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The Lutheran Educator

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As we see it

Why Memorize?

Whatever became of memory work? Primary grade children are still clutching those yellow-orange memory work booklets as they leave our elementary schools, so our schools must still be teaching memory work. But it also appears that this traditional part of a Lutheran education is in some disfavor. The visual, TV generation of children does not value the verbal, memorized word. The family lifestyle is not conducive to doing homework in general or memory work in particular. Teachers are not convinced of the value of memory work. The switch to the NIV and a contemporary translation of the Chief Parts has left adults confused. Schools have not established a coordinated memory work curriculum. The list of reasons goes on, but the reasons aren't important. What is important is memory work.

There are or ought to be times when we are free of temporal issues and distractions. In these quiet times the mind returns to that which is deepest, engraved there in childhood. A hymn stanza drifts in with a snatch of melody. A Bible verse, the explanation to the Second Article, a paragraph from the Table of Duties come into our consciousness and we consider the words—their meaning and significance. As we ponder our sins, reflect on our joys and sorrows, contemplate our aches and ailments and life's end, struggle with decisions and responsibilities, rejoice in the blessings of the Lord, these remembered words bring us comfort, hope, and steadfastness. Then we remember also our teachers who taught us these words and who insisted that we memorize them. We thank God for teachers such as these.

Thus we ponder frequently what we have memorized. In doing so we fulfill the words of the psalmist: "I will remember the deeds of the Lord, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on your precepts and consider all your mighty deeds" (Ps 77:11-12). The first and foremost reason for memory work in religion is this: We use memory work all our lives. We pray it and we reflect on it. It creeps up on us unawares when we are most in need of its message. The words of a hymnwriter, the words of Luther, and above all, the words of our God are very near to us, they are in our mouth and in our heart that we may obey them (Deu 30:14).

Christmas will soon be here and children are preparing for the Christmas eve service. They are memorizing their songs, the Old Testament prophecies of Christ, and the familiar words of Luke. They will speak and sing those words with joy and pride in their own special service. Years from now those children will sit in a church and listen to other children sing and say those same words. As they listen, they will silently say the words along. Children will probably forget the Christmas presents they receive Christmas morning, but they will always remember the words they spoke that evening.

Why memorize? Because it is a gift which lasts.

JRI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF QUALITY PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Michael L. Butzow

"St. Jerome's down the street has a preschool, so if we don't open our own, some of our children might go there. We would fall behind the other churches in the neighborhood. We have an empty classroom, and Mrs. Jones used to be a kindergarten teacher in the public schools. We can call her to be our preschool teacher and open our own preschool this fall."

Words similar to these could easily have been spoken at an education committee or church council meeting at any one of our congregations across the country. During the past few years, early childhood education has become a topic receiving much attention. It is an issue which is not only crossing the tables of our education committees, but the tables of public school administrators and state legislatures. Educating the very young was even an issue in the most recent presidential election.

If your school does not already have a preschool program, the chances are good that it will soon be considered. However, starting a preschool program is much more involved than simply having an open classroom in the building and an ex-kindergarten teacher in the congregation. It requires doing some homework. The purpose of the following



article is to provide information about items which must be considered before undertaking a preschool program. If your school already has such a program, the following may assist you in evaluating it from an administrative perspective.

A need for preschools?

Did you know that most recent research tells us that three- and four-year-old children belong at home, not in school? Did you know that such research further states that competitive academic curricula can actually cause damage in a child's later years of schooling? Benjamin Bloom once said, "My hobby is growing small fruits and berries. One thing I

learned over the years was not to prune during the growing season” (Elkind 1986). Experts warn us not to push formal education on preschoolers, and certainly don’t look down on parents who choose not to send their children to preschool. Earlier does not seem to be better. Edward Zigler, originator of the Head Start program stated, “Whenever the family situation permits it, the best place for a preschool child is at home” (Pool 1986, 4) Lillian Katz, wrote in *Parents* magazine, “From a developmental point of view, it is better to begin children on formal instruction a little late than too early” (1987, 207).

If research tells us that children under age five should be at home, why are thirty-six percent of America’s three- and four-year-olds in school? Why are parents not asking *if*, but *where* their child should attend?

The most strongly convincing reason is working mothers. One-half of mothers with children age three to four work, and two-thirds of these work full time. The economics of the 80s and presumably the 90s demand it. Parents are looking for someone to care for their children while they are working. The logic seems to be this: As long as I have to find a place for my child to stay, she might as well learn something. Working mothers feel that preschools benefit children more than a babysitter, or even a busy parent. Professor LaGrow put it this way, “Today’s parents want professionals to care for their young children primarily because they do not have the time to do so themselves” (1988). In addition, the fact that forty-five percent of the children born

Earlier does not seem to be better.

in the 1980s will live in a single-parent home by the age of eighteen is revealing. For many parents, day care is not a choice, it is a necessity.

