

PAROCHIAL SCHOOL AND SUNDAY SCHOOL--
ENEMIES IN AMERICAN LUTHERANISM?

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When I vicared in Portland, Oregon, last school year (1987-1988), the theme for the year's opening devotions at Grace Evangelical Lutheran School was based on Proverbs 22:6, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." I have learned to appreciate the practicality of this passage. No doubt secular educators, leaders and philosophers will, in general, agree with the truth of that statement. They would say that if you want people to live by moral standards, to interact decently with others, and to function correctly in society, you need to train them in these areas when they are young. But just think of the importance of this truth for Christian lives? Should children be thoroughly trained in God's Word? Should they study the message of salvation? Should they be taught God's will for them to live sanctified lives? The answer to these questions is obvious when we look at Proverbs 22:6. For this passage tells us that this training will not only affect their young Christian lives, but the Holy Spirit, working through that training in the Word, will continually affect their adult Christian lives.

When one carefully studies Lutheranism in America, he cannot say that the Lutheran churches have neglected the training of children. The attitude exists today, for the most part, in the ELCA, LCMS and the WELS that each synod strongly emphasizes the training of their children.¹ It is true that the methods and philosophies of training children differ among the Lutheran churches. Some place a heavy emphasis on the parochial school (church school, Christian day school). Others favor parish education, with the

Sunday school as their major agency. There were times in the past when it seemed that these two were at odds with one another. Are they really, or are they two different means to the same end? We will look at how and where the parochial school and the Sunday school became popular. We will look at how these two are presently made use of in the ELCA, the LCMS and the WELS. Finally we will look at how the training of children will affect the future of Lutheranism in America.

It may be surprising that the church school, not the Sunday school, came into prominence first in the Lutheran churches of America. Around the time of the Revolutionary War, Lutheran pastors, especially in the Pennsylvania Ministerium, saw the benefit of the church school. "Like Muhlenberg himself, they saw clearly that the daily school is often a more vital factor than the pulpit in molding the character of the people."²

Naturally these schools were run much differently than they are today. The pastors had in their call to be both administrators and teachers of the schools.³ Dr. Benjamin Rush made note of the results of this situation. In his study of the Pennsylvania Germans, he said of the Lutherans:

They commit the education and instruction of their children in a peculiar manner to the ministers and officers of their churches; hence they grew up with prejudices in favor of public worship and the obligations of Christianity.⁴

Abdel Ross Wentz recorded the numerical results of the growth of the churches' schools at this time:

At mid-century, after the organization of the Ministerium, there had been 24 schools in the 70 Lutheran congregations of the several colonies. At the outbreak of the war the number of schools had increased to 64 and the congregations to about 100. But by the end of the century there

were 139 church schools with at least 5,000 pupils in some 300 congregations.⁵

It appears that in those early days, the Lutheran pastors in general agreed on the importance of the church school. However, by the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, attitudes became vastly different. The big reason for this was the beginning of the public schools. Would the Lutheran churches in America still consider church schools important? Wentz commented on the attitude in general: "Unlike the Lutherans of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the English-speaking congregations of the ^mMid-nineteenth century felt no need for congregational schools or even for distinctively Lutheran aids to Bible study."⁶

However, the Synodical Conference was the notable exception to this trend:

An aspect of the education enterprise which engaged much attention from Synodical Conference bodies was the parochial, or congregational, school. Other synods advocated and established congregational schools, but not to the same extent nor with the same degree of commitment as those in the Synodical Conference.⁷

The one body of the Synodical Conference that took the lead in this area was the Missouri Synod. "The Missouri Synod promoted parochial schools as essential to the preservation and inculcation of sound doctrine."⁸ Missouri's basic argument for this training consisted in how it affected the children's lives at present:

In advocating congregational schools the chief argument continued to be that they were superior to public schools because all instruction could center in the Word of God whereas public schools could not include religious instruction.⁹

