



# Bringing Up Children in the Discipline and Instruction of the Lord— by Pastor Glenn Huebel

On Sunday, August 30, we begin a new year of Christian education through our Sunday School program. Though Sunday School, like Social Security, was never intended to bear the whole load of the need which it addresses, it has probably become the major conduit for Biblical instruction for the majority of Christian homes today. That itself is a frightening thought. Can you imagine all other education being crammed into a one hour per week segment of time? If Biblical education is important, and it is, we need to devote more time to it. I'm not twisting the arm for enrollment in our school – though that would be an excellent beginning. Neither am I suggesting more Church programs, but more diligence in our family structures. We are no longer living in a Christian culture (if, indeed, that was ever the case). The culture in which your children are being raised is increasingly anti-Christian or at least anti-truth. Dozens of times a week your children will hear, explicitly or covertly, that there is no truth or that truth is relative. It is the basic assumption underlying our culture today. Your children breathe this message in from every nook and cranny of the culture. Trying to counteract that massive deception with one Bible story per week is like trying to knock out an infection by taking an antibiotic pill on Sunday mornings only. I would say it's a useless endeavor, but I know that the Word

has divine power and can even overcome those odds. However, we are foolish and negligent to give the devil so much advantage. The Bible's answer is the ancient command given by Moses, *"You shall teach them (God's statutes) diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."* Daily immersion in the lie is counteracted by daily immersion in the Word of God in our homes.

Biblical teaching in the home may seem daunting or intimidating for many parents. If this is the case for you, please understand that God does not give you this responsibility without the gifts and blessing necessary to carry it out. I guarantee, from my own experience, that your children will ask some hard questions which may stump you. There's nothing wrong with answering "I don't know, but we'll try to find the answer." You have a Catechism with an index of topics, and you have three pastors available. You have far more resources than most Christians today. Make use of them! Remember what Jesus says about those who fail to use the gifts God provides.

Unused gifts are taken away and given to another who WILL use them (Matt 25:28-29).



Let me give you a very simple way to organize the Biblical education of your children using the ancient classical education model of instruction. In the first phase (elementary years), the focus should be on hearing the Bible stories, learning the events and history, etc. Children usually love stories and the stories of the Bible are just wonderful, especially for children. Acquaint them

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Inside this issue:**

Latin for Lutherans	3
Creation Conference	4

*That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31*

## Bringing up children, cont.

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with the basic stories from Genesis to Nehemiah in the Old Testament, and from Matthew to Acts in the New Testament. I am not suggesting that you read the Bible through from Genesis to Nehemiah because books like Leviticus and some of Numbers and Deuteronomy would bog you down. Generally, however, the straight line history of the Old Testament is found in those books. A good way to read appropriately chosen Biblical material is to use one or more of the resources available in Concordia Publishing House. Stories are usually laid out consecutively and simply with good illustrations. You may ask our Church librarian, Marcia Huebel, for advice on good material. We have several Bible story books in our library. Make use of them! You can read one story with every supper or breakfast. Don't use the stories as moral teachings like the fairy tales. You don't have to derive hidden messages, though you may have occasion to supply an application or answer a question or two. The Word is powerful in and by itself. It's really that simple.

If you are faithful in regularly reading the stories (history) to your children through their toddler and elementary years, they will have a good basic foundation to move on to the second phase of instruction which occurs around the middle school years. They are ready at this stage in their development to grapple with theological questions and issues in a discipline we call systematic theology. Here they begin to wrestle with doctrines (Biblical teachings) as they are presented in a system (how each doctrine relates to others). The basic doctrines of the Bible are set forth in a clear logical format in Luther's Small Catechism. Luther's Catechism itself is actually a small pamphlet, but the Catechism we use includes a useful "explanation," with many additional questions and their Biblical answers. The doctrine of the Law is explained through the Ten Commandments, drilling down into each one and learning through

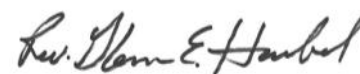
Biblical instruction and example how it applies to life. The doctrine of the Gospel is explained through the Apostles' Creed, again drilling down on each article through Biblical instruction and example to show who God is and what He has done for us and our salvation through Christ. The doctrine of prayer is explained through a study of the Lord's Prayer. The doctrine of how God works and nurtures faith in us is taught through studies of Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Confession and Absolution. In this study, a vast array of relevant issues, from the nature of God to sexual mores to business ethics to the nature of man to conversion and spiritual life is covered. The Catechism becomes a life-time, easy-to-use handbook for the Christian to find quick answers to questions that arise. Our three year confirmation instruction program focuses primary resources of the congregation (all three pastors) to diligently instruct your children how to see the world as Christians. It provides your children a theological framework of discernment. Though pastors are directly involved in this aspect of the instruction of the church's children, it is still primarily the parental responsibility. The Catechism was written to help fathers teach these very things to his household, and it would be a wonderful blessing for our fathers (and mothers) to use it this way in the home. This Catechetical instruction (especially memory) can begin in the home at an early age.

