PERSPECTIVES IN COVENANT EDUCATION

ARTICLES

The Biblical Concept of Discipline
Prof. Robert D. Decker

Teaching Children with Learning Problems
Mrs. Jane Petersen

The Teaching of Science
From a Christian Viewpoint
Miss Marjorie Martin

Luther's Views on Education
Mr. Ronald Hanks

Teaching Responsibility
Mr. Janatio Quenca

Notebooks vs. Workbooks
Dr. Dayton Hobbs

FALL 1979
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Perspectives in Covenant Education is a journal regulated and published semi-annually, in September and March, by the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute. The purpose of this magazine, in most general terms, is to advance the cause of distinctively Christian education as it is conceived in the Protestant Reformed community. More specifically, the magazine is intended to serve as an encouragement and an inducement toward individual scholarship, and a medium for the development of distinctive principles and methods of teaching. The journal is meant to be a vehicle of communication: a vehicle of communication, not only within the profession, but within the Protestant Reformed community and within the Christian community in general.

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From The Editor's Desk

by Agatha Lubbers

With gratitude to our covenant-keeping God the Protestant Reformed Teacher's Institute begins its fifth year of producing Perspectives in Covenant Education. The magazine has been graciously received in the U.S.A., Australia, and England. We are happy for this interest in the cause of Christian education.

Were the copies of Perspectives to be bound into one volume it would now make a book of over 200 pages. This represents, therefore, a considerable effort on the part of teachers and other interested persons for the cause of Reformed Christian education as it is supported and provided by the members of the Protestant Reformed Churches of America.

The spring, 1979, issue of Perspectives reported that we have received approximately $2800.00 in gifts since Perspectives began to be published in October, 1975. Since last spring we have received an additional $154.00. We continue to need the support of interested persons and organizations who are willing to patronize this worthy effort. The cause of Reformed Christian education deserves such patronage.

In spite of the voluntary support and gifts of interested persons and organizations, it may be necessary for the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute to increase the subscription price. We would hesitate to do this, I am certain, but with escalating costs, it seems almost impossible to continue to publish the magazine and keep up with the rate of inflation without increasing the subscription price of the journal.
Concerning the Articles in This Issue

Rev. Robert D. Decker, professor of theology in the seminary of the Protestant Reformed Churches was one of two lecturers at the mini-course for teachers during August, 1979. The main topic of the mini-course was "Discipline in the Christian School." The article "The Biblical Concept of Discipline" was the lecture delivered this summer by Professor Decker to the participants in this mini-course.

Mrs. Jane Petersen has a broad experience in helping children with learning problems or disabilities. She shares her ideas and thoughts concerning the teaching of children with learning problems. Mrs. Petersen works in the area of "special education" at Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School.

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Miss Marjorie Martin gave us her impressions and thoughts on visiting Protestant Reformed Christian Schools in an article that appeared in the fall, 1978, issue of Perspectives. In the current issue she writes on "Teaching Science from a Christian Viewpoint." This is an aspect of curriculum that Miss Martin is qualified to discuss because of her prior teaching experience in Australia. Miss Martin is a graduate of Sydney University, Australia. She taught science in secondary schools and was for many years a lecturer in teachers' colleges where she was associated with the training of teachers of science.

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Mr. Ronald Hanko, 1979 graduate of the Protestant Reformed Seminary, does the readers of Perspectives and the cause of Christian education in the last decades of the twentieth century a singular service by summarizing the ideas of Martin Luther with regards to education. It is also fitting that in this Reformation month this article appears in Perspectives. It is all the more fitting and ironic too that the article appears in print during the month that Pope John Paul II, the Roman idol, tours the U.S.A., which is one of the last bastions of the Reformed faith in the Western Hemisphere. We commend this article to all our readers. It will demand study and careful reading but such study will bear a fruitful reward for yourself for your children, and for
the cause of Christian education. For our day the critique of Luther "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nations" is exceedingly beneficial and fitting.

"Oh, we handle these poor young people who are committed to us for training and instruction in the wrong way! We shall have to render a solemn account of our neglect to set the Word of God before them.... We do not see this pitiful evil, how today the young people of Christendom languish and perish miserably in our midst for want of the gospel, in which we ought to be giving them constant instruction and training."

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A short article reprinted from the Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School Highlights makes a very strong case for the teaching of responsibility. Mr. Ignatio Quenga, teacher of the third grade, writes an article that should be helpful for both the teachers and the parents of our covenant children.

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The last article this month is "The Case for Notebooks" and is a section of an article entitled "Notebooks vs. Workbooks." The article was written by Dr. Dayton Hobbs, editor of The Projector, an educational periodical published by Gospel Projects, Inc., Box 643, Milton, Florida, 32570. We quote a part of this article by permission. It appeared first in the October, 1975, issue of The Projector.
The Biblical Concept Of Discipline

by Prof. Robert D. Decker

This is certainly a timely and worthwhile subject. We live in an undisciplined society. Anything and everything goes and there are no restrictions. Much of the church, sad to say, goes right along with this. In its preaching today there is nothing sinful anymore and church discipline in many denominations is a relic of the past. Anything is acceptable in the pursuit of happiness and pleasure which is to say anything is acceptable in the pursuit of the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. This is true in the sphere of education as well. The watchword in education today is "self expression". The child must be allowed to develop without correction or restraint or even guidance. The child must be free to express himself. All this has effected us too, I fear, perhaps more than we realize or care to admit. Our children today, or so it seems to me, are not as disciplined as they were a generation or two ago. The fault lies partly in the home (probably primarily) but partly in the school as well. We simply do not discipline our children as consistently and strictly as we ought. For these reasons it's good for us to examine the Scriptures and be reminded of what discipline is. Doing this we shall be able to apply the principles practically. Our covenant children and the schools will benefit immeasurably, and the name of God will be honored and praised on our account. We propose to do this under five headings:

I. The Idea of Discipline
II. The Necessity of Discipline
III. The Authority of Discipline
IV. The Motive and Characteristics of Discipline
V. The Aim of Discipline

I. The Idea of Discipline

Scripture has a good deal to say about discipline and I wish to call your attention to several passages. The first is Proverbs 13:24: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth betimes." Notice that the text prescribes the use of the rod. This is not to be taken figuratively but literally.
Chastening is not sparing the rod. Notice too, that discipline is motivated by love, the love of God. Sparing the rod is evidence of hatred. The one who loves his son will chasten him from time to time. And, note that discipline is not punishment, a negative reaction to wrongdoing. But discipline is correction or chastening.

The second passage we wish to examine is Proverbs 19:18: "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." The term, chasten, in this text is rather strong. It means to correct by blows or strikes, to chastise. It also has the meaning of 'to correct by words'. Hence, the idea conveyed is to admonish, exhort, instruct, teach by blows or words. There is hope for the child while he is young according to this verse. That means there is hope while he is yet under our care. That hope is based on the promise of God: "I will be thy God and the God of thy seed after thee." Therefore we must not spare for his crying, but must chasten him, correct him by both blows and words.

The third passage is Proverbs 22:15: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of the child; but the rod of correction will drive it far from him." This text speaks of the necessity of discipline: foolishness is bound in the heart of a child. This is not just a natural foolishness, a lack of experience, or simply immaturity. This is true enough. But the text means spiritual foolishness: the lack of ability to see and understand reality and live in harmony with reality and reality is God as revealed in Jesus Christ. And that is deep-seated and it affects the whole life of the child for it's bound in the heart of a child, the very core of his being out of which are all the issues of life. This is the depravity of the child's sinful nature. We must remember this too. Our children, the ones in our homes and classrooms have foolishness bound in their very heart. Discipline is spoken of in terms of the "rod of correction". And again, notice, discipline is not punishment, but correction. And it has the positive fruit that it drives that foolishness far from the child.

The fourth passage is Proverbs 23:13, 14: "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell." Again notice that discipline according to this text is correction and the use of the rod. This is not harmful to the child at all. Some people think it is. They think that the use of the rod will damage the child, harm his personality, or frustrate him. This simply is not true according to Scripture, not even when one beats his child with the rod. The plain word of God is: "withhold
not correction, use the rod." Positively, the proper application of discipline delivers the child's soul from hell, it saves him. Finally, let us note that here as elsewhere Scripture calls for the use of the rod, corporal chastisement.

The fifth passage is Proverbs 29:15, 17: "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame...Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." Discipline is spoken of in terms of: "the rod", "reproof", and "correction". All three of these obviously imply sin as that which needs the correcting. The fruit of that correction is wisdom. Wisdom is the very opposite of foolishness. Wisdom is the knowledge of and adaption to reality, the knowledge of reality and the will and the ability to live in harmony with that reality. Reality is God in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. That is the fruit of the rod and reproof. The opposite is no rod or reproof: "leaving the child to himself." This is precisely what modern-day "self-expression" in education advocates. One cannot help but be impressed with the fact that Scripture is remarkably up-to-date. That yields shame to the child's mother. And note this is an unalterable rule of the Word of God. Leave a child to himself, fail to reprove and correct him with the rod and shame will be brought to his mother inevitably.

From the New Testament we cite Ephesians 6:4: "And ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The terms used in this text are important. The verb, "bring up", means to nourish up to maturity and it refers to the whole process of rearing the child from birth to maturity. "Nurture" is rather broad in scope. It too, refers to the entire process of training children, the cultivation of mind and morals and it employs for that purpose: commands, admonitions, reproof. It can also mean instruction which aims at the increase of virtue. Finally, it can also mean chastening or discipline or training by discipline. The term, "admonition", means to warn, reprove, exhort. And again this is necessitated by sin. The child must be warned against disobedience and an evil walk of life. When that child falls into sin he must be reproved. Discipline, therefore, according to this text involves chastening and admonition; it includes reproof and correction and that certainly involves the use of the rod. But discipline also involves positive "bringing up" and "nurture". This means that discipline is more than a negative reaction to wrongdoing. It is that, but it is more than that. Discipline, positively, is a process
that includes the molding and preparing of a child for his place in
God's kingdom. Its opposite is provoking the child to wrath,
which is, making him angry. (Cf. Colossians 3:21: "Fathers
provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.")
That is bad, very bad for then we discourage and frustrate the
child and the implication is that we are unjust.

Finally we call attention to Hebrews 12:4-11: "Ye have not
yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have
forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto
children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord,
nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord
loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he
receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with
sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if
ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are
ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of
our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall
we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and
live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own
pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his
holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be
joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the
peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised
thereby." It is perfectly clear that this passage does not refer to
the chastening of children by parents, but to the chastening of
the people of God by their heavenly Father. Nevertheless,
even if only by implication, it has a good deal to say concerning our
subject. In the way that our Father disciplines or chastens us we
must discipline or chasten our children. God's chastening of His
children is the pattern which we must follow in the discipline of
our children. There are several important principles taught in this
passage which must govern us in the discipline of our children.
The Lord chastens those whom He loves. Chastening, therefore,
is proof or evidence of sonship and the love of God. God does not
chasten those whom He hates. He punishes these, but He does
not chasten or discipline them. If, therefore, one is without
chastisement he is illegitimate, he is not a true son of God. This
certainly and emphatically means that the discipline of the
children of the covenant must be motivated by the love of God.
One must never discipline out of a desire of revenge or out of
unholy anger and certainly not out of hatred of the child. We
must chasten the children out of the love of God and that love of
God always seeks the child's eternal welfare, his salvation. God
chastens us out of His love and for our profit. The purpose of that chastening is that we might be partakers (sharers) of His holiness. His chastening yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. This must be our aim. We discipline the children in order that they might be righteous and holy. Holiness is separation from sin and consecration to God. Righteousness is meeting God's standard (law) and doing His will as expressed in His Word. With that in view, out of the love of God, we chasten the children in the same way that God chastens His spiritual children.

If we take these passages together we gain some kind of idea of what discipline is. But in order to do that we must first know who and what the child is. The child is first of all, an image-bearer of God. He has been created in the image and after the likeness of God so that he is able to bear that image and so that he possesses true knowledge of God, righteousness, and holiness. In the second place, as image-bearer, the child is also office bearer before God. He has been anointed a prophet to know God and to speak God's praises. He is priest consecrated in the service of God. And he is king appointed to rule over the works of God's hands. In the third place, as image-bearer, office bearer the child is fallen into sin. He has an evil nature, what the Bible calls the flesh or the old man of sin. According to that nature he is totally depraved and incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil. We must never forget that. Those children with whom we deal every day are depraved, and sinful. Foolishness is bound in their very hearts.

Still more, those children have a small beginning of the new obedience in Christ. By grace and on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus Christ they have been redeemed from sin and death. They have been made citizens of the kingdom of heaven. Thus they have a small beginning of the new obedience or of the life of Christ in them. Even though that remains a small beginning, the child does, according to the Heidelberg Catechism: "...with sincere resolution begin to live, not only according to some, but all the commandments of God." (Lord's Day 44). This factor is terribly important for the understanding of the child and with respect to the discipline of the child. There is a constant tension within the child, a struggle between the old and the new man. It is the same fierce battle so vividly described by the apostle in Romans 7. Apart from an understanding of that one simply cannot discipline the child effectively and properly. He needs
understanding; patient, consistent, loving correction and encouragement to walk in obedience to the will of God.

In sum, what all this means is the child is a child of God’s covenant: “For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:39). He belongs to the heritage of the Lord according to Psalm 127. This means that that child is very precious in God’s sight. He is bought with the precious blood of Christ. That child is a lamb of God’s beloved flock. We must certainly never forget that. When we discipline, train, teach the children, we must remember they are God’s children! They must be handled with extreme care.

This brings us to the question what is the discipline of the child according to Scripture? It is not merely a negative reaction to incidents of wrongdoing. It is not something which we occasionally apply as necessity arises. We tend to think of discipline in those terms. The child does something wrong so we react appropriately. He must write lines, remain after school, etc. That becomes discipline in our mind. That’s part of it but there’s much more to discipline than that. Neither is discipline punishment. That needs to be stressed. We rather commonly speak that way, but we must not talk of discipline as punishment. All of the punishment which we deserve for our sin was borne by our Lord Jesus Christ Who said on the cross: “It is finished.” There is no more punishment for the child of God. God tries us and He chastens us (Hebrews 12) but God never punishes us. God punishes the wicked and that means He destroys them. We must not, therefore, punish the lambs of God’s flock. We must discipline them or chasten them, apply the rod of correction to them, but we may not punish them.

