6-1-1957

Luther's Principals of Education

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LUTHER'S

PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION

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
Bachelor of Divinity

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by

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June 1957

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

A. Problem and Purpose of Research

The title of the research is "Luther's Principles of Education." The problem was to learn what the basic educational principles of Luther were. Through general reading, the writer had come to look upon Luther as a great educator as well as religious reformer. The purpose of this research, therefore, was to gather enough data on Luther's educational views as to be able to draw specific conclusions as to his over-all principles. After the data were gathered, the writer arranged these views under headings of major principles in a systematic manner.

B. Validation of Study

The importance of this research lies in the fact that to the writer's knowledge, Luther's views of education have never been gathered under the heading of broad principles; although his views have been treated extensively by Painter and Bruce. The topic has had personal relevance to the writer in that he has gained a better understanding of Luther's principles of education and thus has grown in appreciation of good Christian education. Along with this benefit, there has been the added value of becoming personally acquainted with the classic writings of Dr. Luther and becoming more

intimately familiar with the greatness of the Reformer.

C. Definition and Limitations of Study

"Principles" is used in the title, "Luther's Principles of Education," in the sense that Webster defines it as "a fundamental truth." Thus, each chapter states a fundamental truth of education that Luther set forth in his writings. "Education" is used in the widest sense of both "instruction" and "learning" and covers all types of instruction by the home, Church, and State. The learning is on all levels, from the most elementary in the home to specialization in the university. The wording of the "fundamental truth" or principle is the subjective choice of the writer, and another might readily state it differently. The "fundamental truth," however, is basic to Luther's thinking and must be recognized as such. Under the general headings are subheadings dealing with specific emphasis of Luther. These might also be considered principles.

The study does not have as its purpose the defense of the principles or the defense of Luther as an Educator. The worth of the principles and the prominence of Luther are both assumptions on which the thesis was predicated. Nor is the purpose to present all that Luther ever wrote on education or to present a detailed account of Luther's philosophy of education.

D. Source and Method of Research

Luther's principles of education are drawn primarily from his own writings directly and particularly from his "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," written in 1530, and his "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of All the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools" in 1524. These two are translated into English in F. Painter's book, Luther on Education. The writer is also indebted to Paul Kretzmann's compilation of Luther's quotes on education in his book, Luther on Education in the Christian Home and and School. Numerous references were to be found in Luther's two catechisms, sermons, and other writings and furnished ample supply for determining Luther's principles of education.

Many of Luther's principles of education are enriched by his experiences in everyday life. Likewise, his theological views have a direct relation to his educational principles. Wherever it is possible, his life and theological views were given briefly to provide a background to the greater understanding of the principles. Occasionally a comparison with past medieval education was mentioned so as to give the reader a clear picture and a deep appreciation of Luther's contribution to the educational field.

The method of research was to find basic emphasis in the writings of Luther, to collect these views, and finally, to arrange them in systematic order under general principles.

The reader will find Luther's views divided into nine basic principles. These general headings are subdivided for convenience and better understanding. At the conclusion of each chapter is a brief summary tying together the findings.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION IS TO BE CHRISTIAN

A. Education is to Present the Triune God

The primary principle of education for Luther was that education be Christain. It is this principle that pervades all other principles. That education is to be Christian can be shown by the fact that the god, which was to be presented in education, was not some indefinite supreme being. It was rather the Christian Triune God. It is in this name that parents are to instruct their children daily. "In the morning, when you rise, you shall bless yourself with the holy cross and say: In the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen."[1]

Luther clearly defines this Triune God in his three articles of faith in the catechism. The work of the Triune God is to serve as the subject and content of religious instruction. Education is to furnish instruction in the will of the Triune God, who has created, redeemed and called every Christian to be His own. In this presentation, the act of redemption is central. Education must be Christian, and if it is to be Christian, the work of Christ must be central. In the words of Luther, it is Christ who:

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[1]Martin Luther, "The Small Catechism," Triglot Concordia: Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 557.

> has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. . . .[2]

Only if education presents clearly the work of Christ and the doctrine of the Triune God can it be called Christian.

B. Education is to be for the Entire Man

That education is to be Christian in nature can likewise be gathered from its purpose. The purpose of education, according to Luther, is to prepare the entire man, body and soul, for service to the Triune God. Christ has redeemed man that he might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness.[3] For this reason, Luther never thought of education as being strictly secular with no Christian basis or religious with no practical application.

This concern for the entire man is brought out clearly in Luther's "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," where the first part is headed, "The Spiritual Benefit or Injury arising from Support or Neglect of Schools,". and the second part, "The Temporal Benefit or Injury arising

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[2]Ibid., p. 545.

[3]Ibid.

from the Support or Neglect of Schools."[4] Life in order to be lived in its fullness must contain religious as well as secular education. Luther knew this, and therefore, encouraged the Christian education of the entire man. In his "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," Luther prays that God may soften the hearts of the leaders to attend to the neglected youth and with the help of God

> so counsel and aid them as to attain to a happy Christian social order in respect to both body and soul, with all fullness and abounding plenty, to the praise and honor of God the Father, through Jesus Christ our Savior.[5]

Thus, we see that in education the concern of Luther was for the entire man, body and soul, that he be equipped to live his full life to the praise and honor of God. This meant that education must be Christian.

C. Education is to be Christian on all Levels of Learning

Luther believed that education was to be Christian on

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[4]Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," Luther on Education, translated from German by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), pp. 223, 242. Hereafter referred to as "Sermon on Sending Children to School."

[5]Martin Luther, "Letter to Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," Luther on Education, translated from German by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 209. Hereafter referred to as "Letter on Behalf of Schools."

all levels of learning, including elementary and secondary schools and universities. In his letter to the nobility in 1530, Luther writes, "Above all, in schools of all kinds the chief and most common lesson should be the Scriptures, and for the young boys the Gospel."[6] If the schools of higher learning could not be Christian, Luther in the "Letter on Behalf of Schools," says:

> I should prefer, it is true that our youth be ignorant and dumb rather than that the universities and convents should remain as the only sources of instruction open to them. For it is my earnest intention, prayer, and desire that these schools of Satan either be destroyed or changed into Christian schools.[7]

Luther, in designating the schools as non-Christian had in mind the false Roman Catholic doctrine being taught and the scholastic method being used in the schools. His concern is that the schools be converted into Christian schools. Any school which did not present the true faith should be destroyed. This denounciation of false teaching might apply equally to schools with no Christian instruction. In either case, there would be no question in the mind of Luther but that the schools must be made Christian.

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[6]Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Respecting the Reformation of the Christian Estate," Luther's Primary Works, edited by Henry Wace and C. Buchheim (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896), p. 233. Hereafter referred to as "To the Christian Nobility."

[7]Luther, "Letter on Behalf of Schools," p. 175.

D. The Devil Opposes Christian Education

That education must be Christian can be seen from Luther's attitude toward all which opposes Christian education. Anything which hindered Christian education was considered by Luther as the work of the devil. It was the devil, he was sure, who was behind the indifference of his day. It was the devil who made people so reluctant to support schools financially and send their children to receive a Christian education. Because of this indifference and disregard for Christian education, Luther admonishes the nobles, "great Christian zeal is needed to overcome the silent, secret, and artful machinations of the devil."[8] The indifference which the people displayed is nothing less than a gross sin of ingratitude and forgetfulness of God's benefits. The closing prayer of Luther's "Sermon on Sending Children to School" asks God for forgiveness for these very sins:

> God grant that we may follow His Word, to the praise and honor of our dear Lord, for His precious blood so graciously shed for us, and preserve us from the horrible sin of ingratitude and forgetfulness of His benefits.[9]

The line is clearly drawn. He who does not support Christian education is on the side of the devil. Rather than hinder, it is the duty of everyone to encourage Christian education.

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[8] Ibid., p. 173

[9] Luther, "Sermon on Sending Children to School," p. 271.

E. Education is to be Based upon the Bible

In order for education to be Christian and to reveal the Triune God, it must be based upon the Bible. Luther's great watchword was: "Make the people acquainted with the Word of God."[10] Luther was certain that the Bible revealed God's plan of salvation, that the Word of God was the sole source of faith, the sole guide for a religious life, and hence, the basic text for education. The Scriptures were the vineyard in which man was to exercise himself and labor. The stringent requirements which Luther put upon Biblical learning might surprise one:

> Is it not proper and right that every human being, by the time he has reached his tenth year, should be familiar with the holy Gospels, in which the very core and marrow of his life is bound?[11]

Luther continues:

> The soul can do without everything except the Word of God. Without this it suffers need. But when it has the Word of God, it needs nothing more, but has in the word enough food, joy, peace, light, art, righteousness, truth, freedom, and every good thing in abundance.[12]

Luther was emphatic about the importance of the study of Scripture because it was here that man found his Savior

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[10]Levi Seeley, History of Education (Third revised edition, New York: American Book Co., c.1914), p. 173.

[11]Samuel Parker, The History of Modern Elementary Education (Boston: The Athenaeum Press, c.1912), p. 44.

[12]Ibid.

revealed. Man no longer needed the intermediary priesthood. Because of the Reformation, the truth was uncovered that man approaches God directly through Christ. Each person could go to the Scriptures and there lay hold of the promises of God by faith. Everyone, therefore, had a responsibility for his own soul. He must for his own spiritual welfare learn the Scriptures. For this reason, the chief lesson in all schools should be the Holy Scriptures.[13] The very fact that they were to be the chief lesson shows that education according to Luther was to be Christian in character.

