

ISSUES...

IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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SHALL WE TEACH KNOWLEDGE OR RELATIONSHIPS?

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Editor's Notes

One important aspect of a person's life involves relationships. Every man must be in communion with his God and his neighbor. Furthermore, he must also live with himself. Consequently, education should include developing the individual's ability to enter into loving relationships with God, his neighbor, and himself. Contributors to this ISSUES present ideas on this topic drawn from the literature and from their experiences for the reader to consider. They should be helpful if one of the goals of instruction is to help students grow in their ability not only to acquire knowledge but also to use it for the benefit of themselves and others. Opinions expressed in ISSUES are the authors and do not represent the position of the faculty of Concordia Teachers College.

THE EDITOR

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editorials

BACK TO THE BASICS

What is the connection between man's knowledge and man's relationships with reference to his God, his fellowmen, and himself? All the editorials and all the articles in this issue of ISSUES discuss matters suggested by this question. But where to begin? There is always only one place for beginnings: back to the sources. But there are sources—and then there are sources!

Be that as it may, the source that we will look at is Martin Luther. We go back to Luther because he had a lot to say about the connection between human knowledge and human relationships. What is appealing about his thought on the matter could be put this way: he affirmed the "both/and," and not merely the "either/or," distinctions of life.

In that connection, we remember Dr. Luther's famous paradoxical statement in his 1520 treatise, "The Freedom of a Christian":

A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.

Martin Luther, "The Freedom of a Christian," *Career of the Reformer: I*, edited by Harold J. Grimm, Vol. XXXI of *Luther's Works*, edited by Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c. 1957), p. 344.

Luther talks about the inner and the outer man in this treatise: the inner powers and benefits of faith and the outer life of the Christian in association with his/her fellows. Luther makes it very clear that the one flows from the other, that the two are connected inseparably. To tear those two spheres of reality apart is to destroy the Christian life. In the words of Luther,

The following statements are therefore true: "Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works; evil works do not make a wicked man, but a wicked man does evil works." (*Luther's Works*, XXXI, 361.)

"The Freedom of a Christian"—one of Luther's many theological gems—calls us back to the basics, to the only solid foundation for life in the sphere of knowledge and in the sphere of relationships. There are so many ways that Luther says it in his treatise. For example:

One thing, and only one thing, is necessary for Christian life, righteousness, and freedom. That one thing is the most holy Word of God, the gospel of Christ, as Christ says. . . . (*Luther's Works*, XXXI, 345.)

Faith alone is the saving and efficacious use of the Word of God, according to

Rom. 10. . . . (*Luther's Works*, XXXI, 346.)

Therefore true faith in Christ is a treasure beyond comparison which brings with it complete salvation and saves man from every evil, as Christ says. . . . (*Luther's Works*, XXXI, 347.)

I will therefore give myself as a Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered himself to me; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable, and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ. (*Luther's Works*, XXXI, 367.)

And finally:

We conclude, therefore, that a Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and in his neighbor. Otherwise he is not a Christian. He lives in Christ through faith, in his neighbor through love. By faith he is caught up beyond himself into God. By love he descends beneath himself into his neighbor. Yet he always remains in God and in his love. . . . (*Luther's Works*, XXXI, 371.)

Luther declares what the foundation is and what springs from that foundation—and they remain inseparable for Luther. They must remain inseparable for the church—then we will have a good issue.

JAMES H. PRAGMAN

KNOWLEDGE AS A GIFT OF GOD

In recent years anti-intellectual forces have made large inroads into American higher education. Sidney Hook, former philosophy professor at New York University, recently asserted that for today's college students "fetishism of action has become a substitute for prolonged concern for ideas." Peter Berger, a well-known sociologist, has observed that "Students want to become personally moved, rather than instructed by course materials; they want to relate to faculty on the level of personal encounter. . . . They are opposed to whatever smacks of intellectual discipline, objective standards, and external regulation."

Hook and Berger give an accurate portrayal, not only of what students want, but of what currently passes for academic activity in countless classrooms on campuses across the nation. Church colleges are no exception.

The question must be asked, what happens when knowledge is not seen as a gift of God and the cognitive aspects of life are minimized or supplanted by what is euphemistically referred to as "human relations"? The answer to this question can in part be seen

by noting the widespread proliferation of sensitivity and encounter groups in our society.

Most encounter groups have one element in common, namely, that it is better to relate than to know. This is well illustrated by one of the gurus of the encounter movement, Fritz Perls. He loved to tell encounter seekers, bent on wanting to relate: "Lose your mind and come to your senses."

That the scorning or neglect of knowledge in all too many instances has led to tragic and even inhumane abuses is well documented in the literature on sensitivity training. Countless individuals, who seriously sought to improve their ability to relate with others, became victims of severe mental disturbances, privacy violations, illicit sex experiences, suicide, and some were forced to lie in coffins. For detailed accounts the reader may consult: Bruce L. Maliver, *The Encounter Game*, 1973; Kurt W. Back, *Beyond Words*, 1972; Gene Church and Conrad D. Carnes, *The Pit: A Group Encounter Defiled*, 1972.

Minimizing the role of knowledge not only affects and distorts man's ability to relate with others and himself, as numerous examples from the encounter group activities show, but invariably also affects how the Christian sees his relationship to God. Lutherans especially should recognize this, for it was Luther who had to contend with the "Enthusiasts" (*Schwärmer*), who depreciated all cognitive discourse about God. The Enthusiasts believed that God communicated and related Himself to them directly, apart from Holy Scripture and the sacraments. They supplanted the cognitive with the affective. As a result, many of God's clear teachings were ignored and violated.

Christians must heed Jesus' words to "be wise as serpents" so that false dichotomies will not arise, pitting the affective and the cognitive domains against each other. Whenever such erroneous distinctions arise, as they are today, not only will knowledge (both divine and human) suffer, but man's ability to relate effectively to himself and others will also deteriorate.

We must always remember that God is no enemy of knowledge. We would do well to listen to some of His praiseworthy references concerning knowledge. "Apply your mind to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge" (Proverbs 23:12). "A wise man is mightier than a strong man, and a man of knowledge than he who has strength" (Proverbs 24:5). The psalmist was moved by God to say: "Teach me good judgment and knowledge" (Psalm 119:66). And the Philippians were told to add knowledge to love (Philippians 1:9). Here we have a clear instance indicating that love alone is not

enough. Perhaps this is what C. S. Lewis had in mind when he said that the heart must never rule the head.

Finally, in being concerned about the role and function of knowledge, it is well to recall that as Christians we are Christ's witnesses. A witness in a court of law must be knowledgeable with respect to his testimony. He must be able to say: "I know." Good intentions and ability to relate well is not enough. They are not enough for Christ's witnesses either. Why not? Because God commanded His followers in both the Old and New Testament to be knowledgeable and informed witnesses. To Isaiah He said: "Set forth your case . . . bring your proofs. . . ." (Isaiah 41:21). In a similar fashion, Peter enjoined the Christians in Asia Minor: "Always be prepared to make a *defense* to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you. . . ." (1 Peter 3:15).

To be sure, Christians should be able to relate meaningfully to God, to others, and to themselves. But this can never be done by opting for anti-intellectualism. To do so, is to err flagrantly. It is to forget that our "Lord is a God of knowledge" (1 Samuel 2:3). It is to lose sight of a vital fact, namely, that in Jesus are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). He demonstrated the truth of this statement even as a 12-year-old in the Temple. Knowledge did not impede His ability to relate to anyone. Neither will it impede our ability to relate, particularly when our knowledge is wholesome and in harmony with God's Word. Volumes upon volumes of it is. Therefore let us cherish it as a gift of God.

AL SCHMIDT

A CHRISTIAN'S RELATING AS A CITIZEN

Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. We were again reminded of this truism by the resignation of President Nixon and the revelations of the White House tapes. Power was concentrated by an overwhelming victory. The concentration of power often causes leadership to accept distorted information and to succumb to the temptation to abuse power—to use it to destroy opponents rather than to serve the people.

Because political activities are viewed as dirty, a popular attitude of Lutherans has been that the church and its members should stay out of politics. Unfortunately this has served as an excuse for many capable, potential leaders in government to remain inactive.

The Christian will not be surprised that corruption is widespread in government as long as he recognizes that all human beings are fallible and sinful. Government is a hu-

man institution. Leaders in the various institutions of society are empowered to establish and enforce legal codes. These codes should serve to establish and maintain boundaries for human behavior so that peace and order might be maintained and that the various institutions of society, including the church, might function effectively to meet the needs of all people who make up society. Unfortunately, leaders in government are often also influenced by motives of self-interest when establishing and enforcing legal codes.

Certainly there are risks involved for the Christian who serves in government. We were reminded of this again by the "dirty tricks" schemes in which the political opponents of President Nixon were hounded and their characters maligned. The politically aware Christian is fearful of the overconcentration of power in government. At best such power leads to the benevolent dictator who is convinced of the rightness of his position. His power is further evidence to him of the popular support of his position by the people. He tends to see all opposition as motivated by error or malicious self-interest and is justified in his own mind in using his power to destroy all opposition.

The Christian must, nevertheless, remember that government is ordained by God. All authority is ultimately derived from God and should be a reflection of His law and will for man. The Christian should treasure good government.

What can the Christian do to support good government? He prays for good government in order that the Gospel may be preached without restraint, that men may live in peace, that the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of men may be met, and that all men in response to the Gospel might show forth the glory of their Creator.

He should also pray regularly for government leadership. He should be informed on political matters, vote, and pay his taxes. He should also be willing to accept the risks and become actively involved in government by either running for office or supporting qualified persons who do. One of his goals as a Christian citizen is to do those things which make sure that government reflects God's will for men so that the Gospel may be freely preached, men may live in peace, and human needs may be met.

The Christian educator has an additional responsibility. He should teach not only the Biblical truths regarding government but he should also help the learner to apply these truths and help the learner see his Christian responsibility toward government as another opportunity provided by God to him for Christian service. Vocations in law and politics should not be shunned but encouraged for those with exemplary judgment, character, compassion, and ability.