Another reason parents are looking for good preschools is the recent decline in the general effectiveness of public education. Families are seeking a way to ensure that their children will get a good head start and perform well in their school years to come. Yet this “good head start” depends greatly on the curriculum and quality of the program.

What parents want in a preschool

Very simply, parents want the best of everything for their children. Parents feel secure in a preschool program where they can be assured of the safety of their children. They need to know that they can communicate easily with the staff. Most parents are looking for a low-stress learning environment without entry standards based on testing. They want a place where they can be sure that their children will be introduced to structured learning in a way that will cause them to become excited about learning. They also want a place where their young ones can develop socially by interacting with other children.

The Christian parent is also looking for all of these. In addition, such a parent is looking for a school where instruction is provided by Christian teachers who are guided by the Sav-

ior's love. They want a program which can educate their child spiritually, as well as physically, mentally and emotionally.

Benefits of preschool programs

Although most experts tell us that children under age five belong at home with their parents, there do seem to be some benefits to early childhood education. Daniel S. Cheever stated in *Principal* magazine, "Early childhood programs are good education, and have proven they can promote the cognitive and social development of the child" (1986). One advantage is learning to interact socially with other children of the same age level. As the size of families in America shrinks, children have fewer opportunities to spend time with peers.

Young children may also benefit in their attitude toward school in general. A pleasant experience in preschool may cause the child to become excited about educational experiences in the future. The behavior of a child may be positively influenced by proper discipline and a good teacher-example. These benefits, again, strongly depend on the quality of the preschool program.

According to a study entitled "Lasting Effects of Early Education" by Lasar and Darling, early school attenders can better avoid labeling in school. They often are able to meet teacher expectations more easily. According to this study, forty-four percent of preschool non-attenders repeated a grade or landed in special education classes, whereas only twenty-five percent of preschool attenders did likewise (Featherstone 1986, 16-

17).

Research does seem to agree that properly operated preschool programs are especially of benefit to impoverished children. We are told that poverty is a better indicator of school failure than any testing or screening procedure. Your decision on operating a preschool may well reflect the community in which you work.

The positive effects of early education are debatable. However, the greatest benefit of starting education at an early age is that three- and four-year-old children are easily able to understand God's message of love through Jesus Christ and such an education can supplement the Christian education provided by parents. This education can never begin too early.

Curriculum

Most experts agree that preschool curricula must be non-academic. Preschool, they say, should ready a child for the regular school experience. At this age, children have a natural desire to learn, and do so best when left to their own discovery. David Elkind wrote, "By far, the majority of today's research studies on infants and young children merely confirm what we already know: young children learn best through the active exploration and manipulation of concrete materials, not through the inculcation of symbolic rules. There is really nothing in the contemporary research literature that refutes this fundamental fact" (1986).

Learning at this age level occurs primarily through direct experience, rather than from mastery of abstract concepts. Preschoolers need an oppor-

tunity for socialization, creative expression, cognitive development and physical activity. Play is the most effective medium for such active learning. Through guided play, children will become more self-assured and independent. An example of play as a learning experience would be listening to stories, telling them and scribbling to develop language skills.

The religious curriculum of the preschool should receive much attention, as it is what separates the Christian preschool from all others. Ideally, it is a chief reason your congregation members have chosen to open a preschool of their own. The main lessons of the Bible can be brought to the children by a multitude of methods to which they will be able to relate. Such methods may include singing, puppets, flannel boards, plays, records or story boards. Here is an opportunity for your upper grade day school or Sunday school

children to get involved and feed Jesus' lambs.

The name of your preschool—licensing

The name which you use for your early childhood program may well depend on your state government. In Minnesota, for example, a "preschool" falls under the supervision of one department of government, while a "pre-kindergarten" is under another. It is important to contact your state department of education and understand their definitions for preschools, pre-kindergartens and nursery schools. If you are not careful, you may find yourself in a legal battle with the state over licensing.

The following is a list of terms as defined by *Principal* magazine:

- ◆ *Child care* is a general term that encompasses the variety of part-day



and full-day programs available for children of different ages.