F. The Catechism is to be the Religious Textbook

Because of the ignorance of the people revealed in the Saxon visitation of 1528 in the basic knowledge of Scripture and the Christian truths, Luther realized that if he were to have Christian and Bible-based education some simple textbook must be written for this purpose. Although he had hoped to write such a textbook earlier, this urgent need hastened the composition. The result was that both the Small Catechism and the Large Catechism were published in the year 1529. The Small Catechism appeared first in the form of tablets which were to be hung in the homes for easy instruction. Luther wanted both catechisms to be used by

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[13]Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility," p. 233.

all the people, the youth, parents, preachers, and teachers. Luther thought very highly of his Small Catechism and never tired of reviewing it:

> Do not think the catechism is a little thing to be read hastily and cast aside. Although I am a doctor, I have to do just as a child and say word for word every morning and whenever I have time the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Psalms. I have to do it every day, and yet I cannot stand as I would.[14]

Likewise, his Large Catechism was to be a means of instruction for the common person. In his introduction to his catechetical sermons from which the catechism was later taken, Luther sets forth his objective with the words: "This sermon is designed and undertaken that it might be an instruction for children and the simple-minded."[15] While this was true, the Large Catechism was in particular to enable the less-educated pastors to fulfill their duty. They were to study the catechism for their own edification as well as for the instruction of their people.

Dallmann quotes Philip Schaff as saying concerning Luther's Small Catechism:

> It exhibits his almost apostolic gift of expressing the deepest things in the plainest language for the common people. . . . It makes an epoch in the history

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[14]Gustav Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), p. 237.

[15]F. Bente, editor, "Historical Introduction to the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church," Concordia Triglotta (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 61.

> of religious instruction: it purged it from popish superstitions, and brought it back to Scriptural purity and simplicity.[16]

From these words, one can gather what an outstanding contribution Luther's cathechism was to religious education. It brought back once again the Scriptural basis and Christian character to education.

From what has preceeded, one can see the important emphasis Luther placed upon the principle, "Education is to be Christian." Without the Scriptures, which are the Word of God, there could be no Christian education, and without Christian education, there was no purpose in education. For the purpose of education was to fit the entire Christian man to serve the Triune God here and in eternity.

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[16]William Dallmann, "Luther is the World's Greatest Catechist," Lutheran School Journal, LXXXII (Nov., 1946), 116.

CHAPTER III

PARENTS HAVE THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION

A. Authority of Parents

Parents, according to Luther, stand in the place of God in relation to their children. There is no greater authority on earth than that of father and mother. While the child is primarily responsible to God, yet on this earth he is directly responsible to his parents, who are the special stewards of God. The authority that parents have is not because of their person, but because of the authority God has put in the office of parenthood in the Fourth Commandment and elsewhere in Scripture. The parents are priest and priestess and prime provider of the spiritual and physical wants of the child. With this authority comes also the obligation to carry out the function of priest and priestess. In his Exposition of Genesis 10:1-12, Luther points out that parents are given authority over their children that they might educate and teach them the Word of God, to fear Him, and to believe in Him. The father is to hold the office over his children and household which the bishop holds over his people: "Also, dass ein Vater eigentlich ein Bischof and Pfarrherr seines Hauses sein soll."[1] Likewise, in his sermon on Exodus 20:12,

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[1]Martin Luther, "Predigt über, Mose 10:1-12," Saemmtliche Schriften, edited by J. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1894), III, 194.

Luther calls to mind the great privilege that parents have. The children when they come into this world are like hungry, thirsty, naked, and poor people. The parents have opportunity to perform many great works to God through service to their children. A home might be conceived of as a hospital where the father cares for his children. Even as God provides for His creatures, so the father and mother in the home have all the names and offices of God. They become like God to their children, "denn sie sind Regenten, Bischöfe, Pabst, Doctor, Pfarrherr, Prediger, Schulmeister, Richter, und Herr."[2]

While parents are in the place of God, yet this authority does not extend beyond the Word of God. Parents are not allowed to teach their children as if there were no God who has commanded differently and as if they themselves were lords and gods in the place of God. They have the right to teach their children only those things that are in conformity with God's command. Luther brings this out clearly in his sermon on the wedding of Cana, John 2:1-11:

> Denn Vater und Mutter auch shuldig sind, ja, eben darum Vater und Mutter sind von Gott gemacht, dass sie die Kinder nicht nach ihrem Duenkel und eigeiner Andacht lehren und zu Gott fuehren sollen, sondern nach den Geboten Gottes, wie auch St. Paulus sagt Eph. 6:4.[3]

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[2]Martin Luther, "Predigt uber 2 Moses 20:12," Saemmtliche Schriften, edited by J. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1894), III, 1096.

[3]Martin Luther, "Am andern Sonntage nach Epiphanii," Saemmtliche Schriften, edited by J. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1894), XI, 472.

Luther wrote his Small Catechism that it might be a guide for the parent in religious instruction. The catechism begins, "The Ten Commandments, as the Head of the Family should Teach Them in a Simple Way to His Household."[4] Parents have, therefore, authority to teach their children nothing but what is in conformity with the Word of God.

B. Parents are not to let Children have Freedom of Choosing Wrong Education.

Luther states in his Exposition of John 2:13 that children are not to be their own masters, but are to be under the guidance and authority of their parents. "Aber," says Luther, "von Natur sind die Kinder so geartet dass sie gerne sehen, wenn man ihnen den zuegel schiessen laesst."[5] Because children have this tendency to be ruled by their natural inclinations, it is necessary for parents to discipline them. It is impossible for the young to care for themselves and to know what is good for them. If the choice of education is left to them, they may choose that which is harmful to their soul. Therefore, God has commanded the older to instruct the young. Luther writes, "Eltern, die ihre Kinder

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[4]Martin Luther, "The Small Catechism," Triglot Concordia: Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 539.

[5]Martin Luther, "Auslegen über die 1 Epistel St. Johannis," Saemmtliche Schriften, edited by John G. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1893), IX, 1543.

allzusehr lieben, lassen ihnen den Muthweillen, die thun im Grunde nichts anders, als dass sie dieselben hassen."[6]

The parental rule over children, however, is not to be harsh or loveless. Experience shows that love will accomplish more than slavish fear or force. Luther reminds parents that they should remember that they, too, have a master and Lord in heaven. Severe punishment and lovelessness can result in two extreme attitudes of the child. It can either make him hate his parents and despise all authority or it can make him feel dejected and discouraged so that he goes through all his life being easily discouraged and despondent.[7] Luther recalled in his childhood when his parents were unreasonable in their discipline. His father once whipped him so severely that he fled and it was a long time before his father gained his confidence again. Likewise, his mother beat him severely for taking a nut. Luther was not against parent's punishing their children, but the punishment should vary according to the seriousness of the offense and the punishment should be administered in love with a view of reward if the child is good. "One should punish in such a way that the apple and the rod go together."[8] Parents should

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[6]Ibid., 1544.

[7]Gustav Marius Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), p. 58.

[8]Ibid., p. 58.

also seek to understand their individual children and suit the training and discipline according to the particular child.

Thus, while parents were not to allow their child to grow up undisciplined, they were also not to be unreasonably severe in their correction. The teaching of the parents was to be firm, yet governed by love. Luther draws the conclusion that parents spoil their children in two ways, "either through too much pampering and over-indulgence, or through too great severity and embittering. One must keep within bounds on either side."[9]

C. Parents are to have Ability to Teach

If parents are to instruct and guide their children in the fear of the Lord, it is important that they themselves be educated in the principles of the Christian faith. Luther felt so strongly over this matter that he writes, "No one should be a father unless he is able to instruct his children in the Ten Commandments and in the Gospel, so that he may bring up true Christians."[10]

There were three types of parents who were neglecting their divine duty to teach in Luther's day: (1) One type was so lacking in piety that like the ostrich, they hardened

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[9]Ibid., p. 218.

[10]Bruce, op. cit., p. 214.

themselves against their own offspring; (2) Others were too ignorant to raise their children in the proper manner; (3) Still others, while they had the piety and intelligence to instruct, were constantly burdening themselves with cares and labors so that their children were nonetheless neglected.[11]

Parents who neglected to teach their children would have to bear the sins of the children as if committed themselves. They should be particularly careful in the kind of example they set. They ought to live clean and godly lives since children easily learn shameful words and oaths. Parents must have the proper attitude as to what is important in this life if they are to guide and instruct their children correctly. Luther complains that in his day "They [the parents] have no other solicitude than that their children acquire an imposing bearing, learn to dance and dress, and cut a figure in society."[12]

The head of the family in particular has the obligation to instruct his children in the Christian faith and ideals:

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[11]Martin Luther, "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," Luther on Education, translated from the German by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 179. Hereafter referred to as "Letter on Behalf of Schools.

[12]F. Painter, Luther on Education, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 125.

> The Ten Commandments, The Creed, and the Lord's Prayer are the most necessary parts which every Christian should learn to repeat word for word, and which our children should be accustomed to recite daily when they arise in the morning, when they sit down to their meals, and when they retire at night. . . ."[13]

The catechism is so arranged purposely by Luther that the head of the house can ask his children and the entire household questions pertaining to Christian faith and life.

D. Parents are to Support Education

During Luther's time, people had many excuses for not sending their children to school. The saying was that they could not send their children to schools and monasteries because of the evil reputation and poor education which they had and offered. Luther gets beneath the problem and says that the real reason is selfishness and hollow piety. They formerly sought security and temporal blessings for their children by sending them to the monasteries and priesthood. Now that the monasteries are no longer places of idle purpose, the people refuse to send them and prefer that their children enter into business and commerce. The real reason is that they are "worshippers of Mammon."[14] Luther wonders where the merchant would be if there were no clergymen or scholars. Rather humorously, he writes:

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[13] Ibid., p. 121

[14] Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," Luther on Education, translated by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 262.

> Without scholars it would not be long till business men in their perplexity would be ready to dig a learned man out of the ground ten yards deep with their fingers; for the merchant will not long remain a merchant, if preaching and the administration of justice cease.[15]

If the parents really had the welfare of their children, the Church, and government in mind, they would ask how they might best educate them to lead a godly life.

If their children are talented, parents should spare no effort and time or cost to train the children to be civil and ecclesiastical leaders. As Luther says:

> If they are talented, have them learn and study something, [that they may be employed for whatever need there is to have them instructed and trained in a liberal education, that men may be able to have their aid in government and whatever is necessary].[16]

There are three things that should motivate parents according to Luther in his "Letter on Behalf of Schools": (1) Gratitude should motivate the parents since they no longer have to contribute large sums of money for indulgences, masses, endowments and so on; (2) Fine schools and competent Christian teachers should motivate the parents, for "excellent and learned young men" were available as teachers; (3) Finally, the greatest motive of all should be the command and will of God, this above all should prompt the people to send

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[15] Ibid., p. 262.