Yet Missouri could not help but look to its future in this method of training their children, as C. F. W. Walther said, "May God

preserve for our German Lutheran Church the gem of the parochial schools! for upon it, humanly speaking, primarily depends the future of our Church in America."¹⁰ The result of this push for the parochial school in the Missouri Synod was that it became the largest full-time elementary program in American Protestantism.¹¹

Another body of the Synodical Conference that also saw the importance of the church school was the Wisconsin Synod. Some ^asy this had to do with its connection at this time with the Missouri Synod. Others feel that the Wisconsin Synod's attitude developed in its opposition to the Bennett Law, which will be discussed in a moment. But J. P. Koehler gave another view:

Synod's school superintendency, however, had long been in the making, not owing to state interference but to the intensive study and discussion of the principles and aims of Christian education, indicated above, that had been carried on in Milwaukee especially. Thus it had a promising start....¹²

Could the Lutherans see it coming that the states opposed the parochial schools and wanted to regulate the schools? That is hard to say. However, it did come. One of the examples was the Bennett Law. This law was typical of other legislative attempts at regulating private schools, and, in effect, promoting public schools. Not only did this law affect Wisconsin Synod schools, but all private schools in Wisconsin, and so deserves looking at. Koehler summarized the implications of this law:

In view of the actual state control today, exercised everywhere, be it by law or common consent, the Bennett Law (Wisconsin Statutes 1889, chap. 519) seems harmless enough. But there was the well-founded fear that the determining of the annual school term (not less than 12, nor more than 24 consecutive weeks) and the requirements of teaching the three R's and United States history in the English language, which the law assigned to the local school boards and magistrates, might be abused by the antagonists of the parochial school to interfere with the church calendar, to hinder children from attending

their church school in another district, to crowd religion and German off the program, or to disqualify a school entirely.¹³

In 1889 the Wisconsin Synod took^k the lead among the Lutherans in the fight against the Bennett Law because of the regulations that they deemed unnecessary.¹⁴ The Bennett Law was repealed in 1891, along with a major defeat of the Republican party who supported this law. This was due mostly because of the opposing campaign of the Wisconsin Synod along with other Lutherans in Wisconsin.¹⁵

As was stated before, the Bennett Law was typical of other legislation. In Illinois the Edwards Law came out at the same time, with similar provisions, and likewise was repealed, but this time with the Missouri Synod leading the opposition.¹⁶ While state opposition to private schools was seen in other states, it has diminished for now. In Nelson's book, it states, "After the 'Meyer vs. Nebraska' decision of 1922 and the Oregon decision, the anti-private-school forces retreated in all states."¹⁷

Other outside opposition to parochial school, especially those that taught German, came during World War I. Koehler said:

The school inspectorship of a much later date came into being incidently thru the First World War agitation, a second phase of the Bennett Law sentiment, when the church school, not by statute, but by the scare put into the church school thru the anti-German propaganda, was caused to sell out to the public school and practically in many cases give up its identity excepting that in it "religion is taught".¹⁸

This opposition seems ~~seems~~ to have had an effect upon the attitude of the parochial school in many Lutheran churches in the mid-twentieth century. The majority of Lutheran churches went with other methods of training their children. This period has been described this way:

Although Lutheran parochial schools were under criticism,

it should be remembered that less than one-third of American Lutheranism maintained a parochial system. Parish education, however--including Sunday school, catechetical instruction, vacation schools--was common to all Lutheran bodies.¹⁹

This is a good lead in for our look at parish education in the past, especially its chief agency, the Sunday school. The Sunday school had a much different beginning in the Lutheran churches in America than the church school did:

The Sunday school was introduced into English-speaking Lutheran congregations in the early nineteenth century when the Sunday school movement took root in American Protestantism, and by the mid-nineteenth century it had become a fixed institution.²⁰

The situation was that the public school system was beginning at this time. This caught the Lutherans "off guard". They had to look for help and materials to train their children elsewhere:

With the advent of the public school early in this period, the responsibility for specifically Christian education rested entirely on the pastor with his catechetical class and the congregation with its Sunday school. Until the end of this period practically all of the congregations used the teaching and learning helps of the interdenominational American Sunday School Union.²¹

The General Synod really pushed the Sunday school in the Lutheran churches. It came up with the Lutheran Sunday School Union in 1829 as a counterpart to the American Sunday School Union.²²

But not until later in the nineteenth century, when there was a concern for confessionalism, did the General Council come out with Sunday school materials that were distinctively Lutheran.²³

It may seem strange to us now, but back in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the main opponent of the Sunday school was the Synodical Conference;

Into the twentieth century Sunday schools were opposed, or at least regarded with suspicion by the most conservative elements of American Lutheranism. This was especially true of Synodical Conference churches. Sunday

schools were considered an element in the non-Lutheran environment that naturally went along with the public school system and unionistic practices. They were looked upon as a threatening but totally inadequate substitute for parochial schools and were deemed unnecessary where parochial schools were in operation.²⁴

Again it was said that:

Because no aspect of life or learning is untouched by the insights of faith, conservative Lutherans (especially those of the Synodical Conference) felt that if religious education were separated from education as a whole both would be perverted. To allow "godless" teachers or those who belong to erring churches to train one's children and to be satisfied with the Sunday-school smattering of religious knowledge casts doubts on one's own commitment to Lutheran doctrine and to the welfare of one's children.²⁵

However, as in the case of the church school, opposition to the Sunday school has dwindled. Nelson reported, "In the course of the twentieth century all segments of American Lutheranism accepted and utilized the Sunday school as a valuable means of Christian instruction."²⁶ Even the Missouri Synod, the great proponent of the parochial school, has also incorporated some forms of parish education:

The Sunday schools of the synod enroll about half a million pupils and engage about 50,000 teachers. The vacation Bible schools attract more than 125,000 pupils. More than one fourth of the children in these schools are from non-Lutheran homes.²⁷

What does the past tell us about the training of Lutheran children right now? It tells us that the ELCA, with its roots in the old General Synod, would tend to emphasize parish education, especially the Sunday school. It also tells us that the LCMS and the WELS, with their Synodical Conference background, would favor the parochial school system. Is that the way it really is? To answer that question, this author sent out a survey to 30 pastors in the Milwaukee area--10 ELCA, 10 LCMS and 10 WELS pastors. The purpose of this survey was to see what kind of training was going

on in the churches of these pastors, and how they felt about their synod's attitude toward the training of children. 25 of these surveys were returned-- 7 ELCA, 9 LCMS and 9 WELS. Appendix I of this paper shows the result of this survey in general. Appendices II and III give the pastors' answers to specific questions. There are a couple things from this survey to take note of here. First of all, of the 18 pastors who responded from the LCMS and the WELS, 12 of them have parochial schools, and all 12 have over 50% of the children of their congregations attending their schools. However, even though 15 of the 18 strongly emphasize Sunday school, only 7 of the 18 have 50% of their children attending. On the other hand, from the ELCA pastors, even though 4 of the 7 see the Christian day school as a benefit, none of the seven have a parochial school. This may support what was found in Nelson's book:

Even synods which did not insist on parochial schools as a necessary aspect of Lutheran church life felt them to be the best solution to the difficult problem of an adequate Christian education for the young.²⁸

But all the ELCA pastors strongly emphasize Sunday school and 6 of the 7 have over 50% of their children attending. What was developed in the past seems to hold true today. The emphasis on training children in the ELCA is on Sunday school along with other parish education agencies, whereas in the LCMS and the WELS it is on the parochial school. Why is this? A couple of the pastors in the LCMS and the WELS point to the every day connection with God's Word in the parochial schools. Here are their answers to the question, "Do you personally feel that a Christian Day School is a benefit? Why or why not?" (Appendix II).

Most certainly--very simply: God's Word is powerful!

CDS children get lots of God's Word.