- ◆ *Day care* is provided in homes or centers, for children during part or all of the day.
- ◆ *Infant and toddler care* is for children from birth to two-and-a-half or three years old.
- ◆ *Preschools* are programs designed for children from three to five years old, that provide opportunities for learning and social interaction.
- ◆ *Nursery schools* are similar to preschools and provide part-day programs for young children.
- ◆ *Child Development Centers* are operated by universities and hospitals to serve children with special needs.
- ◆ *School-age child care* is for children, aged five and up, who need care before or after school hours and during vacations (Cheever 1986).

More than twenty states have passed legislation mandating, encouraging or regulating early childhood education. The state in which you work may require a license for your preschool. If you are able to choose, decide carefully. There are no national licensing regulations at this point.

Some schools may decide not to seek certification. They argue that

**A quality
preschool will
involve and educa-
tion parents as
well as children.**

the state is already getting too involved in nonpublic schools. There may be certain state requirements which certified schools must follow, such as religious non-discrimination in hiring of staff, space requirements, insurance, or medical tests. Others may argue that parents will be more drawn to a school if it is state certified. They feel that we should want to provide the highest quality education that we can, and following state guidelines will assure us of doing so.

Perhaps a simple solution is to obtain a copy of the certification guidelines for your state, and follow them to the best of your school's ability while remaining uncertified. Your program will be assured of high quality standards, while retaining freedom to operate without state intervention. There may be some regulations which you will need to follow even if not licensed, such as building, health, fire and safety codes.

Space

Operating a preschool requires more space than just the empty classroom down the hall. It is suggested that preschools need thirty-five usable square feet per child inside, and seventy-five square feet outside. Large toys such as play appliances, sand boxes and tricycles must be stored. There must be available space for reading, singing and circle games. Equipment such as a stereo, small tables and chairs, and creative toys are needed. Indoor and outdoor play areas are necessary. The administrator must be conscious of stairs, fire safety and busy streets.

Class size

A teacher well- trained in the Scriptures is better prepared to teach God's Word to chil- dren.

Principal magazine reports, "A recent study of Chicago's kindergarten programs showed that class size is a better predictor of school achievement than length of the school day" (Schweinhart 1987). Studies show that a class size of sixteen to twenty is most advantageous. A pupil-teacher ratio of no more than ten-to-one produces the best results. Available space also may dictate class size. The following are the recommended teacher-pupil ratios from the National Association for the Education of Young Children:

Age of child	Group size	Staff/child ratio
2	8	1:4
2	10	1:5
2	12	1:6
3	10	1:5
3	12	1:6
3	14	1:7
3	16	1:8
4-5	16	1:8
4-5	18	1:9
4-5	20	1:10

Staff

When congregations considering

staffing, they need to have two chief concerns. First, is it essential that we have a teacher trained specifically in early childhood education? Second, is it necessary for our teacher to be DMLC certified? In answer to the first, a quote from *Phi Delta Kappan* magazine will suffice: "The National Day Care Study ... found that only one teacher characteristic predicts program quality and effectiveness: the amount of job-related training in early childhood education that a teacher has received" (Schweinhart, 1987). In answer to the second consideration, synodical certification is recommended, if at all possible. It is logical that a teacher well trained in the Scriptures is better prepared to teach God's Word to children.

Your teacher must be a professional, not just a nice lady who likes children. It is wise to hire a teacher assistant to help with crafts, snacks and cleanup. It is not necessary that this person be educated in early childhood education; however, it is necessary that she has been blessed with an extra portion of patience.

Length and number of days

Professor LaGrow suggests that preschools be in session two or three days a week, from one to three hours per day. *Phi Delta Kappan* magazine takes a stronger stand; "When (preschools) are offered at least four days a week, for approximately eight months a year, high quality preschool programs have positive, long-lasting effects" (Schweinhart 1987). If your decision is to operate a full, rather than part-day program, you may need to consider after-school care for working families.



Family involvement

The purpose of a preschool is not only to allow for development of little ones. A quality preschool will involve and educate parents as well. David Elkind writes, "Early childhood programs meet the new needs created by dramatic changes in family life, changes that will not disappear and that require new services if we are to maintain or strengthen the stability of families" (1986). Professor LaGrow makes some strong suggestions, stating that preschools which are not closely connected to the home will be ineffective. His suggestions include home visits to each family by the teacher once per month. To involve parents, he advises required parental involvement as teacher aides. Further, says LaGrow, parents should be required to attend regular group meetings where they can share interests and concerns, and where the teacher is able to provide home instruction techniques.

One important safety precaution to consider is making parents drop off and pick up their child *at the classroom door*. Further, if anyone else will be transporting the child, require a note from the parents.