[16] Martin Luther, "The Large Catechism," Triglot Concordia: Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 631.

their children to school and support education.[17]

In summary, parents have the divine right and responsibility to educate their children in the Word of God. The responsibility is primarily their's to guide and instruct the children. Because of this great responsibility, the parents must themselves have the ability to teach. They will, likewise, have a great desire to encourage and support education the best they can, being motivated primarily by the command and will of God.

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[17]Luther, "Letter on Behalf of Schools," pp. 174-176.

CHAPTER IV

CIVIL RULERS HAVE THE RIGHT AND DUTY TO COMPEL EDUCATION FOR THE WELFARE OF THE CHURCH AND STATE

A. Rulers have the Right to Make Education Compulsary

Education in the Middle Ages was generally in control of the Church and taught by the Church for the welfare of the Church. With the Reformation, the Holy Scriptures became the rule and authority of faith and life. No longer was the Church the supreme authority. The papacy no longer held both the spiritual and secular powers, but the two were now distinct as to their sphere of operation. Both powers were instituted by God and each in its own sphere was to be respected and honored. The State was ordained of God for its function, even as the Church was ordained for its function.

The Church for Luther did not have the right to say that the State must not exercise its authority over the Church. There is no such thing as the spiritual estate existing over and above the temporal. All Christians are of the spiritual state, and there is no difference among them. "A cobbler, a smith, a farmer, each has the work and office of his calling, and yet they are all alike consecrated priests

and bishops. . . ."[1] Because there is no difference in degree of authority, the temporal government has the divine right to carry out its commission without respect of persons, whether it affect pope, bishops, or anyone else. The ruler has authority over all to punish wickedness and protect the innocent. By the same right, he has the authority to compel education for the good of all.

Basically, the civil authorities receive their authority from God through the Fourth Commandment. What the parent is not able to do he must delegate to others. The civil rulers are "fathers" of the nation and the citizens.[2] They are "fathers" in that God gives the people through them food, house, home, and the same protection and security that He does through the parents. Because the parents, even if they were qualified, can not find sufficient time to instruct their children properly, it is all the more the duty of the mayors and councils to watch over the education of the young. They will be held accountable to God if they do not day and night with all their power seek the welfare of their citizens, for into their hands is committed the happiness, security, and life of the people.

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[1]Martin Luther, "The Liberty of a Christian Man," Luther Primer, translated from German by Albert Steinhauser (Columbia, S. C.: Survey Publishing Company, c.1917), p. 20.

[2]Martin Luther, "The Large Catechism," Triglot Concordia: Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 623.

Luther reasons that if the government can compel citizens to bear spear and weapons and mount ramparts in time of war, much more do they have the right to compel the people to send their children to school. This, too, is a sort of warfare, only this being waged against the devil. It is the devil's purpose to make a group of ignorant people out of Germany and then do with them as he pleases. Preachers, curates, scribes, physicians, and schoolmasters are necessary and desperatly needed, "wherefore let magistrates lay these things to heart and let them keep a vigilant lookout; and, whenever they see a promising lad, have him pledged at school."[3]

Luther's letter to Elector John of Saxony on November 22, 1526, states that the elector not only has the right to compel students to attend, but he has, likewise, the right to compel the people to support schools and parishes. Luther fears that if the young are neglected and are not trained, the land will be filled with wild, loose-living people. Education is important for the maintenance of law and order and if the towns and villages do not support schools, the elector, as supreme guardian, has the right, and duty

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[3]Samuel Parker, "Elementary Schools of Religious Purposes. The Reformation," The History of Modern Elementary Education (Boston: Ginn and Company, the Athenaeum Press, c.1912), p. 50.

to force the people to support education.[4]

Because of his views as stated above, "Luther must be recognized as the first modern reformer to advocate compulsory education."[5] The right to select and train leaders in schools was already used by the Church in pre-Reformation days. With Luther, the authority, however, was also given to the State.

B. Education is to be for Welfare of Church and State

The two great reasons, which were always prominent in Luther's mind for the maintenance of schools, were the welfare of the Church and the needs of the State. Of these two, there is no question but that he thought that the most important education was spiritual, to make saints out of sinners, to restore life to the dying, and to change the servants of the devil into children of God.

Responsibility for education is divided equally between Church and State for their mutual welfare. The Church has power over things divine and spiritual and the State over the things material. Both are divinely ordained. Both are

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[4]Marius Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1926), p. 198.

[5]Frederick Eby, "Protestant Educational Reformers," The Development of Modern Education, revised edition (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., c.1952), p. 72.

concerned for the welfare of man. Both are a part of God's great government and both are necessary. They are to work in cooperation with one another. The charge and responsibility is equally divided since both are accountable to God and are a part of His governance. Therefore, they both have a charge to educate the whole man, body and soul. The two functions are kept clearly separate. There is, however, no thought of secularization where the State has no obligation toward the Church and the Church in no way influences the State. Rather, both are to carry out their functions for the good of the other. Upon this basis, Luther could enlist the help of the State in educating the young, not only for its own welfare, but also for the welfare of the Church.

It was imperative that the State do something to foster education, for at the time of the writing of his sermon on the "Duty of Sending Children to School" in 1530, Luther estimated that in Saxony alone there were about eighteen hundred parishes and there were scarcely eight hundred pastors to take care of them. He feared that if the princes in particular did not see that both preparatory schools and universities were properly maintained there would be such a lack of educated persons that one pastor would have to be assigned to three or four cities.[6] Schools were an absolute

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[6]Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," Luther on Education, translated by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 239. Hereafter referred to as "Sermon on Sending Children to School."

necessity for the Church, says Luther:

> When schools prosper the Church remains righteous and her doctrine pure. . . . Young pupils and students are the seed and source of the Church. If we were dead whence would come our successors, if not from schools? For the sake of the Church we must have and maintain Christian schools.[7]

A rather interesting commentary is given on Luther's concern for the welfare for the Church late in his life in a letter written to King Gustav of Sweden, dated April 18, 1539. In it Luther hopes that the King will have the youth educated in the schools and trained for the Church. He stresses the fact that the King himself should be well enough educated that he might judge for himself and not rely upon others. Luther hopes that he will have the youth trained for service in the Church, "For over and above the administration of affairs of state, it is the highest and greatest task of the kings to further the Christian cause."[8]

Though Luther was vigorous in his pronouncements for education in behalf of the Church, he was fully as determined in his concern for the welfare of the State. In his "Letter on Behalf of Schools," he states that though there were no soul, heaven or hell, but only civil government, education would still be necessary in order to provide for the state

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[7]F. Painter, Luther on Education (Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 132.

[8]Alfred Jorgensen, "Sweden," Martin Luther Reformer of the Church, translated by Ronald M. Jensen from Danish into English (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1953), p. 201.

skillful rulers. The ancient Romans and Greeks did this without even knowing that the government was ordained of God. But since the rulers now know that civil government is a divine ordinance, how much more ought they to educate the youth in a Christian manner of ruling.

If the State neglects to educate its young, it will result in a government ruled by the strong, and the weak will suffer. Dictatorship and tyranny will result. They will rule as wild animals with clubs and force as their law.

> For where club-law prevails, there will surely be found at last a brutal condition of society, the strong tyrannizing over the weak. We have examples enough before our eyes to show us what sheer physical force, without wisdom or reason, would do.[9]

Education is necessary for the maintenance of law and justice. Therefore, the State must see to it that chancellors, secretaries, judges, advocates, notaries, and so forth are educated to administrate the law. Luther reminds the mayors and councils:

> The welfare of a city does not consist in great treasures, firm walls, beautiful houses, and munitions of wars; indeed where all these are found, and reckless fools come into power, the city sustains the greater injury. But the highest welfare, safety, and power of a city consists in able, learned, wise, upright, cultivated citizens, who can secure, preserve, and utilize every treasure and advantage.[10]

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[9]Luther, "Sermon on Sending Children to School," p. 245.

[10]Martin Luther, "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," Luther on Education, translated from German by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 180. Hereafter referred to as "Letter on Behalf of Schools."

C. Citizens have the Duty to Cooperate with Civil Rulers

At the same time that Luther reminds the rulers of their obligation to educate the young, he also admonishes the citizens to cooperate with the rulers. He complains that everyone is in a great hurry to make a living, "Als duerfte Gott und die Christenheit keiner Pfarrherren, Prediger, Seelsorger, und die weltliche Obrigkeit keiner Kanzler, keiner Raethe, keiner Schreiber mehr."[11] In his "Sermon on Sending Children to School," Luther encourages the parents to train their sons for civil duties. They should think of the great benefit that comes through service in the government. The government protects body and life, wife and children, and homes from murderers and enemies. He asks, "Who can express the immeasurable benefits of peace? How much it gives and saves every year."[12] Parents ought to think of their sons as messengers and apostles of the emperor. Civil office is an opportunity to bring through one's life a thank-offering to his God for the many blessings he has received.

Citizens are to cooperate with contributions and taxes for education. Everyone is willing to pay for protection

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[11]Martin Luther, "Luthers Schrift vom Krieg wider die Tuerken," Reformations Schriften in Saemmtliche Schriften, edited by John G. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1890), XX, 2136.

[12]Luther, "Sermon on Sending Children to School," p. 247.

against the Turks, wars, and floods, things that may harm the body, but they ought also be just as desirous to support education. Where one would give a florin to defend himself against the Turks, Luther thinks he ought to give a hundred florins to protect the people against ignorance, for even if only one boy were taught to be a truly Christian man, it would be worth it. What a good Christian man can do is well worth the cost and its value beyond computation. In his "Letter on Behalf of Schools," he writes:

> If we must annually expend large sums on muskets, roads, bridges, dams, and the like, in order that the city may have temporal peace and comfort, why should we not apply as much to our poor, neglected youth, in order that we may have a skillful school-master or two?[13]

In summary, Luther called upon the State to enforce education for the welfare of all. The State could do this since it was ordained of God with the responsibility to provide for its citizens. This concern for the State called for the reciprocal support of its citizens.

