

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

## Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

---

Master of Sacred Theology Thesis

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

---

5-1-1963

### Factors Related to the Life and Growth of Adult Bible Classes in the Lutheran Church

Paul Pallmeyer

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/stm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Pallmeyer, Paul, "Factors Related to the Life and Growth of Adult Bible Classes in the Lutheran Church" (1963). *Master of Sacred Theology Thesis*. 278.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/stm/278>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Sacred Theology Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

Short Title

ADULT BIBLE CLASS GROWTH FACTORS

24430

FACTORS RELATED TO THE LIFE AND GROWTH OF ADULT BIBLE  
CLASSES IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH--MISSOURI SYNOD

---

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

---

by  
Paul H. <sup>ENRM</sup> Pallmeyer, 1924-

May 1963

24490

Approved by:

Serge W. Hoyer  
Advisor

Donald L. Jeffner  
Reader

BV  
4070  
C69  
M3  
1963  
no.8  
C.2

24490

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	121
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .	20
CHAPTER	
I. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE . . . . .	1
II. RESEARCH METHODS FOR APPREHENSION AND NON-ATTITUDE . . . . .	19
III. THE CLASSROOM TASK AND ITS RELEVANCE . . . . .	35
IV. PERSONAL FACTORS . . . . .	50
V. INVESTIGATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS . . . . .	61
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY . . . . .	80
APPENDIX . . . . .	94
SYNOPSIS . . . . .	99

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Gain in Bible Class Enrollment 1942-1961 . . . . .	8
2. Attenders' Reasons for Attendance in Bible Class . . . . .	20
3. Reasons Given by Attenders for Present Participation in Bible Class . . . . .	Page

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES. . . . .	iii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .	iv

Chapter

I. THE PROBLEM AND THE METHOD . . . . .	1
II. REASONS ADVANCED FOR ATTENDANCE AND NON-ATTENDANCE . . . . .	19
III. THE CLASSROOM TASK AND ITS SETTING . . . . .	35
IV. PERSONAL FACTORS . . . . .	50
V. INTERPRETATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS . . . . .	63
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND AVENUES FOR FURTHER STUDY. . . . .	89
APPENDIX. . . . .	94
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	99
14. Estimate of Classrooms. . . . .	47
15. Desired Changes in Bible Class Program . . . . .	42
16. Factors in Spiritual Development . . . . .	38
17. Reasons Given for Greater Importance of Worship. . . . .	57
18. Reasons Given for Greater Importance of Bible Class. . . . .	60
19. Knowledge Necessary to be a "Good" Christian . . . . .	62

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Gain in Bible Class Enrollment 1948-1961 . . . . .	8
2. Attenders' Reasons for Starting in Bible Class . . . . .	20
3. Reasons Given by Attenders for Present Participation in Bible Class . . . . .	22
4. Reasons Given by Non-Attenders, Teachers, and Pastors for Attendance of Bible Class Members. . . . .	24
5. Pastors' Concept of Purpose of Bible Class . . . . .	26
6. The Pastors' View of How the Bible Class Contributes to His Ministry. . . . .	28
7. Why Pastors Consider Bible Class Important for Their Members. . . . .	29
8. Reasons for Quitting Bible Class . . . . .	31
9. Reasons Given for Non-Attendance at Bible Class. . . . .	32
10. Reasons Given by Pastors and Attenders for the Non-Attendance of Others . . . . .	33
11. Desirable Qualities in a Bible Class Student . . . . .	36
12. Desirable Qualities in a Bible Class Teacher . . . . .	38
13. Reactions to a Challenge to Traditional Views. . . . .	45
14. Estimate of Classroom. . . . .	47
15. Desired Changes in Bible Class Program . . . . .	49
16. Factors in Spiritual Development . . . . .	55
17. Reasons Given for Greater Importance of Worship. . . . .	57
18. Reasons Given for Greater Importance of Bible Class. . . . .	60
19. Knowledge Necessary to be a "Good" Christian . . . . .	62

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. Use of Class Time in Bible Classes Surveyed. . .	41
2. Frequency of Home Devotions. . . . .	53

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND THE METHOD

A serious concern of many Protestant churches today is their failure to enlist a large proportion of their adult members in group Bible study. One such church body is The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. As will presently be shown, this denomination has vigorously promoted adult Bible study over the last decade and a half, but there remains a continued resistance by the adult membership to participation in Bible classes.

The present project was designed to uncover some factors which show a relationship to this resistance to group Bible study by members of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. A series of interviews with Bible class teachers, Bible class attenders, other church members, and pastors of Missouri Synod churches in the St. Louis, Missouri, area provided the data for this study. This data was examined in the light of other studies directly and indirectly related to the problem.

The present chapter endeavors to highlight more sharply the problem as it relates to The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. It traces the development of the adult Bible class



movement in the church body up to the present time and notes a number of possible factors cited by a previous survey. Following this is a detailed explanation of the method used in obtaining the data for this study. Chapters two, three, and four report the findings of the interviews, and this data is discussed and evaluated in Chapter five. Chapter six sums up the report.

### The Adult Bible Class Movement in The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

Lutheran and Reformed leaders of the 16th Century Reformation rarely, if ever, used the term "adult education." But it is clear that they regarded the Christian education of adults as central to the purposes of the Reformation.<sup>1</sup> However, other than the worship service, agencies for carrying out adult education in Lutheran churches appear to have been few.

One such agency which found favor in American Lutheran Church circles of the mid-nineteenth century was Christenlehre. All confirmed members, regardless of their age or

---

<sup>1</sup>David J. Ernsberger, A Philosophy of Adult Christian Education (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), p. 45.

sex, were included in this activity. Its prime purpose was to review the Catechism.<sup>2</sup> By the 1880's, however, the popularity of the Christenlehre had begun to wane,<sup>3</sup> and it appears to have changed in character and become primarily an activity for children of the congregation, the adults participating only in a rather passive way.<sup>4</sup>

Church publications also were intended to serve as media for educating the adults of the church, but the intent seems to have been to speak to adults primarily in their role as parents. One of the announced goals of the Schulblatt, for example, was to serve as a family magazine offering help to parents.<sup>5</sup>

In the earlier days of its existence, some congregations of The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States carried on Bible study through Bibelstunden.

---

<sup>2</sup>Arthur C. Repp, editor, One Hundred Years of Christian Education. Fourth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1947), p. 105.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>"Parish Education," Lutheran Cyclopedia, edited by Erwin L. Lueker (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), p. 784.

<sup>5</sup>Repp, op. cit., p. 107.

These were devotional services in which longer sections of the Bible were explained by the pastor.

The adult Bible class gradually came into use in the Missouri Synod during the twentieth century. The church body began to produce its own Bible study materials in 1912.<sup>6</sup> But group Bible study by adults has never been received with wholehearted acceptance in most Lutheran circles in spite of strong Synodical encouragement.

The Synod took note of the importance of group Bible study in its 1941, 1944, and 1947 conventions and encouraged its congregations to employ this agency.<sup>7</sup> The 1944 Convention created the office of the Secretary of Adult Education,<sup>8</sup> and the Synod's Board for Parish Education and its Board for Young People's Work met in January, 1945, together with representatives of the Walther League and Concordia Publishing House to survey the field of Bible

---

<sup>6</sup>"Bible Study," Lutheran Cyclopedia, p. 112.

<sup>7</sup>The Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Fort Wayne, Indiana, June 18-27, 1941, pp. 147, 149 (Hereafter, all synodical proceedings will be referred to in this form: Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, pp. 147, 149.); Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1944, pp. 129, 134; Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1947, pp. 313-14.

<sup>8</sup>Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1947, p. 279.

study and to determine whether coordination of effort in the publication of materials might be achieved.<sup>9</sup>

This group appointed a Committee on Bible Classes "with instructions to study objectives and materials, undertake necessary research, and submit a report in due time."<sup>10</sup> It used a questionnaire to obtain much of its information.

This Committee on Bible Classes met regularly during 1945 and 1946. A summary of its findings is of interest for the picture it affords of the Bible class situation at this time:

A fairly accurate picture of the Bible-class situation was obtained by means of the questionnaire. The general complaint of respondents was that of an indifference so deeply rooted as to discourage effort and planning. Various causes were said to account for the indifference of the laity. The Bible-class idea is relatively recent. People are unwilling to enroll because they have not been trained to attend Bible classes. Confirmation is usually regarded as graduation from the formal educational program of the congregation. Everywhere the either-or policy prevails; church members think they are free to choose between the Sunday school and the church service; they feel no obligation to attend both. Some believe that by emphasizing Catechism and Bible History we have given the Bible a secondary place in the thinking of our people. Laymen are indifferent because they are ignorant of the contents of the Book. The language of our version is said to be an obstacle to Bible study. Many leaders are not equipped to make the Bible a

---

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 303-04.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 304.

fascinating book to the people. We have neglected to train laymen for Bible class teaching. Pastors have in many cases failed to utilize meetings of organizations for Bible study. All these factors contribute to a Bible-class situation which is truly alarming.<sup>11</sup>

What was meant by "alarming" can be seen from the Board for Parish Education's Report to the 1953 Convention, which stated: "In 1946 about 6.8 per cent of our communicant members were reported as being in Bible classes."<sup>12</sup> Since this included communicant members of all ages, we may assume that a large portion of this 6.8 per cent were of high school age.

Since the calling of Dr. Oscar Feucht as Secretary of Adult Education in January, 1946, adult Bible classes have received vigorous promotion in the Missouri Synod. The Synod called the Rev. Robert Hoyer as Editor of Adult Bible Class Materials in 1954.<sup>13</sup> A "Centennial Bible Study Program," initiated by the Board for Parish Education in

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1953, p. 276.

<sup>13</sup>Donald L. Deffner, editor, Toward Adult Christian Education: A Symposium, Nineteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1962), p. 8.

1947,<sup>14</sup> a "Bible Study Advance" (1951-1953),<sup>15</sup> and the "Train Two" Program (1959-)<sup>16</sup> have been major promotional efforts in recent decades.

This promotion has not been fruitless. Table 1 indicates the gain in Bible class enrollment from 1948 through 1961. But it is significant that greatest advances in enrollment occurred in the wake of the programs mentioned in the previous paragraph. Also to be noted is that with the exception of 1948 the rate of gain in communicant members has consistently been higher than the rate of gain in Bible class members.

#### The Present State of Adult Group Bible Study

In 1961 there were 7,852 in "senior Bible classes" (18 to 24 year age group), 90,595 in Sunday morning Bible classes that were completely made up of adults, 34,343 in weekday Bible classes (of which 21,783 attended weekly).

---

<sup>14</sup>"Bible Study," Lutheran Cyclopedia, p. 112.

<sup>15</sup>Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1953, pp. 276-77.

<sup>16</sup>The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, Reports and Memorials, Forty-Fifth Regular Convention, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, Cleveland, Ohio, June 20-30, 1962, pp. 194-95.

TABLE 1

## GAIN IN BIBLE CLASS ENROLLMENT 1948 - 1961\*

Year	Com. Member Gain	Bible Class Gain	Percent of Gain	
			Synod	Bible Class
1948	28,256	31,500	2.6%	2.8%
1949	32,812	8,018	2.9	0.7
1950	29,656	9,817	2.5	0.8
1951	31,403	10,180	2.6	0.8
1952	34,068	11,264	2.8	0.9
1953	38,312	27,054	3.0	2.1
1954	36,603	5,305	2.8	0.4
1955	38,059	9,313	2.8	0.7
1956	41,376	7,294	3.0	0.5
1957	43,582	6,279	3.0	0.4
1958	47,921	16,155	3.2	1.1
1959	40,888	7,265	2.7	0.5
1960	53,247	9,129	3.4	0.6
1961	59,496	15,747	3.6	1.0

\*Source: Oscar E. Feucht, Forward in Bible Study: A Manual of Resources for the Bible Study Advance 1959 to 1962 (St. Louis: The Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, n.d.), p. 65; and "Interpretation of the 1961 District Bible Class Statistics," Board of Parish Education Bulletin Number 154. (St. Louis: Board of Parish Education of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, June, 1962), p. 30.

Thus at the most a total of 169,284 were enrolled as members of some kind of Bible study group.

From 1957 through 1960 Junior confirmands totaled 129,103.<sup>17</sup> By subtracting this number from the 1961 total communicant membership (1,631,137)<sup>18</sup> we may assume that there were approximately 1,502,034 communicant members above the age of 18 in 1961. Accordingly, we may safely say that at the most 11.3 per cent of the Missouri Synod adult communicants were enrolled in a Bible class. Actually, of course, the figure is a bit lower than this since a goodly number of those attending "mixed" classes were under 18 years of age.

It should be pointed out that there were 95,565 teachers and officers in the Sunday church schools of the Synod in 1961.<sup>19</sup> Many, if not most of these, may have attended a teachers' meeting which involved considerable direct study of the Scriptures. However, even assuming

---

<sup>17</sup>The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, Nineteen Sixty-One Statistical Yearbook of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, compiled by Armin Schroeder and Cecil E. Pike (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), p. 276.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 277.



that all of these teachers were over 18 years of age and that all attended staff meetings, the number of adults in regular Bible classes of some kind was still only 264,849 or 17.6 per cent.