Publicity

If you have the space available, you may want to open your school to the community. Today's families have a need for preschools. Your evangelism efforts can be enhanced when you meet the needs of families. You can advertise your preschool by placing posters in banks and stores around town. Contact your local cable television company, most have community or religious access channels. Placing an attractive sign in front of your building can be extremely effective. The best publicity, however, is a satisfied customer. Parents who have benefitted from your program will tell other parents. To reach the children of your congregation, establish and maintain a cradle roll.

It is wise to hold a preschool roundup at the end of the previous school year, or the beginning of the current year. Registration should begin as early as the January before the coming school year. Preschools begin to fill very early. Open your registration to congregation members first, and to the community one month later. It is also wise, if your program is full, to keep a dated waiting list. Preschool students often leave a program during the school year.

Implementing a preschool will assist your evangelism efforts. Such a program is also a good way to start interest in Christian education if your congregation does not have a Lutheran elementary school. Preschools can be an effective tool to revive schools which are declining in enrollment. Preschools are excellent "feeders" for elementary and Sunday schools. There are few better times to introduce families to your congregation and its educational programs than when their children are very young.

Finances

Most likely, your congregation's largest concern will be financing.

The preschool should be a part of the congregation's total education program

With planning, your program should be able to support itself. Nearly all private early childhood education programs require tuition. Parents expect to pay from thirty to sixty dollars per month for part-day programs. A classroom of twenty children should support a teacher, paid assistant and supplies. The initial purchase of toys and furniture, however, may require additional funding. As in any school program, cost is linked to quality. A good school is expensive to operate and maintain.

Accountability

Of course, the education committee will want to be closely involved in your preschool. It will be necessary to author a preschool handbook which states the goals and objectives of the school, along with all other procedural and instructional information. It is a good idea to have parents sign the handbook, stating that they have read it and understand what it says.

It is important to make the preschool a part of your total educational program. Teachers should have an opportunity for inservice professional growth. The principal should make regular visits to the classroom. Include your preschool in the activities of the day school. Require that your pre-kindergarten teacher attend faculty meetings. Even if your preschool is self-supporting, it should not be treated as being separate from the rest of your congregation's educational programs.

Implementing and operating a *quality* preschool program requires much study and planning. The quality of your program will depend on group size, the training of your staff

and the pupil-teacher ratio. Without careful planning, administration, and guidance, you will only be operating a baby sitting service. The NAYEC defines a high quality preschool program this way: "... one which meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children and adults—the parents, staff, administrators—who are involved in the program. Each day a child's life is viewed as leading toward the growth and development of a healthy, intelligent, and contributing member of society" (Cheever 1986). We, as Christian educators would add, a quality program is only one which "leads the little children to the Savior's waiting arms."

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THE 9TH AND 10TH COMMANDMENTS: ANOTHER VIEW

David P. Kuske

In the February 1990 issue of *The Lutheran Educator* an article on the 9th and 10th Commandments suggested the “awful possibility” that “we have traditionally been misunderstanding 20 percent of God’s basic moral law.” This suggestion was made on the basis of two arguments. First, since we “know there are ten commandments (Dt 4:13),” we “risk missing important aspects of God’s will” if we fail to establish ten distinct concepts. Second, “Luther is not talking here [in the 9th and 10th Commandments about sins of the heart, coveting.” According to this argument, by following Luther’s lead we will find the real meaning of these commandments “in the *objects* of the verb ‘covet’” rather than in the verb itself. Although the article presents

an interesting study, it should also be noted that this is not a widely accepted view because a study of New Testament passages on coveting and of what Luther says in his Large Catechism does not lead to the conclusion that the real meaning of the 9th and 10th Commandments is in the object of the verb “covet.”

We always need to be careful that we establish the meaning of God’s Word on what is clearly stated and never on what we might think is implied by what is stated. That Scripture refers to the commandments given to Moses on Mt. Sinai as ten in number is sure (Ex 34:28, Dt 4:13, 10:4). But no one can say absolutely how the commandments are to be numbered. Nor can anyone say that by giving Israel “ten words” God was



1 Samuel 26

The Ninth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house or obtain it by false claims, but do all we can to help him keep it.

The Tenth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his workers or his animals or anything that belongs to you neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not force or entice away from our neighbor his wife, workers or animals, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

establishing ten distinct moral stipulations for all people of all time. This is especially true when we remember that these ten commandments were given to Israel as part of a larger covenant and so they contain ceremonial and civil as well as moral stipulations (i.e. the 3rd and 9th Commandments).