Yes--daily Bible study, Christ-centered studies, Christian discipline (fosters good habits too).

Yes--because the children read the Word of God and hear about Christ and the Gospel every day.

Yes--it helps the children feel a closer relationship with the Lord every day.

There were a couple pastors from both synods, however, that have some reservations about their emphasis on parochial schools. Here are their answers to the same question:

Sometimes--when the focus of the congregations ministry is not imbalanced--i.e. too focused on school, and other ministry and programs suffer.

A qualified YES--1. Tremendous benefit to the spiritual life of children and a great assist to their parents. 2. When used properly, a great mission tool. 3. My qualified YES pertains to the tremendous cost involved in terms of dollars and congregational energy at the expense of other worthwhile ministries.

But why is there a lack of interest in the ELCA of the parochial school? From a couple of their answers to the same question, given to the other pastors, one may get the feeling that the lack of exposure to and knowledge of the parochial school greatly affects their attitude:

Yes--in that Biblical and catechetical instruction is usually sound and reinforced and values are certainly reinforced. I see difficulty, though, in relating faith to real life where there are non-believers.

Yes-- I hear good reports. We just have never been involved personally.

Yes--it is good to have alternatives to public schools.

Another thing to note about the survey is the use of all the churches' training agencies as arms for outreach. While the statistics show a number of non-Lutheran children being trained in these 25 churches, those statistics are not staggering. How can

we also bring these people in? A couple pastors commented on this:

Their attitude toward "church" is mostly outreach. We need people committed to outreach. This would and will be the reason for a strong and growing WELS. School must train disciples/evangelists; not just educate members kids.

As a confessing wing of the total church, our focus must be on training our children to be bold confessors of Jesus and the truth and power of His Word.

One final thing to note about the survey is how the agencies for training the children are fulfilling their role in helping parents train their children in God's Word. The pastors were asked if they thought the parents of their congregations were having some kind of home devotions. The response is shocking. Out of the 25, 9 said some parents do, 14 said not many do, 2 said they had no idea. It seems that the training agencies of the Lutheran churches of America are taking on more of a role than they are supposed to. This led one pastor to respond:

I personally believe that church programs can help influence a child to live out faith. However, the influence at church and school, pastors and teachers, is small compared to the influence of the parents in a child's home. The parents example (good or bad) will be the strongest influence and factor affecting Lutheranism in the future. The church and CDS can only be a supplement to, but not a substitute for, the godly example of parents, the religious training parents pass on to their children and the attitudes toward God and His Word and church that parents display. I believe it is important to have a Christian Day School, S.S., VBS, etc., but the home and parent's influence is where it's at. That is the key influence on Lutheranism in the future.

Speaking of the future, which method of training is better to maintain Lutheranism in America? Listen to what some pastors said from each synod (Appendix III).

WELS

The future of the church (humanly speaking) depends on the strengths of the CDS's our children attend today.
[Remember what Walther said?]

LCMS

You will always have a faithful core. We now see more young men (25-40) holding elected offices and doing good job--a good sign. Without Christian Day School I expect less dedication and involvement.

ELCA

Christian faith can often be made or broken in the Sunday School--Confirmation period. As equally important as scriptural and confessional verities, though, are the relationships that are made. Kids are kept after confirmation--even when parents are inactive--if they develop close supportive relationship with their peers and educational staff.

Is one really better than another? What other things will enter in as we raise Lutheran children? One thing to look at here is that with parochial school or parish education--we cannot stop there these days:

We need to not only offer CD school training--we need to go beyond that to keep our young people H.S. and college age in their faith and relationship with the Lord Jesus.

The Christian Day School influence in the life of a child will, in most cases, serve to maintain a strong Lutheran Church in the future. However, the church can't count on the CDS alone. The church needs to be alert to the fact that people today are faced with temptations galore. Adult education undergirded by the Gospel is also a must.