DONALD GNEWUCH

WHAT SHALL WE TEACH ABOUT GOD?

by Gordon Gross

IT IS ALWAYS EXCITING TO DISCOVER SOMETHING. When that which you discover is something that might revolutionize your teaching effectiveness, enabling you to better instruct and communicate about God, then your only regret is that you didn't have that insight earlier. Even the extra work to get your idea rolling seems light if it's a good idea.

Not long ago this writer discovered something that really enables him to anticipate and enjoy the responsibility of teaching people about God rather than half dreading it. (Maybe you have had that latter feeling, too. When people are less than receptive, teaching religion can be a chore even though the subject matter is so high and noble!) What was discovered and how?

A part of this writer's work at Concordia Teachers College is directing the Ambassadors for Christ program. Once or twice a month the students of Concordia who become "Ambassadors" for a weekend go to a congregation in the area and "do evangelism" together with members of the congregation. Usually the evangelism involves a witness-survey.

What People Believe About Jesus

One question on the Ambassador's witness-survey instrument brings very revealing answers. After receiving data about the family and its church connections, the interviewer asks, "What do you personally believe about Jesus Christ?" After momentary shock the person shares answers that have strong implications for our topic, "What shall we teach about God?"

In *churched* communities we would estimate that 75 percent of the people have trouble answering this question. Many have a very fuzzy idea about the person and life of Christ. He is a vague figure to them. An even greater number have no sense of relating to Him or seeing that we relate *through* Him to the Father. Many of these know much about the life and activity of Jesus. However, to most of them Jesus was a great man, a great pattern to follow. He presents the ideal Christian life and teaches wisdom that we should emulate. According to these people, by following His example we become "okay folks" in the presence of God and the people around us. Others in this majority category simply have no knowledge of Jesus nor do they seem to

relationship with God. We speak to one another about how we get that relationship and we share with each other how important it is to us. We do this in the training session/Bible study on Friday evenings. Breaking up into small groups to share what we have learned of the Bible to our lives and the work of the weekend. Then on a one-to-one basis and in groups of four we ask one another the questions that we'll ask in the neighborhood the next day. By the time the evening devotion comes, there is already a strong sense of excitement about the peace we have with God and the joy we share in one another. The spirit is moving!

care to relate to Him in any way. To them, this person is pointless to their life in the 20th century. As you can see, they are in trouble with the above question about Jesus Christ!

What about the other 25 percent? In general this part of a typically churched town population falls into two groups: (1) Those who are very much "in the know." Often these will begin "spieling" off doctrines in answer to your question: "What do you believe about Jesus Christ?" Often Lutherans of the older generations (age 40+) are in this group. They know Jesus as the Savior, and they can tell you all about Him. As they speak, however, often they give the impression that their mind is reciting the response right out of *Luther's Small Catechism*.

(2) The other group, often made up of people of non-denominational, Pentecostal or fundamentalist churches, in a much more simplistic way speak *relational* language when they respond. Warmly, they refer to Him as Friend, Brother, Savior. They can tell you about His life, death and resurrection but seem more concerned with the prayer relationship that they have with Him here and now. They respond easily to the question, giving you the impression that they verbalize their feelings about Jesus often. They seemed to be turned-on, happy people, though a bit pietistic. God is real to both of these groups, to the first more as a Fact, to the other more as a Person.

The Ambassadors' Discovery

Well, then, what is the "discovery?" We have found that invariably after an Ambassador weekend of learning about God and sharing Him with others, people get excited about their relationship with Him: people of the congregation (especially those who joined with us for the training and visits), the Concordia students, and the people in the homes that receive their visit. All are "turned-on," set alive-and-moving in their thoughts toward God. It happens every time! Now what has happened? What made it happen? And what does this have to do about our teaching concerning God?

This is what was happening and why. All through these weekends, which have become legend in this area and others that have such programs, we are witnessing to one another and to others just what it means to have

relationship with God. We speak to one another about how we get that relationship and we share with each other how important it is to us. We do this in the training session/Bible study on Friday evenings. Breaking up into small groups we study and apply a short section of the Bible to our lives and the work of the weekend. Then on a one-to-one basis and in groups of four we ask one another the questions that we'll ask in the neighborhood the next day. By the time the evening closing devotion comes, there is already a strong sense of excitement about the peace we have with God and the joy we share in one another. The Spirit is moving!

The next day the same thing happens in the neighborhood if we're doing a witness-survey, or in the congregation, if we are doing an every-member-visit. As those people visited get the chance to actively share, they begin to feel a new and growing awareness of God as a Person. They themselves have been talking on personal terms with another Christian about Him. Then after the visits the Concordia Ambassadors and the congregation get the additional reinforcement back at church of sharing together the experiences they had "out there." And it is moving as we pray then to the Person-God who we learn has said during the day, "I love you," through the witness being given by people who tasted that love and who were active in passing it on. How much more joyous too is the celebration in "church" the next morning as we praise God and continue to share in the "great assembly."

What made all this happen? This writer is convinced that it is the Good News that we are reconciled to God through Jesus Christ that made it happen. Each of us actively witnessed that Good News and what it means to one another. And that difference is similar to the difference between watching a kiss or studying the dynamics of kissing and actually experiencing the kiss of a loved one! We are experiencing all weekend, and through it God really built our trust of Him and one another.

Some Applications for Teaching the Word

What does this mean for our teaching of the Word in school, our Sunday school, our confirmation classes, our Bible classes, our home? For this writer it means all that follows in this article.

Goals

For one thing our church has a lot to learn about goals in teaching the Word. This writer is convinced our primary goal in instruction should be to establish the relationship of God to man rather than "all that doctrine." Please don't misunderstand. Doctrine is important, but only as it flows from relationship. This is the thrust of both Testaments: we are taught primarily to "walk humbly with our God." Formerly we were no people; now we are the children of God. Formerly we were enemies; now we have been reconciled to friendly relationships. As a group of Christians we have been made the "bride of Christ." We are related intimately

as the head is to the body. We are members of His flock, the sheep of the caring Good Shepherd. Through Baptism and the Word we gain the close bond of disciples with their loving Master. On and on we could go to show that the rescue/saving action of God is not just a means of escape from damnation, but even more so, it is an action of being restored into a relationship with God, a relationship that had been lost. Developing that relationship is the primary goal of Christian education.

A secondary goal, also taught in the Word, is to learn more about God as we find ourselves in relationship with Him. Learning about God's will is a part of this goal too and includes "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." It is a natural sequence that as we fall in love, or are drawn in love, or find ourselves in a relationship of love with a person that we find out more about that person, his ways and his wishes. But even as we do that, we still understand that the most important issue is to retain the relationship. Without that, most of the knowledge we gain is pointless.

So as we learn and teach about God we must keep the perspective that our standing with Him by His grace is primary and that all the interesting and useful facts about Him and ourselves and about others are secondary. This means that even as we are teaching those truths which God's Word reveals about Him (the doctrine of the holy Trinity, the two natures of Christ, etc.) and the teachings about the angels, original sin, etc., etc., we must be constantly referring back to and applying what this means in our relationship to God.

In plain words, then, this means that as we teach a religion lesson, we should constantly share also why we're learning these things. We must give the perspective, and keep sharing it throughout the class. Especially at the end we summarize how the truths we've learned in this lesson apply to our lives with Him in whom we "live, move, and have our being."

That brings us to a third goal for our instruction about God. It moves right into the question of God's purpose for us—a purpose that goes beyond the salvation/rescue concept. This goal is to show that we have become co-workers with God as His sent-out-ones, His servants, His people on a mission, His ambassadors. Through our instruction God wants His people to be equipped for ministry. When we teach about God, we are merely intellectualizing if we do not share what His goals are for us and through us. And it is very interesting to this observer (in fact, it is a part of "the discovery") that as we are drawn further into this goal of ministry and move toward meeting its demands on us, we simultaneously are drawn closer to our Father and our Savior. We feel more a part; we have the sense of belonging, of being "in," of being needed. Many of you have experienced the good feeling of being a part with those who are your teammates in a sport or on a task. The Spirit generates similar feelings of love, loyalty, and trust of God when we work with Him and His people in the chal-

lenges He pushed in our direction.

In short, the work that we do to meet these three goals of God for us is the work of sharing the Good News with others and living out the love-implications of that loving Gospel. By the power of the Holy Spirit, when we thus share the Glad Tidings in word and action, we become more stabilized ourselves in that relationship and treasure it more. This is a mighty dynamic that the writer has observed. Invariably the Ambassador for Christ volunteers that go to share the Gospel with one another, with the congregation, and with the community become stronger, become more effective, and draw closer in their inmost being to the Lord and to one another. In a short weekend they become attached in love with the people of the congregation, a phenomenon that often hasn't been experienced over the course of years for many (most?) members of the same congregation. This is unnecessarily tragic!

