

"What Lutheran Sunday-School Teachers Should Know"

by Dr. P.E. Kretzmann

27

The Religious Attitude.

The Christian Sunday-school teacher must of necessity always be aware of the special type of school in which he is working. The religious attitude and the religious atmosphere in the Sunday-school must be observed with great care by every person on the Sunday-school staff. The Sunday-school session should be a form of worship, not a mere lesson in memory material. This does not imply that the Sunday-school teacher will foster merely a sense of awe in the hearts of the children or that he will try to produce a mere feeling of dependence upon God. The trouble with a great many Sunday-school pupils is that they think of God as merely a little bigger and a little wiser and a little better than themselves. This view has been fostered lately by books on the worship life of children. Many people connected with Sunday-schools think it sufficient merely to deepen a child's feeling of reverence in the presence of the wonderful things of nature, so that the only source of knowledge and the only motivation for worship is the almighty power and the goodness of the Creator. But Lutheran Sunday-school pupils must learn to know that God is a Father in a much richer and fuller sense of the word. They must learn to trust in the heavenly Father for Christ's sake. They must be taught and trained to approach this Father in heaven as dear children come to their dear father on earth, freely and gladly confiding in Him and making known their needs at all times. This religious attitude must be kept in mind at all times by the Sunday-school worker, and particularly during the Sunday-school hour. All the children must receive the impression that religion is not a matter of a few verses or stories studied during the Sunday morning session, but that it is a constant attitude and condition of the heart and mind. [pages 50-51]

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Lesson Material.

For this reason the lesson material of the Sunday-school, generally speaking, will concern itself with the facts pertaining to the love of God in Christ and the child's life of sanctification for the love which he feels for Christ and his heavenly Father. The aim of all Sunday-school work, and therefore also the object necessarily governing the selection of lesson material, is given in the words of St. John, John 20,31: "these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believeing, ye might have life through His name," or as Jesus Himself puts it, Matt. 28,20: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." For this reason we must observe certain fundamental principles in the selection of materials for Sunday-school work. Realizing the brevity of the Sunday-school lesson and the few hours which the average Sunday-school pupil actually devotes to a study of Scripture truths, we must see to it that our lesson material will set before the eyes and the hearts of the children Jesus the Savior and the work of His redemption. Together with this material we must choose also such stories as will present the outstanding features connected with the Messianic element of the Old Testament as well as with the commandments of God as we teach them in the Decalog. To choose lesson material at random, without keeping in mind an object of this kind, will yield only a smattering of unrelated Biblical truths and therefore will not serve to lay a foundation of Christian knowledge. Every child that has finished the regular departments of the Sunday-school ought to be familiar with the work of the Savior, both His active and His passive obedience; he ought to know the stories connected with the means of grace, especially the institution and the power of the Sacraments, and he ought to have in mind the greatest Biblical examples of piety. [pages 51-53]

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Bible History.

It is in keeping with this principle that the Bible-history material used in our schools is selected. The chief interest of the Lutheran Sunday-school teacher is in setting for the life of the Savior, His miraculous birth, His obedience to His mother and His foster-father, His teaching and preaching, together with His miracles, during the years of His public ministry, and especially the events connected with His last great Passion. To omit the fact of Christ's blood being shed for the sins of the world, as some recent liberal writers desire to do, means to cut out the heart of the Gospel and to substitute man-made pedagogy for the divine pedagogy of the Bible itself. In addition to the stories connected with the life of Christ at least a few of the events connected with the establishment of the Christian Church should be taught in order that the children may understand the connection between the Word of Jesus and the present work of the Church. The lessons from the Old Testament are selected chiefly on account of their interest and their connection with the First Article of our Christian faith and the various commandments of the Decalog. The facts which are found in Scripture are not to be regarded as mere historical material, but as lessons showing the various attributes of God and the various virtues and vices of men. All these things were written for our learning, and the most essential parts of the Bible are presented to the children through such statements. - At the same time the Lutheran Sunday-school teacher will not dissociate the lessons from the sequence of the church-year. The various Sunday gospels which the Church has now used for many centuries have proved their value also for pedagogical purposes, and it would be unwise for a Lutheran teacher to ignore the experience of the ages. This does not, however, exclude the presenting of the material in the various departments of a Sunday-school in graded form, partly in the lesson for the child itself, partly in the application suggested by the teacher's presentation.

