

BX
9423
.C4
M54
1923

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON

APR 3 1993

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

EX
9443
C2
1484
1923

Manual for Communicants' Classes

Prepared at the Direction of the
General Assembly

By
J. R. Miller

Revised Edition
With Suggestions and Review Questions
by
Gerrit Verkuyl

Philadelphia
Presbyterian Board of Publication and
Sabbath-School Work

1923

COPYRIGHTED, 1913
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION AND
SABBATH SCHOOL WORK

Contents

	PAGE
Preface	5
Suggestions to Leaders.....	6
To the Student.....	9

LESSON I

What Christ Is to Us.....	11
---------------------------	----

LESSON II

What It Is to Be a Christian.....	17
-----------------------------------	----

LESSON III

Helps—Means of Grace.....	22
---------------------------	----

LESSON IV

Why Unite with the Church?.....	30
---------------------------------	----

LESSON V

Duties of a Church Member.....	36
--------------------------------	----

LESSON VI

The Lord's Supper.....	42
------------------------	----

Questions and Suggestions.....	49
--------------------------------	----

11/82 Exchange Bluffton

70975

Preface

IT is very important that those uniting with the Church should do so intelligently. A single talk of a few minutes with the pastor and session is not sufficient for the instruction necessary. Many pastors, recognizing this, are accustomed to meet candidates for admission to the Church a number of times before receiving them to the Communion, in order to make clear to them the meaning of the step they are taking, and to instruct them concerning the duties of church membership.¹

The General Assembly, at its meeting in 1904, in response to many requests, directed its Committee on the Forward Movement in Christian Education, to prepare a manual for candidates for church membership. This little book has been prepared after much conference with pastors. It is

¹ Another little book, "**In His Steps**," has been prepared by the writer to put into the hands of those who have united with the Church, with suggestions as to the beginning of the Christian life.

thought that six lessons will serve the purpose better than a larger number would do, as it will not be found practicable in most cases to make the course longer. It will be understood that the lessons are presented only as outlines which pastors will elaborate at their own pleasure.

J. R. M.

Suggestions to Leaders

Although this manual is excellently paragraphed and subdivided, so that the pastors and teachers who use it with pupils that are about to unite with the Church are not themselves in need of directions, it will prove most helpful for the pupils to have the appended questions and suggestions in the preparation of their lessons.

It is taken for granted that each teacher will add such directions as seem helpful, and will alter wherever improvement may be made. The main thing is that the

students shall have some idea of how to master the contents of these lessons. With few exceptions they do not know this, except as we make it clear to them.

It is barely possible that the class will memorize all the Scripture passages that are mentioned within the lessons; but it is not likely. They probably have a few other things to do during the week besides preparing for this class work. It is worth while encouraging them to do this; but success is more likely to be secured by assigning only those verses that contain the essential teachings most clearly and succinctly. For that purpose a few such are appended to each lesson.

In order to induce the members of the class to think for themselves, it is helpful to present to them occasional questions, the answers to which are not found in the manual. It is hoped that besides the few here given, the class leader will make out some of his own. It would be quite in place, also, for each student to write one essay of about four hundred words on an assigned topic, or on a topic of his own

choice. The few topics given at the close are suggestive merely.

A written examination at the close of these studies may be held if the leader deems it wise; the questions being selected from among those used in the weekly studies. It is generally better, however, to review the work well in class, to keep watch over each student's personal grasp of the things studied, and at the end to have private personal interviews with all.

G. V.

To the Student

THIS manual, the six lessons of which you are about to study, was written by a believer in Jesus Christ who thoroughly understood boys and girls and deeply loved them. Dr. Miller, who has now gone to heaven, was not merely a great preacher and author, but he was above all a loving companion. Nothing lay closer to his heart than the hope that he might help boys and girls to grow into strong, clean Christian men and women; and with that purpose in mind he wrote this little book.

You will notice that each of the six lessons has its main divisions indicated by words in heavy type. To look up and memorize those heavy-typed words through the whole lesson before you try to read it all, will help you. This will give you the outline of the lesson. After that you may master each paragraph separately.

In the study of these paragraphs you

may consult the questions that relate to each chapter, if you find that it helps you to do so. These questions point out the leading thoughts of the lesson. When you are able to answer them in your own mind you have caught the meaning of what you have studied, and you will be able to remember it more easily.

If you find that you cannot learn all the texts, memorize the verses given at the end of each set of questions. They will help you through your whole life.

One essay of about four hundred words, on a subject that interests you most in these studies, may be prepared on some Sunday afternoon. This will help you to think for yourself.