It can be seen from these figures that despite the increase in Bible class enrollment (65,000 for all ages in 1945<sup>20</sup> to 251,820 in 1961<sup>21</sup>) the repeated urging of Synod that its members participate in group Bible study met with considerable resistance. Dr. Oscar E. Feucht, Secretary of Adult Education, commenting on the suggestion of the 1959 Synodical Convention that Bible class gains each year should equal or exceed gains in communicant members, wrote:

If we were to graph a comparison between our communicant membership and Bible class enrollment (one line showing communicant membership and the other line showing Bible class membership) the lines would grow farther and farther apart based on the present rate of growth. By means of this new goal we hope under God to reverse this trend.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup>Oscar E. Feucht, Forward in Bible Study: A Manual of Resources for the Bible Study Advance 1959 to 1962. (St. Louis: The Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, n.d.), p. 6.

<sup>21</sup>"Interpretation of the 1961 District Bible Class Statistics," Board of Parish Education Bulletin No. 154 (June, 1962), p. 39.

<sup>22</sup>Feucht, loc. cit.

This situation appears to be at variance with The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod's emphasis on the importance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the principle means by which the Spirit of God not only regenerates but also sanctifies the life of the Christian.<sup>23</sup> Missouri Synod people consider the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God in a very special sense.<sup>24</sup> We might logically expect members of this synod especially to welcome and avail themselves of the opportunity to study the Bible with fellow Christians.

That most adults do not attend a Bible class of one kind or another does not mean, of course, that they are not using the means of grace. As this study will show, the majority of Lutherans consider the hearing of the Word in the Sunday morning worship service to be of prime importance. Many engage in family and personal devotions. Contact with the Word takes place at church organizational meetings and functions. But it is still true that the Bible class (either on Sunday morning or at other times during the week) offers a unique opportunity for Christians to participate

---

<sup>23</sup>"Means of Grace," Lutheran Cyclopedia, pp. 424-25.

<sup>24</sup>Allan Hart Jahsmann, What's Lutheran in Education? (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), pp. 48-49.

in the study of this Word. Why is it then that so few avail themselves of this opportunity?

#### Areas to Be Investigated

Some of the possible reasons why most adult members of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod fail to attend group Bible study were advanced in the 1946 report of the Committee on Bible Classes cited above.<sup>25</sup> In personal conferences with 19 district adult education leaders Dr. Feucht more recently made the following analysis of the underlying causes for low participation in Bible study:

An analysis . . . revealed the following seventeen factors: (1) Confirmation complex, (2) abrupt change of program and method after confirmation, (3) inadequate preparation of children, (4) lack of good example by parents and adults, (5) inadequate Bible class aims (knowledge only), (6) interest for ongoing learning stifled, (7) our theological traditions, (8) failure to recognize the difference between worship and learning, (9) limitation of the concept of the priesthood of all believers, (10) Lutheran quietism, (11) fragmentary use of Scripture, (12) lack of direct Bible study, (13) lack of Christ-centered life-related teaching, (14) lack of qualified teachers, (15) "education is for children," (16) churchism, making the church and church going an end instead of a means, and (17) the tempo of our times.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>Supra, pp. 5-6.

<sup>26</sup>Feucht, op. cit., p. 7.

The present study, from an entirely different and independent approach, attempts to see which of these seventeen factors are most significant and uncovers others which appear to affect the life and growth of adult group Bible study in the Missouri Synod.

Areas to be investigated include: (1) Reasons given by various groups for attendance and non-attendance at group Bible study; (2) Concepts of the teacher and pupil roles in Bible class; (3) Personal factors (background, values, habits) which may bear on Bible class attendance; (4) Physical and administrative factors.

#### The Method

In carrying out this study the researcher decided to question a sampling of four different types of people: (1) Those who attend Bible class, (2) good church members who do not attend Bible class [hereafter referred to as "non-attenders"], (3) Bible class teachers, and (4) pastors. The interview technique was employed rather than a simple questionnaire for the following reasons:

1. Interviewees might more readily provide personal and confidential information to an interviewer in an oral communication than they would if required to put the

information down in writing. This seemed especially true for this study because a number of questions could have been answered in a way critical of members of one's own congregation.

2. The interviewer would have an opportunity to draw out an answer from an interviewee when he seemed reluctant to answer. (It is usually easier to leave blank a space on a questionnaire than to ignore a direct oral question.)

3. The interview method would allow the researcher to follow up leads and to take advantage of small clues.

4. The interviewer would be able to clarify his questions when the interviewee's answer might show that he misunderstood.

5. The interviewer would have an opportunity to assess the attitudes of the interviewee and sometimes might "read between the lines" things not said in words (nuances, facial expression, pauses, etc.).

6. Finally, the use of the interview technique would guarantee a 100 per cent return, an essential requirement since the sampling was not large.

To insure asking each interviewee the same questions in approximately the same way, the researcher drew up an instrument designed to provide data in the areas under

investigation. It served only as a guide to the interviewer. Interviewees did not see the questions. This questionnaire is included in the Appendix.

Some questions were asked of Bible class attenders only. Others were addressed only to non-attenders or to teachers or pastors or combinations of these groups. Everyone was asked the last question.

Interviews were carried out over a period of three months from October 1, 1962 to January 1, 1963. Thirty people in each of the four categories mentioned were interviewed to obtain the data. In all, this made 115 interviews because five of the pastors were also serving as Bible class teachers. All interviewees were members of Missouri Synod churches of the St. Louis area. The Bible class teachers and attenders were selected from churches deliberately chosen to give as broad a spectrum of types as possible. Two of the congregations were older churches in changing urban areas. Four might be considered to be in stable urban neighborhoods, and four were in suburban areas. One of the churches in the latter group was a small mission congregation, not yet financially independent. Finally, one congregation was undergoing transition from a rural to a suburban church. Pastors and non-attenders came from these and 13 other churches in the area.

The researcher acquired the names of the Bible class teachers and non-attenders from the pastors of the churches involved. In the case of the non-attenders he specifically asked for names of "good church members who do not attend a Bible class." The term "good church member" is ambiguous, but the request was made in just this way because the "good church member" would be the person more likely to attend Bible class. Thus, by questioning him, the researcher hoped to get at basic obstacles. To get names of Bible class members the researcher asked each Bible class teacher for the name of one member of his class who "fairly well represents the thinking of the class."

The study was limited to classes of the adult and young adult levels, i.e., to members of classes over 18 years of age. Seven of the classes were made up of members of all ages (over age 18), one was composed mainly of people in the 18-to-25-year-old age bracket, two mainly of adults aged 18 to 55, 13 of adults aged 25 to 55, six classes in which most of the members fell into the 25-plus category, and one in which all members were 56 years of age or older. Twenty-eight of the classes were made up of both men and women. One was predominantly female, another mainly male. Average attendance at Bible class of the 30 attenders

during the three month period prior to the interview was 90.3 per cent.

The interviews were conducted in private except for an occasional third person from the family of the interviewee. This was unavoidable because most interviews were held in the homes of the interviewees. This was done for the convenience of the interviewee and as much as possible to put him at ease during the interview.

In the case of attenders, non-attenders, and lay Bible class teachers the researcher did not introduce himself as a minister lest this have some effect on the way certain questions might be answered. However, when questioned regarding the purpose of the interviews (usually after the interviews were completed), the interviewer freely explained his position and the purpose of the study.

All interviewees were assured that their answers would be kept completely anonymous and that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions the interviewer would ask. He told them he just wanted to know how they "really felt about some things."

Most of those approached were happy to cooperate. Only three people (two Bible-class attenders and one non-attender) refused to grant an interview. In each case



substitute names were provided by the pastor or teacher who had suggested the original name.

It is apparent that a weakness in the project lies in the method by which the sampling of attenders was selected. We may assume that a Bible class teacher would be likely to suggest the name of a member who generally approved of his procedures in conducting the class rather than the truly "average" member. Likewise, pastors were more likely to suggest names of non-attenders less critical of the congregation's program than some others may have been.

On the other hand, the method of research followed in this project permits us to see how different types of individuals answer identical questions. From this data we hope to reach some tentative conclusions which may later be used as a platform to launch future research.

"children in the Sunday school" as their reason for first attending Bible class also said that a Sunday school worker had suggested the Bible class to them. Hence, it is possible to interpret this comment as belonging to the category labeled "invitation by a Sunday school worker." However, it is doubtful that these individuals would have attended had their children not been attending Sunday school at the time.

## CHAPTER II

### REASONS ADVANCED FOR ATTENDANCE AND NON-ATTENDANCE

The first question of the survey was designed to shed light on the most significant factors in attracting adults to Bible class. "What started you coming to your present Bible class?" Bible class attenders were asked. A complete compilation of their answers is listed in Table 2. It shows that the most influential factor was the presence of another member of the family in the Sunday school.

In 11 of the 30 cases, children attending Sunday school at the time of the Bible class, a wife teaching in the Sunday school, or a wife or husband also attending the Bible class were cited as the dominant factors in getting started in Bible class. Two of the attenders who gave "children in the Sunday school" as their reason for first attending Bible class also said that a Sunday school worker had suggested the Bible class to them. Hence, it is possible to interpret this comment as belonging to the category labeled "Invitation by a Sunday school worker." However, it is doubtful that these individuals would have attended had their children not been attending Sunday school at the time.

TABLE 2

## ATTENDERS' REASONS FOR STARTING IN BIBLE CLASS

Children in Sunday school or wife teaching	8
Interest in subject	4
"Just felt like it"	3
Wife or husband attending	3
Invitation by pastor	3
Desire for spiritual growth	2
Never stopped Sunday school	2
Invitation by parish worker	1
Invitation by Sunday school worker	1
Invitation by friend	1
Liked teacher	1
Every member visitation inviting me to attend	1

Later in the interview (Question 42) the attenders were asked why they attended Bible class at the present time. A tabulation of their answers appears in Table 3. (As in many of the tabulations which follow, the reader will note that the total number of answers given is far higher than the number of people questioned. This is because many gave more than one answer.)

Significant in the answers to this question are the high number of answers which indicate that a growth in factual knowledge, either of Bible content or of the teaching of one's church, was the prime reason for attending. In all, 19 of the 30 or 63 per cent, of the attenders stated they were going to Bible class to broaden their knowledge in some way.

Another point worth noting is that although five found Bible class a source of help for witnessing, only two gave as a reason for attending that they look upon the Bible class itself as an opportunity for serving fellow Christians. (One of these gave the answer: "To witness to my fellow Christians," and one of those included under "Chance to discuss faith" indicated that he saw this to be as much a way of helping others as of getting help for himself.) Two other answers revealed a desire to use the

TABLE 3

REASONS GIVEN BY ATTENDERS FOR PRESENT  
PARTICIPATION IN BIBLE CLASS

Desire to know Scriptures better	12
Enjoy it	9
Desire to know more about faith	7
Get spiritual help	6
Help for witnessing	5
Chance to discuss faith	4
Duty	3
Have to wait for others in Sunday school	2
Strengthen faith	2
Get help for family worship	1
Prepare for worship	1
Witness to others	1
Like the teacher	1
Resolve differences of opinions on matters of faith with my wife	1
Growth in love of Christ	1

knowledge or spiritual growth acquired in Bible class for the benefit of fellow Christians.

Question 45 asked non-attenders, pastors and Bible class teachers: "Why do you think those who attend Bible class do so?" Their answers are reported in Table 4. It will be noted that all groups regarded the acquisition of Bible knowledge and doctrine as being the chief reason.

Pastors' answers to Question 39 of the interview also underlined their understanding of the Bible class as primarily an agency for increasing the knowledge of those who attend. The question, "What do you consider to be the main purpose of Bible class?" was answered in the ways listed in Table 5. "Better understanding of the Bible," "Growth in Christian knowledge," and "To show what are the fruits of Christian life" were given as answers 22 times. Only one of the pastors answered in a way which indicated that he viewed the Bible class as a means of engaging members in mutual upbuilding of the faith. However, in fairness it should be stated that many of the answers did not rule out such an understanding.