Positively the Bible speaks of discipline in terms of: chastening, correction, nurture, admonition. And that certainly involves reacting to evildoing on the part of the child. Scripture enjoins the use of the rod of correction to drive the foolishness out of the child’s heart. But it’s more than that. It is really a process which involves the child in the whole of his life. We may define discipline as: that process by which the child of God’s covenant is molded and prepared to take his place in God’s kingdom. This means that the child is molded according to the will of God. And the will of God is expressed in His Word and summed in His law. Discipline aims at bringing the child into conformity with the law of liberty so that he is free to love the Lord his God with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength and the
neighbor as himself. Hence, when the child transgresses that law he must be chastened, admonished and even corrected with the rod at times. He must be brought back from his evil way. At all times he must be admonished to live in obedience to the will of God as a citizen of His kingdom. He must be patiently instructed and carefully guided in the right way.

II. The Necessity of Discipline

The necessity of discipline is widely denied by the world's educators. There are various theories of child development set forth by the world. Two are worthy of note. There is the view of Rousseau. According to his view the child is predetermined by his very constitution, like plants and animals, to a progressive development quite independent of artificial aid. Rousseau, therefore, condemns the exercise of any discipline at all. Quite similar is the view which maintains that the child is autonomous, a law unto himself. There is no authority higher than man himself. This is the basic presupposition of American democracy with its "consent of the governed" and "will of the majority". Man is free, independent, he may direct his world (Microcosmos) according to his own will. Man is free to make his own decisions and choices and seek his own purposes and satisfy his own desires. All of this he does according to his own free will. The only qualification to this freedom is that no man may interfere with the rights and privileges of his fellow man. What a man does must not harm his fellows. Hence, it is wrong to cheat, steal, kill, etc. All this goes by various tags. Ethically it is the new morality or sexual revolution. Theologically it is essentially Pelagianism (man is not depraved but only becomes such by imitation or habit) and its child, Arminianism (free-willism). Or it is liberalism which teaches doing good to one's fellows by following the example of the good man Jesus.

These ideas permeate the thinking and life of the world. They serve as the foundational principle of the world's education. They determine, moreover, the world's notion of discipline. Operating out of the presupposition of the inherent goodness of the child there really is no room for discipline. Teachers ought interfere as little as possible with the native tendencies and desires of the child. The teacher must consult his wishes, respect his rights, issue no commands, but only make kind requests. The teacher must require no obedience to external authority. He must strive to promote independent thought and action on the part of the child (self-expression). The teacher must reason with the
child, gently advise, provide a good environment for learning, and encourage the child to appreciate what is truly good, right, and beautiful. An example carried to the extreme of this kind of thinking is cited by Dr. James Dobson in his book, Dare to Discipline, pp. 100-102: "Not everyone recognizes the importance of control in the classroom. In a widely publicized book entitled Summerhill, the author, A.S. Neill describes his supervision of an English school where discipline is virtually non-existent. The resident students at Summerhill are not required to get out of bed in the morning, or attend classes, complete assignments, take baths, or even wear clothes. Neill's philosophy is the antithesis of everything I have found worthwhile in the training of children; his misunderstanding of discipline and authority is complete and absolute. His brand of permissive absurdity gave birth to the social disasters we now face with our young. Listed below are the elements of Neill's philosophy which are particularly incriminating.

"1. Adults, says Neill, have no right to insist on obedience from their children. Attempts to make the youngsters obey are merely designed to satisfy the adult's desire for power. There is no excuse for imposing parental wishes on children. They must be free. The best home situation is one where parents and children are perfect equals. A child should be required to do nothing until he chooses to do so. (This viewpoint is implemented at Summerhill, where the complete absence of authority is evident. Neill goes to great length to show the students that he is one of them — not their superior.)

"2. Children must not be asked to work at all until they reach 18 years of age. Parents should not even require them to help with small errands or assist with the chores. We insult them by making them do our menial tasks; Neill actually stressed the importance of withholding responsibility from the child.

"3. Religion should not be taught to children. The only reason religion exists in society is to release the false guilt it has generated over sexual matters. Our concept of God, heaven, hell, and sin are based on myths. Enlightened generations of the future will reject traditional religion.

"4. Punishment of any kind is strictly forbidden according to Neill's philosophy. A parent who spanks his child actually hates him, and his desire to hurt the child results from his own unsatisfied sex life. At Summerhill, one student broke seventeen windows without receiving so much as a verbal reprimand.

"5. Adolescence should be told sexual promiscuity is not a
moral issue at all. At Summerhill, premarital intercourse is not
sanctioned only because Neill fears the consequences of public
indignation. He and members of his staff have gone nude to
eliminate sexual curiosity. He predicted that the adolescents of
tomorrow would find a more healthy existence through an
unrestricted sex life.

"6. No pornographic books or material should be withheld
from the child. Neill indicated that he would buy filthy literature
for any of his students who wished to have it. This, he feels,
would cure their prurient interest — without harming the child.

"7. Children should not be required to say "thank you" or
"please" to their parents. Further, they should not even be
encouraged to do so.

"8. Rewarding a child for good behavior is degrading and
demoralizing practice. It is an unfair form of coercion.

"9. Neill considered books to be insignificant in a school.
Education should consist largely of work with clay, paint, tools,
and various forms of drama. Learning is not without value, but it
should come after play.

"10. Even if a child fails in school, the matter should never
be mentioned by his parents. The child's activities are strictly his
business.

"11. Neill's philosophy, in brief, is as follows: eliminate all
authority; let the child grow without outside interference; don't
instruct him; don’t force anything on him.

"If A.S. Neill had been the only proponent of this destructive
viewpoint, it would not have been worthy of our concern. To the
contrary, he represents an entire area, dominated by the
neo-Freudians who reigned during the 1950's and early 1960's.
The painful impact of those years will not soon fade. Most of the
values held tightly by the 'now' generation were implanted
during the period I have described. Please note how many of the
following elements of the new morality can be traced to the
permissive viewpoint represented by Neill: God is dead;
immorality is wonderful; nudity is noble; irresponsibility is
groovy; disrespect and irreverence are fashionable; unpopular
laws are to be disobeyed; violence is an acceptable vehicle for
bringing change (as were childhood tantrums); authority is evil;
everyone over thirty is stupid, pleasure is paramount; diligence is
distasteful. These beliefs have been the direct contribution of the
anti-disciplinarians who delicately fused an enormous time bomb
in the generation they controlled. The relationship between
permissive philosophies and adolescent militancy is too striking
to be coincidental. Passive young people did not suddenly become violent. Self-centered petulance did not erupt spontaneously in America's young adults; it was cultivated and nurtured through the excesses and indulgences of the tender years. Selfishness, greed, impatience, and irresponsibility were allowed to flower and bloom in the name of childhood 'freedom'. This great misguided movement was perhaps the most unsuccessful social experiment in history, and yet its influence is still far from dead in our schools and homes.” This, as Dobson points out, has had a devastating effect on American education for such evil roots as these are bound to bear evil fruit. It produced the chaos of the 60's, the rebellious youth, the hippy, and the unbelievable immorality. So devastating are these results that there are some even in the world who are beginning to call for some kind of discipline.

Scripture is perfectly clear on the necessity of discipline. In the first place, God commands it! God says: correct the child, bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; God says: spare not the rod. For that reason we must discipline the children of God's covenant. We may not allow them to follow their own heads, so to speak. We must correct them when they transgress God's law. And we must keep them in the way of obedience. We must do that simply because God commands us to do it.

In the second place, the necessity lies in the child, in his depravity. As we have already noted the child has foolishness bound in his heart. By nature he is totally depraved. According to his sinful flesh he cannot do the good and is inclined to all evil. He has but a small beginning of the new obedience in Christ. We must recognize, therefore, two facts about our children. The child does not have this obedience by nature: “The profoundly tragic element is that true faith is not by nature present.” (T. Vander Kooy, The Distinctive Features of the Christian School, p. 68). The natural inclination is to transgress God’s law. The child is by nature prone to hate God and the neighbor. (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord’s Day 2). But there is the principle of regeneration in the heart of the child. God has performed His work of grace in the child and this means there is a God-created receptivity within the child for the Word of God. This remains, however, always a small beginning. Therefore in our children there remains daily sin. In fact, there are sins peculiar to children. David prayed: “Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions.” (Psalm 25:7) The Apostle Paul warned
Timothy to “flee youthful lusts.” (II Timothy 2:22) Then, too, children are particularly vulnerable to temptation just because they are immature in the faith. They lack experience in the battle of faith.

Parents and teachers must recognize these facts. Our children are depraved and have but a small beginning and for that reason need discipline, strictly and consistently applied. They do not need to be evangelized for they are God’s children. But they must be disciplined in the Lord’s service, nurtured and admonished in the fear of God. They need to learn how to serve their King and walk in the way of His ordinances. And that small beginning at the same time is reason for hope! That’s the point of contact, that God created receptivity for the Word. We have every right to believe that our discipline will bear fruit, yielding obedience in the child to the glory of God.

III. The Authority of Discipline

The authority of discipline does not lie in the church. That is the position of Rome and the Lutherans. Our schools are not parochial. Nor does authority reside in the state as in public education in America. In public education the state determines who shall be taught, when they shall be taught, by whom they shall be taught, how they shall be taught, and what they shall be taught. This is obviously a radical departure from the Word of God. As we have already seen this is founded on the principle that man is autonomous, a law unto himself. There is no higher authority than man. Out of this flow the principles: “the consent of the governed” and “the will of the majority.” Man is free, independent, he may direct his own world and make his own choices according to his own free will. The only qualification is that he may not interfere with the right and privileges of his fellows. All of this stands in defiance of God’s sovereign authority.

The authority to discipline is God’s! God gives to covenant parents the authority to govern their children. God gives them those children, His heritage, in His mercy. God calls those parents, assigns them the task and awesome responsibility of training those children in His fear. God also qualifies covenant parents to do that. God gives the grace, the wisdom, the understanding, the love, the patience to discipline those children in harmony with His Word. God therefore, commands parents whom He calls and qualified: train those children, correct them, nurture them and admonish them in My fear and in the way of
My commandments. This means parents may not discipline their children arbitrarily or according to whim or fancy. They are responsible to God for all the discipline of their children and must correct them according to the Word of God.

Teachers exercise that same authority. They do so by virtue of the fact that they stand in loco parentis, in the place of the parent. What is true of the parent is true of the teachers. God calls them to the task and qualifies them for the work. The teacher, therefore, as the servant of the parents has the right to discipline and demand compliance to the will of God from God Himself through the parents. In one word, the teacher has divine authority in the classroom. This most certainly means the teacher together with the parents is responsible to God for the care and discipline of those children. He may not discipline according to whim or fancy. He may not demand compliance with his own desires. But he must demand obedience to the will of God as expressed in His Word and law. But, standing in the place of the parents with divine authority the teacher has the right to expect obedience and the children must obey for God's sake.

IV. The Motive and Characteristics of Discipline

The motive of discipline is not just a desire for good control. The teacher must have this and I sometimes fear it is somewhat lacking. But there is much more. Nor is the motive just to create the proper environment for learning. Again, this is highly necessary, but there is more. Nor is it merely to form proper behavior patterns.

The Christian teacher must be motivated by the love of God, he disciplines out of the love of God. This is absolutely necessary. The Dutch educator, Jan Waterink, put it well when he said, "Without this inner tie (love) authority becomes tyranny! Consequently, no sooner does parental authority become disassociated from parental love in the consciousness of the child, or separated from the love which the child has for the parent, then the authority begins to miscarry. And the parents will have to understand and put this into practice every day... Conversely love can never be detached from authority, if so authority becomes coddling, indulging the whims and wishes of the child." (Basic Concepts in Christian Pedagogy, pp. 58, 59) This is Scriptural. Hebrews 12 teaches that God chastens (disciplines) those whom He loves and scourges every son whom He receives. That pattern we must follow. Out of that same love we must discipline the children of God's covenant. This means we seek the child's
welfare in our discipline, his eternal salvation. We seek to deliver his soul from hell and to drive foolishness out of his heart. As a beloved child of God’s covenant, precious in God’s sight, we seek to lead him in the way of God’s commandments. Failure to discipline according to the Word, to admonish and correct, to apply the rod can only lead to the child’s detriment and can only be an evidence of hatred, not love.

The first characteristic of true discipline must be a cheerful, pleasant atmosphere or environment in the classroom. In this connection Vander Kooy emphasizes that all one-sided severity must be avoided. All frigid, rigid, codes must be avoided. The teacher must not add rule upon rule, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. The point is the child must not be forced or coerced into proper behavior. All of this is not to say there must be no rules. God’s law which is the rule for Christian’s life of gratitude must be strictly enforced. But that must be within a pleasant, cheerful, relaxed environment. The child will respond obediently to one-sided severity, but out of fear. This is only outward obedience and this must not be in the Christian school for God requires obedience from the heart. The difference between one-sided severity and proper discipline in the right environment lies along the fine line of the difference between compulsion and impulsion. The child after all, is a lamb of Jesus. That lamb must be led, not driven. He must be gently borne not forced. He must be talked with not shouted at. In this connection Vander Kooy offers this warning to the Christian teacher: “Especially let him not resort to crude sarcasm and cruel unfeeling ridicule; amongst Christians in the sphere of the covenant and when dealing with the lambs of Christ’s flock these qualities are altogether out of place.” (The Distinctive Features of the Christian School, p. 75) This is not just private opinion or theory. This is Biblical. Scripture teaches us that it is joy to do the will of God. In fact there is no greater joy than in doing God’s will. And that is not fear of reprisal nor mere outward conformity to external authority, but the joy of obedience from the heart to the will of God. That joy must be clearly evident in the covenant teacher, for this provides the pleasant, cheerful environment so necessary for the classroom.

The second characteristic of the discipline must be the godly example of the teacher. The teacher must himself be an example of godliness both within and outside the classroom. A certain Nicolas Beets (quoted by Vander Kooy in his, The Distinctive Features of the Christian School, p. 72) captured the sense
perfectly when he said: "If you want your children to be good, be no hypocrite." This means all intentional and forced unnaturalness must be avoided. The teacher must not with holy whine and haughty tone lord it over the children. Rather the righteousness, holiness, and obedience of Jesus Christ must be exemplified by the teacher. The implications of this are very serious. Children, perhaps more quickly than adults, are perceptive of inconsistency. They quickly spot inconsistencies in the lives of their parents and superiors. The inevitable result is that children lose respect for and confidence in that parent or teacher. And once the parent or teacher has lost that it is very, very difficult, if not impossible, to win it back.

