

Education Brief: Using Christ Light For Adult Nurture

By David P. Kuske

"Christ-Light? Oh yes, isn't that the new curriculum for the nurture of the youth in our synod?" Right, and wrong! It surely is a curriculum for youth, but it was designed to contribute to the nurture of adults as well.

When Christ-Light was in the design stage, surveys of parents indicated that many parents were not satisfied with sending their children to a Bible class and letting the teachers do all the teaching. These parents suggested that the design of Christ-Light should also give them an opportunity to participate more in the spiritual nurture of their children - that is, doing more than the usual task of making sure their children did the assigned memory work.

This request on the part of parents was a major factor that led to the design of Christ-Light as a curriculum which had several lessons each week that teach the same spiritual truth. The goal is that at least one lesson a week would be taught at home by one or both of the parents of a child. For example, the Sunday school teacher would teach one lesson in class, and the parents would review that lesson plus teach a second lesson on the same spiritual truth to their child at home. This design was also a major reason why the Bible lessons were presented on individual leaflets rather than in a small booklet or a bound book.

An added goal in getting parents involved in this way was to have them grow in their own knowledge of God's plan of salvation. If a parent carried out the reading of two Bible stories each week, that parent in the course of two years would have reviewed all the key events in God's plan of salvation in both the Old and New Testaments. Think of how parents will grow spiritually as they read two Bible lessons a week for (or with) their child over the course of six years. Think of how parents will grow spiritually if they have two or three children for whom (or with whom) they read these lessons in the course of seven to twelve years.

Another possible objection: Will parents take the time and make the effort to do even these simple things - especially parents who are weak in faith or not even members of our congregation? It is probably a pipe dream to think that every parent will. But congregations that have asked parents to do this have been pleasantly surprised at the large percentage of parents who use the leaflets and do so faithfully. If a child is absent from Sunday school, the Sunday school secretary sends the lessons to the home on Monday. Again, congregations that do this are pleasantly surprised that parents will take the two lessons and do their best to teach those lessons to their children. Parents won't do this without a good deal of encouragement from the congregation's leaders. But parents, even spiritually weak parents, will use an opportunity the congregation provides for them to nurture their children spiritually if they are given half a chance to do so.

One final objection: isn't the cost prohibitive? Purchasing two lessons every week would double the Sunday school budget! But on second thought, isn't it worth every penny when one considers the potential results? Where does a dollar go farther in the whole congregational budget than this expenditure? Children learn the Bible truths even better when the lesson taught in class is reviewed at home and taught again in a second lesson each week. The spiritual bond between parent and child is strengthened as they study and discuss spiritual truths together. Children come into catechism class with a better knowledge of Bible history than if parents had not been involved in teaching their child Bible lessons each week. And last, but not least, adults who haven't reviewed their Bible history since the time they were children or parents who never did learn a lot of Bible history are growing in knowledge and faith. Each week they read and think about a couple of Bible lessons they are reviewing and thus deepening their knowledge of God's plan of salvation during the six or more years they teach their child(ren).

"Christ-Light? Oh yes, isn't that the new curriculum for children that can also be a way for spiritual shepherds to nurture adults under their spiritual care?"