Manual for Communicants' Classes

Lesson One

What Christ Is to Us

WHEN, as little children, we were presented to God in baptism, that implied that already we belonged to him and that throughout our lives Christ is willing to be our Friend. Now the time has come for us to express our own faith in him, by personally accepting Christ as our Saviour and Lord, and by confessing him before men. Such an expression of our faith is fully as needful, if we have not yet been baptized; for then it will be the first public acknowledgment of our relation to God.

It is important that we clearly understand what Christ is to us, and what he does for us. When we say that we accept Christ, what do we mean? We take him as

I. **Our Saviour.** This implies that we need a Saviour. We all have sinned. Rom. 3 : 23. The holiest person who ever lived needs Christ. Jesus says, "He that believeth not hath been judged already." John 3 : 18. From the beginning to the end, the Bible teaches that there can be no forgiveness without atonement, and that Christ was the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world. John 1 : 29; Eph. 1 : 7; Heb. 9 : 22.

When the birth of Jesus was foretold, the angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1 : 21. He saves us from our sins, first, by bearing them and freeing us from condemnation. Rom. 8 : 1. He delivers us also from the power of sin by putting his Holy Spirit into us, to give us a new heart, to make us children of God, and to enable us to resist sin and temptation. Then he saves us, also, by delivering us from the hurt of sin, and from its evil effects in our life and character. I John 1 : 9.

Our part is to repent of our sins and

leave them, and to believe on Christ, committing ourselves to him, not only for pardon and cleansing, but also for life and service. Then he becomes our Saviour in the fullest sense, taking us just as we are, guiding us through life, and transforming us into his own image.

II. **Our Lord and Master.** He redeemed us at a great price, and, therefore, we belong to him. I Cor. 6 : 20. When Jesus was calling his disciples, his word usually was, "Follow me." This meant that those he thus called must give up all other masters and all other service and devote themselves completely to him. He made the condition of discipleship obedience to his commands, saying: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments," John 14: 15; and further, "Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you." John 15: 14. This means that the Christian belongs wholly to Christ. He is to take commands from no other. His obedience should be instant and unquestioning. We should never ask "Why?" or "How?" but always should say gladly, "I am ready." The

test of all our life should be: "Will this please Christ? Is this what he would have me to do?"

III. **Our Helper.** When we begin to follow Christ we are very weak. We cannot take care of ourselves. We have neither wisdom nor strength for it. Christ himself becomes our Helper. He is always with us as our unseen Companion. He said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28 : 20. When we know that Christ loves us with infinite love, that he has infinite wisdom, so that he can make no mistake, and then that he has omnipotent power, and is able to do what he will, we need not fear that in any experience of our lives he will be unable to help us.

IV. **Our Friend.** Friend is a very sacred name. We like to have human friends. Christ is the Friend of all his followers, and he wants each of us to be his friend. John 15 : 14. All that the noblest human friend can be to anyone, Christ is to us, only a thousand times more. His friendship never fails us. Some one defines a friend thus:

“The one who comes in when all the world has gone out.” And this is exactly true of Christ. A friend may be trusted; we may trust Christ with all the interests of our lives, for all the affairs of the world are under his control. John 16 : 33. Then he loves us with an infinite love. We need not be afraid, therefore, to commit ourselves to him for eternal keeping. Jude, v. 24.

V. **Our Adviser.** As Jesus grew up from childhood to maturity he faced just such problems, and experienced just such difficulties as come into our lives. Some of them were in different form from ours; but they called for just such fights and decisions as we must make. He met them all bravely and was never lowered by them. To-day he knows perfectly what our struggles and temptations mean; so that when you read his sayings and confide to him your thoughts you have an Adviser, greater than any man. Heb. 2 : 17, 18.

These five points suggest a little of what Christ is to those who take him as theirs.

Whatever our experiences may be, we shall always find him ready to help us. He is our Saviour. He is our Companion. He is our Guide. He is our Burden-bearer. He gives wisdom to those who ask him. He strengthens those who are weak. He will bring us home to glory. There is nothing that we ever can need in all the common and uncommon days of our lives that Christ is unable to give to us or do for us. But in order that he may be all this to us we must accept him as our Lord and Master.

Lesson Two

What It Is to Be a Christian

WE have learned what Christ is to us—our Saviour, our Lord and Master, our Helper, our Friend. What is our part in the Christian life? What do we owe Christ? How should we relate ourselves to him? What is it to be a Christian? A Christian is one who believes in Christ and follows him. To be a Christian one must

I. **Know Christ.** We cannot follow him unless we know something about him. How can we know Christ? We cannot meet him face to face as his disciples met him when he was on earth in human form. How then can we get acquainted with him? We may learn about him in the Scriptures. We should make a careful study of the four Gospels, in which the story of his wonderful life is told. We should study these Gospels until we are familiar with all that is told in them of the life of Jesus—his words, his

works, his character; until we have learned how he lived, how he loved—his patience, his gentleness, his thoughtfulness, his unselfishness, his great self-sacrifice. We must learn all we can about Christ.

