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**Hungerford, Robert Truman**

A NEW APPROACH TO CONFIRMATION TRAINING IN THE LAIRD HILL  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Drew University*

D.MIN. 1983

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A NEW APPROACH TO CONFIRMATION TRAINING IN  
THE LAIRD HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A Professional Project submitted to  
the Theological School  
of Drew University in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Ministry

Robert T. Hungerford

Drew University

Madison, New Jersey

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Having reached half my Biblical span, it has become painfully evident that nothing done by mortals is accomplished alone. I, therefore, wish to acknowledge the patience and cheerful forebearance of Dr. Howard Grimes, who was my perceptively stringent field advisor and mentor. Dr. Marian Poindexter also provided numerous suggestions as to resources and procedures, as well as giving that variety of insight which has been especially entrusted to women.

Within the Methodist Brotherhood, Dr. Charles E. Curl first suggested that I undertake this program and without his continual insistence I would never have persevered. The Reverend Mr. Winston Goens was my boon companion throughout the course work and he especially made the residence period at Drew enjoyable, rather than merely tolerable. May God reward him for his patience. The Reverend Dr. William Wade and the Reverend Mr. Keenan Williams also supplied the sort of encouragement and skillful prodding which a recalcitrant nature like mine requires. Dr. Stuart R. Garrison and his lovely wife, Cynthia Leona, were unfailingly kind and listened to hours of ranting and raving, without which I would have abandoned the endeavor.

Last, and thus most importantly, I wish to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, that He has sustained His unworthy and disordered servant, through the support of friends and helpers. In Heaven the dross will be gone and the grace which is now so deeply obscured, will be eternally evident in us all.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The thesis of this project is that the catechetical model for confirmation training offers an alternative to the present United Methodist forms for confirmation classes and, further, that since this is the most common form for confirmation training in the past it has the support of tradition. In order to test this thesis, a form of such catechetical training was developed by the writer and tested in several situations prior to his using it in the particular setting which forms the practical basis for this project. The writer further engaged in considerable research in order to establish the normative nature of this form of confirmation training and to provide the theological foundation for the project. A more detailed description of the areas of research follows.

#### Description of Methodology

##### Areas of Investigation

Within the obvious confines of time and space, three major areas of research were germane to my project. They are as follows:

Catechetical History. While it is a foregone conclusion in the minds of most Christians living in the

Western world that Confirmation is either necessarily, or closely allied to, catechetics, this has not always been so. In order to reach a balanced understanding of Christian instruction, this writer has delved heavily into sources from outside his own tradition (Methodism) and outside his own understanding of the Christian Faith (Protestant Orthodoxy). While that obviously entailed secular work, it also included a large amount of reading and analysis among the many works on catechetics done by the Roman Church.

Special attention has been paid to works done outside the English-speaking world, as one quickly realizes that national culture has profoundly influenced Confirmation throughout the Western Church. This task was aided by the fact that Rome specifically authorizes works in the major languages, and thus the official Spanish, German and Italian sources of standard reference--as well as the Tridentine Latin--were consulted and analyzed. Works in English regarding Protestant catechetics were not neglected, although by this stage in the writer's life, they were relatively familiar. An added benefit for this project has been the availability of Dr. Howard Grimes' research into the history of catechesis in all the major American denominations, since to this writer's knowledge, no other comparative tabulation currently exists.

Confirmational History. The investigation of Confirmation throughout the history of the Church, was analogous to that of catechetics. While the Eastern

Churches consider Confirmation a sacrament, the West is divided, and this writer grew up in that section of Christendom that considers it an edifying human institution (i.e., vox ecclesiastica). For that reason, heavy emphasis has been laid upon studying the writings of the Anglo-Catholics and the non-English Roman writers. Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University is especially well-stocked in resources of all the major European languages, as well as the vast array of documents in Patrologiae Latinae and Patrologiae Graecae. This writer's investigations have aimed to discover divergencies as well as commonalities, in the Western Church treatment of what is understood as both Sacrament (by some) and as edifying rite (by others) and as nothing at all (by hordes of "free church" Americans).

Behavior Modification. Here the writer has had the blessing of a brother-in-law who is a registered clinical psychologist, as well as holding a Ph.D. in psychological therapy, to advise him in regard to what sources would be the most useful in preparing a program of instruction for adolescents. The writer has also been singularly happy in having Dr. Marian Poindexter of Drew to advise him in matters of Christian Education, in areas where Dr. Grimes was not consulted. It seemed especially important to seek out a woman to advise on psychological matters that might have escaped the heavily analytic emphasis of Dr. Grimes and of the writer's brother-in-law, Dr. Garrison. It was from

Dr. Poindexter that the large bibliography in Christian Education was first obtained, and from her further remarks over the past year and a half that this writer's basic knowledge of the milieu of contemporary Christian education was formed.

#### Sources Used

As stated above, the three main areas of investigation were catechetics, Confirmation, and behavior modification. Within those broad bounds, the writer attempted to search out unusual sources in order to correct his cultural biases. In dealing with both Confirmation and catechetics, an extensive use was made of the following: Lexikon Für Theologie Und Kirche (especially volumes II and V); Roman theologians who have dealt with the catechetics of the Reformation period, especially Garcia-Villoslada and his two-volume Martín Lutero; the Latin edition (especially, Tomus Quartus) of the Canadian Dominican Summa Theologiae; Concilium Tridentinum; Diariorum, Actorum, Epistularum, Tractatum (especially, Tomus Nonus); Analecta Reginensia (as recorded in Studi e Testi, vol. 59), and Enciclopedia Cattolica.

In dealing with the psychological aspects, this writer thought it wiser to deal with compilations of studies and cases, than with theorists and for that reason dealt mainly with Graziano (behavior modification) and works analogous to his, such as the compilation of Sjödén and the findings of

Bandura. In Christian Education, on the other hand, it seemed wiser to be more centralist, in that the catechism itself is unusual and therefore the corrective would be to familiarize oneself with the middle-of-the-road; thus, Little and her The Role of the Bible in Contemporary Christian Education, and Furnish with her Exploring the Bible with Children, served as the foundations. It should also be stated that the writer read, in their entirety, all the current United Methodist Confirmational literature. The writings of James Michael Lee, especially his The Flow of Religious Instruction, proved especially helpful.

#### Lay Participation

This writer has had the great advantage of conducting his project in a student charge. Under the United Methodist system, this means that the pastor arrives late Friday night and leaves late Sunday night, except in the case of funerals, dire emergencies, and seminary vacations. Appointments of this sort are necessarily small, and at Laird Hill, we have 146 members and only approximately half of whom are in any sense active. The result is weekly contact, if only on Sunday morning, with all active members. The parents of the children in the Confirmation class were active, and the meetings of the class were held in the home of the church treasurer, whose daughter was in the class. After the class, the pastor would move with the adults into the parlor and discuss the events of the preceding hour.

### The Structure of the Doctoral Report

Chapter I consists of the Introduction and therefore has the overview of the entire doctoral project, delineating it by specific tasks.

Chapter II deals with the history of Confirmation, especially detailing the many twists and turns which the rite has undergone through the centuries. The focus is gradually contracted in Chapter II, until we conclude with the consideration of Confirmation in the United Methodist Church.

Chapter III deals with the educational efforts that have undergirded the practice of Confirmation since the Reformation, although consideration is also given to the centuries before the great watershed of 1517. As in Chapter II, the focus eventually is on a consideration of the Confirmation materials used in the United Methodist Church.

Chapter IV deals with the content of the catechism which this writer prepared for the use of his Confirmation class in Laird Hill. Since Protestant catechetics have been invariably Biblical in their content, Chapter IV deals with the specific content which was chosen for the catechism, especially in regard to the writer's theological presuppositions.

Chapter V deals with the unusual way in which the old form (i.e., the use of a catechism) was put into contemporary usage in Laird Hill. Chapter V also deals with

the somewhat vexed question of behavior modification and its relationship to "spiritual" instruction.

Chapter VI deals with the evaluation of both the efforts in Laird Hill, including suggestions and criticisms from friends and advisors, and with the writer's understanding of how best to understand and present Confirmation in the late 20th century.

#### Goals to be Accomplished

Two specific goals were adopted by the writer, which served as the raison d'être for the doctoral report: the catechism and the pedagogical method.

#### The Catechism

The writer of this project has long been convinced that it would be wise if the United Methodist Church had the option of a true catechism in addition to the material which is currently considered official. The last official catechism was issued by the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, during the 1920's and is now in total disuse. Furthermore, the writer wished to include, as much as possible, the full sweep of Protestant catechetical efforts, in order to give his catechism as much existential bite as possible.

#### The Pedagogical Method

This included not only the written content of the catechism, but also those inducements to individual effort

which will invariably determine how much retention takes place in any given study. It has been the writer's own experience, beginning in his childhood, that all study outside of school is generally treated lightly by both parents and children. As the years passed, and this writer became a Methodist pastor, he found that, if anything, the problems had been underestimated, and therefore the question of motivation and retention loomed larger and larger in his thoughts. It became simultaneously clear that one must devise methods not used in the public schools, if any significant impact were to be obtained. Whether such a method has been devised, will be considered in the evaluation found in Chapter VI, but the evolution of that pedagogical method--if not, perhaps, its final form--was fully as operative a goal as the production of a new catechism.

#### Limits Built into the Project

##### Limited Research

The details of the historical and psychological investigations were so fascinating that the writer shortly found himself in possession of several hundred pages of notes, and eagerly desirous of acquiring several hundred more. The operational procedure used to prune back the writer's lust for information was the time allotted by his very patient Bishop (The Reverend Finis Crutchfield, Bishop of The Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church) to

finish this project. Within that general boundary, the operational details were aimed at producing a project which might be compared to surveying in the "metes and bounds" method: the desired tract is marked off by its significant features, but without the precision generated by more time-consuming methods. By way of illustration, this project makes only one reference (a quote from the Enciclopedia Cattolica) to medieval English catechetics, when the writer was in fact desirous of writing a chapter on the catechetical struggle between the prelates and the "poor priests" who were themselves divided into Lollards and the violent radicals, such as John Ball.

#### Focus on Character Formation

The existential thrust of the catechism was intended to be part of the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing young people farther from Original Sin and nearer to Sanctification. This naturally limited not only the content of the catechism, but also pared away much of the pedagogical method, in that everything and every word was intended to serve in the formation of the young people's character. This emphasis led to the elimination of much that is currently considered important in the various schools of Christian Education. To state the matter as briefly as possible: this writer has no interest in anything or any technique which vaguely resembles the Human Potential Movement, because the writer's view of human worth

is far higher--and therefore demands a more rigorous and serious approach.

All of this suggests that Confirmation is not only a very deep subject, but as broad as it is deep. In all of the points broached above, the reader can well imagine that sincere Christians might easily diverge, and historically that has been the case. In the following chapter we shall see not only the development but also the multi-faceted diversity of the rite we now know as Confirmation.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Confirmation training ought to be related to what one understands Confirmation to be. Since there is no single understanding historically nor at the present, of what Confirmation is, it is appropriate that we look at the history of its development as a means of arriving at some understanding of what it is today.

#### The Nature of the Problem

When one considers the historical development of Confirmation, it is unlikely that anyone will be more accurate than was the Vice-Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, when he wrote over a century ago:

The rite now known by this name presents a singular instance of the continued use of a symbolic act in the midst of almost every possible diversity of practice, belief, and even terminology.

As we work our way through the various historical stages, it will be evident how mutable is the human mind, as it seeks to produce that sense of completeness and perfection that the heart demands. It is highly debatable at what point Confirmation first achieved sacramental status in the West, but it was not until the 12th century that the seven sacraments were being enumerated in seriatim, and thus

officially recognized as a "class" of similar religious import.<sup>2</sup> Even so, Confirmation had a troubled standing, both before and after.

#### The Biblical Background

As one would expect, all manner of precedent was claimed for the institution of the Confirmational sacrament, and even in our own time some of the same reasoning and citations are espoused, especially by Anglo-Catholics, and to lesser extent by Roman theologians. The chief Scriptural citations are, of course, Acts 8:12-17 and Acts 19:1-7. To a lesser extent Hebrews 6:2 is named and the Vulgate Psalm 103:3 ("panis cor hominis confirmat") is also cited. Those passages are cited chiefly because they involve the  $\xi\pi\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\varsigma$   $\tau\hat{\omega}\nu \chi\epsilon\iota\rho\hat{\omega}\nu$  in a way that distinguishes the laying on of hands from evidence in the healing of diseases (cf., Mark 16:18, Acts 9:12, etc.) and from the admission to a particular sacred office in the public ministry of the Church (cf., Acts 6:6, Acts 13:3, etc.). The text from Hebrews (6:2) is less clear and is sometimes referred to as "generic";<sup>3</sup> it is significant, however, in the sense of an additional specialized instance of the  $\xi\pi\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\varsigma \tau\hat{\omega}\nu \chi\epsilon\iota\rho\hat{\omega}\nu$ . Since neither the writer of this investigation, nor (presumably) any of the readers, has a vested interest in establishing a Biblical precedent for Confirmation, we need not belabor the evidence.

It is true that the Bible contains several clear instances of the laying on of hands which involve neither healing nor ordination, and they may well be the foundation for what we have come to know, through the centuries, as Confirmation. (A passage which is scarcely or never cited by the authorities who do have a vested interest in proving the sacramental character of Confirmation, is Matthew 19:13. One can only speculate why they missed what seems to be a Dominical connection). However, any serious claim that Our Lord instituted the rite of Confirmation or that it is clearly established in the Biblical witness, is unwarranted. Clearly, the New Testament indicates some connection of the laying on of the hands and an increase in the Spirit, after baptism--but the exact nature is not specified. A faithful interpretation, which would also allow for the historical variety one encounters when considering Confirmation, would be that the further gift of the Spirit depends upon the individual and the collective needs of specific times and places.

#### Early Church

By the time we reach that redoubtable and irascible character--Tertullian--the situation has changed markedly and the Anglo-Catholics and the less vehement Roman theologians clearly have the rudiments of a case. Large amounts of early evidence can be produced (of which we will consider only the more salient) to the effect that Baptism

was closely connected with both anointing and the laying on of hands. Indeed, the latest "fad" among liturgical scholars is that Confirmation represents "the dissolution of the rite of Christian initiation."<sup>4</sup> Tertullian, in both De baptismo and in De resurrectione carnis, considers the laying on of hands (after being baptized) the occasion for a specific invocation of the Holy Spirit. That Tertullian did not consider any such acts to be a sacrament in the modern (or even medieval) sense is admitted by contemporary theologians of the Roman Church:

There is a lacuna in the documentation on the existence after apostolic times of a second Sacrament distinct from Baptism.

Beyond dispute, however, the rudiments are all present for what was later to become Confirmation. These basic elements were confused, by our current standards, and great variation prevailed, but they were present in the second century. Cyprian clearly teaches that to be reborn, one must be in unity with the true Church, beyond simply being baptized:

Et ideo baptizari eos oportet qui de haeresi ad Ecclesiam veniunt; ut qui legitimo et vero atque unico sanctae Ecclesiae baptismo ad regnum Dei regeneratione divina præparantur, sacramento utroque nascantur . . .

While this presumably applied chiefly to adults, there is no reason to conclude that it was exclusively so. Indeed, we read from Clement's first letter that parents are to provide Christian training for their children: τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν της ἐυχριστῷ παισεῖς μεταλαμβανέτωσαν. <sup>6</sup> <sup>7</sup>

Cyprian, furthermore, applies the word "sacramentum" to the laying on of hands and of anointing--being acts which are additional to Baptism.<sup>8</sup> While it would be invalid to contend that Cyprian's use of the word "sacrament" and our current usage would be identical, the point remains that he considered the gift of the Spirit to require something above and beyond Baptism.

It is significant that for those members of the Holy Catholic Church who consider the episcopal office to be a matter of function rather than of descent (i.e., Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, et al.), not even the closest scanning of either Tertullian or Cyprian leads to the conclusion that a bishop was required to perform the rudiments of Confirmation. As Hotham remarked:

In these passages, it will be observed, no distinction is drawn between the baptizer and the layer on of hands. Both acts are spoken of as if they were performed at the same time and by the same person.

Thus, up to the age of Constantine, what we seem to have is a rather prolonged baptismal rite, in which it is customary not only to baptize the person entering Christ's Church, but also to anoint and always to have the imposition of hands, in order that the individual might receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Especially when one considers Cyprian--the man who struggled ceaselessly against heresy and recidivism--the unmistakable point arises that Baptism is completed by anointing and the imposition of hands. It

is this sense of completion which provides the continuing interest in Confirmation throughout the ages.

By the fourth and fifth centuries, the picture becomes both more detailed and more hierachial. At this point the importance of the bishop becomes noticeable and the more restrictive statements of the Anglo-Catholic and Roman theologians begin to make historical sense. Jerome specifically says that in his time the bishops used to travel through their respective dioceses in order to administer the imposition of hands "ad invocationem Sancti Spiritus."<sup>10</sup> Significantly, the episcopacy laid hands only on those who had already been baptized by a deacon or a presbyter. Thus, the episcopal act was presumed to increase the gift of the Spirit. On the other hand, it is a clear and self-evident deduction that Baptism and what is now known as Confirmation could be done all at one time, provided it was performed by the bishop.

Jerome leaves no doubt as to his conviction that the bishop is indispensable for imparting the fullness of the Spirit:

Non quidem abnuo hanc esse Ecclesiarum consuetudinem, ut ad eos qui longe a majoribus urbibus per presbyteros et disconos baptizati sunt, episcopus ad invocationem Spiritus Sancti manus impositurus excurrat. . . . Quod si hoc loco quaeris quare in Ecclesia baptizatus, nisi per manus episcopi, non accipiat Spiritum sanctum, quem nos asserimus in vero baptimate tribui, disce hanc observationem ex ea auctoritate descendere, quod post ascensum Domini Spiritus sanctus ad apostolos descendit.<sup>11</sup>

From the above, one can see why the Tractarians might well have wished that Christian history began with Jerome. For anyone who might be disturbed by such a commendation of the episcopal office, it should be remembered that we have no way of knowing how far the practices known to Jerome were representative of the whole Christian Church. A strong case could be made that no specific physical practice was consistent throughout the Church during antiquity, beyond the obvious exception of the elements used in Baptism and the Lord's Supper. However, Jerome seems to be speaking of a practice that was at least widespread, as Innocent I (floruit 401-417) tells us:

De consignandis vero infantibus manifestum est,  
non ab alio, quam ab episcopo fieri licet. Nam  
presbyteri licet secundi sint sacerdotes,  
pontificatus tamen apicem non habent. Hoc autem  
pontificium solis deberi episcopis, ut vel  
consignent, vel paracletum Spiritum tradant, non  
solum, consuetudo ecclesiastica demonstrat,  
verum et illa lectio Actuum Apostolorum, quae  
asserit, Petrum et Joannem esse directos, qui  
jam baptizatis traderent Spiritum sanctum.<sup>f2</sup>

Thus, "consignation" is separate from Baptism, administered later, and then only by the bishop.

As we draw to the close of the fifth century, Confirmation has clearly become sacramental throughout the Christian Church, although there was presumably wide variation in the administration, and certainly it was in a form which scarcely resembles Protestant or Roman practice today. Those who feel free to dispense with Confirmation will have to deal with not only the authorities cited above,

but also with such doughty witnesses as Basil (Liber de spiritu sancto 27:66),<sup>13</sup> and with Cyril of Alexandria (Commentarius in Joelem prophetam):

"Ἐθεοὶ τοις ἁγίοις προφήταις, ἐκ τῶν κατὰ μέρος, καὶ πρὸς ἀλίγους ἄγιούς, κομιζεῖν τὸν λόγον ἐπὶ τὰ καθέλου τε καὶ γενεκώστερα. Ταῦτα δέ εἰστι τὰ διὰ Χριστοῦ. ... Η πᾶσα γὰρ Θυμηδία ἡμῶν Χριστὸς, παρ' οὐδὲντας διὰ οὗ πᾶσα πλήρωσις ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῶν οὐρανίων χαρισμάτων χορηγὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτὸν, ὡς ἐν πρωτημοις τε, καὶ δρίμοις δεσμοῖς νοούμενη, καὶ ὡς ἐν σῆται ἔλεῳ, καὶ σίνῃ ληροῖς ὑπερχειμένῳ, καὶ ἐλαίῳ ὑπερβαίνονται ... προειπενήνικται δὲ καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἐλαίου χρεία, συντελοῦσα πρὸς τελείωσιν τοῖς δεδικασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Σίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου Βαπτίσματος."<sup>14</sup>

Last but certainly not least, Hilary of Poitiers (Commentarius in Evangelium Matthei, 4:27)<sup>15</sup> also affirms the sacramental nature of Confirmation.