A slightly different question (Question 41) was designed to discover how important pastors consider the Bible class to be in carrying out their own work. Table 6

TABLE 4

REASONS GIVEN BY NON-ATTENDERS, TEACHERS, AND PASTORS  
FOR ATTENDANCE OF BIBLE CLASS MEMBERS

	Non- Attend- ers	Pastors & Teachers
Desire to learn more of Bible or doctrine	16	23
Desire to grow spiritually	5	14
To equip selves to serve as future teachers		11
Sense of duty	3	6
Enjoy it	3	6
Nothing better to do at time (children in Sunday school)	5	6
Desire to get deeper into Scriptures		5
Chance to ask questions		4
They "get something out of it"	2	3
Habit	1	3
Interest	2	3
Guidance for Christian living		3
They like to discuss	2	1
Pressure to attend		2
Help for spiritual problems		2
Express love for God		2

TABLE 4 (continued)

They are innately religious	1	
Inquisitiveness	1	
Haven't learned to search on their own	1	
They need it	1	
Want to keep up religious training	1	
Can't get much out of service with small children	1	
To please friends	1	
Strengthen faith	1	
As a witness to children	1	
They are better Christians than the rest of us	1	
Satisfaction		1
Individual appeal		1
They attend anything church sponsors		1
Make themselves better members		1
A feeling of importance at being able to answer questions		1
Promotion by Synod		1
Trying to discover secrets of life and their power over others		1
Reverence for Word of God gained from parents		1
Work of God's Spirit		1
More knowledge results in security		1
Help for witnessing to non-Lutherans		1
Curiosity regarding lesser known areas of Bible		1



TABLE 5  
 PASTORS' CONCEPT OF PURPOSE OF BIBLE CLASS

Better understanding of Bible	10
Strengthen faith	9
Growth in Christian knowledge	6
Show what are the fruits of Christian life	6
Growth in closer relationship to God	4
Deepening of spirituality	4
Growth in service	3
Let Word speak and direct lives of people	3
Show way to salvation	3
Deepen Christian life	2
Equip for witness	2
Growth in grace	2
Growth in love	1
Warn against heresy	1
Provide opportunity for sharing insights into life application	1
Communicate grace of God	1

reports these findings. Again, a high percentage (30 per cent) viewed the Bible class as an agency for helping members increase their knowledge of the truths of Christianity. However, other answers indicate that they regard as even more important the role Bible classes play in enlisting support for the church's program. (Nineteen answers could be placed in this category.) Surprisingly, not one of the 30 pastors, even those who taught Bible class, looked upon the agency as affording themselves any help personally either by way of increasing their knowledge of their parishioners or for personal growth.

Less emphasis on knowledge per se and a more healthy emphasis on genuine spiritual growth were indicated in the answers given to another question addressed to pastors. Question 46: "How important do you consider your adult Bible classes to be for your members? Why?" Only two of the 30 considered Bible class to be anything less than very important or at least "quite important." The other two thought it important, but only for those who attend, and believed that even for these people its importance would vary with the individual. (See Table 7.)

Twenty-two of the 30 non-attenders interviewed had attended a Bible class some time in the past. Their

TABLE 6

**THE PASTORS' VIEW OF HOW THE BIBLE CLASS  
CONTRIBUTES TO HIS MINISTRY**

Increases knowledge of truths of Christianity	9
Contributes to general sanctification	7
Makes active church workers	5
Growth in knowledge of Lord	4
Helps people understand life	4
Trains for better leadership	4
Trains people for soul winning	4
Increases faith of people	4
Applies Scripture to life	3
Prepares people for worship	3
Helps people see need to go to church	2
Develops more consecrated members	2
Helps people see need to raise budget	1
Impresses a congregational philosophy on people	1
Indirectly trains children in the home	1
Deepens concern for carrying out mission of church	1
Gets support for program of the church	1
Leads people to an awareness that they are battling demonic forces	1
Reaches people with the Word through another layman	1
Gives people a chance to discuss their faith	1
Equips members for performing their ministry	1
Communicates the grace of God	1
Helps members search Scripture	1
Helps members appreciate that Bible is God's Word	1

TABLE 7

WHY PASTORS CONSIDER BIBLE CLASSES IMPORTANT  
FOR THEIR MEMBERS

Spiritual growth	10
Help people in their lives	7
Gain knowledge for witness	5
Sermon and/or worship not sufficient	4
Deeper knowledge of God's Word	3
Because it is basically the same thing as worship	3
Train church workers	2
To make sure they are getting some study of Word	2
Creates desire to study further	1
Set example for children	1
Be able to discuss Bible with children	1
To get more out of worship service	1
Chance to ask questions	1
Protect them against false doctrine	1
Undergird faith	1
Clear up misconceptions	1

reasons for quitting are tabulated in Table 8. As will be noted, the principal reasons advanced were consideration for others in the family and other church duties at the time. In two of the five latter cases the duty involved was that of teaching in the Sunday school.

When these same non-attenders were asked why they were not attending Bible class at present, they again most often gave consideration of another member of the family as their reason. The complete tabulation of their answers to this question is given in Table 9. Thus Tables 2, 8, and 9 point to the key role of the family in influencing Bible class attendance. On the other hand, there is some question whether the answers given to questions 23 and 43, "Why don't you attend Bible class now?" and "Why did you stop going to Bible class?" (Tables 8 and 9) are the real ones or whether these are rationalizations. In some cases, at least, the latter might be the case.

"Why do you think so many in your church do not attend Bible class?" attenders and pastors were asked. Their answers are listed in Table 10. The primary reason given was not even mentioned by the non-attenders themselves, namely, a misunderstanding of confirmation as a sort of graduation. Another reason given was the common feeling

TABLE 8

## REASONS FOR QUITTING BIBLE CLASS

Consideration for others in family	6
Conflict with other church duties	5
Loss of interest	4
Poor teacher	3
Changed church	2
Laziness	2
Couldn't be regular	1
Can't remember	1
Moved to country	1

TABLE 9

## REASONS GIVEN FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT BIBLE CLASS

Consideration for another family member	8
Unwilling to give extra time	7
Inconvenience	6
Out of habit	4
Not interesting enough	3
Get enough out of service	2
No desire to do so	2
Laziness	2
Conflict with other church duties at time	1
Get more out of personal study	1
Would have no excuse for not coming if I later wanted to quit	1
Don't think I'd learn much there	1
Don't enjoy it	1
Wasn't invited until recently	1
Afraid I'd be asked to teach	1
Teacher asks me embarrassing questions	1
Poor teacher	1
Can't go regularly so rather not go at all	1
Had to go to Sunday school as a child every Sunday	1

TABLE 10

REASONS GIVEN BY PASTORS AND ATTENDERS  
FOR THE NON-ATTENDANCE OF OTHERS

Confirmation complex	20
Unwillingness to give extra time	16
Poor teaching	15
Laziness	13
Regard Bible class as an "extra"	12
Tradition	11
Lack of appreciation for the Word	11
Indifference	8
Habit	7
Fear of revealing ignorance	7
We haven't promoted it enough	6
Spiritual sluggishness	4
Fear of embarrassment	3
Conflict with service at time	3
Feel no need to grow	2
No interest	2
Too self-conscious	2
Too proud	2
Won't be able to get out if they so desire later	2
Afraid it will lead to greater involvement	2
Inconvenience	2
They associate it with the ineffective way we carry on Sunday school	2
Feel there is no point to it	1
Class time not convenient	1
Place where Bible class held poor	1
They drop out as a way of asserting their adulthood	1
Dogmatic teaching by pastors and teachers	1
People not aware of responsibilities when they join church	1
Feel pastor can answer specific question and that is enough	1
Overemphasis on the institution of church	1
Think it's a waste of time	1
Young children in family	1



that Bible class is an "extra," the church service being the only really important thing happening on a Sunday morning. "Poor teaching," while mentioned by only one non-attender, was cited by 15 attenders and pastors as being a factor in keeping people away from Bible class.

The main questions, asked of both Bible class teachers and attenders, were: "How would you describe a good Bible class student?" and "How would you describe a good Bible class teacher?"

Answers to the first of these are listed in Table II. The response most frequently given by both types of people interviewed was the ability and willingness of the class member to participate in class discussion. Sixty-three per cent of the teachers and 58 per cent of the attenders gave this answer. Also, about one-third of all those interviewed said that "interest in the subject" was a characteristic of the good student.

By and large there was strong agreement in the answers of both attenders and teachers. If one can find a difference in their responses, it would probably be that generally teachers expect more work of attenders than attenders expect of themselves. In other words, attenders seem to want to

### CHAPTER III

#### THE CLASSROOM TASK AND ITS SETTING

A number of questions in the interview attempted to uncover what teachers and pupils thought their roles were in a Bible class and what the atmosphere of their class was. The main questions, asked of both Bible class teachers and attenders, were: "How would you describe a good Bible class student?" and "How would you describe a good Bible class teacher?"

Answers to the first of these are listed in Table 11. The response most frequently given by both types of people interviewed was the ability and willingness of the class member to participate in class discussion. Sixty-three per cent of the teachers and 50 per cent of the attenders gave this answer. Also, almost one-third of all those interviewed said that "interest in the subject" was a characteristic of the good student.

By and large there was strong agreement in the answers of both attender and teacher. If one can find a difference in their responses, it would probably be that generally teachers expect more work of attenders than attenders expect of themselves. In other words, attenders seem to want to

TABLE 11

## DESIRABLE QUALITIES IN A BIBLE CLASS STUDENT

	Students' Estimate	Teachers' Estimate
Ability and/or willingness to participate	19	15
Good listener	10	3
Interested in subject	9	10
Raises questions	8	5
Prepares beforehand	8	5
Desires to learn	4	8
Can apply Biblical principles to daily life	1	5
Willing to do extra work on his own	3	4
Regular in attendance	3	4
Has knowledge of Bible	3	1
Open-minded	3	3
Ability to interpret text		3
Interest in application of subject to life	2	
Reads his Bible	2	
Brings others to Bible class	2	
Love for the Word		2
Willing to be guided		2
Believes what he learns	1	
Can evaluate what he hears	1	1
Willingness to discuss personal problems	1	
Answers questions	1	
Puts into practice what he learns	1	
Has a prayerful attitude toward Bible class	1	
Believes Bible is Word of God	1	
Doesn't talk too much	1	1
Attends church regularly	1	
Desire to be better Christian		1
Can communicate well		1
Is alert		1
Acquainted with resources for study		1
Understands basic questions		1
Recognizes time limitations of class		1
Cooperates in carrying out group objectives		1

participate but are also more likely to view their role as that of a listener to whom the teacher is to suggest life application. Participation is seen as questioning, prior preparation, and class reactions to stimuli of the teacher.

Answers to the question "How would you describe a good Bible class teacher?" were quite diffuse and difficult to classify. These answers are recorded in Table 12. Although identical answers of teachers and pupils are paired off where possible, the reader will notice certain other answers which, though not exactly alike, are at least similar. For example, while seven attenders looked for a teacher to be able to "gain interest," no teacher mentioned this in just these words, but four attenders felt that a teacher must present his material in an "appealing" way. In general, the answers of both teachers and students again indicate an awareness of the need for participation by all members of the class as well as by the teacher.

To determine how successful classes were in attaining pupil participation, attenders and teachers were asked to estimate percentages of class time spent in each of four categories of activity: (1) Lecture, (2) Discussion with most of conversation taking place between teacher and individual class members, (3) Discussion with most of

TABLE 12

## DESIRABLE QUALITIES IN A BIBLE CLASS TEACHER

	Students' Estimate	Teachers' Estimate
Knowledge of Bible	11	4
Doesn't spend too much time in lecturing	10	2
Able to get class to participate	6	9
Prepares thoroughly	8	8
Can gain interest of class	7	
Open-minded	5	1
Good leader	5	2
Knows pupils		5
Can get message over	3	5
Permits difference of opinion	1	1
Willing to admit ignorance when he doesn't know	4	
Knowledge of Lutheran faith		4
Knows subject		4
Can present material in appealing way		4
Interest in subject	1	3
Studies on his own		3
Personal faith		3
Sticks to subject	1	3
Can simplify the subject	2	
Patient	2	
Sets good example in his life	2	
Covers essential points	2	2
Holds attention	2	
Radiates confidence in Word of God		2
Interest in pupils	1	2
Willing to try new techniques		2
Sense of humor		2
Well trained		2
Sincerity		2
Cheerful	1	2
Presents material in organized way		2
Can relate Bible teaching to life	1	2
Can use visual aids well		2

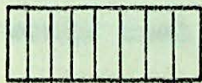
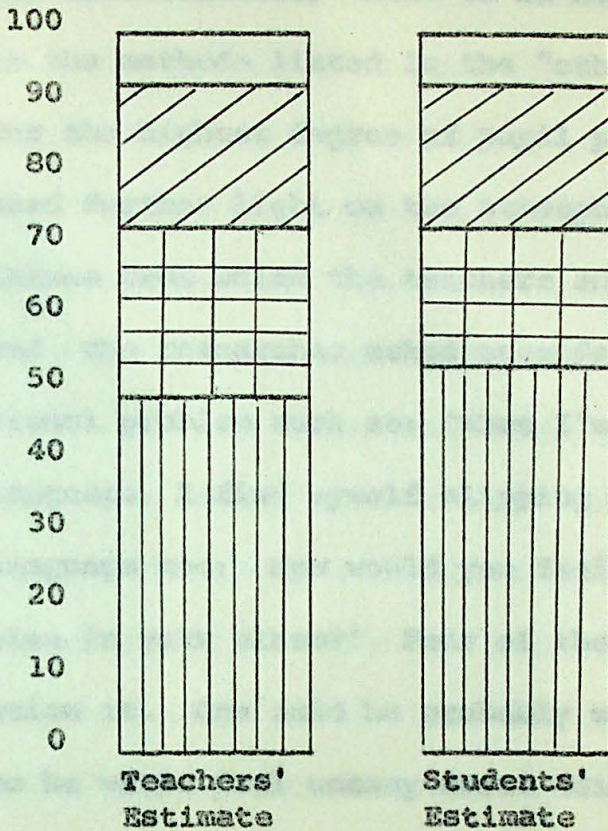
TABLE 12 (continued)

	Students' Estimate	Teachers' Estimate
Can give definite answers to questions raised in class	1	2
Respects every member of class		2
Has confidence of class	1	
Learns with the group	1	
Asks thought-provoking questions	1	
Summarizes well	1	
Can be heard	1	
Assigns work to class	1	
Keeps control	1	
Refrains from attacking other churches	1	
Can get people to apply Word of God to life		1
Has clear objectives for each lesson		1
Willingness to learn		1
Creates interest in Bible		1
Can help student gain insight into Scripture		1
Can "direct thinking of group"		1
Willing to listen		1
Is natural		1
Gives pupils a sense of purpose in their class		1
Flexible		1
Makes self as dispensable as possible		1
Shows empathy and consideration		1
Knows resources		1
Dignified and even straight-laced		1
Can get pupils to study on their own		1
Sense of purpose		1
Not a slave to notes		1

conversation taking place between class members, and (4) Other methods (reading, movies, reports, questionnaires, etc.)