But it is not enough to know about Christ—we must know him. Eph. 4 : 20, 21. It is possible for us to have a personal acquaintance with him. He says that he knows his own and his own know him, even as the Father knows him and he knows the Father. John 10 : 14, 15. Christ is living in this world as really, to-day, through the Holy Spirit, as he lived, in human form, in the days when his first disciples were with him. We should yield all our life to the Holy Spirit. Those who let the Spirit lead them become God's children. Rom. 8 : 14. The Spirit will also reveal to them the things of Christ. John 16 : 12-15. Thus Christ will reveal himself to us and we shall come to know him as a close personal Friend, knowing no other friend so well, so intimately.

II. **Love Christ.** We have many reasons for loving him. One is, because he

loves us. I John 4 : 19. When we think of the great sacrifice he made for our redemption, we cannot doubt his love, and our hearts should go out to him in deep affection. Gal. 2 : 20.

We should love him because of the excellence of his character. We have human friends whom we love because of their noble qualities, but Christ excels in his beauty and excellence the best characters that ever have been found on the earth. He is worthy of our deepest love, our highest praise, our purest devotion.

We should love him because only thus can we become like him. He desires that we shall grow into his likeness, and we can do this only by letting his love fill our hearts and purify and sweeten them. We cannot be Christians at all unless we love Christ. After Peter had denied his Lord he could not be restored to his lost place until he could say, "Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." John 21 : 16. Only as love fills our hearts and transforms our lives do we have the beauty of Christ upon us.

III. **Trust Christ.** There will be many

things which he will want us to do, the reasons for which we cannot understand. But we do not need to know the reasons when we have Christ's command. He is much wiser than we are. He has sufficient reason for everything he bids us to do or to suffer, and his reason should satisfy us. Sometimes he calls us to give up things that we should like to keep, but if he does this he knows that it is better we should do so. These things would not be a blessing to us. Sometimes when we pray, he refuses us the things we ask for, but he has a wise reason for this, and we should never doubt his tender care for us. Sometimes he leads us in ways which seem very strange and hard. We can scarcely think they are the right ways. Yet, knowing that he loves us as he does, and that he has all wisdom, we need never doubt for a moment that the way he wants us to go is the right way and leads upward, and toward our heavenly home. II Cor. 4 : 17, 18.

IV. **Obey Christ.** He makes obedience a necessary quality in discipleship. When he was on the earth he called men to follow

him, which meant that they should leave everything and go with him, that they should obey every word of his. "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it," is the word always for a Christian. John 2 : 5. It is not in place to ask "Why?" when Christ commands us to do anything. Our obedience should be prompt, unquestioning, unreserved. No one who does not seek to obey Christ can claim to be a Christian. Nothing else we may do will please him if we do not obey him. Matt. 7 : 21. The spirit of true obedience to the Master is well expressed in the refrain of a familiar hymn:

"I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord,
I'll be what you want me to be."

Lesson Three

Helps—Means of Grace

IT is good to begin well, but beginning is not all. It is only by continuing unto the end that we prove ourselves true disciples. John 8 : 31. We start as little children, but we are to grow until we reach full manhood. We need divine help on the way. We have the promise of it, too—grace sufficient for every experience. II Cor. 12: 9. But how can we get it? What helps are provided for us? How can we get heaven's strength and heaven's grace down into our hearts and lives?

I. We may get help in **prayer**. Every true Christian prays. Acts 9 : 11. The most important element in religion is communion with God. Prayer is a great privilege. We are permitted to bring all our needs, wants and desires to God, and to come to him in all times of trouble, temptation, or trial. Indeed, the true Christian life is a life of unbroken fellowship with

God. We are to walk with him as one walks with a loved and trusted friend.

To go out into the world any day without having first committed ourselves to God in prayer is a perilous thing. Life is full of dangers, struggles, temptations, and not one of us is strong enough to meet these experiences alone. Then we have our tasks, our duties, our burdens, our perplexities, our responsibilities—we are not able for these things unless we have divine help. Hence we should begin each day with prayer, committing ourselves to the keeping of Christ and invoking his guardianship, his guidance, his help.

At the close of the day we should go to God again in prayer, with thanks for the day's blessings, with confession of our mistakes and sins, then committing ourselves to the divine care for the night. Dan. 6 : 10.

