

The Assistant Pastor

September, 1943

“Thus saith the Lord!”

“Suffer the little children to come unto me.” Mark 10:14.

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

“Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19, 20.

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33.

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

“Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4.

“From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:15.

“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” Jer. 9:23, 24.

The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches, affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

Church Directory

N. S. Tjernagel, Pastor

SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Carl Miller, John Natvig, Martin Borlaug.
Treasurer: Milton Boleng.
Secretary: Fred Steensland.
Cemetery Committee: Oscar Natvig, Henry Borlaug, N. S. Tjernagel.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Arthur Anderson, president; Mrs. Omer Ellingson, secretary; Miss Adelia Natvig, treasurer.

JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: J. N. Anderson, Tom Roberson, C. O. Vigdal.
Secretary: Alfred N. Anderson.
Treasurer: Jeff A. Knutson.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Tollef Knutson, president; Mrs. Alvin Johnson, secretary; Mrs. Andrew J. Johnson, treasurer.
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Carl A. Knutson, Mrs. M. A. Robinson, Mrs. C. O. Vigdal.

THE CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL

"Even as Christianity should penetrate and permeate the whole life, so should it also permeate the whole school and all instruction. The instruction should be animated by a Christian spirit and the instruction in every branch of knowledge should be given in the light of Christianity. Throughout the whole instruction it should always be borne in mind and impressed upon the children that they have been grafted into Christ through baptism and that they must abide in Him. The discipline in the school must therefore also be a Christian discipline.

"... The zeal of a congregation for a Christian School will, even as it flows from the zeal and earnestness of a congregation in its Christianity, also nourish, strengthen, and further the true Christian life in its midst. Especially will it exert such an influence in the coming days, that the future existence of our congregations, as far as men can judge, can well be said to depend more upon such schools than upon anything else. May God give us grace to acknowledge this and act accordingly." (1866)

"It is certain that something must be done—something drastic—by our church body if it shall not perish. Experience teaches us that this has been the fate of so many Lutheran denominations in this country on account of their neglect of the congregational school." (1876)

"If there is any cause that is of supreme importance for us, a cause which the Synod now at the beginning of a new period should embrace with all its power and enthusiasm, it is the cause of schools for our children." (1903)

"In these schools the children should receive their

whole training. The public schools should not be used except in the case of absolute necessity, for in these schools the Word of God does not dominate, neither its nurture or its admonition. In these schools they are not taught "the one thing needful," nor do they "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." (1876)

"We who are the heirs of the old Norwegian Synod and who have declared that we want to continue to build on the old foundation and according to the old principles, have, by the grace of God, continued to espouse the cause of the Christian Day School.

"... When we are now about to begin a new period in the history of our Synod, may we all bear in mind that the future of our church depends upon the training that we will give our children." (1943)

Lest We Forget

The quotations above are taken from the Synod's anniversary book, "Grace for Grace." They are official statements of our Synod as to our convictions in the matter of the Christian education of our children.

Those convictions were muffled in the years preceding the merger in 1917, and at that time there were only three Christian day schools left in the whole Synod. It is noteworthy that all three of the congregations which had schools at that time remained true to the old truths.

It is extremely doubtful that our present Synod would ever have been organized if it had not been for the support of the members of those three congregations whose membership had been educated in Christian Schools. We may well say now that we owe our present existence as a right teaching Synod in large part to the Christian Day School.

We have reprinted these statements lest we forget what our Synod has always taught, namely that the Christian education of our children is, and must always be, one of our most vital concerns and that under present-day circumstances the Christian Day School is the only adequate means to that end.

A New School

We are most grateful to the Lord of the Church for the fact that in this our Jubilee year, we have been enabled to open a Christian Day School at Saude. This will bring the number of congregations in the Synod that are making use of Christian Day Schools to thirteen. It will be a cause of great rejoicing to the Synod, and will be an inestimable blessing to those who are enabled to send their children to the new school.

Naturally certain questions will arise in the minds of those who have not given careful thought to the question of the Christian education of their children. The most familiar of such questions are these:

"Aren't the public schools good enough for our children?" "Can't our children learn enough religion in Saturday School and in their Confirmation instruction?" "Won't our children be benefited by mixing with children of other denominations, and with children who have no religion?" "Is it not better to learn religion separate from the secular subjects?" We shall answer those questions.