This grading is particularly advisable after the children have gained a fairly good knowledge of the fundamentals of our Christian faith, that is, after their confirmation. At this time teachers may well begin to present the great stories of the Bible in a connected fashion and in chronological sequence, taking up the easier books of Scriptures first, such as the gospels and the Acts, then proceeding to historical material of the Old Testament, and so gradually building up a very thorough understanding of all the doctrines held and taught by the Lutheran Church. [pages 53-54]

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Catechism Material.

To this end also this is of great importance, that the Lutheran Sunday-school teacher be familiar with the Catechism and be in a position to teach at least the meaning of the text of Luther's Small Catechism. While the words of the Catechism are intended for children, it must not be overlooked that the text itself, that is, the language and the structure of the sentences, in other words, the meaning of the text, should be clear to the children. In the Sunday-school the Catechism will be used just as it is offered in print, with the Five Chief Parts (six with Confession and the Office of the Keys) presented to the children in some sort of connected fashion. That is, the Ten Commandments should be learned in order, likewise also the Three Articles of the Creed, and so the other sections of the Catechism, in order that every child may be familiar with the text of the Small Catechism and have an understanding of this text by the time it reaches the age of confirmation. This presupposes careful study and preparation on the part of the Sunday-school teacher. In fact, the careful Sunday-school teacher will devote quite as much time to a thorough study of the Small Catechism as to the presentation of the regular Bible lesson. [page 55]

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Prayers, Proof-Texts, and Hymns.

To the lesson material of the Sunday-school session will be added also prayers, proof-texts, and hymns. The Concordia series of graded memory material offers practically everything that will be required in the average Sunday-school. But the teacher may not neglect the object of Sunday-school work. A mere mechanical prayer has little value, either as an act of worship or as a part of the child's life. For that reason prayers should be taught very carefully, no matter how short or simple they may seem to the teacher. If the little evening prayer "Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep" is used in the Sunday-school, it may be retained in the form which has been acceptable in our circles, the prayer being made in the name of Jesus. But the last lines of the stanza are not taught in a manner bringing morbid thoughts to the mind of the child, but rather to instill a simple trust in God's providence.

As far as the proof-texts are concerned, the interest of the text again lies in the unfolding of the understanding lest a child gain a false impression. It will readily be seen that the understanding of the divine mystery itself is not possible, no more than with adults; but the text ought to be clear before the child's memory. And as for hymns, this requirement ought to be emphasized even more strongly. If children do not hear the text correctly, or if the picture suggested by the text is not made clear to them, they often take with them false conceptions and even nonsensical ideas. For that reason the teacher must pay close attention to this part of his work. [pages 55-56]

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Training in Worship.

As has just been intimated, prayer should never be a mechanical performance, a mere babbling. It is necessary that the spirit of worship be taught in Sunday-school, as it should be inculcated in the home. This does not mean a mere sentimental and subjective development of a feeling of awe in the presence of the supernatural, as has recently been said. Nor is it sufficient that the children be taught to think of God as a friendly God, a law-abiding God, and an active, creative God, an intelligent God, a powerful God, who expresses Himself through personality, as a late book has it. Christian worship means a reverential, but trustful approach to the heavenly Father for Christ's sake. Though Him we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, Rom. 5,2. "Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father," Eph. 2,18. Children should be taught to look upon God as their Father for Christ's sake, so that they may worship Him in spirit and truth, in spirit, as distinguished from the external form, which connects worship with outward habits, and in truth, which distinguishes New Testament worship from the figures and sacrifices of the Old Testament. The mind and spirit of the children should be lifted up in childlike simplicity and confidence to the Father who sent His Son to be the Redeemer of the world. -- If this attitude is constantly taught and practised, then the outward forms of worship will have significance to the children if we give the proper explanation. We should explain the order of service to them, from the opening salutation to the last benediction, so that they may follow with intelligence and appreciation. The music of the liturgy should also be explained to them and practised with them, so that the worshipful attitude of their hearts will find its proper expression throughout the service. [pages 57-58]

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Teacher's Preparation.