In close connection with the above, fairness must prevail in all the teacher's handling of the children. All arbitrariness must be avoided. This means that the teacher must treat all his pupils alike. He may show no favoritism for there is no room for partiality in the covenant school. This too, is founded on solid Biblical principle. God is no respecter of persons. He is absolutely and perfectly just in all His dealings with us. This same impartiality, fairness, must be reflected in the teacher especially in his classroom. Secondly, this means the teacher must be fair in the chastening of the child. The child must know that the chastening is deserved, made necessary by his sinful behavior. He must be told what he did wrong, how he transgressed God's law, and why the chastisement. The discipline must fit both the crime and the criminal. It is terribly important but difficult to circumscribe this point. One must know the child involved and be blessed with a goodly measure of sanctified common sense.

V. The Aim of Christian Discipline

The aim of Christian discipline differs radically from the world's aim. American education is governed by pragmatism. Waterink correctly observes: "This radically effects the aim or goal of education. Obviously, the doctrine of pragmatism in the United States, the essential character of which is expressed by the statement that the only good education is the one which is useful, and that the only useful thing is for a man to make himself useful in society both to himself and the community, also fails to recognize a normative education in principle." (Basic Concepts in Christian Pedagogy, p. 11) Education must be useful and useful is that which benefits the individual and the community. Hence the aim of the world's education is the
production of useful citizens, useful to themselves and to the community, for the common good or the public welfare. There is, therefore, no normative education. There is no discipline, no forming, molding, shaping, correcting. Education consists of guiding the child in the development of his natural tendencies. Education must remove the obstacles to the effective development of these tendencies. The child must be inspired to free, uninhibited self-expression. That some of this pragmatism has rubbed off on our children is evident from such questions as: "Why do I have to take this course? What good will it do me?" or "I'll never use this."

The aim of discipline according to Scripture is quite different. Hebrews 12 speaks of the Lord's chastening us. That chastening as we have seen is discipline. The fruit of that chastening is righteousness. God chastens us, moreover, to make us partakers of His holiness. This must be the aim or purpose of the discipline of the children of God's covenant. That they may be righteous, i.e., conform to the standard of God's law. That they may be holy, i.e., separated from sin and consecrated in all of life to the service of God.

Therefore our aim is not just outward obedience, a mere conformity to certain rules, a kind of coerced response. Our aim is a mature child of God who walks in new obedience. This obligation is placed upon the child by his baptism: "Whereas in all covenants there are contained two parts, therefore, are we by God through baptism admonished of and obliged unto new obedience; namely, that we cleave to this one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that we trust in Him and love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a new and godly life." (Form for Baptism) The teacher in loco parentis must hold this sacred obligation before the covenant child. This must live in his consciousness. The child is obligated to submit to the will of God in school, at home, in all of his life. He must recognize God's will and law as it affects every sphere of life and human endeavor. He must be disciplined in order to regulate his higher life, work, recreation, church, marriage, and home according to the Word of God. In this the child must be taught to recognize his own sin and sinful nature which renders everything impossible apart from the grace of God in Christ Jesus. This is the life of new obedience, the life of faith. All of our discipline must aim at this goal. The fruit of this will be the mature man of God thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
This must govern us in all of our teachings. Teachers must make the child aware of this truth, conscious of his calling.

Finally, this new obedience must be obvious in the life of the teacher himself. It is incumbent upon us that as teachers we be examples to the covenant children entrusted to our care. Our lives must be worthy of emulation by the children. This is our lofty calling, our high privilege, our awesome responsibility. Let us, therefore, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, implore His grace, for by that grace alone can we perform this holy task. To this end may God be with us and help us for the blessing of the cause of His covenant and the glory of His Name!
Teaching Children
With Learning Problems

by Jane Petersen

It has been my privilege for more than ten years to teach Covenant children with learning problems. During the past few years it has become increasingly evident to many that it is our obligation to teach all the children God has given us.

Children with learning problems can be divided into two groups, the learning disabled and the slow learners.

A learning disability has been described thus:

"A learning disability is a problem in one or more areas of learning. It can be a specific school subject, like math, reading or language. It can be a whole learning area such as problems in learning things through seeing them or hearing them. While we may not know the cause, we know that it is not mental retardation, poor sight, bad hearing, or emotional problems." 1

Each day the number of children with learning disabilities grows larger. They often are children of the middle class from culturally enriched homes and have average or above average intelligence.

The slow learner, on the other hand, has been described thus:

"The slow learner is typically the child who obtains an I.Q. score from 80-90 and whose functioning in academic areas is from one to two years behind grade level." 2

These children can be helped in a variety of ways. In larger schools they are commonly helped in the resource room or remedial room. However, many of the methods employed in these specialized settings can be used in the classroom.

In helping, one must first understand the child and his problems. Too often he is tolerated rather than welcomed. Further, before he can be helped the child must first understand himself, and must be willing to admit to himself and others that a
It is of critical importance that parents understand the child's problems, limitations, and capabilities. The greatest disservice that parents can do for a child with learning problems is to refuse to accept the problem. The child knows there are problems. The other children in the class also realize that problems exist. As Christian parents we certainly must be willing to accept the children that God has given us as they have been given not as we think they should have been. To pretend that real and obvious problems do not exist is to make additional problems for the child. The child who feels that his parents are disappointed in him because he is not as other children is often thrust into a cruel cycle of failures, the scars of which last for life.

The teacher must accept the fact that in a class of thirty children many differences arise. All the children will not be able to fit a certain rigid predetermined standard. One cannot expect uniform performance of the lot. It is easy for a teacher to sit back and say a student is lazy, or doesn't care, and it may be true. Another possibility, however, is that these characteristics developed as a defense mechanism when the student found out that no one seemed to understand him or cared about helping him.

After the proper learning climate has been established, the child's strengths and weaknesses should be evaluated. There are many diagnostic tools that can be used. However, one of the best methods of evaluation is the classroom teacher. She can observe the child while he is reading. What happens when the child is confronted with a new word? Does he stop and refuse to respond? Or does he look at the beginning of the word and guess at the rest of it? Does he try to sound out the word or perhaps look at the word's configuration? Once the teacher has decided on her plan of action she must share these plans with her student. Even the youngest child wants to know what must be accomplished and what is expected of him.

Unfortunately all children with similar problems will not achieve success with the same materials. A child may continue to fail and lack motivation unless the teacher finds the proper teaching techniques and materials. In my classroom I have one group of children from fifth through eighth grade who have been very successful in working together. Some of my students are excellent oral readers but are poor in comprehension. When they are paired with a student who reads haltingly but comprehends well, excellent team work can result. The teacher should select
materials, then, that meet the students' individual needs. Many materials have been designed for specific learning problems. These materials need not involve a large outlay of money if the teacher has the time to make them.

Learning packets are excellent tools for the child with learning problems. The packet should have simple directions, be colorful, involve movement and provide immediate feedback.

Games or tools can be made by the students. Many junior high students still have trouble following directions. I hope to work in a combination reading, science, and art project by having the students make electric boards. These completed boards provide an interesting way to review various concepts. Once the actual boards are made, the teacher can make a variety of programs for them.

A word of caution is needed here. One must be careful that the student is not pushed ahead too fast. It is a temptation for a teacher to move on to another area too quickly. Even though a student has reached success in an area, he should review it so that he will permanently retain that knowledge.

When working with children having learning problems, a routine is especially necessary. Students should know what their schedule is, so that this schedule will soon become a routine for them.

The cause for many reading problems can be traced to a visual problem. Some misunderstanding between the school and the parents can have its roots in this problem. Most schools have regular vision screening. This fact may make matters even worse. The type of test that is usually given proves that the child is or is not nearsighted. Often the fact that a student has passed such a test makes parents or teacher judge that the student does not have a vision problem and that poor performance is a result of laziness or lack of motivation.

Fisher says, "Of the hundred children referred to me because of problems in reading, almost 90 percent suffer from a visual problem. Most of these problem readers score well on the Snellen test." 3

All children with learning problems should have a complete eye test. This should include tests of the following: acuity — farsighted and nearsighted, binocular fussion — alignment of both eyes, convergence — the movement of eyes together in unison, fixation — eye movement in reading, pursuit of fixations — the ability to follow moving targets, and form perception. If the student has difficulty with any of these eye functions and
corrective steps are not taken, he will probably experience frustration during reading class. A thorough eye test is the first step in diagnosing a reading problem.

When dealing with children in the first and second grade, reading success should not be confused with strong visual memory. It is possible for a child to develop an adequate sight vocabulary and be classified as a good reader. Suddenly, when he gets to the third grade, he finds it impossible to memorize all the new words and his troubles begin. The result is often that the child is called lazy or the teacher is classified as being "too hard".

I have discussed some of the problems of our students. However, there are a number of children who are not in one of our own schools. We have made a start but there are still many areas where we do not provide for our children. Where I teach we have an estimate of from fifteen to twenty children who must rely on the public schools for their education. The pressing need seems to be in the field of educable mentally retarded. These children have strong convictions and become very upset when they are forced into situations contrary to their religious beliefs. It has been my experience that the Lord who has given to these children simple minds has also endowed them with deep spiritual faith and trust in Him.

Each time we make room in our schools for another group of handicapped children we come a little closer to our goal to teach all our children.


When I give my children into the care of a schoolmaster, it is not my intention that the child is to look to the schoolmaster forever; nor do I expect the teacher to make him rich but only that he will teach and bring up my son well.''

"Sermons on the Gospel of John"
-Martin Luther
"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth forth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Psalm 19:1, 2. All creation proclaims and clearly displays the glory, the might and majesty of Almighty God, its Creator. The people of God are ‘‘to hear,’’ to see, to contemplate and then to worship and bow down before Him, the Creator of heaven and earth, the omnipotent, infinitely wise and perfect Lord of all. Also, since creation so reveals the power and Godhead of its Maker, man is without excuse, if he does not acknowledge God as the Creator and sovereign Ruler, especially when he is investigating creation, as he does in his science. Romans 1:20. The teaching of science, also, which, in essence, is the declaring of the works of the Lord in His creation, should magnify His holy name and be to His praise.

How vital and responsible a task, is that of science teaching in a Christian school, for the student is to see the Lord’s glory in his studies and be inspired to use the knowledge, insights and skills he gains for serving and glorifying God in his life.

First and foremost it must be stated, that it is God’s revelation in His word, the Scriptures, which is the source of all knowledge and wisdom and all science must be viewed and taught in the light of Scripture. For it is only in this light, that the nature of creation can be known and God’s people can wisely observe the works of creation and thereby, being enriched, praise their Maker.

In considering science education from a Christian approach, it is desirable to treat the nature of science itself, true science as opposed to ‘‘science’’ falsely so-called (I Timothy 6:20), the limitations of scientific method, science and scripture, the scriptural framework or foundation for science study and types of knowledge to be studied. Then consideration will be given to the goals of science education and method of teaching to be used to achieve these goals by the science teacher.

The natural sciences are being considered here. The term science may be understood to mean, ....a systematized body of knowledge acquired by scientific investigation; and often to refer
to the activity or process of investigation itself as well. Scientific knowledge is knowledge which is obtained in a particular way; by investigation which necessarily involves exact observation, using man's senses of sight, hearing, etc. The knowledge is systematized into hypotheses (tentative answers) theories and laws. Scientific knowledge then, is knowledge based on observation and experiment. It is therefore knowledge of the physical nature of the universe, its components and the processes which occur therein, which can be observed by man's senses or extensions of those senses by instruments, e.g. microscopes; for only physical phenomena can be so observed. Scientific knowledge, also is built upon observations which must be reproducible, showing like causes producing like effects. True science involves knowledge, not inference or speculation.

We might think, in simple terms, of knowledge, as chiefly awareness of facts, and wisdom, as dealing with the interpretation and explanation of these facts. All true knowledge and wisdom will conform to the truth, God's word, the Scriptures. True science will always be in accordance with Scripture; for in Jesus Christ, the living Word of God "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" Colossians 2:3, and He is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Also true scientific knowledge will accord with Scripture, as God is the author of His written revelation in Scripture and of reality, His creation. The Bible contains the principles on which Science is rightly built.

Science is a human activity limited by human capacity and frame of mind. It is a series of human descriptions and explanations of the universe which change as more is learned. 1 Such knowledge is fallible and limited, for man is limited in ability and if not regenerated by God, is totally depraved as well, and indeed, unless scientific activity is carried out by God's people, for His glory, it is a sinful activity. 2

The purpose of science should be the exercise of dominion by man over creation under God. We read in Genesis 1:28-30, the creation ordinance or "cultural mandate" was given to man when he walked uprightly with God. "Be fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it....", all for the glory of God. Then, because of the fall, this cannot be followed apart from a man being redeemed by Christ.

Man was originally created after the image of God in holiness and righteousness, in true knowledge of God and in covenant relationship to Him and to be His friend servant. He was to be king over the earthly creation; to have dominion over
the beasts of the field, over the fowls of the air and over the fish of the sea. The "cultural urge" to subdue the world to himself was created in him. This was to glorify God, the Creator, in the midst of and through the earthly creation; to reign under God, in His name, in His will and for His glory. 3 Though at the fall, man became totally depraved, he did not change in essence, such as in his relation to the world, so he still has the cultural urge and is still lord of the earthly creation. For His own purposes God maintained all things essentially as He created them. So sinful man still strives to develop and subdue all things to himself, but he has lost much of his original power and light. 4

But his relationship to God has changed. He died spiritually. His light became darkness. The image of God changed to the opposite. He became an enemy of God, a slave of sin, he still works the creation, he can still discover the laws of God in the world and subject all things unto himself; but no longer in the service of God. Indeed he is now the servant of the devil and he is subject to corruption and death and so is the work he does. 5

Scientific activity, involves following the cultural mandate, but as it is performed (in most cases) in the service of the devil, by fallen man, it is evil. For the source of the activity is not faith in Christ and the goal is not the glory of God. 6 But the products of the science and the scientific knowledge are not evil e.g. computers or a discovery of how God upholds and governs His creation. Many are the gifts of God to us through the unbeliever. 7 The Christian must use the products and the scientific knowledge to the glory of God, this needing wisdom and discernment, only obtained from God's word.