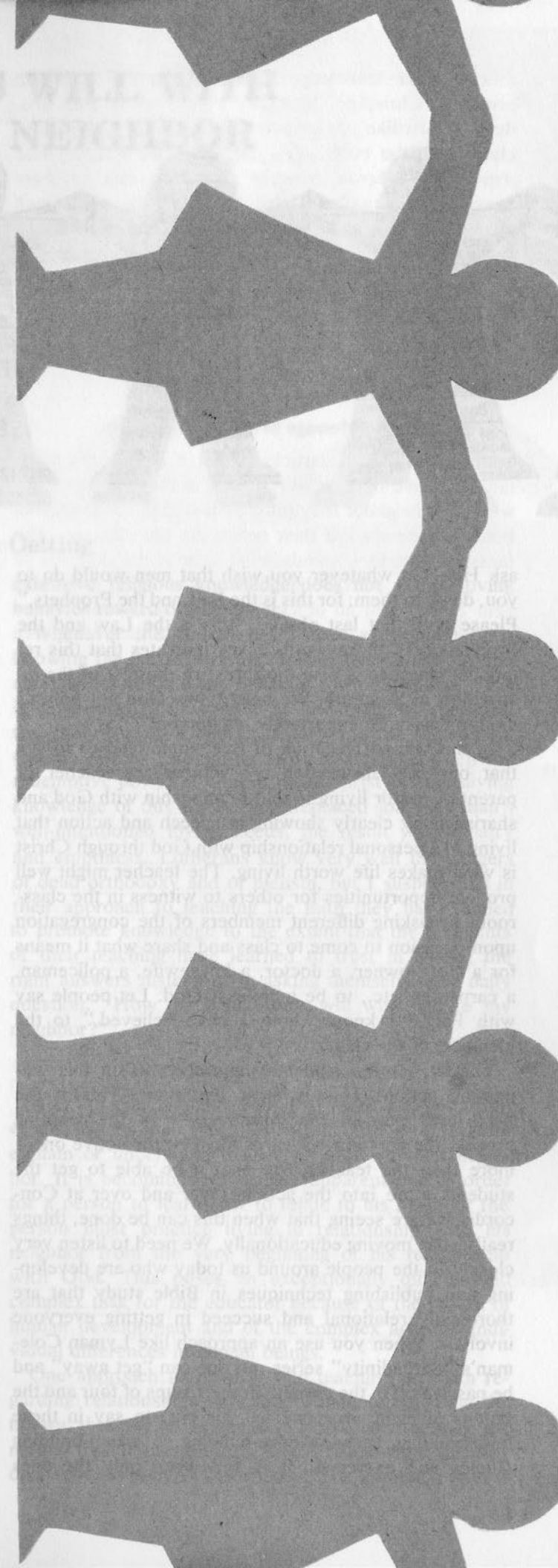
It's not because the preacher has not been preaching; it's not because the teacher has not been teaching; it's not that the powerful Word has not been proclaimed. There is a consensus in the evaluating of the Ambassadors' experiences that the reason for this new awareness of happiness, this sense of mission and zeal in our relationship with God, is that the people have participated actively in their own instruction and have themselves, each one, been in a sharing ministry as royal priests, speaking to one another and to nonmembers the wonderful works of God.

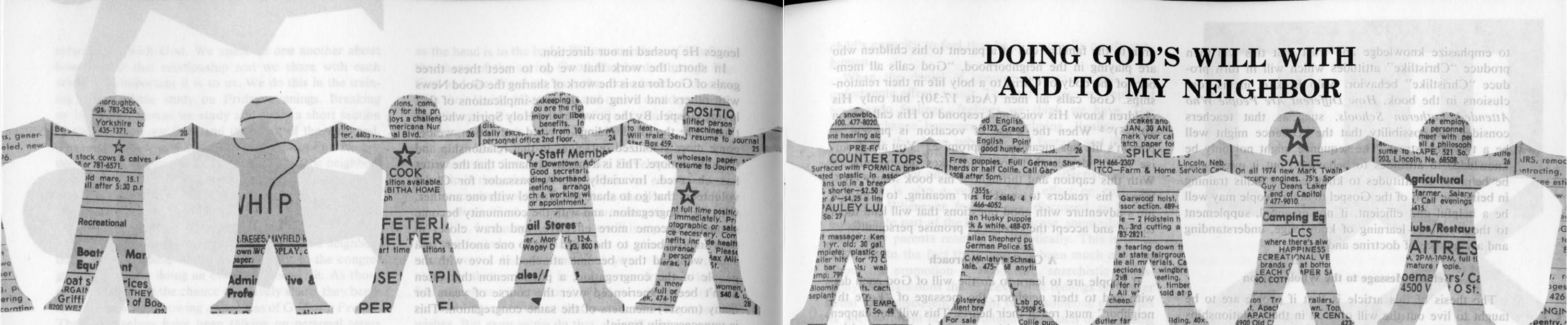
Those works of God which the church has to teach are more than facts and abstractions, although they are included. Above all, when the church teaches about God, it does so with a sense of giving opportunity for people to know God as living Lord and Savior, a Person, who comes in forgiveness and who leads into a life of following Him as living Lord. In its instruction the church witnesses to its faith and thereby provides conditions through which the Holy Spirit works trust and nurtures that confidence.

Teaching Methods

What does this say concerning our instruction about God in the classroom, the home and the church? It says several things of great significance if our people are to be spared becoming intellectual bores on the subject of "God" or being turned off altogether.

First, the most important content of our lessons are those which pertain to the personal needs of the spirit of man, those things by which we relate to others, above all, to God. As Jesus taught, so ought we. In the Sermon on the Mount, for example, Jesus was teaching about how we live with God and man. The concepts are those of trust and love: "Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on . . . your heavenly Father knows you need them all . . . how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who





DOING GOD'S WILL WITH AND TO MY NEIGHBOR

By Eugene Oetting

ask Him! So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets." Please note that last phrase, "this is the Law and the Prophets." In those words Jesus indicates that this relational language is also the thrust of the rest of the instruction of Scripture. We must know God not only as Triune but, more importantly, as Person!

In the second place, all of this would lead us to say that our best instruction is "witness": a teacher or parent or pastor living in that relationship with God and sharing it by clearly showing in speech and action that living in a personal relationship with God through Christ is what makes life worth living. The teacher might well provide opportunities for others to witness in the classroom by asking different members of the congregation upon occasion to come to class and share what it means for a store owner, a doctor, a housewife, a policeman, a carpenter, etc., to be a child of God. Let people say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed," to the members of the class.

Thirdly, let the students themselves in on this witnessing action! This is most important. This is the "heaviest" part of the "discovery." In the learning process the person who learns must be the active one—more than the teacher. We should be able to get the students more into the action. Over and over at Concordia we are seeing that when this can be done, things really start moving educationally. We need to listen very closely to the people around us today who are developing and publishing techniques in Bible study that are thoroughly relational and succeed in getting everyone involved. When you use an approach like Lyman Coleman's "Serendipity" series, no one can "get away" and be passive off in the corner. In the groups of four and the groups of eight everyone has his part to say in these faith-building, knowledge-building, group-building studies and exercises. It is sad when only the ones

whose hands are always "flying" get to speak. When all get to share, God is not only personally and powerfully there in the midst of the "two or three gathered in His name" but His people, each one, is being trained for a witnessing ministry wherever he goes. Religion class suddenly gets to be interesting and exciting.

Finally, keep the content of religious instruction relevant. The student should not have to say inside, "So what?" If the meaning of what is being discussed does not seem to apply, he should be able to feel free to ask how it applies. The teacher ought to develop the understanding in the class that the things of God must have meaning in our lives. There should be an atmosphere of openness in the classroom, openness to probe, explore, and test. We do well to avoid teaching religion "academically." We should be willing and ready to be led off on a tangent by the students. That's where they are. Lead them from there and you are relevant.

Some Pertinent Questions

Sometimes when we make discoveries of something exciting and meaningful, we "kick ourselves" that we never noticed this before. Intellectually we might say, "Those things that this writer 'discovered' we have known all along. What's new?—These are the principles of the Christian faith." If that is correct, then we are going to have to ask, "Why has so little practice been made of these truths in the church and school?" How much time is your church spending on a live, personal, and individual sharing of the Good News that God is alive and dwelling in our midst? Asking yourself that question seriously may launch you into making the happy "discovery" too!

THIS ARTICLE WILL SEEK TO ANSWER THE QUESTION, "How can doing God's will with and to my neighbor be taught effectively by the church?" Specifically, how can doing God's will with and to my neighbor be taught by the parochial schools of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and by the other agencies of education available to this body?

Who Is to Do the Teaching?

The question implies that doing God's will with and to my neighbor can be taught by someone. The Third Article of the Apostles' Creed expresses our belief that the Holy Spirit enlightens us regarding the will of God in our daily lives. What part do Lutheran teachers have in this enlightenment? In the *Large Catechism* Luther says that the Holy Spirit's office and work is "daily to increase holiness on earth through these two means, the Christian church and the forgiveness of sins."¹ This statement indicates that Luther understood that the Holy Spirit works through the church. It is the daily task of the people of the church to be agents of the Holy Spirit in promoting this increase of holiness.

Knowledge Is Not Enough

There is evidence that frequently the church's teachers have understood their responsibility to be solely the promotion of the knowledge of the grace of God in Jesus Christ and that the Holy Spirit had sole responsibility to cause this knowledge to blossom and to produce fruit. This has often led the church to be complacent about its educative mission. It is an over simplification to believe that if you have knowledge of Jesus as your Savior you will recognize who your neighbor is and that you will in turn do God's will to and with your neighbor. The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates that

¹ Quoted by Martin E. Marty, *The Hidden Discipline* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), p. 63.

extensive religious knowledge does not assure loving behavior toward our neighbor.

Whenever the church has placed a premium upon knowing the message of the Gospel, the result has been an unloving attitude and behavior toward mankind. This is most clearly illustrated by the religious crusades, the "holy" wars of church history and the Inquisition. Church history also shows most clearly that when the redemptive power of God in Jesus Christ and the saving knowledge of this Christ were replaced solely by man's well-intentioned loving deeds, the result was idolatry and emptiness. Lutherans know very well the dangers of dead orthodoxy and of pietism, but I suspect that in their approach to teaching the faith they have tended to promote knowledge to the extent that the recipients of their teaching have learned to trust in having the right answers instead of in asking themselves the daily question, "How do I do God's will with and to my neighbor?"

The Possibility of Two Strategies

It is not educationally sound to teach persons to do God's will to their neighbor by attempting to verbally explain or understand the will of God for their neighbor. It is becoming increasingly apparent that in order for a person to learn how to relate to his neighbor the person must practice living in relationship with his neighbor from the very beginning of his relationship with God. This poses an exceptionally difficult and complex task for the educator because of the nature of human development and of the complex array of individual differences in human beings.

One approach to learning and teaching the faith regarding relationships with fellow man is based on the theory that the loving behavior toward others is the natural result of attitudes which result from mastery of a specific body of knowledge. The approach then is

to emphasize knowledge and trust that this will then produce "Christlike" attitudes which will in turn produce "Christlike" behavior. Milo Brekke, in his conclusions in the book, *How Different Are People Who Attended Lutheran Schools*, suggests that teachers consider the possibility that the sequence might well be a two-way street. The sequence might not only be knowledge to attitudes to behaviors, but it might also be behavior to attitudes to knowledge. "Skills training in being the light of the Gospel to other people may well be a helpful and efficient, if not essential, supplement to the teaching-learning of knowledge, understanding and acceptance of doctrine and dogma."²

Get the Message to the Whole Person

The thesis of this article is that if people are to be taught to live out the will of God in their relationships with their neighbor they must be taught in a manner that both their heads and their hearts get the message. The message that their minds must hear is the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers. They must also hear clearly that all of God's priests are called to live their entire lives to God's glory. All of God's children are called to this vocation.