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[13]Luther, "Letter on Behalf of Schools," p. 174.

CHAPTER V

PASTORS HAVE THE DUTY TO TEACH

A. Teaching is a Function of the Ministerial Office

In his "Sermon on Sending Children to School," Luther makes a rather comprehensive list of the duties of the pastor in which teaching has an important emphasis:

> He [the pastor] comforts the sorrowing, gives counsel, settles difficulties, calms distrubed consciences, helps to maintain peace, to appease, to reconcile, and similar duties without number; for a preacher confirms, strengthens, and supports all authority, all temporal peace, governs the seditious, teaches obedience, morality discipline, and honor, and gives instruction in the duties pertaining to fathers, mothers, children, servants, and in a word to all other secular relations of life.[1]

We note the stress upon teaching and instruction and the wide scope that these encompass. His teaching covers the entire area of man's experience. The instruction is made relevant to all of life. While Luther in writing the sermon no doubt was chiefly concerned about the shortage of pastors and teachers in the Church, he also states that the pastors should educate the people for the benefit of the State as well as for the benefit of the Church. By doing this, the pastor does the State a great service, "in that he informs

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[1]Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," Luther on Education, translated by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 228. Hereafter referred to as "Sermon on Sending Children to School."

and instructs all classes how they are to discharge their various duties in a manner acceptable to God."[2]

The greatest teaching function of the ministerial office is the teaching of the Word of God and to make known the way of salvation through Christ. The pastors are the "spiritual fathers" of the people who govern and guide them by the Word of God.[3] By the office of the ministry souls are:

> daily taught, converted, baptized, brought to Christ, made blessed, redeemed from sin, death, hell, and the devil, and come to perfect righteousness and eternal life in heaven. Daniel well says: "They that teach others shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. xii.3).[4]

The high esteem in which Luther held the teaching of the Word of God is illustrated beautifully in his paraphrase of the Fourth Petition:

> Give Thy grace to all preachers, that they may preach Thy Word and Christ, to profit and Salvation, in all the World. Help all who bear the preaching of Thy Word to learn Christ, and honestly to better thier lives thereby. Graciously drive out of the Holy Church all strange preaching and teaching from which men do not learn Christ. Have mercy upon all bishops, priests, clergy and all that are in authority, that they may be

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Martin Luther, "The Large Catechism," Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 627.

[4] Luther, "Sermon on Sending Children to School," p. 225.

enlightened by Thy grace to teach and govern us aright by precept and example.[5]

The will of God is done on earth as in heaven by the correct teaching of the Word of God, which is the duty of every true minister of the Word.

Thus, the teaching of the Word of God for the salvation of man is the most important function in the ministerial office. Connected with this is the temporal benefit which the preaching of the Word affords man.

B. The Pastor has Responsibility to Encourage Education and to Instruct His People

Realizing that the teaching function is an important part of the ministerial office, the pastor must do all in his power to encourage education and to instruct his people. With the hope that the pastors would encourage education, Luther wrote his "Sermon on Sending Children to School." It is addressed specifically "To all Pastors and Preachers."[6] Luther is sending them the sermon which he himself has preached often in the hope that they will pass on the sermon to the people and encourage them to have their children educated. In the special introductory note to the sermon, the pastors

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[5]Martin Luther, "A Brief Explanation of the Ten Commandments, The Creed, and the Lord's Prayer," Works of Martin Luther, translated by C. M. Jacobs (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1943), III, p. 380.

[6]Luther, "Sermon on Sending Children to School," p. 217.

are admonished to greater zeal for the education of the young. They should not think that this is no responsibility of their's. They have a direct responsibility to encourage parents to send their children to school for the welfare of Church and State.[7]

In his preface to The Small Catechism, Luther addresses specifically the pastors and preachers, urging them to instruct their people. He has just visited some of the parishes and is shocked at the deplorable condition which exists. "The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and alas! many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach. . . . It is the pastors' fault and guilt that the people do not know the fundamental Christian truths. Luther entreats them that they devote themselves to their office and use this catechism, which he has prepared to teach the people, especially the young.[8]

While The Large Catechism was intended for all, it was in particular to enable the less-educated pastors in the village and country to do justice to their office. In the longer preface to The Large Catechism, Luther directs his admonition "to all Christians, but especially to all pastors

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[7]Ibid., passim.

[8]Martin Luther, "The Small Catechism," Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 533.

and preachers, that they should daily exercise themselves in the catechism, which is a short summary and epitome of the entire Holy Scriptures."[9] He further urges the pastors never to tire of reviewing, meditating, reading, and studying. In order to teach the doctrines, they will themselves have to be well acquainted with them. It is necessary that the pastor keep up a constant study of the catechism for one can never exhaust all that is to be learned from this one book.

Sound pedogogical principles of presentation, illustration, and applicability are to be part of the pastor's instruction. A pastor must not only have the skill of oratory and exhortation, but the ability to teach also. Luther suggests when the pastor treats a subject that he should do the following:

> First set it forth, then define it; third, adduce passages of Scripture in support of it; fourth, illustrate it with examples from the Bible and elsewhere; fifth, adorn it with parables; sixth, administer reproof to the wicked, the disobedient, the slothful, and others.[10]

Thus, we see that the pastor by virtue of the ministerial office has responsibility to his people. He must encourage

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[9]Martin Luther, "The Large Catechism, Triglot Concordia: Symbolical Book of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 567.

[10]Preserved Smith, The Life and Letters of Martin Luther (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), p. 187.

his people to educate their young for the welfare of the Church and civil government, and he must himself be able to instruct them in the truths of the Holy Scriptures as they apply to the secular calling and spiritual life of the Christian.

CHAPTER VI

WORSHIP IS A PART OF EDUCATION

A. Luther made the Worship Service more Meaningful

In 1523, Luther prepared the Formula Missae et Communionis in which he purified the liturgy of the Roman Mass, removing the objectionable features and retaining those that were good and pure. The Formula Missae remained in Latin because that language was still widely used, being the universal, as well as historical, language of the Church. Luther, however, suggested that vernacular sermons and vernacular hymns be used in the service, thus, making the worship more meaningful and educational for the common people.

Partly because of popular request, and partly because he wished to make the service still more suitable to congregational participation, Luther drew up the Deutsche Messe in 1525. It was not a mere literal translation of the historical order of service. The words and music were written and chosen with particular attention given to bring across the German idiom. Reed says of this, "For him [Luther] the music as well as the text was to be 'eine rechte deutsche art.'"[1] To assist him in this delicate work, he called Bugenhagen and Jonas to his aid. The Elector sent him John

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[1]Luther Reed, The Lutheran Liturgy (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1947), p. 75.

Walther and Conrad Rupff to help in writing the music of the service. The order of service which they produced was not the first to appear, but it surpassed all other attempts because of the conscious effort not just to make a literal German translation of words and music, but actually to Germanize the service to such an extent that it might be felt and grasped by the common people. The people could now feel that this was their service. They could put themselves into free and meaningful participation. Once again, we see how this concern for the people had great pedogogical values.

Luther considered the worship service a valuable means of instruction. The worship service was a means of instruction particularly for the young and the non-Christians; however, it was also for the Christian in as far as he, too, was a sinner and in need of strengthening. In his preface to the Deutsche Messe, Luther writes, "We need such Orders for those who either must still become Christians or need to be strengthened. . . ."[2] Again, speaking of daily service: "This is what I have to say concerning the daily Service and the teaching of God's Word, which is primarily for the training of the young and the encouragement of the simple-minded. . . ."[3] This pedagogical awareness is found throughout

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[2]Martin Luther, "Deutsche Messe and Ordnung Gottis Diensts," The Philadelphia Edition, translated by A. Steimle (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1932), VI, 171.

[3]Ibid., p. 185.

Luther's discussion of the order of service. Reed, commenting on Luther's views of worship in the Deutsche Messe, makes this statement, "The pedagogical spirit is evident throughout."[4]

B. The Service has Great Educational Devices

Luther perhaps gave his greatest contribution to worship through the use of the congregational song in the vernacular. The vernacular song was a powerful means of conveying the truth of the Gospel. It was an educational device. In the middle ages, the liturgy was almost entirely restricted to the celebrant and the choir. The congregation joined in only a few of the responses in the vernacular.[5] Because he recognized the educational devotional value of hymns, Luther very early, perhaps in 1523, set about translating and composing hymns into the German language. It is not definitely known how many hymns he composed. There are thirty-six or thirty-seven generally ascribed to him. Through his interest in hymns, Luther has made a great and lasting contribution to latter generations. The hymn still is an important means for expressing and teaching the Christian religion. Bainton says that Luther, for his

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[4]Reed, op. cit., p. 77.

[5]Roland Bainton, Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther (Nashville: Abingdon—Cokesbury Press, c.1950), p. 344.

outstanding contribution, might truly be recognized as the "father of congregational song."[6]

Within the service itself, Luther suggested that the pastor instruct the people in the catechism. The catechetical instruction was to be given from the pulpit at a stated time or daily as may be needed:

> First, the German Service needs an easily understood, plain, simple catechism. Catechism means instruction, in which heathen who want to be Christians are taught and directed in what they should believe, do, omit to do, and know in the Christian religion.[7]

Thus, Luther had in mind that the catechism instruction as a part of the service should make a contribution to the educational value of the worship.

The highest educational devices, however, for Luther were the actual speaking and preaching of the Word. The Word was the all important thing and it above all should be taught. This teaching was most effectively done in the reading of the lessons and the preaching of the sermon. The sermon had been neglected by the Roman Catholic Church. Luther, knowing that preaching had been an important function of the early Church, brought it back to its rightful importance. The importance of speaking the Word in lesson and sermon are implied in the Deutsche Messe: "Since the chief and greatest aim of the Service is to preach and teach God's

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[6]Ibid., p. 344.