But besides these and other regular seasons of prayer, we may be all the time in the spirit of prayer. The apostle Paul counsels us to continue instant in prayer, and to pray always. I Thess. 5 : 17. He does not mean that we shall spend all

our time on our knees, but that while at our work, or in our walks, or wherever we are, we shall keep so near to Christ that we can speak to him at any moment and get his help.

II. **The Bible** is another of the helps a Christian needs. The Bible is God's word. It tells us what God is and what he would have us do. We are to read the Bible to know of the divine love and mercy, and also to learn the divine will for us. The teachings of the Bible will purify our lives. Ps. 119 : 11. Our hearts are like bitter fountains, and the words of Scripture are sweet spices to be cast into these fountains to sweeten them.

The Bible should be our constant companion. Prayer alone is not enough. We need the Word of God to feed us just as we need bread for the hunger of our bodies. Not to read the Bible every day is to leave our souls to hunger. II Tim. 3 : 16, 17.

We should read the Bible thoughtfully, pondering its words to know their meaning, and then letting its teachings into our hearts and lives. Not only should we hear the

words of God, but we should also obey them. A young man said to his pastor at the close of the year, "I have gone through the Bible five times this year." The minister quietly asked him, "How often has the Bible gone through you this year?" Jesus told certain people that the reason they hated him was because his Word did not have free course in them. John 8 : 37. Some people read the Bible so carelessly that it makes no impression upon them. It should be read thoughtfully, every word sinking into our hearts and having its effect upon our lives and characters. Ps. 19 : 8, 9.

III. We may get much help from **Christian friendship**. Young Christians need to be very careful about their companions. If they take as their friends those who are not Christ's friends, those who are profane or worldly, those who do not pray, nor read the Bible, nor try to do right, the influence of such companionships will be very harmful. They should rather choose for their friends those who are also Christ's friends, those who love the Bible and love the Church and

strive to do right. The influence of such friendships upon their lives will be purifying, uplifting and inspiring. Rom. 12 : 2.

IV. Much help can be gained also from having **good surroundings**. As far as possible, the young Christian should seek to have about him only those influences that will help him. A good home is a great blessing. Those who have Christian parents and whose homes are full of the love of Christ, have every advantage. It is easy to grow up into a beautiful life in such an atmosphere. It is not possible always, however, to make all of one's surroundings congenial and spiritual. We cannot make our own circumstances. Sometimes a young Christian finds himself the only follower of Christ in his family. Sometimes in his school, or in his place of work or business, he is thrown among those who are not Christians. It is not always possible to control the influences which surround one's life. So far as we can choose for ourselves, we should keep the atmosphere of our lives such as will promote our best spiritual growth. Then, if we find ourselves amid surround-

ings which are not congenial and helpful, it is all the more important for us to be loyal and true in our own hearts and lives. Dan. 1:8. Opposition should make us the more watchful, the more earnest, the more diligent, the more careful. There is no place in which a Christian cannot be true, for God has promised to help all those who are faithful to him. If our lives are cast in places where we must meet opposition, or encounter temptation, we should be all the more careful to be faithful and true. No one can do us harm but ourselves. If we keep our hearts closed against temptation it can have no power against us. I Cor. 10 : 13; James 1 : 14.

V. There is help in **Christian work**. We grow by activity. A child's body is developed and strengthened by exercise. All our growth, whether of mind or body, comes through activity. The object of study in school is to bring out the powers of the mind. The Church is a school, Christ's school. We enter it at the lowest form, and are to grow, learning our lessons and putting them in practice. For example,

patience is a Christian virtue. Impatience is not Christlike. But we cannot get patience by merely learning how beautiful it is; we can get it only by practicing the lesson day after day, year after year. The same is true of thoughtfulness, kindness, contentment, joyfulness, and all Christian graces. Only by practicing them can we learn them. The only way to learn to speak for Christ is to begin to speak for him at once, confessing him before the world, and then continuing in this duty until we have learned to do it effectively and well. Phil. 3 : 13, 14.

Every young Christian should at once take up some kind of work for Christ. The boy who joined the church last week should try to bring another boy to Sunday school or to church next Sunday. Luke 22 : 32. The girl who has given herself to Christ should begin at once to practice kindness, thoughtfulness, and all beautiful things, first at home, then among her friends and wherever she goes. Idleness is full of danger, because it affords opportunity for all manner of temptation. The busy

person is the safe one. There is no better help in Christian life than to be always active—first in one's common duties, and then in special work for Christ. Eph. 6 : 11-18.

Lesson Four

Why Unite with the Church?

