

Jr. Lutheran Quiz

As I investigated the Lutheran distinctives, I was relieved to see the emphasis Luther placed on fathers teaching the Christian faith to their children. Each Chief Part of the *Small Catechism* declares, "As the head of the family should teach his household..." It echoes my own conviction about what Scripture teaches. Indeed, during my time as a non-denominational church pastor I was constantly teaching our fathers how to teach the Christian faith to their little ones by the use of various catechisms. We even stepped it up a notch when our parents and children participated in a Bible Trivia match, utilizing competition against other churches. Other churches in our area memorized the same question and answers, allowing us to compete on both the State and National levels. This ministry was an important piece of teaching the faith to the children.

After discussing my experience with Pr. Bruss, we are creating something similar specifically for those children ages, 6 to 11. We want to instill in them the Bible knowledge as well as highlighting the Lutheran difference so that when Pr. Bruss and myself, along with Deaconess Linda have those same children in catechism class, there is plenty to build upon.

HOW IT WORKS:

First, children and their parents (parents are key to success with this!) begin working on memorizing the questions and their answers. These are simple questions, with many answers containing only one word. When my children were little we reviewed questions at meals, throughout the day and at bed time. Some examples of the questions include:

10. **How many books are in the New Testament?** 27
11. **What language is the New Testament written in?** Greek
12. **Who wrote most of the books in the New Testament?** St. Paul
13. **What is the common name given to the first four books of the New Testament?** The Gospels
262. **What are the Sacraments and the Word of God?** The Means of Grace
264. **Who was the principal author of the Augsburg Confession of 1530?** Philipp Melancthon
265. **How old was Luther when he died?** 63

Once time is given to study and memorize, quizzes are held. During the quiz itself, correct questions are awarded with 10, 20, or 30 points. So far Pr. Bruss and I have created a list of just under 300 10-point questions. Our questions span the Old and New Testaments, and contain Lutheran history. We have also begun working on more challenging questions with point values of 20 and 30. However, we want to begin simply.

Each team has a coach. The size of the team may vary, but only four quizzers can play at a time. Substitutions can be made throughout the match. One team of four (GREEN TEAM) competes against another team of four (RED TEAM). Twenty questions are randomly selected and a quiz master reads each question to the two teams. Specially designed quiz boxes indicate which quizzer buzzed in first keep track of the time allowed for the answer to be given. If the answer given is correct, points are awarded to the particular team and the quiz master moves to the next question. If the answer given is incorrect, points are subtracted and the question automatically goes to the other team. One of the things that make the match more competitive is that the children learn where the "cut off" of the question is. Look again at the sample questions above. Do you notice the portion of the question in

bold-face type? This is the “cut off.” If a quiz master asks, question 13, a quizzer can buzz in and thereby interrupt. However, if a quizzer interrupts, he or she has to finish the question accurately, and then give the answer. If anything is incorrect, question or answer, the team loses points and the quiz master repeats the same question for the other team. It is hard to do it justice, but this is a fast-paced competition. The coach is there to call time-outs, make substitutions and give guidance as his/her team plays.

EXPANSION:

Pr. Bruss and I believe all of our Missouri Synod churches would benefit from something like this. As mentioned previously, it assists the heads of the household fulfill their vocation to teach the Christian faith to their children, and it places in the minds and hearts of our children a great deal of knowledge that can be built upon in formal catechesis. Once we have developed the game and ironed out the wrinkles, we intend to export it to other LCMS churches this summer hoping they incorporate it. That has the added benefit of giving St. John’s someone to compete against through the Fall/Winer, 2017.