

The Great Commission and Our Christian Schools

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Milwaukee Journal religion reporter, Richard Kenyan, in a published interview in 1980 with synod president, Pastor Carl Mischke and then stewardship counselor Pastor James Schaefer spoke of the Christian schools of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, as a “highly respected educational system.” Today this system includes 30,800 students in 376 day schools, a network of high schools, three colleges and a seminary. God has truly blessed us! We have a Christian educational system second to none. We don’t have to hastily improvise a curriculum as many new church-related schools are doing. We don’t have to scramble for teachers and hope that they then represent our theological position fairly and clearly. Without, intending to sound a note of pride, we can safely say that we know what we are doing in the Christian education “business.” Years of God-blessed experiences have taught us how to operate our schools. And the existence of Dr. Martin Luther College, assures us of a continuing supply of teachers properly equipped to teach in keeping with our confessional stance.

When there is such a blessing as this in the body of Christ you can be sure that Satan is going to direct some major assaults against it so that it will not be as effective as possible. Has this happened? Have we received maximum benefit from our fine Christian educational system? I am going to be so bold as to suggest that we make this evaluation not on the basis of our academic accomplishments or our advanced musical programs or our involved athletic program, but on the basis of the purpose for existence that our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ gave us. I am referring to His Great Commission as recorded in Matthew 28:19, “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.” If you have developed a mission statement for your church or school I am pretty confident that you would have included this concept in one way or another in your reason for existence. If you haven’t developed a mission statement I will be happy to provide you with materials that will assist you in doing that. I believe that this process is so important that it should be done every year or at the very least every other year. One of the ways in which the devil really succeeds in running our beautiful ship aground is by causing us to lose sight of our purpose.

Just for the sake of interest I went back to the confirmation class of 1982 at Eastside to see just how many “disciples” we still had left. I choose 1982 because that class has now been out of high school for two years and somewhat on their own. At Eastside it happened to be a very large class of 37 and I think we might say an exceptionally gifted class. There were many well-rounded outstanding students. The statistics look like this: 12 active, 12 inactive, 6 semi-active, 7 transferred/released. Probably a portion of the transferred members are still active but that means about 50% have strayed from their Savior in six short years. Furthermore, I can’t think of a single one of the 12 active who have brought along another unchurched person outside of a possible prospective mate on occasion. I will have more to say about the class of ‘82 later in this paper.

Perhaps some of you have seen a graph that Pastor Mark Freier used at a recent youth counselors Workshop. The graph tracked the 452 children who were confirmed at St. John’s in Wauwatosa from 1956-1976. It is rather striking. Of the class confirmed in 1956 only 4% were active 20 years later. The class that was about six years past its confirmation had about 60% still active and St. John’s has a Christian Day School.

How are we doing as a synod? In 1960 we had 829 congregations. The 1985 statistical report lists 1189 congregations an increase of 43.5% in 15 years. I think that you would agree that is a notable blessing from our gracious God. However, during that same time span our communicant membership increased by 86,797, a 37.8% growth rate, or an annualized increase of just over 1%. A total of 3,647 adult confirmations were recorded in 1985, an average of 3 per congregation. Adult baptisms totaled 625, approximately 1 for every 2 congregations.

What these statistics indicate is that while the number of congregations has increased markedly if not dramatically, there has not been corresponding increase in the number of communicant members. We might expect the wider base to produce a greater numerical growth. That has not happened.

Back in 1986 our synod Board for Evangelism did a survey of all the congregations in our synod. After finding out exactly where we were, we wanted to set some realistic goals for the future. One rather disappointing statistic that was noted was that it requires 103 WELS communicants to enlist one new adult confirmand per year. The corresponding figure for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is 73 communicants for each new confirmand. The corresponding figure for the Assemblies of God (currently the fastest growing Protestant denomination in the USA) is 20 for each new member. That says something about us, doesn't it?

I believe that I would have to agree with Pastor Joel C. Gerlach when he writes in his paper entitled "The Call Into the Discipling Ministry," "apparently WELS Lutherans are not as determined as members of other denominations to become involved personally in sharing their faith with others. In an era when conservative churches have been growing phenomenally, we have been growing minimally. I think there are a number of reasons for that. One of them is that our educational system, generally speaking, does not imbue an evangelistic spirit nor impart evangelistic skills requisite for reaching out more effectively than we are in our communities."