My deep concern is that our lay-people (in general) do not have the desire to study God's Word and, thereby, do not review (or learn) the truth of God's Word as found in our Lutheran Confessions; and unless the masses of lay-people in Lutheranism today return to a strong diet of God's Word we are going to be followers (late-comers) to the 'universalism' which is too evident in the ELCA today and can also become strong in both the LCMS and the WELS. I believe that we are too passive towards the invasion of "reformed" theology in Lutheranism.

Parochial school and Sunday school--are they really enemies in Lutheranism of America? They may have been up to as late as 25 years ago. But now, with the lack of education in the home and the lack of desire in general to study God's Word, both are becoming more and more essential. Parochial schools and Sunday

schools are both needed, as well as all educational agencies of children and adults in the church, so that Lutherans will continue to be trained "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

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- ¹Appendix I, question 11.
- ²Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955), p. 57.
- ³Ibid.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 58.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 57.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 152.
- ⁷E. Clifford Nelson, ed., The Lutherans in North America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 295.
- ⁸Ibid.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 296.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 295.
- ¹¹Wentz, op. cit., pp. 210-11.
- ¹²John Philipp Koehler, Leigh Jordahl, ed., The History of the Wisconsin Synod (St. Cloud, Minnesota: Sentinel Publishing, 1970), p. 187.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 184.
- ¹⁴Ibid.
- ¹⁵Nelson, op. cit., p. 297.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 428.
- ¹⁸Koehler, op. cit., p. 187.
- ¹⁹Nelson, op. cit., p. 517.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 298.
- ²¹Wentz, op. cit., pp. 151-2.
- ²²Nelson, op. cit., p. 139.
- ²³Ibid., p. 298.
- ²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., p. 427.

²⁶Ibid., p. 299.

²⁷Wentz, op. cit., p. 211.

²⁸Nelson, op. cit., p. 427.

APPENDIX I
LUTHERAN CHILDREN EDUCATION SURVEY

1. What body is your congregation affiliated with?
ELCA 7 LCMS 9 WELS 9
2. Does your congregation have a Christian Day/Elementary School?
ELCA 0 LCMS 6 WELS 6
3. (see Appendix II)
4. About what percentage of the children in your church go to your school (of those who have schools)?
75% to 100% -- LCMS 4 WELS 3
50% to 75% -- LCMS 2 WELS 3
5. Do you personally place a strong emphasis on Sunday School?
ELCA 7 Yes 0 No
LCMS 8 Yes 1 No
WELS 7 Yes 1 No 1 Sort of
6. About what percentage of the children in your church attend Sunday School?
75% to 100% -- ELCA 5 LCMS 2 WELS 3
50% to 75% -- ELCA 11 LCMS 2 WELS 0
25% to 50% -- ELCA 1 LCMS 4 WELS 3
Less than 25%-- ELCA 0 LCMS 1 WELS 3
7. In general, your catechism/confirmation classes are attended by children of what grades in school

ELCA	LCMS	WELS
7-9 2	7-8 4	7-8 4
7-8 2	6-8 3	6-8 4
7-10 1	5-8 2	8 1
6-8 1		
5-8 1		
8. What other educational agencies for children do you have in your church? (All three synods)
VBS 23 Kindergarten 17 Pre-school 15 Cradle Roll 23
Bible camp 10 Others 7
9. About how many children not in your congregation (non-Lutheran) attend all of your children educational agencies?
0 -- ELCA 0 LCMS 0 WELS 2
1 - 10 -- ELCA 3 LCMS 3 WELS 5
10 - 25 -- ELCA 4 LCMS 2 WELS 1
More than 25-- ELCA 0 LCMS 4 WELS 1
10. What is your perception of parents holding home devotions?
most do 0 some do 9 not many do 14 have no idea 2

11. What, in your perception, is the attitude of your church body/synod concerning children Christian education?

Very strong	--	ELCA	2	LCMS	4	WELS	6
Strong	--	ELCA	4	LCMS	4	WELS	3
Middle	--	ELCA	0	LCMS	1	WELS	0
Weak	--	ELCA	1	LCMS	0	WELS	0
Very weak	--	0					

12. (see Appendix III)

APPENDIX II
SURVEY QUESTION #3

Do you personally feel that a Christian Day School is a benefit?
Why or why not?