All this very naturally leads up to the question of the manner in which the teacher ought to prepare the lesson. From the experience of hundreds of successful teachers it may be concluded that the teacher's own attitude toward the work is of immense importance in bringing the lesson home to the children. Many teachers begin the work for next Sunday's lesson as soon as they have reached their homes on Sunday noon. They do not neglect to gain new strength and inspiration through the agency of fervent prayer. In fact, the true teacher's life is a life of constant prayer, not only with regard to the successful presentation of the lesson, but also with regard to the needs of the individual pupil. It is advisable to read the lesson through very carefully and try to grasp its chief points, to refresh the memory, and to deepen previous impressions. After this has been done, the helps that have been provided for the study and the teaching of the lesson may be consulted. The chief interest at this time must be the teacher's own understanding of the text. It may be necessary therefore to consult a reliable commentary or to look up points in one or more Bible dictionaries. It may also be advisable to make a thorough study of all historical and geographical references found in the story. No matter how great the amount of material which is thus gathered, it will have its value in the teacher's own spiritual life and will serve as a wider background for the teaching of that particular lesson. The next step is for the teacher to become clear concerning the presentation of the story or the lesson material, the analysis of the story, and the sequence of events. Even at this time it may be advisable to keep in mind the special aim of the lesson, so that attention may be directed to the points connected with this aim. Quite a few Bible-history lessons contain material which concerns a number of facts. To present them all would mean to confuse the child, and therefore the wise teacher will select one or more special objects, either in the telling of the story or in the questions connected with the story, in such a manner as to lead the children along the path chosen by him. After the preparation of the teacher has reached this stage, he will naturally want to put down the analysis that he has made on paper, whereby the lesson is further crystallized for actual use. If all this is done by the middle of the week, the lesson will stand out with increasing clearness when he then attends the teachers' meeting, in which the lesson is once more presented by the pastor or some other leader, and everything will be arranged in such a manner as to be ready for Sunday morning. In other words, the teacher will then be in a position to teach [pages 58-60]

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Motivation.

But in this connection it is of great importance that the teacher keep in mind the value of proper motivation and the use of apperception. To motivate a lesson means to direct the interest of the children. This may sometimes be done by means of pictures or photographs. In some instances a previous incident in the life of a Bible character may furnish the starting-point. In still other cases events in the present history of the world, of the Church, of the school, of the individual child, may be utilized for the approach. The successful teacher will be able, almost in the first sentence of his introduction, to arouse the interest of his pupils, in other words, to make proper use of motivation. - But in the introduction as well as in the lesson proper the teacher must always keep in mind the laws of apperception. This includes, simply speaking, the necessity of going from the known to the unknown. We must begin with ideas, with information which is already in the mind of the child and proceed to add information in such a way as to bring together new ideas with previous ideas. It would be a foolish undertaking, for example, to begin with the doctrine of the Sacraments in the Primary Department. We must first teach the children the life and work of Jesus before they can understand the means of grace. But if a child has once understood the significance of the means of grace, it will be an easy matter to show that the Sacraments are means of grace, on account of the fact that they bring the Word of God to the user in a visible and tangible form. In this fashion new facts are added to such as have been established in the minds of the children, and teaching is well done. The doctrine of the use of apperception will therefore do away with all haphazard and disconnected teaching. For our Sunday-school work should not merely be entertaining, but it has a definite object of presenting the truths of salvation in a connected form. It involves cognition, or the imparting of information; emotion, or the arousing of a favorable reaction; and volition, or putting the knowledge to work. [pages 60-61]

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Getting and Holding Attention.

All of this will be of great value to the teacher in securing and maintaining interest and attention. We often speak of making a lesson interesting. Strictly speaking, this is not correct. We ought to say that the material of the lesson is presented in a manner which arouses the interest of the pupils. This is so important because the pupil is bound to do his own thinking. The mental act by which knowledge is acknowledged and assimilated is not an act of the teacher, but of the pupil. Only what a pupil thinks through and assimilates will become his mental property. Therefore the first point which the teacher must keep in mind is that he must create in the pupil a desire to know. Since there will usually be little natural interest in the lesson or no appeal to the active instincts of a child's nature, it rests with the teacher to institute in the heart of the child the eagerness which must be brought into the lesson to make it successful. For that reason the soul of the teacher must first of all be inflamed; he must himself be filled with the truth and be ready to break through the reserve of a child's mind. He must be ready to give the infection of his own interest to the child. He must have all his material marshaled in advance. He must be in a position to ask questions which lead right into the heart of a subject. He must create in the pupil an urgent desire to be active in connection with the lesson, to carry out the points which have been presented in the lesson. And this is not to be a mere intellectual belief, but it is to be an active trust or a confessional activity. If these prerequisites have been carefully observed by the teacher, then the attention of the children will be gained with the greatest ease. It is true that this attention may at times waver, but it is equally true that the teacher will be able to lead back the minds of such as are growing weary and inattentive. This may be done by calling upon pupils who are beginning to wander away, by asking questions, by presenting the material from a new viewpoint, by eliminating distractions, and by having the class well in hand at all times. In this way the best form of attention will be secured, namely, secondary-passive attention. This is the attention which starts out with native or sensual attention, which is natural for a child and directs such attention into the field of intelligent application to the subject-matter as such. A child's mind may first be interested in the beautiful colors or the grouping of the picture. We begin with such interest and attention, but we lead the child to see the meaning of the picture, and we apply the lesson of the picture to the life of the child. [pages 61-63]

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Getting and Holding Attention.