Answers to this question (number 8 on the questionnaire) varied greatly between the teachers' and students' estimates of how time was spent in certain specific classes. (One teacher claimed to spend only 30 per cent of class time lecturing while the member of his class interviewed put the estimate at 75 per cent. Another estimated his time spent in lecture as 25 per cent, but a class member thought it closer to 60 per cent. On the other hand, the teacher of one Bible class said he spent 80 per cent of class time in lecture, but a member of his class thought he spent no more than a third of his time lecturing.) However, averages of these estimates by all teachers and all attenders interviewed were in close agreement. (See Figure 1.)

There appears to be an attempt to involve pupils in discussion, but at least 70 per cent of class time in the Bible classes surveyed was spent in lecture or discussion between the teacher and an individual in the class. (When interviewees were questioned as to the nature of the "discussion" that went on between the individual member and the teacher, they usually replied that it was a question put to the teacher which he in turn would answer or an answer



Lecture



Discussion with most of the conversation taking place between teacher and individual class members



Discussion with most of conversation taking place between class members



Other: (Reading, movies, reports, questionnaires, etc.)

Figure 1. Use of Class Time in Bible Classes Surveyed



given to one of his questions by a class member, rather than an extended conversation.) Also to be noted is the low figure for the methods listed in the "other" category, which provide for the highest degree of pupil participation.

To shed further light on the atmosphere prevalent in the 30 classes from which the teachers and attenders were interviewed, the researcher asked attenders, "Suppose you had a personal problem such as: 'When I'm around people who use bad language, I find myself slipping once in a while and use bad language too: How would you feel about mentioning this problem in your class?' Four of the 30 said they would never mention it. One said he probably would not mention it because he would feel uneasy about doing so. Five others answered that they probably would mention the matter, but would feel some uneasiness at doing it. Two stated that there was no opportunity for such problem sharing in their class. The other 18 all stated that they would want to get help from their teacher or from members of their class and would therefore ask for it in class without embarrassment.

A question along the same lines but on an intellectual rather than a deeply spiritual level elicited a similar response. The question: "Suppose you began believing something that you knew was contrary to the teachings of

our church. Would you mention this in your class?" Twenty-six (87 per cent) answered that they would.

When asked, "Do people in your class ever disagree with your teachers?" 21 of the 30 attenders replied in the affirmative. But to state it differently, in 30 per cent of the classes attenders said there was never any disagreement of any kind between pupil and teacher.

Asked if they ever encouraged disagreement in their classes or felt it unwise to do so, 22 teachers replied that they encouraged it. Seven considered it unwise, and one stated that he didn't consider it unwise but didn't encourage it either. However, it should also be noted that a number of those stating that they occasionally encouraged disagreement hastened to add that they did so only to evoke discussion or to wake up the group but would not allow genuine disagreement to develop.

Another question designed to explore the concept of class purposes and attitudes was number 38. The researcher asked attenders, teachers, and pastors to imagine that they were teaching a Bible class. Then he said: "A question comes up for discussion which is not answered by the Bible in just so many words. If the group did not arrive at the answer which you have been taught to be correct, would you straighten

them out or just what would you do?" Table 13 lists the various reactions to this problem. It will be noted that lay members and teachers and even those 11 teachers who were parochial school teachers were far more interested in maintaining the church's position than the pastors. Twenty-four (80 per cent) of the attenders, 11 of the 14 laymen who were serving as teachers (70 per cent), and six of the 12 parochial school teachers (50 per cent) said that they would insist on agreement with the traditional view or would seek help for defending it from another in authority.

In ten of the 30 classes surveyed the Bible itself was the only material used. Thirteen classes used the Bible and a published guide. In five classes the teacher produced an outline, which the class used with the Bible, and two classes used some other material, rather than the Bible itself, as the text.

Answers to Question 13 revealed that most classes studied about one topic or one book of the Bible per quarter. In a rather high percentage of the churches where there are multiple adult classes courses are run on a quarterly system and members are encouraged to change classes each quarter. Of the 30 classes surveyed, 17 were of this type.

Class sessions, not counting time spent in opening and

TABLE 13  
 REACTIONS TO A CHALLENGE TO TRADITIONAL VIEWS

	Attendees	Lay Teachers	Professional Teachers	Pastors
Seek help from pastor or teacher	20	7	3	0
Insist on getting agreement with traditional view	4	4	3	4
Express traditional view and go on	5	2*	2	24***
Suggest further study of matter together	1	1	2**	2
Assign to a member for further study	0	0	2	0

\* One of these a Seminary student.

\*\* One of these a Seminary professor.

\*\*\* Includes all five who serve as Bible class teachers.

closing devotions, averaged 58 minutes, according to teachers, 56.4 minutes according to attenders. The shortest session was 37 minutes long, the longest, 105 minutes.

Asked how they felt about the room in which their class meets, a rather high 43 per cent of the teachers and 40 per cent of the attenders had some complaint to make about it. However, in 12 of the 30 cases attenders and teachers disagreed as to their estimate of the desirability of the facilities. (See Table 14.)

In 16 (53 per cent) of the classes the seating arrangement resembled that of a lecture hall, with students seated in straight rows facing the teacher. In five others (17 per cent) chairs were arranged in a semi-circle with students facing the leader, and the remaining nine classes (30 per cent) were arranged in a circle or a modified circle. The seats themselves were church pews in eight classes and school benches in five. Chairs were used in the remaining 17 classes.

Most of the members questioned had been quite regular in attendance. They were present an average of 90.3 per cent of the time. Average attendance in their classes was 22, the smallest class having an average attendance of four, the largest 75. Sixty-seven per cent of the classes had an

TABLE 14

## ESTIMATE OF CLASSROOM

	Pupil	Teacher
Like it	18	17
Minor complaint	6	6
Fairly strong dislike	6	7
Agreement on classroom		18
Disagreement		12

average attendance of 20 or less members. In 26 of the classes (87 per cent) a class membership list was maintained, and the same number reportedly made some attempt at follow-up by letters, calls, or visits.

"If you could ask for any change in your Bible class program, what would you suggest?" the researcher asked attenders. Seven were completely satisfied and could suggest no change. Of the complaints, the desire for more participation by fellow class members and dissatisfaction with the teaching and with the institute or quarterly system were mentioned most often (see Table 15).

## CHAPTER IV

## PERSONAL FACTORS

TABLE 15

## DESIRED CHANGES IN BIBLE CLASS PROGRAM

None	7
More participation	4
Better teaching	3
Abolish institute system	3
Lower level	2
More choice of topics by class members	2
Add more classes	2
More home assignments	2
Better place for classes	2
Smaller classes	1
Shorter courses	1
Use guides to aid in study	1
Drop service during Bible class	1
Study one book at a time	1
Meet more frequently (met once every 3 weeks)	1
Longer class period	1
Better seating arrangement	1
More male members	1
More younger members	1
Study more basic questions	1



## CHAPTER IV

### PERSONAL FACTORS

Are there differences in the backgrounds, attitudes, and habits of attenders and non-attenders which play a significant part in determining Bible class attendance or non-attendance? Are there differences in the values attenders and non-attenders place on worship? Do all groups surveyed generally share the same view of knowledge necessary for fruitful Christian living? The instrument included a number of questions designed to uncover this information.

The size of the families of both attenders and non-attenders was similar. Attenders' families averaged 3.8 persons, non-attenders 3.4. The limitations of the sampling make it difficult to draw any conclusions from this finding, but it does seem to rule out children as a significant factor per se. Also, exactly the same number of attenders and non-attenders (7) reported that there were other members of the family teaching or otherwise helping in the Sunday school.

However, on the positive side, there were significant differences in response to the questions: "Are other members of your family attending Sunday school?" and "Are others in your family attending Bible class?" (Questions 25 and 27).

Twenty-two attenders (73 per cent) said others in their family attended Sunday school. The average number of their family members in Sunday school was 3.8. On the other hand, only ten non-attenders (33 per cent) reported other family members in Sunday school and even the average number in such cases (2.5) was smaller. Also, only five non-attenders (17 per cent) said other family members attended a Bible class, while 18, or 60 per cent of the attenders were able to say this. These findings apparently substantiate the conjecture, made earlier, that attendance at church school by another member of the family has a strong relationship to one's own attendance at a Bible class.<sup>1</sup>

A somewhat higher number of attenders than non-attenders were adult confirmands. Twelve attenders were confirmed in their adult years, whereas only seven non-attenders were confirmed after the traditional early-teen age. These 12 attenders were confirmed an average of 13 years ago; for the seven non-attenders the number of years since confirmation averaged 16. There is an indication here that confirmation later in life leads to greater participation in group Bible study.

---

<sup>1</sup>Supra, p. 19.

Both attenders and non-attenders participated in home devotions to about the same extent (see Figure 2). Educational level of the two groups was also similar, attenders averaging 12.2 years of schooling while non-attenders averaged 11.8 years.

More non-attenders than attenders (15 as against 12) were products of parochial schools, understandable in view of the previous finding that a higher proportion of attenders were adult converts. Only one of each of the groups had attended a Lutheran secondary school.

Attenders averaged 9.3 years in Sunday school; non-attenders 8.4 years. Both groups claimed to attend worship services quite regularly. Attenders estimated they were present at Sunday worship an average of 46.8 times; non-attenders put their average at 48.2 times.

Twenty-four of the Bible class members belonged to an average of 3.3 other organizations or groups in the church, while 28 of the non-attenders participated in 2.8 other church activities. In the community attenders and non-attenders belonged to an average of 2.3 and 2.2 groups respectively. The findings here seem to indicate that it would be hard to classify attenders as "joiner"-type personalities.