If our children are acquainted with the basic material of the Bible and are equipped with a Biblical system of theological thought through which they are able to make right judgments about what they see and hear in the world, they are ready to begin the final phase of Biblical instruction. A good theological framework, like higher math, is most useful and blessed when it is rightly applied to problems and issues in the real world. If our children have "the mind of Christ" through thorough Biblical instruction, they will not be

limited to the fixed answers we require in our Confirmation examination. They can apply the truth to rightly analyze and respond to social or personal issues we have never faced or even imagined. When I went through confirmation instruction, neither legalized abortion nor homosexual marriage were on the radar. I did, however, have all the basic information and theological structure I needed to make a Godly decision on the questions. We don't know and cannot possibly anticipate what new heresies will arise in the Church, or what new politically correct insanities will come forth in their adult lives. We want them to be able to think and analyze theologically, in the framework of the Word. This last phase is probably our weakest today, but we cannot even begin to develop that phase if the first two are neglected.

We cannot end this discussion without the reminder that faith is not just a set of propositions or an intellectual theological system. Our target, goal, purpose, and prayer is that our children BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ and that by believing they have eternal life. All the knowledge in the world ... all the intellectual power in the world ... all the moral living in the world, is nothing without a living, heartfelt FAITH or trust in Christ and His imputed righteousness. That is the Holy Spirit's work. All we can do is apply the means diligently, but are we doing that? May God open our eyes to see that the fields which are white and ready to harvest are growing up in our homes today.

Blessings,



Pastor Huebel



# A Brief Latin Glossary for the Lutheran Armchair Theologian — by Pastor Tom Chryst

*Lex semper accusat*

## **Lex orandi, lex credendi**

Simul justus et peccator

Ex nihilo

Sola scriptura

Sola gratia

Sola fide

Fides qua, fides quae

Ex opere operato

Quia and quatenus

Oratio, meditatio, tentatio

Soli deo gloria

Now on to “**Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi**”



Lex Orandi is typically defined as “the way we pray” or “the way we worship”. It goes to all aspects of the prayer and worship life of a congregation or church body. It includes, especially the public services and official gatherings in which the form of worship is done a certain way.

Lex Credendi is defined as the “the law of belief” or “what we believe”. It entails the formal doctrinal proclamations and such, but also the actual personal beliefs of the worshippers and church officials.

The idea of putting these two phrases together is two-fold.

On the one hand, it acknowledges that the way we worship flows from

what we believe. We pray the Lord's Prayer because we believe Jesus gave it. We begin with an invocation of the Triune name, because we believe God is three-in-one and we hold His name sacred. We confess our sins at the beginning of the Divine Service to acknowledge that without Christ's forgiveness, we are not worthy to come into God's presence.

This is not only a description of how things are, but also of how they ought to be. It is consistent that our worship life follows and adheres to our beliefs and theology. It only makes sense if we believe that the Lord's Supper is truly Christ's Body and Blood, that we treat this gift with great reverence. We believe that Baptism is God's work, and not man's, analogous to an adoption, and so we do not repeat the process over and over. God's promises given therein do not fail. We could give many more examples.

But churches do not always adhere to practices which are consistent with their confession of faith. In other words, they don't always practice what they preach! And therein lies a danger.

Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi cuts both ways. Not only does belief inform practice. But the practice itself, over time, can shape beliefs. Ceremonies teach – and we must be careful of the message.

Now, if the practice is faithful, this can be a simple process of reinforcement and teaching. I might not fully appreciate the doctrine of Christ's Real Presence in the Sacrament, for example, but when I see the pastors and other parishioners “act like Jesus is in the room”, it can help to reinforce this belief.

But if our practice is not in accord with our doctrine, the practice, over time, can begin to re-shape the

doctrine. If we sing hymns that teach wrong ideas, we may come to embrace those wrong ideas. If we have altar calls like those who believe in decision theology, we may begin to believe we have it in us to “choose Jesus”. If we worship in such a way that suggests an experience of God or emotional high is really what it's all about – then we may just begin to believe it.

Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi. What you believe affects how you pray and worship. And how you pray and worship affects, for good or bad, what you believe.

Which is why we Lutherans take our corporate prayer life, especially, so seriously. It's why we are careful and reverent and see that everything is done decently and in good order. It's why we treasure the time-tested hymnody and liturgy of the Lutheran church. It's why we avoid the latest fads and seeker-sensitive approaches to worship.