We recognize the moral concept underlying the 3rd Commandment because in the New Testament, even though God has not commanded us to keep certain days holy, we know it is his will that we study his Word. Whether the 9th Commandment establishes a separate moral principle for all people of all time is not clear from the New Testament. It was for that very reason that this argument, studied in a number of pastoral con-

ferences in the mid-1960s, never received wide acceptance.

Finally, the contention that "liberty" is an essential moral right may be true if one is speaking of our nation's guiding principles, but it is not a right established by Scripture. When Scripture speaks of slavery, for example, it does not condemn slavery itself as immoral, but the abuse of another human being by a master of slaves.

It is not possible to conclude, therefore, on the basis of the three passages in Exodus and Deuteronomy that there are ten distinct moral principles for all people of all time. The numbering of the commandments will not bear such weight. Keil and Delitzsch, commenting on Exodus 20:1, state a caution that is well-taken: "The Bible contains neither

distinct statements, nor definite hints with reference to the numbering and division of the commandments upon the two tables—a clear proof that these points do not possess the importance which has frequently been attributed to them.”

Secondly, the contention that Luther dealt with the 9th and 10th Commandments as totally separate entities and that Luther says the meaning of these commandments is contained in the objects of the verb “covet” rather than in the verb itself need to be analyzed in the light of his own explanation of them in the Large Catechism. Note well that in the Large Catechism Luther treats these two commandments together (*Triglotta*, p. 663; *Book of Concord*, Tappert, p. 404). Furthermore, in speaking about the content of the 9th and 10th Commandments he consistently refers to their thrust as one and the same: “Therefore God has added these two commandments in order that it be esteemed as sin and forbidden *to desire* or in any way *to aim at getting* our neighbor’s wife or possessions” [emphasis ours] (*Triglotta*, p. 665; Tappert, p. 404, #293). “Therefore (I say) they thus interpreted these commandments, and that

rightly (although their scope reaches somewhat farther and higher), that no one *think or purpose to obtain* what belongs to another...” [emphasis ours] (*Triglotta*, p. 665; Tappert, p. 404 and 405, #296). In his summary sentences Luther says, “Thus these commandments are especially directed against envy and miserable avarice, God wishing to remove all causes and sources whence arises everything by which we do injury to our neighbor, and therefore He expresses it in plain words: ‘Thou shalt not covet, etc.’ He would especially have the heart pure...” (*Triglotta*, p. 669; Tappert, p. 407, #310). On one occasion, in referring to both commandments, Luther even says, “This last commandment ...(*Triglotta*, p. 665; Tappert, p. 405, #300).

Even a cursory reading of the Large Catechism will also confirm that Luther understood the verb “covet” to be the heart of the commandment, not the objects of this verb. Luther spends a good deal of time explaining the difference between the last two commandments and the 6th and 7th Commandments. He speaks of people who, under the cover of human laws, gratify their avarice by taking another’s property or wife or servants or cattle away from them. Because they did it legally they like to call it shrewdness. But near the end of his discussion of the 9th and 10th Commandments Luther says, “Although you go your way as if you had done no one any wrong, you have nevertheless injured your neighbor; and if it is not called stealing and cheating, yet it is called coveting your neighbor’s property, that is aiming at possession of it, enticing it away from

Luther understood the verb "covet" to be the heart of the commandment.

him without his will, and being unwilling to see him enjoy what God has granted him. And although the judge and every one must leave you in possession of it, yet God will not leave you therein; for He sees the deceitful heart . . ." (*Triglotta*, p. 669; Tappert, p. 406, #307 and 308).

When Luther spoke of these commandments as addressing the thoughts of the heart, he was simply echoing what the New Testament writers say about this moral command. In Romans 13:9 Paul quotes a number of commandments, among them the 9th and 10th when he says, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet." That Paul understands the emphasis in this command to be on the verb and not on the objects of the verb is clear from his words in Romans 7:7 where he says, "I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what it was to covet if the law

had not said, 'Do not covet.' "

There can be no arguing with the statements in the February article which uphold liberty and labor as blessings of God which God's children will not want to abuse but constantly employ in the most loving way for the benefit of all their neighbors. But there is a good deal of evidence in Scripture and in the writings of Dr. Luther that it is best to retain the emphasis on coveting as we teach the 9th and 10th Commandments.

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STEWARDSHIP IS FOR ADULTS, RIGHT?

Mark Lenz

Stewardship is for adults, right?

It's what you do after you're confirmed and you get your very own packet of church envelopes, and then if you don't forget where you put them, you take one (whoops, better throw all those out-dated ones away) put in a quarter and place it in the offering plate on Sunday.

Stewardship is when Dad sits down with the checkbook, and after paying the bills, decides how much the family can afford to give to church this month.