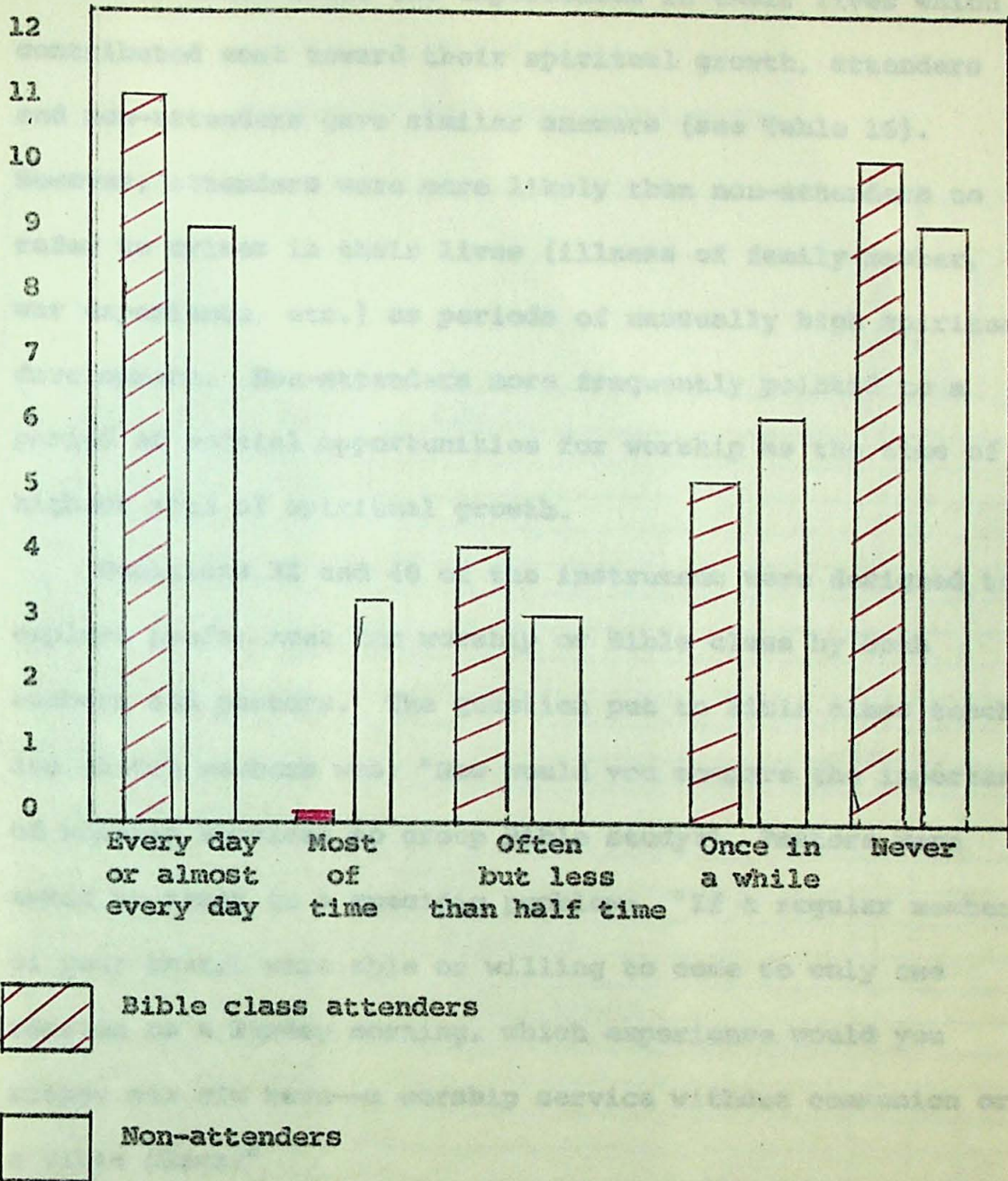


Figure 2. Frequency of Home Devotions

When asked about the experiences in their lives which contributed most toward their spiritual growth, attenders and non-attenders gave similar answers (see Table 16). However, attenders were more likely than non-attenders to refer to crises in their lives (illness of family member, war experience, etc.) as periods of unusually high spiritual development. Non-attenders more frequently pointed to a period of special opportunities for worship as the time of highest rate of spiritual growth.

Questions 32 and 40 of the instrument were designed to explore preferences for worship or Bible class by both members and pastors. The question put to Bible class teachers and church members was: "How would you compare the importance of worship services to group Bible study?" Pastors were asked to react to a specific problem: "If a regular member of your church were able or willing to come to only one session on a Sunday morning, which experience would you rather see him have--a worship service without communion or a Bible class?"

In answer to the first of these questions three attenders, three non-attenders, and three teachers considered the two to be exactly equal in importance. Many others had a hard time deciding for either the Bible class or the church

TABLE 16  
FACTORS IN SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

	Attenders	Non-Attenders
Illness and/or death in family	5	
Attendance at worship		5
None (gradual growth)	4	3
War experience	4	
Confirmation	2	3
Parochial school	2	3
Crisis in life		3
Assumed office in church	2	2
Sunday school	2	1
Raising family	1	2
Bible class	2	
Just an insight as to the nature of Christianity	2	
Advancing years		2
Sunday school teaching	1	1
Discussing faith with child	1	1
Walther League associations	1	
Experience with marriage contract	1	
Experience with DeMolay	1	
Attendance at adult class with spouse	1	
Had to defend faith before those of another faith	1	
Influence of spouse	1	
World travel	1	
Influence of new pastor		1
Confirmation of spouse		1
Occupation		1
Daily devotions		1
Helped in starting new mission		1
Association with church (last 4 years)		1
Experience in Armed service		1

service. When pressed for a decision, 13 attenders, five non-attenders and six teachers favored group Bible study, while 14 attenders, 22 non-attenders, and 20 teachers considered the worship service of greater importance. Among the teachers were four of the five pastors serving as Bible class teachers. The one other teaching pastor said that the relative importance of the two would depend on the individual.

All 30 pastors except two answered Question 40 by saying they would unqualifiedly advise the member in question to attend the worship service. Their reasons are assumed to be those for considering the service more important than Bible class. One pastor said he would suggest Bible class to a new convert but the worship service to one who had been a Lutheran for a long time. Only one picked the Bible class outright, giving as the reason for his answer the opinion that no communion makes a service "little more than a religious exercise."

Table 17 lists the reasons church members and pastors gave for considering the worship service of most importance. For the sake of comparison the pastors' answers are listed in a separate column from that of the other groups. One answer which the researcher frequently found was the response

TABLE 17

## REASONS GIVEN FOR GREATER IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP

	Members and Teachers	Pastors
"Atmosphere" or "closeness"	8	2
Sacraments	8	*
Fellowship with larger group		7
God would rather have you worship	7	3
"More and varied ways to worship" in service	7	
Music and hymn singing	7	4
Group prayer	1	6
Tradition	6	
Liturgy	6	
Whole congregation present together	6	
Led by ordained pastor or someone with training	6	
The sermon is there	5	
Don't know, just feel it	4	
Worship the key to all activities in church	4	
Opportunity to praise God		4
More satisfying		3
Whole family together	3	
Confession and absolution		3
Sermon		3
Can witness better in service	1	3
Worship demands more personal commitment	2	
More receptive to message in worship	2	
Hear law in Bible class, but Gospel in church	2	1
Bible class limited to one section of Bible on a given Sunday	2	
Bible class too much a matter of opinion	2	
More opportunity to respond		2
Emphasis of church year more apparent		2



TABLE 17 (continued)

	Members and Teachers	Pastors
More colorful	1	
Can communicate with God better	1	
Can participate better in worship	1	
Can think things through without interruption	1	
Can always study Bible alone	1	1
Can't answer--never went to Bible class	1	
Chance to give thanks in worship	1	
Worship a more natural response	1	
More effective in working sanctified life	1	
Sense of security	1	
Hear pastor better	1	
Dialog between man and God and man and man not present in Bible class		1
We can hear both law and Gospel in service		1
Greater opportunity for active worship on his own		1
Can serve fellow Christians better in worship		1
More crucial in terms of preparation for heaven		1
Bible class more on intellectual level		1
No admonition in Bible class		1
First Christians came together for worship		1
More inspiring		1
More edifying		1
Value not contingent on ongoing course		1

\* The stating of the question precluded getting this answer from pastors.

that God would rather have us worship than participate in group Bible study. Three members and three pastors asserted that God commands us to worship but does not command us to participate in group Bible study. When the interviewer asked these people where this directive is in the Bible, they invariably answered, sometimes indignantly, "Why, in the Third commandment, of course!" Several of the members who expressed preference for the worship service confessed that they personally learned much more from Bible class, but still felt that worship was more important.

Table 18 is a tabulation of reasons given by those who considered group Bible study of greater importance than the worship service. Many of the reasons given point to a deficiency in the understanding of the worship service rather than to a real strength of Bible study.

The final question attempted to explore concepts of knowledge and values placed on this knowledge by the various groups interviewed. The interviewer asked: "What do you think you need to know to be a good Christian?" Answers were of three types. Type I referred to rudimentary theological facts, e.g., "John 3:16," "Sin and grace and then the conviction that Christ is the only Savior," "Know right from wrong, know what God has told us to do, and know

TABLE 18

## REASONS GIVEN FOR GREATER IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE CLASS

Learn more in Bible class	6
"Get more out of it"	6
Chance to ask questions	5
Chance to discuss	4
Worship too formal and routine	3
Can grow more	2
Can search Scriptures better	2
Children disturb in worship	2
Greater participation	2
Sermons boring and repetitious	1
Can state own point of view	1
Faith strengthened better	1
More basic and prepares for worship	1

how to be saved," etc. Those who answered in this way felt that this knowledge is learned sometime within a person's lifetime, usually by the time one is confirmed. A second group of answers (Type II) referred to a body of theological facts or Biblical knowledge but considered the number of these facts to be so great that these are never really mastered during one's lifetime. Those who answered in the third way (Type III) interpreted the question quite differently and gave such answers as: "The love of Christ," "Christ, and more Christ, and still more Christ," "It's not a question of knowing facts but of having the Holy Spirit," etc.

Table 19 reports how each group interviewed answered the question. The comparatively large number of non-attenders giving a Type I answer and the large number of attenders and pastors giving a Type II answer will be immediately apparent. The pastors who were teaching Bible classes are included in both the teacher line and the pastor line in Table 19. One of these pastors gave a Type I answer, two answered in the Type II way and two are included in the eight teachers who gave Type III answers. Also to be noted is that another of these eight was a Seminary professor (and thus also a pastor) and still another was a seminary student. Further

investigation revealed that all four of the remaining teachers were parochial school teachers. In other words, of the eight teachers who gave Type III answers, not one was a layman.

TABLE 19

## KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY TO BE A "GOOD" CHRISTIAN

	Type I	Type II	Type III
Attenders	8	18	3
Non-Attenders	22	4	4
Teachers	11	11	8
Pastors	4	15	11

This concludes the report of the data in the study.

In the next chapter we shall examine some of the more significant findings reported above and relate these to other research for possible clues they may give to the solution of our problem.

## CHAPTER V

### INTERPRETATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Reviewing the findings presented in the foregoing chapters, there is supporting evidence for at least some of the 17 points in a previous analysis of factors inhibiting Bible class growth.<sup>1</sup> For example, Dr. Feucht lists "theological traditions" as a factor contributing to low participation in Bible study.

#### Authoritarianism

One "theological tradition" which has always played an important part in the church life and educational structures of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod is the conviction of its members that the Holy Scriptures are the only source and norm of Christian faith. This has led Missouri Synod Lutherans to place great stress on the communication of God's truth as revealed in the Bible and to stress methods which tend to be authoritarian and subject centered, methods which

---

<sup>1</sup>Oscar E. Feucht, Forward in Bible Study: A Manual of Resources for the Bible Study Advance 1959 to 1962 (St. Louis: The Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, n.d.), p. 6.

have as their aim, the conveying of factual material.<sup>2</sup>

As a consequence, teachers in Bible classes as well as in other educational agencies of the church have tended to cast themselves in the role of defenders of the faith. Dr. Allan Jahsmann states:

The traditional method of Christian religious education has been didactic and normative. The typical teacher of the church (whether a professional minister of the Word or a layman) approaches a pupil or class as a representative of Jesus Christ, His way of life, and a particular church body and set of beliefs and teachings. In this position he assumes that his primary responsibility is to stand up for these teachings, to express them authoritatively also in interpersonal relations, and to instruct others in the Scriptures and in his church's confessional formulations of doctrine.<sup>3</sup>

What Dr. Jahsmann says is illustrated by the hesitancy especially of lay teachers of the Missouri Synod to deviate in any way from a traditional position on doctrinal questions. This is not only the case when the matter in question is clearly a Scriptural one but is true even when the Bible is

---

<sup>2</sup>Raymond F. Surburg, "Historical Survey of the Lutheran Philosophy of Education," Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education. Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association, edited by L.G. Bickel and Raymond F. Surburg. (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1956), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>Allan H. Jahsmann, "Application of Procedural Aspects of Psychotherapy to Christian Nurture," p. 25 (Unpublished paper).

silent. The tendency is to seek help from a pastor or teacher who maintains a position of authority.

Ernsberger, referring to an article by Charles K. Ferguson,<sup>4</sup> says:

The average adult tends to expect his adult class to resemble the usually authoritarian class atmosphere he has known in grade school, high school, or college. He expects to be told, and regards himself as essentially a passive listener. This is especially true in the church. The people look to the minister as the authority figure who is to "tell" them. From their point of view, the minister's authority consists primarily in his greater religious knowledge. He is the "religious expert" who is to preach to them, to lecture to them, and they are to remain passive and silent.<sup>5</sup>

The present study gave strong indications of a similar attitude in Missouri Synod Bible class members. In fully 30 per cent of the classes attenders reported that there was never any disagreement between teachers and pupils, a large percentage of teachers were afraid of genuine disagreement in class, and a major proportion of class time was spent in methods which were largely transmissive. One-third of the

---

<sup>4</sup>Charles K. Ferguson, "Using Informal Methods," Adult Leadership, III (March, 1953), 24.

<sup>5</sup>David J. Ernsberger, A Philosophy of Adult Christian Education (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), pp. 124-25.



attenders thought an important characteristic of a good Bible class student was to be a "good listener."

This image of the Bible class as a place where one sits passively to be taught may be a strong factor against the inclination to attend Bible class. At least some think that it is and trace this feeling back to childhood experience:

Sunday school programs frequently use a formalized learning program to which youngsters are regularly exposed in their daily school life. This has been found effective largely because children haven't lived long and have had few practical opportunities to test ideas; their experience is limited. Hence a rather natural teacher-learner relationship, the child being dependent upon someone who he thinks knows the facts. The child often knows he doesn't know, and he tends to accept.