We also wish to invite all those who wish to send their children to the new school. We promise to leave nothing undone that may serve to make it a good school that will measure up to the superior scholastic standing of Christian Day Schools elsewhere. For the most part the County text books will be used, and the school will be under the supervision of the County Superintendent of Schools.

The state Course of Study will be followed, and children in the upper grades will take the State examinations as and when prescribed.

What Is An Education?

Education is much more than merely going to school or acquiring knowledge. Nor is education merely a matter of exercising and disciplining the mind so that it learns to think logically and in an orderly manner.

We usually think of education as being a matter of the mind only, as though it was simply a matter of learning the common school subjects, and being trained in a trade or profession.

For a Christian such thoughts concerning education are wholly inadequate. For a Christian the foremost part of education is acquiring a knowledge of the way to salvation, and the development of Christian character. A Christian will always be more concerned about how to be saved and how to live a godly life, than about the common secular school subjects, or about how to earn a living.

What Is the Error in Our Thinking?

The usual error that we make in our thinking is that we imagine that we can separate between secular and religious education. We think that it is proper and best to give a secular education at one time and at one place, and a religious education at another time and at another place. We might as well think that we live a secular life part of the time, and a religious life only part of the time.

The fact is that we are Christians all the time, and that there can be no true knowledge that conflicts with Christianity. We can not separate our minds into two chambers, one being a repository for religious knowledge, the other a repository for secular knowledge. We have only one mind, and all true knowledge conforms perfectly with Christianity.

It is as impossible to teach Christianity without touching on earthly things as it is to teach secular subjects without reference to God and our faith as Christians. How can history be truthfully taught

without calling the pupil's attention to the guiding hand of God in history? How can geography be truthfully taught without reference to the story of creation, and the story of the flood? What reader is there, or what course in literature is there that will not frequently touch on matters of right and wrong? How can the field of Science be truthfully taught without mention of the creative hand of God?

The lamentable fact is that where an effort is made to teach secular subjects without reference to Christianity there it inevitably happens that things are taught that are contrary to Christianity. That must unavoidably happen because any instruction that omits Christianity is by that very fact omitting part of the truth.

The Principal Reason

Many conscientious Christian parents have asked: "Can our children not learn the way to salvation through their attendance at Saturday or Sunday School, and in their confirmation instruction?" We readily answer yes to that question. We have not advocated the Christian Day School because it is necessary to study religion every day. We might even omit the daily instruction of Catechism and Bible History and still have a powerful reason for urging parochial schools.

The point is that in addition to instruction in religion, we want our children also to have a secular education in the common branches of knowledge. If you did not want your child to have a secular education then we could cheerfully say that Saturday School and Confirmation instruction was sufficient religious instruction. But since we want them instructed in the secular branches we insist that those branches be taught in all their truth. We do not want those branches taught with Christianity subtracted from them. Take Christianity away from any field of knowledge and what is left is part truth and part untruth.

However, when we stop to think, it does seem a little incongruous to say that a child needs to study geography five days a week, but that one day's instruction in religion is sufficient.

Character Development

There is no reputable educator who will not state that it is much more important to develop a child's character than merely to fill his mind with knowledge. They are frank to admit that mere knowledge is as likely to degrade a person as to elevate him.

We know, and many leading educators admit, that character development is impossible without Christianity. Think of the plight of the teacher in a secular school. She has found a child guilty of some offense. What can she do? She may punish the child or threaten it with the consequences of its evil-doing. She may even tell the child that if it continues in its evil ways it will finally end in jail.

Think what a superior position the teacher of a Christian school is in. That teacher can speak to the erring child of the love of the Savior who suffered and died to deliver us from the consequences of sin which are far worse than a mere jail sentence. The love of Christ will be a far greater deterrent to sin than threats of corporal punishment.

That present day educational systems have succeeded in filling the minds of the peoples of the world with knowledge is proved by all the scientific and cultural developments of our time. That these same educational systems have failed to develop character is proved by the fact that despite all our civilization and culture the nations of the world are now engaged in needless and savage warfare.