At this point it is significant to note that none of our ancient authorities have the slightest notion of what Protestants today mean by Confirmation and very little of what the Roman Church currently means by "one of the three sacraments of Christian initiation."<sup>16</sup> However, all the men cited above would generally agree with what is currently being done in the Eastern churches--and presumably has been done since antiquity--in regard to Confirmation--that is, Baptism, Confirmation and the Lord's Supper being simultaneously administered to all initiated infants. Our

ancient authorities primarily thought of Confirmation as a finishing act which completed the gift of the Spirit, and thus was not dependent in any sense upon the reason of the recipient. As is commonly known, the sacraments in the East are referred to as "the mysteries," and Confirmation for them is a sacrament. Since the Reformation, while neither of the warring camps (at least until recently) cared to admit it, both Rome and the Protestants have defined even our differences in terms of the other party and thus Rome has come to see Confirmation in a manner very like our own: the ratification of the baptized child after he or she has been instructed in the faith and possesses sufficient reason to make a deliberate choice. As we leave the period of the early church it is important to realize that the general Protestant understanding--good and valid as it may be--is not the thrust of the ancient writers. They are chiefly fascinated by "life in the Spirit," with all the non-rational loose-ends that volatile phrase implies.

#### The Middle Ages

As we leave antiquity and enter the period from the sixth to the twelfth centuries, we find ourselves on an academic Dover Beach, where the armies may not be ignorant but where they surely "clash by night." It can be safely said that no two authorities agree on the main outline of Confirmation during this period, much less its details. It is at first amusing and then, quickly, rather disgusting to

see how confident Dom Gregory Dix is about his speculations from Nashdom Abbey and then to hear the theories of Nathan Mitchell from the equally unreal setting of Notre Dame's Murphy Liturgical Center--contradicting each other and simultaneously telling us how it really was. Any reader who has at least one foot on terra firma can immediately see that it was then as it is now-- folks "made do." Smarter folks theologized from the "making do." Since my problems today are markedly different from the problems of the same human (Robert Truman Hungerford) five years ago--my words and actions are different today, although bearing a Wittgensteinian "family resemblance" to what I did in that earlier period. In the same manner, the Church for centuries upon centuries confronted (often after being run down in the road by onrushing events) changing times in widely scattered places, and thus Confirmation changed accordingly--without ever being uniform in the first place.

Always, and everywhere, however, it was connected with an increase in the Spirit, whether by chrismation, imposition of hands, or whatever, by virtue of the episcopal office and the appropriate grace conveyed therein. But, the writings of the men who were present at the time or who collated them later (i.e., Gratian and Lombard) all reflect rationalizations of current practice. Once that has been baldly stated, there is nothing particularly shocking or unsavory in the multitude of conflicting reports that emerge from the early medieval writers. It is only when someone

like Dix or Mitchell (or to a lesser extent, a more modest man like Fransen) begins to concoct a "unified field theory" and marshall carefully selected sources to support their various theories, that studying the history of Confirmation becomes "a weariness to the flesh."

An example drawn from the very end of the Middle Ages will illustrate the general understanding of Confirmation from the sixth century until the Reformation. After that example we will consider some (i.e., only a few of the salient) writers which lead up to Aquinas' masterful rationalization of the practice of his day. All of this will bring us to that era of renewed interest in Confirmation which is the basis for all current Roman and Protestant effort on this subject: the Reformation.

Our example is none other than Elizabeth I, regal ancestress of that vaguely pleasant and altogether bourgeois lady who currently resides in Buckingham Palace. The Princess Elizabeth was born at Greenwich Palace on September 7, 1533, and three days later (September 10) she was baptized and confirmed at the Grey Friars' Church, Greenwich. The baptismal celebrant was Stokesley, Bishop of London and the confirmational celebrant was none other than Cranmer himself, who had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury six months before.<sup>17</sup> Thus we see why those who wish to build their confirmational theory solely upon historic precedent (White, the two Mitchells, et al.) are basically arguing for a return to Eastern practice--that is,

all the "Sacraments of Christian initiation" celebrated in one act--and among the Romans, by a bishop. The rationalism and individualism of the Renaissance has vitiated the insistence upon the recipient also being an infant.<sup>18</sup> Was Elizabeth's confirmation a standard medieval (sixth through early sixteenth century) example of the sacrament that is supposed to derive from those two passages in Acts and that one verse in Hebrews?

It was and it wasn't. It was fairly standard for the East, but in the West--which is chiefly what concerns us--there was never uniformity in either rite (including the physical elements used) or in the age of the recipient. Medieval confirmands were sometimes as old as fifteen!<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, some scholars do not date separate confirmational liturgies any earlier than the eleventh century.<sup>19</sup> The discerning reader should notice very carefully what is implied in the previous sentence: Confirmation, in one sense, did not exist until a thousand years after the earthly life of Our Lord. All the theorizing about Confirmation dating back to the Apostles (Dix: "we should think of Confirmation as the New Testament does"<sup>20</sup>) rests solely upon Biblical references to anointing or imposition of hands. It is not until the eve of the Reformation that Innocent VII in 1485 moved to unify the various confirmational practices, resorting to one of the more popular manuals of the day: the Pontifical of Durandus

of Mende.<sup>21</sup> The best summation of the medieval situation is given by N. D. Mitchell:

Throughout this entire period there exists no single western rite of initiation, but rather a collection of local rites similar in structure yet divergent in significant details. Furthermore, these local rites were themselves subject to such a degree of evolution that general assertions about "Roman" or "old Spanish" or "Gallican" rites always need to be nuanced by specific details about particular places at particular times.<sup>22</sup>

Before examining the Confirmational theory of Aquinas, it is important to note that all the significant work of the Middle Ages on this topic (and on whose work Aquinas largely builds) was done by three men--two of whose names we do not know--Pseudo-Eusebius of Emesa, who lived in Gaul during the latter fifth century, and the two ninth century theologians, Pseudo-Melchiades and Rabanus Maurus.

Pseudo-Eusebius teaches, in essence, that Confirmation is an augmenting of Baptism, in that the Holy Spirit "augmentum praestat ad gratiam" the work He began in infant Baptism.<sup>23</sup> Several centuries later the equally anonymous Pseudo-Melchiades developed the theory that Confirmation comes after Baptism in order to strengthen us for the battle against Satan and his hosts: "post baptismum confirmamur ad pugnam."<sup>24</sup> Dix is of the opinion that Pseudo-Melchiades lifted the words quoted above from Pseudo-Eusebius in order to develop the theory found in the Forged Decretals, and the available textual evidence seems to support his contention. Rabanus Maurus then adds the extremely significant

consideration that Confirmation bestows the grace to tell (actually, preach to) others about the gift we received in Baptism: "robur ad praedicandum aliis."<sup>25</sup>

When we come to the Angelic Doctor, what is mainly found is an artful composite of the three men discussed above. As one would expect, Aquinas had no notion that any of the Decretals were forged, that Gratian might in any sense have erred in his compilation or that tradition might have deceived him in regard to his historical precedents (cf., "quod Melchiades Papa scribit"<sup>26</sup>). Much to his credit, Aquinas usually states his basic views succinctly, however much he may expatiate before and after. He certainly lives up to his reputation in regard to Confirmation: "confirmatio est sacramentum plenitudinis gratiae."<sup>27</sup> Thus, he ably sums up what those before him had said: Confirmation gives the fullness of grace which was originally received in Baptism.

#### The Reformation Period

When we enter the period known in some circles as "that great and mighty act of God's sovereign grace--the Reformation," we find that the meaning and understanding of Confirmation in the West undergo a profound change. In the opening years of the Reformation, Luther entertained a low view of Confirmation, partly because the Romanists called all rites sacraments thereby debasing those that were actually instituted by Our Lord, and also because

Confirmation was part of the arsenal at the disposal of the Roman bishops. However, he recovered from his initial disdain of Confirmation (Affeinspeil und Gaukelwerk), and by the end of his ministry commended it in the pedagogical sense. This is one of the many instances where the great Reformer's pastoral concern overcame secondary objections to those edifying rites and practices which the Church has accumulated over the centuries, even though they were not directly instituted by the Lord Jesus Himself. In connection with his intense interest in educating children Luther wrote two of his most famous works (the Large and Small Catechism) and achieved the distinction--according to Stevick--of coining the term "catechism."<sup>28</sup> This is a topic of such seminal significance that a whole chapter in this Project is devoted to catechisms and their history, at which place Luther's commanding position will be further considered.

Another early worker in the field of Lutheran Confirmation was Bucer, whose contributions, until recently, have probably been underestimated, not unlike the input of Engels into what is generally known as Marxism. Bucer is probably the source of the practice which connects Confirmation, catechesis, and First Communion. Repp has remarked in regard to Bucer's innovation:

Here Bucer was influenced also by Erasmus in establishing a confirmation rite. But he did not limit himself, as did Erasmus, to a rite in which the youths themselves made a confession of the faith which their sponsors had made for

them; under Luther's influence he associated the rite also with first Communion. This is the first formal association of the rite<sup>29</sup> of confirmation with the Lord's Supper.

Thus we see that Bucer and Luther developed (i.e., out of their efforts, there developed) the Protestant pattern of Confirmation: instruction usually during puberty with materials especially prepared for youth, and then a public confession "of the faith into which you were baptized" coupled with First Communion.

This pattern is especially significant when one recent student of Reformational catechetical and Confirmational practice remarks: "We find that Reformed practice does not differ substantially from Lutheran."<sup>30</sup> That is also the conclusion of this investigation. Both in their theological writings and in their practice, Calvin and his followers came down hard and continually on the necessity of knowledge accompanying profession of the Christian Faith. While it has been frequently objected that Protestantism lays too heavy a stress on the intellectual side of the Faith, it would nonetheless be hard to object to the way Calvin envisaged reception into full membership:

How I wish that we might have kept the custom which existed among the ancient Christians before this misborn wraith of a sacrament came to birth! Not that it would be a confirmation such as they fancy, which cannot be named without doing injustice to baptism; but a catechizing, in which children or those near adolescence would give an account of their faith before the church. The best method of catechizing would be to have a manual drafted for this exercise, containing and summarizing in simple manner most of the articles of our

religion, on which the whole believers' church ought to agree without controversy. A child often would present himself to the church to declare his confession of faith. He would be examined in every article, and answer to each; if he were ignorant of anything or insufficiently understood it, he would be taught. Thus, while the church looks on as a witness, he would profess the one true and sincere faith in which the believing folk with one mind worship the one God.<sup>31</sup>

As is the case with most revolutionaries, Calvin was eager to point out--even insistent--that he was returning to an earlier, purer practice. As we have seen, that is hardly the case in respect to Confirmation, but there is no doubt that Calvin and his associates all believed what he wrote in the Institutes regarding his view of Confirmation in the early Church:

In early times it was the custom for the children of Christians after they had grown up to be brought before the bishop to fulfill the duty which was required of those who as adults offered themselves for baptism. For the latter sat among the catechumens until, duly instructed in the mysteries of the faith, they were able to make confession of their faith before the bishop and the people. Therefore, those who had been baptized as infants, because they had not made confession of faith before the church, were at the end of their childhood or at the beginning of adolescence again presented by their parents, and were examined by the bishop according to the form of the catechism, which was then in definite form and in common use. But in order that this act, which ought by itself to have been weighty and holy, might have more reverence and dignity, the ceremony of the laying on of hands was also added. Thus, the youth, once his faith was <sup>32</sup>approved, was dismissed with a solemn blessing.

Because of our somewhat better informed historical knowledge, we know that Calvin was engaged in "creative

history," but it is easy to see how in the context of his time the above quotations made good precedents, and were an additional weapon against Rome. Since ancient catechetical works had indeed been produced,<sup>33</sup> and since even in the late twentieth century we have seen how sketchy is our knowledge of actual parochial practice in regard to Confirmation prior to the Reformation--Calvin's very idealized view (i.e., fifth century Cappadocia strikingly resembled sixteenth century Geneva) was not particularly objectionable. It could have been his way of seeing the matter as easily as those of his opponents, if one were to judge from the evidence then available.

It seems evident today that (the Anglo-Catholics notwithstanding) the Church of England imbibed first from Luther and then from Calvin. Luther's works are known to have influenced the early editions of the Prayer Book, and Cranmer especially was influenced by Dr. Martin, perhaps because of his extraordinary command of language in the context of prayer and public worship.<sup>34</sup> In the 1549 edition of the Prayer Book the Confirmation of infants was abolished,<sup>35</sup> which in England was especially significant. Whatever may have been the practice on the Continent, England was a land of not only early Confirmation but even of legally enforced infant Confirmation. As we have seen in the case of the Princess Elizabeth, Confirmation and Baptism celebrated together a few days after birth were known and approved by the hierarchy--but it is not generally known

today, that all English subjects were required to be confirmed by the age of three.<sup>36</sup> As late as 1536 the legitimacy of infant Confirmation had been defended by the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury.<sup>37</sup> Thus the year 1549 was a watershed in every respect when the new rubric in the Prayer Book required that all who are to be confirmed must be able to recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, "and can also answer such questions of this short catechism, as the Bishop (or such as he shall appoint) shall at his discretion appose them in."<sup>38</sup> It is important to note that as early as 1549, the Church of England had a fully Reformational understanding of Confirmation (in direct opposition to its practice of as recent a time as thirteen years earlier in 1536), as is made clear by a further quotation (in the original archaic language) of the 1549 rubrics:

When children come to the years of discretion  
and haue learned what their Godfathers and  
Godmothers promised for them in Baptisme, they  
maye then themselves with their owne consent,  
openly before the churche, ratifie and confesse  
the same, and also promise that by the grace of  
God they wyll euermore endeavour themselues  
faithfully to obserue and kepe suche things, as  
they by their g<sup>od</sup>owne mouth and confession haue  
assented vnto.

Thus we see that with variations in regard to age (all centering on the question of understanding--thus not an actual variation) and with occasional actual variations as to whether or not Confirmation should also be connected with First Communion, the entire magisterial Reformation adopted

essentially the same position on Confirmation. While it lies beyond the scope of our considerations, an excellent case could also be made that the Protestant view has also become the major portion of the Roman view of Confirmation, and therefore what we have been hearing in regard to Confirmation as developed by Luther and Bucer, now characterizes the entire Western Church.

#### Methodism and Confirmation

This writer hopes eventually to do an investigation of John Wesley's views on Confirmation, as none (to my knowledge) currently exists. From what we currently know, it suffices to say that John Wesley affirmed emphatically another of the rubrics from the 1549 Confirmation service:

And that no manne shall thynke that anye detryment shall come to children by differeing of their confirmation: he shall knowe for trueth, that it is certayn by goddes word, that children being Baptised (yf they departe out of this lyfe <sup>40</sup> in their infancye) are vndoubtedly saued.

Not to put too fine a point on it, Wesley seems to have been consumately indifferent on the question of Confirmation. A single example will suffice: John Wesley's tract on Baptism was actually written by his father; however, Samuel Wesley had also written a tract on Confirmation and John did not reprint it.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, as is generally known, Wesley sent no Order of Confirmation to the Methodist Societies in America. Various reasons have been advanced for this, the most compelling of which would

seem to be that John did not think it particularly important and because there were no Anglican bishops in America who might administer it. On the other side of the analytic coin, it must be remembered that Wesley implicitly affirmed Confirmation all his life because he expected all Methodists to be observant Anglicans, who would naturally be confirmed. It seems in many ways that however much the contemporary UMC may have strayed from Father John, we retain in many ways his strange blend of implicit/explicit dualism when approaching a variety of matters, Confirmation being among them. In the 1980 Book of Discipline, Confirmation rates a separate listing in the index and four citations in the body of the Discipline (105, 216.2-.4, 225,408.1).<sup>42</sup> However, until the 1950's, the Methodist parent bodies of the UMC did not even have Confirmational materials.<sup>43</sup>

From this, however, one should not conclude that there was not a rite prior to the '50's. In fact, the Methodist Episcopal Church first instituted a rite for reception of members in 1864 and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did the same in 1866.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, there were catechisms being prepared throughout the mid-to-late nineteenth centuries by the Methodist Episcopal Churches,<sup>45</sup> and within living memory a member of the Ohio East Conference had seen whole Confirmation classes publicly catechized prior to the imposition of hands.<sup>46</sup> Thus, it can be truly said that the United Methodist Church stands in Apostolic Succession, in that both our theory and practice have been confused and

contradictory. Unlike Dix, the Mitchells and other presumably well-meaning spinners of liturgical theory--Methodism has done "whatever seemed good to do" at a given juncture of Time and Space, and thus is firmly within the confused skein of theory and practice which it has pleased the Holy Spirit to spin throughout Christian history.

This writer's position on Confirmation might be called Reformational by way of Rabanus Maurus. This is, the purpose of the Confirmation lessons presented later is to impart the strength to preach to others ("robur ad praedicandum aliis") by means of being instructed oneself. The child is intended to gain confidence in the faith into which he or she was baptized by being taught the basic tenets of Christianity in a clear and simple form. As we shall see in the following chapter, it is the writer's considered opinion that confidence and strength are best produced in young people by means of catechetical instruction.

## CHAPTER III

### CATECHISMS AND CONFIRMATIONAL MATERIALS

In the previous chapter we looked at the confused history of Confirmation theory and practice in the Church. We turn now to a subject of more direct relationship to this project, a historical overview of materials used for training for Confirmation. Such a review is made more difficult because one of the primary types of material, the catechism, was not used exclusively for Confirmation. The catechism as a summary of the faith has a much broader usage in much of the history of the Church, but it is appropriate to look at this history because of its relationship to Confirmation training as such.

To put this educational consideration in its current perspective, Paragraph 225 of the 1980 United Methodist Book of Discipline lays the following responsibility upon all those who are entrusted with the care of children in the United Methodist Church:

It shall be the duty of the pastor, the parents or guardians, and the officers and teachers of the church school to provide training for the children of the church throughout their childhood that will lead to an understanding of the Christian faith, to an appreciation of the privileges and obligations of Church membership, and to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The pastor shall, at least annually, building on the preparation which boys

and girls have received throughout their childhood, organize into classes for confirmation the youth, who, preferably, are completing the sixth grade. This instruction shall be based on materials which the boys and girls have already used and on other resources produced by The United Methodist Church for the purpose of confirmation preparation. Wherever boys and girls so prepared shall give evidence of their own Christian faith and purpose and understanding of the privileges and obligations of Church membership, they may be received into full membership.<sup>47</sup>

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, that provision of the most recent Discipline admirably fulfills the classic Reformational view of Confirmation. Our attention now turns to the materials with which the children will be instructed. While it is not currently the practice, until as recently as 50 years ago, Methodists, like nearly all Christians in the Western Church, were trained by use of catechisms.

#### What Is a "Catechism"?

The best brief description of a catechism is found in the Enciclopedia Cattolica:

Il termine c. viene oggi adoperato ad indicare un breve compendio delle principali verità della fede e morale cristiana, steso in maniera chiara, precisa, facile a comprendere e ritenere e prevalentemente in forma dialogica<sup>48</sup> di domande e risposte fra maestro e discepolo.

The catechetical form--the question and answer--has come down to us from antiquity, where it was one of the favorite pedagogical devices. The most widely known instance of didactic dialogue in antiquity would be Plato's, with

perhaps Cicero's Tuscullan Dialogues coming in a distant second.

#### The Development of the Catechism

In the broadest sense of the word, it is possible to trace the use of catechisms back to the Didache:

Un documento prezioso dell'epoca immediatamente dopo il tempo apostolico e la Didache, la quale nei primi capitoli offre un modello d'una c.<sup>49</sup> indirizzata ai catecumeni prima del Battesimo.

However, the term itself did not gain particularly wide currency until the time of the Cappadocian Fathers<sup>50</sup> and in the sense defined at the beginning of this chapter, did not actually become operative until the Middle Ages. While motivations for writing presumably varied, there seems to have been a widespread recognition throughout the Western Church during the High Middle Ages that the mass of Christians were essentially uninstructed in the fundamentals of the Faith. Both before and after the Conciliar Movement, various theologians and members of the hierarchy made efforts to reach the masses through catechisms:

Il sec. XIV ci offre, tra le altre, due opere degne di nota: il Catechismus Vauriensis e il Lay Folks Catechism. Il Catechismus Vauriensis rappresenta il primo testo, a cui veramente compete il nome di c. e lo dobbiamo alle decisioni del Sinodo principale di Lavaur, presso Narbona, tenuto nel 1369. Alla sua composizione molto contribuirono gli opuscoli di s. Tommaso; ma la dottrina è esposta in un ordine strettamente logico e in modo completo. Il Lay Folks Catechism fu composto dal card. Thoresby, arcivescovo di York, e pubblicato in latino e in inglese nel 1357 per attuare la costituzione (1281) di J. Peckham, arcivescovo di Canterbury, il quale aveva ordinato che ogni

sacerdote quattro volte all'anno, spiegasse al popolo, "vulgariter, absque cuiuslibet subtilitatis textura phantastica" il Credo, i Sacramenti, i due precetti della carità, i sette peccati capitali e le sette virtù (teologali e cardinali) e aveva pure emanato una breva istruzione sui singoli punti da servire come traccia.<sup>51</sup>

While "vulgariter" may have been the desired end, it was not to be achieved until the time of Luther, even though men as mighty as Gerson labored in the catechetical quarry:

Gerson regte die Abfassung einer Summa doctrinae für das Volk an, die von der Synode v. Tortossa (1429) verwirklicht wurde (verschollen). Sein Opus tripartitum enthält die meistens katechet. Lehrstücke.<sup>52</sup>

It would be no exaggeration to say that even as the Roman efforts at reform in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were largely ineffectual, so were the late medieval efforts at writing effective catechisms. Good as they may have been--and the men who wrote them were excellent--they did not penetrate the masses of Christendom. As one secular student of catechetical work has written:

All these efforts were superseded in 1529 with the publication of Luther's Small Catechism, perhaps the most influential book produced by any Reformer.<sup>53</sup>

So remarkable were both the lucidity and the impact of the great Reformer's Small Catechism, that even as hostile an analyst as a professor in the Gregorian Institute has remarked:

Los meritos catequisticos del Reformador son inmensos.<sup>54</sup>

Why Luther's catechetical works had such an immense impact cannot be considered at length in this chapter, but it is sufficiently important to stress at this point--even if it leads to redundancy later--that all subsequent work in Western catechetics rests heavily upon Luther, and this came about not only because of the strength of his exposition, but also because the influence of his writing upon the German people was immediately perceived by both friend and foe.