Matthew 28:19-20

The key verse that we need to focus our attention on is what is commonly referred to as the Great Commission, Matt. 28:19-20. Let's start this focus with a little self-examination. As you were growing up as a child what did this verse mean for you?—Was your experience perhaps somewhat like mine, that this verse was read or perhaps expounded about once a year, usually at mission festival time. We probably had a guest speaker, to urge us on to greater heights in "mission work" which usually meant increasing your mission offerings. There might have been a display of beads and baskets made by the Apache Indians and pictures showing wickiups and missionary E. Edgar Guenther. Or another familiar picture was that of Pastor Edgar Hoenecke whose white face and hair was always very noticeable sticking out among the black faces of natives from Malawi or Zambia. But how often did you associate the words of the Great Commission with anything that was going on in your own home town? Wasn't the picture that was conjured up in your minds by these words of Jesus that of a missionary instructing heathen natives in some far-away land?

How many evangelism meetings were announced in your church bulletin? How many evangelism seminars were held at your church? I can't ever remember an adult being baptized in our congregation as I was growing up. Neither can I ever remember adult confirmation though I am sure there must have been at least a few of those. I do not ever remember a new member welcome, as a matter of fact I remember Sunday School as being very much the same faces in my class for all the years that I went there.

Did your understanding of the Great Commission change substantially when you went to New Ulm? Unless you graduated within the last five years, I feel pretty confident that you did not receive very much personal evangelism training. And I believe that I could safely make the same assumption about the graduates of Northwestern College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Now I don't, mean to lay blame anywhere else. I am willing to accept it for myself. I had extremely capable instructors whom I respected highly but the simple fact I want to state is that I didn't see it.

I did not see myself as a facilitator of a process by which others would become free-speaking witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ or certainly not trainers of still more disciples. I viewed myself as a pastor who promoted missions and the instructor of biblical truth in the congregation. I was certainly more concerned about what my people knew about Christ, than I was about what they were becoming in Christ. All I ask is that we all take a good look at ourselves because if there is any change that is where it has to start.

Having taken a good look at ourselves let us take a look at our key verse from scripture. Before Jesus directs our attention to our task he directs our attention to his authority. All authority was given to him

according to his human nature. Jesus does this not to establish the right to tell us what to do but to assure us that he is in a position to turn an impossible task into an exciting possibility. _

The commission he gives us is not a command to go, *POREUTHENTES* is an aorist participle, not an imperative. The command Jesus gives is to make disciples—*MANTHETEUSATE*—an aorist imperative. That is the main verb. The going is only incidental to the discipling. But “going” does suggest that the Lord’s strategy for his New Testament church has been changed. He envisions his people going out to others, taking the initiative to establish contacts that make discipling possible.

In the same paper mentioned above, Pastor Gerlach writes, “Jesus does not offer the prospect of insulation or isolation from the world. Hibernation in little WELS ghettos is not compatible with a call into the discipling ministry.”

Since the aorist tense in the Greek is suggestive of action and not time, a possible paraphrase might be “Be about the business of making disciples.” The word is suggestive of action and of results, not of means and of methods. That will come later.

The object of our activity is the people who inhabit “all nations.” Jesus adds two participles to explain how to make disciples, baptizing, teaching. I think Pastor Gerlach said it swell when he writes in the same paper, “Baptizing recruits disciples. Teaching trains and equips the recruits for authentic discipleship. What baptizing initiates, teaching perfects. Baptizing restores the lost image. Teaching continually refurbishes that image. Baptizing makes us look like Christ in God’s eyes. Teaching helps us act like him. Teaching enables us ‘to be conformed to the image of (God’s) Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers’ (Rom.8:29)’. Teaching transforms us into his likeness with ever—increasing glory, which comes from the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). Teaching makes disciples.”

What is a Disciple?

Before we get into the importance of making disciples we really ought to have a good working definition of what a disciple is. So just what is a disciple? What are the marks of discipleship?

The following will not be a comprehensive definition but rather a highlighting of the main features.

Jesus called to his disciples to be followers. “Come, follow me,” he told Peter and Andrew. “At once they left the boat and their father and followed him.” (Matt. 4:19f). They made a commitment to follow Jesus. Discipleship always involves a personal commitment to Jesus as Lord. That commitment recognizes that Jesus’ claim on lives is total. It does not allow us to say “First let me go and bury my father” (Matt. 8:22). Commitment means to “let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5 KJV). It means, that a disciple is ready and willing to “deny himself and take up his cross,” ready to “lose” his life in order to “find” it.