[7]Luther, "Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Gottis Diensts," p. 174.

Word, we have arranged for sermons and lessons as follows. . . ."[8] In the eight-page pamphlet, Von Ordenung Gottis Dienst Ynn Der Gemeyne, in 1523, Luther stated very emphatically the importance of preaching:

> It is necessary to know, first of all, that the Christian congregation never should assemble unless God's Word is preached and prayer is made, no matter for how brief a time this may be.[9]

The preaching, in order to be instructive, should be simple enough so that the common people could understand. Luther's own sermons are simple and interesting. They are fine examples of what he means when he says that sermons are to be simple. Concerning his own preaching, Luther said:

> When I preach at this place, I come down to the level of the people; I do not regard the doctors and the teachers, of whom there are about forty in my audience, but the crowd of young people, children, and servants, of whom there are a hundred or a thousand; to these I preach, to these I direct my attention. . . . To use Greek, Hebrew, or Latin in sermons is mere self-exaltation, which is altogether out of keeping with this place and time; it is only done in order that the poor, ignorant lay people may marvel and praise the preacher.[10]

Here is expressed his concern that the common people understand the Word. Preaching is a must, but not any kind of preaching, for the sermons must be simple enough so that the

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[8]Ibid., p. 177.

[9]Martin Luther, "Von Ordenung Gottis Dienst Ynn Der Gemeyne," The Philadelphia Edition, translated by A. Steimle (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1932), VI, 60.

[10]John H. Fritz, Pastoral Theology (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1945), p. 354.

majority of the people can understand and learn the lesson.

In summary, Luther looked upon worship services as a means of instruction as well as edification. So that it might be just that, he went to great effort to make the historical order of worship more meaningful and understandable for the people. He stressed the value of the song and the speaking and preaching of the Word as means of teaching the Christian religion.

CHAPTER VII

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IS TO BE UNIVERSAL

A. Education in the Middle Ages

Before we can appreciate Luther's contribution to universal elementary education, we must first discuss the limitations of the existing schools. Most of the schools in the middle ages were directly connected with the Church and had as their chief purpose the preparation for service in the Church. While there was a wide variety of schools, such as the cathedral, parochial, monastic, burgher, knightly, and Nullbruder, in actual practice they proved to be far from a universal system of education from which all boys and girls could benefit. It is true that during the days of Charlemagne, there had been a resurgance in education. The reforms which he carried out during his life were soon lost after his death. Sherrill points out that even the length of religious instruction decreased in the medieval Church until it virtually disappeard and liturgical ceremony and symbolism took its place.[1]

Generally speaking, from the time of Gregary the Great until the time of Luther, there was little provision for education of the common people on a universal scale. They

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[1]Lewis Sherrill, "Medieval Symbols of Thought," The Rise of Christian Education (New York: Macmillan Co., c.1944), p. 231.

continued to live in their ignorance, receiving little encouragement to better their situation. Those who were encouraged, were encouraged to prepare themselves for service in the Church. Education of a secular nature was not considered important. Education of girls was most neglected of all. Only the girls of nobility received some fine education in household duties, reading, writing, music, and polite manners. The situation was not equally bad in all areas. Some of the cities had burgher schools and the Nullbruder schools were a bright light in education of the common man. This was by no means the general situation. Painter sums it up in the following passage:

> No general effort was made to reach and elevate them [the common people] by education. The ecclesiastical schools were designated chiefly for candidates for the priesthood; the parochial schools fitted the young for Church membership; the burgher schools were intended for the commercial and artisan classes of the cities; knightly education gave a training for chivalry. Thus the laboring classes were left to toil on in ignorance and want; they remained in a dependent and servile condition, their lives unillumined by intellectual pleasures. If here and there, as claimed by Roman Catholic writers, popular schools were established, they were too few in number and too weak in influence to deserve more than a passing mention.[2]

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[2]F. Painter, Luther on Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 139.

B. Luther's View of Education for Boys and Girls

In contrast to what has been said, Luther insisted that all cities, towns, and villages of Germany should establish schools for boys and girls, rich and poor, supported by public funds. As we have seen, Luther not only encouraged the leaders to support general education, but he wished the common people to send their children to school.[3] The common people should not feel as though they have no part in the benefits of education. Noble birth does not make lords and rulers; God can do something about blessing the common man. Luther believed that the common people and the poor should have opportunity for education and advancement as well as the rich.[4]

Luther, however, had a difficult time convincing the common people that they should send their children to school. Among other excuses, they felt that they could not spare the children for so long a time each day. Luther replies:

> It is not my idea that we should establish schools as they have been heretofore, where a boy has studied Donatus and Alexander twenty or thirty years, and yet has learned nothing. . . My idea is that boys should spend an hour or two a day in school, and the rest of

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[3]Supra, p. 20.

[4]Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," Luther on Education, translated by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 260.

> the time work at home, learn some trade and whatever is desired. . . .[5]

The parents would not miss the children since the boys "now spend tenfold as much in shooting with crossbows, playing ball, running, and tumbling about."[6]

Not only were the boys of the common people to be educated, but the girls also should be educated and left free to pursue learning. Luther would suggest that the girls be given education a few hours everyday. If the parents complain that they can not afford to have them away from home this long, Luther argues:

> In like manner, a girl has time to go to school an hour a day, and yet attend to her work at home; for she sleeps, dances, and plays away more than that.[7]

Luther encouraged the Town Council of Wittenberg to establish a school for girls. He himself invited Else von Kanitz to be the schoolmistress and opened his own home to her in the following words, "You shall be in my house and at my table, so that you may be free from danger and cares, so I beg you not to refuse me."[8] In the constitution of the congregation at Leisnic, published and commended by Luther as a model, is stated that the ten directors in the

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[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid., p. 200.

[8]Thomas Lindsay, "Laying the Foundations of the Evangelical Church," Luther and the German Reformation (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900), p. 236.

name of the congregation shall have the power to call a teacher for the young boys. However, the directors are in like manner to provide an honorable, mature, and blameless woman to instruct the young girls under twelve years of age. They are to be instructed in "Christian discipline, honor, and virtue, and at a suitable place to teach them reading and writing in German a few hours daily."[9]

Nor were the poor boys and girls to be left out of the picture. Every child, no matter how poor his parents were, should receive at least an elementary training in reading, writing, and religion. Luther even went so far as to say:

> The poorest youths are the most studious, for Christ, Himself poor, wishes to build up his poor kingdom through poor men. The rich young gentlemen, loaded down with purse and possessions, do not study.[10]

Luther set up a system of helping poor students. He received funds from well-to-do ladies and gentlemen. Lindsay mentions a certain Frau Dorothea Jörger as the first to donate five hundred gulden to Luther's fund.[11]

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[9]Painter, op. cit., p. 139.

[10]Preserved Smith, The Life and Letters of Martin Luther (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), p. 23.

[11]Lindsay, op. cit., p. 236.

C. Luther's Translation of the Bible and Its Influence upon Universal Education

While Luther did a great deal in other areas in establishing universal elementary education, his greatest contribution is perhaps his translation of the Scriptures. It is the translation of the Scriptures into the tongue of the common people which increased in them more than anything a desire for education so that they might read the Bible. For this reason, Frederick Eby says: "One is fully justified in saying that the Bible was not only the cause of Protestant Reformation, but equally of Protestant Education."[12] Again and again, authorities express the great contribution Luther made toward the education of the masses through his translation of the Bible: Cubberly for instance remarks, "the printing of the Bible in the common tongue did far more to stimulate a desire to be able to read than did the Revival of Learning. . . ."[13]

The common people, before Luther's translation of the Bible, had little incentive to learn how to read or write. There was little need for writing in the small business

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[12]Frederick Eby, "The Renaissance and Reformation," Christianity and Education (Dallas: Executive Board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, c.1915), p. 55.

[13]Elwood Cubberley, "Educational Results of the Protestant Revolts," The History of Education (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, c.1948), p. 310.

transactions they might carry out. If need be, the sign of the cross would suffice. It was not until Luther translated the Bible and poured forth with his tracts, that the masses were aroused to a desire to read. While there had been German translations before, they were litoral and cumbersome. Luther went out of his way to speak simple and commonly in his translation, so that every person, no matter how humble his station, could understand, if not read the Scriptures. His purpose was not to give a difficult literal or learned rendition, but to transmit the exact meaning of the original into the language of the German people in the simplest form. He felt that the language should be comprehendable by the common man, and to make it so, he interviewed housewives, children, businessmen, and butchers to learn how they would express the meaning.

Luther was so in earnest that the common people have the Word of God that the New Testament was completed in rough draft in the remarkable short time of three months. After several months of revision, the first edition appeared off the press in September of 1522.[14] In his translating of the Bible, Luther truly showed his skill as translator and educator. The result of his conscious effort to make the Bible intelligible for the common people was that people

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[14]Gustav Marius Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), p. 213.

had a desire to learn how to read. This one factor alone did much to pave the way for universal elementary education.

D. The Results of Luther's Efforts

The results of Luther's efforts to make education universal were great. In his letter to Elector John of 1530, Luther expresses his joy at the progress of education among the common people in these words:

> The tender youth of both sexes now grow up so well instructed in the catechism and Scripture, that my heart delights to behold how the boys and girls are able to pray, exercise their faith, and to speak more of God and of Christ than all the cloisters, convents, and schools have hitherto been able to do.[15]

It should be noted that while Luther advised universal education for boys and girls on the elementary level, he did not feel that all should be compelled to go to the secondary schools. Numbers were not the important thing, but quality:

> However, even if the High Schools studied Scriptures diligently we should not send every one to them, as we do now, when nothing is considered but numbers, and every man wishes to have a Doctor's title; we should only send the aptest pupils, well prepared in the lower schools. This should be seen to by princes or magistrates of the town, and they should take care that none but the apt pupils be sent.[16]

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[15]Painter, op. cit., p. 140.