YOUNG Christians sometimes ask whether it is necessary for them to unite with the Church, or whether they cannot serve Christ as faithfully and acceptably without taking this step. There are several important reasons why those who love Christ and have entered his service should take their places openly before the world. Christians should unite with the Church, because:

I. **Christ requires it.** When we turn to the Gospels we find that all Christ's invitations to men required them to come out before their friends and before the world and join his company. He invited people to come to him. Matt. 11:28. This implied their being known as belonging among his disciples. He asked them to follow him, meaning that they should accept him as their Teacher and Master, and begin to do what he commanded them

to do. Matt. 16 : 24. They could not obey him without letting people know that they believed in him and had taken him as their Guide and Friend. He never gave any of his disciples leave to keep their discipleship quiet for a while, but expected them all to make it known at once.

Jesus required public confession, saying: "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Matt. 10 : 32, 33. Thus it appears that public confession of Christ is a large part of saving faith. Paul also has a very strong word on the subject: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10 : 9, 10. Of course, one may confess Christ in quiet, personal ways, by loyalty of heart and obedience in life, but there is

no way which seems entirely to fulfill the condition of our Lord's words without our uniting with the Church, which represents Christ's friends. Nicodemus and Joseph were secret disciples for a while, but there was a day when they came out boldly—they could not do otherwise—and confessed their Lord before the whole world. John 19 : 38, 39.

II. **It is necessary for the receiving of the fullest blessing.** So long as we love Christ and yet keep our friendship for him secret from the world, we cannot receive the full comfort which comes to those who have openly taken their place on his side. Secret discipleship may be sincere and true, but it never quite satisfies the heart. There is always something kept back, something hidden from the world which ought to be told out. Unconfessed allegiance to our Saviour does not bring to us the full, rich comfort which comes from open declaration of our love for him. The woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment and then tried to steal away unnoticed, without making herself known, had received only part of

the blessing, and Jesus required her to come forward and tell her whole story, and then she went away with a full, rich blessing. Mark 5 : 25-34.

III. **It is necessary for the influence of our example.** So long as persons follow Christ only secretly, the world does not know where they stand. They may be true to their Master in their own hearts, and may be fruitful in their love and loyal in all their personal relations to him. But they have not declared themselves his friends before men, and are supposed by the world still to be among his enemies. There are but two parties: those who are on Christ's side and those who are against him. Matt. 12 : 30. All who have not openly and publicly taken their place among his friends are classed by the world as against him. Their secret friendship places them in a false position; in a position dishonoring to their Master, in which they withhold from him the strong witness which they ought to give to him.

IV. **Only thus can we do our full part in the work of Christ.** So long as we follow Christ only secretly, we are not in a position

to do much in bringing other persons to Christ, in adding to the power of the Church, or in advancing the kingdom of God. Every faithful new member in a church adds to the strength of the church in the community and to the influence of righteousness in the world. Being saved is not all of salvation; it is essential that those who are saved shall become earnest helpers in saving others. This we can do effectively only by identifying ourselves with the visible Church. Acts 2 : 46, 47.

V. **We thus best help and safeguard our own lives.** Committing ourselves publicly to Christ gives us a new motive for faithfulness. No true man wants to fail in his vows and promises before other men. The lofty ideal of the Church keeps us intent on our duty and calls us ever to do our best. Then association with other good people helps us, quickens us, and inspires whatever is good in us. In climbing mountains, tourists are tied together, so that if one slips he may be held up by the others. It is very much easier to be a Christian in happy church fellowship than when one is

all alone. In 1879, a young Boston physician who had scaled the Matterhorn, insisted, during the descent, on loosening himself from the rope that united him to his companions. He had hardly done so when he made a false step, lost his footing, glided rapidly down the steep icy slope, and the next moment disappeared over the precipice.

VI. **Above all, it duly honors Christ.** Our Saviour feels very close to those who believe in him. He calls himself the Bridegroom. Matt. 9 : 15. The Church, in turn is called the Bride. Rev. 22 : 17. Therefore Christ is closely identified with his Church and so are his people with each other. But as if this were not close enough, the Church is called his body. I Cor. 12 : 27. The head of this body is Christ. Eph. 5 : 23. From the earliest times, therefore, the children of God have united into a body, for worship, fellowship and service. That body is the Church.