En sus Catecismos reveló Lutero cualidades no vulgares de pedagogo y rara habilidad para darse a entender a los niños y a la gente sencilla. . . . Con tan draconianas medidas, la catequización del país penetró profundamente.<sup>55</sup>

The obvious success of the Protestant catechisms, of which Luther's was the most dreaded, drove Trent to formulate their own catechism in opposition to the Reformers.<sup>56</sup> In addition to polemics against the Protestants, the Tridentine catechism (Catechismus Romanus) was also designed to define the Roman faith for the average parish priest:

Anzi ancor prima della Riforma protestante, perché dell'ignoranza religiosa altri eretici anteriori già avevano approfittato. Anzi il Concilio stesso non ebbe solo una funzione antiprotestante, ma concentrò e organizzò le molte energie frammentarie, già dispiegate si qua e là sotto la spinta di un desiderio assai diffuso di riforma cattolica.<sup>57</sup>

In the respect that it was designed mainly for clergy, the Roman Catechism more closely resembled the catechetical work of the Cappadocian Fathers. It is significant that while

Roman theologians did produce notable catechetical works (which we will briefly consider below, and one of which influenced Wesley), the Protestants have always held the field in this endeavor, perhaps because their efforts--especially in the early period--were consciously directed at the portion of the laity whom Garcia-Villoslada termed "la gente sencilla."

Although the Catechismus Romanus was intended for the parochial clergy, Roman theologians were not remiss in attempting to develop instruction for the laity. The most successful, if numbers give us any insight into influence, was Peter Canisius:

Unter den über 30 Werken des Heiligen ragt hervor sein dreifacher Katechismus: der grosse für Gebildete mit 211, später 222 Fragen: Summa doctrinae christianaæ, 1555; der mittlere für Gymnasiasten mit 122: Catechismus parvus catholicorum, 1558; der kleinste mit 59 Fragen für Kinder und das Volk, 1556. Die mittlere Fassung gilt als die beste. Beim Tode des Canisius war sein Katechismus bereits in über 200 Auflagen verbreitet und in 12 Sprachen übersetzt. Er sicherte für lange Zeit die unverrückbare Grundlage der relig. Erziehung für alle Altersstufen.

Even so, the Roman attempts never matched the influence of either Luther's or of the potent Reformed efforts, such as the Heidelberg Catechism (admitted even by the Romans to be "a minor masterpiece"<sup>59</sup>), and that catechism which has probably had the largest cultural influence--direct and indirect--on American history: The Westminster Catechism.

### Anglican Catechisms

It is only when we come to that (presumably) Providential blending of Luther and Calvin--the Church of England--that we find catechetical efforts done by Protestants which resemble those of the Roman communion, at least in their influence. That is, there was serious work done by exceptional men, but their influence is difficult to gauge, other than to say it seems to have been less than that achieved by the Continental Protestants. Even so, it certainly penetrated the popular mind of England to some extent, for Shakespeare has Hamlet allude to the Anglican Catechism when he refers to "these pickers and stealers,"<sup>60</sup> thereby indicating that the Catechism was a "known quantity" to all classes of the London audience.

The positioning of the Anglican Catechism was especially happy, as it came in successive editions in between the Baptismal and Confirmational services. While it has been described, perhaps justly, by some commentators as "pedestrian,"<sup>61</sup> one is reminded by St. Paul in II Corinthians 5:7 that we are to "walk by faith" and thus a down-to-earth treatment of the Faith may be the best. One is especially persuaded of the quality involved in the "pedestrian" approach, when the alternative is considered. One Roman commentator thinks well of the "alternate text" (as it were), prepared by the Dean of St. Paul's:

Alexander Nowell prepared a more adequate catechism (written in 1562 but officially approved only in 1570, after many revisions).

Until it was supplanted by the Westminster Catechism in 1647, Nowell's Catechism saw more than forty editions. After<sup>62</sup> the Restoration, it was again in great demand.

The wisdom displayed by the Church of England in choosing the "pedestrian" version is exemplified by comparing their respective treatments of the Fifth Commandment. Nowell says (in part!):

M. What shall we then say of them that be disobedient to parents or magistrates, or do misuse them, yea, or kill them?

S. Commonly all such do either continue a most vile and miserable life, or lose it most shamefully, being taken out of it with untimely and cruel death, or infamous execution. And not only in this life, but also in the world to come, they shall forever suffer the everlasting punishment of their ungodliness. For if we be forbidden by the commandment of God, as here next followeth, to hurt any men, be they never so much estranged from us, yea, even our adversaries and deadly enemies, much more to kill them; surely it is easy to perceive how much we ought to forbear and beware of all doing of any injury to our parents, of whom we receive our life, inheritance, liberty, and country. And since it is notably well said by the wise men in old time, that natural duty may be broken with a look, and that it is a most heinous wickedness to offend his parents with word or speech; what punishment can be found sharp enough for him that shall offer death to his parent, for whom himself ought to have been content to die by the law of God and man, if need so required?<sup>63</sup>

Certainly a Christian answer, but more of a meditation than a statement that could be committed to memory, especially by a young person. In contrast, the Anglican Offices of Instruction, give the explanation of the Fifth Commandment as follows:

To love, honour, and help my father and mother:  
 To honour and obey the civil authority: To  
 submit myself to all my governors, teachers,  
 spiritual pastors and masters: And to order  
 myself in that lowliness and reverence which  
 becometh a servant of God.<sup>64</sup>

Whether the local pastor used the standard Anglican Catechism or an approved alternative (such as Nowell's), it certainly cannot be said that the hierarchy of the Church of England entertained indifference toward catechesis:

The Curate of every Parish shall diligently upon Sundays and Holy-days, after the Second Lesson at Evening Prayer openly in the Church instruct, and examine so many children of his parish sent unto him as he shall think convenient in some part of this Catechism.<sup>65</sup>

This determination to see the general populace instructed seems to have characterized the entire Western Church after the first paroxysms of the Reformation had passed, for in 1563, the Council of Trent ruled:

quos ad praedicationis munus assument, in aliis autem ecclesiis per parochos sive, iis impeditis, per alios ab episcopo, impensis eorum, qui eas praestare vel tenentur vel solent, deputandos, in civitate aut quacumque parte diocesis censemunt expedire, saltem omnibus Dominicis et solemnibus diebus festis, tempore autem ieiuniorum, Quadragesimae, et Adventus Domini quotidie vel saltem tribus in hebdomada diebus, si ita oportere duxerint, sacras Scripturas divinamque legem annuntient, et alias quotiescumque id opportune fieri posse iudicaverint. Moneatque episcopus populum diligenter, teneri unumquemque, parochiae suae interesse, ubi id commode fieri potest, ad audiendum verbum Dei. Nullus autem saecularis, sive regularis, etiam in ecclesiis suorum ordinum, contradicente episcopo praedicare praesumat. Iidem etiam saltem Dominicis et aliis festivis diebus, pueros in singulis quos spectabit, doceri curabunt et, si opus sit, etiam per censuras ecclesiasticas compellent.

Non obstantibus privilegiis et  
consuetudinibus.<sup>66</sup>

As one might imagine, catechizing and instruction were often matters of English ecclesiastical law, especially after the hot debates regarding Confirmation which took place at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604.<sup>67</sup> The result was a resounding victory for both Confirmation and catechizing, with Canon 59 requiring no less than half an hour to be spent every Sunday.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, there were severe penalties attached to any lazy or heretical clergy who would not instruct the children of the parish. If the pastor were twice reported as not catechizing, and the Bishop found this to be a true report, the man was suspended, and if it occurred a third time, he was excommunicated.<sup>69</sup> It is to be further remembered that unlike American polity, the Canons of 1604 had the force of civil law throughout the realm:

In the time of Charles II it was ruled in the King's Bench that the canons of 1604 were of force, on the ground of the statute of the 25th of Henry VIII, provided they did not impugn the common law or the royal prerogative. The old canon law was part of the law of the land; and by the 25th of Henry VIII all canons were continued, except such as were prejudicial to the prerogative or the laws of the realm. When, therefore, a canon is within the meaning of the act of the 25th of Henry VIII, it is still part of the common law.<sup>70</sup>

#### John Wesley and The Catechism

It was into this legally sanctioned and enforced atmosphere of catechetics that Wesley was born. As is the case with most extraordinary people, it is difficult to

gauge the influence of external forces upon his development, especially in so oblique and, if the pious reader will excuse the writer, so conspiratorial a character. That he shared all the intense interest in stamping out ignorance in the English Church (of which America was then a part) which is displayed in the legal statutes cited above, is obvious from the conduct of his entire life, especially in regard to his ceaseless publishing endeavors. However, his views on catechizing, like his views on Confirmation, are difficult to assess.

He did prepare a catechism, which in his usual manner he lifted from someone else--in this case the Roman abbot, Claude Fleury. Wesley expunged the Roman elements from Fleury's Historical Catechism ("Of Tonsure," "Indulgences, and Purgatory," etc.), but very significantly, retained the vivid eschatological features which seem to have been favorite topics of the learned abbot. Those who wish to maintain (as this writer has often heard in sermons throughout the United States) that Wesley and the early Methodists were primarily interested in improving man's earthly lot, would do well to hear these words from the end of Lesson XI:

At the end of the world they who sleep in the  
Dust of the Earth shall awake; some to  
everlasting Life, others to Reproach, which they  
shall see forever. . . . The Damn'd will have  
Bodies, which will <sup>only</sup> serve to augment their  
eternal Punishment.

In Lesson XII Fleury (and Wesley) take the same view as Aquinas, regarding the pleasures Christians shall enjoy in statu gloriae, not the least of which shall be to view the tortures of the damned:

Meanwhile they shall see those who have been unfaithful to God, in Everlasting Death, where their Worm shall never die, and their Fire shall never be extinguish'd. This is the second Death, far worse than the First by reason that the Soul shall be continually in a State of Death, forever separated from God who is her Life: In bitter Grief, and in furious Rage,<sup>72</sup> to see that she is lost through her own Fault.

One can also see in that last sentence that Wesley was fond of a catechism which clearly made damnation the result of the sinner's own choice, rather than being numbered among the Reprobate due to God's inscrutable decree. Sin for Fleury is culpability and this is only possible for those who are free to choose, and thus to be at fault.

Fleury's catechism, as expurgated by Wesley, made little or no impression in the American societies, but it does provide the entrée for considering an important point. As one Roman observer has written:

The available evidence might not, even under the most diligent study, tell us more than part of what we would like to know. How did pastors, who were not leaders and who did not write books, teach? How methodically was confirmation observed in those generations for which episcopal and parochial records have not been given scholarly examination? Often one assumes that ways to which we are accustomed have always been followed in our traditions; attention needs to be given to the extent to which our familiar practices<sup>73</sup> have been shaped by the nineteenth century.

Early Methodist Catechetics

At the present time very little is known about the training of children in early Methodism--beyond Wesley's experiment at Kingswood--and as one might imagine, it is next to impossible to make any inclusive statement about practices along the frontier. This writer has spent long years living in locations as scattered as southern Arizona, Tidewater Virginia, and the Piney Woods of East Texas--as well as the religious medley of the seminary at Southern Methodist University--and can attest that theologically there is considerable unity among American Methodists; but there is almost none in regard to parochial practice. We must, therefore, restrict ourselves to the existing documents, without any clear knowledge of how widely they were utilized. However, it seems a reasonable assumption that written instruments such as catechisms did not penetrate the rural bulk of Methodism to any great extent. The Methodist hymnals did, and to a lesser extent the Sunday School literature out of the denominational publishing house, but beyond those two standards, it is doubtful that the catechetical aids ever had even the circulation of the various conference newspapers (The Richmond Advocate, etc.), and those organs were probably read only by the two or three prominent members of each rural congregation.

The written aids to the training of children begin appearing in the mid-nineteenth century, and come as an import. The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist

Episcopal Church, South, adopted the Wesleyan Catechism as the basis of training for children beyond the Sunday School instruction and even expressed the desire that it be used in Sunday Schools. In 1861, the venerable Thomas Summers revised the Wesleyan Catechism, mainly in the form of additional material such as hymns, and by the inclusion of Bishop Capers' Catechism for the Use of the Methodist Missions. In the Introduction, Bishop Pierce makes several telling statements that have characterized Methodist problems in the continuity of doctrine from his time to ours:

The Book Editor of the M.E. Church, South, deserves the thanks of the preachers and people, the parents and children of Southern Methodism, for this compilation of Catechisms. Such a book has been greatly needed, and is destined, now that it has been prepared, to do great service in the religious training of the young. Adapted to childhood and youth, it will aid parents in the instruction of their children; and to the intelligent, earnest Sunday-school teacher will prove invaluable in meeting the intellectual demands of his advancing pupils, from the infant scholars to the members of the Bible class. I sincerely trust it will be universally adopted by our people, introduced into all our schools and families, and made a textbook in the course of study for preachers on trial in our Annual Conferences. If the children of our Connection are well taught in the elementary ideas and principles here developed, the profiting of the church will be patent to all, in a more stable, intelligent, and spiritual membership. The ministry will be roused to self-improvement, in order to meet the wants of congregations already well taught in the doctrines, morals, and institutions of Christianity, and the piety of the people grow more active, uniform, and reliable. The true idea of the Church will become at last a living incarnation--an orthodox ministry, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost;" a membership well instructed and ready for every

good work, and children taught of God--trained in the knowledge and love of spiritual things, made examples of Scripture truth, and inheritors of Divine promise. . . . The issue of this book of Cathechisms meets our great want, and cuts off the last excuse for neglect. . . . With all our zeal and enterprise as a Church, and notwithstanding our actual achievements in the broad world of action, we have been comparatively delinquent in our attention to our children. . . . Every preacher, every parent, is here supplied with arms and ammunition to beat back the powers of darkness, and to occupy the hearts of the young for God and the Church. Heaven help us all to do our duty, and subdue the world to the obedience of faith.<sup>74</sup>

Even a cursory reading of Bishop Pierce's remarks gives one the tema con variazioni of American Methodism: ignorance and instability in the setting of power and success. As one who has labored for eight years in the backwaters of the United Methodist Church, this writer has seen the bitter fruit come to harvest, which the prescient Bishop tried to nip in the bud. Ours is a denomination whose greatest loyalty tends to be centered on individual buildings and family graveyards, because the emotional experience which gave us the great grandparents in droves and herds, could not be intellectually communicated to the descendants. Every Baptist meeting house and independent conventicle is filled with apostate Methodists who delight in cursing and maligning their spiritual sire, because--in addition to the direct action of Satan--the young apostates-to-be were not rigorously trained.

At this point it would be advisable to see how thoroughly Bishop Pierce and Book Editor Summers intended to

catechize the children. The Wesleyan Catechism is divided into two parts: "for those of tender years" (under age 7) and "No. II--In this catechism the principles of the First Catechism are enlarged; and Scripture proofs are placed under the answer, where they can receive appropriate illustrations from the word of God."<sup>75</sup> The First Catechism (through age 6) contains seven sections, an appendix and "Prayers For Little Children:"

- I. "Of God
- II. Of The Creation Of Man
- III. Of The Fall Of Man
- IV. Of The Redemption Of Man
- V. Of Heaven And Hell
- VI. Of Our Duty To God And Man
- VII. The Lord's Prayer, Creed, And Ten Commandments

Appendix: A Short Catechism Of Scripture Names"<sup>76</sup>

For those seven and older, the training becomes even more rigorous, as seen from three questions in Section III ("Of The Fall Of Man"):

- Q. Into what state did the fall bring mankind?
- A. The fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery.  
Rom. v. 12. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."
- Q. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that state into which man fell?  
A. It consists in the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin, together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.  
Rom. v. 19. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."  
Rom. iii. 10. "There is not one righteous, no, not one."

- Ps. li. 5. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."
- Q. In what consists the misery of that state into which man fell?
- A. All mankind being born in sin, and following the devices and desires of their own corrupt hearts, are under the wrath and curse of God, and so are made liable to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell hereafter.
- Eph. ii. 3. "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."
- Gal. iii. 10. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."<sup>77</sup>

Later Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren Confirmational Resources

With the elevation to Glory of "mighty men of valor" like Bishops Capers and Pierce, and Book Editor Summers, the educational efforts of episcopal Methodism decidedly declined. In the 1920's a "Junior Catechism" was produced (and known to have circulated throughout the Southwest from Oklahoma to Arizona)<sup>78</sup> but in a watered-down version from the rigors of the old Wesleyan Catechism.

During the mid-sixties there was a brief flicker of interest in catechetics in regard to parochial instruction at the seminary of Southern Methodist University. The noted contemporary theologian, Dr. John Deschner, advised younger ministers to write their own courses of initiation based on the old catechisms:

Although our church membership manuals offer some guidance, and although you are enjoined by our Discipline to use these manuals in membership instruction, I am going to risk suggesting a clarifying look at a much more

ancient tradition of initiatory teaching, that of the catechism. . . . Those who are looking for clarity in the teaching ministry which precedes church membership could do much worse than study these old catechetical rubrics, and learn to compose contemporary initiatory courses as simple and as profound in their content.<sup>79</sup>

However, nothing of substance is known to have come out of his proposal.

Beginning in 1960, The Methodist Church began to produce in large quantities a unified Confirmation series, in which they were possibly influenced by the Evangelical United Brethren, who with their German heritage, were more Confirmationally minded. The following summary of the content rests nearly in toto upon the pioneer work done by Dr. Howard Grimes at Southern Methodist University, and is to this writer's knowledge the only extant precis of Methodist Confirmational resources between 1960 and 1980:

Confirmational Resources: The Methodist Church (1960)

Boys and Girls

1. Children of God
2. Why Do People Sin?
3. How Jesus Christ Saves Men from Sin
4. Responding to God's Love and Purposes
5. Helps in Living the Christian Life
6. The Christian Church (Nature of Church, Creeds)
7. The Beginnings of the Christian Church
8. The Methodist Church
9. Confirmation/Reception
10. Being a Church Member
11. Our Local Church/Denomination
12. World-wide Work of The Methodist Church

Young People and Adults

- I. Christian Beliefs
  - 1. God
  - 2. Jesus Christ
  - 3. Holy Spirit
  - 4. God's Plan for Us
- II. The Christian Guidebook
  - 5. Understanding
- III. The Christian Church
  - 6. Our Christian Heritage (History)
  - 7. Our Methodist Heritage
  - 8. Our Church at Worship
- IV. The Christian in Action
  - 9. Kingdom
  - 10. Mission
  - 11. At Work (Local, Denominational)
- V. Christian Responsibility
  - 12. Personal Commitment
  - 13. Christian Growth

Among many other problems that just a schematic listing indicates--if the Church is not "active" when we are worshipping--then what are we? The dichotomizing which naturally flows from the heavy influx of rationalism and Boston Personalism is thus bearing its bitter fruit.

The differing emphases at that time current in the old Evangelical United Brethren are clear in the more fully developed topics and more conceptually integrated plan they were using at the time of Unification:

Juniors

What A Christian Believes:

God and His World; God Made Man;  
 The Bible and Its Message; Man Does Wrong;  
 Then Jesus Came; Jesus, Our Savior; God Is  
 With Us; Life Goes On.

How A Christian Lives

Being a Christian at Home; A Christian  
 at Work, at Play; Learning and Worshipping  
 at Church; Prayer--the Lord's Prayer; Using  
 The Bible; Ten Commandments; God and the  
 Christian; Witness.

A Christian and His Church

What the Church Is; Around the World;  
Evangelical United Brethren Church; Mission;  
Your Own Church; At Worship; Sacraments;  
Becoming a Church Member.

Junior HighsThe Christian Faith

God and Creation; The Bible; Sin;  
The Lord Jesus and God's Love;  
Salvation Through Faith; The Holy Spirit;  
The Christian Hope; The Apostles' Creed.