[16]Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Respecting the Reformation of the Christian Estate," Luther's Primary Works, edited by Henry Wace and C. A. Buchheim (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896), p. 234.

In conclusion, we can say that Luther urged a universal type of education. He stressed that all children, boys and girls, rich and poor, should at least be given an elementary education. His translation of the Bible was important in creating a desire among the common people to become educated.

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION IS TO BE WIDE IN SCOPE AND PRACTICAL

Painter says that an examination of Luther's pedagogical writings reveals that Luther had in mind three classes of schools, and thus, a very comprehensive system of education:

1. The Latin Schools, to which he gave most prominence;
2. The Universities, which he wished to see reformed; and
3. Schools for the common people. . . .[1]

Taking this into consideration, we shall consider the principle, "Education is to be Wide in Scope and Practical," by discussing the three levels of education, beginning with the elementary level. Both the curriculum and its practicality shall be discussed under the three levels of education.

A. The Elementary Level

It is perhaps in the establishment of elementary vernacular schools that Luther gave his greatest contribution to education. There had been little general elementary education. The subjects were limited in the most to reading, writing, arithmetic, some formal religion, and a little singing. Due to the influence of Luther, the vernacular

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[1]F. Painter, Luther on Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 138.

schools for the children of the common people developed to include the reading of the Bible and the learning of Luther's catechism, the singing of hymns, the reading of Aesop's Fables, some history, and some physical activity. All of these subjects are basic and quite practical for later education.

Significant in his curriculum of education is Luther's added emphasis on music, history, and physical education. His emphasis on music and history seem to have grown out of the needs of the Reformation, while the introduction of physical education was something relatively new in elementary education.

Luther's songs and his stress upon the value of music were a powerful educational feature in the Reformation. Not only did he translate and compose many songs himself and introduce vernacular singing into the congregation, but he gave it a prominate place in the schools. Painter quotes the following passages to show the value Luther placed upon music:

> "Music is semi-disciplinarian and school-master; it makes men more gentle and tender-hearted, more modest and discreet." I have always loved music. He that is skilled in this art is possessed of good qualities, and can be employed in anything. Music must be retained in the schools. A school-master must be able to sing, otherwise I will hear nothing of him." "Music is a delightful, noble gift of God, and nearly related to theology. I would not give what little skill I possess in music for something great." "With those that

despise music, as all fanatics are wont to do, I am not pleased; for music is a gift bestowed by God and not by man."[2] (Underlining is added by writer).

Along with music, Luther saw a great deal of value in gymnastics. He thought the ancients had a very good practice in exercising their bodies. It had for him moral value in that it kept men from falling into revelling, unchastity, gluttony, intemperance, and gaming. Whereas music drives away all melancholy from the heart, gymnastics or physical education drives away evil desires and builds and preserves the health of the body.[3] It, along with music, was important in the school curriculum.

It is only natural that Luther should likewise have a high regard for history, beginning with it already on the elementary level. It was an important part in establishing an effective attack on the Roman Catholic claims concerning priesthood, sacraments, and power of the pope. There was besides this, however, another great value in learning history. History was for Luther as a living fountain through which flowed all laws, sciences, warnings, comfort, knowledge, and wisdom. It was an indication, recollection, and monument of the divine doings of God. It showed, "how God maintains, governs, hinders, advances, punishes, and

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[2]Painter, op. cit., p. 165.

[3]Gustav Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), p. 227.

honors men according as each one has deserved good or evil."[4] For example, in his explanation to the First Commandment, Luther points to history as revealing God's wrath against idolatry, "For from the beginning He [God] has utterly extirpated all idolatry. . . ."[5] History is important for the curriculum, for if it is treated objectively, it will show how God works in history and controls the course of history. Thus, it had practical value for the Christian's faith and life. Luther took a big step in relating elementary education to everyday life by allowing boys and girls to spend only a short time each day at school and the rest of the time at home learning some trade or whatever might be desired. In his own words:

> My idea is that boys spend an hour or two a day in school, and the rest of the time work at home, learn some trade and whatever is desired, so that study and work may go on together, while the children are young and can attend to both.[6]

While his chief concern in the above passage is to overcome the objection of parents who did not want their children to spend all their time in school, one likewise senses a desire to make education practical and related to life.

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[4]F. Painter, op. cit., p. 160.

[5]Martin Luther, "The Large Catechism," Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 589.

Luther would arrange the schooling in such a manner "that study and work may go on together."[7]

B. The Secondary Level

Although Luther was very much interested in the vernacular education for the common people and made his greatest contribution here, he always felt that the Latin school was the more important for the purpose of promoting the Reformation. It was the Latin school that would train leaders for the Church and State and prepare them for the universities. He, therefore, put new stress on secondary education.

Secondary education in the middle ages was generally limited to the trivium: Latin grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics and at best included also the quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. Toward the end of the middle ages, some instruction in philosophy and the natural sciences were added.[8] Luther would have the curriculum of the Latin schools expanded to include Latin, Greek, Hebrew, rhetoric, dialectics, history, science, mathematics, music, and gymnastics.[9]

Luther was not alone in his view of the importance of

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Bruce, op. cit., p. 53.

[9]Elwood Cubberley, "Educational Results of the Protestant Revolts," The History of Education (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, c.1948), p. 314.

the classics. All the religious groups agreed that the classical curriculum provided the best secondary education. The historical documents of the Church were written in Latin. It was still used to present the formal writings of the reformers. Hebrew and Greek were needed to defend and preserve the Lutheran Church against the Roman Catholic errors. Luther sincerely believed that in order to preserve the Gospel in its purity and protect it from corruption as in the past, the ancient languages must be studied. Luther ironically answers those who are opposed to the foreign classics, "I wonder why we do not also say: of what use to us are silk, wine, spices and other foreign articles? . . ."[10]

In his dedicatory letter to Lazarus Spengler, Counselor of the city of Nuremberg, Luther writes that German books are fine and are good to read at home, but in the schools other languages and subjects must be taught for:

> preaching, governing, and directing, both in the spiritual and secular sphere, all the sciences of the world are insufficient, let alone the German, particularly at this time when we do speak with more people than neighbor Jack.[11]

Nor did the students resent learning Latin, since it was useful as the language of the Church, law diplomacy, international relations, scholarship, and travel. Thus, we see

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[10]Luther, "Letter on Behalf of Christian Schools," p. 183.

[11]Painter, op. cit., p. 53.

the practical element also revealed in the extensive secondary curriculum.

C. Universities

While Luther called the universities "Schools of Satan," among other things, he did not agree with the common people that they should be abolished.[12] Rather, he would reform their discipline and study.

The universities in the middle ages were free societies having faculties of arts, medicine, theology, and law. The intellectual presentation of scholasticism dominated the curriculum. The purpose of scholasticism was to reconcile philosophy with Christian truth and faith, to Christianize heathen philosophy, and to systematize knowledge. "The result was a mixture of Aristotelian philosophy and medieval theology. . . ."[13] Abstractions, hairsplittings, and scientific terminology were carried to an extreme.

It is against this emphasis that Luther reacted. In his address to the nobility in 1530, he asks the question:

> What are the universities, as at present ordered, but, as the book of Maccabees says, "schools of 'Greek fashion' and 'heathenish manners'" (2Macc. iv.12,B), full of dissolute living, where very little is taught

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[12]Eby, op. cit., p. 77.

[13]Paul Kretzmann, A Brief History of Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), p. 45.

of the Holy Scriptures and of the Christian faith, and the blind heathen teacher, Aristotle, rules even further than Christ?[14]

As early as 1509, Luther had lectured on Aristotle's Ethics and the Sentences of Peter Lombard. Already at that time, he detested their study in comparison to the study of the Bible and spoke sharp words against the scholastic approach. It is perhaps little known that he wrote Ninety-Seven Theses against Aristotle and the scholastics shortly before he wrote his famous Ninety-Five Theses. While his theses against Aristotle met with much opposition, they also won many adherents and paved the way for a new approach to scholarship. This new approach was to do away with method and encourage the study of Scripture. Luther would, however, retain Aristotle's books, Logica, Rhetoric, and Poetica, since they were useful in teaching the young to speak and preach well, but he would do away with all the comments on them.

Luther would let the faculty of medicine reform itself. However, the faculty of Law was spending too much time on the Canon Law of the Church to the neglect of the learning of the Gospel. He would have the local common law take precedence over the law of the empire, since each land and

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[14]Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Respecting the Reformation of the Christian Estate," Luther's Primary Works, edited by Henry Wace and C. A. Bucheim and translated into English (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896), p. 228.

district had its own particular problems and peculiar characteristics. They could be governed much better by the local common law. The elaborate, far-fetched laws of the empire seemed to him often to be a burden to the people and a hindrance to good business.[15]

Here, it might be mentioned that Luther in the closing section of his "Letter to the Mayors" encourages the erection of suitable buildings for good libraries. Libraries to Luther were very important because the spiritual and civic leaders should have some place to go and prepare themselves for useful service. They were important for the preservation of the Gospel and every kind of learning. The books for the libraries, however, should be picked discriminately. In the past, many hurtful books of the monks, Aristotle, and the philosophers had been preserved. It was not necessary to gather all the books ever written, but only the best. Luther would have four types of books preserved in the libraries: (1) The Holy Scriptures in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German and other languages and the best and most ancient commentaries; (2) Books useful in acquiring the languages, such as writings of poets and orators from whom grammar might be learned; (3) Books treating on all the arts and sciences; (4) Books

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[15] Ibid., p. 231.

on jurisprudence and medicine. A prominent place should also be given to chronicles and histories.[16]

In summary, we see that the reform and improvement which Luther wished to effect was on all three levels of learning. He expanded the curricula and made education wider in scope. While the emphasis was upon classical education for the benefit of the Church, he also had in mind the welfare of the civic offices. Throughout his concern was that the education be practical and useful for the people and beneficial for spiritual and civic offices.

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[16]Luther, "Letter on Behalf of Christian Schools," p. 206.