Lesson Five

Duties of a Church Member

WHEN we become members of the Church, there are certain duties which we assume. We often hear persons speak of "belonging to the Church." The expression is suggestive. If we belong to the Church we have an interest in it, we owe it something, and it has claims upon us. It is the duty of a church member

I. **To honor Christ as his Saviour and Lord.** We must, therefore, do much more than merely take our place as church members and come now and then to the Lord's table. From the day of our public confession we are recognized as belonging to Christ, and wherever we go we represent Christ. This puts upon us a sacred responsibility. We bear Christ's name. We stand for him among men. The world expects to find in us the beauty of a Christian life. Eph. 2 : 10. Our witness must be consistent and faithful, not merely in the

church of which we are members, but quite as much outside, among men. Everything we do, every word we speak, every manifestation of our spirit in disposition or conduct, either honors Christ and makes him more glorious in the world, or dishonors him and puts a stain on his name, which we bear. II Cor. 3 : 3. A church member must, therefore, in all things, small and great, live a life worthy and true, a life that will please Christ and never bring reproach upon his Church.

II. To be conscientious in attendance upon the church services. He needs this for his own sake, for only those who use the means of grace that the Church provides can grow in Christian life. He needs the instruction which he finds in the services of the Church. He needs the influence of Christian fellowship and friendship. Good people are a means of grace to us. One coal will not burn alone on the grate, but when two or more are laid together, one kindles the other. He needs the blessing which comes through Christian worship, when hearts unite in their praise and prayer. Those

who continue faithful in their attendance upon the ordinances of divine worship are not likely to drift away from Christ, while those who grow careless in the habit of church attendance are apt to lose their interest, and perhaps, in the end, fall away from their confession and from their Saviour. Heb. 10 : 25.

III. **To do his part in the support of the Church.** There are necessary expenses in every church which all the members should share according to their ability. Even the poorest person can do something. The widow brought her two mites and Jesus commended her gift as the largest cast that day into the treasury. Giving should not be regarded as a burden—it is a privilege, an opportunity. Acts 20 : 35. It is as important that we learn to give as that we learn to pray. Not to give is to cultivate selfishness, which produces spiritual death. We must give if we would live. Not to give is to rob God, to whom we owe our offerings. Not to give is to miss blessing which comes always to those who give in the right spirit. Every young Christian

should begin to give as soon as he unites with the Church. He should give regularly, at definite times. He should give according to what he has—as the Lord hath prospered him. He should give cheerfully, for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver. II Cor. 9 : 7.

IV. **To take his part in all the work of the Church.** We are not saved merely to sit still and enjoy ourselves as Christians. We are saved to serve. All those who have found Christ are to do what they can to bring others to Christ. The Sunday school affords opportunities for young Christians to study the Bible, and to bring it into the lives of others. The Christian Endeavor Society is meant to train them to take part in meetings. There are many ways, also, in which they can begin at once to do the work of Christ. They can invite others to attend the church services. Even a child Christian may bring another child, or perhaps a mother or father, or some other older person. They can do the deeds of love which the Master expects of all his followers.

V. **To live out the spirit of Christ in his relations with his fellow church members.** The members of a church should bear each other's burdens, rejoice in each other's joys, and weep with each other's sorrows. Rom. 12 : 15. They should be patient, kind, charitable, helpful, the one to the other. Jesus made the badge of discipleship to be the showing of love to fellow Christians. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13 : 34, 35. Those who love Christ and are bound together in the same Christian household are their brothers' keepers in a peculiar way. They should guard each other's good name and seek the advancing of each other's interests in all ways.

VI. **To build up the church of which he is a member.** This he can do not only by giving to its support as generously as he is able, and by showing love to his fellow members, but also by striving to bring others into the church. If all the members

are enthusiastic in their love for their church, they can do a great deal to interest others in it. The true idea of Christian life is that everyone who loves Christ shall be a personal evangelist. Andrew and John, when they had found Jesus, brought their brothers, and Philip brought his friend Nathanael. Upon every member of the church rests part of the responsibility for preaching the gospel to every creature. It is not enough for us to work for the church to which we belong; we should have the true missionary spirit, beginning at home, but reaching out to the ends of the earth. Young Christians cannot too soon begin to learn about the work of missions and to do what they can to help in this work.

We owe more to the church than we can ever repay; we should not withhold from it our best love and service. Our devotion to the church should never grow cold nor should our diligence in its work slacken. Our enlistment is for life, and while we live nothing should woo us away from our allegiance or weaken our loyalty.'