The Christian Life

Living as a Christian; Ten Commandments;  
Beatitudes; The Lord's Prayer; Devotional Life;  
Stewardship; Relationships; Giving my Life to Christ.

The Christian Church

Story of the Church (general); Story of the  
Church (EUB); Our Church Home (building); Church  
at Work; Sacraments; Worship; Days and Seasons;  
Teaching Evangelism and Mission; Uniting With the Church.

Senior HighsThe Apostles' Creed

God the Father; Jesus Christ and Redemption;  
The Holy Spirit and Sanctification; The Church  
and Its Work; The Fellowship of Christians;  
Personal Salvation; The Resurrection of the  
Body; Immortality.

The Ten Commandments

Duties Toward God (1, 2, 3, 4): Duties Toward Our  
Fellowmen (5-10); The Summary Commandments:  
Great Commandment, Golden Rule, New Commandment.

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer; The Pattern Prayer; Salutation; Petition;  
Doxology.

The Bible

6 sections

In 1977 the UMC brought out the latest series of  
Confirmational material and the doctrinal dilution is again  
evident in a schematic listing:

Younger ConfirmandsConfirming My Faith

1. Starting Together
2. Experiencing God
3. God Claims Us
4. Giving Ourselves
5. Enjoying Worship
6. Interpreting the Bible
7. United Methodists
8. One Way and Many Ways
9. Christian Fellowship
10. The Joy of Salvation
11. Being in Ministry
12. Choose Faith
13. The Celebration

Senior High/AdultsThe Way

1. One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism
2. God With Us
3. Christ, Our Way to God
4. Christ, God's Way to Humanity
5. The Bible: Getting to Know God
6. Our Beliefs: Guides for the Journey
7. Worship and the Sacraments
8. Disciplines of a Faithful Life
9. Doing Faith
10. A Crowd of Witnesses
11. The United Methodists
12. The Church and Its Mission
13. The End (Eschatology, Eternal Life)

With the advent of "pluralism" it becomes increasingly difficult not only to separate black from white, but gray from gray; however, it is both accurate and true that the materials of 1977 have made a huge departure from those of 1861. To take only the raison d'être of the Faith ( $\text{εἰ }\text{ἐν τῷ}$   
 $\zeta\omegaῇ \tauοῦτῃ \xi\text{ν} \text{Χριστῷ λατικότες ἐσμὲν μόνον ἐλεεινότεροι πάντας... ἐσμέν}^{80}$ ), and thus using eschatology as the touchstone, we find the following pronounced differences:

1861 (Section IX: Death And Judgment)

- Q. What is death?  
 A. The separation of the soul from the body.
- Q. Will all men die?  
 A. All but those who shall be alive at Christ's second coming to judge the world.
- Q. Is it not a fearful thing to die?  
 A. It is to all but true Christians.
- Q. When will Christ appear to judge the world?  
 A. When all the prophecies in the holy word of God shall have been accomplished, and the gospel shall have been preached to all nations.
- Matthew v. 18. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.
- Matthew xxiv. 14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.
- Q. In what manner will Christ come to judge the world?  
 A. Suddenly, and in pomp and great glory.
- I Thess. v. 2. The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
- Rev. i. 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.
- I Thess. iv. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.
- Q. Will all men be brought before him to be judged?  
 A. They will; not only those who are alive at his coming, but all the dead shall be raised up and stand before him.
- Acts xxiv. 15. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.
- Rev. xx. 12. I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
- Q. How will Christ the Judge dispose of men, and deal with them, at the day of judgment?  
 A. He will place the righteous on his right hand, and the wicked on his left.
- Matthew xxv. 32, 33. He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.

1977 (13: The End)

What does the Christian faith have to say about the end of the world and the future we face? Frankly, we United

Methodists do not believe speculation about the end of the world is a major issue for us. When the disciples asked the risen Christ how or when the world would end, he said, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority" (Acts 1:7). In other words, speculation on such matters is not very helpful for the practical, day-to-day living of the Christian life. Like our founder, John Wesley, we are a practical people. In general, we have tried to fix our attention on things of Christ that apply to life here<sup>82</sup> and now rather than on speculation about tomorrow.

1861 (Section IX: Death And Judgment, continued)

- Q. Will the actions of men be brought into judgment?
- A. God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Ecc. xii. 14.
- Q. What sentence will Christ pronounce on the wicked?
- A. Matt. xxv. 41. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
- Q. What sentence will he pronounce on the righteous?
- A. Matt. xxv. 34. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
- Q. What then shall take place?
- A. The world shall be destroyed by fire, and the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal; the misery of the former, and the happiness of the latter, being equally endless. Rev. xx. 11. "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." 2 Pet. iii. 10. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up."
- Ps. ix. 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."
- Rev. xxi. 4. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."<sup>83</sup>

1977 (13: The End, continued)

Unfortunately, when many hear the phrase "last judgment" or "day of judgment," they think in purely negative terms. They are fearful of some future time of reckoning. Admittedly, it is not a pleasant thought to think that someday we shall be forced to look back honestly on the lives God has given us, all the gifts that have been

entrusted to us, all the blessings and benefits and be told to render account. Whether God will punish us for our irresponsibility or not, for most of us it will be punishment enough to be in the presence of the divine love and realize how our lives have thwarted that love. This is the bad news of judgment.<sup>84</sup>

If one defines heresy as omission, then the current materials are clearly heretical; if one considers historical distortion a good thing, then the 1977 effort is very good indeed.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, we find that the catechism has been the basic tool of the Faith restored at the Reformation. It is further evident that American Methodism has remained a true child of the Church of England, and of Father John, in that we have had very complete catechetical resources, but have put them to uncertain uses and with application which has been less than intense. At the present time, it is objectively evident that the current material used for United Methodist confirmands bears little resemblance not only to that which has been prepared by all Protestants since the time of Martin Luther, but that it bears an equally slight resemblance to that which was episcopally approved for the Church a hundred years ago.

As with the emotional attachment that first generated this writer's interest in catechetics, it is again a visceral reaction that prompts my rejection of the current United Methodist Confirmational resources. On the secondary level, it angers the writer to see history distorted. On

the primary level, "in the deep soundings of the heart," I am not willing to teach others what I know to be deficient. I am too proud to be part of something which is obviously second-rate. This writer had seen most of what he loved die by the time he reached seminary, and is thus not satisfied by anything except eschatology. Harnack remarked of Luther, "like all earnest Christians, he was eschatologically determined."<sup>85</sup> It was for those two reasons that I developed the material we will now consider in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONTENT OF THE CATECHISM

#### Introduction

When a person becomes interested in an alternative to the prevailing practice in any given field of human endeavor, the obvious question is "Why?" This writer is intensely dissatisfied with the current United Methodist Confirmation materials for a variety of reasons the more visceral of which were broached at the end of Chapter III. However, the chief among them on the vocational level is the everyday pastoral concern for clear norms to guide one's parishioners. As we have seen in the previous chapter, in former times Methodism, along with the rest of mainline Protestantism, used the catechism as a means of inculcating clear guidelines for daily faith and practice. This pastor has found that the current Confirmation materials out of Nashville do not provide that daily guidance in the concrete manner that human nature both desires and requires.

The writer has also found the Nashville material sadly deficient in speaking to those whom William James described as "sick souls."<sup>86</sup> The materials currently available for confirmation instruction in the United Methodist Church do

not reflect the strong, underlying current of Protestantism that is concerned with the teleological dimension of the Christian Faith. More people than Nashville seems to realize are daily concerned with the question, "What is the point of all this?" It is thus a union of practical and psychological needs that moved this writer to formulate an alternative to current practice.

#### The Theological Point of View

One of the simultaneously interesting and amusing aspects of studying theology is the odium theologicum which becomes apparent when one theological writer assails another for his lack of Biblical integrity. From Tillich to Falwell, all theological writers in the Christian West invoke the Bible and thus little is learned by the reader, and less is communicated by the writer, when the term "Biblical content" is used--unless the psychological Sitz im Leben is made clear. In order to understand the particular Biblical content in this writer's Confirmation lessons, the reader should know that a major psychological and epistemological component is the acceptance of Wittgenstein's "Die Welt ist unabhängig von meinem Willen."<sup>87</sup> The world is independent of my will and of my perception, and thus any meaningful action by any individual must rest upon a knowledge of objective reality, unpalatable though that reality be.

Because this writer is committed to the position of Protestant Orthodoxy, he is therefore convinced that the Bible is true and binding, whether or not it is accepted by any given individual. While that may seem a rather mundane statement--perhaps even tautological--it nonetheless has profound methodological implications that directly inform both the content and the structure of the lessons. When one explicates his theology of Scripture, he obviously speaks sub sigillo, about himself. To "unpack" both myself and the concomitant Vorverständnis, one could not do better than to quote a line commonly attributed to Bossuet:

When I think of the vast ages when I did not exist, and contemplate the infinite time when I shall not exist,<sup>88</sup> I am even now as nothing.

Less elegantly but more in the focus of considering pedagogical matters, Bertrand Russell is reported to have remarked during a BBC broadcast:

Despite all the noonday brilliance of man's achievements, the entire enterprise is doomed to perish in the guttering light of the small star that heats this planet.

Whether one begins with Entropy and the Wärmetod which is its inevitable conclusion, or by passing a graveyard and knowing that in among the markers there is a stone for me, the conclusion is the same and Ecclesiastes 1:13 said it best: "It is an unhappy business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with."

Among the minor distractions which are touted as amelioratives to the contemplation of our dusty demise, none

receives a better press than Love. However, good as that multifaceted experience may be in all its various forms, to suggest it as anything other than a lubricant and an anodyne to the human condition, is like considering three fingers of Cutty Sark sufficient to see one through an amputation. In short, we know both too much and too little; unlike the animals, we know death is our end, and yet that knowledge leaves us sunk in Sichlosigkeit.

Out of that Sitz im Leben it is not altogether surprising that the writer of this project is an Orthodox Protestant of the Jena School, whose chief literary monument is Gerhard's Loci theologici. Born out of the combination of general Lutheran voluntarism and the specific sufferings of the Thirty Years War, the detailed Orthodoxy of Jena combines a heavy emphasis on human effort with an equal resignation to God's will. Insofar as Heidegger was correct in asserting "everyman is constantly accompanied by a shadow," it would be the light of the Reformation, as focused through Jena and Gerhard, that shines upon this tenebrous writer. While that shadow is necessarily deformed, both because of the one who casts it and because of the nature of optics after the Fall--that does not invalidate the Light which makes the shadow possible. As Saint John tells us, "καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνεται, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸν οὐ κατέλαβεν ."<sup>89</sup>

Due to the fact that American Fundamentalism (in all its strange manifestations) is somewhat better known at the

moment than Protestant Orthodoxy, it would be advisable to add a few comments on the nature of ars interpretandi, since Ebeling was correct when he said that hermeneutics functions in order to remove obstacles to the "speech event." The writer of this project is of the opinion that the Bible is primarily for preaching and that preaching is the life of the Church. While strongly advocating, and privately practicing, devotional Bible study, and while steadfastly maintaining the Wesleyan high view of the sacraments, this writer must assert the conviction that these practices arise out of the Body of Christ which proclamation makes possible. Pietism is anathema to the writer of this project and the idea of "going to church on TV" (as millions do who never darken the local parish doors) is, in the literal sense, heretical. Thus, the Confirmation instruction is not primarily aimed at the production of morality, although that is certainly desired. Nor are these lessons primarily intended to develop the interior life of the young Christian--good and honorable as that goal is. Rather, they aim at the union of faith and morality ("faith active in love") which is possible only in the context of participation in the parochial life of the Church.

#### The Biblical Point of View

It is important to realize, in light of the preceding section, that this writer does hold the Orthodox Protestant view of II Timothy 3:16, and thus is not a crypto-Roman,

with the view of the Bible (not unlike Barth's) which means fallible and yet inspired. The revealed Word is indeed "divina et infallibus historia" (contra Barth and Rome), rather than Barth's celebrated "witness to revelation."<sup>90</sup> Not to put too fine a point on it: this writer is not a "neo-Evangelical" who waffles on the central point of Protestant Orthodoxy.

The Bible is to be studied in the original languages, according to Luther's oft-quoted dictum, "Primum grammatica videamus, verum ea theologica." Since that long, hard Book contains not only shocking and dull passages, but also hundreds that are shockingly dull, it is wise to keep in mind another of Luther's dicta: "Duplex claritas et duplex obscuritas." The perspicuity of Scripture ("sui ipsius interpres") is what enables the Christian reader to make semi-sense out of much that would otherwise be "a dark tale, darkly told." The emphasis on Christian should be noted, as it is not possible that the Bible could be salvifically intelligible without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. At this point the reader is asked to excuse a quotation from a tainted source (Reformed dogmatics--in this case, Heiden): "Testificatio et obsignatio Spiritus in cordibus fidelium."<sup>91</sup>

This understanding of the pneumatological basis of interpretation also explains why the labors of past Protestant interpreters and catechists count so heavily in the formation of this series of lessons. This writer

presumes that he is not the first Christian. Since there is an overwhelming similarity of not only theme, but also of treatment, among all the Protestant catechisms, this project has been strongly influenced by those who did similar labors in the past and "who now rest from their labors."

The discerning reader will at this point wish to inquire about the Auswahlprinzip which has guided not only the interpretation of the passages found in the lessons, but also their selection. As one might gather from section 2 ("The Theological Point of View"), this writer concentrates heavily upon Romans 7 through 9 and upon II Corinthians 12:9. These are, of course, loci classici for all the stark voluntarists of left-wing Augustinianism, as well as the leitmotiv of all losers in all times and places--a company into which this writer naturally fits. To articulate a point that should be obvious, Protestant Orthodoxy refutes the psychological critique by affirming and embracing it. The only substantive problem with either Freud or Sophocles is that neither of those excellent observers knew Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thus, as we draw to the end of our hermeneutical consideration, it is correct to say that by affirming a tradition (in this case, Jena), one naturally comes under regula fidei, and does not entertain the dangerously ludicrous notion of Turrenttini: "Animus vacuus instar tabulae rasae." Rather, with Scripture as the norma normans of all human discourse, nonetheless regula fidei must be the

gubernaculum interpretationis. This obviously involves the use of the much spoken-against method of sedes doctrinae (proof-texting), as well as the much maligned Tradierbarkeit and Geheimniskrämerei. Let the reader remember, however, that all Orthodox Protestants agree with the commonly known position of Aquinas that only the sensus litteralis has the power of proof. In closing this portion of our consideration, it should also be noted that most of the writer's sermons take the form of an Exkurs in die Heilsgeschichte and that is the presumed purpose of all the lessons in this project.

As is remarked in the Book of Concord: "It is impossible to state anything so clearly that it cannot be misunderstood." Therefore, the writer will risk tiring the reader with one further dilation upon this all-important topic, because it may seem to the uninitiated reader to be primarily an intellectual position. This is not so, nor has it ever been the case at any time in history. The following passage from an unpublished manuscript should provide at least partial illumination for those who see Protestant Orthodoxy as an act of the mind which is separated from the heart:

The beginning seemed like a good place to start, so I read Article 1 ("Holy Scripture") and was surprised to find it considerably lengthened from what appeared in The Methodist Reformer. There was the same heavy flow of what appeared to be fundamentalism until the following sentence erupted: "We believe that all Christians who ask the Father for Jesus' sake will have the Holy Spirit to illumine their

reading and hearing of His Word." It may be obvious to untold millions of brighter minds, but I had never realized that Biblical orthodoxy is mystical rather than intellectual. It always seemed like a basically dumb position, what with the countless textual variations, the hopeless task of dating and collating manuscripts and most obvious of all: only a handful of scholars are actually deep into the ancient languages, which necessarily implied that the mass of Fundies were not actually reading the Bible--what they had was only the translated reflection of the Truth. Seen in this new light, Biblical orthodoxy made sense because God supplied not only the Word but also the illumination, the Gordian Knot cut by "the sword of the Spirit."<sup>92</sup>

Because these Confirmation lessons deal with the Bible at considerable length, it is therefore presumed they are inherently transforming. While more attention will be given to this point later, it should be stated that this writer assumes that all Bible study is aimed at "character formation." Those who would maintain that the lessons are too intellectual or deal only with facts have misunderstood their intent.

#### The Desire for an Alternative

The background of this particular project rests upon two main desires, both of which fall under the heading directly above. In the strictest sense, I wanted something different than what, in that evocative '60's phrase, "was going down." In addition to a major objection to the current material out of Nashville (which will be the second consideration in this section), the writer wanted to produce a catechetical alternative that bespoke of Christian experience through generations and even centuries, rather

than being the work of one man--as is the material currently available from Nashville (with committee approval). Since the United Methodist Church officially considers itself a pluralistic denomination, this writer wanted to put that pluralism into action.

The second reason behind the desire for an alternative will be considered at greater length, as the times in which we live are such that it will require explication, if not defense. The current materials from Nashville do not deal with eschatology to any extent sufficient to please this writer and since he had no interest in using the "Good News" materials, he was thus forced to write his own. The goal toward which the Biblical content of these lessons is necessarily directed is eschatology, as has been the case with all Protestant catechisms until the most recent decades of the twentieth century. The avoidance of Hell and the attainment of Heaven is the teleological (as well as theological) concern of every lesson and even of every question. With that in mind, the Confirmation lessons begin with the first question from the Westminster Catechism: "What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." Thus, the young person's attention is to be continuously focused upon de beatitudine aeterna, which is envisaged as fellowship first and foremost with God Himself and then secondarily as fellowship with the risen saints. While the reader may peruse the lessons to see how this is specifically presented, it should be kept in mind by anyone

who is in doubt, that the Bible is completely clear as to the pains of Hell and the pleasures of Paradise:

### Hell

Mark 9:48: Ὅπου ὁ σκάλης αὐτῶν οὐ τείλειται καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται.

Revelation 14:11: καὶ ὁ καπνὸς τοῦ βασανισμοῦ αὐτῶν εἰς αἱ̑ς αἰῶναν ἀναβαίνει, καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἀνάπαυσιν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς...

Revelation 20:10: καὶ ὁ διάβολος ὁ πλανῶν αὐτοὺς ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ θείου, ὅπου καὶ τὸ Θηρίον καὶ ὁ ψευδοπροφήτης, καὶ βασανισθήσονται ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τὰν αἰώναν.

### Heaven

Luke 23:43: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἄμην σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.

John 12:26: ἐὰν ἔμειται τις διακονῆς, ἔμοι ἀκολουθεῖτω, καὶ Ὅπου εἰμὶ ἔγώ, ἔκει καὶ διάκονος ὁ ἔμοις ἔσται·

John 14:3: καὶ ἐὰν πορευθῶ καὶ ἐτοιμάσω τόπον ὑμῖν, πάλιν ἔρχεμαι καὶ παραλημψόμαι ὑμᾶς πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν, ἵνα Ὅπου εἰμὶ ἔγώ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔγε.

II Corinthians 5:8: Θαρροῦμεν δὲ καὶ εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σάματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν Κύριον.

I Thessalonians 4:17: Ἐπειταὶ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι ὅμα σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀρπαγησόμεθα ἐν νεφέλαις εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἄέρα· καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν κυρίῳ ἐσόμεθα.

Therefore, the Biblical content of the lessons has been determined by that excellent maxim, "Respice finem," in the sense of "one thing only is necessary."<sup>93</sup> In order that we, like Martha's sister, might enjoy the Lord, many of the questions have been drawn from the labors of the brethren who preceded us in the pilgrimage "through this barren land," along with new questions and emendations added by the writer of this project.

### The Contents of the Catechism

The cognitive content of the lessons was divided into ten main sections under the following headings:

- a) The Goal of Human Life
- b) God and Man
- c) Jesus Christ: The Union of God and Man
- d) The Holy Spirit
- e) The Means of Grace
- f) The Ten Commandments
- g) The Apostles' Creed
- h) The Lord's Prayer
- i) The Problem of Evil
- j) Christian Morality

The full set of instructional lessons may be found in the Appendix and perused there. Our purpose in this fifth section of Chapter IV is to examine and briefly explicate representative questions and answers from each of the ten topical headings, in order that the instructional thrust of the content might become clear.

#### a) The Goal of Human Life

Question: "What is the chief end of Man?"  
Answer: "Man's chief end is to glorify God  
and to enjoy Him forever."

With these words from the first question of the Westminster Catechism, we learn in a few simple words, the whole purpose of human life. We are made to glorify God during our earthly lives by working, praying, studying, and whatever else human beings do--with the exception of sin. For example, it is possible to glorify God by being a farmer or housewife, a bank president or garbageman; it is not possible to glorify God by

being a criminal or running a liquor store. At death, our work is over and total enjoyment begins--but only for Christians.

"Therefore, the great problem and task is, 'How can I be a Christian?' In the next few months we will be learning what God expects of us, in order that we may glorify Him now and enjoy Him forever in the life to come."

b) God and Man

Question: "What is sin?"