CHAPTER IX

THE METHOD IS TO FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING

A. Instruction is to be Adapted to the Nature of the Child

Luther saw in the child the gracious working of God. God had so made the child that if taught properly, he would take delight in learning. He urges in his "Letter to the Mayors in Behalf of Schools" that they take advantage of this inborn tendency of the child and provide schools for learning.[1]

Bruce says, "Through his affectionate relations with his own children Luther attained a deeper appreciation of child nature as well as the whole process of education."[2] Luther had six children of his own and in addition the responsibility of bringing up eleven-orphaned nephews and nieces. His first child Hans was a great joy and delight to him. In his remarks concerning Hans, one can gain an insight into Luther's own understanding of child-nature, which affected his principles of education. In one of his

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[1]Martin Luther, "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," Luther on Education, translated from German by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 198.

[2]Gustav Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), p. 99.

Table Talks, Luther observes:

> My boy Hans is now entering upon his seventh year. Every seven years a person changes; the first period is infancy, the second childhood. At fourteen they begin to see the world and lay the foundation of education, at twenty-one the young men seek marriage, at twenty-eight they are householders and patres-familias, at thirty-five they are magistrates in church and state, until forty-two when are kings. After that the senses begin to decline. Thus every seven years brings a new condition in body and character, as has happened to me and to us all.[3]

From his keen understanding of the ways of children, Luther admonishes the teachers to use the natural inclinations of children in teaching them. They are to try to understand the child. In his explanation to the Second Commandment, Luther shows how children are to be constantly urged and incited to honor the name of God. The instruction, however, is to be done "in childlike way and playfully in the fear and honor of God. . . ."[4] If this is done, the children will delight in fulfilling the commandments:

> For what must be enforced with rods and blows only will not develop into a good breed, and at best will remain godly under such treatment no longer than while the rod is upon their back.[5]

If we are to teach children, we must become one of them.

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[3]Ibid., p. 100.

[4]Martin Luther, "The Large Catechism," translated into English in the Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 601.

[5]Ibid., p. 603.

In his Deutsche Messe, Luther concludes the section on instruction in Bible passages through illustration as follows:

> Let none think himself too wise for this and despise such child's play. Christ, in order to train men, must needs become a man himself. If we wish to train children, we must become children with them. Would to God such child's play were widely practiced. In a short time we would have a great wealth of Christian people, souls becoming rich in Scripture and the knowledge of God. . . .[6]

By this we see the value Luther put upon understanding the nature of the child and using the natural tendencies so as to facilitate understanding and interest on the part of the child.

B. The Lessons are to be Simple to Facilitate Understanding

Luther is an outstanding example himself of teaching and preaching to the understanding of the people. He always sought to live up to the principle of simplicity which he taught to his students. The result was that his words were spread by the common people and a greater impact was made with his teaching. In the preface to the Small Catechism, Luther stresses the principle of using simplicity in

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[6]Martin Luther, "Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Gottis Diensts," The Philadelphia Edition, Vol. VI, translated by A. Steimle (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1932), p. 176. Hereafter referred to as Deutsche Messe.

teaching. The pastors are not to make their own so-called improvements and adaptations, using one expression this time and another a different time. This would only confuse the children. The pastors should not rush into their instruction but make sure the students understand and have learned the lesson well before proceeding on to the next. If the pastor proceeds before they understand the lesson, the students will be overwhelmed with it all and will not retain the former lesson.

The entire course should thus be graded according to the ability of the children and simple enough so the child can understand. If the child does not understand, he can not relate it to life and the method fails its purpose.

C. Memorization is to be Reasonable and Serve the Understanding

Luther put a great deal of emphasis on memorization. In the Large Catechism, he says:

> Therefore we must have the young learn the parts which belong to the Catechism or instruction for the children well and fluently and diligently exercise themselves in them. . . .[7]

Again:

> These are the most necessary parts which one should first learn to repeat word for word, and which our children should be accustomed to recite daily when

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[7]Luther, "The Large Catechism," p. 575.

they arise in the morning, when they sit down to their meals, and when they retire at night; and until they repeat them, they should be given neither food nor drink.[8]

As to the quantity of memorizing, however, Luther did not demand more than the child was able to produce. For those less gifted, he was satisfied that they know the text of the first three chief parts and the words of institution of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Luther says in his preface to the Large Catechism, "for the common people we are satisfied with the three parts, which have remained in Christendom from of old. . . ."[9] Luther did not demand more than the ability of the hearer in memorization.

Although Luther believed in exact memorization, yet this memorization was not to be mechanical, but conscious, personal, and applicable. In the preface to the Small Catechism, Luther instructs the preachers: "After they [the children] have well learned the text, then teach them the sense also, so that they know what it means."[10] Although this might not be considered good procedure today, yet Luther no doubt felt that the understanding of the lesson would be facilitated and the subject matter more

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[8]Ibid., p. 577.

[9]Ibid., p. 575.

[10]Martin Luther, "The Small Catechism," translated into English in the Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 535.

easily grasped once it had been memorized.

Luther insisted on elaboration of what had been learned through explanations, sermons, questions and answers. With Luther we meet the questions: "What does this mean? What does this signify? Where is this written? What does it profit?"[11] This is quite different from the mechanical methods of the middle ages. It was a deliberate attempt to improve the past methods and to help the understanding of what was being learned. He instructed the head of the house in the Deutsche Messe:

> They [the children] should not merely learn to say the words by heart, as heretofore, but with each part they should be asked questions and give answers, what each part means and how to understand it.[12]

D. Illustrations are to be used to Improve Understanding

Luther valued the use of illustrations so greatly for teaching that he took time while at Coburg to make a collection of Aesop's Fables into "a somewhat better German."[13] He regarded them very highly and knew of few books aside from the Scriptures that better portrayed the external life of man. The fables caught the interest and imagination of

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[11]Bente, op. cit., p. 74.

[12]Luther, Deutsche Messe, p. 174.

[13]Albert Steinhaeuser, Luther Primer, (Columbia: Survey Publishing Company, c.1917), p. 132.

the people and unpretentiously taught them a moral. Whereas people might not take the admonition from a person, they might listen to the mouth of animals.

In the Deutsche Messe, Luther writes that children are to be encouraged to bring home Scripture texts from the sermons and to repeat them at meal-time for the parents. The parents are to encourage learning by having the child think he has two pockets into which he drops the passages as he would drop coins: "let faith's pouch be the golden pouch. . . ."[14] Later he continues, "Let love's pouch be the silver pouch."[15]

Luther gives a fine example of the use of illustrations in his classic letter to little Hans on June 19, 1530. Little Hans was only four years old, yet Luther came down to his level. One can only imagine the excitement that came over the little son as his mother read him the letter. Luther does not scold his son for not praying and studying, he appeals to the boy's imagination and paints him a picture of heaven with trees loaded with fruit, ponies with silver saddles, children happy and singing and having a jolly time. Luther mentions that these children had learned their Scripture passages and prayed and Hans should do likewise

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[14]Luther, Deutsche Messe, p. 175.

[15]Ibid., p. 176.

so he might enjoy the same things in heaven.[16]

To facilitate the learning of Bible History, Luther in 1529, published his Passionale, called "The first Biblical History for the Christian home."[17] It was a booklet composed of forty-nine Biblical pictures with texts corresponding. Eleven were taken from the Old Testament and thirty-eight from the New Testament. The purpose of the booklet as stated in the preface by the Reformer is "chiefly for the sake of the children and simple folks, who are better enabled by picture and parable to remember the divine history."[18] When his Small Catechism appeared in 1529, it was illustrated by twenty wood cuts; the number was later increased to twenty-four. Luther used examples drawn from daily life, folk-lore, and especially history.

Luther at least in one instance advocated dramatics as a means of illustrating life and teaching secular literature. The instance was when Johann Collarius came to him and said that a school teacher in Schlesien had arranged to give one of the plays of Terence and the people were objecting. Collarius wanted to know how Luther felt. Luther said that he saw no objection in this since it would teach the actors the use of Latin and the play itself would inform the people

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[17]M. Reu, Catechetics (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1918), p. 103.

[18]Ibid., p. 105.

in various walks of life.[19]

Thus, illustrations of all sorts are an important element in facilitating understanding of the subject.

E. Discipline is to be Tempered with Love

Discipline was discussed previously in regard to the "Duty of Parents."[20] However, it must also be briefly given when considering Luther's views on method. Luther warns the school teachers of his day not to apply discipline too harshly:

> Many clumsy schoolmasters spoil fine minds with their blustering, storming, whipping, and beating, when they do not deal otherwise with their children than an executioner or jailer deals with a thief.[21]

Although punishment has a deterrent effect upon the sinful nature, Luther thought it could never bring about positive results. These must come about through the New Man and the Gospel. The fear of punishment may result in outward obedience, but it can not work a willingness to do what is right. Thus, while the children should be punished, the discipline should be tempered with love. For childish faults, one should not punish with the same severity as for more serious

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[19]Bruce, op. cit., p. 236.

[20]Supra, p. 17.

[21]Paul Kretzmann, Luther on Education in the Christian Home and School (Burlington: The Lutheran Literary Board, c.1940), p. 54.

faults. One should punish according to the severity of the offense and then always with such a spirit that the apple is always close to the rod. The entire approach should be governed by firmness, yet tempered with love.

In summary, we have presented the great improvements Luther made with regard to methods of teaching. He sought to instruct the child according to his nature and ability, to increase learning through meaningful memorization, to improve the understanding through illustrations and to have the entire approach governed by love. These all worked together in a harmonious method to facilitate understanding.

CHAPTER X

TEACHER IS TO BE COMPETENT AND WELL-TRAINED

A. Luther's High Regard for the Teaching Profession

Luther had a very high regard for the teaching profession. The teacher was considered an instrument of God, who directs, fashions and molds, and influences the entire personality of the child. In one of the Table Talks, Luther spoke of the teaching profession in the following words: "Were I not a preacher, there is no profession on earth I would sooner follow. One must not regard how the world esteems and has it, but how God glorifies it every day."[1] He continues, "It is my opinion that on the last day an honest schoolmaster will be more honored than all the popes."[2]

Luther says that to teach children is to share in the works which angels have to do. Commenting in a sermon on Matt. 18:1-10, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven," Luther says:

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[1]Preserved Smith, The Life and Letter of Martin Luther (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), p. 97.