All of this will be of great value to the teacher in securing and maintaining interest and attention. We often speak of making a lesson interesting. Strictly speaking, this is not correct. We ought to say that the material of the lesson is presented in a manner which arouses the interest of the pupils. This is so important because the pupil is bound to do his own thinking. The mental act by which knowledge is acknowledged and assimilated is not an act of the teacher, but of the pupil. Only what a pupil thinks through and assimilates will become his mental property. Therefore the first point which the teacher must keep in mind is that he must create in the pupil a desire to know. Since there will usually be little natural interest in the lesson or no appeal to the active instincts of a child's nature, it rests with the teacher to institute in the heart of the child the eagerness which must be brought into the lesson to make it successful. For that reason the soul of the teacher must first of all be inflamed; he must himself be filled with the truth and be ready to break through the reserve of a child's mind. He must be ready to give the infection of his own interest to the child. He must have all his material marshaled in advance. He must be in a position to ask questions which lead right into the heart of a subject. He must create in the pupil an urgent desire to be active in connection with the lesson, to carry out the points which have been presented in the lesson. And this is not to be a mere intellectual belief, but it is to be an active trust or a confessional activity. If these prerequisites have been carefully observed by the teacher, then the attention of the children will be gained with the greatest ease. It is true that this attention may at times waver, but it is equally true that the teacher will be able to lead back the minds of such as are growing weary and inattentive. This may be done by calling upon pupils who are beginning to wander away, by asking questions, by presenting the material from a new viewpoint, by eliminating distractions, and by having the class well in hand at all times. In this way the best form of attention will be secured, namely, secondary-passive attention. This is the attention which starts out with native or sensual attention, which is natural for a child and directs such attention into the field of intelligent application to the subject-matter as such. A child's mind may first be interested in the beautiful colors or the grouping of the picture. We begin with such interest and attention, but we lead the child to see the meaning of the picture, and we apply the lesson of the picture to the life of the child. [pages 61-63]

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Laws of Teaching.

The careful teacher will also keep in mind at all times the great laws of teaching. According to the excellent summary offered by Gregory we may distinguish seven laws of teaching. These laws may be stated as follows:

1. The teacher should be thoroughly familiar with every lesson that he wishes to teach, so that he may teach from a full mind and with a clear understanding.
2. The learner must be taught to follow the lesson with interest, and there is to be no teaching without such attention.
3. The language used by the teacher must be such as may readily be understood by the pupils, language which is familiar, clear, and vivid, conveying the same understanding to both the teacher and the pupil.
4. The teacher must progress from the known to the unknown, proceeding by graded steps.
5. It is necessary that the self-activity of the pupil be excited and directed, so that a large part of the learning process be in the nature of a discovery by the pupil.
6. The pupil should be required to reproduce in thought the material which he has learned, expressing that which he has assimilated in his own language.
7. The pupil must be required both to review and continually to apply everything that he has learned, looking into meanings, reviewing the impressions gained, finding new applications, correcting such views as are false, and completing those which are true.

These laws of teaching are so important that they ought to be pondered by the individual teacher and discussed time and again in teachers' meetings. The study of the books given in the bibliography below will greatly aid the teacher in advancing him in this field of his work. [pages 63-64]

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Discipline.

The question of discipline is one that has ever caused much trouble, especially in the Sunday-school, where the obedience required is not so much that of the Fourth Commandment as that of the Third. As far as actual forms of discipline are concerned, there seem to be only two that will find their application, namely, admonition and expulsion.