At Messiah, we pay attention to these things not because we are stick-in-the mud fuddy-duddies stuck in the church of the past. We are careful and deliberate about these traditions not because we simply prefer them as a matter of taste or personal style. And we adhere to liturgical, traditional worship because we understand they are a more faithful expression of our theology than much of what we see out there.



There is a degree of freedom in these ceremonies and rites, to be sure. As Pastor Huebel said recently in a sermon, there is no

*(Continued on page 4)*



## Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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Church Office: (817) 431-2345

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Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Associate Pastor

Rev. Steven Cholak, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Erika Mildred, MLCA Headmaster

[www.messiahkeller.org](http://www.messiahkeller.org)

## Latin glossary, cont.

New Testament version of Leviticus, which outlines all this in detail. Our confessions recognize ceremonies don't have to be in lock-step for there to be unity in the church. It is enough that we have the word faithfully preached, and the sacraments rightly administered.

But yet, we recognize better and richer expressions of our confession of faith – and have sought to order or ministry in a such a way – that we say what we believe and believe what we say – for the sake of the Gospel and all those who have ears to hear. So that Jesus Christ

would be clearly proclaimed to all. So that sinners may be called to repentance and faith in Christ, with no stumbling blocks to such faith. And that we may receive His gifts of Baptism and Supper together as he intends – for our good, and to His glory.

In Christ,

Pastor Chryst

## Creation Conference: Oct. 4-5, Faith Lutheran in Plano

On Sunday, October 4, and Monday, October 5, Faith Lutheran Church and School of Plano will host a Creation Conference entitled "Geology and the Flood," featuring guest speakers Brian Thomas and Frank Sherwin from the Institute for Creation Research. Based in Dallas, Texas, the Institute for Creation Research is a leader in scientific research within the context of biblical creation.

### Open-to-the-public sessions of the conference include:

- Sunday at 1 p.m.: Mount Saint Helens, by Frank Sherwin
- Sunday at 2:20 p.m.: Why the World is Only Thousands of Years Old by Brian Thomas
- Sunday at 3:40 p.m.: The Mighty, Wonderful Oceans by Frank Sherwin
- Monday at 6:00 p.m.: What You Haven't Been Told About Dinosaurs by Brian Thomas
- Monday at 7:00 p.m.: From Big to Small, God Made it All by Frank Sherwin.

Faith Lutheran Church and School is located at 1701 E. Park Boulevard in Plano. For more information on this event, please call 972.423.7448 or visit [www.faithplano.org](http://www.faithplano.org)

Babysitting will be provided on Sunday from 1-4:45 p.m. Space is

limited, so please register for childcare by Sunday, September 20. The cost per family is \$20.

Donations will be accepted to help offset the cost of the conference, you may make your check payable to "Faith Lutheran Church" and designate 'for Creation Conference'.

**Brian Thomas** received his bachelor's degree in biology in 1993 and a master's in biotechnology in 1999 from Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas. He taught junior high and high school at Christian schools in Texas, as well as biology, chemistry, and anatomy as an adjunct and assistant professor at Dallas-area universities. Since 2008 Mr. Thomas has been a science writer and editor at ICR, where he contributes news and magazine articles, speaks on creation issues, and researches original tissue fossils. He is the author of *Dinosaurs and the Bible* and a contributor to *Guide to Creation Basics*, *Creation Basics & Beyond*, and *Guide to Dinosaurs*.

**Frank Sherwin** received his bachelor's degree in biology from Western State College, Gunnison, Colorado, in 1978. He attended graduate school at the University of Northern Colorado, where he studied under the late Gerald D. Schmidt,

one of the foremost parasitologists in America. In 1985, Mr. Sherwin obtained a master's degree in zoology. He published his research in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Parasitology*. He contributes his scientific expertise to a variety of ICR's publications on creation science and is one of ICR's most sought-after speakers. He is the author of *The Ocean Book and Guide to Animals*, co-author of *The Fossil Record: Unearthing Nature's History of Life and The Human Body: An Intelligent Design*, and a contributor to *Guide to Creation Basics* and *Creation Basics & Beyond*.

### About the Institute for Creation Research:

After more than four decades of ministry, the Institute for Creation Research remains a leader in scientific research within the context of biblical creation. Founded by Dr. Henry Morris in 1970, ICR exists to conduct scientific research within the realms of origins and earth history, and then to educate the public both formally and informally through graduate and professional training programs, through conferences and seminars around the country, and through books, magazines, and media presentations. For more information, please visit [www.icr.org](http://www.icr.org)