WELS

1. Yes--1) the power of God's Spirit thru the Word actively works in hearts of children 2) supports and reinforces Christian values and beliefs; less negative peer pressure.
2. Sometimes--when the focus of the congregation's ministry is not imbalanced--i.e. too focused on school, and other ministry and programs suffer.
3. Most certainly--very simply: God's Word is powerful! CDS children get lots of God's Word.
4. Yes--helps keep the children close to their Savior.
5. Yes--it's training the church of tomorrow and for heaven.
6. Yes--evangelism tool, Christian education, quality education.
7. Yes--it serves to nurture the souls of our children, to strengthen them in their Christian faith, to train them to become messengers of Jesus and also serves as a mission arm of the congregation to gain new families through their children attending our school.
8. Yes--in a time of the decline in the nuclear family, it gives a solid basis for our children.
9. Yes--daily Bible study, Christ-centered studies, Christian discipline (fosters good habits too).

LCMS

1. A qualified YES--1. Tremendous benefit to the spiritual life of the children and a great assist to their parents. 2. When used properly, a great mission tool. 3. My qualified YES pertains to the tremendous cost involved in terms of dollars and congregational energy at the expense of other worthwhile ministries.
2. Absolutely--it gives us an opportunity to shape our children's lives in a spiritual way (Prov. 22:6).
3. Yes--because the children read the Word of God and hear about Christ and the Gospel every day.
4. Yes--it helps the children feel a closer relationship with the Lord every day.
5. Yes--as well as providing an excellent academic preparation--it also gives the kids a much stronger Bible background and helps the students better to apply their faith to their life.
6. Absolutely--people are attracted to our congregation because of the school. They want a superior education for their children.

7. Yes--to teach the truths of God's Word as they apply to the strengthening of our faith; and, as these truths relate to our daily lives.
8. Yes--prior to becoming a pastor--had been a Luth. school teacher and principal--also am product of Luth. elem. and Luth. high. This is first church in my life w/o school. I see a real lack of depth and understanding of Scripture in confirmands. Seems more difficult to recruit people for further church work.
9. Yes--if our children are trained to be active witnesses for Jesus Christ.
No--if they are only trained with inward focus.

ELCA

1. Yes--(no response)
2. ?--(no response)
3. Yes--(no response)
4. Yes--in that Biblical and catechetical instruction is usually sound and reinforced and values are certainly reinforced. I see difficulty, though, in relating faith to real life where there are non-believers.
5. Yes--I hear good reports. We just have never been involved personally.
6. Yes--it is good to have alternatives to public schools.
7. No--S.S. gives _____?_____ dimension that public school does not.

APPENDIX III
SURVEY QUESTION #12

How the training of the children of my church will influence Lutheranism in the future.