In a great many instances the children will take advantage of the situation, sometimes even deliberately ignoring the authority of the school and of the teacher. The better way of maintaining discipline therefore is that of having the teacher cultivate the desirable qualities of leadership, whereby the pupils are almost involuntarily brought to the point of following. The teacher must cultivate self-control at all times; for he who loses control of himself and gives way to temper will certainly not be able to control the class. The teacher must also be the master of his subject-matter, a background of eight times as much material as is actually used during the class period being none too great for the object of the school. That the individual lesson must be fully mastered by the teacher if he wishes to maintain discipline is almost self-evident. Above all, the methods of Jesus in maintaining discipline are always the great example for all teachers. Jesus mingled with His followers as one of them, and yet He not only kept their respect, but He actually strengthened their respect for Him. Thus in a good school there may be much freedom, but never any license. Good discipline furthermore requires that pupils be guided and then allowed to make many choices for themselves; but in many instances, especially where the Word of God speaks, the choice of the teacher must simply be insisted upon, since he is to govern correct choice. Just as too much law may result in rebellion or in the unfortunate condition of a weakened will in the suppressed underling, so too much freedom will lead to anarchy. Under no circumstances may a teacher sacrifice a principle or lower his ideals in a misdirected effort to give his pupils their right of choice. Teachers are not willful despots, but they are responsible for their pupils, and they have an authority on the basis of God's Word which is not derived from the consent of the governed. For that reason also the teacher must control pupil relationships, insisting at all times that these must be characterized by love and service. [pages 64-66]

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Pupil Activity.

The influencing of pupils' habits is a fundamental point in proper teaching. Information in itself is not the end of Sunday-school teaching, but information which leads to thinking and to activity. In other words, the condition in the Sunday-school ought to be that of proper cooperation, with an increasing amount of self-activity on the part of the pupil. It stands to reason that in the Beginners' Class and in the Primary Department most of the early teaching must be done in the informational way. But even here the teaching may be strengthened by the proper use of a sand-table better than by mere telling and memorizing. And the older the child gets, the more he ought to be trained to put the information which he receives and which he acquires for himself to proper use, so that his entire life will reflect the attitude of his mind and heart. In other words, teachers must train the children in proper habits, so that their entire life will simply be an expression not only of reverence for the unseen realities, but also of childlike trust in the Lord and Savior of mankind. [pages 66-67]

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Teaching Procedures, or Types of Teaching.

In most textbooks on teaching, types, or procedures, and actual class or individual lesson methods are thrown together or at least presented without proper discrimination. But for the sake of distinguishing it may be said that types and procedures refer to the form and the machinery of presentation in general and may be incidental to many lessons, while class or lesson methods refer to the manner of actually conveying the information during the lesson hour. - The following teaching procedures are now generally recognized and taught. Inductive or developmental, work seeks to lead the child to observe, discover, think, find out, for himself. It begins with concrete and particular facts and instances and by putting these together attempts to arrive eventually at conclusions and rules. Work of this kind is used chiefly with little children. In making the idea of Holy Baptism clear to little children for example, the teacher may elicit from his pupils the fact of the use of water in baptism, the fact of the presence of a child to be baptized, and the fact of the use of the Word of God together with the water, these three elements giving us the definition of child baptism. Deductive, or application, work in teaching is done with older children, who have a little ability in logical thinking and possess at least some body of information. We start with general truths, rules, or principles and apply them to concrete individual cases. Thus, if we say that the Bible is the Word of God, we must prove this statement by various facts, especially by texts taken from the Bible. It is particularly desirable that the deductive procedure make the proper application of truths to the lives of the pupils. In socialized teaching the teacher capitalizes the experiences and the information possessed by the pupils, which form their mental background in such a way as to secure student participation for the work of the course. Frequently this can best be done by having the pupils work together in groups, of which each

member is made responsible for some part or phase of information gathered and presented to the class. With proper guidance this work will result in real cooperation of a high social value, presenting a life situation and clarifying the student's experiences. This procedure can often be combined with the problem-project procedure. This is a form of teaching in which some question or topic is worked out in a series of related subtopics. Thus the geography of Palestine might be studied in the conventional informational way, as given in some good geography. But the same object may be attained if we subdivide the topic under the headings of how we might make the journey to Palestine, how we would live and travel while there, how the people of that country formerly lived and dressed and how they do now. All these and many other subordinate problems would create what might be called a natural learning situation and a demand for the information which under the older method would be presented systematically and somewhat abstractly. Then there is the appreciation type of teaching, in which the aim is to create a response of warmth and interest toward, or appreciation of, a person, object, situation, or the material studied. This is frankly an appeal to the social or to the ethical or to the esthetic side of the pupils' nature and therefore is largely emotional. It may be connected with a beautiful scene a fine painting or bit of sculpture, a beautiful piece of music, or any other object in the fine arts, or it may concern the acknowledgment of some outstanding virtues in great heroes or heroines. It is most frequently incidental to a lesson but ought to receive the most careful attention. Reference ought to be made also to the work or contract plan of teaching, in which work or contract sheets are provided for the pupils and their work is done on two or three levels, in agreement with their natural intelligence and application, although this is seldom feasible in Sunday-school. But teaching by dramatization has been found to offer fine opportunities, provided it is not emphasized to the exclusion of informational procedures that are less emotional in their appeal. Work of this type should be incidental and supplementary rather than primary, but it certainly has great value if properly used [pages 67-70].