Answer: "Sin is any act, word, or thought in which we disobey God."

Proof: "I John 3:4; Romans 13:10;  
St. James 4:17."

When we come to Chapter V the methodology for discussing the questions with the children will be dealt with in detail and thus here we wish to concentrate on the content of what the methodology inculcates. The question is intended to make fully inclusive the heinousness of sin, as it concentrates the student's attention upon the fact that all sin is sin against God and that it is both internal and external to the sinner. Furthermore, it centers the concept upon disobedience, thus showing that man is at all times subject to God.

c) Jesus Christ: The Union of God and Man

Question: "How did Jesus overcome the devil?"

Answer: "Jesus overcame the devil by the Word of God."

Proof: "St. Luke 4:4, 8, 12."

Notice that this question emphasizes how we too may be like Jesus, for we have the same opportunity to overcome evil by the Word of God. The divinity of Our Lord has already been established in previous questions and thus the student is being offered the chance to follow Him on a daily basis in a

way (i.e., the concrete rejection of evil by means of the Bible) that is both existential and continuously available.

d) The Holy Spirit

Question: "What is the first work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts?"

Answer: "He shows us our sins and our need of the Savior."

Proof: "St. John 16:8."

In a time when "Holy Spirit talk" floods the land, the student may desire spiritual experience without knowing what it is. This question gives him or her the opportunity to know that our feelings of guilt and inadequacy are also the work of the Spirit.

e) The Means of Grace

Question: "Does the Holy Spirit work differently on each person or does He follow an ordered plan?"

Answer: "He follows an ordered plan."

Proof: "I Corinthians 14:40."

Youth is a sufficiently distressing and anarchic time without having the additional weight of "finding your own path up the mountain." The young people are thus strengthened in their sense of being incorporated into the loving purpose of an orderly God who has a plan for their disjointed lives.

f) The Ten Commandments

Question: "What is the meaning of the Fourth Commandment?"

Answer: "Even though they are very far from perfect, we should fear, respect, and love our parents, for they are the superiors whom God chose to place over us."

One of the most difficult aspects of adolescence is the sense of ambivalence that surrounds one's parents. The Fourth Commandment thus eases the grim reality of having an authority over one's life while realistically teaching that parents are every bit as defective as they seem to the child.

g) The Apostles' Creed

Question: "Does the heart as well as the head need to be taught?"

Answer: "Yes, and that is why we continually study and repeat the basic teachings of the Faith."

One of the continuing problems of mainline Protestantism is much like a major difficulty of being an adolescent: To discern some continuity and maintain some order in the midst of ceaseless change. The student needs to be taught that weekly recitation of the central truths of the Christian Faith is one of the ways that we educate the obdurate heart. Analogously, basic repetition of central themes (for example, the liturgy) is the way we grow in grace, amidst the daily pressures and disappointments of life.

h) The Lord's Prayer

Question: "What is the Second Petition?"

Answer: "Thy kingdom come."

Question: "What does this mean?"

Answer: "The Kingdom of God comes without any help from me--in either my prayers or my life--but we pray that it may also come to and for me."

The student is here assured that the great cause to which he or she is giving his or her life, is not dependent upon the success of their daily efforts, as adolescents are more

honest in their evaluations of a day's work than we older people who have learned to skillfully deceive ourselves. Furthermore, they are offered the opportunity of allying themselves with that which cannot fail. In this setting of objective security, the student is then encouraged to continuously undergo that difficult process known as growth in grace.

i) The Problem of Evil

Question: "What is the Biblical example of how this works?"

Answer: "The Book of Job. In the first chapter God gives Satan a command, which he does, according to his evil nature. Notice that the Devil can do nothing which God does not allow. In the last chapters of Job, God speaks directly to Job and tells him not to concern himself with matters that are beyond human understanding."

Proof: "Job 1:6-12; chapters 38-41, especially 38:4--'Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much tell me about it.'"

While all humans suffer under the gross injustice and incommensurateness of life upon earth, young people especially feel the smart of duplicity and dashed hopes. Every egregious wrong, from deformity to social injustice, weighs upon the adolescent and cries out for an answer. What adults generally forget is that the right answer is also the solution, especially in questions of theodicy.

j) Christian Morality

Question: "Is it true that Methodism has a traditional commitment to Social Action?"

Answer: "Yes, because we take the Gospel seriously and therefore seek to apply it throughout the whole range of human experience."

Any serious child in Confirmation today will sooner or later (generally sooner, especially in East Texas) be confronted with the charge that the United Methodist Church has departed from its foundational principles by injecting itself in social controversies where it has no business. In other words, what is "spiritual" becomes simply personal morality. The whole final section of these lessons thus deals with the necessity of a Christian being concerned not only for his soul, but also for his society.

In conclusion, we have seen both the background which gave rise to this catechism and the basic constituent elements that have gone into the content. Eschatology and a desire for an alternative to available resources in Confirmation training provided the impetus, while the traditional Methodist commitment to social concerns has provided the backbone for the content dealing with morality. In Chapter V we will see how this content is conveyed to a class, as well as the theoretical foundations that underlie the conveyance.

## CHAPTER V

### RATIONALE FOR THE METHODOLOGY

#### Background

It has been said that nothing is stranger than a human life, and therefore less amenable to analysis; but if this writer were to hazard a guess as to why the project described in this paper took the form of a catechism, it would be due to the influence of his grandfather. The writer himself underwent Confirmation training without a catechism. Our pastor prepared his own lessons, which took the form of lectures and discussions, with copious illustrations on the blackboard behind his desk. During this period, the writer's grandfather would remark that he had been required as a boy to memorize the catechism, and that it was a much superior method. The writer's grandfather both liked and respected the pastor, but thought his method defective. He convinced his grandson, and here we are today.

This visceral acceptance of the catechism format was--and still is--regularly reinforced by the unsettling experience of hearing mainline Protestants say in the course of religious discussions, "Well, I just don't know." This point would obviously be pertinent anywhere in America, but in the writer's case the poignancy of our ignorance was even

more biting because of the huge number of well-informed and articulate Mormons in both rural and urban Arizona. In short, the writer has been deeply impressed with the need of every Christian adolescent to "have an answer" when pressed. It is even more important that the young person feel there is an answer, even--and especially--when they cannot recall it. As Dorothy Jean Furnish has written.

We want children to feel the "holy" as they meet with the biblical text. Just as others through the centuries have found the Bible to be God's Word for them, we want children today to experience the Bible in a way that will open for them new understanding of what it means for persons to encounter God . . . We want children to find<sup>94</sup> guidance in the Bible for their lives today.

If one cannot come out of Confirmation with assurance, then the Bible cannot be said to be giving our young people any guidance worthy of the name. It was then, and is now, an emotional need that directed the writer into the preparing of a catechism for Confirmation. Lest one be tempted to discount the emotional undercurrent in all intellectual endeavor, let us hear Bertrand Russell give his testimony from the Autobiography:

In July of 1900 there was an International Congress of Philosophy in Paris in connection with the Exhibition that year . . . The Congress was a turning point in my intellectual life, because there I met Peano. I already knew him by name and had seen some of his work, but had not taken the trouble to master his notation. In discussions at the Congress I observed that he was always more precise than anyone else, and that he invariably got the better of any argument upon which he embarked. As the days went by, I decided that this must be owing to his mathematical logic. I therefore

got him to give me all his works, and as soon as the Congress was over I retired to Fernhurst to study quietly every word written by him and his disciples. It became clear to me that his work afforded an instrument of logical analysis such as I had been seeking for years, and that by studying him I was acquiring a new and powerful technique for the work I had long waited to do.<sup>95</sup>

Geniuses and garbagemen share the common human need to have a "powerful technique" that affords clear answers to the unceasing and ageless questions of the heart.

#### Human Motivation

As the discerning reader may have gathered from prior remarks throughout this project in regard to the ambivalent nature of man's life upon earth, this writer comes down heavily on the experiential side of what is sometimes called the Wesleyan Quadrilateral (Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason). Again, as Furnish has remarked:

Children are people, with an ability to understand things they can see, touch, taste, smell, and feel. Some of their concrete experiences are amazingly parallel to those of people in the Bible. At times children comprehend in their lives intellectually, but more often they understand with their emotions and imaginations.<sup>96</sup>

The emphasis in Confirmation should fall on the phrase "children are people," with all the emotional needs that would naturally follow from such a statement. When dealing with character formation, we must begin with reality, with the unvarnished conditio mortalium. As Furnish has implicitly stated in the quotation above, we are creatures of appetite. To think of training children without recourse

to our basically craving and acquisitive nature, is, in that evocative Scots phrase, "to dine upon wind pudding." A child, because he or she is human, must be able to see "what's in it for me." Altruism, per se, does not exist. While this writer does indeed believe that occasional nobility and even heroism are present in the human condition, nonetheless we must begin with the flinty truth of Romans 3:10: "None is righteous, no, not one." The writer of this project in no way derogates the force of "intrinsic" motivation, but he is also keenly aware of the strength of "extrinsic" motivation in all human actions. The interplay between the two forms of motivation is subtle and not easily analyzed, thus it seemed wise to consciously, use both in order that the maximum effect might be achieved.

Since human action this side of Heaven is at least initially motivated reinforcement of one sort or another, the question for the teacher of Confirmation classes becomes, "Positive or negative reinforcement?" While it will come as no shock to any Biblically orthodox reader, it may surprise those of other persuasions that the statistical evidence falls solidly on the side of "aversive reinforcement."<sup>97</sup> Rather than cite pages of dull statistical tables, a single childhood recollection will suffice:

We had our own project books dealing with the USA state by state, and one day Brother Byrne snapped his fingers for mine, wanting to check an answer. Because I didn't hand it to him quickly enough he hurled it out the window to

flutter to the ground in tatters. In a rage I went to his desk and, took all his books and hurled them out the same window. He rushed at me, cuffing me about, and gave me six cuts on each hand. Then he ordered me to fetch the books, and when I refused he hit at my shoulders and arms with the strap, shouting at me to fetch them. I still refused, and felt ready to hit back if he hit me again. He might have sensed this, because he went and fetched them himself. The other Brothers disapproved of his methods and eventually he left the order, but academically Brother Byrne was a good teacher, and that year I came in first in the country in my grade, getting a hundred percent for Latin. It was the hardest I ever worked at school, and in the next few years under more humane teachers I never achieved such high marks.

These are not methods one could easily utilize in the average parish! Thus, even though the results tend to be less impressive, the writer decided upon positive reinforcement for the children in the Confirmation class. It seemed vitally important that the reinforcement be of a nature that was not duplicated elsewhere in the children's experience. Furthermore, it should have a strong element of "fun" in the sense of being an object of pleasurable speculation in between the sessions. This writer thereby hit upon the notion of giving cash prizes in the form of sacks of pennies. The money is bound up in red cloth and tied with rawhide, to give the appearance of the sacks of loot one might find in a pirate's chest or hidden in the secret passage of an old house. In addition to the weekly prizes (\$2.50 for First Prize, \$1.75 for Second Prize and \$1 for Third) there is the Grand Prize for the best Final Exam, which is frequently passed from child to child, who are

amazed at the size and weight of \$25 in pennies. As the discerning reader has no doubt surmised, all this rests firmly upon the Biblical bedrock of Hebrews 11:6: "For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him."

### Behavioralism

It is significant that the leading advocate of a modified form of stimulus-response technique in religious instruction quotes one of the more telling dialogues from the libretto to Mozart's Die Zauberflöte:

Second Priest: Do you, too, want to fight for  
the love of wisdom?  
Papageno: Fighting is not my bag. And, to  
be perfectly honest, I really  
don't need wisdom. I'm  
basically a child of nature,  
content with sleep, food, and  
drink. And if I could, I'd like  
to catch a pretty little wife.  
Second Priest: That you will never do unless  
you undergo our trials.  
Papageno: What do these trials consist of?  
Second Priest: You must submit yourself to all  
our laws, and show no fear of  
death.  
Papageno: I'll stay single.<sup>99</sup>

James Michael Lee is today the leading advocate among Christian educators of a modified form of behavior modification which he styles "behavioralism."<sup>100</sup> His connection with the school of thought represented by Skinner, Watson, Hull, et al., might best be seen in the following quotation:

To describe a religion teacher or any other kind of teacher is more to describe a function than to describe a person. To call an individual a

teacher is to specify him in terms of the function he performs rather than the person he is. It matters not what kind of person he is; what matters<sup>101</sup> is the kind of activity he performs.

Lee makes a concerted effort to put considerable distance between himself and that position which most readers would consider to be behaviorism:

Behavioralism is much broader than behaviorism. Every theoretical school, like every thoughtful practitioner of a facilitational art-science (for example, teaching, counseling, administering) is behavioralistic because, by its very nature, a facilitational art-science is oriented around behavior. After all, facilitational activities are antecedent behaviors which yield desired consequent behaviors. The antecedent behaviors of the facilitator are purposive ones; they are deliberately targeted to most effectively bring about the desired learning outcome. All behaviorists are behavioralists, but not all behavioralists are behaviorists. The position advanced in this book, together with the other two volumes in the trilogy,<sup>102</sup> is behavioralism, not behaviorism.

The difference between the two "isms" which most concern the purposes of this project would be the lack of implicit materialism in behavioralism. Behavioralism, which Lee also refers to as "the social-science approach to religious instruction," is considered to be a vehicle which is effective in reaching any of a number of goals, rather than a goal itself:

The social-science approach to religious instruction is value-free in terms of any and all specific theological positions. It can accommodate a Pelagian, an Augustinian, a Thomist,<sup>103</sup> a Jansenist, or an advocate of the new theology.

On the other hand, behaviorism as seen in the works of B. F. Skinner, J. B. Watson, et al., tends to have a definite philosophic drift, if not outright commitment:

Behaviorism typically takes a monistic, atomistic, and mechanistic view of human behavior. It tends to be consistent with<sup>a</sup> materialist philosophical system . . ."<sup>104</sup>

What, then, do the two "isms" have in common? While Lee might not fully appreciate quite so close an identification with Watson, the following paragraph gives the gist of the commonality:

What about the acquisition of knowledge? Can conditioning be used to explain how one learns, for example, the facts of history? Certainly, says Watson, for this knowledge consists simply of saying certain words, aloud or to oneself. The response sequence involved in saying "William the Conqueror defeated Harold the Saxon at Hastings in 1066" is in principle no different from that involved in walking across a room. A question, such as "How did the Norman conquest occur?" elicits the statement, which is itself a sequence of words with each word a conditioned stimulus for the next one. Acquiring knowledge is a process of learning to give the proper sequence of words in response to a question or other conditioned stimulus.<sup>105</sup>

This close identification with stimulus-response--and its obviously Pavlovian overtones--does not bother many Christians who hold the orthodox position that God is both transcendent and immanent:

Wherever teaching and learning take place, God is intimately and existentially present in every zone of the process. Nature is not nature alone--it is graced nature, or perhaps more precisely, grace-full nature. To say "nature" is at once to mention an aspect of God. The laws of teaching and learning are not somehow apart from the laws of God. Teaching is effective when and only when it is true to the

dynamics of its own nature; but to be true to its own nature is to be automatically true to the existential presence and ongoing activity of the God who is so existentially commingled with this nature as to make it a God-full nature. Because nature is the immediate object and milieu of human activity, a person is usually most true to God<sup>106</sup> when is chronologically first true to nature.

Hence Lee's reference to Papageno and his reluctance--we must advance according to our nature, and not according to some well-meaning authority who views Confirmation as too "spiritual" to be tainted with rewards.

Having established that behavioralism is a valid option for religious education, it would also be appropriate to cite, out of the many sources available, at least a nodding acknowledgment of the large body of secular evidence to the effect that positive reinforcement is efficacious. The modern period of study began approximately fifteen years ago with the work of Ayllon and Azarin, in regard to their efforts with physical items being used as rewards ("the token economy").<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, their initial results have been substantiated by a number of researchers:

The effectiveness of this procedure has been amply documented in the educational (O'Leary and Durham, 1971) and psychiatric literature (Kazdin and Bootzin, 1972).

Thus, we see that positive reinforcement can be viewed as both religiously acceptable and pragmatically sound.

#### Partial Transcript of One Session

In order that the pedagogic functioning might be more transparent to inspection, the following transcript is

offered from the January 10, 1982 session, which dealt with the sacraments. As is the case with nearly all transcripts of actual conversations, the structure and phrasing are banal in the extreme, but the method of explication--and the psychological elicitation of interest--are apparent:

Pastor: Question 82--who's next?  
Dena Manos: Me.  
Pastor: O.K.  
Dena: What is the inward and spiritual part? Answer: The inward and spiritual part is the Body and Blood of Christ Himself.  
Proof: I Corinthians 10:16.  
Pastor: O.K., now in 82, it's very important to keep in mind that we live around people for whom the sacraments are like badges of membership. For instance--uh, let's see if I've got it with me (digs through his wallet)--yeah, O.K., I want a volunteer who reads English. Is there anybody here who can read English?  
Dianne Wilson: I can!  
Pastor: Alright--read me a couple lines on the top of the card.  
Dianne: Southern Methodist University.  
Pastor: Great! Read me a couple more lines under that.  
Dianne: Dallas, Texas 75275.  
Pastor: That's my ID card. Like, if I want to go to the library or something, I show 'em that card, and they have to let me in. A lot of the people around us practice what is called "closed communion"--the term is actually "close" communion--it means that if you're not a member at Piney Branch--Dianne, you better give me back the card or they might throw me out of school--thanks. Now, "close communion" means that if you're not a member at Piney Branch, then you can't receive the sacrament there. But the Bible says that's not

the way to do it. Rather, all who believe Jesus is the Lord have their sins forgiven by being in contact with Him. So, how do we do it at Laird Hill? Do we require them to show their SMU card?

Glenda Nelson:

Pastor:

No

No. We have open communion for all who believe that Jesus died for them. Alright then, "the inward and spiritual part we receive is Christ Himself."

O.K., we're ready for 83.

Glenda:

What is required of those who receive the Lord's Supper?

Answer:

First, middle, and last, all who receive Communion must believe that Jesus is truly present in the Sacrament. Proof: I Corinthians 11:29.

Pastor:

Good. Now, here is the point that the chief requirement is faith and therefore what we're always aiming for is the life of faith. If we had complete faith, then we wouldn't sin at all. In this life we all have incomplete faith, like 60% faith, or maybe on a good day, 90% faith, so we're always looking for our faith to grow. Alright, next meeting will be when?

Children:

January 24th!

Pastor:

Yeah and then we will be back here and we will have 10 questions from 5 and 6, so that means questions 55 through 83. Like for instance, Dianne, just look at me. O.K., now from question 70, "what is the outward and visible part of Baptism?", just look at me and tell me.

Dianne:

Water.

Pastor:

Yeah, the right answer in a very brief way is to say "water" and if you wrote that you would get some credit. But it's better if you can remember the whole thing. That way, Dianne wins those big prizes. Got any

questions on what we've done today?

Dianne: Yes, its kinda like in 68. We went to see "The Elephant Man" and when he died, it was because God sent down angels. The Elephant Man had to sit up to breathe or it would block his wind pipe, so the angels laid him down and he died. Can God send angels to do that to you? (Laughs) Well, I haven't seen the play, "The Elephant Man," but I sort of know what it's about. But that's an interesting point--were the angels in the movie?

Pastor: Dianne: This was just a play and see what he had to do was sit up to sleep so he could breathe . . . Hmm, right.

Pastor: Dianne: So the angels made him lie back, because he wanted to sleep like other people, and that made him die.

Pastor: Dianne: So, in other words, in the play, you really did see angels?

Dianne: Yeah.

Pastor: O.K., well, I'm trying to make it clear as possible, so let's put it this way: the answer, Dianne, is yes and no. First, what did we say about how God works in the sacraments? Does He work how everybody can understand it or does He work mysteriously?

Dianne: Mysteriously.

Pastor: Right. In other words, you don't have to be worried that-- well, for instance, I have mice in my house. They're runnin' me crazy. I can't get rid of the critters. They just drive me nuts. They come runnin' out of the holes, right into the middle of the room, and look at me. Alright, it's like this: angels are NOT like mice. You don't have to be afraid that you'll go to sleep some night and some angel's going to smother you. See? The point the man was

making in the play is that God took pity on the Elephant Man. Would it be better for the Elephant Man to be runnin' around all deformed or to be with God and be perfect?

- Dianne: To be with God and be perfect.
- Pastor: O.K., exactly. So the reason the angels came--it wasn't like havin' the Mafia come out and murder you--like God's going to send an angel to stomp on you. But rather, that God in His mercy called the man unto Himself. It's not like having mice in your house or like being in an accident. Yes, God does that, but it's not terrifying. It seems to me from what you said that it frightened you. Didn't it?
- Dianne: Yeah, because I wondered why He did that. I didn't understand it.
- Pastor: Because it was merciful to the Elephant Man. It's just like somebody--your grandparents maybe--that was sick and suffered a lot.
- Dianne: Oh, yeah!
- Pastor: It was much more merciful to call 'em out of their suffering and into Heaven, than to leave 'em in the body. In the same way, the angels were a way of showing God's mercy for the Elephant Man. O.K. That was a good question. Now, we're going to meet again on the 24th. Alright, as we always do, tonight we are going to pray together and tonight the topic for our prayer will be discipline. Who can tell me what discipline is?
- Glenda: I want you to pray for Esther Turner.
- Pastor: O.K., what's wrong with Esther?
- Glenda: She's in the hospital now, they thought she had a tumor, but it was just scar tissue . . .
- Pastor: Uh huh . . .