Stewardship is when pastor talks about money in his sermon, and it's a good thing he doesn't do that more than once a year because some people get pretty upset.

Stewardship is when a couple men from church come to your home, talk about a lot of boring statistics and how the church is really in trouble, give you a stack of material, and tell you they hope you can give a lot more because the church needs it!

Stewardship is for adults. They get the envelopes. They've got the money. It's one of those unpleasant things you've gotta do when you grow up.

How can we change this picture? How can we help children understand that stewardship involves more than money? How can we lead them to realize that every believing child of God is a steward, that they too, no matter how young they are, are stewards?



Stewardship does involve money and envelopes and sermons and committees and budgets. We can't deny that, and we don't have to be embarrassed about that. But there's so much more!

Taking care of the earth

Somebody once said that if the earth were a globe only three feet in diameter floating in a room somewhere, and we could go up to it and see the water and the clouds and the creatures and people moving about (under a microscope of course), we would not only be amazed by it but would also want to take very good care of this wonderful phenomenon.

In a way that's what stewardship was all about for Adam and Eve—taking care of this wonderful phenomenon called earth. God said to them, "Fill the earth and subdue it" (Ge 1:28). God says that to us today too. We need to take care of this earth and our own little corner of it. Cleaning up a room, straightening a desk, mowing the lawn, pulling weeds,

recycling newspapers or bottles or cans—all are ways of subduing the earth. And it's the responsibility of all—young and old. We're all managers, or stewards, of this house where we live.

That's really the meaning of the Greek word *oikonomia* which we translate as “stewardship”—management of a house or household affairs. The house belongs to God, but we are to manage it for him.

God owns all

Try to take a favorite toy truck away from a child, and he will wrench it back saying, “Mine.” God says, “Mine,” too, not only about toy trucks but about silver and gold, about the world and everything in it—all the beasts of the forests and all the cattle upon a thousand hills (Ps 50:10).

You and I and all that we are and have belong to God. I can't claim that this body is mine to do with as I please. I have been fearfully and wonderfully made by God; he has given me “my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.” Everything belongs to God, and he's placed me here to manage it for him. He's the Owner. He's the One to whom I'm responsible, and I need to do a good job for him.

We're all managers

A manager of a professional baseball team is entrusted with a certain number of players. The owner of the team gives him infielders, outfielders and pitchers. The manager then has to decide who is the best person to put in right field. He has to deter-

A child's purpose in life is to serve his Lord in every way he can.

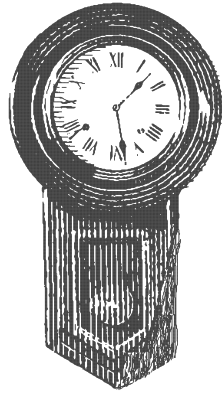
mine a batting order. He wants his most powerful hitter in the clean-up position, and his most consistent hitter in the lead-off position. A manager has to settle on a starting pitcher, and he has to know when to send in a relief pitcher. He has all sorts of decisions to make on behalf of the owner of the team.

Some people get to be baseball managers; some get to be business managers. But every Christian gets to be a manager for God—not just adults, children too!

We need to manage our time

Children might say, “Why talk to me about stewardship? I don't have much money. Oh, I get a little allowance, but that's gone before I know it. And I'm not that big and strong. I don't know a lot. There aren't that many things I can do to help.” That's not true, and we'll explain in a moment. But there's one thing each person, young or old, has the same amount of each day.

Suppose you had a bank account which credited you each morning with \$86,400. But this bank account carried no balance to the next day. It allowed you to keep no cash in your account. Every morning it cancelled



every cent which you failed to use. What would you do with that \$86,400 each day? The fact is that each of us has such a bank account, and it's name is "Time." There are exactly 86,400 seconds in a twenty-four hour day.

There's a radio commercial where the man asks the clerk at the counter, "Do you have a minute?" And the clerk responds, "I'm sorry, we're all out of minutes, but if you'll check aisle two we still have a few hours on special."

Wouldn't it be great if we could buy time? But we can't. We can't store it. We can't retrieve it. We can't loan it or borrow it. The only thing we can do is use it.

The average child in grade school

Every Christian gets to be a man- ager for God.

today watches about twenty hours of television a week. If this child maintains his television viewing habits throughout his lifetime it means that *nine years* will be spent in front of the TV. The same person will spend only about *four months* of his lifetime reading the Bible.

Businesses often bring in time management consultants to teach their employees to be more efficient and productive. Perhaps it's time to teach time management to children. The stakes are surely a lot higher. How we use our time in this world has a bearing on how we'll spend eternity.