Lesson Six

The Lord's Supper

THE sacraments of the Christian Church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Both were appointed by our Lord Jesus Christ, to be perpetually observed by his Church. Baptism as a sacrament is the sign and seal of our reception into the household of faith. It implies confession of sin and unworthiness, and the need of cleansing, and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, of God as our Father, of the Holy Spirit as our Guide, and of other Christians as our brethren in the Lord. It is to be administered to little children, for Christ declared that of such is the kingdom of heaven. It is also to be universally observed by the Church, for our Lord commanded all nations to be baptized. For Christians, personally, it is the sign of their open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's. If, therefore, we were not baptized in earlier childhood,

the time is now. The other sacrament is the Lord's Supper. To this the young Christian is admitted as soon as he takes his place in the Church as a full member. Concerning the Lord's Supper, it is to be said:

I. It is **a feast of memorial**. It was instituted by the Lord himself, on the night of his betrayal. "He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you." Luke 22: 19, 20. Jesus did not want to be forgotten by his friends, so he gave them a feast to keep himself in their memory, that in the world of care and toil and struggle they might not forget him. This was necessary also for their own faithfulness, for if we let Christ drop out of our minds we shall soon drift away from him. It is to be noticed that the Lord's Supper is meant especially to keep Christ's suffering and death in mind. This is because it was by his offering of himself for us that we are

redeemed. We are never to forget that Jesus died for us.

II. It is also a **Communion**. Jesus and his disciples sat at a table and communed. Eating together in such a manner implies very close intimacy. When we come to Christ's table, we are privileged, first of all, to have fellowship with him. Those who sat at the first Communion were thus acknowledged to be his friends, and were made partakers of great privileges. John 15 : 15. They that now receive the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper, with penitent, humble and trusting hearts, receive similar precious and divine gifts. They feed upon Christ by faith, have their union with him confirmed, are strengthened against sin, encouraged and quickened in duty, inspired with new love and zeal, and have peace of conscience and comfortable hopes of eternal life. The bread of the Supper is the symbol of Christ as their life, strength and assured hope; the cup is the sign to them of the forgiveness of sins and of the divine favor. Christ wants us to commune with him at his table. Any-

thing that separates us from Christ hinders communion. If we cherish any sin in our hearts, any disbelief, any distrust, we cannot get close to Christ. We should put away all sin by sincere repentance. I Cor. II : 27, 28. We should talk to Christ, telling him our desires, unburdening our hearts, speaking to him of our love, and then of our failures and mistakes, of our weakness and proneness to go astray, casting ourselves in simple faith upon his love and strength.

The Lord's Supper is also meant to be a communion of saints, a communion between those who sit together at the table. Anything that separates us from another hinders this communion. All bitterness, all unkindly feeling, should be put away, as we take our place side by side and with the Master. It should be a time for mutual forgiveness, if one has wronged another, if one holds a grudge against another. We should meet together as one family, heart touching heart, and life flowing into life. Eph. 4 : 4, 5.

III. It is also an act of Consecration.

The word sacrament primarily means an oath. In Rome, it was the soldier's oath to be loyal to his king and to his country. In coming to the Communion, we avow our devotion to Christ and pledge ourselves to be faithful to him while we live. It is not enough to be true to Christ and merely to confess him at his table; we must continue to confess him also when we go back into the world again—in our homes, in our places of work and duty, in our pleasures and amusements, in all our contacts with people outside. We pledge ourselves to be his friends and his followers wherever we go, as long as we live.

IV. It is meant to be **a sample of all our Christian life.** We are to think of Christ when we sit at his table and receive the memorials of his love and sacrifice. But we should continue our remembrance of him when we go out into the world. If we would only learn to remember Christ always, to keep him always in mind, it would make our lives very beautiful. We cannot do wrong things when thinking about our Saviour. We cannot speak the angry word

nor do the unholy thing; we cannot tell a lie, nor be dishonest in any transaction, while remembering Christ. If we but keep him always in our thought it will hold us close to him, it will make our lives like his, and it will transform us into his beauty.

How should we come to the Lord's table? We should come **thoughtfully**, knowing what we are doing. We should come **penitently**, confessing our sins and putting them out of our life forever. We should come **trustingly**, taking Christ into our hearts and casting all the burdens of our lives upon him. We should come **in the spirit of consecration**, presenting ourselves as living sacrifices for his use and service. We should come **gladly**, for the Lord's Supper is a feast of gladness. Christ drained the cup of its bitterness and then filled it with blessings for us. We should come with **love**, love to Christ and love to all about us. Then we should go forth from the Communion to serve, to do Christ's work in the world, to win others to him, to be comforters of the world's sorrow and helpers of the world's needs.

Questions and Suggestions

Lesson One

1. Why should boys and girls think of this personal relation to Christ?
2. Name four things that Christ is to us.
3. What does the need of a Saviour imply?
4. Tell what Christ did to save us.
5. Who is our present Helper to keep us safe?
6. What is our own part in our salvation?
7. What did Jesus mean by saying, "Follow me"?
8. Mention three things whereby Christ is a sure Helper.
9. How does the definition of a friend apply to Jesus?
10. What reason have we to look to Christ as our Adviser?
11. Of the things that Christ is to us, which one includes all the rest, and why?

