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## A Teacher's Guide to Lutheran Confirmation

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### Lesson 3: Teaching Goals for Confirmation

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Your most important teaching goal is the same one that the Apostle John had when he wrote his gospel: *"These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* John 20:31 You will accomplish this purpose if your students gain a firm foundation of heartfelt trust in Jesus as their Savior from sin, continue firmly in this faith for their whole lives, and bring forth fruits of faith that will glorify God by their Christian life and witness.

This goal can only be accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit does this work through the powerful Word of God.

*"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)*

*"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity." (2 Peter 3:18)*

Earnestly pray that God will work through you to give your students more and more **grace** and **knowledge** of the Lord Jesus! Keep these important points in mind when you are preparing and teaching the Confirmation class:

#### **True Christian growth in God's Word involves both the *head* and the *heart*.**

First, we want the children to learn and remember the **facts** about what the Bible teaches -- this is **head** knowledge. They should be able to correctly answer questions about the Bible doctrine, and they should memorize key Scripture passages and portions of the Small Catechism.

The second part is even more important. We want the **meaning** of the Bible's teachings to increase faith and trust in Jesus in the hearts of the children. We want the Good News about full forgiveness of sins through Christ to bring them peace and joy, and we want God's love to lead them to live a holy life, for God's glory. We also want them to be eager to share God's love in Christ with others.

*"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." (Romans 10:9-10)*

**Example 1:** when teaching about the 7th Commandment, "You shall not steal,"

We want the children to *know* about the God-pleasing ways that he blesses us with our possessions, the right way to use these blessings, and how to respect the possessions of others.

We want them to *know* about the ways that people break this commandment, and that God does not tolerate sin.

We want the children to *recognize* that when they fail to keep the 7th commandment they are sinners in need of a Savior. We want them to *treasure* the good news that Jesus kept this commandment in our place, and died to take away our guilt. With this kind of Savior, the children will see that earthly possessions are blessings from God, to be used for his glory.

**Example 2:** when teaching about the person of Jesus Christ in the second article of the Apostles' Creed,

We want the children to *know* that Jesus Christ was and is true God (John 1:1, John 5:23-25, Philippians 2:5-7, etc.). We want them to *know* that this same Jesus was and is true man (John 1:14, 1 Timothy 2:5, etc.).

We want the children to *treasure* the miracle of how true God became a true man. We want them to find *peace and joy* in the great love of Jesus that led him to leave heaven's glory to become human like us, so that He could live a life of humble obedience and die for us on the cross.

#### **Short Answer Study Questions:**

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1. What was the Apostle John's purpose in writing his gospel, as stated in John 20:31?
2. Through whose power will this teaching goal be accomplished?
3. What are the two aspects of true Christian growth mentioned in the lesson?
4. What is "head knowledge" in confirmation instruction?
5. Why is "heart knowledge" important in addition to "head knowledge"?