



#59944

TRAIN UP A CHILD Bible Study – Leader’s Guide

Opening Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, we look to you for all wisdom and guidance. Thank you for giving us Your Word to enable us to learn more about you and what you would have us do through Your Son, Jesus. Teach us Your ways so that we might serve You with our lives. To You belongs all honor and glory. Amen.

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Introduction: The Lutheran Church has been promoting Christian education ever since Martin Luther first wrote the Small Catechism in 1529. For almost 500 years we have been using it as a resource in our homes and churches to teach our children more about the Word of God. The catechism was created to be a tool to assist in instruction. Luther outlined his summary of Christian doctrine, complete with Scripture references, in an easy to understand question and answer format. He wanted to give parents a practical resource to help them teach their children about God.

This was a radical concept in Luther’s time. In Luther’s day, Bibles were a rare commodity and Christian education was not widely promoted. The Roman Catholic Church was closely connected with the government. One might say it was not “politically correct” to teach the average person to study God’s Word. Religious leaders preferred to tell the people what to believe. But God used a man, Martin Luther, to change all of that.

- 1. Why did Martin Luther think Christian education was so important?** (*Learning God’s plan for salvation is central to Christian education. We must know why we believe what we believe. We must know we have the truth.*)
- 2. Who needs Christian education?** (*Everyone. Jesus received instruction from His heavenly Father and then later spent His life teaching and instructing His disciples and countless others.*)
 - **1 Timothy 2:3, 4** *“This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth.”*
 - **Colossians 1:6** *“All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s grace in all its truth.”*

- **Matthew 28:19, 20** *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*
- **Luke 2:46** *“After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions.”*

3. What is the essential element of proper instruction found in the following Scripture references?

(All instruction should speak the truth based on God’s Word. This involves a proper understanding of the Law and Gospel along with complete trust in God’s promises. All teaching must be in accord with Scripture.)

- **Titus 2:1** *“You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.”*
- **Luke 1:3, 4** *“Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seems good also to me to write an orderly account for you...so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.”*
- **Acts 18:25** *“He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.”*

4. How can we “teach about Jesus accurately” as written in Acts 18:25?

(Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ must be the main teaching.)

- **Ephesians 2:8, 9** *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.”*

5. What impact will this instruction or training have on our lives?

(It teaches us how to live our lives according to God’s will as a response to His gift of faith. It also teaches us about God’s moral absolutes – right from wrong. It teaches salvation and “just say no.”)

- **Titus 2:11-13** *“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*

6. Who does God say is responsible for Christian education?

(In the patriarchal age the father was the instructor for his entire household. Later, the synagogues, temples and churches provided regular instruction. Ultimately, God Himself, instructs us through the Holy Spirit and His Word.)

(Parents)

- **Deuteronomy 4:9b** *“Teach them to your children and to their children after them.”*

(The Church)

- **Ephesians 4:11, 12** *“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of services, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”*

(God)

- **Psalm 32:8** *“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go: I will counsel you and watch over you.”*

7. What is the Church’s role in Christian education?

(The Great Commission of Christ instructs the church to spread the message of the Gospel to all nations. Baptism and instruction of God’s Word are included in the process of making disciples.)

- **Matthew 28:19, 20** *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

8. How does the Great Commission apply to individual believers?

(As part of the body of Christ we all have a responsibility to reach out to others with the message of the Gospel. We do this when we support Christian education.)

9. What is our role as Christian parents in the spiritual teaching of our children?

(Martin Luther divided the Small Catechism into six chief parts: the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Confession and the Sacrament of the Altar. Under each of these sections Luther instructs “the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household.”

We are to bring our children to be baptized. We are to teach and train our children according to God’s Word, by living our faith and daily seeking opportunities to instruct and apply God’s Word to our lives.)

- **Deuteronomy 11:19** *“Teach them to your children, talking to them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”*
- **Ephesians 6:4** *“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”*
- **Proverbs 22:6** *“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”*

10. How are we doing in our homes with regard to Christian training? What could we do to make it better?

(Ask for examples of specific ways to improve in the area of Christian training.)

- 11. How should we respond to the parent who says, “I don’t know how to teach my children about the Bible. That’s why I send them to Sunday school?”**
(We should gently remind them that Sunday school is only a part of Christian education. A parent’s responsibilities involve living and sharing their faith with their children.)
- 12. What promise is made at our baptismal vow regarding Christian instruction?**
(At the baptism of children, the parents and sponsors promise to train and instruct the children in the Christian faith, remind them of their baptism, bring them to worship and provide further instruction that they may later partake of the Lord’s Supper. When being baptized as an adult, the person speaks for themselves, as they profess their Christian faith and promise to continue to worship and seek instruction in God’s Word.)
- 13. How is our Confirmation vow a reflection of Christian instruction?**
(We publicly profess our faith and take upon ourselves the responsibility of seeking continued instruction in God’s Word. This is a lifelong commitment.)
- 14. Why do we want to study God’s Word? What does He promise us?**
(Guard against false prophets.)
- **Acts 17:11b** *“For they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*
- (Receive faith)*
- **Romans 10:17** *“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”*
- (Eternal Life)*
- **John 20:31** *“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”*

Conclusion: Some things never change. For nearly 500 years Lutherans have been using Luther’s Small Catechism to help teach and explain God’s Word. For over 2000 years man has been trying to grasp the love of God who sent His only Son, in human form, to rescue and save a sinful world. As we continue to study and meditate on God’s Word and His promises to us, we can be assured that God will not change. Matthew writes these comforting words of Jesus in chapter 24, verse 35: *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”* May God bless us all as we continue to live in His grace.

All Scripture is from NIV.

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Bible Study – Participant’s Worksheet

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- 2. Who needs Christian education?**
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 - **Colossians 1:6**
 - **Matthew 28:19, 20**
 - **Luke 2:46**
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 - **Luke 1:3, 4**
 - **Acts 18:25**
- 4. How can we “teach about Jesus accurately” as written in Acts 18:25?**
 - **Ephesians 2:8, 9**
- 5. What impact will this instruction or training have on our lives?**
 - **Titus 2:11-13**
- 6. Who does God say is responsible for Christian education?**
 - **Deuteronomy 4:9b**
 - **Ephesians 4:11, 12**
 - **Psalm 32:8**

7. **What is the Church's role in Christian education?**
 - **Matthew 28:19, 20**
8. **How does the Great Commission apply to individual believers?**
9. **What is our role as Christian parents in the spiritual teaching of our children?**
 - **Deuteronomy 11:19**
 - **Ephesians 6:4**
 - **Proverbs 22:6**
10. **How are we doing in our homes with regard to Christian training? What could we do to make it better?**
11. **How should we respond to the parent who says, "I don't know how to teach my children about the Bible. That's why I send them to Sunday School?"**
12. **What promise is made at our baptismal vow regarding Christian instruction?**
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14. **Why do we want to study God's Word? What does He promise us?**
 - **Acts 17:11b**
 - **Romans 10:17**
 - **John 20:31**

Conclusion