Glenda: So we should pray that she gets better.  
Pastor: We sure will. Now, who can tell me what discipline is?  
Dena: It's like when you're little and you do something bad, your parents punish you so you won't do it again.  
Pastor: Yeah, well, there is a part of discipline that isn't very pleasant, like what you said, but as we get older . . .  
Dena: We discipline ourselves.  
Pastor: That's right, we discipline ourselves. We want to aim to discipline ourselves. What does this group want to discipline itself to do?  
Dena: We need to pray to study more.  
Pastor: That's right! So tonight we will pray for Esther Turner and we will pray for the discipline to study more.

The reader will notice that contrary to what might seem to be the case, the question and answer form does not stifle the children's questions. The whole process of learning is poorly understood, and thus this writer certainly would not make claims that cannot be substantiated--nor, for that matter, could the claims be refuted--rather, it is his contention that the question and answer form along with memorization works as well as any other in regard to "ventilating" a child's true concerns. It has the added benefit of also inculcating objective knowledge, while the workings of the child's subconscious bring forth the questions of anxiety and concern.

### Concluding Remarks

As we conclude our consideration of the methodology used in this project (a new catechism based on old ones, taught in the context of modified behavioralism with positive reinforcement), let us remember that it has been acknowledged since antiquity that much of human reflection operates at what we would today call the unconscious level, and for that reason this Confirmation series does not hesitate to rely on memorization, especially in regard to character formation. As T. H. White remarked in his autobiography:

In my day, the Latin School was a cruel school--but it may have been the best public school in the country. The old Boston version of "Open Admissions" held that absolutely anybody was free to enter. And the school was free to fail and expel absolutely anyone who did not meet its standards. It accepted students without discrimination, and it flunked them--Irish, Italians, Jewish, Protestant, black--with equal lack of discrimination. Passing grade was fifty, and to average eighty or better was phenomenal. Our monthly tests were excepts from the College Board Examinations of previous years--and we learned "testmanship" early, beginning at age fourteen. The entire Latin School was an obstacle course in "testmanship," a skill which, we learned, meant that one must grasp the question quickly; answer hard, with minimum verbiage; and do it all against a speeding clock. If you scored well in Latin School class--for example, room tests in arithmetic--then you would do well on the College Board tests, and at Harvard, almost certainly, you would qualify for the advanced section of Mathematics A.

The Latin School taught the mechanics of learning with little pretense of culture, enrichment, or enlargement of horizons. Mr. Russo, who taught English in the first year, had the face of a prizefighter--a bald head which

gleamed, a pug nose, a jut jaw, hard and sinister eyes which smiled only when a pupil scored an absolute triumph in grammar. He was less interested in the rhymes of The Idylls of the King or "Evangeline," or the story in Quentin Durward, than in drubbing into us the structure of paragraph and sentence. The paragraph began with the "topic sentence"--that was the cornerstone of all teaching in composition. And sentences came with "subjects," "predicates," "metaphors," "similes," "analogies." Verbs were transitive, intransitive, and sometimes subjunctive. He taught the English language as if he were teaching us to dismantle an automobile engine or a watch and then assemble it again correctly. We learned clean English from him. Mr. Graetsch taught German in the same way, mechanically, so that one remembered all the rest of one's life that six German prepositions take the dative case--aus-bei-mit, nach-von-zu, in alphabetical order. French was taught by Mr. Scully. Not only did we memorize passages ("D'un pas encore vaillant et ferme, un vieux pretre marche sur la route poudreuse"), but we memorized them so well that long after one had forgotten the title of the work, one remembered its phrases; all irregular French verbs were mastered by the end of the second year.

What culture was pumped in came in ancient history, taught by Mr. Hayes; American history taught by Mr. Nemzoff, who enlarged on what Miss Fuller had taught in the sixth grade; and Latin itself, taught by "Farmer" Wilbur. "Farmer" Wilbur was a rustic who raised apples on his farm outside Boston, and would bring them in by the bushel to hand out to the boys who did well. Latin was drudgery; one learned Caesar, one groaned through Cicero, one went on to Virgil. I did badly in Latin, although ancient history fascinated me; and not until I came many years later to American politics did I realize how much of "Farmer" Wilbur's teaching of Caesar and Cicero had <sup>109</sup> flaked off into the sediment of my thinking.

Although it operates primarily at the unconscious level, memorization is a factor in character formation, and for that reason, the writer of these lessons has striven to

take the inspired author at his word: "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and he will not depart from it when he is old."<sup>110</sup>

#### Results of the Practical Experience

The practical results of teaching the children were numerous, but some of the most important are not easily structured, or susceptible to standardized interpretations. Before considering those aspects of the practical experience which can be more easily explicated, the writer feels constrained to say that he feels there is the definite possibility of making a "behavioralist" or "sociological" contribution to religious education by way of catechetical instruction and teacher training. The teacher training would be implemented by the prospective teacher listening to cassette recordings of the first several lessons from the catechism, which another teacher had already recorded from previous sessions. Videotaping would not be used because of visual distraction and because of the over-emphasis in modern American culture on physical appearance. From the experience of the teacher and the children recorded on tape, the new catechetical teacher would then develop his or her informal style of communicating the printed material, including the creation of a psychological atmosphere where the children would feel as free, as those in the transcript, to express their existential concerns. Most would-be

teachers could acquire the necessary skills more readily by hearing them used, than by reading about them in a manual.

In addition to the trusting and existentially viable atmosphere in the class meetings, it was equally important to this writer that a large amount of objective information was conveyed to the students. This was verified by their comprehensive final test, which they took during the last regular class meeting. No student scored lower than 80% on the final test of 74 questions, which covered all the topics in the series. While their verbatim recall was not exceptionally high, their understanding of the 74 questions was good indeed, and thus gave the writer confidence that the children had acquired an intellectual grasp of the basic elements of the Christian faith.

This intellectual grasp extended to the parents, in two distinct ways. They took an active part in drilling the children in their homes during the pre-final time, due to the fact that the date of the final was announced from the pulpit every Sunday for a month ahead. Even older people who had no children at home, became interested in the preparation for the final test and would ask the parents and the pastor how the children were doing, if such and such a child were applying him or herself, etc.

The parents, along with the entire congregation at Laird Hill, became involved in a second way, because near the end of the series, and just before the date of the final was announced, every one received in his or her bulletin the

study copy of the 74 questions, with the answers and Scriptural proofs. This eleven page document then formed the basis of the sermon, since it was also part of an on-going instructional series for the congregation. As number 15 in the instructional series, it became a permanent part of the library of all the parishoners, as they received a blue folder at the beginning of the series which they now keep either on a coffee table in the living room or on top of the television.

The Confirmation lessons ended by meeting on the last Saturday afternoon--after awarding the prizes and examining the children on the "faith questions" required by the Rite of Confirmation in the United Methodist Book Of Worship--and going to see the film "Charriots Of Fire." While the children were already friends from school and church, they had definitely become more cohesive as a group during the Confirmation series, as evidenced not only by their enjoyment in being together, but also afterwards in the discussion we had over the topic of commitment, as portrayed in the film, at a local Baskin and Robbins ice cream store.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer was pleased to be able, by God's grace, to reach the goals enumerated in his Prospectus. While doing so, several other points of general interest in regard to Confirmation became evident. The seven points enumerated below include data which is of value for anyone who is interested in the ongoing practice of Confirmation.

1) The project fulfilled all five of the goals in "Contributions to Ministry" which formed part of the writer's prospectus:

a) Orthodox Protestants were in fact trained in Laird Hill United Methodist Church by using the catechetical form of instruction that dates back to the early days of the Christian Church.

b) The emotions as well as the mind were actively engaged in the training of young Methodists, in response to a widely perceived need, not only in the Church generally, but also in Laird Hill.

c) The parents of the participating children were assured that learning and piety are not mutually exclusive.

d) The writer was given the opportunity to deal with a project that has come to fascinate him and which he

feels offers potential contributions to United Methodist pluralism.

e) The project showed the possibility of producing a standard catechism which is nonetheless flexible enough to embrace the vast numbers within the United Methodist Church and which could be utilized according to our widely differing parochial circumstances. The pedagogical method used in teaching the catechism has provided the key to this desired flexibility.

2) The investigation of this writer have made it clear that those who argue for a "return" to the so-called "unified rite" of Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation administered in one liturgical act--or any variation thereof--are arguing for an arbitrary conclusion. This arbitrary conclusion regarding the "unified rite" fails to take into account the principle of development in the tradition of the Church, which has produced many different emphases under the aegis of Confirmation. The arbitrary nature of their conclusion is especially evident when one considers that the New Testament witness is neither clear nor prescriptive. That is, from the New Testament record no one can say that there is or is not something present which later ages would call Confirmation.

3) This writer has utilized for his understanding of Confirmation, the Reformational emphasis of the young people affirming the faith into which they were baptized as infants, after a period of instruction in the basic tenets

of the Christian Faith. The writer has added the additional emphasis, which is founded upon an understanding first found in Rabanus Maurus, that Confirmation is for the gaining of strength in order to preach to others. In our time, this aspect of Confirmation might be called "preparation for witnessing." It is the writer's conclusion that the best way to instill confidence in the young witnesses, is to teach them by way of the catechism.

4) This writer has concluded from his pragmatic experience, that a modified form of behavioralism is a viable option for motivating young people to study their catechism. This modified form of behavioralism could be varied according to local needs and personalities, but would normally incorporate concrete rewards on a regular basis. Providing they are both regular and concrete, these rewards can be of nearly negligible commercial value. This writer found a very effective tool in achieving 100% attendance was simply to mail a picture postcard to each participating child on the Monday preceding the Saturday when we were to meet. In an increasingly depersonalized age, behavioralism gives the yearning child a sure affirmation that he or she is individually noticed and appreciated.

5) From his experience, this writer has concluded, and therefore recommends that the catechetical method be taken under consideration by the United Methodist Church. The catechism developed by this writer could, mutatis mutandis, be used within a great variety of United Methodist

parishes. If the materials were accompanied by sufficient explanatory instructions, the pastor using them would feel free to alter the style of presentation within the confines of both personality and circumstance. While this project has proceeded from a Biblically conservative stance, the modified behavioralism utilized in the overall catechetical approach, could be the vehicle for disseminating the content of the materials now published in Nashville for Confirmation classes.

6) This writer recommends that the resurgent interest in "character formation" be focused upon the possibilities of Confirmation, especially as seen in the catechetical method. The constant exposure to Biblical passages, along with the on-going viva voce exegesis by the pastor, offer the possibility of taking Psalm 19:11 seriously, where we are told "thus your servant is formed by them." While it is fairly obvious that young children can be influenced in their character formation by the Biblical narratives, the nature of the formation becomes problematic as they approach adolescence. By utilizing the emotions and acquisitive desires of the human heart--even if it be only for tokens of recognition, such as postcards--the pastor can lead his young friends into prolonged consideration of the Biblical truths that undergrid Christian living.

7) The experience of this writer causes him to recommend that Confirmation be pursued in every Methodist parish, regardless of the number of children available. It

is often contended that one needs more children than are readily available in most of our small, rural parishes, if Confirmation is to be effective. This writer, however, has found that his catechetical instruction was effective with very small numbers, and indeed, could have been effective with only one child. In those years when there is not even one child available, Confirmation would be held in abeyance, but as soon as he or she reached the age where the pastor was confident the child could read the catechetical material with at least minimal understanding, that one child should be placed in Confirmation class.

In his concluding recommendation, this writer feels historically justified in suggesting that the United Methodist Church should not abandon our current Confirmational focus on adolescence. Since no "unified rite" ever existed in the West, the Church is today fully free to pursue our current practice, with an additional emphasis on pluralism. This additional emphasis should take the form of a Biblically conservative catechism which is taught in a locally modified context of behavioralism. This addition to pluralism would produce dividends in both character formation and greater Biblical awareness among our young people. As the years roll on, those young people would then produce a revitalized United Methodist Church.

## **ENDNOTES**

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Sir William Smith and Samuel Cheetham, A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities (Hartford: J. B. Burr Publishing Co., 1880), p. 424.

<sup>2</sup>Sacrorum Conciliorum (Mansi), Vol. 21, 335-341.

<sup>3</sup>Smith and Cheetham, p. 424.

<sup>4</sup>Made Not Born (Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1976), p. 50 ff.

<sup>5</sup>The New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. IV (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 145.

<sup>6</sup>Patrologiae Latinae, 3:1169.

<sup>7</sup>I Clement, 21.

<sup>8</sup>Epist. 72, ad Stephan.

<sup>9</sup>Smith and Cheetham, p. 415.

<sup>10</sup>Contra Lucifer, 10:4.

<sup>11</sup>Patrologiae Latinae, 20:172-173.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 20:554.

<sup>13</sup>Patrologiae Graecae, 32:188-189.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 71:372-373.

<sup>15</sup>Patrologiae Latinae, 9:942.

<sup>16</sup>Piet Fransen in Sacramentum Mundi, Vol. I (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 405.

<sup>17</sup>Confirmation Or The Laying On Of Hands, Vol. I (London: S.P.C.K., 1926), p. 62.

<sup>18</sup>Sacramentum Mundi, Vol. I, p. 409.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 407.

<sup>20</sup> Dom Gregory Dix, The Theology of Confirmation (London: Dacre Press, 1946), p. 42.

<sup>21</sup> Sacramentum Mundi, Vol. I, p. 407.

<sup>22</sup> Made Not Born, pp. 52-53.

<sup>23</sup> Hom. de Pentecoste, 4.

<sup>24</sup> Dix, p. 24.

<sup>25</sup> De Inst. Cleric., I, 30.

<sup>26</sup> Summa, IIIa, 72.1.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Made Not Born, p. 100.

<sup>29</sup> Arthur Repp, Confirmation in the Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1964), p. 32.

<sup>30</sup> Made Not Born, p. 91.

<sup>31</sup> John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, ed. J. T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 1460.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 1451.

<sup>33</sup> Patrologiae Latinae, Vol. 101, 1097-1144.

<sup>34</sup> Dix, pp. 34 and 42.

<sup>35</sup> Made Not Born, p. 92.

<sup>36</sup> Synod. Exon., can. III, Ibid., 1076.

<sup>37</sup> Confirmation Or The Laying On Of Hands, p. 63.

<sup>38</sup> F. E. Brightman, The English Rite, Vol. II (London: Rivingtons, 1915), p. 776.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 778.

<sup>41</sup> Dr. Howard Grimes, "The History of the Rite," September 9, 1981.

<sup>42</sup> The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1980), p. 681.

<sup>43</sup>Dr. Howard Grimes, "The History of the Instruction," August 27, 1981.

<sup>44</sup>Dr. Howard Grimes, "The History of the Rite," September 9, 1981.

<sup>45</sup>Dr. Howard Grimes, "Catechetical Review," Fall, 1981.

<sup>46</sup>Interview with the Rev. Mr. Pritz, First Methodist Church, Phoenix, Arizona, June, 1967.

<sup>47</sup>The Book of Discipline, p. 117.

<sup>48</sup>Enciclopedia Cattolica, III, 1120-1121.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 1098.

<sup>50</sup>Catholic Encyclopedia, III, 225; Encyclopaedia Britannica (1951), 5, p. 66.

<sup>51</sup>Enciclopedia Cattolica, III, 1120-1121.

<sup>52</sup>Lexikon Für Theologie Und Kirche, Vol. V (Freiburg: Herder Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1931), p. 881.

<sup>53</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica, 5, p. 66.

<sup>54</sup>Ricardo Garcia-Villoslada, Martín Lutero, Vol. II (Madrid: Biblioteca De Autores Cristianos, 1973), p. 282.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>56</sup>Concilium Tridentinum: Diariorum, Actorum, Epistularum, Tractatum, Tomus Nonus (Freiburg: Herder, 1965), Sessio octava (XXN), canon quartus.

<sup>57</sup>Enciclopedia Cattolica, III, 1110.

<sup>58</sup>Lexikon Für Theologie Und Kirche, II, p. 730.

<sup>59</sup>Made Not Born, p. 101.

<sup>60</sup>Hamlet, act 3, sc. 2.

<sup>61</sup>Made Not Born, p. 101.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Alexander Nowell, A Catechism (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1853), p. 132.

<sup>64</sup> The Book Of Common Prayer (New York: Church Pension Fund, 1945), p. 288.

<sup>65</sup> Book Of Common Prayer, 1662.

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<sup>67</sup> Confirmation Or The Laying On Of Hands, I, p. 109.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Lathbury, History of the Convocation of the Church of England (London: J. Leslie, 1853), p. 213.

<sup>69</sup> Made Not Born, p. 102.

<sup>70</sup> Lathbury, p. 230.

<sup>71</sup> Claude Fleury, An Historical Catechism (London: 1726), pp. 166-167.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 169-170.

<sup>73</sup> Made Not Born, p. 99.

<sup>74</sup> Catechisms of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1861), Introduction.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., Section II, p. 3.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-16.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-9.

<sup>78</sup> Physical evidence gathered in the United Methodist Churches of Phoenix, Arizona, and orally reported to the writer by an Oklahoma native, Dr. Charles E. Curl.

<sup>79</sup> John W. Deschner, "The Church As School: The Rise of the Teaching Pastor," Perkins School of Theology, December 20, 1966.

<sup>80</sup> I Corinthians 15:19.

<sup>81</sup> Catechisms of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Section II, pp. 37-38.

<sup>82</sup> William H. Willimon, The Way (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1977), p. 120.

<sup>83</sup> Catechisms of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Section II, pp. 37-38.

<sup>84</sup> Willimon, p. 123.

- <sup>85</sup>Adolph von Harnack, History of Dogma, Vol. 7, trans. N. Buchanan (Boston: Little, Brown, 1905-1910), p. 191.
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- <sup>88</sup>Philippe Ariès, The Hour of Our Death (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), pp. 342-343.
- <sup>89</sup>St. John, 1:5.
- <sup>90</sup>Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, trans, G. T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1956), p. 457.
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- <sup>92</sup>Robert T. Hungerford, "My Life In The Barrio."
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- <sup>94</sup>Furnish, p. 15.
- <sup>95</sup>Bertrand Russell, Autobiography, Vol. I (New York: Little Brown, 1968), pp. 217-218.
- <sup>96</sup>Furnish, p. 25.
- <sup>97</sup>Per-Olow Sjödén, Trends In Behavior Therapy (New York: Academic Press, 1979), cf. Chapter 2.
- <sup>98</sup>Donald Woods, Asking For Trouble (New York: Atheneum, 1981), p. 50.
- <sup>99</sup>James Michael Lee, The Flow of Religious Instruction (Mishawaka, Indiana: Religious Education Press, 1973), p. 207.
- <sup>100</sup>Ibid., pp. 289-292.
- <sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 226.
- <sup>102</sup>Ibid., p. 290.
- <sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 292.
- <sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 289.
- <sup>105</sup>Winfred F. Hill, Learning: A Survey of Psychological Interpretations (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1963), p. 39.

<sup>106</sup>Lee, p. 293.

<sup>107</sup>Sjödén, p. 358.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Theodore H. White, In Search Of History (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 34-35.

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## **APPENDIX**

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- FIRST MEETING

October 7, 1981

## 1. Introduction

- a) What you are about to learn is far more important than anything you will ever learn in school because the knowledge acquired in Confirmation will carry you safely through Time and into Eternity.
- b) We will normally meet twice a month, for one hour on the second and fourth Saturdays (today being an exception). The time of day will depend upon when we can all be here.
- c) Our meetings will be filmed on Video Cassette for the evaluation of Professor Poindexter at Drew University. Everybody wave and say "hello" to Professor Poindexter.
- d) We will have a test every meeting, beginning on October 24, over the last material we covered together.
- e) In order to help us with our Memory Work, we will have weekly prizes. Those who study will be rewarded on a regular basis.

## 2. Distribution of Manila folders--everybody gets two.

- a) Write your name on the red folder.
- b) When we are done tonight, take home both the papers and the folders.
- c) Every meeting's papers are to go into the red folders at your house.
- d) Ask your parents to read the lessons, as one of the chief problems of the church today is that very few parents have more Biblical knowledge than their children.

## 3. "What are we going to study?"

We will study three things:

- a) Who I am
- b) Who God is
- c) The relationship between God and me.

4. "How will we do this?"

By learning from the Bible about:

- a) The Holy Trinity
- b) The Church
- c) The Sacraments
- d) The Commandments
- e) The Creed
- f) The Lord's Prayer.

5. "What kind of instruction will we be using?"