A disciple is devoted to Jesus because of his sacrifice on behalf of the world. “This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16). When love bonds us to Jesus in genuine devotion to him, we are ready and eager to walk in obedience to him. “Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did” (1 John 2:6). A disciple’s devotion to his Savior is so all-encompassing that he will willingly sacrifice his own self interests for those of his Lord (Matt 16:24-25).

Jesus summons disciples to follow him, not because he needs them for companionship or for assistance in accomplishing his objectives for this world, but because disciples need Jesus for companionship, and because they find meaning and purpose in life only as they let the Lord use them for the purpose for which he reclaimed them for himself.

One of the foremost characteristics of a disciple is the attitude of a servant. Disciples are all servants of Christ. They are like their Lord, “who came not to be served but to serve” (Matt. 20:28) . The “mind of Christ” which is to be in us is typified by the fact that Jesus took upon himself “the very nature of a servant” (Phil. 2:7) . Paul treats this subject over and over again in his epistles. The life of a disciple exemplifies a spirit, of faithful service.

Growth is another mark of a disciple. Paul speaks of a disciple’s growth as a growing in Christ. “We will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ” (Eph. 4:15). That growth is multi-faceted. It

is a growing “in all things.” A disciple grows in faith. Paul tells the Thessalonians that he thanks God for them “because your faith is growing more and more.” He adds, “And the love everyone of you has for each other is increasing” (2 Thess. 1:3). A disciple is known for his love. They were sensitive too “the new command” Jesus gave his disciples in the upper room. “All men will know that you are my disciples if you love-one another” (John 13:35).

A disciple is also expected to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). The author of the letter to the Hebrews chides disciples who are content with “milk” when they ought to be digesting “solid food.” A disciple is eager to “leave the elementary teachings about Christ and to go on to maturity” (Heb. 6:1).

A disciple is also expected to be a witness. After three years of discipling his disciples, Jesus gave direction to their discipling ministry by saying to them “You will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). All of the other characteristics of a disciple work together for this purpose, that of being an effective witness for the Savior. A witness is not only one whose words testify to the fact that he is a disciple of Jesus. His character and his actions are also a telling testimony to that fact. When Peter and John testified before the members of the Sanhedrin, the elders and the priests were as impressed by what they saw as they were by what they healed. “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished, and they took note that these men had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Something of Jesus had obviously rubbed off on them. The pupils had become like their teacher.

Discipling Our Children is Important

Now, how are we doing at making disciples? I think we would all agree that we could be doing better especially with our children, after all this is certainly the best place to start. We complain about adults and their lack of discipleship, but let’s realize that our adults are the product of their training (or lack of training) as children. Most people, by time they are adults, are convinced that evangelism is something others do. “Let, somebody else do it!” we say and so it doesn’t get done. Perhaps if we had some experience in sharing our faith as children, even experienced some success, then maybe we would not be so afraid of doing it as adults.

The importance of training our children to be disciples can also be seen from another perspective. Who can better reach children than other children? We realize, of course, that children are also able to witness to adults who of us hasn’t seen or heard of a child who brought his/her parents to Jesus?—and yet it is a common observation that children can also be very effective in winning other children. Among other children very few things can be as effective as the witness of one’s peers.

In preparing this paper I came across another very important thought and an interesting quote. The thought is this: if people are not won for Jesus when are little children when will they be won? Several studies have been made of people who became Christians to determine at what time in their lives they became Christians. Carl W. Berner in a book entitled “Spiritual Power for Your Congregation” quotes Walter A. Maier in relating how a

Dr. Spencer once questioned a thousand persons who were members of various Christian churches in the United States. He found that of these, 548, or more than half, were brought into the Christian Church when they were under twenty years of age; 337 were converted between the ages of twenty and thirty; eighty-six were converted between the ages of thirty and forty; fifteen between the ages of forty and fifty; three between the ages of fifty and sixty; one between the ages of sixty and seventy; and none over seventy. The Rev. H. Bonar made a similar investigation of 283 converts who were brought into the church under his own labor. He found that 138 of these were converted under twenty years of age; eighty-five between the ages of twenty and thirty; twenty-two between the ages of thirty and forty; four between the ages of forty and fifty; three between fifty and sixty; one between sixty and seventy; not one over seventy.