Creation is for the elect i.e. we may use it and enjoy it, live in it and work with it, in such a way that we rule it under Christ and to His glory. 8 So the Christian can use the products and knowledge of science, be scientists and study science. All must be devoted to God and done in consecration to Him. 9

The method used by science, the scientific method, is a legitimate tool in the investigation of facts as long as its limitations are recognized. 10 This method can only be used to study physical phenomena and events, as these only are observable, and with present processes, which alone are reproducible. Science cannot speak, for instance, concerning origins of the universe; of the world, animals, plants and man. It cannot tell us how these began, as no man was there to observe what happened. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth." Job 38:4. When scientists try to explain origins by
science alone, they step outside the bounds of science into the
domain of philosophy and religion. Evolution is a philosophy,
rather a belief, not science. Scientific method can study the
products of creation, but not the process of creation itself. 11

_The scientific method is restricted in its scope, as it can only
deal with a limited area of reality_ (i.e. present physical
phenomena). It cannot deal with spiritual realities at all; with
moral and ethical aspects, value judgments, etc.

Events which occurred in recent history, which were
observed and studied by scientists, may be included in science.
Scientific method is based upon various assumptions which
determine and govern its use. Also it cannot be used without bias
and prejudice and is influenced by the beliefs of the scientist.

It is only in Scripture that true knowledge is revealed. _The
Christian is truly blest, as he has true knowledge revealed to him,
by God’s Spirit, through the Scriptures_. He can discern. He can
learn the formal knowledge of science and when this is in
harmony with the truth of God’s word, sees this as a beautiful
God-honoring whole. _From the pinnacle of Scripture he can
survey the world of reality_. The unregenerate man has not lost all
the knowledge of God. He can, through things that are made,
know that there is a sovereign God of the universe who ought to
be served; however, even this truth, limited as it is, he willingly
and consciously corrupts. 12 He has “changed the truth of God
into a lie and worshipped and served the creature more than the
Creator.” Romans 1:18ff, and there we read of God’s just dealing
with such.

Indeed in these last days, we see the results of the using of
scientific method alone, as a source of knowledge and therefore
in the service of the devil. We see that “knowledge has
increased.” Daniel 12:4. _There has been an explosion of scientific
knowledge and its implementation in technology_. In this
Atomic-Space Age we have atomic reactors, space vehicles and
stations, computers, etc. There have been remarkable develop­
ments in atomic research, space technology and exploration, in
molecular biology, genetics and in the field of medicine, etc. So
great has been the impact of science on our lives that many have
come to “worship” science, giving it the prestige and power of a
new divinity. Nothing seems impossible for science to achieve
according to many. God, who controls everything, has allowed
man to acquire this knowledge and bring about this remarkable
technology. Man, of course, creates nothing. He merely
manipulates what is already in existence, utilizing the matter and
forces God created and preserves, and man can do nothing except as God permits. *The Lord God omnipotent reigneth and all He wills, and only what He wills comes about.* "He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Ephesians 1:11.

There is much *false science* today. "Profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so-called." I Timothy 6:20. False science is any science which is in conflict with Scripture. Evolutionism and other atheistic philosophies are not science. They are not only non-scientific, but also are Satanic.

*The Bible speaks with authority on every subject with which it deals.* It is not a scientific textbook, in the sense, that it gives technical data and formulations; but it is a book of science, in that it is accurate in the many parts which deal with natural phenomena. 13 The Bible is always right. Statements based on scientific observations may be either right or wrong. The Bible gives us knowledge in the light of which, only, we can interpret creation. *It is essential to understand fundamental doctrines of scripture*, to interpret scientific studies aright. 14 So we find in God’s word and only there a framework or foundation, 15 on which the study of the physical world must be built. In fact, the first words of the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" is the foundational statement of science. God, by His omnipotent will and by His word, called all into existence and He is the Almighty Creator and Governor of His creation.

*A Biblical framework for the study of science*, will now be considered, being itemized for brevity.

1. The triune, personal, infinite, self-existent Creator reigneth forever. 16
2. Creation was by God’s sovereign will and decree and it is revelatory in nature. 17
3. God created all things by His almighty word in the six days of creation week. All was very good.
4. God created all things by and unto Jesus Christ, the Firstborn of every creature. "By Him and for Him were all things created." Colossians 1:14-17.
5. God created plants and animals "after their own kind," able to multiply "after their own kind" only. I Cor. 15:39.
6. God created man in His own image, in righteousness, holiness, and knowledge of God 18 to be a friend servant to God, his Sovereign, as a king and steward of creation. 19 Man is a personal, rational and moral being.
7. Man is distinct from animals and is a special creature of
8. God is the Possessor of creation. He is the lawgiver in all the universe and ordains all ordinances for His creatures.

9. God sovereignly governs and preserves all according to His predetermined plan.

10. It is God's purpose to unite all things in Christ as the glorious head of all creation and of His Church, and to preserve and perfect His covenant and everlasting kingdom.

11. Therefore the government of God "guides the organic whole of creation unto the final glory of the new heavens and the new earth, to the glory of God's covenant and to His eternal tabernacle which will be with men; while through the same government the reprobate element falls away to become ripe for desolation." 

12. The fall of man in sin and consequent death, physical and spiritual. Man lost the image of God. He is totally depraved (unless redeemed by Christ).

13. Man was separated from God and with him the whole creation was separated from God and fell under the curse. The curse had a marked effect on every creature and creation as a whole. There is turmoil and confusion, strife and warfare and only a remnant of the original organic unity. The creation now groans for deliverance from the bondage of corruption. Romans 8:27.

14. There is no operation of God's providence apart from sin and grace, wrath and love, election and reprobation.

15. The Creator is also the Redeemer and He made all things with a view to redemption with creation as the stage for the battle of sin and grace and with all things reconciled to God through the blood of the cross of Christ.

16. There is to be spiritual and physical restoration in a much higher sense, the removal of the curse and bondage of corruption and the perfecting of all things on the higher heavenly level of the new creation through and in Christ Jesus. This is in God's covenant of grace.

17. God's covenant of grace towards His people in Christ Jesus, means He loves His people and His creation. John 3:16 The "world" here being creation organically considered and the elect humanity in Christ in the center.

18. The image of God is restored in the elect and they are being sanctified to be in conformity to the image of His Son. Romans 8:29 God's Spirit is in the heart of His people. His...
tabernacle is with them.

19. God's covenant of grace in Christ extends to the brute creation and God establishes it with the earth and every living creature Genesis 9:9, 10.

20. The universal Flood was God's judgment on the sin and wickedness of men. The mighty rains and vast upheavals "All the fountains of the great deep" were "broken up" Genesis 7:11. The Flood killed all men, animals and most plants, except those in Noah's Ark. It seriously and profoundly changed the entire world. The earth that then was perished II Peter 3:6. God maintained His covenant, preserving His people in the Ark.

21. The temporal judgments God (no wrath of God for God's people) are seen in plagues, earthquakes, disasters, droughts, disease, suffering, etc. There is "an increase in the force and effect of the curse" and "always new manifestations of it." The world is going deeper into corruption and death till the end.

22. The final judgment by fire, II Peter 3:7, 10, on the day of the Lord's return, when the very elements will burn and perish and there will be the final realization of the wonder of grace with the establishment of the eternal covenant of friendship with His people and in the new heavens and the new earth.

The Christian in studying science, in studying creation, in this Scriptural framework can rightly interpret what he observes. Creation is a revelation, a word, a book, God has given for us to read, but it must be read in agreement with the book of Scripture, His spoken word. In so doing, what can the Christian see in creation? The created universe is the personal expression of its Creator, God. It speaks the praise, beauty and glory of its Maker. It manifests His godhead; His omnipotence and infinite wisdom. It reveals that He is incomprehensive, immutable, infinitely perfect, holy, just and faithful to His word.

The creatures manifest their creaturehood and their dependence on God and we see the government of God and His preservation of His universe, by the functioning of His laws therein. Each creature fulfils the law of God for it and we see its purpose in creation as a whole; and the interdependence of the parts of creation, showing the original organic unity in creation. Plants are the bridge between the inorganic and organic creation and unite the two in a wondrous whole. Plants
make food for all creatures, using inorganic materials from the air and soil. From plants also come textiles, lumber, fibres, fuels, medicines, dyes and many other products, and also beauty to behold; through the most marvelous process of photosynthesis and other processes in the green leaf. Every green leaf is a wonder of creation and makes His glory known!

The faithfulness of our covenant Father is seen in His supply to His people of food and all their physical needs and from His word, we know, all our needs physical and spiritual will always be supplied Phillipians 4:19. How great should our thankfulness be!

Wondrous beyond description is God's creation! The vastness of the universe, the minuteness of the atom cannot be grasped by our limited minds! The marvelous order, the remarkable and exquisite design of all His creatures and the great beauty in creation; makes us exclaim "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in heaven and the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all." I Chronicles 29:11.

Let us look at one of the myriads of examples we might give of God's infinite power. The earth is of enormous weight, estimated at about $6588 \times 10^3$ tons and it is whirling about its axis at the incredible speed of 1000 miles an hour and at the same time it travels in orbit around the sun at more than 1100 miles a minute! Can you comprehend this speed? What stupendous forces and vast energy are required to impel this ponderous mass at such velocity! And Jupiter requires a force of about 150 times greater to impel it in orbit around the sun for the same distance, and a vast force also is needed to impel Saturn 90 times the mass of the earth, though moving more slowly in orbit at 22,000 miles per hour, but carrying along with it several stupendous rings and 11 moons. And this rapid motion has been going on for 6,000 years since creation, without slowing down or deviation from their course. The idea of the strength and power implied in the impulsion of such enormous masses of matter through vast tracts of space, overwhelm our powers of astonishment and awe causing us to exclaim "Who is strong like unto Thee?" "Thy, right hand, O Lord is become glorious in power." "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Remember, too, there are vast numbers of suns and planets, in millions of galaxies many far bigger than ours, moving at immense speeds. We cannot begin to conceive of the stupendous forces in incessant operation in the vast empire of the Almighty!
And wonderful to know, this omnipotent sovereign Jehovah is the covenant Father of His people and keeps them in intimate friendship with Himself, through Christ Jesus! Surely such contemplation of creation arouses adoration for Him and humility before Him in our hearts! What wonder and excellence in creation, how much more in the Creator! We should always ascend from the creature to the Creator! Such beauty in creation, should make us delight more in Him who made such beauty for us to behold? Is their beauty in a rose? What beauty then in Christ, the Rose of Sharon? (Song of Solomon 2:1)? Is their treasure in the earth? What of Christ, in whom are hid all treasures. Colossians 11:3? If their is provision and comfort here, so much more in God. 38 "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Psalm 124:8. In learning about creation we should love and reverence our Lord more and more fully consecrate our lives to Him. All we have is from God. Let us honor our Maker, obey Him and live to Him. Let us walk humbly before Him, seeking His grace to make us holy and fully restore His image in us.

The Christian in studying creation perceives these glories by the work of grace in his heart. Saving knowledge of God, true knowledge, cannot come through studying creation. 39 Scripture alone is the source of this knowledge. Creation is limited as a revelation of the knowledge of God, but in the light of Scripture, it is a wonderful book.

The Christian sees creation "as the science of the drama of sin and grace enacted according to God's eternal purpose and sovereignly controlled by Him." 40 He perceives and understands the effects of the curse in the universe, such as disease-producing bacteria, viruses, and other parasites, pests, noxious weeds, earthquakes, deserts, disorder, decay and death, etc. He sees the extent of the manifestations of the curse increasing, with increase in the temporal judgments of God, in these last days. He can see the drastic, earth-shattering effects of the Flood, in much of the structure of the earth today and in the great numbers of fossils from creatures drowned and buried then. So he recognizes the horror of sin, the holiness and justice of God and His righteous wrath against sin, but also the grace of the Covenant God in preserving His people in the Ark.

Joy of joy! The Christian sees signs of grace in creation. As said before, the excellency, beauty and wonder he sees, speaks of the glory of the Redeemer, and he recognizes our Covenant Father's faithfulness and "tastes of the lovingkindness of the
Lord which is better than life.' He sees signs that there is life from death and a recurring witness to the hope and promise of victory over sin and death in such events, as the morning light after darkness, springtime after winter, the butterfly from the chrysalis, the harvest from the seed, etc. He sees the image of the heavenly and foresees in creation better and heavenly things to come in the creation of the new heaven and the new earth. 41

It will be apparent, that the knowledge a regenerate man learns in science, is different to that which an unregenerate man acquires. We can identify two types of knowledge involved. One is empirical or formal knowledge; this is knowledge obtained solely by scientific methods and concerned with physical aspects e.g. size, weight, structure, etc. This type of knowledge can be understood by the Christian and non-Christian alike; but the Christian acquires and understands as well, what we call, "transcendent" knowledge, which includes the spiritual dimensions of a phenomenon. Both aspects constitute reality, so only, the Christian can see the total picture and have knowledge of reality.

Professor Hanko speaks of "transcendent knowledge" as being: "the knowledge of creation which involves not only the intellect, but also the will and the heart, which sees and understands the creation, not merely as an aggregate of facts, but as the handiwork of God, which leads to a deep sense of humility before the majesty of the most High." 42

Examples of this knowledge and the effects of this knowledge have been given in the last few pages. Transcendent knowledge sees each phenomenon (object or event) as it stands in relationship to God, its Maker and Sustainer and this is its most fundamental and basic relationship. Each phenomenon is a creature of God and dependent on Him for its continued existence and integrity. Its qualities were designed by God for the purpose He has for it. So each object or process has a beauty and aptness in its design as it speaks of the glory of its Creator and is a wonder in itself as it fulfils its created purpose. Teleology plays an important part in science teaching, as it is a study of purposiveness and design and the Christian should see God's creative purpose for a phenomenon and see how it was designed to serve that purpose.

Transcendent knowledge also includes statements, as to ways phenomena illustrate Scriptural truths and principles, such as were given earlier in the Scriptural framework, and also, often statements about the attributes of God, as displayed by the
phenomena. Since the Bible is full of descriptions of the visible creation, some of these references should be included in science lessons.

*Formal knowledge* is essential, of course. This gives us the physical features, design, structure, etc., the work of God in making and preserving the phenomenon. *Most of science study is of formal knowledge, but transcendent knowledge should be taught with it,* as often as is appropriate as both constitute reality. When obtaining formal knowledge, care must be taken to sift out the wickedness sometimes associated with these facts. For example, we read that coal was made by the decomposition of plant material buried and subjected to great pressure. This is acceptable, but when we are told it formed millions of years ago, this latter is false and evil. (The Flood was the true cause.)

