

URGENT!!!

Which Catechism Are You Studying?

It seems like an odd question, “*Which Catechism Are You Studying?*” but let me explain. The term *catechism* comes from the Greek word that means “*sound back and forth.*” The *catechetical* method of teaching goes back to the classical Greek era. The teacher asks a question; the student responds with a fixed and set answer; and so it goes, back and forth.

Unfortunately our post-modern culture insists that there are no longer fixed and set answers. Those answers are fluid and flexible to each person, depending on the desires and feelings of the individual. Some call this thinking a form of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, where they believe their god put the world in motion but is not involved in people’s lives. This god wants people to be good, nice, and fair to one another. And the goal of life is to be happy and feel good about one’s self.

So which catechism are you studying? Are you studying the Christian catechism or the catechism of culture? While you might not think you are studying the catechism of culture, you daily absorb what culture is teaching. And so are your children. Everyone you talk to, listen to, and every TV program and advertisement is attempting to indoctrinate you and your children into the culture of the world.

In 2001 the Journal of Marriage and Family published a study on the percentage of hours children spend engaging in major activities per week. This study found that the average 6 – 8 year-old spends 42% of their week sleeping, leaving 58% of the week for every other activity. Of that 58%, 19% of their time is in school, 8% watching TV, and only 1% in church. Provided the child is actively engaged in worship (listening, praying, singing), that still means that they are studying from the catechism of culture 57% of the week.

As adults, we spend roughly the same amount of time in church as the children. If you sleep 7 hours each night, you only spend 29% of your week sleeping – meaning you have an additional 30% of your week being fed from the catechism of culture.

As a Christian you are set apart from this culture and the world. Jesus prayed to His Father for you in the Garden of Gethsemane saying, “***They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth***” (John 17:16-17).

Martin Luther published his Small and Large Catechism in 1529 because of “*The deplorable, miserable condition...*” of the teaching within the Saxon Church (SC, Preface). At the beginning of each of the Six Chief Parts in the Small Catechism, Luther writes, “*As the head of the household should teach it in a simple way to his household.*” By studying yourself and by teaching your children from the Catechism and Bible, and participate in worship, you and your family are sanctified in the Truth.

I encourage each of you – no, I **urge** you to spend time in God’s Word. Spend time in Luther’s Catechism. Read the Bible to your children every night, pray with them and teach them to trust in Jesus Christ their Savior. Let me know how I can assist and encourage you in your faith as well as the faith of your children.

Please read the extra insert in this month’s newsletter entitled, “***You Don’t Need A Megachurch For You To Go To Heaven.***” It was written by Rev. Hans Fiene, pastor at River Of Life Lutheran Church, Channahon, IL for an on-line blog. Rev. Fiene describes better than I, how to immunize your family against the catechism of culture.

God’s peace is yours!

Pastor Sutton