Certainly we aren't going to stop witnessing to adults or discontinue our services in nursing homes but I think we can acknowledge that these studies do emphasize something that we have probably all observed from experience and that is that Satan and a whole lifetime of self-reliance and entrenched self-righteousness can erect some pretty solid barriers to the gospel. Statistics tell us that there are about 40 million children in American not in anyone's Sunday School. What a compelling reason to train out children to be disciples that they can go out and win other children.

I believe that we could say that children have special talents in evangelism. Consider again the story of Naaman, the Syrian. The Bible says "He was great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded... a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy" (II Kings 5:1). What a blow it must have been for this otherwise very successful man, a hero in his country, the commander of his country's armed forces, to learn that he had leprosy. One can imagine not only the physical suffering he began to endure, but the mental anguish as well. One can imagine the panic, the denial, the hoping against hope, the frantic search for a cure only to be told that there was none.

But then a young servant girl, a captive from Israel who served Naaman's wife, entered the picture. She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria. He would cure him of his leprosy" (v. 3). Please note that this precious little girl, whoever she was, knew nothing about evangelism theory and techniques. As far as we know, she knew nothing about TAS or the Great Exchange. She simply shared what she knew. She knew someone who could cure Naaman and said so. She was like the disciples who said, "We speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen" (John 3:22). Those she was a slave in a foreign country there was no holding of a grudge or the desire that Naaman get his "just desserts." Life wasn't all that complicated for this little girl. And in the end, through her witness, Naaman found out that "there is no God in all the world except in Israel." (v.15). I believe we can learn a great deal about children and their ability for evangelism in this little story.

How different children are from adults when it comes to sharing their faith. Adults are full of all kinds of fears and apprehensions. They question their own ability. They're afraid that they just don't have the kind of personality necessary to buttonhole people and tell them they're going to hell. Don't ask me how they know this with such certainty, but somehow they are convinced as if the Pope himself said it, that they could never to evangelists. They're not Billy Graham, not even a Leighton Ford. That's not their style.

The more adults think about what they ought to be doing as disciples, and the more their mind settles on the man next door or that dyed-in-the-wool atheist relative, the more they come up with powerful reasons to drag their feet. It just won't work, they say to themselves. Why offend people? Why ruin a beautiful friendship? After, all, don't all non-Christians resent people who push religion on them, give out tracts and tins like? Don't they think them to be weird, and nuisances and fanatics? What's the use? It won't work. It doesn't feel right, and on and on and on. Either they can't think of an icebreaker, or else when they have one and use it, they can't seem to make the transition to begin talking about the one thing needful.

Isn't it wonderful that children don't have all these problems? Children don't have all these complicated doubt and fears. They just do what comes naturally. They say things like: "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy." Or they just invite people to come and hear. They speak of what they know, and testify to what they have seen. Elmer A. Kettner, in his book *Adventures in Evangelism*, gives the following example:

Recently a pastor was working in the church office when he heard a racket in the nave of the church. Going up to investigate, he found three little children running up the aisle. As he approached them, the older of the three explained, "We just came in to see the church."

For the moment he was tempted to chase them out and tell them to go home. But he thought better of it. He took out a few moments of time, though he was very busy, to show them different parts of the church. Particularly he called attention to the cross on the altar and told them what Jesus had done for them. They thanked him and left.

A half hour later he heard the same kind of noises in the church. Returning, he found the same children, but this time they had a fourth child with them. “We went home and told our little brother what we had seen, and he wanted to see Jesus too,” they explained. This time the pastor asked for their names and addresses. When he called on their parents, he found that none of the children were baptized. Today these children came every Sunday “to see Jesus.” They have been baptized in His name—all because a busy pastor took time enough to tell them the wonderful story of Jesus and His love.

Elmer Kettner used the above illustration to show that no matter how busy we are, we should always have time to tell little children about Jesus and His love. What if this pastor had not taken the time? What if these children had not felt accepted? Surely it is important that children enrolled in our high school, our day school, our Sunday school, or just visiting services with their parents feel welcome and loved by their teachers and the pastor. Why would they want to come to a place where they felt uncomfortable and unwanted? Why would they bring anyone else to a place like that?