Let us illustrate again some combining of formal and transcendent knowledge. The child of God readily recognizes that the human body is "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14, as he sees each part of the body is marvelously structured so as to perform its function, as designed by God. Of course, the body as a whole is the part of the man of God which houses his soul, it is, in his case, "the temple of the Holy Spirit" I Corinthians 6:19, and enables him to live and serve his Creator here and will be raised again in the resurrection, "in incorruption as his heavenly body." I Corinthians 15:42. Let us briefly consider one or two structures in the human body indicating its created purpose and wondrous design.

The pair of kidneys in the body, weigh about five ounces each and each is about the size of a closed fist and contains more than one million tiny filtering units called nephrons. These have coiled tubes or tubules which, if stretched out in one long line, would measure something like 70 miles! The marvelous and exquisite design of each of these filtering units serves the purpose of filtering off waste materials from the blood and is concerned with maintaining the chemical balance of the blood; which must be precise, otherwise ill-health and death results. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." Leviticus 17:11. The great length of the tubules provides extensive surface area for the efficient reabsorption and diffusion which occur through their walls.

In the case of the blood circulatory system, whereby food and materials and oxygen in solution are transported in vessels (arteries, veins and capillaries) so as to reach the trillions of body cells and bring back wastes to the lungs and kidneys, the total
length of these vessels has been estimated as something like 60,000 miles! And what a wonderful pump is the heart, the most powerful organ in the body, weighing about 12 ounces and pumping everyday more than 1,800 gallons of blood through these miles of blood vessels to nourish the trillions of cells! The flow of the blood in the vessels is very rapid taking about one minute to flow through the entire body. The heart pumps in perpetual rhythm about 75 gallons of blood through the body every hour with about 70 strokes or beats a minute, which is about 100,000 beats everyday and so life is sustained. Surely man, with all his being, should praise his Maker and humble himself in awe and reverence. When teaching the topic "blood" there should be appropriate reference to the fact that there could be no "remission of sins" without the shedding of blood and to the atonement and its inestimable significance and inexpressible wonder.

There is wonder upon wonder in studying all aspects of creation, even the most commonplace being wondrous, such as a grain of sand, which, on closer examination, is seen to have a lovely crystalline structure and which consists of millions of atoms. Each atom itself is composed mostly of space, and also of even more minute particles.

The infinite wisdom and power of God pervade every portion of the universe. Indeed science is full of the study of wonders. Everywhere is the hand of the Designer seen! Great is the Lord and greatly is He to be praised!

In this article, general, but important background material relative to the teaching of science in a Christian framework, has been considered. Treatment of goals and practical implementation in classroom teaching must await a further article. A few points will be briefly treated.

1. A **Goal of science** study for a Christian student would be, for him to grow in the praise and reverence of God. Study of creation can cause him "to come to a greater appreciation of the infinite and splendid wonders of the power and majesty of the Most High" 45 and to humble himself in adoration and awe before God. He is also to use the scientific knowledge and skills he acquires in the service of God, exercising stewardship over these and his talents for the Lord's glory.

2. **The status of the Bible is primary** in science lessons and it should pervade the whole atmosphere, Scripture flowing in and out of discussion and at times the focal point. 46 The student must see that true science never conflicts with
the Scriptures.

3. Prior to seeing and observing is the conceptual framework that governs what is seen. Seeing is believing, but believing is also seeing. There is need for the Scriptural framework of science studies, to be explicitly treated at the commencement of science courses especially at Junior and Senior High level; in terms appropriate to the student's level. There should be continual reference to the Scriptural framework throughout science courses.

4. Formal and transcendent knowledge should be taught. Strategic references to the equally real and spiritual aspects, as well as the empirical should be given.

5. Science should be so taught that the concept of creation (and creaturehood) and providential guidance of God is a necessary part of what we teach.

6. The science teacher needs to be an efficient teacher and to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." II Timothy 2:15. He needs to arouse and maintain the interested participation of his students; to have a stimulative teaching manner; and to describe phenomena with interest. Continual and careful forethought is needed as to the effective explanation of difficult concepts. A science teacher should be an inspiring teacher and should evince enthusiasm in the subject and the lesson.

7. Science lessons at Junior and Senior High require a good amount of demonstration and practical activity. To see the design and beauty of an object, the object should be seen, a picture in a book is a substitute only; quite often real materials and experiments should be observed. This necessitates that the teacher have periods free for the preparation of materials, apparatus, etc., which is a much time consuming activity and that the laboratory be vacant for a suitable number of periods, so he can have access to the room to prepare for practical classes.

8. In the classroom there needs to be not only a good intellectual climate, but also, one that is uplifting spiritually. The science teacher's attitude should exhibit a love for the Lord and His handiwork and a sanctified interest in the work on hand. His prime goal in his teaching is the glory of God and the spiritual welfare of his students. He is to uphold the Lord's Name before the student, continually highlighting His divinity and power and other attributes. What a great
responsibility! How very demanding is the work of the science teacher, but how great are the responsibilities for the enoblement of his students by his labors! His teaching, with God blessing his efforts and prayers can lead to the expanding of the capacity of his students' minds, and the enlargement of their conception of God, and he can inspire them to a greater reverence and love for their Lord and an increase in self-consecration to Him. How vital and precious, therefore, is work that can play such a part in the edifying of members of "the body of Christ"!

1. Ream, p. 12.
2. Engelsma, p. 56.
5. Ibid, p. 10.
7. Ibid, p. 56.
8. Ibid, p. 53.
14. Engelsma, p. 27.
17. Ibid, p. 56.
27. Hoeksema, H.C., p. 31 and Engelsma, p. 53.
29. Engelsma, p. 53.
33. Ream, p. 33.
34. Ibid, p. 41.
37. Ibid, p. 93.
38. Watson, T., p. 82.
43. Rehwinkel, p. 248.
44. Ibid, p. 246.
46. Engelsma, p. 25.

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Luther's Views
On Education

by Ron Hanko

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Education in Europe before the Reformation
The Middle Ages are also for the history of education the "dark ages." This does not mean, of course, that education was completely forgotten, for as Painter says in the historical introduction to his book on Luther's educational views, "The dark ages must not be made too dark. While ignorance prevailed in large measure, it was not universal." ¹ But education, as well as almost everything else was subjected to a very great extent to the interests of the Church of Rome. And so what education there
was "was stamped with a theological character that fettered it for ages." 2 Popular education as we know it today was not only not to be found but was discouraged by Rome.

All education was geared to the preparation of the clergy and therefore any kind of a liberal arts education was simply unheard of. To quote Painter once again:

... the papacy is not favorable to the education of the masses. It seeks above all things absolute obedience on the part of its adherents. Intelligence among the laity is recognized as a dangerous possession; for it ministers to their independence in thinking and makes them more critical of the teaching imposed upon them by priestly authority. Any activity displayed by the Papacy in popular education is forced by the existence of Protestant schools. ³

And so during the Middle Ages education declined under the heavy hand of Rome.

The principal means of obtaining an education in the Middle Ages was the monastic school. These generally taught the seven liberal arts as divided into the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic) and the quadrivium (music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy). But these were all studied with the interests of the church in mind as the following quote from Rabanus Maurus clearly shows:

Arithmetic is important on account of the secrets contained in the numbers; the Scriptures also encourage its study, since they speak of numbers and measures. Geometry is necessary because in Scripture circles of all kinds occur in the building of the ark and Solomon's temple. Music and astronomy are required in connection with divine service, which cannot be celebrated with dignity and decency without music, nor on fixed and definite days without astronomy. ⁴

And so only a very minimal knowledge could be obtained of the principles of these sciences.

A slightly broader curriculum was offered by the cathedral schools but in these the religious element was even more prominent as they were designed chiefly for candidates for the priesthood. ⁵ So also the chantry or parochial schools, though meant for the laity, were primarily catechetical and were set up to prepare the layman for church membership by acquainting him with the liturgy and doctrine of the church.

The only alternative to a religious education was the guild school. But these were simply vocational schools run by the
various merchantile guilds to prepare the children of guild members for their respective trades. And all of these schools, including the guild schools "were directly or indirectly under the domination of ecclesiastical authorities committed to the theological system of the church." 6 Even the great universities were given over to scholasticism and the picking over of the dry, bare bones of inane and tedious "theological" questions.

The development of humanism in the fifteenth century did little to change the situation though it professed to be hostile to the educational system of Rome. The Romish Church simply absorbed the movement and though some changes were made in curriculum and in methods of educating, and though there was a general revival of learning in Europe, the humanist movement was simply not enough. There was no education available for the common people, and education in general was not highly esteemed.

This all is not to say that there were not good schools available and that the layman could in no case receive an education. An example of the opposite case is the system of schools established by the Brethren of the Common Life in the Lowlands. But generally on account of the aforementioned and other factors the quality of education in Europe was so poor at the time of the Reformation that Luther himself was moved to say:

"It is perfectly true that if the universities and monasteries were to continue as they have been in the past and there were no other place available where youth could study and live, then I could wish that no boy would ever study at all, but just remain dumb." 7

And again:

"Is it not evident that we are now able to prepare a boy in three years, so that at the age of fifteen or eighteen he will know more than all the universities and monasteries have known before? Indeed, what have men been learning till now in the universities and monasteries except to become asses, blockheads, and numbskulls?" 8

The Impact of the Reformation on Education

The Reformation marks the beginning of a new emphasis on popular education. In fact, the basic principles of the Reformation necessitate and encourage education. For example, that great Reformation principle of Sola Scriptura — that the Scriptures are the only rule for faith and life — involved the placing of the Bible in the hands of the laity and so also the necessity of teaching
them all to read and write. Likewise the closely related principle of the priesthood of all believers meant that each member of the church had to be thoroughly educated in order to fulfil his duties as God's representative and servant in the world and in the Church. And so it has been ever since that the churches of the Reformation, at least in the days of their strength, have put much emphasis on thorough, Scriptural education.

But this emphasis was not always carried through to reality, for as Brandt says in his introduction to Luther's address "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," "The impact of the events of the early sixteenth century on Germany was by no means favorable to schools and education." And so we find the paradoxical situation in Germany especially at the beginning of the sixteenth century that there was a serious decline in education:

...the growing lack of interest in the higher education (was) reflected in the general decline of the number of students attending the secondary schools and the universities during this period. During the five years, 1521-25, the number of those matriculating at Wittenberg University sank from 245 in the former year to 171 in the latter (note; this compared with 579 in 1520). This decline is, in fact apparent in all the German universities, and in some it was more marked than at Wittenberg. In the case of Leipzig, for instance, the number sank from 339 to 102, of Cologne from 251 to 120, of Freibourg from 171 to 22. In 1526 only 9 students matriculated at Rostock compared with 118 in 1521, whilst teaching at Greifswald was suspended between 1524 and 1539 for lack of students. There were many reasons for this decline:

Its factors were economic as well as religious. Begging, for instance, had hitherto been recognized as a legitimate means of subsistence for students, even in those who belonged to well-to-do families, as well as for the monastic orders. As the reform ordinances of Wittenberg and elsewhere show, one of the effects of the evangelical movement was to discredit the practice and create a more healthy self-respect in the rising generation, as against this demeaning form of charity. The prospect of securing a living, in the form of an ecclesiastical prebend, as the result of a university education had further lost its attraction for those who had forsworn the Pope and all his works. In any case the secularization of ecclesiastical property threatened to dry up this source of income for the needy scholar. Moreover, the changing economic conditions of the age were tending to foster a more material and practical view of life. And expanding commerce was
offering a more alluring prospect for the enterprising youth, who, as Bucer deplores, were more concerned with the quest of wealth than the things of the Spirit.\textsuperscript{11}

Likewise the common people argued that:

If as the reformers contended, many of the current doctrines and practices of the church were erroneous and dangerous to salvation, surely parents ought not to send their children to schools where these doctrines were inculcated.\textsuperscript{12}

But a more serious problem arose out of a misunderstanding of the principles of the Reformation.

When Luther preached the spiritual priesthood of all believers, some took it to mean that no formal training was necessary as a preparation for the priesthood. Others went even further, holding that God speaks directly to the human heart; there must be an inner word supplementing the written word. This inner word, this prompting of the Holy Spirit within, wholly independent of any formal education, makes it possible to understand the written word. For this reason Karlstadt and Munzer were opposed to learning of any kind, even declaring it to be sinful and devilish.\textsuperscript{13}

And so we find the reformers speaking out very sharply against the current trend and emphasizing the need for thorough, scripturally grounded instruction for all those who professed the truth of the Reformation.

\textit{Luther's Place in the History of Education}

Luther stood at the front of the battle against this anti-education attitude. He wrote and preached against those who deprecated all education, especially in his two treatises, "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools,"\textsuperscript{14} and "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School."\textsuperscript{15} The former which argues for the establishment and maintenance of schools has been called, "the charter of the German gymnasia (high schools),"\textsuperscript{16} while the latter treatise which urges the use of schools thus established "was intended to furnish preachers with arguments that could be used to persuade people to provide their sons with an education."\textsuperscript{17} Though these are most important, his writings are filled with references to almost every aspect of education, and all together show his great and lasting interest in this important aspect of life.