We will use instruction prepared by the pastor, which is based on four sources:

- 1) The Junior Cathechism of The Methodist Church
- 2) The Westminster Cathechism
- 3) Luther's Small Catechism
- 4) The Catechism of the Church of England.

The reason for choosing those sources lies in their clear and short presentations of Biblical truth.

I. BEGINNING OF INSTRUCTION

"WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MAN"

Answer: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

WITH THESE WORDS FROM THE FIRST QUESTION OF THE WESTMINSTER CATECHISM we learn in a few simple words, the whole purpose of human life. We are made to glorify God during our earthly lives by working, praying, studying, and whatever else human beings do--with the exception of Sin. For example, it is possible to glorify God by being a farmer or housewife, a bank president or garbageman; it is not possible to glorify God by being a criminal or running a liquor store. At death, our work is over and total enjoyment begins--but only for Christians.

Therefore, the great problem and task is, "How can I be a Christian?" In the next few months we will be learning what God expects of us, in order that we may glorify Him now and enjoy Him forever in the life to come.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- SECOND MEETING

October 24, 1981

## II. GOD AND MAN

1. What is the first verse of the Bible?

Answer: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Proof: Genesis 1:1

2. Who is God?

Answer: God is our Father in heaven, the Creator of all things, and the giver of every good gift.

Proof: Malachi 2:10; Acts 4:24; I Corinthians 8:6; St. James 1:17; Ecclesiastes 12:1.

3. Where is God?

Answer: God is everywhere.

Proof: Jeremiah 23:24; Psalm 139:7-10

4. What does God know?

Answer: God knows all things, even the thoughts of our hearts.

Proof: Psalm 139:2; Proverbs 15:3; Ezekiel 11:5.

5. What can God do?

Answer: God can do whatever He wills to do.

Proof: Jeremiah 32:27; Daniel 4:35; St. Matthew 22:29; Romans 4:21.

6. How long has God lived?

Answer: God has lived always, and will live forever.

Proof: Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 1:8.

7. Deleted

8. Does God love us?

Answer: Yes, God loves everyone, for "God is love."

Proof: Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 5:8; St. John 17:23;  
I John 4:10.

9. Should we love God?

Answer: Yes; we should love God because He first loved us.

Proof: I John 4:19; Deuteronomy 6:5; Joshua 23:11.

10. Is there only one God?

Answer: There is but one living and true God.

Proof: I Kings 8:60; II Kings 19:19; Isaiah 42:8;  
I Corinthians 8:5-6.

11. How does God make Himself known to us in the Bible?

Answer: God makes Himself known to us in the Bible as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Doctrine of the Trinity.

Proof: St. John 14:26; II Corinthians 13:14;  
Philippians 2:6.

12. In what name are Christians baptized?

Answer: We are baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Proof: St. Matthew 28:19.

13. Who were our first parents?

Answer: Adam and Eve were our first parents.

Proof: Genesis 3:20; Acts 17:26.

14. Where did God place our first parents?

Answer: God placed them in the Garden of Eden.

Proof: Genesis 2:8.

15. Were they created good?

Answer: Yes, they were created good, for God made them in His own image.

Proof: Genesis 1:27; Genesis 1:31; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Isaiah 43:7.

16. What were they given to do?

Answer: They were to care for the garden, and to enjoy God's blessings.

Proof: Genesis 2:15, 16.

17. What were they forbidden to do?

Answer: They were forbidden to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Proof: Genesis 2:17.

18. Did they obey God?

Answer: No; they sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit.

Proof: Genesis 3:6.

19. What is sin?

Answer: Sin is any act, word, or thought in which we disobey God.

Proof: I John 3:4; Romans 13:10; St. James 4:17.

20. What punishment did sin bring upon our first parents?

Answer: They lost the favor of God, were driven out of Eden, and became subject to pain and death.

Proof: Genesis 3:17-19

21. What evil and punishment did their Fall bring upon all men?

Answer: By their Fall, sin entered into the world, and death by sin. The Fall of Adam and Eve and the death which all men must suffer is called the Doctrine of Original Sin.

Proof: Romans 5:12; I Corinthians 15:22, Romans 6:23; Psalms 51:5.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- THIRD MEETING

## III. JESUS CHRIST: THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN

22. What did God do in order to save fallen man?

Answer: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Proof: St. John 3:16.

23. What did the Son of God do to save us sinners?

Answer: In order to save us sinners Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man, lived, suffered, died, and rose again from the dead.

Proof: St. John 1:14; I Corinthians 15:3,4; Galatians 4:4.

24. How did He become man?

Answer: The Son of God became man by taking upon Himself a human body and soul, by being born of the Virgin Mary.

Proof: Romans 1:3; Hebrews 2:14; Philippians 2:7; I Timothy 3:16.

25. Where was He born?

Answer: He was born in Bethlehem of Judaea.

Proof: Micah 5:2; St. Matthew 2:1.

26. What name was given to Him?

Answer: They "called His name Jesus".

Proof: St. Matthew 1:25.

27. By what other name was He called?

Answer: The angels that spoke to the shepherds called Him, "Christ, the Lord".

Proof: St. Luke 2:11.

28. Who sought to kill Baby Jesus?

Answer: King Herod sought to kill Him, but He was taken to Egypt for safety.

Proof: St. Matthew 2:13, 14.

29. Where did Jesus live after Herod's death?

Answer: After Herod's death He was brought back from Egypt and lived with His parents in Nazareth.

Proof: St. Matthew 2:23.

30. When did Jesus begin His ministry?

Answer: He began His ministry when He was about thirty years old.

Proof: St. Luke 3:23.

31. How did Jesus begin His ministry?

Answer: He went to John the Baptist at the River Jordan, and was baptized by him.

Proof: St. Matthew 3:13; St. Luke 3:21.

32. What took place when Jesus was baptized?

Answer: The Holy Spirit came upon Him like a dove and a voice from Heaven said, "This is My beloved Son."

Proof: St. Matthew 3:16,17.

33. What did John the Baptist say of Jesus?

Answer: He said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

Proof: St. John 1:29.

34. What did Jesus do after His baptism?

Answer: He went into the wilderness and fasted forty days and forty nights.

Proof: St. Matthew 4:1,2.

35. What else took place in the wilderness?

Answer: Jesus was tempted by the devil.

Proof: St. Matthew 4:3-11.

36. How did Jesus overcome the devil?

Answer: Jesus overcame the devil by the Word of God.

Proof: St. Luke 4:4,8,12.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- FOURTH MEETING

III. JESUS CHRIST: THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN  
(Continued)

37. What did Jesus do after the Temptations in the wilderness?

Answer: He began preaching the Gospel in Galilee and Judaea.

Proof: St. Matthew 4:17, St. Mark 1:14, 15.

38. What great works did Jesus do?

Answer: He did many miracles; through Him the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, and the dead were raised to life.

Proof: St. Matthew 11:4,5.

39. What greater works did Jesus do?

Answer: He forgave sinners; He cleansed the heart; He healed the broken-hearted; He delivered men from the power of sin and Satan, and made them the children of God.

Proof: St. Matthew 9:2; St. Luke 4:18, 19.

40. What did Jesus say about little children?

Answer: Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me and do not stop them because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Proof: St. Mark 10:14.

41. How did Jesus come to His death?

Answer: He was betrayed by Judas, and was falsely accused before the High Priest. "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."--Apostles' Creed

42. Where was Jesus crucified?

Answer: Jesus was crucified outside Jerusalem, at a place called Calvary.

Proof: St. Luke 23:33.

43. Why was Jesus crucified?

Answer: Jesus willingly laid down His life for the sins of the world.

Proof: St. Luke 22:42; St. John 10:11-18.

44. When did Jesus rise from the dead?

Answer: Jesus rose from the dead on the third day.

Proof: I Corinthians 15:4.

45. What does the resurrection of Jesus prove to us?

Answer: The resurrection proves that Jesus is the Son of God and that we too will rise from the dead.

Proof: Romans 1:4; I Peter 1:3.

46. On what day of the week did Jesus rise from the dead?

Answer: Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, now called Sunday or the Lord's Day.

Proof: St. Matthew 28:1.

47. What day is celebrated each year in honor of the Resurrection?

Answer: Easter is the celebration of the Resurrection.

48. How long did Jesus remain on the earth after His resurrection?

Answer: Jesus was seen by His disciples for forty days after His resurrection, and then He ascended into Heaven.

Proof: Acts 1:3.

49. What was the last command that Jesus gave to His disciples?

Answer: Jesus said, "I have been given all authority in Heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all people everywhere and make them disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Proof: St. Matthew 28:18-20.

50. What was the last promise of Jesus?

Answer: "And I will be with you always, to the end of the world."

Proof: St. Matthew 28:20

51. Does Jesus live and reign today?

Answer: Jesus reigns at the right hand of God the Father and forever lives to make intercession for us.

Proof: Romans 8:34.

52. Will Jesus come back to earth again?

Answer: Jesus will come again to raise the dead and to judge the entire human race.

Proof: St. Matthew 16:27; II Timothy 4:1.

53. What will Our Lord Jesus Christ say to the Christians on the Last Day?

Answer: Our Lord will say to us, "Come, you that are blessed by My Father! Come and posses the Kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world."

Proof: St. Matthew 25:34.

54. What will Our Lord say to the wicked?

Answer: He will say to them, "Away from Me you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels!"

Proof: St. Matthew 25:41.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- FIFTH MEETING

## IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT

55. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Answer: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, the Third Person of the Trinity, the divine Helper and Comforter whom Jesus promised His disciples before ascending to God the Father.

Proof: St. John 15:26

56. When was this promise fulfilled?

Answer: On the Day of Pentecost.

Proof: Acts 2:1-4.

57. What is the first work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts?

Answer: He shows us our sins and our need of the Savior.

Proof: St. John 16:8.

58. When we have repented of our sins and turned to Jesus Christ, what does the Holy Spirit do next?

Answer: He gives us a new heart.

Proof: Romans 5:5.

59. What does it mean to say that we have a "new heart"?

Answer: It means the following three things:

- 1) We know ourselves to be children of God
- 2) We are comforted by the Holy Spirit in time of trouble
- 3) We begin to desire personal holiness. While it is true that no human fully attains (reaches) perfection in this life, nonetheless all Christians are daily to strive in that direction.

Proof: Romans 6:16; 8:26

## V. THE MEANS OF GRACE

60. Does the Holy Spirit work differently on each person or does He follow an ordered plan?

Answer: He follows an ordered plan.

Proof: I Corinthians 14:40.

61. What is the name the Church has given to the working of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: The means of grace.

62. What are the individual names of the means of grace?

Answer: They are:

- a) Prayer
- b) The Bible
- c) The Church
- d) The Sacraments

Proof: II Chronicles 6:26-27; St. James 5:16;  
St. John 10:35; Hebrews 10:25; St. Matthew  
16:18; Galatians 3:27; St. Matthew 28:19;  
Acts 8:36-37; St. John 6:56; I Corinthians  
11:26.

63. What is the Bible?

Answer: The Bible is the Word of God.

Proof: I Thessalonians 2:13.

64. How was the Bible given to us?

Answer: The Bible was written by men inspired by  
the Holy Spirit.

Proof: II Peter 1:21.

65. For what purpose has God given us the Bible?

Answer: In order that we may know God personally  
and truly, and by knowing Him, to obey Him  
in all things.

Proof: II Timothy 3:16.

66. When we read the Bible ourselves, or hear it read, how are we to think of what is being told us?

Answer: We are to think of the Bible as God speaking directly to us.

Proof: Romans 15:4.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- SIXTH MEETING

V. THE MEANS OF GRACE  
(Continued)

67. What is mean by the word, "sacrament"?

Answer: We mean by the word "sacrament," an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The sacraments were begun by Christ Himself, which makes them different from all other human activities.

Proof: St. Mark 16:16; St. Luke 22:19.

68. How many sacraments has Christ given His Church?

Answer: Jesus gave us two sacraments and two only: Baptism and Communion.

Proof: St. Matthew 28:19; St. Luke 22:14-20.

69. How many parts are there in a sacrament?

Answer: There are two parts. There is the outward and visible part and the inward and spiritual part, which is God's grace for us.

Proof: I Corinthians 11:27 (That verse shows us that Christ Himself is truly present "in, with, and under" the physical elements).

70. What is the outward and visible part in Baptism?

Answer: The outward and visible part of the sacrament in Baptism is water. It is by means of water that we are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Proof: St. Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36.

71. What is the inward and spiritual grace in Baptism?

Answer: The inward and spiritual grace in Baptism is death to sin and the New Birth to righteousness, whereby we are made the children of grace.

Proof: Acts 2:38; Ephesians 5:26.

72. Are we "born again" in the sacrament of Baptism?

Answer: Yes we are, and Baptism is the true meaning of the phrase "born again."

Proof: Titus 3:5; Romans 6:4.

73. What are the requirements for Baptism?

Answer: There are two requirements: Repentance and Faith. Repentance means a desire to turn from sin and Faith means we believe the promise of eternal life offered in His Son Jesus Christ.

Proof: Acts: 2:38.

74. Should babies be baptized, even though they are too young to understand?

Answer: Yes, the little child is accepted in God's sight because of the faith (covenant) between God and the sponsors--parents or Godparents. The baby does truly become a part of Christ's Church.

Proof: Acts 16:31-34; Acts 2:39; St. Matthew 18:6.

75. Had this always been the practice of the Christian Church?

Answer: Yes, and it extends back in time to the Old Covenant God made with Abraham, for Baptism is the Christian circumcision.

Proof: Romans 4th chapter (that is, circumcision admits Abraham's descendants into his faith and baptism admits the children of Christian believers into their parents' faith); Colossians 2:11-12.

76. Is infant baptism the most frequent as well as the oldest understanding of the sacrament?

Answer: Yes, 96% of all Christians practice infant baptism.

Proof: World Almanac, 1979.

77. Why do we locally know many people who do not practice infant baptism?

Answer: ". . . for many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Proof: I John 4:1.

78. By what other names is Communion known?

Answer: The full name is Holy Communion and it is also known as The Lord's Supper.

Proof: Church History--that is, no Biblical proof is required for points that are not doctrine.

79. Why did Jesus give us the Sacrament of Holy Communion?

Answer: He gave us Holy Communion for the continual remembrance of His sacrifice for our sakes and for the benefits we receive from that sacrifice.

Proof: St. Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 10:16-17.

80. What is the chief benefit we receive from Communion?

Answer: The forgiveness of sins.

Proof: St. Matthew 26:28.

81. What is the outward part of the Lord's Supper?

Answer: The outward part of the Lord's Supper is the bread and the fruit of the vine, which He commanded us to use.

Proof: St. Mark 14: 22-25.

82. What is the inward and spiritual part?

Answer: The inward and spiritual part is the Body and Blood of Christ Himself.

Proof: I Corinthians 10:16.

83. What is required of those who receive the Lord's Supper?

Answer: First, middle, and last, all who receive Communion must believe that Jesus is truly present in the Sacrament.

Proof: I Corinthians 11:29.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- SEVENTH MEETING

## VI. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Confirmands and Parents: Please notice that in the instruction regarding the Commandments that the Biblical references and proofs are Exodus 20:2-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21. The Answers are drawn from tradition (the Westminster Catechism, Luther's Small Catechism, The Junior Catechism of the Methodist Church and the Catechism of the Church of England) and represent the best thought of Biblically orthodox theologians.

84. What is the First Commandment?

Answer: "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me."

85. What is the meaning of the First Commandment?

Answer: We should fear, love, and trust God above all else.

86. What is the Second Commandment?

Answer: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."

87. What is the meaning of the Second Commandment?

Answer: We are not to use His name wrongly. This includes swearing in the everyday sense (cursing) but also includes swearing in the legal sense--we are not to lie under oath.

88. What is the Third Commandment?

Answer: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

89. What is the meaning of the Third Commandment?

Answer: Sunday is now the Christian Sabbath and we are required to be in Church in order to hear His Word and receive His sacraments.

90. What about not working on Sunday?

Answer: The chief meaning of the Lord's Day (that is, the Christian Sabbath) is WORSHIP, abstaining from work is purely secondary and for any necessary labor (tending farm animals, running a pharmacy, etc.) the Christian is fully free.

91. Is it better not to work on Sunday whenever possible?

Answer: Yes it is--providing you remember that it is no sin for those who must work on Sunday. "Why is it better?" Because of our current social conditions here in America, the Church is not honored by much of the population and thus to abstain from labor on Sunday whenever possible is one form of missionary endeavor in which we can all participate.

92. How is not working on Sunday a form of missionary endeavor?

Answer: People who are not Christians see our difference in conduct and thus wonder, "Why?" Those whose curiosity is moved by the Holy Spirit will then make their first steps toward Christ and His Church.

93. "I'm still not convinced--does the Bible really allow Christians to work on Sunday?"

Answer: Yes.

Proof: Romans 14:5; Romans 6:14; I Corinthians 10:23 (the Christian understanding of the Third Commandment is fully contained in that one verse).

94. In conclusion, remember that the Third Commandment is obeyed by attending Church in order to hear the Word and receive the Sacraments. We all know people who never come inside God's House and yet would not consider working on Sunday for any reason; on the Last Day, the violation of the Third Commandment will be one of the charges brought against them before Christ the Judge.

95. What is the Fourth Commandment?

Answer: Honor your father and your mother.

96. What is the meaning of the Fourth Commandment?

Answer: Even though they are very far from perfect, we should fear, respect, and love our parents, for they are the superiors whom God chose to place over us.

97. What is the Fifth Commandment?

Answer: Do no murder.

98. What is the meaning of the Fifth Commandment?

Answer: Because we both fear and love God we should not harm our neighbor in any way, especially we should not take his life.

NOTE: The Fifth Commandment does not forbid Capital Punishment, as executions take place under the Civil Authority.

Proof: Romans 13: 1-4.

99. What is the Sixth Commandment?

Answer: No adultery.

100. What is the meaning of the Sixth Commandment?

Answer: Because we both fear and love God, we should lead a moral life, both before and after marriage.

101. What is the Seventh Commandment?

Answer: Do not steal.

102. What is the meaning of the Seventh Commandment?

Answer: Because God orders us to love our neighbor, we are not in any way to take his property for our use. This includes dishonest business methods as well as outright stealing.

103. What is the Eighth Commandment?

Answer: Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.

104. What is the meaning of the Eighth Commandment?

Answer: God forbids us to lie against our neighbor in court, and also He forbids us to slander, gossip or in any way speak falsely about him.

105. What is the Ninth Commandment?

Answer: Do not covet.

106. What is the meaning of the Ninth Commandment?

Answer: God forbids me to desire my neighbor's property, family, or anything else that belongs to him. We are especially to interpret this commandment as meaning that God has placed us where we are, with what we have, and we are to accept His decision.

107. What is the Tenth Commandment?

Answer: Do not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

108. What is the meaning of the Tenth Commandment?

Answer: The same as the Ninth.

109. Why is the same commandment given in two forms?

Answer: Because human greed and lust are so strong.

110. How did Our Lord sum up the Commandments?

Answer: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: Love your neighbor as you love yourself. The whole Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets depend on these two commandments."

Proof: St. Matthew 22:37-40.

Note to Students and Parents: At various times in the history of the Church, the Commandments have been divided differently, depending on what problems Christians faced at their time in history. Because "graven images" are not a major problem in modern America--and materialism is--we are following Martin Luther's ordering of the Commandments. That is, "graven images" have been included in the First Commandment and the verses dealing with covetousness are counted as the Ninth and Tenth Commandments.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- EIGHTH MEETING

January 17, 1980

## VII. THE CREED

111. Why is the Creed called the Apostles' Creed?

Answer: Because it goes back to the earliest days of the Christian Church.

112. What is the Apostles' Creed?

Answer: It is a short summary of the Bible, containing what all faithful Christians are required to believe.

113. Why do we say it every Sunday?

Answer: For the same reason that the pledge of allegiance is given to the civil authority every day at school. To continually instruct us and also to emotionally train us.

114. Does the heart as well as the head need to be taught?

Answer: Yes, and that is why we continually study and repeat the basic teachings of the Faith.

115. How many parts does the Creed have?

Answer: Three.

116. Why is it divided up that way?

Answer: To show the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

117. What names are given to the Three Articles of the Creed?

Answer: The work of the Father is called Creation; the work of the Son is called Redemption; the work of the Holy Spirit is called Sanctification.

118. What is the First Article of the Creed?

Answer: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and earth."

119. What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that the Father has created everything that exists everywhere, seen and unseen, including myself.

120. From Whom do we receive all blessings?

Answer: From God and from Him only.

121. Do we receive blessings from God directly or through His agents?

Answer: Usually through His agents--such as parents, friends, land, medicine, etc.,--however, the greatest blessing of all we must receive directly from Him.

122. What is the greatest blessing of all, that must come directly from the Father?

Answer: Faith in His Son.

123. What does the Second Article in the Creed tell us about His Son?

Answer: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

124. What does the Second Article mean?

Answer: The Second Article of the Creed tells how Jesus became my Savior and what He will do for me in the future.