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Individual Class or Lesson Methods. (Part 1)

The actual process of imparting information or causing pupils to get such knowledge in the lesson hour or Sunday-school class is the lesson method. It should be remembered at this point that informational methods must continue to occupy a most prominent place in this work. As Professor Betts Promine writes: "To be intelligent in one's religion, there are certain fundamental things which must be known; that to be a worthy Christian, there are certain facts, stories, personages, and events with which a knowledge of the mind must be well furnished. There can be little doubt that the common run of teaching church-schools has failed to give our children a sufficient basis of information upon which to build their religious experience.

Teachers ought to keep in mind here that the Sunday-school lesson is ordinarily not a reading-lesson. We do not have classes in Sunday-school to test out the children's ability to read from the printed page. If the lesson is to be read at all, the teacher may allow a few minutes at the beginning of the lesson period, and then only for children who can read; but the reading is to be done silently. Generally speaking, the best form of informational methods in all the departments of the Sunday-school up to the Senior Department is the story-telling method. It is the main object of the school to have the children become acquainted with the facts included in the Gospel-story and in the many other interesting events narrated in the Bible, together with their application to present-day conditions. A story is not merely to be enjoyed by the children; for the object of Sunday-school teaching is not entertainment. At the same time the story should be told in an interesting and enjoyable manner; for the teaching value of a story depends largely upon its enjoyment value. It follows from this that a good story is a work of art, which claims attention for its own sake; it is a message of beauty, the very form of which ought to impress and direct the minds of the children. But the story in the Sunday-school must also have a definite purpose. It is to teach the facts of Scripture in order that the children may obtain a proper understanding of the work of redemption and faith in the Savior may be kindled in their hearts or strengthened. It is to arouse the emotional life of the children, so that they may give themselves freely to the service of the Savior. It follows that a teacher must prepare very carefully for the telling of the story. It must actually have become his



own, his mental and spiritual possession. He must know its analysis; it must possess his feelings. He must be able to tell it in its simplest terms, building up the entire narrative around a central thought. The progression of thought must be clearly in evidence. The climax also must be clear. Have the language adapted to the age of the children. Use direct discourse, with paragraphs. Above all, study the Master's method of story-telling; for the parables of Jesus are the greatest models in this respect that the world has ever seen. Almost invariably the Lord sets entire situation before His hearers in the very first sentence of His story, and He always leads up to a definite climax, or application. We cannot use the stories of the Bible in the exact words which they were written, but the material which we add should be in the nature of such simplification only as will open up the understanding of the language and give some idea of the social and economic background. Very often a story told practically in the words of the Bible, all extraneous information being added by way of footnote and additional exposition.

A second informational method is the rote, or recitation method, to be used with children who read the story of the day and are able to answer at least certain fact questions without hearing the story told by the teacher. This method tries to determine whether the pupils have grasped the facts and understand their connection. In the simplest form the recitation means that the teacher will ask only those questions that are printed in the lesson leaf or booklet. If the teacher can do nothing more in this method of teaching he should at least try to provide a motive for knowing the lesson, endeavor to have each pupil feel his responsibility, and have the assignments so clear as to elicit at least a measure of responses. This method should never become a dead rote or routine procedure; for in that form it has little appeal for wide-awake children. - Closely related to this method is the drill method, which may sometimes be used for the stories themselves, but will find its best use in memory-work, proof-texts, and hymn verses. The drill lesson should not consist in a mere mechanical repeating of the material to be studied, for mere repetition is not drill of the right kind. Teachers must supply a motive for the drill, so that the pupils feel a real need of mastery. Competition may be used, but still better is the appeal of the intrinsic beauty and value of the memory material and the reference to the need of the information studied for a full Christian life. Drill is used also in recapitulating and presenting new viewpoints. -The lecture method can be used only rarely in an ordinary Sunday-school. But for advanced classes and Sunday-school teachers' institutes it offers the advantages of a definite and systematic presentation of the lesson, an economy of time, and a certain attractiveness to such as wish to get certain information without much personal effort.