I'm convinced that the way we teachers think about, talk about, and use our time can speak volumes to the children we teach, but there are also a number of practical things we can do.

Part of good time management is goal-setting. We need to help children set goals, long-range and short range goals, even if it's something as simple as how many books they're going to read over their summer vacation.

One thing you might try is having your students keep an after school time-log for a week and then discuss the results. It might give you the opportunity to talk about time spent watching TV as compared with reading and helping around the home.

Making use of diagrams or checklists to plan activities such as a school trip can teach children something about the importance of planning—another aspect of good time management. Using a wall calendar and a message board in the classroom can show the importance of communication, still another time saver.

In every way we can, we need to teach children to be good managers of time. Jesus said, "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent Me. Night is coming when no one can work" (Jn 9:4).

Everyone has talents

What about the second "T" word, talents? Congregations often distribute talent survey forms to the communicants. The members are invited to write down their various talents, abilities and interests and indicate the ways in which they would be willing to serve in the church. When such a system is kept up-to-date and properly filed and used it can help a congregation develop the talents of its members to the fullest.

But why not such a system also for children? The Bible says, "*Each* one

should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (1 Pe 4:10). This is directed, not just to communicants or adults or voting members, but to children too.

A talent survey form for children could consist of a few simple questions: What times are you available? (Before school? After school? Evenings? Week-ends?) With whom would you like to work? What are your interests? What do you see as your special talents and abilities? And then a list of jobs and activities such as helping put up a bulletin board, emptying wastebaskets, sweeping the classroom, working on the school grounds, helping correct papers (upper grades), visiting a nursing home, collecting items for a food shelf, writing letters to shut-ins, hanging door hangers. The list of jobs and activities must of course be suited to different age groups and modified to fit given situations.

A couple of responsible upper grade children could be put in charge of placing the talent survey forms on file, updating them and contacting children when certain jobs needed to be done.

Is this expecting too much of children? No, I don't think so. A child's purpose in life is not simply to play, as some would have it, but to serve his Lord in every way he can.

Money is part of stewardship too

It's no secret that we live in a very materialistic, pleasure-seeking world. Children too are affect-



ed by the philosophy which says that having a beer in one hand and a fishing rod in the other is the best life has to offer. "It's my money. I work hard to earn it. And if I choose to spend it all on myself, that's my business." Not only certain rock stars and sports heroes, but sometimes even a child's own parents give that message loud and clear.

What can we do to combat this?

First we need to teach children exactly what being a manager involves. A manager is someone who takes care of things that belong to somebody else. Our money and all we call our own really belong to God. He entrusted it to us, and we are to manage it wisely for him. Whether a person has much or little, whatever he has comes from the Lord.

God doesn't leave us guessing how we're to manage the treasures he's entrusted to us. There are four things he says we are to do: 1) support ourselves and our families, 2) help the poor, 3) provide for government, and 4) support the preaching of the gospel to the world.

In some places of the world children have to beg for a living. Rarely

does a child in this country have to support himself. Many children, however, do earn their own money by paper-routes, baby-sitting, yard-work, snow-shoveling, even having a lemonade stand. From that money they can help the poor, perhaps by buying an item for the food-shelf. From that money they need to realize they're supporting the government when they pay the sales tax on a candy bar, for example, and they need to understand that as an obligation we all have. And from the money they earn they also need to give their offerings to the Lord.

Guidelines for giving to the lord

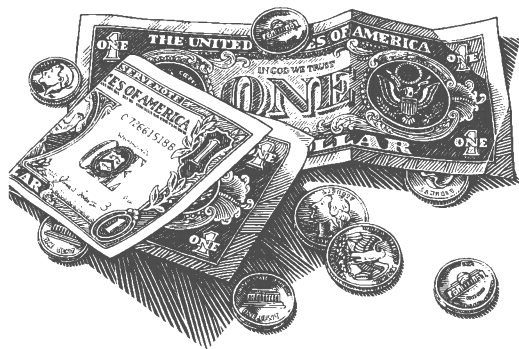
God gives a number of specific guidelines for supporting the preaching of the gospel. He says we are to give regularly—weekly, in fact. "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money" (1 Co 16:2).

He expects us to give willingly and cheerfully. "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Co 9:7).

He wants us to give, not what's left over when everything else is taken care of, but the firstfruits. Offerings for church come first, then we pay the rest of the bills and take care of our other needs and expenses.

We are to give proportionately, according to our ability (Ac 11:29), in keeping with our income (1 Co 16:2), according to what we have (2 Co 8:12).