But as Plass says, his concern was not pedantic but arose out
of his own thorough training:

Luther was also well acquainted with church history and exercised his independence of judgment on many of its persons and passages. He had received a very thorough training in logic, nor had general psychology, mathematics — which he disliked — astronomy, the theory of music, philosophy, and political and domestic economy been neglected. His course of study was, in fact broader than the course required today of a well-educated man. 18

And so he did much to revive and reorganize the educational system of Germany. Painter sums up his legacy to the cause of popular education thus:

Luther contributed in various ways to the advancement of education, and in this respect, as in many others, he rises high above all his contemporaries. With his usual penetration, he perceived at once the obligation and necessity of maintaining schools, and with powerful words urged this duty upon parents, cities, and princes. He pointed out the glaring defects of the schools of the time, and indicated improvements in both studies and methods. For religious instruction, which he made prominent, he wrote a catechism which, after the lapse of more than three centuries, has not been superseded in the large body of Protestants bearing his name. In cooperation with Melanchthon, he drew up plans for primary and secondary schools, and from the University of Wittenberg sent forth many enlightened and successful teachers. He pointed out with great clearness the fundamental truths, upon which all state and religious education must rest. If he did not emphasize education for its own sake, it was because his practical mind was absorbed by the pressing needs of the time. Unfortunately, as often happens with great reformers, he was not fully understood by the men of his age; and this fact, in connection with the religious wars that followed after his death, prevented his ideas from being fully realized in practice. But even for the advanced pedagogy of to-day his writings contain many useful lessons. 19

Luther’s Views on Education

As is abundantly evident from his writings, Luther was interested in education, but especially as it concerned the whole cause of the Reformation and so as MacKinnon says, “The supreme end of education is for him the furtherance of the gospel as revealed in the Word, and the building up of Christian character as the indispensable and the incomparable foundation of the higher moral and spiritual life.” 20 Luther himself says in this connection:
Above and elsewhere I have written much about the schools, urging firmness and diligence in caring for them. Although they may be viewed as something external and pagan, inasmuch as they instruct boys in languages and arts, they are nevertheless extremely necessary. For if we fail to train pupils, we will not have pastors and preachers very long — as we are finding out. The school must supply the church with persons who can be made apostles, evangelists, and prophets; that is, preachers, pastors, and rulers, in addition to other people needed throughout the world, such as chancellors, councilors, secretaries, and the like men who can also lend a hand with the temporal government. 21

The goal of education, therefore, is the well-being of the church:

When schools flourish, things go well and the church is secure. Let us make more doctors and masters. The youth is the church's nursery and fountainhead. When we are dead, where are others (to take our place) if there are no schools. They are the preservers of the church. 22

* * * * *

When schools prosper the church remains righteous and her doctrine pure.... Young pupils and students are the seed and source of the church.... For the sake of the church we must have and maintain Christian schools. They may not appear attractive, but they are useful and necessary. 23

For Luther, then, the chief goal of education was the training of ministers and teachers and all instruction had to be directed to that end first of all:

...the schools must be second in importance only to the church, for in them young preachers and pastors are trained, and from them emerge those who replace the ones who die. 24

In connection with this, the whole first part of his "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School" is devoted to an argument that only through the means of good schools and good instruction will there be preachers and ministers for the church. Without the schools, the church also suffers.

But all this does not mean that the only kind of education Luther was interested in was seminary education. In reference to Luther's Address "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," MacKinnon says:

Though Luther's motive in penning it was mainly the interest
of the evangelical movement, he does not overlook the material well-being of the nation or the value of education as a good in itself. He strove to advance thereby the national interest and to raise the national reputation in the face of the charge of barbarism and grossness with which the Italians besmirched it, and which, though exaggerated, he regards as sufficiently well founded. 25

Luther himself says that the temporal well-being of the state was dependent on good education.

Now if (as we have assumed) there were no souls, and there were no need at all of schools and languages for the sake of the Scripture and of God, this one consideration alone would be sufficient to justify the establishment everywhere of the very best schools for both boys and girls, namely, that in order to maintain its temporal estate outwardly the world must have good and capable men and women, men able to rule well over land and people, women able to manage the household and train children and servants aright. 26

A city's best and greatest welfare, safety, and strength consist rather in its having many able, learned, wise, honorable, and well-educated citizens. 27

And so the last part of his "Sermon on Keeping Children in School" is devoted to the temporal or worldly profit and loss which one has from the support or neglect of the schools.

But Luther realized too, that also for the well-being of the church Christian education must produce more than pastors and teachers:

By what I have said I do not want to insist that every man must train his child for this office, for not all boys must become pastors, preachers and school-masters.... Beside them, indeed, other boys ought also to study, even though they are not so clever, and ought to learn to understand, write, and read Latin; for it is not only highly learned Doctors and Masters of Holy Scripture that we need,... in a good building we must have not only hewn facings, but also backing-stone; so we must have sacristans and other persons, who serve and help the preachers and the Word of God. 28

He believed very strongly that the man of God ought to be thoroughly furnished unto all good works, and saw clearly that good and sound education was the means to reach that goal. As we have seen, he deplored the idea that parents should keep their children from school simply in order that they might earn a
living. He argued that a good education was the best way of preparing the layman as well as the clergyman for his place in the church. Education, then, is never an end in itself but always a means, as he says; "The young folks in particular cannot be trained to the kingdom of God but through the schools." 29

But when Luther spoke of "good and sound" education, he meant instruction that is thoroughly grounded in the Scriptures: He says:

I would advise no one to send his child where the Holy Scriptures are not supreme.... I greatly fear that the universities, unless they teach the Holy Scriptures diligently and impress them on the young students, are wide gates to hell. 30

* * * * *

True it is that human wisdom and the liberal arts are noble gifts of God, good and useful for all kinds of things, wherefore one cannot do without them in this life. But they can never thoroughly tell us what sin and righteousness are in the eyes of God, how we can get rid of sins, become pious and just before God, and pass from death into life. Wisdom divine and an art supreme are required for this; and one does not find them in the books of any jurist or worldly-wise person, but in the Bible alone, which is the Holy Spirit's Book. 31

He "believed that the truly educated man is religious and that only the religious man is truly educated." 32

He, therefore, at length and with consummate skill argued the case for popular education. And he meant that all children ought to receive, at least up to a certain age, a thorough, biblically based instruction, and that included girls as well as boys.

Above all the foremost reading for everybody, both in the universities and in the schools, should be Holy Scriptures — and for the younger boys, the Gospels. And would to God that every town had a girl's school as well, where the girls would be taught the gospel for an hour every day in German or in Latin.... Is it not only right that every Christian man know the entire holy gospel by the age of nine or ten? Does he not derive his name and his life from the gospel? 33

So, then, the heart of Christian education, the doctrine of "sainthood through obedience to God's commands" must by means of good instruction be impressed upon the youth "who are the seedbed of the church" in order that "they may learn that
they must stand firmly and remain where God speaks, and that
they may accustom themselves to those obligations which are
commanded by God,'" 34 as he says in a lecture on Genesis
22:19.

Again, this does not mean that he depreciated a liberal arts
education, but it does mean that he believed that even the
teaching of the liberal arts must be "Christian education."’ Indeed, as the following quote shows and as we shall see again
later when we look at his views concerning curriculum, Luther
believed that the liberal arts were a necessary and desirable part
of the education of the Christian man.

From this it follows that the fine liberal arts, invented and brought
to light by learned and outstanding people — even though those
people were heathen — are serviceable and useful to people for
this life. Moreover, they are creations and noble, precious gifts of
this Man (who is Lord over everything). He has used them and still
uses them according to His good pleasure, for the praise, honor,
and glory of His holy name. 35

On account of these things he enjoins upon parents the
proper instruction of children as a divine requirement:

He has not given you children and the means to support them,
only that you may do with them as you please; or train them for
worldly glory. You have been earnestly commanded to raise them
for God's service, or be completely rooted out, with your children
and everything else; then everything that you have spent on them
will be lost. The first commandment says, "I visit the iniquities of
the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation
of them that hate me." 36

And he emphasizes that this is required of parents:

...He has entrusted His Word to parents, as Moses often declares:
"Tell your children these things." 37

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The third consideration is by far the most important of all,
namely, the command of God, who through Moses urges and
enjoins parents so often to instruct their children that Psalm 78
says: "How earnestly he commanded our fathers to teach their
children and to instruct their children" (Ps. 78:5-6). This is also
evident in God's fourth commandment; in which the injunction
that children shall obey their parents is so stern that he would
even have rebellious children sent to death (Deut. 21:18-21).
Indeed, for what other purpose do we older folks exist, other than
to care for, instruct and bring up the young? It is utterly impossible for these foolish young people to instruct and protect themselves. This is why God has entrusted them to us who are older and know from experience what is best for them. And God will hold us strictly accountable for them. 38

Christian education is always a parental responsibility, and Luther lays great stress on this point. Parents carry out this responsibility through the schools. And he gives several reasons for this:

In the first place there are some who lack the goodness and decency to do it, even if they had the ability.... In the second place, the great majority of parents unfortunately are wholly unfitted for this task.... It takes extraordinary people to bring children up right and teach them well. In the third place, even if parents had the ability and desire to do it themselves, they have neither the time nor the opportunity for it, what with their other duties and the care of the household. Necessity compels us, therefore, to engage public school teachers for the children.... 39

"Public" school education, in his opinion is to be preferred even to private tutoring as he writes in a letter to Marcus Crodel, headmaster of the Torgau Latin School, when he sent there his son John and his nephew Florian Von Bora. 40

There must be, then, cooperation between the home and the school:

For in the first place it is necessary that by the office of the Word of the wrath of God as well as His mercy be impressed upon the hearts. But this is not sufficient unless the teacher is then supported by the discipline in the home, and the parents impress upon their children as well as upon their servants this very thing that they hear publicly or in the church from pious teachers. 41

Only in this way will instruction serve its purpose.

Because this education is of such crucial importance, Luther describes what a good school teacher must be for his pupils in a lecture on Titus 2:4:

"Good teachers" are those who are instructed, apt, and skillful at teaching, filled with good doctrine and exhortations. 42

And again in a lecture on Genesis 16:4 he says:

If, then, you are a teacher or the director of a school, what should you do? You must educate, teach, correct, and admonish the young people who have been entrusted to your faithful care. You must do so in the expectation that some will do their duty,
others not. For whoever wants to do a kindness is bound to waste it, because there are always more who spurn sound advice than there are who follow it. The fact that our kindness has not been completely wasted should be sufficient for us; and if among ten lepers one returns acknowledges the kindness, this is enough (Luke 17:18). If among ten pupils there is one who submits to improvement and studies diligently, this is enough. For then the kindness has not been completely wasted. God’s example directs us to show kindness to the grateful and the ungrateful. 43

A good teacher, then, does a great work in the sight of God:

In addition, if the school teacher is a godly man and teaches the boys to understand, to sing, and to practice God’s Word and the true faith and holds them to Christian discipline, then, as we said earlier, the schools are truly young and eternal councils, which perhaps do more good than many other great councils. 44

Luther, himself highly esteemed the position of a schoolteacher and speaks of it often:

I wish nobody would be chosen preacher unless he had first kept school.... In a city as much depends on a schoolmaster as on a minister. We can get along without burgomasters, princes, and noblemen, but we can’t do without schools, for they must rule the world.... If I weren’t a preacher I know no position on earth I’d rather fill (than that of schoolmaster). But one must not consider how the world esteems and rewards it but how God thinks of it and how he will praise it on the day of judgment. 45

I would be brief and say that a diligent and pious schoolteacher, or master, or whoever it is that faithfully trains and teaches boys, can never be sufficiently rewarded or repaid with any money, as even the heathen Aristotle says. Nevertheless, this work is as shamefully despised among us as though it was nothing at all. I myself, if I could leave the preaching office and other things, or had to do so, would not be so glad to have any other work as that of schoolmaster, or teacher of boys, for I know that this is the most useful, the greatest, and the best, next to the work of preaching. Indeed, I scarcely know which of these is better; for it is hard to make old dogs obedient and old rascals pious; and that is the work at which the preacher must labor, often in vain. But young trees can be better bent and trained, though some of them break in the process. Let it be one of the greatest virtues on earth faithfully to train other people’s children. Very few people, almost none, in fact, do this for their own. 46
But he also recognized the difficulty of the task; that "It takes persons of exceptional ability to teach and train children aright." 47 And this, too, accounts for his high regard for teachers.

But he says too:

When I give my children into the care of a schoolmaster, it is not my intention that the child is to look to the schoolmaster forever; nor do I expect the teacher to make him rich but only that he will teach and bring up my son well. 48

The teacher is always and must be always a servant:

For what else is a teacher than a servant of his pupil? The latter is the master; the former is the servant. 49

But Luther, in spite of his own position as a preacher, was not only interested in the principles of education, but also in its mechanics. He had much sound practical advice to give concerning methods of teaching, curriculum, finance, etc., and he did much to put his advice into practice. With Melancthon he drew up the "Saxony School Plan," which was aimed at the reform of existing schools and the establishment of new schools.

Thus he has much advice for teachers, especially of small children, on how to teach children. He says:

When Christ wished to attract and instruct men, He had to become a man. If we are to attract and instruct children, we must become children with them. 50

* * * * *

Since we are preaching to children, we must also prattle with them. 51

Teaching according to Luther involved three stages. First of all simple repetition is necessary: "Teach only one thing at a time and often repeat the same thing." Then:

In the second place, when those whom you are instructing have become familiar with the words of the text, then teach them to understand the meaning of those words, so that they may become acquainted with the object and purport of the lesson.

Finally, teaching involves a "fuller and more comprehensive explanation" of the subject. 52

As is also evident from his writings, he urged the establishment of a complete system of education. Painter says
that "he had in mind three classes of schools." He wanted a
general elementary education for all children without regard for
age or sex. Beyond this he urged a higher education for those
who showed exceptional talents and ought in his opinion be
trained for the ministry or for teaching:

The exceptional pupils, who give promise of becoming skilled
teachers, preachers, or holders of other ecclesiastical positions,
should be allowed to continue in school longer, or even be
dedicated to a life of study.... We must certainly have men to
administer God's Word and sacraments and to be shepherds of
souls. But where shall we get them if we let our schools go by the
board, and fail to replace them with others that are christian?

This higher education culminated in the universities, which he
believed ought to be completely reformed. Nevertheless, his
system was not so rigidly defined as it is today. And though he
believed in different levels or "grades" of instruction, these were
very loosely defined and were divided more according to ability
than age.

In his "Instructions for the Visitors of Parish Pastors" he
suggests three divisions, with a definite curriculum for each. We
quote here at length also because of the explicit instructions
given here concerning the details of what Luther considered to be
a good education:

**The First Division**

The first division consists of children who are beginning to
read. Here this order should be followed.

They shall first learn to read the primer in which are found the
alphabet, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and other prayers.

When they have learned this they shall be given Donatus and
Cato, to read Donatus and to expound Cato. The schoolmaster is to
expound one or two verses at a time, and the children are to repeat
these at a later time, so that they thereby build up a vocabulary of
Latin words and get a supply of words for speaking.

They shall practice this until they can read well. We would
consider it not unfruitful if the weaker children who do not have
especially quick minds, went through Cato and Donatus not only
once but also a second time.

The children are to be taught to write and be obliged to show
their lessons daily to the schoolmaster.