WELS

1. I personally believe that church programs can help influence a child to live out faith. However, the influence at church and school, pastors and teachers, is small compared to the influence of the parents in a child's home. The parent's example (good or bad) will be the strongest influence and factor affecting Lutheranism in the future. The church and CDS can only be a supplement to, but not a substitute for, the godly example of parents, the religious training parents pass on to their children and the attitudes toward God and His Word and church that parents display. I believe it is important to have a Christian Day School, S.S., VBS, etc., but the home and parents influence is where it's at. That is the key influence on Lutheranism in the future.
2. Sorry, no big thoughts at this time.
3. The future of the church (humanly speaking) depends on the strengths of the CDS's our children attend today.
4. Hopefully their background will help WELS remain a confessional church. It has been my experience to have our children (young people) remain Lutherans in a mixed marriage, even encouraging their spouses to become Lutherans.
5. Orthodox, traditional, and adults who appreciate their Lutheran heritage will not exist where the old, traditional doctrines, practise, liturgy, etc. are not in use. Modern hymns, etc. will create modern not traditional Lutherans--no connection at all eventually with the past. Amy Grant has taken the place of good, traditional hymns.
6. Our kids come from non-Lutheran, non-WASP homes. Their parents learn to be Lutheran and many come to appreciate confessional position of WELS. Many families join for wrong reason, are converted, and stay for right reason. Their attitude toward "church" is mostly outreach. We need people committed to outreach. This would and will be the reason for a strong and growing WELS. School must train disciples/evangelists; not just educate member's kids.
7. First we nurture and train our children as Christians. As Christians they grow to see and understand that the Ev. Lutheran Church does teach God's Word in its clarity, truth and purity. God willing, they will endeavor to remain faithful to their Savior by being faithful and diligent in hearing and learning the Word at every opportunity God gives them; they will also contend against false, un-Scriptural teachings and be ever zealous and active in wanting to share the truth of God's Word with as many people as possible, their parents, relatives, friends, neighbors and even with others on the other side of the globe; doing this by personal sharing of the Gospel and support of mission efforts with mission offerings.

8. Strong Christian Ed. is a key to developing knowledge of and love for the Word, important for maintaining a Scriptural foundation Synod-wide.
9. We need to not only offer CD school training--we need to go beyond that to keep our young people H.S. and college age in their faith and relationship with the Lord Jesus.
I've only been here about 4 months and Christian education is an area that needs and will receive a great deal of time and effort.

LCMS

1. The Christian Day School influence in the life of a child will, in most cases, serve to maintain a strong Lutheran Church in the future. However, the church can't count on the CDS alone. The church needs to be alert to the fact that people today are faced with temptations galore. Adult education undergirded by the Gospel is also a must.
2. God's Word does not return empty. It will have a strong effect.
3. Without teaching the Word of God, the church will die. Without preachers learning the Biblical languages, we shall lose the Gospel.
4. --will help to maintain doctrinal orthodoxy.
5. It will stress the Bible and Christ's teaching. I can look at my leaders today; they are the ones who have received a Christian education and they definitely want to make it available for their children.
6. Help them better understand their church.
7. My deepest concern is that our lay-people (in general) do not have the desire to study God's Word and, thereby, do not review (or learn) the truth of God's Word as found in our Lutheran Confessions; and unless the masses of lay-people in Lutheranism today return to a strong diet of God's Word we are going to be followers (latecomers) to the 'universalism' which is too evident in the ELCA today and can also become strong in both the LCMS and the WELS. I fear that we are too passive towards the invasion of "reformed" theology in Lutheranism. I believe there must be a gathering of some kind of the concerned pastors and lay-leaders within the LCMS and the WELS and other smaller Lutheran groups, to face up to this problem and do something more than talk and observe. Unless this problem is recognized and steps taken to return to the Lutheran Confessions, the training of our children will be quite futile.
8. You will always have a faithful core. We now see more young men (25-40) holding elected offices and doing good job--a good sign. Without Christian Day School I expect less dedication and involvement.
9. I am less interested in propagating Lutheranism and more interested that we are God's mission to a lost world. As a confessing wing of the total church, our focus must be on training our children to be bold confessors of Jesus and the

truth and power of His Wrd. This can be done under the power and anointing of God's Holy Spirit.

ELCA

1. Not known--speculative.
2. Hopefully the training of the children of my parish will produce young people who are able to respond to the Gospel in a positive way and be dedicated Christian people first. Secondly, I would hope they would be dedicated people to their Lutheran church with an understanding of what their church is all about and what it teaches.
3. (no response)
4. Christian faith can often be made or broken in the Sunday School-Confirmation period. As equally important as scriptural and confessional verities, though, are the relationships that are made. Kids are kept after confirmation--even when parents are inactive--if they develop close supportive relationships with their peers and educational staff.
5. (no response)
6. The training of the children will influence Lutheranism in the future.
7. (no response)

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