so should a teacher not have to sufficiently indoctrinate children and give them the principles of right living? Yes, more time could be secured if we would make better use of the time. There is also the problem of irregular attendance.

The second weakness is the lack of trained teachers. So very few people are willing to teach Sunday School and accept the responsibility for the intellectual training and spiritual growth of his pupils. For this reason every church is thankful for whomever they can get. Yes, there are many good teachers but not nearly enough. In a Catechism course it is the pastor who is instructor, and who can be better fitted than he? He is the Shepherd of his flock; he is the

Watchman of his house. It truly is a privilege to have the pastor as teacher. The adolescent who has been privileged to have studied Catechism and been instructed by the pastor will have many precious sacred memories spent in discussing problems which were so vital to him in his daily living and a life of holiness.

Third weakness. The leaders and church do not practice what they teach. Can the blind lead the blind. Youth cannot be convinced of their leaders' faith, unless those leaders live it. Every teacher educates every minute he is before or near his students, even though unconsciously. He teaches through his personality, manners, conduct, the views he expresses, and the life he leads. Everything he does immeasurably influences the students for better or worse. It is of vital importance for a teacher to possess a spiritual experience. "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works (Titus 2:7)." Faith in Christ involves belief, trust, and obedience to His Word.

Fourth, the subject-matter is scattered. Even though the series in so many years cover the Bible, it is not so concisely arranged as to be quickly recalled in time of need, nor is it impressed upon young minds sufficiently to be recalled. Then again, teachers give more attention to instructing the child in the Word and do not train him to do and to observe or apply Christ's commands to a life of holiness.

This latter, being the greater and more difficult task, is often neglected. To win and keep a child for Christ is more important than to reclaim him, though the latter must of course be done if the child has back-slidden.

Fifth, doctrines taught in Sunday School are not impressed strongly enough to be permanently remembered. No matter what critics say, youth must have doctrine so that they will know what they should believe. Youth wants facts that have stood the test of the ages and can be relied upon when everything else seems so unstable. Koehler, in commenting on the limitations of Sunday School, favors a continuous training in parochial school. He goes on to say that it will help the bent twig very little if it be straightened but once a week. The impressions made on the heart of the child in the Sunday School are not entirely lost--they may become a power conducive to holy living--but often they are not clear nor deep enough to last long. They are easily effaced by impressions received five days of the week in the secular school.¹ Where there is no continuous catechetical training, as in a parochial school, a catechetical course is essential and would strengthen the Sunday School training immeasurably.

¹ Edward W. A. Koehler, A Christian Pedagogy (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1930), p. 31.

Training in Sunday School, which is an excellent department in our churches and renders invaluable service, is insufficient in instructing and training youth, for, due to faults which are not wholly its own, the Sunday School lacks time, trained teachers, and consecrated leaders; its subject-matter cannot be put into concise form; time is insufficient to indoctrinate youth with truths that will leave lasting impressions. Therefore it is very necessary that the short Catechism course should be given to the adolescent. It gives the essential doctrines in simple words, so that every soul can learn and know how to believe rightly and lead a life of holiness.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY

As summary, one would unhesitatingly state that the Catechism is essential for the Lutheran adolescent. Sheatsley has so aptly enumerated the reasons for the course:

1. The course is a preparation by which the youth is led into a knowledge of the Bible particularly of its fundamental teachings of the church and those bearing upon Christian life. It is not only a doctrine, but will take in all of life, man's social life, or his relation to men, as well as his relations to God.

2. The course is of sufficient length and thoroughness to make it really effective, for a full course calls for two years of at least one hour or two hours a week for seven, eight, or nine months.

3. The Catechism centers on essentials. The Commandments, Creed, and the Lord's Prayer afford ample opportunity to draw in all social relations.

4. The Catechetical work is in the hands of the pastor, who is supposed to be the fittest person to instruct children and others. This is a distinct advantage over most other religious educational agencies.

5. The method is practical. The plan will work with one pupil or with a hundred.

6. The training has brought the adolescent under the forces of organized truth and will provide a lamp and a light on his path.¹

Youth needs guidance, which he can follow during the period of adjustment, and no course measures up to the requirements for guidance so effectively as a Catechism course. It is an authoritative means of grace and character building, it measures up to high educational standards of methods, and it is supplemented by the work of the Sunday School. One of the chief reasons why the Lutheran church has remained strong is because of her excellent catechetical educational system, which has given her people organized truth based on the Bible. The very simplicity of the Christian truth and duties has given it a firm hold on the inner life and conscience of the Lutherans throughout the world. Therefore the writer unhesitatingly states that the Catechism cannot be dispensed with and have the same results in the Lutheran religious education, for as Sheatsley states:

"When boys and girls in their adolescent years have had a thorough course in the catechism they have been brought under the force of organized truth, and they will have a firm hold on sound words to hold to that will be a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path as they go on through life."²

¹ Jacob Sheatsley, The Bible in Religious Education (Columbus: The Book Concern, n.d.), pp. 259-261.

² Ibid., p. 263.

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