In order that they may learn a greater number of Latin words,
the children may be assigned a few words for memorization each
evening, as wise teachers formerly have done in the schools.
The Second Division

The second division consists of those children who can read and should now learn grammar. With these we should proceed in the following manner.

All the children, large and small, should practice music daily, the first hour in the afternoon.

Then the schoolmaster shall first expound the fables of Aesop to the second division.

After vespers the *Paedagogia* of Mosselianus should be explained and, these books learned, selections should be made from the *Colloquies* of Erasmus, such as are useful and edifying for the children.

This may be repeated on the following evening.

When the children go home in the evening a sentence from a poet or other writer may be prescribed which is to be repeated the next morning....

In the morning the children shall again explain Aesop.

The preceptor shall decline a number of nouns and (conjugate) verbs, many or few, easy or hard, according to the ability of the pupils, and have them give the rule or explanation of these forms.

When the children have learned the rules of syntax they should be required in this period to identify parts of speech or to construe, as it is called, which is a very useful practice, though employed by few.

When now the children have learned Aesop in this way, they are to be given Terence to be learned by heart. For they have now matured and can carry more work. But the schoolmaster shall exercise care so that the children are not overtaxed.

After Terence the children shall be given some of the fables of Plautus,....

The hours before noon shall always and everywhere be so ordered that only grammar be taught. First, etymology. Then, syntax, Next, prosody. When this is finished, the teacher should start over again from the beginning, giving the children a good training in grammar. For if this is not done all learning is lost labor and fruitless.

The children are to recite these grammatical rules from memory, so that they are compelled and driven to learn grammar well.

Where the schoolmaster shuns this kind of work, as is often the case, he should be dismissed and another teacher found for the children, who will take on this work of holding the children to grammar. For no greater harm can be done to all the arts than where the children are not well trained in grammar.

This is to be done all through the week, and the children are not to be assigned a new book every day.

But one day, for instance Saturday or Wednesday, shall be
appointed on which the children are given Christian instruction.

For some are taught nothing out of holy Scripture. Some teach their children nothing but holy Scripture. We should yield to neither of these practices.

It is essential that the children learn the beginning of a Christian and blessed life. But there are many reasons why also other books beside Scripture should be given the children from which they may learn to speak.

This order should be followed: The schoolmaster shall have the whole division come up for recitation, asking each pupil in turn to repeat the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments.

If the group is too large one part may come up for recitation one week, another the following.

In one period the schoolmaster should explain simply and correctly the meaning of the Lord's Prayer, at another time, the Creed, at another, the Ten Commandments. He should emphasize what is necessary for living a good life, namely, the fear of God, faith, good works. He should not touch on points of dissension. He also should not accustom the children to lampoon monks or others, as many incompetent teachers do.

Furthermore the teachers should ask the pupils to memorize a number of easy Psalms that contain in themselves a summary of the Christian life and speak about the fear of God, faith, and good works,...

On these days, too, St. Matthew is to be expounded grammatically. When one has completed it, one should begin from the beginning.

Or, if the boys are a little older, one may expound the two epistles of Paul to Timothy, or the first epistle of John, or the Book of Proverbs.

The schoolmaster should not undertake to read other books than these. For it is fruitless to burden the youth with hard and deep books. It is for their own reputation that some have assayed to read Isaiah, the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, the Gospel of St. John, and the like.

The Third Division

When now the children have been well drilled in grammar the more excellent ones may be chosen for a third group.

Along with the others these shall rehearse music the hour after noon.

Then one should expound Virgil to them, and when this is finished one may read Ovid's Metamorphoses with them.

In the evening: Cicero's Officia or Familiar Letters.

In the morning: Virgil is to be repeated, and in grammar the pupils are to be required to explain, decline, and indicate the
various forms of discourse.

One should keep to grammar the hours before noon, so that the pupils may be well drilled in this.

When they have mastered etymology and syntax the pupils shall go on to prosody, wherein they become accustomed to composing verses. For this practice is very useful in learning to understand other writings. Also it gives the pupils a rich vocabulary and makes them apt in many ways.

When they have sufficiently studied grammar they may use these hours for dialectic and rhetoric.

Of the second and third divisions should be required each week a written exercise such as a letter or a poem.

The pupils shall also be required to speak Latin. The schoolmaster himself, as far as possible, should speak only Latin with the pupils so that they become accustomed to and are encouraged in this practice. 55

From this it is evident that the course of study was very thorough and of a broad character.

Nevertheless, Luther believed that instruction, especially for those who had no intention of making studies a lifetime work, ought not to be overly rigorous:

So you say, "But who can thus spare his children and train them all to be young gentlemen? There is work for them to do at home," etc. Answer: it is not by intention either to have such schools established as we have had heretofore, where a boy slaved away at his Donatus and Alexander for twenty or thirty years and still learned nothing. Today we are living in a different world, and things are being done differently. My idea is to have the boys attend such a school for one or two hours during the day, and spend the remainder of the time working at home, learning a trade, or doing whatever is expected of them. In this way, study and work will go hand-in-hand while the boys are young and able to do both.... In like manner, a girl can surely find time enough to attend school for an hour a day, and still take care of her duties at home. 56

For such education ought simply to be the means for their becoming thoroughly furnished people of God in the home, in the church, and in the state, and not an end in itself.

But always and for every student he desired a wide range of study and thus a broad curriculum:

For my part, if I had children and could manage it, I would have them study not only languages and history, but also singing and music together with the whole of mathematics. 57

He likened "liberal arts" to the riches of the orient:
"All right," you say again, "suppose we do have schools; what is the use of teaching Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and the other liberal arts?... But I wonder why we never ask, "What is the use of silks, wine, spices, and other strange foreign wares when we ourselves have in Germany wine, grain, wool, flax, wood, and stone not only in quantity sufficient for our needs, but also of the best and choicest quality for our glory and ornament?" Languages and the arts, which can do us no harm, but are actually greater ornament, profit, glory and benefit, both for the understanding of Holy Scripture and the conduct of temporal government — these we despise. 58

In each subject he saw a particular value for the Christian man in the world. Concerning history he says:

A prominent place should be given to chronicles and histories, in whatever languages they may be obtained; for they are wonderfully useful in understanding and regulating the course of the world, and in disclosing the marvelous works of God. 59

Concerning poetry and rhetoric:

Certainly I do not intend that young people should give up poetry and rhetoric. I certainly wish that there would be a tremendous number of poets and orators, since I realize that through these studies, as through nothing else, people are wonderfully equipped for grasping the sacred truths, as well as for handling them skillfully and successfully. Of course, wisdom makes the tongues of infants eloquent; but (wisdom) does not wish the gift of languages to be despised. Therefore, I beg also you to urge your young people at my request (should this have any weight) to study poetry and rhetoric diligently. 60

With regard to the study of languages he says:

Indeed, if the languages were not of practical benefit, we ought still feel an interest in them as a wonderful gift of God, with which He has now blessed Germany almost beyond all other lands.... The languages are the scabbard in which the Word of God is sheathed; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored. 61

So also he advised instruction in dialectic or logic:

Dialectic instructs, and rhetoric moves; the former appeals to the understanding, the latter to the will. It does not give us the power to speak of all subjects, but is simply an instrument, by which we can speak correctly and methodically of what we already know and understand. 62
He likewise suggested the teaching of music to children of all ages:

Music in itself has the power to encourage and to stimulate the minds. For that reason also Elisha had a minstrel (2 Kings 3,15), and Moses had trumpets made for the war (Num. 10,7). Therefore the Holy Ghost took music into His service in such a wholesome and necessary matter, in order that He, since it is difficult to think lightly of life and to long for death, might by the singing of the admonition move us the more easily and show us that we should be moved thereto the more easily. 63

But he firmly believed and said often that all the arts should be "placed in the service of Him who has given and created them." 64 His reason for this is soundly scriptural — only then can a person have true knowledge, for if he has not knowledge in the fear of God then he has knowledge without wisdom which is not knowledge:

For knowledge is of two kinds: (1) what the words means (sic), (2) what the subject matter is. To him who has no knowledge of the subject matter the knowledge of the meaning of the word will be of no help.... By the grace of God we have this knowledge of the subject matter; they are blinded. Therefore even though they know the language, they do not know the true meaning of Scripture. To them, as Isaiah says (29:12), Scripture is a book they cannot read. 65

Mere formal knowledge is always dead and useless.

Luther considered that even gymnastics had a proper place in education, again, not for its own sake, but also in this that the man of God in the world might be thoroughly equipped for his duties:

It was well considered and arranged by the ancients that the people should practice gymnastics, in order that they might not fall into revelling, unchastity, gluttony, intemperance, and gaming. ...(it) produces elasticity of the body and preserves the health. 66

One other essential part of good education in Luther's eyes was the setting up of good libraries:

Finally, one more thing merits serious consideration by all those who earnestly desire to have such schools and languages established and maintained in Germany. It is this: no effort or expense should be spared to provide good libraries or book repositories, especially in the larger cities that can well afford it. 67
MacKinnon defines what Luther meant by "good libraries":

To the same end he would establish libraries in the towns and fill them with useful books, instead of the scholastic rubbish which he regards as so much lumber. He would exclude from these collections the textbooks of canon law and the scholastic theology and philosophy, and in place of this "filth" install the Bible in the original language and in German and other translations along with the best ancient commentators, the classic authors, both pagan and christian, and approved books in law, medicine, and all the arts and sciences. He would add the best histories and chronicles in any language, particularly those related to Germany's national history, which are indispensable for a proper understanding of the past, the ways of God as revealed in the doings of men. 68

Finally good christian instruction involves discipline because even covenant children are by nature depraved. Luther says that "a boy needs a schoolmaster and a switch because he is bad." 69 Thus he says:

Nevertheless a schoolmaster is extremely necessary for a boy, to instruct and chasten him; for otherwise, without this instruction, good training, and discipline, the boy would come to ruin. 70

Yet he did not want training to be too harsh since he knew also that "rigid severity is apt to defeat its purpose." 71 Discipline must always be tempered with love.

Because he understood so clearly what good education is and its tremendous importance, Luther fought with all his strength the tendency among "the carnal minded masses" to leave the schools "to go to wrack and ruin" 72 through neglect. He used many and often harsh words to try to impress on his fellow countrymen and christians the need to send their children to school:

Thus, even in temporal government, you can serve your Lord or your city better by training children than by building him castles and cities and gathering the treasures of the whole world; for what good does all that do, if there are no learned, wise, godly people? I shall say nothing of the temporal benefit and eternal reward that accrue to you before God and the world if you have thus raised your child better than was in your shameful, hoggish counsel and intention. 73

* * * * *

Oh, we handle these poor young people who are committed to us
for training and instruction in the wrong way! We shall have to render a solemn account of our neglect to set the Word of God before them.... We do not see this pitiful evil, how today the young people of Christendom languish and perish miserably in our midst for want of the gospel, in which we ought to be giving them constant instruction and training. 74

And because of the current decline in education and unwillingness of the common people to educate their children, Luther said that it is

...the duty of the government to compel its subjects to keep their children in school, especially those children who were mentioned above.... If it can compel its subjects who are fitted for the work to carry pike and musket, man the walls and do other kinds of work when war is necessary; how much more can it and ought it compel its subjects to keep their children in school, because here there is a worse war on, a war with the very devil, who goes about to suck out secretly strength of cities and princedoms, and empty them of able persons, until he has bored out the pith, and left an empty shell of useless folk, with whom he can play and juggle as he will. That is, indeed, starving out a city or a land; it destroys itself without battle, before one is aware of it. 75

Government ought also, then, finance education:

My dear sirs, if we have to spend such large sums every year on guns, roads, bridges, dams, and countless similar items to insure the temporal peace and prosperity of a city, why should not much more be devoted to the poor neglected youth — at least enough to engage one or two competent men to teach school? 76

He lays down the details for this in his treatise, "The Ordinance of a Common Chest." 77

Where there is such good, scripturally-oriented education, the blessing of God rests:

There is further a divine blessing attached to this sphere of activity; for God is pleased with the many excellent and useful works that belong to the secular condition, and that constitute a divine service. 78

Not only the spiritual blessing of seeing Church, home and state prosper, but

...the fine pleasure that a man gets from having studied, even though he never has an office of any kind; how at home by himself he can read all kinds of things, how he can talk and associate with the learned; travel and do business in foreign lands; for perhaps
there are very few people who are moved by this pleasure. 79

A Brief Critique of Luther's Views

One can find very little to criticize in the expressions of Luther's ideas concerning either the principles or the mechanics of education. What Luther lays down as the principles of Christian education for his day are still the same for Christian education today. This can be seen in general from a comparison of the two following statements.

Above all things, the principal and most general subject of study, both in the higher and lower schools, would be the Holy Scriptures. 80

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Christian instruction means...essentially one thing. This one thing is instruction that is based entirely upon the truth of the Word of God. 81

The former is Luther's own fundamental premise, the latter is found in "Principles of Education of Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School."

Many have criticized Luther's "over-emphasis" on the religious aspect of education, especially the training of ministers and teachers as the primary goal of education. And, indeed, Luther lays much emphasis on this point. We do not however find in this a misplaced zeal, nor do we criticize it. And there are several points that ought to be made in this connection.

In the first place one must remember the times in which Luther lived. The Reformation was just beginning. Many thousands had joined this new and yet unorganized movement, and as a result there was a tremendous need for able and good leaders, especially preachers and teachers. This, to a great extent, determined Luther's emphasis.

In the second place one must not forget that this stress on the training of ministers and teachers and leaders is tempered by Luther's great zeal for the whole cause of popular education and by his emphasis on the training of the Christian man, whether he be a preacher or not. Luther never forgot this aspect of Christian education and did not want it to be forgotten by others.

Finally, this emphasis on the training of ministers and teachers stands in its own right. It is interesting that in the
history of the Church of the Reformation it is always the theological schools which are first established while popular Christian education follows. The reason is obvious: one must have pastors and teachers and leaders to begin schools and to teach the people to use the schools. So too Luther saw the need of such leaders simply in order to keep the evangelical movement as a whole and the cause for education in particular alive.

And even as his emphasis on "Christian Education" can be appreciated, so can his emphasis on education as a parental responsibility. This is also our emphasis. But it is also here that one must find fault with Luther's principle of government financed and government enforced education. But also this must be seen in the light of several historical facts.