All this is well and good, and it ought to be taken to heart. But let’s not fail to notice in Mr. Kettner’s story how the three little children, once they had been welcomed and told about Jesus, went out and *brought their little brother so that he could see Jesus too*. That’s the way children are! They are natural missionaries! They simply tell what they know, without dredging up all kinds of worries and anxieties about what will happen if they mention Jesus to somebody.

A rather old paper entitled “Mission Work Among Children” lists these special talents of children in winning others.

- a) A child has no inhibitions. He will discuss freely anything that may be of interest to him. As teachers, we always have to be on our guard lest some child divulge his complete family history and drag all the family skeletons out of the closet. Children will discuss their religion with playmates of other faiths with no thought of being ashamed of their own.
- b) A child is loyal to the extreme. He will defend his parents to the last ditch even though those parents may be utterly worthless.
- c) A child has no prejudices. There is no such thing as race distinction among small children even though they may show curiosity about a different color of skin.
- d) A child will believe implicitly any thing that we may tell him or her.
- e) A child is enthusiastic to a point where no obstacle is too big to overcome.

A child is often the best missionary. It may be possible for one child to persuade another child when even parents can’t convince their own children. Any time spent in preparing our children to become disciples is by no means a waste of time and effort. In most cases it is not even necessary since the child’s own enthusiasm will direct his efforts. What may seem impossible for an adult is taken for granted by a child. For example, we may hesitate to approach a certain unchurched family because we know their background too well. A child will show no hesitation. At times our own knowledge defeats us.

Often a child will have more faith in, and a greater insight into the power of the Gospel than the average adult. The child will approach his playmate directly with the Gospel. Often we grownups think we have to supplement the Holy Spirit with various earthly tricks. We have one and only one tool to use and that is the Word.

What can little children do? I hope that if we did not know it already, we are at least beginning to get the idea that they can do a great deal, if only they have opportunities and are challenged to use their opportunities. Allan Hart Jahsmann writes in a book entitled *Evangelism Through the Sunday School*:

Children are natural missionaries. If they like a school or a teacher, they are quick to tell their father and mother about it. When they love Jesus, they are eager to serve Him. We

have not fully capitalized on this in training children to live and give for missions. It is a relatively simple task to harness this power for healthy, vigorous, mission-minded activity, but it requires an educational program.

Motivation for Disciples

Before we get to some disciple making methods and opportunities, let's focus on one more thing and that is motivation. How can children be motivated to become disciples for Jesus Christ? How can we make them more aware of their high calling and more responsive to their opportunities? Those questions are not really very difficult to answer. Children must be motivated the same way that adults are, namely, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is how they will grow spiritually and how they become faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. When our children are taught in the Word and they know Jesus as their personal Savior, they will grow in living their life as a disciple of Christ.

The Word of God enables us to see our sin and our salvation. When Nathan came to him with the Word and David became conscious of the fact that *he* was the man who had sinned, and *he* was the one forgiven, his voice was raised in praise to God (Psalm 32). When the Samaritan woman, who was laden with guilt, realized that she had found her Savior, she ran back to her village and said, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did" (John 4:39). She was determined to introduce others to the Living Word.

In every heart there is a consciousness of sin. Children have it too. They feel guilt. They also feel the joy of love and acceptance. And when they feel the joy of being loved, accepted, and forgiven by God, children also feel the desire to witness of the love of God. Anyone who has attended a children's Christmas service has seen that joy. Children have joy, feel it and express it perhaps better than we adults, who are so afraid someone will laugh at our happiness in Christ.

Disciple Making Methods and Opportunities

What can we do to improve our disciple making process especially in our Christian schools. How can we make our children into clones of our Savior? In this final section I want to suggest some ways and then I would like to open up the floor for you to present ideas that you have used and found helpful in developing disciples of our Lord and helping your children share their faith.

1. My first suggestion is this: Get the home more involved in the disciple making process. Here is where I want to go back to the class of 37 that we confirmed at Eastside in 1982. Of the twelve that are still active, in every case, the parents are also very active in our church. Of the twelve that are inactive, eight of them do not have active parents and three come from broken homes where the single parent is active but is not able to bring the child along. Only of the inactives comes from a "normal" home where the parents are active. To me this indicates a need for a family ministry at our congregation.