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Individual Class or Lesson Methods. (Part 2)

The conversational or cooperative methods include chiefly the following. There is the method of the cooperative recitation, or the question-and-answer method, which is arranged by the teacher to provoke discussion. By skilfully prepared questions the teacher sets the pupils to thinking and gets them to express their thoughts and then makes these the starting-point for further questions and discussion. This method presupposes at least a measure of information; for an empty mind will not be able to think and wild guesses on the part of pupils are hardly conducive to real learning. The province of this method is the organization of facts, chiefly in the upper departments. In the best form of this method the teacher will use a combination of recitation and discussion, so that real cooperation will result. Under the heading of the discussion method we should properly place the review lesson; for this is not to be a mere recitation, but should organize the material studied in a term or quarter in such a way as to present a new viewpoint or elicit additional applications of the information studied. -- A special form of the conversational method is the problem-project method, which is really a method presenting topics with a number of subdivisions, or subtopics. This is particularly valuable in Catechism instruction in the Senior Department, when the question "How can we prove the deity of Christ?" is worked out under the several headings of divine names, divine attributes, divine works, divine honor and glory, not, however, by merely consulting the explanation of the Catechism, but rather by finding proof-texts in various books Bible and building up the proof by cooperative searching. This method takes a fair pedagogical training. - A last method listed under conversational forms of teaching is the outline-discussion method. Here the teacher or the school furnishes typewritten, mimeographed, or printed sheets, and the class, with or without previous assignment study, proceeds to discuss the several parts of the lesson. This form of teaching is especially valuable in the post-confirmation age and for adults. The last group of methods is commonly known as the strictly functional lessons. If the problem-project method is used in such a way as to have the pupils of a class gather their own material, with only some guidance or direction on the part of the teacher, this method is very valuable. There are few ways of teaching which will exceed it in value in advanced Bible classes, since the students are thrown largely on their own resources. A still more advanced form of class teaching is the research method in which the teacher simply becomes the leader of a group of students who are together pursuing an investigation. The work is done either by individuals working alone or by groups, the latter form having a somewhat greater appeal to most students [pages 70-75]

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Equipment of the Sunday-School.

Most of our Sunday-schools are without the equipment required for effective teaching, the congregations being satisfied if they have some auditorium for the sessions of the school. But it should be the aim of every teaching staff to provide helps, especially for visual education. It is a well-known fact that the greater part of learning is done through the eyes, especially in early and middle childhood. A good many schools would benefit by the use of the sand-table in the Beginners' and the Primary division, especially if these departments have their own meeting-room. Certain supply-houses have models of the Tabernacle, of the various Temples of the Jews, of the furniture and other appointments of the Temple, of the furniture of Oriental houses, of agricultural implements, of military equipment, etc., all of which can be acquired in the course of time. The use of blackboards for every class in Sunday-school is almost essential if the teacher wishes to illustrate points in the story, draw diagrams or maps, and otherwise use visual instruction. Historical and natural-history charts may be obtained or made at slight cost, and they likewise make teaching much more effective for they are bound to arouse and maintain the interest of the pupils. A Sunday-school without maps of Bible lands will be missing one of the chief avenues of approach for the understanding of the text, since frequently the entire lesson will be without an appeal to the children if they cannot visualize the geography of the scenes.

Concerning the use of pictures in the Sunday-school a great deal could be said. It is true that very much of proper teaching is done through visualization. Therefore we use the best pictures, partly for motivation, partly for information, the idealistic pictures of Hofmann and Plockhorst as well as some of the more modern pictures, such as those of Leinweber. We also use scenes from the Holy Land, not only of places visited by Christ, but also of other scenes from the lands of the Bible. In the lower grades we make the psychological moment depicted in the picture the center around which we build up the story, drawing strongly on the imagination of the children. In the upper grades we use pictures chiefly for the purpose of illustrating important points in the lesson, also as a guide for children in reproducing the lesson. For the sake of the appreciation procedure it might be suggested that every Sunday-school room be provided with a number of standard-size picture-frames with removable backs. If copies of some of the great masterpieces of Biblical paintings will be obtained in the corresponding sizes and the pictures are changed in the frames from time to time, it will not only be possible to refer to these pictures in connection with the respective lessons, but such masterpieces may constantly be utilized for the appreciation procedure, to stimulate the esthetic sensibilities of the pupils [pages 75-77].