As a person grows into adulthood, however, his feeling of dependency decreases and he begins to think he knows. He resists reorganizing his attitudes and behaviors which have grown out of his response to many years of experience. Especially does the adult resist someone else's attempt to force him to reorganize himself. The teacher-pupil relationship in adult groups, therefore, must be considerably modified if the program is to be most successful. Mainly it is a problem of recognizing that adults are both dependent and independent. Extremes are dangerous.<sup>6</sup>

Clemmons has pointed out one danger in trying to overcome this resistance of adults to a reorganization of

---

<sup>6</sup>Paul Bergevin and John McKinley, Design for Adult Education in the Church (Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury Press, 1958), pp. xvi-xvii.

attitude and behavior. This is the danger that the teacher will use the threat of biblical orthodoxy or moralistic values to cudgel people into conformity. By doing this he invites peripheral responses which are removed from the learner's inner personal region.<sup>7</sup>

Even more serious, but related to this, may be the development of dishonesty in the classroom. Members may hesitate to be completely open and truthful with one another for fear of being accused of doubt or disloyalty or of failing to conform to what is commonly accepted.<sup>8</sup> The strong concern for maintaining the traditional position of the church evidenced by Missouri Synod laymen in this study gives rise to the suspicion that they may not always be completely open in admitting doubts in class, despite their assurances to the contrary. And where this freedom to express oneself with integrity is lost, the value of the class is seriously impaired.

#### Belief that Spiritual Maturity Has Been Attained

The majority of all groups questioned in the survey

---

<sup>7</sup>Robert S. Clemmons, Dynamics of Christian Education (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 37.

<sup>8</sup>Stanley J. Glen, The Recovery of the Teaching Ministry (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), p. 33.

considered the broadening of religious knowledge to be the prime purpose for attendance at Bible class. It is also quite clear that the majority of those interviewed consider this kind of factual knowledge to be the knowledge needed "to be a good Christian." Significantly, the non-attenders interviewed considered a minimal amount of this knowledge to be adequate for the Christian life.

Many non-attenders evidently equate "knowledge needed to be a good Christian" with knowledge necessary for salvation. The study thus seems to lend support to Glen's judgment. Speaking of the average churchgoer he says:

We have seen . . . that a saving knowledge is regarded in principle as a simple knowledge, and that in so far as it is looked upon as complete it discourages the acquisition of a substantial knowledge. The religious security that many obtain through the conversion experience satisfied them to such an extent that their interest in the Bible does not advance much beyond those favorite texts and passages associated with their conversion.<sup>9</sup>

The same author asserts that many believers consider religion to be a matter between themselves and God and that their problems, doubts, or sins are manageable, if indeed they exist at all. He considers this attitude to reflect a

---

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

form of perfectionism, with saving faith making a person impervious to the problems and doubts in one's life.<sup>10</sup> Glen further charges that a perfectionism which resists teaching rests upon an essential dishonesty. It claims to rest on the grace of God, but in reality it hides from itself its sins and doubts.<sup>11</sup>

In Missouri Synod circles this self-satisfaction with one's religious knowledge may stem in part at least from this church body's educational system, especially its emphasis on the education of children in the parochial school, Sunday school, and confirmation classes. Feucht, as well as many of those interviewed, referred to the "confirmation complex" as limiting participation in adult Bible classes.

Other Lutheran writers have pointed to confirmation as responsible for much misunderstanding in regard to Christian adult education. Huxhold, for example, says:

On the one hand, confirmation has been a source of great strength for the Lutheran church by creating a doctrinally informed laity. On the other hand, confirmation has also misled many Lutherans into believing that they are well informed enough.

Anyone in parish teaching and preaching who has tried

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 32-33.

to kill the notion that confirmation is terminal knows this to be too true. . . .

. . . For the wayward, confirmation was the end. For the stoutly loyal, confirmation was also the end; nothing new could be learned; no fresh insights gained; no examination of one's faith in the light of one's growth of new experiences.<sup>12</sup>

Theiss agrees:

The program of Christian adult education would have been more fully and systematically developed in our Church if we had been more conscious of the Scriptural ideal and less inclined to restrict Christian education to the limits of a parochial school diploma and a Confirmation certificate.<sup>13</sup>

There is not space here to treat in detail the development of the confirmation tradition as it developed in the Lutheran Church. This has been done elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> But it is important to note that the catechetical sermons of the sixteenth century took on a highly intellectual character during the period of Orthodoxy. Catechizations, though

---

<sup>12</sup>Harry N. Huxhold, "Equip the Saints" in Convention Report of the Annual Convention of the Lutheran Education Association July 21 - August 2, 1960, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>New Frontiers in Christian Education, First Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, Illinois: The Lutheran Education Association, 1944), p. 99.

<sup>14</sup>Arthur C. Repp, "Reconstructing Confirmation for Our Day," Proceedings of the Seventy-Sixth Convention of the Western District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod June 12-16, 1961, pp. 26-69.

intended to educate the entire congregation, for practical purposes had to be limited to children in the formal worship services. In his study of confirmation in the Lutheran Church Dr. Repp says of these catechizations: "The continuous repetition at the most elementary level for young and adults was deadening."<sup>15</sup> The question may be asked whether this was partially responsible for the dampening of adult interest in Christian education and the notion that Christian education is not for adults.

Confirmation took on more and more importance during the subsequent periods of Pietism and Rationalism, with the rite of confirmation also receiving more and more emphasis. The elaborate church ceremonies, the celebrations in the home, the expensive gifts, the clothes, the certificate, and especially the coincidence of confirmation with the end of one's primary schooling, are traditions which date from these periods and suggest that confirmation is graduation from the Christian education of the church.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>16</sup>Ad. Haentzschel, "A Philosophy of Christian Education," New Frontiers in Christian Education, First Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1944), p. 9.

Confirmation in the Lutheran Church has always been associated with the two sacraments, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper,<sup>17</sup> a sort of link between the two. Lutherans have tended to think of confirmation as preparation for adult membership in the church. Some Missouri Synod writers even have referred to confirmation as the rite by which one becomes a member of the Lutheran Church!<sup>18</sup> This has undoubtedly strengthened the erroneous idea that confirmation is terminal, or at least a high point, in one's spiritual development and that from this time on the objective is to maintain the level of spiritual development attained. The present study gives evidence that many feel this need can be met adequately by participating in public worship and home devotions.

There appears to be a basic misunderstanding among many Lutherans in regard to the nature of spiritual growth. In speaking of the nature of the instruction in confirmation Repp says:

In speaking of faith necessary for the Lord's Supper the church has frequently interpreted this to mean a specific state of faith or a specific amount of faith

---

<sup>17</sup>Repp, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

as evidenced by knowledge and understanding, something which can be measured and determined in a catechetical examination. In other words, understanding of the doctrine has been substituted for participation in faith.<sup>19</sup>

In discussing adult confirmation classes Repp writes:

The instruction in the Word must not be confused with an information class. Since so much of education is informational, there is a tendency to regard confirmation as an instruction in which we merely inform people about God. This is undoubtedly one of the major hazards of Christian education. Confirmation classes for adults are sometimes referred to as "information classes," to make them more appealing to the unchurched, who are invited to hear about the Christian religion without any personal commitment . . . . This may have the elements of good salesmanship, but the consequences are often appalling. It is so easy for people to equate an understanding about God and His redemption with faith, forgetting that understanding is only the scaffold for faith.<sup>20</sup>

We might say the same thing of adult Bible study. The results of this investigation indicate that the acquisition of theological knowledge is the main reason most adults give for participating in Bible study. There is question whether this aim has beclouded the immediate central aim of Lutheran education, viz., the sanctification of the individual.<sup>21</sup> It would appear that for many, at least, it has. At the very

---

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>21</sup>Allan H. Jahsmann, What's Lutheran in Education? (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p. 19.



least, we can say that growth in the new life is not what most Lutheran adults first think of when they are asked a reason for attending Bible class.

Theological knowledge is of utmost importance because theological facts form the basis of and support faith in the Triune God, whom to know is eternal life. The disciple of Christ has never completely "arrived" so that he need no longer grow also in theological knowledge. Even the word "disciple" itself means "learner" or "student" and suggests that the Christian needs to continue to broaden inadequate conceptions throughout his life.<sup>22</sup> Jesus told His disciples that they were to love God also "with all your mind" (Luke 10:27). One writer in discussing this statement of our Lord says:

Unless I do not understand Him, this means that along with all the other things that God requires of us, He expects us to use the brains He gave us! The plain fact is that in this life and in this tough age there are a lot of hard, tough questions that have to be thought through. Just thinking about them is, of course, no proof of your worth as a Christian, but it is evidence that you are taking things seriously. And it may also help people who put a premium on thinking

---

<sup>22</sup>James D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), p. 86.

to take Christianity seriously. . . .<sup>23</sup>

It may be significant that the writer of that statement is not a member of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. Missouri Synod Lutherans are concerned about doctrine and growth of theological knowledge. But they do not appear to be as concerned about wrestling with theological problems or interpretations of Christian ethics as do those churches with a Calvinistic heritage.<sup>24</sup> The evidence in this study is rather that Missouri Lutherans feel they already have the answers to theological questions and for spiritual health need only to review their knowledge on occasion.

Furthermore, the very high percentage of laymen who defined "knowledge needed to be a good Christian" in terms of Bible knowledge or doctrinal formulations gives rise to the suspicion that there is a basic misunderstanding of the kind of knowledge and the kind of truth which is the essence of Christian faith. At its heart Christianity is a relation-

---

<sup>23</sup>Oliver Powell, Household of Power: The Task and Testing of the Church in Our Time (Boston: United Church Press, 1962), p. 20.

<sup>24</sup>Education for Covenant Living: An Introduction to the Covenant Life Curriculum (Richmond, Virginia: Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1962), p. 60.

ship between God and man, and growth in Christian faith and life is growth in this relationship (John 17:3). Doctrine is only a means to this end. So is Biblical knowledge. To equate an increase of Biblical knowledge with being a better Christian resembles the Gnostic heresy in its equation of salvation with special knowledge.<sup>25</sup>

At least one Missouri Synod scholar has demonstrated that in the Scriptural view "truth" itself is vastly more than the common understanding of the term in Western thought:

The concept of truth in the Old Testament is thus quite different than the concept of truth as it is usually understood in our Western world. Stating briefly once more what we have learned from the texts of the Old Testament and from the secondary sources under consideration, we affirm that truth in the Old Testament is not so much rational as pedagogic; not so much cognitive as ontological. Truth is not only that which is disclosed, but also that which has stability; not merely that which can be deduced, but rather that on which one may depend. Truth is not so much the result of contemplation as it is a stimulant to conduct; it lays claim not so much to precision and accuracy as to unflinching trustworthiness.<sup>26</sup>

The present study suggests that there is widespread misunderstanding of this concept of truth in Missouri Synod

---

<sup>25</sup>Ernsberger, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-15.

<sup>26</sup>Alfred von Rohr Sauer, "The Concept of Truth in the Old Testament," p. 16 (Unpublished paper).

circles. Thinking of truth in terms of "precision and accuracy" rather than in the dynamic way described above may actually discourage Bible study. Having had a thorough training in childhood in parochial school, Sunday school, and confirmation classes, people can feel that they have been adequately "indoctrinated with the truth." Since they do not need to be convinced that what is reported in the Bible actually took place, they feel no need for further study. Furthermore, they have little desire for a more precise understanding of doctrine. Also, because they once received a thorough indoctrination and are expected to have mastered the fundamentals, they may be afraid of being embarrassed should they be called upon to restate some tenet of their faith and be unable to do so accurately. The study indicated that a number of attenders and pastors believe many non-attenders entertain this fear.<sup>27</sup>

#### The Nature and Purpose of Group Bible Study

The doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers has always been a cardinal one in Lutheran theology, but in practice the Lutheran Church has tended to rely heavily on

---

<sup>27</sup>Supra. p. 33.

the pastor for initiating and carrying out the spiritual edification of its members. Whereas Calvinism placed much stress on the lay elder, Lutheranism, with its emphasis on das Predigtamt, tended to make the Word and absolution spoken by the pastor the chief means of spiritual edification. The liturgical revival, while accenting lay participation in worship, has often elevated the dignity of the officiant and weakened the responsibility of the worshiper.<sup>28</sup> The tragedy of this is well stated by Dr. Richard Caemmerer in this way:

The chief obstacle for the exercise of the ministry of the Word by every Christian toward his brother has been one of omission rather than commission. It has been the simple neglect of the horizontal dimension in the body of Christ. Most denominations are stressing the rehabilitation of family life, and with it the restoration of household worship. Curiously the stress on mutual sharing of the Word of God, as well as common reaching up in adoration to God remains weak. Likewise in the attempt to revive intelligent and conscious participation in group and liturgical worship, the horizontal values of ministry from worshiper to worshiper, so richly affirmed in the New Testament, receive meager anticipation. The years of material prosperity have enlarged the Church's activities in fund raising, plant construction, public relations, and evangelism. Lay participation in all of these had been stimulated well. Yet the privilege and duty of each Christian to speak

---

<sup>28</sup>Richard R. Caemmerer, "The Ministry of the Word," Theology in the Life of the Church, edited by Robert W. Bertram (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, c. 1963), pp. 220-21.

the saving Word to his brother first, for the sake of his upbuilding in faith, has often been left untouched.<sup>29</sup>

What Dr. Caemmerer says of liturgical worship in the church service applies equally well to group Bible study. The survey reported above shows that a high percentage of attenders and teachers consider "participation" by members highly desirable in group Bible study, but few regard Bible class as an opportunity for building up fellow members of the Body of Christ. Perhaps this again is related to the widespread feeling that the main purpose of Bible class is to gain more knowledge of the Bible and doctrine. Because the pastor is professionally trained, or because the Bible class teacher has a "Teacher's Manual," members may feel that they are unable to contribute to the class as significantly as the pastor or teacher can. And because he too often views the purpose of the class as impartation of knowledge to his people, the pastor is in danger of failing to "open himself to the healing, transforming power of the fellowship of which he is a part."<sup>30</sup> Indeed, there is some evidence in this study that real ground for this fear exists.