Memory Work: Matt. 1 : 21; John 1 : 29; I John 1 : 9. Read all other passages mentioned in the lesson.

Lesson Two

Outline the previous lesson and repeat the memory verses. This is the briefest lesson in the manual. You might find time to think of and write something about a man or a woman you know, or of whom you have read either in the Bible or elsewhere, who

seems to show the marks of a Christian that are mentioned in this lesson. Point out those marks if you write.

1. Mention the four things that mark a Christian.
2. From what sources can we learn of Christ?
3. How may we become personally acquainted with him?
4. Give three reasons why we should love him.
5. What reason have we to trust him?
6. Why is obedience absolutely necessary?
7. How does the call for obedience apply to your own life?

Memory Work: I John 4 : 19; John 10 : 14, 15.
Read all other passages mentioned in the lesson, and notice why they were spoken or written.

Lesson Three

Recall in your mind what one thing appealed to you most in the first lesson; and also one thing in the second lesson; and see whether it has meant anything to you in your actual living.

1. Name five "means of grace."
2. Why is communion with God the most important?
3. Give a reason for praying both at the opening and at the close of day.
4. What is meant by continuing in prayer?
5. Why should we also make use of the Bible?
6. What has God's Word to do with our lives, and what have our lives to do with it?

7. What difference do companions make?
 8. When thrown among bad companions and scenes, what then?
 9. Give all the reasons you can think of for starting Christian work at once.
 10. Mention some work you might personally do.
- Memory Work: Ps. 119 : 11; I Cor. 10 : 13.
Read John 1 : 40-45.

Lesson Four

Give one illustration for each of the five things mentioned in the previous lesson as helpful in the Christian life; and freely discuss in class the subject of mastering one's environment.

1. State the reasons given for uniting with the Church.
2. In what two ways did Christ show he desired open allegiance?
3. Tell of Nicodemus as a secret and as a known disciple.
4. From an actual incident, show that full blessing requires open confession.
5. Show the falsity of the secret follower.
6. What positive side of life is hindered by non-confession?
7. Note the effect of public commitment upon ourselves.
8. Give the names that suggest Christ's relation to the Church and suggest their meaning.
9. Discuss the arguments that are sometimes made against uniting with a church.

Memory Work : Matt. 10 : 32, 33; Acts 2 : 47, latter part. Read John 3 : 1, 2; 7 : 50-53; 19 : 39.

Lesson Five

Not a member of this class should unite with the Church except from his own free choice. Uniting with the Church saves nobody. But it is a true expression of our own faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour and of our desire to serve him in company with others. This lesson suggests what we should gladly be and do as members of the Church. While you study it, pray that God may guide you in the right way. You belong to him. Are you willing to be loyal to him, and to take part in his work in the world ?

1. What is the supreme quality of a church member?
2. Mention three benefits that come from church attendance.
3. Why, how and when should we give?
4. Mention the various church activities, and consider a place for yourself.
5. How does it help to be Christians together?
6. How does the Great Commandment affect us at home?
7. How is the Church a channel for home and foreign mission work?
8. If our Saviour bought us with a price, what follows?

Memory Work : Matt. 5 : 16; I Cor. 16 : 2;
Matt. 28 : 18-20.

Lesson Six

1. What does baptism mean, and why should children be baptized?
2. What relation has personal uniting with the Church with baptism?
3. How was the Lord's Supper instituted?
4. In what way is it a memorial?
5. Who is our host at Communion, and how is fellowship strengthened?
6. What do the bread and the wine signify?
7. Show how a sacrament involves consecration.
8. What bearing has this Communion upon our everyday life?
9. Suggest in what frame of mind we should sit at the Lord's table.
10. Who are invited to the Lord's Supper?

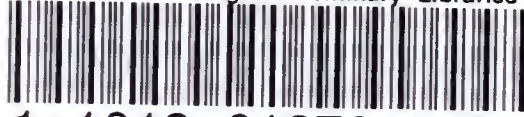
Read Acts 16 : 25-33; Matt. 26 : 26-28; I Cor. 11 : 23-28.

Essays and Examination

Within the series of questions, or appended to them, a few topics have already been proposed. The following are also offered, so that the students may have a more liberal choice:

1. Simon Peter without and with Christ's help.
2. How to get most out of the Bible.
3. The class member's own way of praying.
4. The meaning of loyalty to Christ.
5. Jesus as a personal Friend.

Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries



1 1012 01379 4526

DATE DUE

JAN 13 2015

JAN 7 9 2015

GAYLORD

#3523PI

Printed in USA