Some persons may think that a public school will benefit their children because they will then mingle on equal terms with children of all denominations, and thus be prepared for their contacts with all kinds of people in later life. While we may admit that such contacts are not only necessary but also valuable we must not forget the principle function of education which is to give Christian knowledge, and develop Christian character. There is ample opportunity outside school hours for the child to adjust itself to the social contacts it will make during life.

Teachers

Every human being on earth has his own distinctive character. When you put your child in the school-room you place that child under the influence of its teacher. Inevitably the teacher's character will in a greater or lesser degree influence and mold the characters of the pupils under his charge. What that teacher knows and believes will influence and mold the knowledge and beliefs of his pupils. No teacher can be perfectly neutral or impersonal in his instruction. If the teacher is an atheist his unbelief will certainly influence his pupils in at least some degree. If the teacher is a member of the Reformed church, the child will in greater or lesser degree be influenced by the morality of the Reformed church. If the teacher happens to be of the child's own faith the case is not much better. For the child, always believing what the teacher says, will be misled in his faith because of the things that a public school teacher is not permitted to teach.

The Christian Day School is in a far stronger position, for it, regarding religious education as paramount, can choose its teachers on the basis of their knowledge of Christianity. The patrons of such schools have the knowledge that their children are under the moral guidance and influence of a Christian whose faith is transmitted to his pupils through the teaching of God's word as it applies to every branch of secular learning.

What Of the Cost?

Many will say that "a Christian Day School would be a fine thing if we could afford it." Whether

a thing costs too much or not depends on what value we place on the thing we are buying. How much we can afford to pay in order to maintain a Christian School depends entirely on how highly we value it. We know of a farmer in one of the congregations of the Synod who drove 28 miles each school day for a dozen years so that his children might attend a Christian School. That tells us what valuation he placed on the Christian Day School.

Figures printed in the Convention Reports in past years have shown the average cost of maintaining the Christian Day Schools in the Synod to have been about \$25.00 per child. That figure would doubtless be higher now. It is doubtful that a single parent reading these words would hesitate if he had to pay a figure far higher than that to maintain the physical health of his child. What thinking parent can hesitate to do as much where the health of his child's soul is concerned?

The Assistant Pastor begins a new year with this September issue. We wish to thank you all for your support during the past year. You will find enclosed with this issue an envelope in which to make your contribution for the coming year. You may place your contribution on the collection plate at your convenience. The following persons made payments twice last year, and are therefore paid up for this year. **Jerico:** H. A. Knutson, \$1.00; J. C. Johnson, \$1.00; J. N. Anderson, \$1.00; Otto Dahlen, 50c. **Saude:** Mrs. Carl Natvig, \$1.00; Henry Borlaug, \$1.00; Oscar Natvig, \$1.00.

Jubilee Fund Contributions have been made as follows since the last acknowledgment in the Assistant Pastor. We wish to apologize to some of these contributors whose contributions were made previous to the publication of the last list but were not included. **Jerico:** Louis Dauglas, \$5.00; T. W. Munson, \$30.00; Paul Munson, \$10.00; T. O. Knutson, \$25.00; Alvie Iverson, \$10.00; Alvin J. Johnson, \$5.00; Ole J. Knutson, \$5.00; **Saude:** Nelvin Hereid, \$10.00; Ned Borlaug, \$20.00; Cpl. Arthur N. Borlaug, \$10.00; Staff Sgt. Orlo G. Natvig, \$50.00.

Allan Johnson and Carlyle Knutson, sons of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Johnson, and Mr. and Mrs. Severt Knutson, respectively, become communicant members of the church by the rite of Confirmation performed in Redeemer Congregation, New Hampton, on July 25, 1943.

Pvt. Victor C. Ball and Orletta Anderson were united in Holy Matrimony at the Jerico church on July 2, 1943. They were attended by Orville Ball and Janice Anderson. May the God of Grace hasten the end of warfare so that they may establish their home among us in a country at peace.

We wish to thank the many who have made payment of their cemetery dues, and all those who have paid for the anniversary volume "Grace For Grace".