Who Is to Do God's Will?

In *Everyone a Minister*, Oscar Feucht wishes to give the people of the church the incentive to look at the church and to consider changes that are necessary if the church is to recover the dynamic power of the early Christians. As Feucht discusses the ministry of the laity, he begins with a quote by the theologian Blumhardt: "First the human being must become a Christian. Then the Christian must become a human being. And this second conversion is sometimes missing."³

The Christian is called not only to live in the world but to be doing the will of God in the world. Being a Christian is not an escape from the world. On the contrary, it is doing the will of God in the world. Doing God's will to my neighbor is more than performing voluntary services for the church. Doing God's will with and to my neighbor is fulfilling the call of God as it affects my relationships with people. In *The Christian Calling*, Donald Heiges has investigated the concept of call or vocation in the Old and New Testaments and in Martin Luther's writings. He summarizes the Christian vocation as follows: "Who is calling? God. To whom is the call addressed? His children. For what purpose does He call? That His children may come together around His table and then to run errands for Him."⁴ Heiges compares the call of God to His chil-

dren to the familiar call of a parent to his children who are playing in the neighborhood. "God calls all members of the body of Christ to a holy life in their relationships. God calls all men (Acts 17:30), but only His children know His voice and respond to His call. (John 10:1-5)"⁵ When the sense of vocation is present, a person's life has meaning and promise. "You are promise to the degree that your life takes on meaning."⁶ With this caption and throughout his book Marty challenges his readers to search for meaning, to continue life's adventure with good questions that will lead them to find and accept the Gospel of promise personally.

A Confluent Approach

If people are to learn to *do* the will of God each day with and to their neighbor, the message of "Love thy neighbor" must reach their hearts. This will not happen if we only use a cognitive approach. The cognitive domain of learning refers to the activity of the mind in knowing what the will of God is regarding his relationship to his neighbor. "What an individual learns and the intellectual process of learning it would fall within the cognitive domain—unless what is learned is an attitude or value which would be affective learning."⁷ The affective domain of learning refers to the feeling or the emotional aspect of experience and learning. This refers to how a learner feels about learning what the will of God is for him in his relationships to his neighbor, how he feels as he learns and after he has learned.

What is needed is an approach to learning that will permit both the heart and the head to receive the message of living out God's will with our fellowman and to our fellowman. "Confluent education is the term for the integration or flowing together of the affective and cognitive elements in individual and group learning."⁸ It is Brown's contention that there is no intellectual learning without some sort of feeling and no feelings without the mind's being somehow involved. It is also a truism that authentic teachers have always attempted to find that not too hot or not too cold balance that is proposed by the term confluent education. Brown believes that educators have compressed and organized knowledge in all areas of the curriculum to such an extent that they have created in most classrooms what Paul Tillich called the fatal pedagogical error "to throw answers like stones at the heads of those who have not yet asked the question."⁹ This has so deadened the

ress Press, 1958), p. 67.

⁵ Ibid., p. 69.

⁶ Martin E. Marty, *You Are Promise* (Niles, Ill.: Argus Communications, 1974), p. 54.

⁷ George Isaac Brown, *Human Teaching for Human Learning* (New York: Viking Press, 1971), p. 4.

⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

⁹ Ibid., p. 15.

child's capacity to feel that he is eventually nearly sub-human.

When the denial of genuine feelings occurs, three unfortunate effects result. The real feelings are replaced by pseudo feelings—feelings we think we have. The fear of change becomes overwhelming. Reality is replaced by the cheap substitutes of fantasy and illusion. If the error that Tillich warned against is not avoided, the result is not only the deadening of affective learning but there is also a very negative effect on cognitive learning. Whenever feelings are discussed as having a legitimate part of the learning process, some educators and many parents react quite skeptically. This is probably due to the fact that there has been much concern about the promotion of hedonistic, anarchistic philosophy that sanctions the expression of feelings no matter what the consequences might be for someone else. This is not the intent of the confluent approach that is being advocated in this article.

The major downfall of some of the humanist movements in education have been the preoccupation with the self. "The family of man concept cannot be encouraged by concentrating almost all or even most of one's attention on the self."¹⁰ This is not the intention of the approach suggested by the use of the concept of confluent education. The intent is to promote an approach to the teaching of the will of the Lord regarding human relationships that has as its result a life activity committed to loving service to mankind.

A confluent approach would seem to warrant serious consideration on the basis of the conclusions reached by Milo Brekke. "Greater concentration on affective teaching—learning without sacrificing the cognitive is clearly implied. For example, are teachers and pupils *experiencing* the love and forgiveness of the Gospel from one another and from parish members and administrators as fully as they are hearing about it? Are skills of living out the Gospel with one another being modeled and practiced as much as doctrine and challenge to mission are being presented and discussed?"¹¹ If we have an affective dimension to learning, the learner will become personally involved, and as a consequence there will be a change in behavior.¹² The message of living in a caring relationship with my fellowman must reach the heart as well as the head of the learner.

Some Resources That Promote a Confluent Approach

Perhaps the best-organized efforts within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to have the message of the Word of God reach the learner's head and heart

¹⁰ Mario Fantini, "Humanizing the Humanism Movement," *Phi Delta Kappan* (February 1974), p. 401.

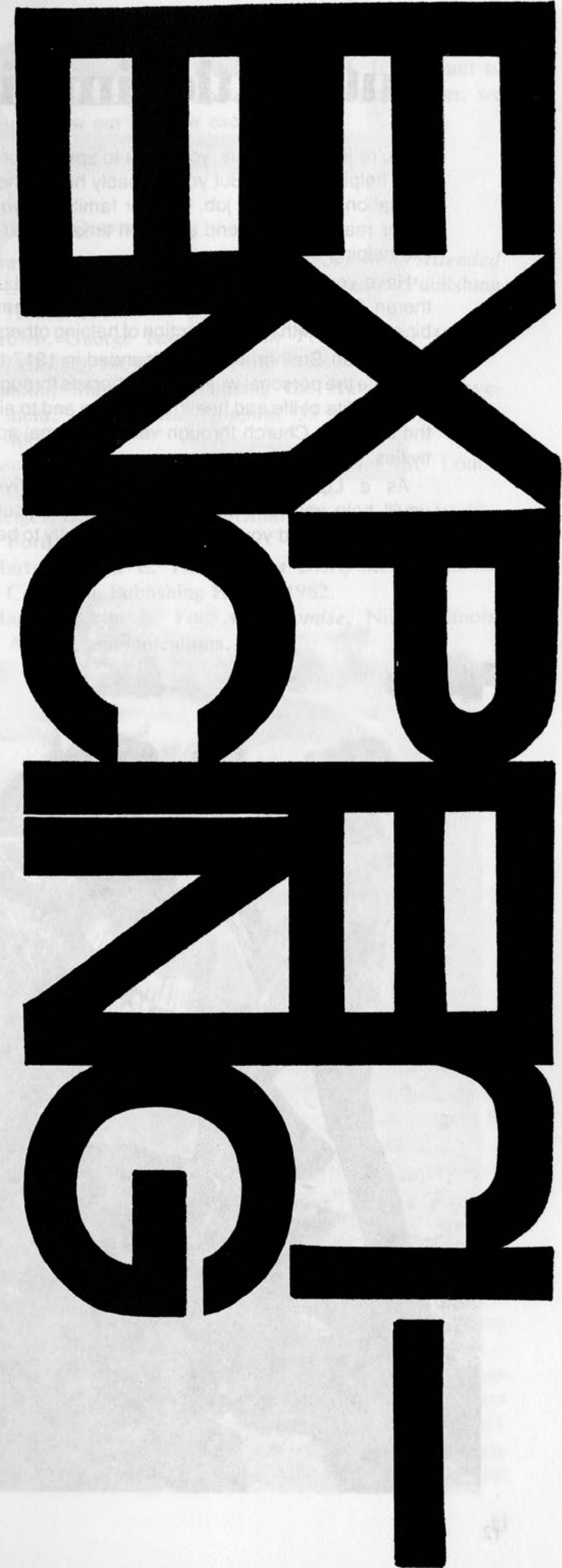
¹¹ Brekke, op. cit., p. 124.

¹² Brown, op. cit., p. 16.

² Milo Brekke, *How Different Are People Who Attended Lutheran Schools* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974), p. 125.

³ Oscar E. Feucht, *Everyone A Minister* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974), p. 68.