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Memorizing.

The recitation is largely a matter of memory work, and therefore it is of prime importance to teach the children the art of memorizing properly. This should not be done, as formerly, by short phrases or individual lines, but by larger units. If the piece which is to be memorized is first analyzed carefully by the teacher and the progress of thought correctly shown, a careful, thoughtful reading of the memory gem two or three times will usually fix the main points in the memory of the pupils. After this, repetition is the chief factor, -not mere mechanical repetition, but an intelligent recalling of the material, with purposeful endeavor properly guided by the teacher [pages 77-78].

Questions.

One of the hard things in teaching is that of the proper use of questions. Generally speaking, questions, according to their use, are divided into preparation questions, which call upon the memory of the child and arouse interest in a new subject; recitation questions, which test the retention of material; development questions, which lead to the organization of material and to the formulation of judgments; review questions, which are supposed to strengthen existing impressions and to suggest new viewpoints; testing, or examination, questions, which are to bring about relation and correlation of information gained; personal questions, which apply the information directly to the life of the pupils. But for all practical purposes we may divide questions into fact questions and thought questions. Fact questions are introduced with the particles who, which, what, when, etc. Thought questions are introduced with the words how, why, for what reason, for what purpose, etc. Fact questions are used almost exclusively in the case of little children. The use of thought questions will increase with the growing information of the children. The interrogative word should always be at or near the head of the sentence. Questions should be brief, not long; single, not double; clear and concise, dealing with essentials [pages 78-79].

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The recitation is largely a matter of memory work, and therefore it is of prime importance to teach the children the art of memorizing properly. This should not be done, as formerly, by short phrases or individual lines, but by larger units. If the piece which is to be memorized is first analyzed carefully by the teacher and the progress of thought correctly shown, a careful, thoughtful reading of the memory gem two or three times will usually fix the main points in the memory of the pupils. After this, repetition is the chief factor, -not mere mechanical repetition, but an intelligent recalling of the material, with purposeful endeavor properly guided by the teacher [pages 77-78].

Questions.

One of the hard things in teaching is that of the proper use of questions. Generally speaking, questions, according to their use, are divided into preparation questions, which call upon the memory of the child and arouse interest in a new subject; recitation questions, which test the retention of material; development questions, which lead to the organization of material and to the formulation of judgments; review questions, which are supposed to strengthen existing impressions and to suggest new viewpoints; testing, or examination, questions, which are to bring about relation and correlation of information gained; personal questions, which apply the information directly to the life of the pupils. But for all practical purposes we may divide questions into fact questions and thought questions. Fact questions are introduced with the particles who, which, what, when, etc. Thought questions are introduced with the words how, why, for what reason, for what purpose, etc. Fact questions are used almost exclusively in the case of little children. The use of thought questions will increase with the growing information of the children. The interrogative word should always be at or near the head of the sentence. Questions should be brief, not long; single, not double; clear and concise, dealing with essentials [pages 78-79].

"What Lutheran Sunday-School Teachers Should Know"

by Dr. P.E. Kretzmann

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Tests and Measurements.

Most Sunday-schools are satisfied if the children respond reasonably well to the ordinary questions, fact questions and thought questions, which are asked in connection with the story of the day and with the memory work. But it will be advisable at least for as many Sunday-school staffs as possible to study the questions of examinations, not only of the old-type essay review, but also of the new-type tests. Such tests take the form of true-false statements, of multiple-choice quotations, of completion examinations, of devices for matching statements in two or more columns. If we are keenly alive to the possibilities of Sunday-school work, we can easily make our teaching definitely worth while. The stimulus received by the children through such tests, the competitive appeal and the game approach, will tend to stir their energy and their eagerness to learn. The measurements in use in the modern schools are chiefly those connected with intelligence and achievement tests, and there are possibilities connected with this field of pedagogy which will bear investigation by wide-awake Sunday-school teachers [pages 79-80].

Reviews.

As for recitations and reviews, a short period of time in each lesson should be set aside for a recitation, which is to be most carefully prepared lest it become a mechanical performance. Sometimes only a few of the essential facts will be touched upon, and at other times it may be necessary to ask questions on practically the entire previous lesson. Review lessons are to be more than long recitations. To be most successful, they ought to take up some of the material of a series of lessons from a new viewpoint, or certain features from a number of lessons should be selected. Often it may be advisable to list such features in a column on the blackboard, thereby intensifying certain impressions pertaining to a series [page 80].

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