[2]Ibid.

> Wenn wir nun nicht mehr haetten, denn diesen einigen Spruch, da Christus sich hoeren laesst, wie seinem himmlischen Vater so viel an den jungen Volk gelegen sei, so sollten wir schliessen, es waere unter allen guten Werken kein groesseres noch besseres, denn junge Leute recht ziehen.[3]

Because of this high honor placed upon the teaching profession by God, Luther felt that teachers together with parents, could never be sufficiently compensated in this life.

For Luther, the teacher got his authority, as did the officers of the State, through the parents to whom God had entrusted the children. Since the parents were not able, or more often were not willing, to educate their children, the schoolmaster took the place of the father. Teachers were, therefore, the representatives of the parents and with parents had the obligation to carry out the commands of God.

School teachers were a necessity for the welfare not only of the Church, but in Luther's day, the rulers especially depended upon the learning of the teachers to help them in their task. It was not just anyone who could become a teacher. Luther went so far as to say that anyone might become a magistrate, prince, or noble, but not so with teachers, "For schools rule the world."[4] Luther contended

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[3]Martin Luther, "Am St. Michaelstag," Saemmtliche Schriften, edited by John G. Walch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1883), XIII, 2778.

[4]Smith, op. cit., p. 96.

that "in a city a schoolmaster has as much responsibility as a minister."[5] Because of this, he should be appreciated and respected. People did not appreciate what teachers did nor what a difficult job they had. Luther considered the teaching profession "so strenuous that no one ought to be bound to it for more than ten years."[6] Whether this is an exaggeration or not, it shows the deep appreciation and sympathy Luther had for the teaching profession.

B. Teachers are to be Competent and Well-Trained

This high regard for the teaching profession showed itself in the stringent requirements put upon the teacher. In his "Letter to the Nobility," Luther turns his attention to the recruitment of teachers. Young people should be encouraged to continue their study and the leaders should take the time to educate and prepare them. He would have the gifted young people, both boys and girls, continue their study. Women teachers were needed for the teaching of girls and men for the boys. The gifted boys and girls are to be chosen. The rulers were to be selective, and they were to see to it that the gifted students were well-trained for the teaching profession.

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[5]Ibid.

[6]Roland Bainton, Here I Stand (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1950), p. 235.

In the same statement, in which Luther brings out the need for teachers and schools in order to preserve the Church and furnish pious pastors and pious people, he states that the teachers are to be well-trained and learned: "When schools flourish," he says, "then things go well and the Church is secure. Let us have more learned men and teachers!"[7]

This desire for well-trained teachers was partially realized by Luther in his own life time. He encourages the people to contribute to the support of the schools and teachers since in contrast to by-gone days, the teachers were very well-trained. He presents the ability of the teachers in these words:

> Almighty God has truly granted us Germans a gracious visitation, and favored us with a golden opportunity. We now have excellent and learned young men, adorned with every science and art, who if they were employed, could be of great service as teachers.[8]

The value that Luther puts upon "excellent and learned" teachers is very evident in the above passage. The people ought not to disregard this favor of God. Luther would much rather have dumb and ignorant people than to have them

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[7]Paul E. Kretzmann, Luther on Education in the Christian Home and School (Burlington: The Lutheran Literary Board, c.1940), p. 93.

[8]Martin Luther, "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," Luther on Education, translated from the German by F. Painter (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 174.

instructed by teachers who were not competent, but since they do have them, how much more reason to take advantage of the fine education.[9]

Luther believed that for the teacher to be well-qualified, he must be trained in the various classical languages, the arts, history, and religion. He must have the ability to teach these things and through them guide the understanding of the children in such a way as to mold their lives. The teacher should have sufficient knowledge to draw examples from the success and failures of the past generations. He must lead the children to see the hand of God so that they learn to govern their own lives according to the fear and will of God. This means that the teacher must possess the knowledge and have the ability to communicate it to the children. He must be well-trained and competent.

For Luther, the primary subject for the teacher to teach was religion. Religion was relevant to all subjects. Because of this sacred work which the teacher had to do, he could never be trained well enough. Other subjects were necessary to gain skill in presentation of the truth of Scripture. He writes that he who is to teach others the Scriptures and wishes to be rightly understood, "must first

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[9]Ibid., p. 175.

have observed and learned to know the world."[10]

Not only must the teacher have the ability to teach and be well-trained, but he must also have the Christian maturity. He must be morally blameless, pious, honest, and diligent. As early as 1515, Luther encouraged the teachers to be men of character. He had been made director of studies for his cloister and District Vicar of ten convents. In his new capacity, he admonished the priests, "I conjure, be diligent and faithful in teaching the young, the first and the most important thing."[11] This was early in his priesthood and he held the same high moral requirements to the end of his life.

In 1539, Luther wrote in his treatise, "The Councils and the Church," the following:

> Moreover, if the schoolmaster is a god-fearing man and teaches the boys to understand, to sing and to practice God's Word and the true faith, and holds them to Christian discipline, then (as was said above) the schools are young and everlasting Councils, which do more good than many great Councils.[12]

In the same year, to King Gustav of Sweden, who had asked for a tutor for his oldest son, Erix XIV, Luther recommends

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[10]F. Painter, Luther on Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 148.

[11]William Dallmann, "Luther, the World's Greatest Educator," Lutheran School Journal, Vol. LXXXI (March, 1946), 297-306.

[12]Martin Luther, "The Councils and the Church," Works of Martin Luther (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1931), III, p. 298.

to him George Norman, whom he describes as a "God-fearing, modest, sincere, and learned man."[13]

In summary, Luther had a very high regard for the teaching profession. This high regard showed itself likewise in his stringent requirements. Teachers were to be well-trained and competent, having both the intellectual and moral qualifications.

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[13]Alfred Jorgensen, "Sweden," Martin Luther Reformer of the Church, translated by Ronald M. Jensen (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1953), p. 200.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

A. The List of Principles

In summary, we have seen that there are the following principles of education according to Luther:

1. Education is to be Christian.
2. Parents have the primary responsibility for education.
3. Civil rulers have the right and duty to compel education for the welfare of the Church and State.
4. Pastors have the duty to foster education.
5. Worship is a part of education.
6. Elementary education is to be universal.
7. Education is to be wide in scope and practical.
8. The method is to facilitate understanding.
9. The teacher is to be competent and well-trained.

These principles are general and comprehensive. To the list might be added the subheadings in the TABLE OF CONTENTS, which in many cases might be considered principles. The principles cover the entire area of instruction and learning and are carried out by the home, Church, and government for the mutual benefit of all.

B. The First Principle is Basic to All

The one principle, which permeates and fashions all other principles in the mind of Luther, is "Education is to be Christian." Education is not to present a false or indefinite religion, but rather, it is to furnish instruction in the will of the Triune God. The purpose of education should be to fit the entire Christian man, body and soul, for service to the Triune God, who has created, redeemed, and sanctified him. If education is to present the Triune God to man, it must be based upon the Bible wherein this God is revealed. The very fact that the Scriptures for Luther were to be the chief lessons shows that for him education must be Christian. In Luther's own manner of emphasis, he says that it would be better to have the people remain ignorant than that they should be taught in non-Christian schools.

That this first principle is the basis of all other principles is evident throughout. According to Luther, the parents have the primary responsibility to instruct their children, not according to their own wishes, but according to the commandments of God. They must themselves have the ability to instruct them in the truths of the Christian religion. The civil rulers have the duty to act as the arm of the Church and encourage Christian education for the welfare of both the Church and its citizens. Pastors, as the "spiritual fathers" of the people, have the obligation

to further Christian education and to teach their people the way of salvation. To this end, the worship service plays an important part in teaching the truths of Christianity and preparing the people for a Christian way of life.

Because education is Christian, it can not be limited to a few. The Gospel is universal. It must be offered to all. So that all might be able to learn the promises of salvation for themselves, it is necessary that education be offered for all, at least on the elementary level. If one is to have a thorough understanding of the Christian religion, he must include in his studies so-called secular subjects, which will broaden the learning and application of Christian knowledge and the truths of God as they are revealed in history and His divine Word. The curriculum should be wide enough that it includes practical application of this knowledge and prepares the person for useful service in this present life.

If education is to fulfill its purpose of preparing the Christian man for service to the Triune God, the method of instruction must be so simple and meaningful that the significance of the Christian truths is very evident to the learner and easily understood by him. Illustrations are an important means for accomplishing this principle.

To fulfill all the principles of education is not easy; therefore, Luther would have competent, well-trained teachers. These teachers must have the intellectual acumen and ability

to teach the pupil and make the lessons meaningful. Intellectual ability, however, is not all that is needed; the teacher must himself be a Christian. He must first have tasted of the grace of God and come under its power. He must be motivated by the love of Christ and show this love by his every action. With his given ability, the teacher will apply the Word of God to the child and instill in him a response to his Creator and Redeemer.

C. The Urgency Connected with the Principles

Because the Christian principle is basic to all others, there is a certain urgency and compulsion connected with all the principles, which is sensed in the educational writings of Luther. Behind these principles were firm Christian convictions. Luther had a burning desire to share these convictions with his fellowmen. This meant education. Only through education could the new truths of the Reformation be spread abroad. Only through education could the Church grow. As justification by faith is there for all, so Christian education, which teaches this fact, must be offered to all. Parents and teachers are constrained by the love of God to make His saving knowledge known. Because man is sinful and always in need of strengthening, Christian education is important and an absolute necessity.

D. Conclusion

Thus, we conclude that Luther had basic principles of education which can be found in his writings. These are sound and important principles, since they are derived from his fundamental convictions of Christianity. They are "fundamental truths" which might well guide future generations. The greatness of the Reformer is sensed in every principle. What makes the principles themselves great is not the Reformer, but the fundamental truths, which has as their source a yet greater Redeemer.

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