⁴ Donald R. Heiges, *The Christian's Calling* (Philadelphia: For-



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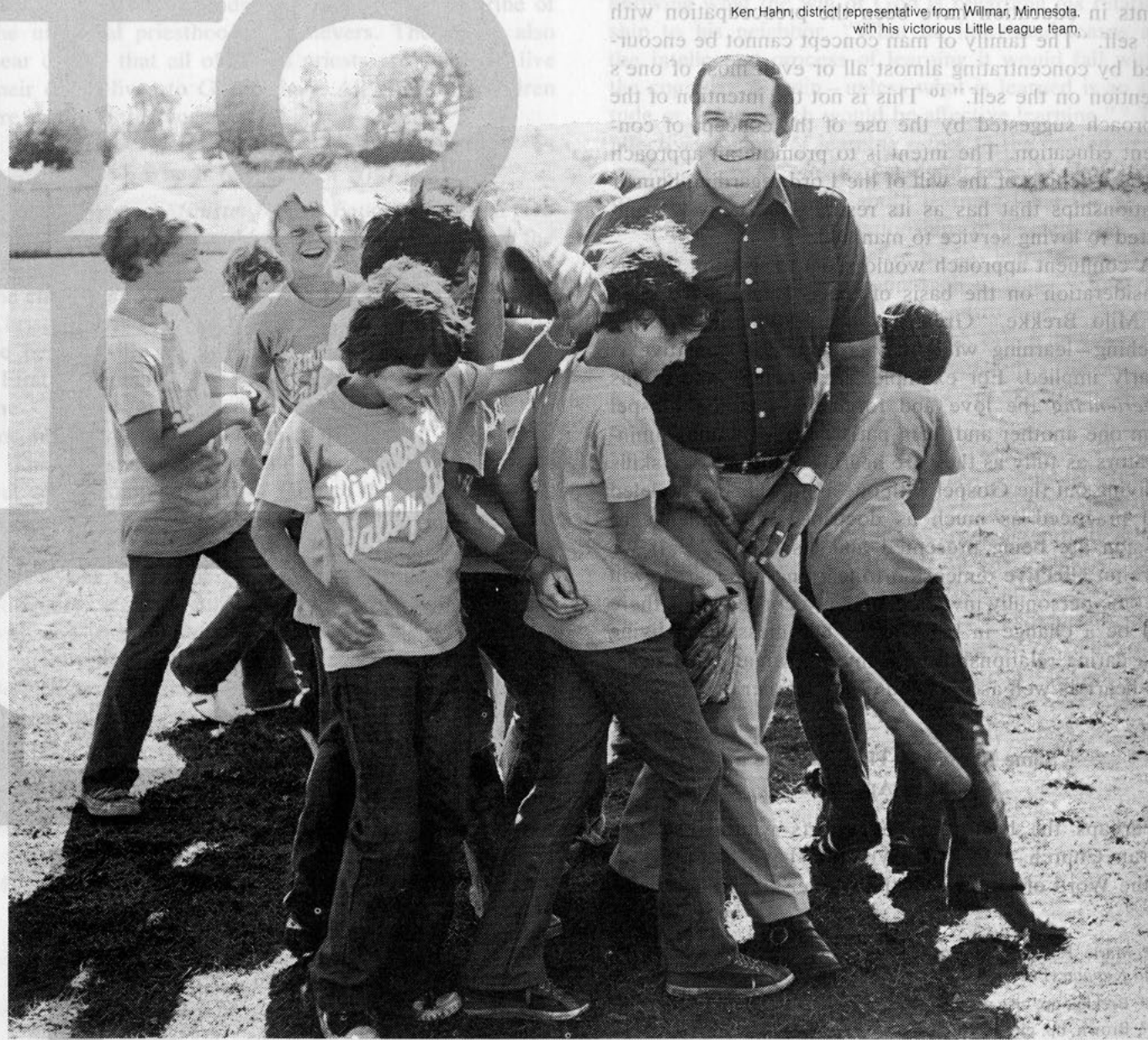
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are the Mission:Life materials. This article has dealt primarily with teaching the Christian life in such a manner that a response to God's will will be evident in our relationships with our fellowman. The Mission:Life materials are excellent resources for making that possible.

The author is also very impressed with the skills that are taught in the Lutheran Effectiveness Training program for parents and/or teachers. This program, developed by Synod's Board for Parish Education and funded by the Aid Association for Lutherans, is based on the work of Thomas Gordon who has developed sound skills from the earlier work of Carl Rogers. The skills of the effectiveness training programs are excellent devices to put into practice the loving, caring relationship that is the essence of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. With these skills a teacher can model a relationship built on mutual respect, love, trust, and discipleship.

Finally —

If teachers wish to teach students to live in a loving, caring relationship to one another and to all men, they must continue to share who they are with their students. Students can be taught to share their thoughts, their feelings, and their forgiveness in Christ with each other;

but the modeling of this sharing, caring behavior by teachers (parents are teachers) is vital. If we want to more effectively teach people to love one another, we must show our love for each other.

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By Herman Glass

Why would a person write a book or develop an article for issues? Why does an athlete spend hours in practice in order to possibly play a few minutes in a game? Why does another assume a leadership position even though it saps time and energy? The answers to these questions vary somewhat from individual to individual, and from time to time. Persons on occasion have said that they make certain decisions because "God wants them to." Such an answer is difficult to argue with, but in reality most decisions probably are made in the hope that God's will is being done. While God does know and does direct the lives of each of us, it is folly to believe that an individual really knows what the will of God truly is in each decision. That does not mean that one should not constantly search for the will of God and make every attempt to follow His bidding. Each individual under the gov-

BRICKS BOOKS CLOCK

By Herman Glaess

WHY WOULD A PERSON WRITE A BOOK OR DEVELOP an article for ISSUES? Why does an athlete spend hours of practice in order to possibly play a few minutes in a game? Why does another assume a leadership position even though it saps time and energy? The answers to these questions vary somewhat from individual to individual, and from time to time. Persons on occasion have said that they make certain decisions because "God wants them to." Such an answer is difficult to argue with, but in reality most decisions probably are made in the *hope* that God's will is being done.

While God does know and does direct the lives of each of us, it is folly to believe that an individual really knows what the will of God truly is in each decision. That does not mean that one should not constantly search for the will of God and make every attempt to follow His bidding. Each individual under the gov-

ernance of God has a basic set of needs and a unique value system which to a large extent determine his behavior and decision making. The physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs described by Maslow help explain why a person decides to do what he does. Since people do make decisions on the basis of personal needs and values, it is important that we give attention to this realm of the individual in our educational endeavors.

A purpose of this article is to deal with the importance of assisting learners to know and accept themselves as unique individuals who have specific needs and values that assist in determining behavior. If there is any type of education that should focus on values, needs, and feelings, it is Christian education. Such an approach is not easy because feelings of learners and teachers, although present and real, are much more

difficult to deal with than are facts. A fact is a fact; an opinion is an opinion; but, a feeling is evasive, personal, and threatening.

Developing | - and + Relationships

There are many reasons to believe that for an individual to lead a personally productive, fulfilling life he must experience a close positive relationship between self and God and between self and other people. Knowledge about God and about others plus knowledge about oneself is vital in establishing meaningful relationships involving God and other people, but knowledge *about* is only a beginning. There must be some positive emotional involvement and concern for feelings in the Christian classroom.

While many public school educators are giving considerable thought and attention to the development of better people-people relationships, Christian educators have the identical challenge plus the added concern for the God-person relationship. Success in the latter should assist in reaching the former. It is possible that when one realm of relationship is weakened, both are weakened. Maybe both groups of educators have been less than successful because the emphasis has been more exclusively on person-person (horizontal) or God-person (vertical) rather than on the combination of God-person and person-person (vertical and horizontal [+]).

Although the most important resource on earth is the human resource, too little attention has been given to the development of this resource. Persons interested in the development of an individual's potential could take a lesson from scientists, because much of their success can be attributed to their giving the majority of their attention to *what can be*. Successful scientists are constantly studying ways to improve upon previous successes.

In the behavioral sciences, attention has been placed primarily on the ills of society and humans which are due to strained vertical and/or horizontal relationships. Over the years, social scientists have spent a large share of their time studying humans in trouble and the causes of these problems. Less time has been spent on studying "successful" human beings. Humans who have established a warm, positive relationship with other humans and who have used their time and abilities to assist in the potentiality development of other humans and have done it with satisfaction and success have been of little concern to the sociologist, psychologist, historian, or theologian. Various pressures combine to motivate studies of humans in trouble, humans with disabilities. Educators and psychologists are still prone to give considerable attention to learners with difficulty and to spend less time in determining the characteristics, experiences, learning styles, and environment of "gifted" students. It continues to be the case of the squeaky wheel getting the oil.

On the other hand, today's society is somewhat under the impression that persons are to lead a trouble-free existence. Advertising especially leaves the impression that if one has the right *things*, life will be perfect. The "perfect" life is then depicted as being "thing centered." Such thinking leads to an "Eden complex," where persons feel that they must "have it altogether" to be normal. The "Eden complex" is fantasy because no one leads a life without problems. The "Garden" has been destroyed for everyone. But in Christ there is assurance and example.

Building the Self

One of the ways to develop a person's potential to be a warm, contributing member of society rather than a demanding leech is the establishment of satisfying vertical and horizontal relationships. A person can more readily give warmth, kindness, and concern to another if it has been personally experienced. Not only is a model important, but personal experience involving such a relationship is vital if a person is to establish other such relationships. The classroom provides an opportunity for learners and teachers to experience warm, personal, accepting, and forgiving relationships which are modeled by Jesus throughout His ministry.

It is no secret that many of today's youth have few if any heroes after whom they desire to model their lives. Public figures in politics, business, church, sports, and movies are not recipients of hero worship to the same degree that was true prior to the days when mass media and behavioral scientists began searching and sharing the frailties of persons in the public's eye. There seems to be a growing desire for people to seek a degree of self-enhancement through a process of "other debasement." It seems to be a case of, "Look at John, he ain't perfect either."

It is possible that the "self and other-debasement" portion of our society has motivated a counter idea found in the presently popular "I'm O.K., You're O.K." approach. In the search for what is right about man, the "I'm O.K." idea has caught on along with other self-improvement approaches. The enhancement of the self is further exemplified in the catchy title by Jess Lair, *I Ain't Much Baby, but I'm All I've Got*, a book which is rapidly growing in popularity. Christian educators may profit from a reading of such books, but the real value of this approach can be more helpful and meaningful to the Christian when interfaced with one's Christian faith and value system and understanding of moral development. Christian principles must be liberally sprinkled in, with, under, and through the "self-improvement" approach to the extent that Jesus Christ becomes the Center and the Motivation of the "I'm O.K." (redeemed) approach. Arlan Reuter's *Who Says I'm O.K.?* provides commendable assistance in this Christ-centered approach.

What Do People Value?