In the first place the government of which Luther speaks is the small government of the different electorates and principalities of mediaeval Germany. Many of these, and these are the ones to whom Luther addresses himself, were sympathetic to the cause of the Reformation and thus to the cause of Christian pedagogy. We have no such government.

In the second place Luther advises government interference because of the ignorance and laxness of the common people in Germany concerning education and the subsequent decline of the schools. He wanted the Princes and Electors to take a hand simply because the common people would not do it themselves. But this also shows once again how important he considered popular education to be.

Finally, these same historical circumstances determined Luther's particular views concerning such matters as curriculum, methods of teaching, etc., where we today do and ought to do things differently because as is so often said, "times change." Nevertheless there is much sound practical advice to be found in Luther's writings as we have seen and much that can be learned from him.

The Importance of Luther

Painter sums up some of Luther's contributions to education thus:

1. In his writings, as in the principles of Protestantism, he laid the foundation of an educational system, which begins with the popular school and ends up with the university.

2. He set up as the noble idea of education a Christian man, fitted through instruction and discipline to discharge the duties of
every relation of life.

3. He exhibited the necessity of schools both for the Church and the State, and emphasized the dignity and worth of the teacher's vocation.

4. With restless energy he impressed upon parents, ministers, and civil officers their obligation to educate the young.

5. He brought about a re-organization of schools, introducing graded instruction, an improved course of study, and rational methods.

6. In his appreciation of nature and of child-life, he laid the foundation for educational science.

7. He made great improvements in method; he sought to adapt instruction to the capacity of children, to make learning pleasant, to awaken the mind through skillful questioning, to study things as well as words, and to temper discipline with love.

8. With a wise understanding of the relation of virtue and intelligence to the general good, he advocated compulsory education on the part of the State. 82

And we agree with Painter who says that Luther "accomplished scarcely less for education than for religion." 83

He stands at the vanguard of the movement for Christian day-school education, which means too that he must also be judged from that perspective. His contribution, then, is that, even as for the revival of religion, he laid the foundations. He did that by showing the weaknesses of education as it had existed under the dominion of Rome in the first place, and secondly by laying down the principles of a new foundation for a God-glorifying, soundly Reformed system of schools where the man of God might indeed be thoroughly equipped unto all good works.

Many have called Calvin "the father of popular education" but as Schaff says, he must share the honor with Luther. 84 Calvin and others of the later Reformers built a new building, but Luther laid the foundation.

"A schoolmaster is extremely necessary for a boy, to instruct and chasten him; for otherwise, without this instruction, good training, and discipline, the boy would come to ruin."

— Martin Luther
Footnotes


2 Painter, p. 75.

3 Painter, pp. 49, 50.

4 Quoted in Painter, pp. 77, 78.

5 Painter, pp. 77ff.

6 Walter I. Brandt, Introduction to Luther’s treatise, "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools, (Works, vol. 45, pp. 339-378, trans., A. Steinhaeuser) p. 341.

7 Luther, "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany", p. 352.

8 Luther, "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany", pp. 351, 352.

9 Page 342.


12 Introduction, "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany", p. 342.

13 Introduction, "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany", pp. 342, 343.


16 MacKinnon, p. 222.

17 Introduction, "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School", p. 133.

18 Ewald M. Plass, This is Luther (St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1948), pp. 296, 297.

19 Painter, pp. 128, 129.

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23 Quoted in Painter, pp. 132, 133; no reference.


25 MacKinnon, pp. 223, 224.

26 “To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany,” p. 368.

27 “To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany,” p. 356.


32 Plass, This is Luther, p. 305.

33 “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation,” pp. 205, 206.


36 “A Sermon on Keeping Children in School,” p. 145.

37 “Lectures on Genesis” (chap. 7:1), vol. 2, p. 45.

38 “To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany,” p. 353.

39 “To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany,” p. 355.

41 "Commentary on Joel 1:2, 3," in Kretzmann, p. 29.


43 "Lectures on Genesis," vol. 3, pp. 50, 51.

44 "On the Councils and the Church," p. 176.

45 "Table Talks," #5247, pp. 403, 404.


49 "Lectures on Genesis," (41:40), vol. 7, p. 185.


52 Quoted in Painter, pp. 150-152.

53 Painter, p. 138.

54 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," p. 371.


56 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," p. 370.

57 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," p. 369.

58 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," pp. 357-358.

59 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," quoted in Kretzmann, p. 76.

60 "Letter to Eobanus Hessus" (1523), vol. 49, p. 34.

61 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," quoted in Kretzmann, pp. 74, 75.

62 Quoted in Painter, pp. 159ff.
63 "Exposition of Psalm 3:6," quoted in Kretzmann, p. 84.


66 Quoted in Painter, p. 166.

67 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," p. 373.

68 MacKinnon, pp. 221, 222.


71 Painter, p. 122.

72 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," p. 348.

73 Luther's preface to Oeconomia Christiana by Justus Menius, in the Introduction to "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," p. 133.

74 "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation," p. 206.

75 "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," pp. 177, 178.

76 "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany," p. 350.


78 "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School," quoted in Kretzmann, p. 95.


80 Quoted in Plass, What Luther Says, p. 449.

81 H. Hanko, p. 1.

82 Painter, pp. 167, 168.

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Teaching Responsibility

by Mr. I. Quenga

reprinted from Hope Highlights

To teach children to be responsible citizens of their segment of society is an important goal of education, whether it be at home, school, or church. It begins at home — very early. It means setting up standards and goals for children to meet. It means teaching children self-reliance and independence. It means teaching them to solve their own problems when the easy way out is to do it for them. To solve their problems for them is like carrying a child around all the time so he won't fall. The end result, of course, is that he doesn't learn to walk.

It means that when I tell my child to mow the lawn, I expect him to clean up the edges with the hand clipper without having to be told specifically. That's part of the job. It means that when I give my pupils an assignment, I expect them to be able to do the work independently without having to repeat the instructions or to tell them separately each step to take. I'm there to help, but I would like them to use the resources they have been taught to use — check the examples given, re-read the rules, turn back to a previous lesson, use the glossary. The easy way out for you or me is to solve the problem for the child by telling him the answer. The best way, and most difficult of course, is to require an attempt at an independent solution. I am accountable for what I teach the children, but the opposite side of the coin is that the child is responsible for what he has been taught. If I teach him to say, "He and I are going to play together after school," then it is his responsibility not to say again, "Him and me are gonna play together after school."

Another important aspect of responsibility is keeping one's word. If anyone commits himself to a job, he's going to stick to it until it's done. It may not be the fun he thought it would be. Perhaps it's taking more time than he expected. Maybe he "got sick of it". Perhaps his attitude is, "If I don't do it, somebody
else will. A parent's and teacher's task is to see to it that the child is held to his commitment. Important lessons are to be learned in keeping one's word.

One more important area is "communal" responsibility. So often when there is a piece of waste paper or other article where it doesn't belong and I ask someone to pick it up, the answer comes, "That's not mine," or "I didn't put it there." The point is we use the room in common, we use the restrooms, the halls, the playground, and the gym in common. That makes each of us responsible for its upkeep whether it's "ours" or not.

A positive attitude toward responsibility makes life more pleasant for all.

"'All right,' you say again, 'suppose we do have schools; what is the use of teaching Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and the other liberal arts?'... But I wonder why we never ask, 'What is the use of silks, wine, spices, and other strange foreign wares when we ourselves have in Germany wine, grain, wool, flax, wood, and stone not only in quantity sufficient for our needs, but also of the best and choicest quality for our glory and ornament?' Languages and the arts, which can do us no harm, but are actually greater ornament, profit, glory and benefit, both for the understanding of Holy Scripture and the conduct of temporal government — these we despise.'

Indeed, if the languages were not for practical benefit, we ought still feel an interest in them as a wonderful gift of God, with which He has now blessed Germany almost beyond all other lands.... The languages are the scabbard in which the Word of God is sheathed; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored.'

"'To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany'
-Martin Luther
Notebooks Vs. Workbooks

by Dr. Dayton Hobbs

The Case for Notebooks

I am not naive enough to think for one moment that I am introducing something new to the field of education when I speak of notebooks. Many teachers use them today and many have in the past. In some cases they may not be used as effectively as they can be used, and in other cases their use may be detrimental instead of helpful because of a lack of planning and follow up on the part of the teacher. First let me give a few reasons why I believe the proper use of notebooks is an excellent teaching method and consistent with the principles of the Word of God.

1. Notebooks encourage individual initiative on the part of the student. He is taught responsibility for having all the required materials in his notebook and the proper care of that notebook.

2. Notebook usage encourages excellence. Students can rise above the average and put as much work and care into them as they desire.

3. The notebook becomes a reflection of the student, his work habits, carefulness, etc. It will point out to teacher, pupil, and parent alike areas that need improvement.

4. Notebooks are an excellent tool for Parent-Teacher Conferences. The full record is there for the parent to see, making it possible for parent and teacher to better agree on a course of action for helping the student.

5. Notebooks teach order and proper management to students, when teachers are diligent and consistent in seeing to it that every student carries out every detail in keeping his notebook. The injunction of I Cor. 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order" is obeyed through the use of notebooks.

6. Notebooks give the students a permanent recorded document at the end of the course, the compilation of a year's work. It is in fact the student's recorded history of his work for the year, and may prove a valuable resource book in future years.
Other important values of notebook usage could be cited, I am sure, but these will suffice to establish their superiority over workbooks, I believe. As has been stated, the value of notebooks will be in proportion to the training of the student in their proper use and in the step-by-step execution of this method by the teacher. No substitute for diligence on the teacher's part is acceptable.

**THE PREREQUISITES TO USING THE NOTEBOOK METHOD**

There must be a decision on the part of the teacher and administration as to which subjects (in elementary, Jr. High, and Senior High) will be employed in the notebook approach. I would suggest that in the first year only one or two subjects in the elementary grades employ this method. In the junior and senior high at least one subject per teacher should be taught through the use of notebooks the first year. The ideal would be to have notebooks used in every subject area within two to three years.

There must be a decision as to just how the teachers will implement the notebook approach in their subject area. I suggest that an outline of this plan be turned in to the administrator for approval. Within the framework of the overall plan of the school as to the basic requirements of these notebooks, the teacher should have the liberty to develop a plan in keeping with the distinctives of his particular subject area. Some of the things that must be determined include:

1. Type of notebook (I suggest individual notebooks for each subject of the small 3 ring variety.)

2. Divisions of the notebook, such as (a) tests and quizzes (b) homework (c) class notes (d) handouts by the teacher, etc.

3. Grading system. (No grades should be given at report card time unless the notebook is absolutely up-to-date in every detail).

It is obvious, I believe, that over-all school policies must be established so that each teacher is working from the same basic set of rules. This will give continuity to the notebook program throughout the school and the students will know what is expected as each teacher in each grade follows the same basic set of rules for notebooks.

Students must be responsible for their own notebooks. Any notes or materials missed becomes the responsibility of the student. Lost or unreturned borrowed notebooks are the student's responsibility. Remember, no grade if the notebooks are not
absolutely complete at each grading period. Spot checking by the teacher becomes important especially during the first few weeks the program is implemented to be sure the students understand and are carrying out instructions regarding notebooks. Personal pride and care of these notebooks develops with consistent use of this system, teaching responsibility and a good reward for a job well done.

Admittedly, this system requires much more work by students as well as teachers, but I believe the results will be found to be worth the efforts expended, and nothing can replace the joyous feeling of having done a quality job of teaching.


Luther
On Teaching

"But one day, for instance Saturday or Wednesday, shall be appointed on which the children are given Christian instruction. For some are taught nothing out of holy Scripture. Some teach their children nothing but holy Scripture. We should yield to neither of these practices. It is essential that the children learn the beginning of a Christian and blessed life. But there are many reasons why also other books beside Scripture should be given the children from which they may learn to speak."

"Instructions for the Visitors of Parish Pastors"

"He (the teacher) should emphasize what is necessary for living a good life, namely, the fear of God, faith, good works. He should not touch on points of dissension. He also should not accustom the children to lampoon monks or others, as many incompetent teachers do."

"Instructions for the Visitors of Parish Pastors"
I wish nobody would be chosen preacher unless he had first kept school.... In a city as much depends on a schoolmaster as on a minister. We can get along without burgomasters, princes, and noblemen, but we can't do without schools, for they must rule the world.... If I weren't a preacher I know no position on earth I'd rather fill (than that of schoolmaster). But one must not consider how the world esteems and rewards it but how God thinks of it and how he will praise it on the day of judgment."

"Table Talks"

"Since we are preaching to children, we must also prattle with them."

Luther, *What Luther Says.*

"...it is necessary that by the office of the Word the wrath of God as well as His mercy be impressed upon the hearts. But this is not sufficient unless the teacher is then supported by the discipline in the home, and parents impress upon their children as well as upon their servant this very thing that they hear publicly or in the church from pious teachers."

"Commentary on Joel 1:2,3."

"Good teachers are those who are instructed, apt, and skillful at teaching, filled with good doctrine and exhortations."

"Lectures on Titus, Philemon, Hebrews"

"He (God) has not given you children and the means to support them, only that you may do with them as you please, or train them for worldly glory. You have been earnestly commanded to raise them for God's service, or be completely rooted out, with your children and everything else; then everything that you have spent on them will be lost. The first commandment says, 'I visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.'"

"A Sermon on Keeping Children in School"
The following is a list of the manuals for teachers that have been produced by teachers at summer workshops and through personal study. These educational helps have been funded by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. Copies of these are available.

- Biblical Perspectives in the Social Sciences (1971)
- A Writing Program for the Covenant Child (1972)
- Music Curriculum Guide (1973)
- Teacher's Manual for Ancient World History
- Suffer Little Children (Bible manuals 1, 2, & 3)
- Workbooks for Suffer Little Children
- Science Notes — Unit on Water

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"Certainly I do not intend that young people should give up poetry and rhetoric. I certainly wish that there would be a tremendous number of poets and orators, since I realize that through these studies, as through nothing else, people are wonderfully equipped for grasping the sacred truths, as well as for handling them skillfully and successfully. Of course, wisdom makes the tongues of infants eloquent; but (wisdom) does not wish the gift of languages to be despised. Therefore, I beg also you to urge your young people at my request (should this have any weight) to study poetry and rhetoric diligently."

"Letter to Eobanus Hessus"
- Martin Luther

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Perspectives continues to need manuscripts or articles from teachers, parents, or any other interested persons. We will also print any pertinent letters regarding our publication.