125. On the Last Day, will Jesus still be the Savior?

Answer: No, He will then be the Judge of the living and the dead.

126. Since we will all meet Him as Christ the Judge on the Last Day, what is our duty and privilege toward Him at this time?

Answer: To receive Him as our Savior and to tell others about Him, in order that we may be judged by our faith, rather than our works.

127. When we call the Second Article, the Article of Redemption, what does that mean?

Answer: It means that Jesus Christ redeems me from my sins and thereby enables me to pass safely through the Judgment on the Last Day.

128. What is the Third Article of the Creed?

Answer: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

129. What does the Third Article mean?

Answer: I know that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ or in any way come to Him.

130. How then do we come to Jesus?

Answer: By the Holy Spirit, God the Father calls me to believe in His Son. He calls me by means of the Gospel, preserves me in the True Faith and makes me part of His Church. This is the meaning of Sanctification.

131. When we refer to the Church as the Holy Catholic Church, what do we mean?

Answer: That Jesus has all believers in His power and care, both on earth and in Heaven.

132. Then "catholic" actually means "universal?"

Answer: Yes, because the Christian Church extends throughout the entire universe, even into Eternity.

133. When we say that we believe in the Holy Catholic Church, do we mean that we have any connection with the Pope?

Answer: NO, we have no connection with the Pope and are in fact opposed to Rome and all her many heresies.

134. What is a "heresy?"

Answer: The substitution of man-made religion for the Truth of God's Word.

135. When we say that we believe in the "resurrection of the body and the life everlasting", what do we mean?

Answer: That Jesus has defeated decay and death, Time and Space. Even though we must all die and our bodies rot, Our Lord will raise us up on the Last Day, and we shall live forever with Him in both power and glory.

136. In conclusion, what are we taught in the Three Articles of the Creed?

Answer: We are taught in the Creed that God the Father made the entire universe, including ourselves, that His Son Jesus died for our sins and will judge the world on the Last Day, and that the Holy Spirit gives us faith in Jesus Christ in order that we might live with Him in power and glory.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- NINTH MEETING

February 14, 1980

137. Where in the Bible is the Lord's Prayer found?

Answer: It is found in St. Matthew 6:9-13.

138. How does the Lord's Prayer begin?

Answer: Our Father who art in Heaven.

139. What does this mean?

Answer: God tells us plainly and simply that He is truly our Father and that we are truly His children, in order that we may boldly and confidently approach Him in prayer, even as we speak to our earthly fathers.

140. What is the First Petition in the Lord's Prayer?

Answer: Hallowed be Thy name.

141. What does this mean?

Answer: That God's name, which is already holy in and of itself, may also be holy in and for us.

142. How is this done?

When the Word of God is taught clearly, and when we, as children of God, live according to that teaching.

143. What is the Second Petition?

Answer: Thy kingdom come.

144. What does this mean?

Answer: The Kingdom of God comes without any help from me--in either my prayers or my life--but we pray that it may also come to and for me.

145. How is this done?

Answer: The Kingdom of God comes to me when Our Father in Heaven gives me the Holy Spirit in order that, by His grace, we may believe the Bible and thus lead a Christian life, both here and hereafter.

146. What is the Third Petition?

Answer: Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

147. What does this mean?

Answer: God's will is done without our prayers or efforts, but we pray that His will may also be done by us.

148. How is this done?

Answer: When I obey the Bible, and thereby fight against the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

149. What is the Fourth Petition?

Answer: Give us this day our daily bread.

150. What does this mean?

Answer: We pray in this petition that He will make us aware of all His gifts to us, including our daily food, in order that we may receive them with praise and thanks.

151. What, especially, is meant by "daily bread?"

Answer: Everything that is required to satisfy our bodily needs; such as: food and clothing, house and furniture, health and good government, etc.

152. What is the Fifth Petition?

Answer: And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.

153. Is this petition translated another way?

Answer: Yes, it is also translated "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us."

154. Is there any difference in meaning between the two translations?

Answer: No, there is not.

155. What does the Fifth Petition mean?

Answer: Here we ask that Our Heavenly Father will not deny our prayers because of our many sins, even though all of us are sinners and therefore do not deserve to receive anything for which we pray. Rather, we ask for what we need by depending on His grace, rather than upon our merit. In the same way, we are to forgive others because God has forgiven us for Jesus' sake.

156. What is the Sixth Petition?

Answer: And lead us not into temptation.

157. What does this mean?

Answer: While we know that God Himself tempts no one (St. James 1:13), we pray in this petition that His grace may so strengthen us that the world, the flesh, and the Devil may not defeat us.

158. What is the Seventh Petition?

Answer: But deliver us from evil.

159. What does this mean?

Answer: This petition is like a summary of all our fears, of whatever kind or description, and also our confident request that Our Father in Heaven will protect us, both now and forever.

160. What part of the Lord's Prayer is called the Doxology?

Answer: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.

161. What does this mean?

Answer: Just as the Seventh Petition sums up our fears and weakness, the Doxology sums up God's grace and power.

162. What is the last word in the Lord's Prayer?

Answer: Amen.

163. What does this mean?

Answer: "Yes, it shall be so."

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- TENTH MEETING

February 21, 1980

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

164. From where does evil come?

Answer: From the only source of all things--God Himself.

Proof: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." --Isaiah 45:7 (KJV)

165. "How is that possible!??!"

Answer: The first thing to remember is that in this life, our understanding is very limited ("For now we see through a glass, darkly . . ." I Corinthians 13:12) and all humans must therefore build their hope on Faith Alone. Within the narrow limits of our understanding, it is, however, possible to see that God is the creator of evil and is yet not evil Himself.

"How? How?"

The Devil and all the lesser demons are all fallen angels. That is, they were created good but choose to rebel against God and were then cast out of Heaven.

Proof: "Then war broke out in Heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, who fought back with his angels; but the dragon was defeated and he and his angels were not allowed to stay in Heaven any longer. The huge dragon was thrown out--that ancient serpent, named the Devil, or Satan, that deceived the whole world. He was thrown down to earth, and all his angels with him." --Revelation 12:7-9.

166. "What is the Biblical example of how this works?"

Answer: The Book of Job. In the first chapter God gives Satan a command, which he does, according to his evil nature--notice the Devil can do nothing which God does not allow. In the last chapters of Job, God speaks to Job and tells him not to concern himself with matters that are beyond human understanding.

Proof: Job 1:6-12; chapters 38-41, especially 38:4--"Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much tell me about it."

167. There is also a second point in regard to Evil that is easy for the head to understand, but hard for the heart to accept: all of us are sinners, and therefore, all of us fully deserve to be punished. This means that whatever bad things may happen to us--each one of us fully deserves whatever happens to him or her.

Proof: Romans 3:10--"There is none righteous, no, not one."

168. Hardest point of all, because it offends both the head and the heart: God knows more than we do. We all want a god who thinks and acts just as we do, which is to say, we all want an idol. However, God is the loving Father who does what is BEST for each of us--rather than what is desired by you or me.

Proof: Romans 8:28--"We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose." --TEV

169. "Then in the long run, nothing bad ever happens to a Christian?"

Answer: Yes, it is true to say that, but it will not FEEL that way until we get to Heaven.

Proof: All the people in the Bible are proof, because they lived lives exactly like our own; that is, some of the time they were happy, and some of the time they were miserable. For purposes of illustration, we will concentrate on St. Paul--sometimes he had experiences of heavenly glory (II Corinthians 12:1-6) but other times he was deeply depressed (Romans 7:24--"What an unhappy man I am!" --TEV).

## CONFIRMATION CLASS -- ELEVENTH MEETING

## "200" SERIES--CHRISTIAN MORALITY

200. Is there any way to make Morality enjoyable?

Answer: None whatsoever. Moral instruction is by its very nature contrary to what we all want and desire. The wisdom found in Ecclesiastes 1:13 especially applies to our moral efforts.

201. Has the Church failed to provide the Moral Instruction one would expect during the last 50 years?

Answer: Yes, for a variety of reasons, the chief of which came about from the failure--and repeal--of Prohibition. Having initiated and won a battle that resulted in total defeat, the Methodist Church lost much of its courage. Liberal heresy has been the second chief reason that little is now heard about the "thou shall nots."

202. Is it true that Methodism has a traditional commitment to Social Action?

Answer: Yes, because we take the Gospel seriously and therefore seek to apply it throughout the whole range of human experience.

203. Is sexual intercourse permitted before marriage?

Answer: No.

Proof: Deuteronomy 22:21; I Corinthians 6:18-20; I Corinthians 7:9.

204. Are Christians permitted to divorce?

Answer: Only on the grounds of adultery, and even then reconciliation is to be sought, with divorce only as the last resort.

Proof: St. Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 4:32.

In the questions and answers that follow, the Proofs are basically drawn from the following verses:

- 1) Romans 14:21
- 2) St. Matthew 7:12
- 3) St. James 4:17
- 4) Romans 6:16

All these verses teach that the Christian is to be free and to seek the freedom of all other members of human society. However, "freedom" today often means slavery, for anyone who is in any sense addicted to affluence (easy living) is as hooked as someone on heroin. Methodism therefore believes in strong social controls over human weakness; that is, we oppose the evil notion that a person should be allowed to do anything he or she pleases. This point will be developed in the following questions--and will be increasingly put into practice, first in Texas and then later in the rest of the nation.

205. Is alcohol--in any form--a drug?

Answer: Yes and furthermore it is the most widely used and socially approved drug in the Western World. Older people who condemn the use of marijuana and themselves use alcohol are hypocrites.

206. Is alcohol forbidden in the Bible?

Answer: No, it is not--but drunkenness is.

Proof: Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21.

207. Methodism teaches total abstinence--is this the best policy?

Answer: Yes. There is no way to know who will or will not become an alcoholic, therefore NO liquor is the most rational way to go.

208. Is smoking (tobacco) forbidden in the Bible?

Answer: No it is not. The Church traditionally opposes it because it does harm and does no good whatsoever, producing a physical and emotional dependence which is in every sense, addiction.

209. Why does the Church oppose gambling?

Answer: 1) It produces no socially beneficial results.  
2) It is fully controlled by the Mafia (organized crime).  
3) It has throughout human history produced addiction.  
4) It promotes belief in the pagan idea of Luck, rather than to believe in God's providential care (Romans 8:28).

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR CONFIRMATION - FINAL TEST

1. What is the chief end of man?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

2. Who is God?

Answer: God is our Father in heaven, the Creator of all things, and the Giver of every good gift.

Proof: Malachi 2:10; Acts 4:24; I Corinthians 8:6; St. James 1:17; Ecclesiastes 12:1.

3. Where is God?

Answer: God is everywhere.

Proof: Jeremiah 23:24; Psalm 139:7-10.

4. What does God know?

Answer: God knows all things, even the thoughts of our hearts.

Proof: Psalm 139:2; Proverbs 15:3; Ezekiel 11:5.

5. What can God do?

Answer: God can do whatever He wills to do.

Proof: Jeremiah 32:27; Daniel 4:35; St. Matthew 22:29; Romans 4:21.

6. How long has God lived?

Answer: God has lived always, and will live forever.

Proof: Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 1:8.

7. Does God love us?

Answer: Yes, God loves everyone for "God is Love."

Proof: Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 5:8; St. John 17:23; I John 4:10.

8. How does God make Himself known to us in the Bible?

Answer: God makes Himself known to us in the Bible as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Doctrine of the Trinity.

Proof: St. John 14:26; II Corinthians 13:14; Phillipians 2:6.

9. In what name are Christians baptized?

Answer: We are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Proof: St. Matthew 28:19.

10. Who were our first parents?

Answer: Adam and Eve were our first parents.

Proof: Genesis 3:20; Acts 17:26.

11. What is sin?

Answer: Sin is any act, word, or thought in which we disobey God.

Proof: I John 3:4; Romans 13:10; St. James 4:17.

12. What punishment did sin bring upon our first parents?

Answer: They lost the favor of God and were driven out of Eden, and became subject to pain and death.

Proof: Genesis 3:17-19.

13. What evil and punishment did their Fall bring upon all men?

Answer: By their Fall sin entered into the world, and death by sin. The Fall of Adam and Eve and the death which all men must suffer is called the Doctrine of Original Sin.

Proof: Romans 5:12; I Corinthians 15:22; Romans 6:23; Psalm 51:5.

14. What did the Son of God do to save sinners?

Answer: In order to save us sinners, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man, lived, suffered, died, and rose again from the dead.

Proof: St. John 1:14; I Corinthians 15:3, 4; Galatians 4:4.

15. How did He become man?

Answer: The Son of God became man by taking upon Himself a human body and soul, by being born of the Virgin Mary.

Proof: Romans 1:3; Hebrews 2:14; Philippians 2:7; I Timothy 3:16.

16. What name was given to Him?

Answer: They "called His name Jesus."

Proof: St. Matthew 1:25.

17. When did Jesus begin His ministry?

Answer: He began his ministry when He was about thirty years old.

Proof: St. Luke 3:23.

18. How did He (Jesus) overcome the devil?

Answer: Jesus overcame the devil by the Word of God.

Proof: St. Luke 4:4, 8, 12.

19. Why was Jesus crucified?

Answer: Jesus willingly laid down His life for the sins of the world.

Proof: St. Luke 22:42; St. John 10:11-18.

20. What does the resurrection of Jesus prove to us?

Answer: The resurrection proves that Jesus is the Son of God and that we too will rise from the dead.

Proof: Romans 1:4; I Peter 1:3.

21. What day each year is celebrated in honor of the Resurrection?

Answer: Easter is the celebration of the Resurrection.

22. Does Jesus live and reign today?

Answer: Jesus reigns at the right hand of God the father and forever lives to make intercession for us.

Proof: Romans 8:34.

23. Will Jesus come back to the earth again?

Answer: Jesus will come again to raise the dead and to judge the entire human race.

Proof: St. Matthew 16:27; II Timothy 4:1.

24. What will our Lord Jesus Christ say to the Christians on the Last Day?

Answer: Our Lord will say to us, "Come, you that are blessed by My Father! Come and possess the Kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world."

Proof: St. Matthews 25:34.

25. What will our Lord say to the wicked?

Answer: He will say to them, "Away from Me you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels!"

Proof: St. Matthew 25:41.

26. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Answer: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the divine Helper and Comforter whom Jesus promised to His disciples before He left the world.

Proof: St. John 15:26.

27. When was this promise fulfilled?

Answer: On the Day of Pentecost.

Proof: Acts 2:1-4.

28. What is the first work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts?

Answer: He first shows us our sins and our need of the Savior.

Proof: St. John 16:8.

29. What does it mean to say we have a "new heart?"

Answer: It means the following three things:

- a) We know ourselves to be children of God.
- b) We are comforted by the Holy Spirit in time of trouble.
- c) We begin to desire holiness and, even though no human being reaches the goal in this life, all true believers nonetheless strive for perfection.

Proof: Romans 6:16; 8:26.

30. Does the Holy Spirit work differently on each person or does He follow an ordered plan?

Answer: He follows an ordered plan.

Proof: I Corinthians 14:40.

31. What is the human name that the Church has given to the working of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: The means of grace.

32. What are the means of grace?

Answer: They are:

- a) Prayer
- b) The Bible
- c) The Church
- d) The Sacraments

Proof: II Chronicles 6:26-27; St. James 5:16; St. John 10:35; Hebrews 10:25; St. Matthews 16:18; Galatians 3:27; St. Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36-37; St. John 6:56; I Corinthians 11:26.

33. What is the Bible?

Answer: The Bible is the Word of God.

Proof: I Thessalonians 2:13.

34. How was the Bible given to us?

Answer: The Bible was written by men inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Proof: II Peter 1:21.

35. For what purpose has God given us the Bible?

Answer: In order that we might know God personally and truly, and having known Him, obey Him in all things.

Proof: II Timothy 3:16.

36. When we read or hear the Bible being read to us, how are we to think of what is being told us?

Answer: We are to think of the Bible as God speaking directly to us.

Proof: Romans 15:4.

37. What is meant by the word "sacrament?"

Answer: I mean by the word "sacrament," an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The sacraments were begun by Christ Himself.

Proof: St. Mark 16:16; St. Luke 22:19.

38. How many sacraments has Christ given His Church?

Answer: Jesus gave us two sacraments and two only: Baptism and Communion.

Proof: St. Matthew 28:19; St. Luke 22:14-20.

39. How many parts are there in a sacrament?

Answer: There are two parts. There is the outward and visible part and the inward and spiritual grace. (That is, the physical and the spiritual are united in one act.)

Proof: I Corinthians 11:27.

40. Are we "born again" in the sacrament of Baptism?
- Answer: Yes, and Baptism is the true meaning of the phrase "born again."
- Proof: Titus 3:5; Romans 6:4.
41. Should babies be baptized, even though they are too young to understand?
- Answer: Yes, because through the faith of the baby's sponsors--parents or God-parents--the little child is received into Christ's Church.
- Proof: Acts 16:31-34; Acts 2:39; St. Matthew 18:6.
42. Has this always been the practice of the Christian Church?
- Answer: Yes, and it extends back to the Old Covenant God made with Abraham, for Baptism is the Christian circumcision.
- Proof: Romans 4 (that is, Abraham's descendants are baptized of his faith, children are therefore baptized for their parents' faith); Colossians 2:11-12.
43. Is infant baptism the most frequent as well as the oldest understanding of the sacrament?
- Answer: Yes, 96% of all Christians practice infant baptism.
- Proof: World Almanac, 1978.
44. Why do we locally know so many people who do not practice infant baptism?
- Answer: ". . . for many false prophets have gone out into the world."
- Proof: I John 4:1.
45. By what other names is Communion known?
- Answer: The full name is Holy Communion and it is also known as The Lord's Supper.
- Proof: Church History - that is, no Biblical proof is required for points which are not doctrine.

46. What is the chief benefit we receive from Communion?

Answer: The forgiveness of sins.

Proof: St. Matthew 26:28.

47. What is the outward part of the Lord's Supper?

Answer: The outward part of the Lord's Supper is Bread and the fruit of the Vine, which He commanded us to use.

Proof: St. Mark 14:22-25.

48. What is the inward and spiritual part?

Answer: The inward and spiritual part is the Body and Blood of Christ Himself.

Proof: I Corinthians 10:16.

49. What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper?

Answer: First and last, all who receive Communion must believe that Jesus is truly present in the Sacrament.

Proof: I Corinthians 11:29.

50. What is the First Commandment?

Answer: "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me."

51. What is the Second Commandment?

Answer: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."

52. What is the Third Commandment?

Answer: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

53. What is the Fourth Commandment?

Answer: Honor your father and your mother.

54. What is the Fifth Commandment?

Answer: Do no murder.

55. What is the Sixth Commandment?  
Answer: No adultery.
56. What is the Seventh Commandment?  
Answer: Do not steal.
57. What is the Eighth Commandment?  
Answer: Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.
58. What is the Ninth Commandment?  
Answer: Do not covet.
59. What is the Tenth Commandment?  
Answer: Do not covet anything that is your neighbor's.
60. Why is the same commandment given in two forms?  
Answer: Because human greed and lust are so strong.
61. Why is the Creed called the Apostles' Creed?  
Answer: Because it goes back to the earliest days of the Christian Church.
62. What is the Apostles' Creed?  
Answer: It is a short summary of the Bible, containing what all faithful Christians are required to believe.
63. How many parts does the Creed have?  
Answer: Three.
64. Why is it divided up that way?  
Answer: To show the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
65. What name is given to the Three Articles of the Creed?  
Answer: The work of the Father is called Creation; the work of the Son is called Redemption; the work of the Holy Spirit is called Sanctification.

66. What is the greatest blessing of all, that must come directly from the Father?
- Answer: Faith in His Son.
67. What does the Second Article mean?
- Answer: The Second Article of the Creed tells how Jesus became my Savior and what He will do for me in the future.
68. Since He will be met as Christ the Judge on the Last Day, what is our duty and privilege toward Him at this time?
- Answer: To receive Him as our Savior and tell others about Him, in order that we may be judged by our faith in Him, rather than our works.
69. What is the Third Article of the Creed?
- Answer: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen."
70. What does the Third Article mean?
- Answer: I know that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ or in any way come to Him.
71. How then do we come to Jesus?
- Answer: By the Holy Spirit God the Father calls me to believe in His Son. He calls me by means of the Gospel, preserves me in the True Faith and makes me part of His Church. This is the meaning of Sanctification.
72. When we say that we believe in the Holy Catholic Church, do we mean that we have any connection with the Pope?
- Answer: No, we have no connection whatsoever with the Pope and are in fact opposed to Rome with all her many heresies.

73. In conclusion, what are we taught in the Three Articles of the Creed?

Answer: We are taught in the Creed that God the Father made the entire universe, including ourselves, that His Son Jesus died for our sins and will judge the world on the Last Day, and that the Holy Spirit gives us faith in Jesus Christ in order that we might live with Him in power and glory.

74. Where in the Bible is the Lord's Prayer found?

Answer: It is found in St. Matthew 6:9-13.

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