In a variety of recent gatherings, involving at different times such groups as students, teachers, parents, and community leaders, attention was focused on an exercise where participants were asked to categorize the value of the following 21 items as "very important, important, less important":

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Achievement | Aesthetics |
| Altruism | Autonomy |
| Creativity | Emotional Well-Being |
| Health | Honesty |
| Justice | Knowledge |
| Love | Loyalty |
| Morality | Physical Appearance |
| Pleasure | Power |
| Recognition | Religious Faith |
| Skill | Wealth |
| Wisdom | |

Later, they were asked to select the top five or top seven according to value, depending upon the time available. Personal knowledge, experiences, and behavior all combine in varying degrees during the important process of values clarification. While the major learnings are likely found in the process, it is interesting to note that items such as *religious faith*, *love*, and *emotional well-being* were consistently in the top seven. In only a few instances *wisdom* reached the top seven when participants were forced to prioritize their listed values, and it was a rare individual that placed *knowledge* in the top seven. During the important discussion period, *wisdom* was seldom connected *per se* with classroom learning.

Value Priorities in the Schools

The disturbing factor in all of this is that the activities of the typical classroom are centered around knowledge. Constant and continuous attention is given to the curriculum to be covered, assignments to be finished, pages to be read or scanned, projects to be completed, behavior of students, and grades. Feelings which are an integral part of religious faith, love, and emotional well-being (top consistent three) are given too little concern. Some teachers and students preparing to be teachers have even questioned why they are giving so much time in attempting to acquire knowledge when their personally perceived value system indicates that this is not a top priority item. In many cases, they conclude that *achievement* and *recognition* (valued generally also above knowledge) often motivate them to do all the mundane tasks required. Knowledge for knowledge's sake seemingly is a blasé cliché based on hope rather than reality. Let it suffice to say that very few students come to school in search of all the factual knowledge dispensed, but for a variety of other reasons such as love, acceptance, emotional well-being, recognition, and achievement.

Logic might indicate that if teachers knew what values learners held in high regard, they would attempt

to meet these needs. Such is not the case, because teachers still perceive their primary role as "dispensers of knowledge," and humans have a tendency to act according to their perceived role. If and when teachers perceive themselves as "dispensers of love," "livers of religious faith," and "counselors for emotional well-being," a change in classroom living can take place.

Being Christian in the Classroom

After a recent "peak experience" worship service involving over a thousand teen-agers where the Word was made alive with singing, handholding, spontaneous words of praise, strong and meaningful Law and Gospel, and participation in the faith-strengthening Holy Eucharist, the question was asked why a classroom of Christians couldn't experience such joy in Christ.

Rather than just asking if it could be done, a teacher-participant in the Nebraska Youth Gathering decided to try the Christ-centered, positive approach where teachers and pupils became truly concerned about each other as redeemed children of God who are blessed with experiences and characteristics which can be enhanced through acceptance which is realized through relationships. The results were phenomenal for the participants and observable by parents and colleagues, who readily noted enthusiasm, love, concern, and true Christian living. Joy in Christ became real in a Grand Island classroom!

If a peak experience is too much to expect each day, why not plan for it at least once a week—say on Friday at 3:00 p.m. Or for a start, why not try it on one Friday a month—call it "April's Joy Friday" with the emphasis on love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Or do it on a Monday and call it "God's Monday" or "Easter Monday," or "Saint's Monday" or do it often and call it a school where Christ lives, a Christian school.

Religious faith, love, and emotional well-being can permeate the entire schoolday because redeemed children of God are living and sharing together in the Christian school. It rightfully can be an entire day of joy because of Christ. There can be joy in Christian faith; there can be joy in spelling, arithmetic, reading, recess, social studies, physical education, art, English, lunch, science, and handwriting. It might be fun, on occasion (each "Joy Friday") to prepare a religious lesson and wrap it in and around and through the whole day, rather than during the first hour.

It would be helpful if teacher education institutes could prepare teachers who would consistently model the suggestions outlined above. There are numerous reasons why it is more difficult on the college level than on the elementary and secondary school level, but we will not discuss them here. Lest it be misunderstood that we are not attempting to do this, it should be noted that Concordia continues in its attempt to be aware of individual differences, predicted needs, and value systems of future teachers. Seward Concordia works to-

ward this end already in the first semester of college. Freshman students are part of an advising system that gives attention to personal needs, values, and goals. Relationships receive considerable attention. The IMPACT program further offers numerous opportunities for involved college students to share abilities and feelings while developing positive relationships of varying depth levels. The preprofessional experiences provide opportunity to become involved with learners of all ages in different school settings. The Teacher Laboratory, required of all senior elementary education students, is dedicated to excellence in teacher preparation while being concerned with the individual's needs, which include those in the affective domain. An objective is to develop a working relationship between an instructor and student during periodic one-to-one sharing periods. The sharing of the joys in Christ is part of the bondship that can transpire.

The "People Energizing People" Approach

In addition, attention has recently been given to the positive approach in such projects as "People Energizing People," which was developed to assist individuals as they seek to enhance their potential for effective living. The theory behind the program is founded on the premise that if a person feels worthy (redemption being central in the feeling) he can look upon another as having worth. Paragraphs taken from the "People Energizing People" program may further explain this "positive approach," where the focus is placed on past, positive, significant people and events as well as suggesting present, positive action which can provide further assurance of worth. You may want to use the following exercises and join others who have gained a greater feeling of worth during and after the activities.

You have been influenced by a large variety of experiences and people who have been part of your life, because people energize other people. Some of these interactions and relationships have been all but forgotten while others remain vivid in your memory.

The purpose of this first exercise in "People Energizing People" is to have you focus on individuals who have had a positive effect on you, people who have done or said things that made you feel happy, worthy, motivated, and satisfied. You are also to think of people who possessed characteristics which you desired to copy, people who were "significant" at one time in your life.

Write the names of three persons and the reason why you remember them with a positive feeling.

Person _____

Explain _____

Person _____

Explain _____

Person _____

Explain _____

Select one of the above persons and inform him or her in some manner of your feelings of gratitude for what he or she did for you.

* * * *

Whenever a person helps another, the helper receives a degree of satisfaction or feelings of worthiness due to being needed and helpful. When you do something good for others without a thought of return, it comes back manyfold. You can't stop it.

Deeds of kindness are repaid in many ways. A smile, a verbal thank-you, a token of appreciation, or just the personal knowledge that you made somebody's day a little brighter.

In this exercise you are to recall an incident where you assisted another person and received a feeling of worthiness, a feeling of being needed.

Write the incident and your feelings at the time.

Incident _____

Feeling _____

Incident _____

Feeling _____

Incident _____

Feeling _____

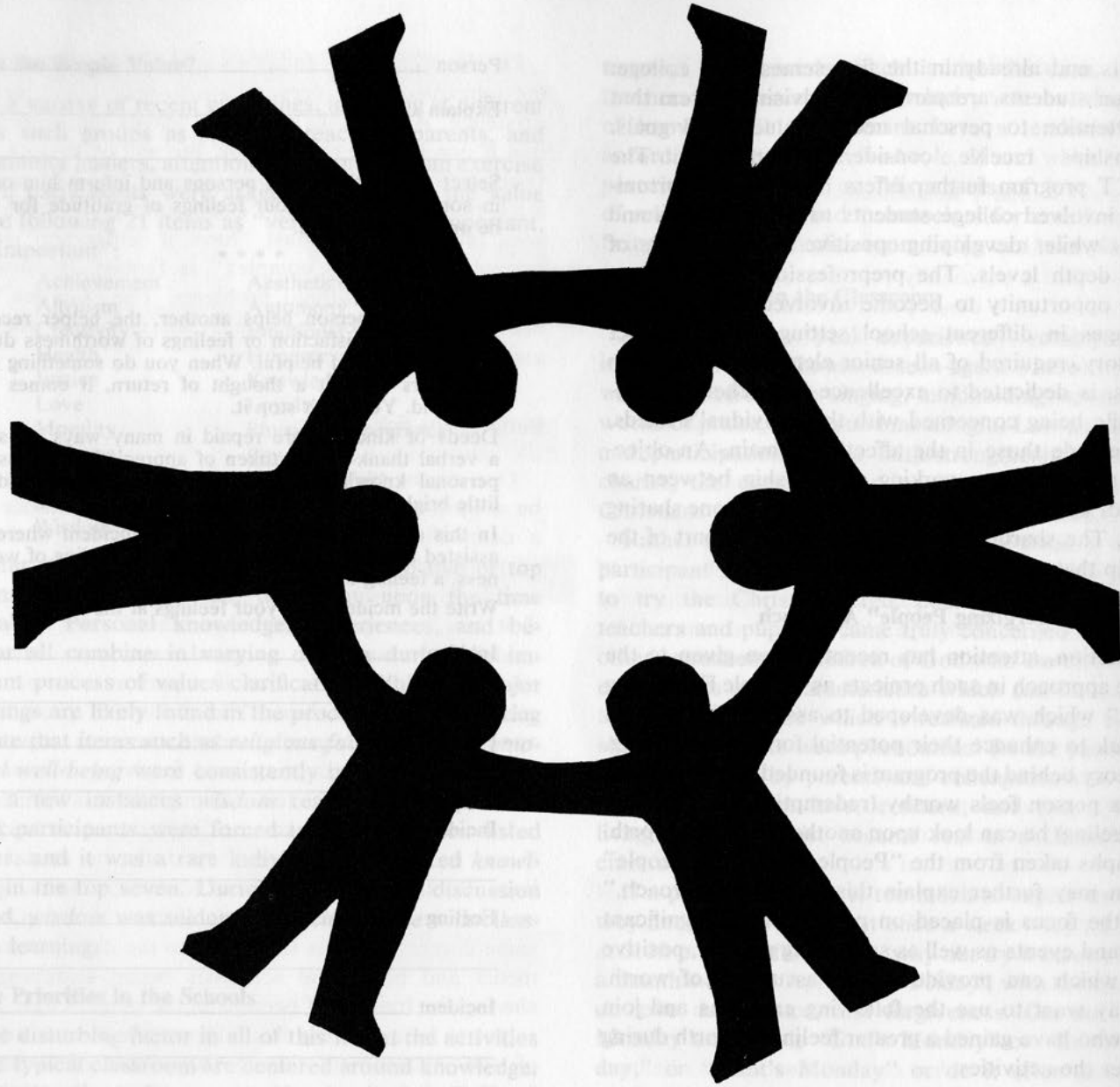
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The two previous exercises give indication that our lives are made up of many relationships which provide feelings of a positive nature. We appreciate the assistance given to us by people in our lives and realize that some of them have been significant individuals because of specific and special reasons. On the other hand, we recall incidents when we have experienced feelings of worth, of value, of being needed when we were able to make another's burden a little lighter.