---

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>30</sup>Ernsberger, op. cit., p. 134.

Professor Harry Coiner regards as a sign of Christian immaturity the failure to understand one's relationships in the church as a fellowship of responsibility as well as a fellowship of privilege.<sup>31</sup> The Scriptures indicate that each member of Christ's body is related to every other member. (Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:14-26). Moreover, the failure to exercise this responsibility and to depend on the pastor or preacher to carry it out results in serious loss to the church. The lay Christian who faces the same general set of problems confronting another lay Christian may be in a much better position to help his brother than the pastor of the church.

The point to be made here is that the informal setting of the Bible class can obviously present a far more ideal environment for genuine interpersonal relations than the formal worship service. However, there must be an unthreatening atmosphere in which genuine communication

---

<sup>31</sup>Harry G. Coiner, "The Role of the Laity in the Church," Toward Adult Christian Education, Nineteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association, edited by Donald L. Deffner (River Forest, Illinois: The Lutheran Education Association, 1962), p. 53.

between persons can take place.<sup>32</sup> There must be acceptance of the doubter and love and trust of persons who ask embarrassing questions. Clemmons described people in an ideal group of this type thus:

They will be free enough to say, "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." They will not feel that they are under the threat of "Believe it this way or be damned." They will not force persons to check all their doubts outside the classroom so that when they come in they must conform to whatever the strongest person has to say. That kind of group idolatry will meet with the same fate as Aaron's calf in a mature group where persons are free and responsible.<sup>33</sup>

Establishing this kind of atmosphere in a group is what Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder call "training for progression."<sup>34</sup> In this training the teacher must "accept differences between students in a tolerant fashion, support and encourage the students' efforts to try out new approaches, and reflect reality to the student. . . ." <sup>35</sup> Such training is a

---

<sup>32</sup>Lewis J. Sherrill, The Gift of Power (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 84. Also: Warren H. Schmidt, "The Churchman and the Social Sciences," Toward Adult Christian Education, p. 40.

<sup>33</sup>Clemmons, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>34</sup>O. J. Harvey, David E. Hunt, and Harold M. Schroder, Conceptual Systems and Personality Organization (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1961), p. 343.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.



necessary step if a closed conceptual structure is to be opened to progression.<sup>36</sup>

Some Bible class teachers surveyed appeared to be making an attempt to establish and maintain this kind of atmosphere. However, the increasing number of churches using an "institute" type of Bible class program with short courses of six to twelve weeks seems to militate against the establishment of genuine groups. Just about the time members get to know and trust one another it is time to change classes. No doubt the use of the institute system was responsible for the fact that one teacher questioned could not give the investigator the name of even one member of his class. It is hard to imagine the emergence of an "I-thou" relationship under such circumstances.

We have seen that a large percentage of teachers and attenders consider participation by Bible class members to be highly desirable. This is true for at least two reasons. First, as Frank points out, participation is necessary for promoting attitude change.<sup>37</sup> Secondly, certain studies indicate that greater participation and responsibility in

---

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 335ff.

<sup>37</sup>Jerome D. Frank, Persuasion and Healing (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 98.

carrying out group tasks result in greater satisfaction for the individual.<sup>38</sup> It is therefore significant that those methods which allow for optimum student participation are also those which were most infrequently used in the classes surveyed.

To promote change in the learner and to satisfy him, the participation must be more than superficial. Jahsmann cautions the new teacher thus:

Obviously not all activity is on a level of personal involvement. It can be very superficial and impersonal. In education much activity that has been labeled pupil participation (learning by doing) is more in the nature of "busy work." Such activity in Christian education fails to confront the learner with an issue and a word from God and the challenge to express his own responses to God in his own way.<sup>39</sup>

Clemmons also reminds us that there are levels of participation in a group and asserts that for a level of participation which results in change to the individual, it is necessary for a group to have a quality of

---

<sup>38</sup>Harold J. Leavitt, "Some Effects of Certain Communication Patterns on Group Performance," Readings in Social Psychology, edited by Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore M. Newcomb and Eugene L. Hartley (Third edition; New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1958), pp. 546-63.

<sup>39</sup>Allan Jahsmann, "How You Too Can Teach" (Unpublished manuscript), p. 17.

interrelatedness.<sup>40</sup> Studies of the 1940 U.S. presidential elections, for example, show that the only significant factor in changing vote decisions was the influence of other people.<sup>41</sup> When even the physical setting of the classroom does not allow for participants in a group to face each other (as in most of the classes surveyed), when attenders report that there is never any disagreement between students and teacher (as in 30 per cent of the classes), and when the personnel of the classes is constantly changing, there is serious question whether it is possible to characterize such classes as groups in which members can influence each other in a significant way.

The emphasis on teaching and learning knowledge of factual information may also fail to take into account the importance of emotions in teaching. Judgments and perceptions are influenced by emotions.<sup>42</sup> Inner conflict is a necessary part of change in personality structure,<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Clemmons, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>41</sup> Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1955), p. 32.

<sup>42</sup> Jahsmann, "How You Too Can Teach," p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> Jahsmann, "Application of Procedural Aspects of Psychotherapy to Christian Nurture," p. 53.

including the "change of heart" or spirit with which Christian education at its deepest level must be concerned.<sup>44</sup> As long as emotions are ignored Bible study is likely to be little more than an intellectual exercise and for this reason irrelevant to many church members.

#### Subordination of Teaching Ministry

We have noted the pastors' overwhelming preference for formal worship services over a Bible class. Yet we have also seen that they very often consider the knowledge most important for Christian life a personal knowledge of God and His love. Apparently pastors do not feel that a Bible class can supply this type of knowledge nearly as well as the church service.

The judgment of the pastors in regard to the relative importance of the service and Bible study is possibly more ingrained than it is based on logical reasons. Just as ingrained appeared to be the reasons for many laymen attending worship services in preference to Bible study. Five non-attenders said that they considered Bible class more

---

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

important even though they themselves did not attend.

Other studies indicate that Lutherans generally have tended to subordinate group Bible study to participation in worship. After a limited survey of Lutheran pastors,

Muhlenbruch says:

Traditionally, the Lutheran Church has stressed the Sunday morning worship service as the "high point" of the week for the Christian. Our elaborate church buildings, our development of the liturgy, our emphasis on the "corporate body"--all illustrate this fact. Even today very few pastors would be willing to advise: "If you have to make a choice between Bible class and Sunday morning worship service, I recommend the Bible class."<sup>45</sup>

Blizzard, in a much quoted study, concluded that for most Protestant ministers teaching was a subordinate concern. He reported that the average minister regards the preaching role as being of first importance, followed respectively by the roles of pastor, priest, organizer, administrator, and finally teacher. He estimated that the average pastor spends only 1/20 of his time in the role of teacher, but about 2/3 of his working day is taken up with administrative chores.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup>Jack K. Muhlenbruch, "The Problem of the Sunday Church School in Relation to Multiple Worship Services," Paper delivered to the Lutheran Intersynodical Committee on Parish Education, November 14, 1962. (Mimeographed)

<sup>46</sup>Samuel W. Blizzard, "The Minister's Dilemma," The Christian Century, LXXV (April 25, 1956), 509.

Bruce Reinhart found further evidence that education was distinctly secondary to other concerns in a number of Protestant churches which he surveyed on the West Coast. He points especially to the lower status and pay of ministers and directors of Christian education as compared to the pastors, associate pastors, and ministers of music of the churches.<sup>47</sup> Reinhart traces this marginal position of Christian adult education in the church to the marginality of churches themselves in present-day culture. This marginality results in the educational agencies' serving as supports for the institution of their church rather than as agencies for promoting real spiritual growth.<sup>48</sup>

An indication in the present study that Dr. Reinhart's conclusions also apply to the Missouri Synod is the discovery that a high percentage of pastors view adult Bible classes as agencies for indoctrinating members in the program of the institution. This use of church education for organizational promotion rather than for the nurture of

---

<sup>47</sup> Bruce Reinhart, The Institutional Nature of Adult Christian Education (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), pp. 57ff.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., passim.

genuine Christian faith and life deserves further research because it could be or could become a major source of spiritual blight affecting also the church's adult Bible study program.

Research has indicated that a large percentage of members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod consider the Bible class to be primarily an information-disseminating agency. The purview of this information is the leader of the Bible class. The "information" is to be the traditional view of the Synod, while the teacher of the class is expected to deliver. Pastors, however, generally appear to be far less concerned about consistency of agreement with traditional views than Synod. Methods employed in Bible classes are usually one-way transmission, in keeping with the understanding of the purpose of Bible study.

The understanding of "knowledge needed to be a good Christian" differs widely among non-attenders, attenders, and pastors. Although most non-attenders think of this knowledge as a limited set of basic facts, attenders are more likely to consider a much larger amount of this information to be necessary. Pastors generally view the matter in still another way or consider the knowledge needed to be a good Christian to be a broad base of information.

The most significant factor influencing participation

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND AVENUES FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study has indicated that a large percentage of members of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod consider the Bible class to be primarily an information-dispensing agency. The purveyor of this information is the leader of the Bible class. The "information" is to be the traditional view of the Synod, which the teacher of the class is expected to defend. Pastors, however, generally appear to be far less concerned about uniformity of agreement with traditional views than laymen. Methods employed in Bible classes are usually one-way transmission, in keeping with the understanding of the purpose of Bible study.

The understanding of "knowledge needed to be a good Christian" differs widely among non-attenders, attenders, and pastors. Whereas most non-attenders think of this knowledge as a limited set of basic tenets, attenders are more likely to consider a much larger amount of this information to be necessary. Pastors generally view the matter in this latter way or consider the knowledge needed in terms of personal need of information.

The most significant factor influencing participation



of Missouri Synod Lutheran adults in Bible classes appears to be the presence of another member of the family in the Bible class or other department of the Sunday school. Few look upon the adult Bible class as an opportunity to fulfill their responsibility for nurturing fellow members of the Body of Christ and personal growth in sanctification. This is probably related to the view that the main purpose of the Bible class is to increase factual knowledge.

The attitudes toward education evidenced in this study suggest that while Missouri Synod Lutherans strongly support Christian education, they think of it almost exclusively in terms of additional knowledge. Those who do not attend Bible class generally feel they have all the knowledge of this type that they need for fruitful Christian living. Like a bucket which has been filled with water and needs only to have a small amount of water added from time to time to compensate for evaporation, so the average Missouri Synod Lutheran who does not attend Bible class believes that the replenishment of doctrinal knowledge in the church service is sufficient to keep him in good spiritual shape. Those who do attend Bible class, on the other hand, most often feel that they "can never know enough," and this is another reason why they participate in Bible study.

Thus there are indications that many Missouri Synod Lutherans misunderstand the nature of knowledge and truth and spiritual growth. This misunderstanding most likely has its roots in the traditional patterns of Christian education which have prevailed in the Missouri Synod. This misunderstanding of spiritual life and growth, combined with a failure to take seriously the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, has resulted in an inadequate view of what a Bible class can be and do when the proper point of view, atmosphere, and stimulation are provided.

We have already indicated in the previous chapter that the whole problem of the church becoming institutionalized also in its program of education needs to be studied in greater detail. Bruce Reinhart's book on The Institutional Nature of Adult Christian Education gives cause for alarm if what he says is also true of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

The finding that there is a strong relationship between one's Bible class attendance and habits of other family members indicates that a study of the effect of parental attitudes and practices on children, children on parents, husband on wife, etc., might be significant also in regard to this question of Bible study habits.

Also worthy of further study is the nature of the education Missouri Synod Lutherans receive in childhood and its relationship to later concepts of spiritual growth. Both of these points were among the 17 factors listed in Dr. Feucht's analysis.<sup>1</sup> Other considerations which this present study indicates may limit participation in Bible class are (1) the confirmation complex, (2) inadequate Bible class aims (knowledge only), (3) theological traditions of the Missouri Synod, (4) limitation of the concept of the priesthood of all believers, and (5) the persisting notion that Christian education is mainly for children.

This study was limited to members of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. It might be of value to compare the findings of this study with a similar study of members of churches which generally have a greater participation in group Bible study, such as The Southern Baptist Convention.