God wants us to think carefully about how much we're giving and why and for what. We aren't just to throw some money into the offering plate, but we are to inform ourselves about needs, opportunities



Stewardship:

regularly cheerfully firstfruits proportionately informed

and challenges which confront the church (2 Co 9:7).

And when we give, we need to do it not to have others notice us, but out of love for the Lord. Jesus said, "When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Mt 6:3).

Most churches use an envelope system, not because the Bible says they have to, but because it is a fine aid to encourage regular giving. What about having church envelopes for children? Such envelope packets are in fact available. Little is gained for a child's training in stewardship if the head of the house simply fills out an envelope for the entire family. Children have mission offerings and chapel offerings and Sunday school offerings, and maybe sometimes they have envelopes for these purposes. Why not regular Sunday church offering envelopes too?

Will children take this seriously?

But how practical is all this talk about stewardship? Can we really expect children to take this seriously? How much success can we expect to have in teaching children these stew-

ardship guidelines? The Bible says "Each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Ro 14:12). It doesn't say each adult or each communicant, but each and every Christian, young or old, child or adult, will have to give a report of his stewardship to the Lord. Every person, regardless of age, has been given talents and abilities to use faithfully for the Lord. On Judgment Day our use of these talents will be examined. Those who have used their talents faithfully will receive the reward of grace, but those who have been unprofitable servants will be condemned by Jesus (Mt 25:26,30).

Of course we can't threaten children into becoming good stewards, and we shouldn't cajole, coax or trick them into it either. Stewardship is rather our response to God's love in Christ. "We love because he first loved us" (1 Jo 4:19). Stewardship is a living expression of faith in Christ Jesus; it is what I do after I say I believe. It's using what God has made me and what he has given me out of love for him. In the broad sense we could say that stewardship is sanctification. It's managing my whole life and everything I have in gratitude to my Savior who shed his blood for me. Stewardship is using what God in his grace has given me to accomplish his saving purpose in the world. Who can say that that's not true for children too?

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A suggestion for your classroom

CALCULATORS FOR THE 1990s

David J. Pelzl

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards for the 1990s state "The K-4 curriculum should make appropriate and ongoing use of calculators ..." and assume for grades 5-8 that "all students will have a calculator with functions consistent with the task envisioned in this curriculum." In response to those statements, more and more classrooms are requiring students at all grade levels to have a calculator. Some schools are providing the students with calculators.

No matter which situation describes your school, it is important for faculties to take the time to establish a calculator policy. What type of calculators should be used at which grade level? When should they not be used in the classroom? What specific calculator instruction needs to be a part of the curriculum? Many other such questions need to be answered when developing a calculator policy.

In regard to the type of calculator,

I propose that cheapest is not always best. In grades K-4, calculators should have large keys, or at least sufficient space between the keys, so the children do not press two keys at the same time. Calculators should have a key which makes it easy to delete the last number(s) entered if wrong. Thus the student will not always have to start over from the beginning of the problem. Most calculators have a C/CE key which removes the last number entered and does not disturb the operation that was previously entered. Other calculators have a backspace key which allows the user to remove the last digits entered one at a time.

Another feature which I believe all calculators should have is algebraic logic. This means that the calculator will do the correct order of operations when needed. For example, if the child were to do $2+3 \times 5$ on such a calculator, the correct answer of 17 would appear in the display, *not* 25.

This type of calculator supports correct teaching of the order of operations and thus can become a tool for the teacher. Finally, all calculators should be solar calculators. Quite a number of well-known calculators, such as the Casio MS-8W, the Sharp EC-376A, the TI-108 and others fit the criteria previously described, and in addition are known to stand up to hard use. Such calculators cost from \$6-\$10.

In grades 5-8, calculators should also be able to work with exponents, square roots, and fractions in fraction form. At the present time only the TI Math Explorer allows one to easily add, subtract, multiply and divide fractions in either fraction or mixed number form, and display the answer in the same form. Another nice feature of the Math Explorer is that it allows the user to divide two whole numbers and display the answer as a

quotient and a remainder. The TI Explorer costs about \$17 when purchased in multiples of 10.

When considering the choice of calculators, faculties should also consider whether to purchase one or more overhead projector calculators. Overhead calculators can be useful teaching tools, particularly if they have a keyboard which is fully visible to the students. The Educator™ and Calc-U-View calculators, priced at \$35-\$80 are such calculators.

The calculators described in this article are available from Addison Wesley Publishing Co., Creative Publications, Cusinaire, Dale Seymour Publications, as well as other companies specializing in teacher helps.

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May the peace of the Christchild give you hope, comfort and joy.
The editors