In your day-to-day existence there are people who need you. There is an individual who would appreciate a written or spoken word of encouragement or of commendation. There is a person who needs an open ear which allows the sharing of concerns. There is a person who may need assistance to accomplish a task.

People energizing people is a most beautiful two-way concept that provides an arena for growth for the people involved. It takes action, but such action causes further energizing for meaningful living.

Write the names of two persons you haven't helped recently who could profit from a genuine act of kindness and indicate how and when you will add meaning to this person's life.



Person _____
 Action _____
 By When _____
 Person _____
 Action _____
 By When _____

A second program which focuses on "what is right" is used with children and is offered to adults who share time with children and who desire to develop potentiality by accentuating the positive which can eliminate the negative. Again, you may wish to follow the exercise to determine the merits of the approach or share the idea with a parent who has been focusing on the negative with little success.

Adults who live or share time with children generally have more experiences, knowledge, and wisdom than the child. They usually have psychological and physical power which provides an arena where adults tends to "make the children do what is good for them."

In addition, concerned and knowledgeable adults see many areas where the child should and could improve. Adults are adept at pointing out deficiencies and inadequacies because *it is easy to be right about what is wrong with people, even children.*

A false assumption then leads adults to believe that if they point out the wrongs the child will change. Anyone who works with children knows that such a procedure is not always successful. In fact, pointing out faults often has the opposite effect.

On the other hand, it has been discovered that when adults focus on the successes and acceptable characteristics of children the attitudes of both parties become more positive.

With a specific child in mind, write some positive characteristics and achievements (in and out of school).

Achievements _____

Positive Characteristics _____

Now, when is the last time you took the time and creatively informed the child of your positive feelings about these achievements and characteristics?

If you want to assist a child to eliminate an unacceptable characteristic or to achieve higher goals, there is an approach that is more likely to succeed than criticism: **ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE TO ELIMINATE THE NEGATIVE.**

For most adults, it seemingly is more efficient to point out mistakes and punish unacceptable characteristics and behavior. The results are most questionable.

It will not be easy to change from criticism to praise, but why not make an attempt. To serve as a visual reminder, you are asked to keep a weeklong tally on your "accentuating the positive" for *one* person. Even though others will also benefit from your behavior change, you are asked to keep tally only on one.

Person _____

Number of your positive actions/remarks:

1st day _____ 2d day _____ 3d day _____
 4th day _____ 5th day _____ 6th day _____
 7th day _____

Child's reactions: _____

In addition to reinforcing positive behavior, there are other ways to indicate to a child that he or she is a worthy, unique, important human being. One is to show love for no special or specific reason. "I love you just because you are you" is richer than "I love you because you cleaned your room."

Making something, purchasing something, going someplace, undertaking an activity for just one person you love for no special reason can be a memorable and positive experience for the child.

What will you do to show this general acceptance?

By when? _____

Children often say, "No one listens to me," while parents say, "We always are listening to them."

In this exercise, you are to *just listen*. Do not give directions, commands, sympathy, analyzation, or any comment which would "block" their talking or sharing. You want them to talk. You listen. Listen for the *feelings* behind the words. For example, if the child says, "I hate school," *what is the feeling?* Is it fear, frustration, anger, disappointment, discouragement? NOW, check to see if you are correct in detecting his feeling. Try asking with a phrase such as, "You appear to be discouraged!" Now *listen* again.

Write down the different feelings you detect in the child.

Teachers, parents, children, and even college professors have a desire to improve their skills. According to Adler, it is normal for humans to want to move from universal feelings of inadequacy to greater perfection. The desire is probably what prompted a college student to ask, "How can one become a better (more effective) teacher?" This instructor of educational psychology was tempted to answer that she should sign up for another of my classes or read another book. Experience has indicated that such activities in no way guarantee a person will become an effective teacher. The better answer to the question was that she should locate people in her life that would constantly assure her that she was a worthy, trusted, loved, blessed individual (fill her bucket), because then she could more readily treat her children as if they were trusted, loved, accepted, and blessed. The motivating and central force behind this whole approach must be, can be, Jesus Christ. His love is the only complete assurance, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that each Christian is A-O.K. Jesus assures us that we can go and live accordingly. We can focus on feelings and can live a classroom life of JOY. Go and have a "Good Friday" or an "Easter Monday" and live your way into a "dispenser of Jesus' love," and a "counselor for emotional well-being." Even in failure, you and your students are A-O.K. Jesus says so! When a Christian feels A-O.K. he/she can more readily see other Christians as O.K. ■

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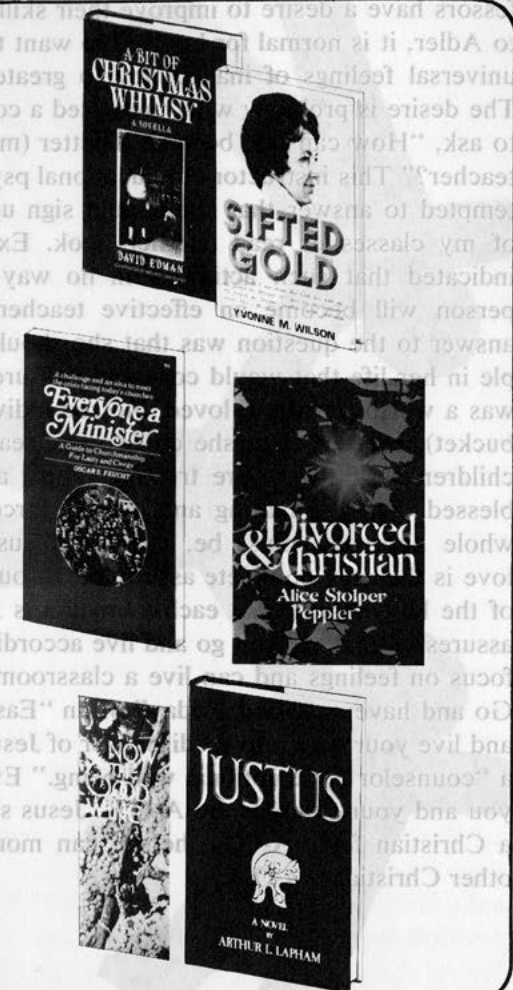
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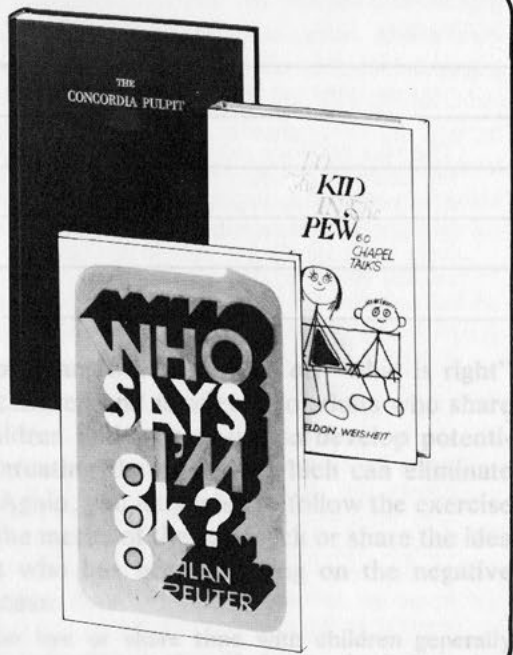
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THEOLOGY AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS, by James Gustafson. Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1974.

This is a collection of essays previously published in a number of journals written by a man described by some theologians as the most important Protestant thinker in Christian ethics in our country today. In exploring the relationship between believing and interacting with others, Gustafson is both illuminating and provocative. For example, in developing 1 John 4, the writer points out that confessing "God is love" not only affects moral dispositions, attitudes, and intentions that are to be consistent with one's belief in this proposition, but it also calls a believer to respond to the neighbor in a way that witnesses to one's confidence in and faithfulness to God! He asserts that it is the power of the love of God that delivers one from the traps of self-deception, self-interest, self-aggrandizement, a failure to consider the purposes of God, pride in one's own achievement, and a longing to make secure that which sustains the good life. Pointing out that much of the debate in Christian ethics has centered on *how* Christians are to make moral judgments, Gustafson proceeds with a theological analysis of such questions as, "What are the contributions of theology to the decision-making process?", "Who is a morally discerning person?", "What is the relationship between one's spiritual life and moral decision-making?", and "What are the components of 'spiritual' and 'moral'?" Discussion is also directed to the place of public and religious education in moral development, the role of the theologian as prophet, preserver and participant, and the relation between Christian ethics and the social sciences in probing moral dilemmas in the fields of medicine and biology. The writer's stance becomes provocative at a number of points, as in his discussion of the place of Scripture in moral decision making. Believers in a revealed morality will be stimulated to return to the Biblical text to see more of the significance of moral law, wisdom sayings, moral precepts, parenetic instruction, etc., for Christians today. The writer's accent upon God's presence in the world being seen in terms of where the action is will cause some to raise a number of probing questions. Readers who are interested in relating Biblical and theological insights, history, and the social sciences to contemporary ethical and moral issues. His discussion is not conducted in terms of some of the traditional Lutheran categories, such as the third use of the Law. However, one who is willing to explore the

views of a theologian who has invested considerable time and thought in the field of ethics will find himself wrestling with important questions in a day when conflict in the church involves all of us in a response to a significant New Testament insight: "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all; he who says he is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness still."

MARVIN BERGMAN

HOW DIFFERENT ARE PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED LUTHERAN SCHOOLS, by Milo Brekke. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974.