In conclusion further study might be given to the hypothesis that the legitimate concern for purity of doctrine may be responsible for an authoritarian attitude and a rather static concept of Christian truth in the approach of many Missouri Synod Lutherans to group Bible study. As long as Lutherans view the Bible class as a place to be indoctrinated

---

<sup>1</sup>supra, p. 12.

into this kind of truth, it will be hard to interest them in group Bible study. Participation will depend largely on external pressures, such as those exerted by institutional propoganda or the need for a place to spend time while children are attending another Sunday school class. To flourish, group Bible study needs to be given the status it deserves as a medium for Christian growth. When designed to provide genuine interaction between fellow Christians, it can be a church's greatest source of vitality.

- Q 1. Suppose you had a personal problem such as that I'm  
 with people who use bad language. I find myself  
 slipping now and then and using bad language, too.  
 How would you feel about mentioning this problem in  
 your class?
- \_\_\_ would never mention it.  
 \_\_\_ probably wouldn't because I would feel uneasy about  
 mentioning it.  
 \_\_\_ probably would, but would feel some uneasiness at  
 doing so.  
 \_\_\_ would want to get help from members of my class and  
 would therefore act.  
 \_\_\_ there is no opportunity for such problem sharing in  
 my class.  
 \_\_\_ other

Notes: Suggestions addressed to Bible class attendees,  
 Suggestions addressed to Bible class teachers,  
 Suggestions addressed to adult church members  
 not attending Bible class,  
 Suggestions addressed to pastors.

APPENDIX

The Instrument Used by the Researcher

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ Code No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Professional church teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Layman \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation of \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Breadwinner \_\_\_\_\_

---

- A\*1. What started you coming to your present Bible class?
- A 2. How regularly have you attended Bible class in the last three months?
- A 3. Suppose you had a personal problem such as: When I'm with people who use bad language, I find myself slipping now and then and using bad language, too. How would you feel about mentioning this problem in your class?
- \_\_\_\_\_ would never mention it
  - \_\_\_\_\_ probably wouldn't because I would feel uneasy about mentioning it
  - \_\_\_\_\_ probably would, but would feel some uneasiness at doing so
  - \_\_\_\_\_ would want to get help from members of my class and would therefore ask
  - \_\_\_\_\_ there is no opportunity for such problem sharing in my class
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other
- 

\*Code: A=Questions addressed to Bible class attenders.  
T=Questions addressed to Bible class teachers.  
N=Questions addressed to adult church members not attending Bible class.  
P=Questions addressed to pastors.

A 4. Do people in your class ever disagree with your teachers?

A 5. Suppose you began believing something that you knew was contrary to the teachings of our church, would you mention this?

A 6. If you could ask for any change in the program of your Bible class, what would you suggest?

TA 7. Your Bible class session lasts about how long?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

TA 8. In this class session what would you estimate to be the approximate percentages of the time spent in  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Lecture  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Discussion with most of the conversation taking place between teacher and individual class members.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Discussion with most of conversation taking place between class members.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Other: (Reading, movies, reports, questionnaires, etc.)

TA 9. What materials do you use in the class most of the time?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Bible only.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Bible and a published guide.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Bible and a locally produced outline.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Other material, not necessarily the study of the Bible itself. What?

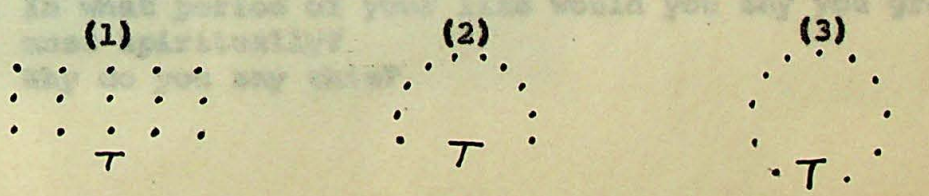
TA 10. How well do you feel about the room in which your Bible class meets? (size, comfort, etc.)

TA 11. How would you describe a good Bible class student?

TA 12. How would you describe a good Bible class teacher?

T 13. What have you studied in the last year?

T 14. What is the seating arrangement like in your Bible class?





- AN 31. Do you have family devotions in your home?  
 \_\_\_ 1. Everyday or almost  
 \_\_\_ 2. Most of the time  
 \_\_\_ 3. Often, but less than half of time  
 \_\_\_ 4. Once in a while  
 \_\_\_ 5. Never
- AN 32. How would you compare the importance of worship services to group Bible study?  
 Why?
- AN 33. How much formal education have you had?
- AN 34. Did you attend Lutheran Day School? \_\_\_ High School? \_\_\_  
 How many years of Sunday school? \_\_\_
- AN 35. About how many Sundays a year do you attend church services?
- AN 36. Of what church organizations are you a member?
- AN 37. Of what community organizations?  
 \_\_\_ service clubs: Rotary, Lions, Jr. Chamber, Etc.  
 \_\_\_ Youth organizations: Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Scouts, 4-H  
 \_\_\_ Community groups: school board, planning commission  
 \_\_\_ School groups: PTA, homeroom mothers, etc.  
 \_\_\_ Political groups or party work  
 \_\_\_ Social groups: clubs, grange, etc.  
 \_\_\_ Service groups: fire company, hospital auxiliary, etc.  
 \_\_\_ Community welfare drive: United Fund, polio foundation, family service bureau, etc.
- PTA 38. Let's imagine that you are teaching a Bible class. A question comes up for discussion which is not answered by the Bible in just so many words. If the group did not arrive at the answer which you have been taught to be correct, would you straighten them out?
- P 39. What do you consider to be the main purpose of Bible class?



- P 40. If a regular member of your church were able or willing to come to only one session on a Sunday morning, which experience would you rather see him have--a worship service without communion or a Bible class?  
Why?
- P 41. What do you expect your Bible class to accomplish? What is its chief value to you in your work?
- A 42. Why do you attend Bible class?
- N 43. Why don't you attend a Bible class?
- AP 44. Why do you think so many others do not attend Bible class in your church?
- NP 45. Why do you think those who attend do so?
- P 46. How important do you consider your adult Bible classes to be for your members?  
Why?

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bergevin, Paul, and John McKinley. Design for Adult Education in the Church. Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury Press, 1958.

Bible Class Curriculum, The: Preliminary Studies Including a Report of The Bible Class Curriculum Conference, May 20-21, 1954 and an Interview by Mail. The Board for Parish Education. The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. n.d. (mimeographed)

"Bible Study," Lutheran Cyclopedia. Edited by Erwin W. Lueker. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954. Pp. 111-12.

Blizzard, Samuel W. "The Minister's Dilemma," The Christian Century, LXXV (April 25, 1956), 508-10.

Caemmerer, Richard R., Feeding and Leading. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962.

----- . "The Ministry of the Word," Theology in the Life of the Church. Edited by Robert W. Bertram. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963. Pp. 215-32.

Clemmons, Robert S. Dynamics of Christian Education. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958.

Cox, Robert M. "Let the Bible Speak," International Journal of Religious Education, XXXIX (February, 1963), 27-28.

Deffner, Donald L., editor. Toward Adult Christian Education: A Symposium. Nineteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association. River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1962.

Education for Covenant Living. An Introduction to the Covenant Life Curriculum. Richmond, Virginia: Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1962.

- Ernsberger, David J. A Philosophy of Adult Christian Education. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959.
- Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, The. Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Fort Wayne, Indiana, June 18-24, 1941. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941..
- Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, The. Proceedings of the Thirty-Ninth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Saginaw, Michigan, June 21-29, 1944. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944 .
- Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, The. Proceedings of the Fortieth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Chicago, Illinois, July 20-29, 1947. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947 .
- Fallow, Wesner. The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church. Chicago: The Macmillan Company, 1946.
- Feucht, Oscar E. "Bible Study in the Life of the Church," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXIII (July, 1962) 401-09.
- . Forward in Bible Study: A Manual of Resources for the Bible Study Advance 1959 to 1962. St. Louis: The Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, n.d.
- Frank, Jerome D. Persuasion and Healing. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961.
- Fritze, Edwin J. Bible-Reading Practices in The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. Report on a Survey conducted under the auspices of the Bible-in-the-Home Committee for the Council on Bible Study of the Board for Parish Education of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. River Forest, Illinois: The Lutheran Education Association, 1955.

- Fry, John R. A Hard Look at Adult Christian Education. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961.
- Gilbert, Arthur. "Moral Character: How Shaped?," The Christian Century, LXXIX (May 23, 1962), 654-56.
- Glen, Stanley J. The Recovery of the Teaching Ministry. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960.
- Good, Carter V., and Douglas E. Scates. Methods of Research: Educational, Psychological, Sociological. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954.
- Hanson, Joseph John. Our Church Plans for Adults: A Manual on Adult Christian Education. Valley Forge, Pa.: The Judson Press, 1962.
- Harvey, O. J., David E. Hunt, and Harold M. Schroder. Conceptual Systems and Personality Organization. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1961.
- Hunter, David R. Christian Education as Engagement. New York: The Seabury Press, 1963.
- Huxhold, Harry N. "Equip the Saints," Convention Report of the Annual Convention of the Lutheran Education Association, July 31-August 2, 1960. N. p., 1960. Pp. 1-13.
- "Interpretation of the 1961 District Bible Class Statistics" Board of Parish Education Bulletin Number 154. St. Louis: Board of Parish Education of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, June, 1962. (Mimeographed) Pp. 39-44.
- Jahsmann, Allan H. "Application of Procedural Aspects of Psychotherapy to Christian Nurture." Unpublished paper.
- . "How You Too Can Teach." Unpublished paper.
- . What's Lutheran in Education? St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960.
- Katz, Elihu and Paul F. Lazarfeld. Personal Influence. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1955.

- Landis, Benson Y., editor. Yearbook of American Churches. Edition for 1963. New York: National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1963.
- Lane, Howard, and Mary Beauchamp. Human Relations in Teaching: The Dynamics of Helping Children Grow. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955.
- Little, Sara. Learning Together in the Christian Fellowship. Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1956.
- Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, The. Nineteen Sixty-One Statistical Yearbook of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. Compiled by Bureau of Statistics, Armin Schroeder and Cecil E. Pike. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962.
- Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, The. Proceedings of the Forty-Second Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod Assembled at Houston, Texas, June 17-26, 1953. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953.
- Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, The. Proceedings of the Forty-Fifth Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod at Cleveland, Ohio, June 20-29, 1962. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962 .
- Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, The. Reports and Memorials, Forty-Fourth Regular Convention, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, June 17-27, 1959. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959 .
- Mayer, James W. "The Church as the People of God United in the Word of God" Concordia Theological Monthly, XXXIII (November, 1962), 658-69.
- "Means of Grace," Lutheran Cyclopedia. Edited by Erwin L. Lueker. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954. Pp. 424-29.
- Miller, Randolph Crump. Biblical Theology and Christian Education. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956.
- . Christian Nurture and the Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961.

- Muhlenbruch, Jack K. "The Problem of the Sunday Church School in Relation to Multiple Worship Services." Paper delivered to the Lutheran Intersynodical Committee on Parish Education, November 14, 1962. (Mimeographed)
- New Frontiers in Christian Education. First Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association. River Forest, Illinois: The Lutheran Education Association, 1944.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956.
- Overstreet, H. A. The Mature Mind. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1949.
- "Parish Education," Lutheran Cyclopedia. Edited by Erwin W. Lueker. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954. Pp. 780-91.
- Parten, Mildred. Surveys, Polls, and Samples: Practical Procedures. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950.
- Powell, Oliver. Household of Power: The Task and Testing of the Church in our Time. Boston: United Church Press, 1962.
- Pruyser, Paul W. and Karl A. Menninger. "Religious and Spiritual Values," Becoming the Complete Adult. Edited by Simon Doneger. New York: Association Press, 1962. Pp. 95-118.
- Reinhart, Bruce. The Institutional Nature of Adult Christian Education. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962.
- Repp, Arthur C., editor. One Hundred Years of Christian Education. Fourth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association. River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1947.
- "Reconstructing Confirmation for Our Day." Proceedings of the Seventy-Sixth Convention of the Western District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, June 12-16, 1961. Pp. 26-69.

- , "Teaching the Word to Adults," Parish Education Bulletin Number 61. St. Louis: Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, March, 1963. (Mimeographed), Pp. 1-23.
- Sauer, Alfred von Rohr. "The Concept of Truth in the Old Testament." Unpublished paper.
- Sherrill, Lewis Joseph. The Gift of Power. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955.
- Smart, James D. The Teaching Ministry of the Church. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954.
- Surburg, Raymond F. "Historical Survey of the Lutheran Philosophy of Education," Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education. Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association. Edited by L.G. Bickel and Raymond F. Surburg. River Forest, Illinois: Lutheran Education Association, 1956. Pp. 7-36.
- Symonds, Percival M. What Education Has to Learn from Psychology. 2nd edition. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, n.d.
- Whitman, Ardis. "The Conflict Between Churchgoers and Their Ministers," Redbook, CXX (January, 1963), 38-39, 115-118.
- Ziegler, Earl F. Christian Education of Adults. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958.