Furthermore, I'm pretty sure that nearly everyone of our teachers takes church attendance of the children in your classroom on Monday morning. Please understand that I am not opposed to that but I do wonder if we always handle it in the right way. After all if little Johnnie isn't in church on a Sunday morning is it really his fault? I think you would agree that really the problem lies with parents, again indicating a need for a family ministry to get our parents more involved in the disciple making process.

Just how that might be most effectively accomplished, I am not sure but I do have an idea that is still in its embryonic stage. I wonder if it might work to divide our school families into smaller groups that could meet in a home on a monthly basis. A leader would be selected who would be given a short agenda which would include a short Bible study, pertinent information relative to the school or congregation and then a time for sharing. My thought would be that perhaps in a small face-to-face

group, deeper friendly relationships would be developed where burdens could be shared and specific encouragement given. Peer counseling might be very helpful because some couples have trouble with parenting, much less discipling. I would be interested in knowing if anyone has tried this or what your reaction might be.

2. I believe that every teacher (and we're all teachers, aren't we) should be involved in at least one of the group Bible study opportunities the congregation offers. This is in addition to our personal Bible study and preparation for our class presentations. Not only does this afford the teacher the opportunity to grow but as you listen to the discussion you will also have a better idea of where the families of the congregation are at in their spiritual development. Furthermore, how can we expect our children to see the importance of Bible study for their own discipleship if we are not going to set the example for them? Your reference to something that was studied in Bible class will be very important in shaping their ideas on this important aspect of their lives. Since attending a Bible class on Sunday morning or a week night requires no preparation I really see no valid reason why every teacher couldn't make this a part of their weekly schedule.
3. I believe that every teacher should be active in sharing their faith either as part of the formal evangelism program of the congregation or on a definite program of friendship evangelism with at least one specific unchurched prospect. If necessary perhaps one teacher at a time could be relieved of extra-curricular activities for a semester to attend the evangelism training course offered in your congregation. I believe the children would benefit greatly from the teacher's increased expertise in sharing the way of salvation and also from the joy of first-hand experiences that the teacher would have on evangelism calls. Certainly the spirit of true discipleship is as much "caught" as it is "taught."

If I may be permitted a personal note here: Over the past several years I have been involved in numerous evangelism seminars throughout our district. They have been well received. One reason for this, I'm sure, is that the people know – from the experiences I am able to relate – that I am not just theorizing with them. I don't speak of anything that I have not done myself. Teachers who themselves are going and telling will have, it would seem, the greatest influence on their children when urging them to go and tell (I shall be briefer with the rest of my suggestions).

4. Invite a couple of your most active lay evangelists in your congregation to speak to your class and share experiences.
5. Demonstrate a passion for lost souls when discussing other subjects such as history or current events.
6. Focus your teaching on the promise, power, and mission of Christianity, not merely on truth as doctrine.
7. Focus your teaching not just on the facts of scripture but on the attitudes of a disciple such as joy (personal and vocational), love, commitment, optimism, contentment, and trust.
8. Be vulnerable. Be willing to share your own feelings and spiritual growth. Be willing to share your personal experience of triumph or tragedy and how your faith brought you through.
9. Encourage Christian self-expression in your class. Be willing to listen to personal testimony and not just insist on feeding back cognitive facts
10. "Target" your prayers.
11. Use art projects to develop a consciousness of discipleship.
12. Use Northwestern Lutheran articles on missions and personal witnessing.
13. Invite missionaries and other synod representative to address your school.
14. Explain the operation of our synod
15. Help your children to understand the unchurched better
16. Teach children to overcome objections that people might have.
17. Bring the idea of evangelism and discipleship into as many religion lessons as possible.
18. Have children take an active part in "Bring a Friend Sundays" or "Bring a Friend to School Days."

19. Have children share in certain outreach projects for their congregation like passing out flyers door-to-door announcing an Easter or Christmas service, doing it during school time classes on evangelism.
20. Arrange for students to sing at nursing homes, etc. where children have practice sharing the good news in front of others.

What is the key things in the disciple making process that demands our special attention in our effort to become better disciple makers/ Without a doubt it is the role of modeling. We need more disciple maker models in our classrooms. It isn't enough just to tell others to go and make disciples. We need to show them and tell them. Modeling is an essential, integral part of showing and telling. My prayer is that our time together today will serve to produce more models in our school.