The general research design of Brekke's book is a correlation study which attempts to answer the question "Do Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod members, ages 15–65, reporting differing amounts of parochial school attendance show systematically different patterns of belief, value, attitude, opinion, and reported behavior than LCMS members in general, and particularly those with no parochial school experience?" (page 32). Data used in this particular study are the facts originally collected to prepare *A Study of Generations*. Dr. Brekke selected three independent variables (length of attendance of parochial school, grades attended, and pattern of attendance) and compared them with dependent variables composed of 78 scales and 187 single items as set forth in *A Study of Generations*. In chapter one Brekke lists 13 questions that the study hoped to answer. The questions are well formulated and should be easily understood by the average reader. Chapter two, "All Who Attended Parochial School—A Descriptive Profile," and chapter three, "Was Attendance the Cause," present all the data which are necessary to construct answers to the 13 questions asked in chapter one. In many ways these are the most important sections of the book. However, some readers may have difficulty appreciating the content of these chapters because of their heavy statistical orientation.

Chapter four, entitled "Conclusions and Implications," provides answers for the 13 questions originally raised in chapter one. A careful reading of this chapter is imperative, and thus a summary of Brekke's conclusions in this review would probably not be advantageous because there is danger of being simplistic. However, Brekke does supply a list of 12 specifics which pinpoint positive effects, probably caused by parochial school attendance, exhibited by students who attended parochial schools. This list includes items like:

book reviews

positions, judgments, and biases concerning parochial education. The Board of Parish Education of the LCMS should be praised both for their foresight in having this book written and for expending the funds necessary to send copies of the book to pastors and teachers of the LCMS during the summer of 1974. Maximum benefits will be gained by the total church only if this book is studied and discussed in parishes across the country. Members of boards of education and teachers and pastors affiliated with parochial schools need to expend the efforts necessary to evaluate and strengthen the programs of those schools using the data of Brekke's report as the jumping-off point. Do not wait! Use the data while it is still fresh!

ALAN HARRE

WHO SAYS I'M OK?, by Alan Reuter. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974.

The most easily understood and workable definition of a transaction was presented by Eric Berne, the author of *Games People Play*:

The unit of social intercourse is called a transaction. If two or more people encounter each other . . . sooner or later one of them will speak, or give some other indication of acknowledging the presence of the others. This is called the transactional stimulus. Another person will then say or do something which is in some way related to the stimulus and that is called the transactional response.

An attempt can be made to understand and interpret transactions and this is called "transactional analysis." A perceptive, accurate, working system of transactional analysis leads to what Thomas A. Harris calls a feeling of "I'm OK—You're OK."

Ineffective or effective communication, then, is a result of our perception and use of the unit of social intercourse, the transaction. Problems in social living do not necessarily have to relate to a particular conception of the basic nature of man. The practical usage of transactional analysis depends almost entirely on an accurate perception of social intercourse. Alan Reuter has attempted to explain transactional analysis on the foundation of Christianity's definition of the basic nature of man. The problem with such an attempt is to limit severely the practical utility of transactional analysis. Transactional analysis certainly has a wide range of acceptance for various definitions of the basic nature of man.

Another problem with Reuter's book is

that he sets up transactional analysis and Christianity as two opposing football teams operating to gain a touchdown for OKness. The reader is placed in a position, many times, to choose which team seems to have the best strategy for gaining points. Rather, the reader should be encouraged to accept a definition of the basic nature of man that he can live with and then concentrate on social intercourse. This enables the reader to escape a win-lose dilemma and approach the win-win paradigm essential in feeling "I'm OK—You're OK."

The reader is confronted throughout the book with examples and exercises which lack applicability and relevance. For example, on page 48 there is a series of six questions for the reader to answer regarding the development of the concept of moralism. After the sixth question, two discussion sentences follow: "As you have probably guessed, the moralist would answer yes to the first two questions and no to the next four. The Christians would answer the opposite." First, it is doubtful that the reader will guess the moralist's response, and the reader may not feel that the Christian would answer the opposite. Second, the reader is left suspended while Alan Reuter continues to another point. Most of the examples and exercises identified by Reuter leave the reader without some consideration for closure or application. The examples or exercises in themselves may be good, but Reuter should have concentrated time and effort in helping the reader make application.

The reader is given a biased and unjust perception of B. F. Skinner by two comments made by Reuter in the book. Reuter has taken both items out of context and given them negative qualities. The reader, hopefully, will not accept or reject Skinner on the basis of Reuter's comments but evaluate Skinner objectively and select from Skinner's work that which is helpful and informative.

Reuter indicates in chapter 7, "When TA offers itself as a 'salvation,' as a gospel, it compromises the Christian faith." The reader must understand that TA does not offer salvation. Transactional analysis offers a person a systematic way to understanding and analyzing social intercourse. This point could have been made more emphatically by Reuter. Instead, the issue may have been confused.

The reader should approach the book in a very analytical style. To do this, it is necessary for the reader to be familiar with the works of Berne and Harris. In that context, the book prompts good dialog and discussion.

KEN EGGEMAN

Everyone, I think, agrees that Christians should relate to and deal with each other in a Christian way. Everyone, I think, agrees that this should be done not only in church, but also at home and at work, as well as every other place. The question is, how are such Christian type relationships put into practice? What is done differently, for example, when Christian considerations are the prevailing force in our relationships at work.

Let's take a specific type of work and try to spell it out. Let's say I'm a newspaper editor saying to myself: "In my newspaper work, I want to relate to my fellow human beings in a Christian way; I want to be honest; I want to be truthful; I want to be kind and considerate; I want to be loving." What kind of cautions would I have to hold out to myself to help keep my Old Adam down? I would have to tell myself: "If I want to engage in Christian relationships with the people I talk about in my newspaper, I must meticulously avoid printing rumors; I must avoid half-truths like the plague; I must stay away from negative innuendos or unproven accusations; if I am determined to love my neighbor as myself, I must follow Luther's admonition to 'defend my neighbor, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.'"

This is not an easy way to run my newspaper. It makes my work much harder. It means I have to check my stories more carefully. It means I may have to postpone publishing what could be an attention-getting story, thus running the risk of another newspaper scooping me. I may even have to kill a story completely, because printing it may falsely or unnecessarily or improperly damage my neighbor's reputation.

Won't this kind of Christian relationship approach make for a less exciting newspaper? It might. Won't fewer people read what I've got to say? They might.

The questions that arise when one takes Christian relationships seriously are: What is more important, the "success" of one's work or the Christian treatment of one's fellowman? What counts most, things or people?

When Christian relationship has priority, the answer comes through loud and clear. In the words of an ancient teacher: "Be forbearing with one another, and forgiving, where any of you has cause for complaint: you must forgive as the Lord forgave you. To crown all, there must be love, *to bind all together and complete the whole.*" (Col. 3:13-14 NEB)

LAST WORDS

W. TH. JANZOW

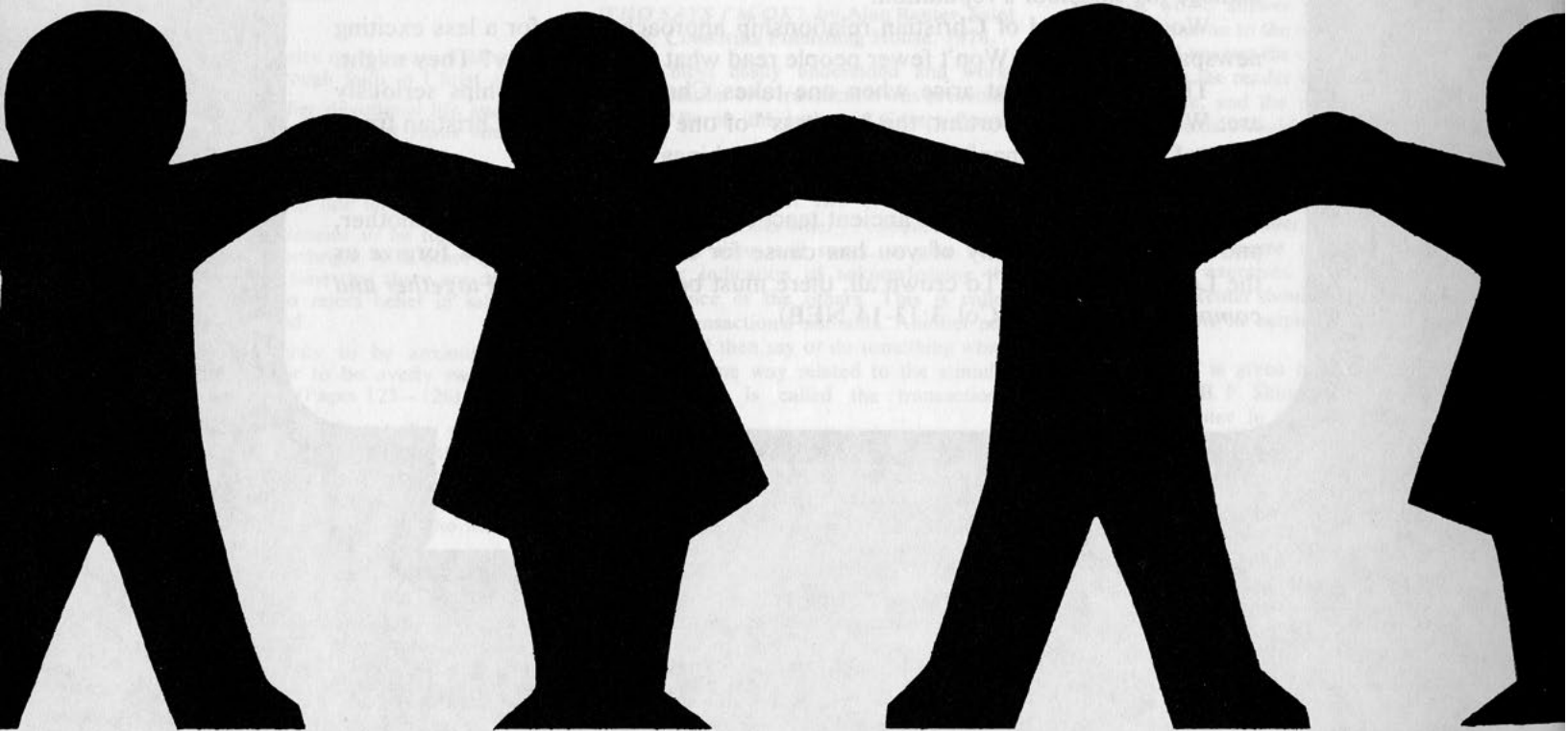
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