



Every Fall, since 2002, I have reminded the congregation of the interrelation of the three cords involved in training our covenant youth in the fear and admonition of the Lord. I trust that the visual above will serve to remind you...

As members of the covenant community by baptism, our covenant you enjoy the benefit of hearing the Word of God preached each and every Lord's Day as well as observing the sacraments which signify the gospel of Jesus Christ to them. By these means of grace, the Holy Spirit works to create faith in the hearts of the elect and to strengthen the faith of those who believe.¹

As members of covenant households, our children are entrusted by God to believing parents who are charged with training them up in the way of wisdom. Beginning with the fear of the Lord² and directing them to Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God,³ we are to equip our children to rightly apply the Word of God to every circumstance of their lives.⁴ Whether help is found in a Christian day school, like Calvin Christian School, or elsewhere, the head of each household is ultimately responsible for the content and character of the training their children receive.

Covenant households do not bring up their children alone, but in the context of the covenant community – the church: one body of many members bound up with Christ by the one Holy Spirit. Therefore, at the baptism of a covenant child, members of this congregation have been asked, “Do you... promise to receive this child in love, pray for him, help care for his instruction in the faith, and encourage and sustain him in the fellowship of believers.” When we answer, “We do, God helping us”, we answer with confidence in our unity in Christ and the diversity of His gifts to us.⁵

As we begin another church education year, I want to again draw your attention to the many who have again – or for the first time – stepped forward to assist you in the instruction of your children. Thirty seven of your brothers and sisters in the Lord have committed to prayerfully prepare for and to assist you week-by-week in teaching our children the truth of Scripture and the way of gospel living. As they do so, please remember that

*the design and intent of instruction by the church
is to assist parental instruction – not to replace it.*

Many families have found that incorporating their child(ren)'s preparation for class into family devotions they not only help them to learn, but also reinforce the importance of what is being learned. Catechizing [or catechesis] is time-proven method for teaching that is biblical and effective. Although ancient, catechesis is by no means out-of-date. It involves more than merely giving information. It also works to elicit responses

¹ Romans 1:16, 10:17; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 3:2 – 5; 2 Timothy 3:15

² Proverbs 1:7

³ 1 Corinthians 1:24

⁴ Deuteronomy 6:6 – 9

⁵ Ephesians 4:4 – 7

that reveal knowledge and understanding of that information and – most importantly – whether the catechumen [the student] trusts in our God and Savior Jesus Christ to Whom Scripture and our Three Forms of Unity point!

Because we are one in Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit, let us be one in the purpose of looking to the eternal interests of our covenant youth; preparing and encouraging them to profess their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and their belief in His Word, not only before the church but also before the watching world.

Working to prepare God's people for works of service (Eph 4:12),



Rev. Donovan

Catechism is not just for children!

The disciples asked, “Who then can be saved?”

Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

(Matt 19:25-26)

Join Rev. Donovan for an invigorating and challenging interaction with the Word of God as directed by the *Canons of Dort* – denoted by T.U.L.I.P. These “five points of Calvinism” are not intended to summarize *all* that we believe, but to focus in *particular* on *what we believe about the way of salvation*.

All post high school adults are welcome to join in this consideration of **THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE**. We will be meeting in Calvin Christian High School, in the classroom at the far end of the hall from the doorway where you enter the school. This class will be concluded by Christmas break.

2008 – 2009 Curriculum: Major components

- **12th graders** will begin defending the faith, using Christian apologetics, by working through *Lifeguards* by R.C. Sproul. Having been catechized in the faith, these young men and women will be enabled to better meet the challenges awaiting them in their college years and beyond.
- **11th graders** will discover and discuss the *Canons of Dort* and the *Belgic Confession* as well as continue memorization of some of the Heidelberg Catechism. They will use the books *But for the Grace of God*, by Cornelis P. Venema and *Everything in Christ*, by Clarence Stam.
- **7th through 10th graders** will delve into the Heidelberg Catechism, working through the book *I Belong* (Volumes I and II) twice over the course of four years.
- **6th graders** will continue using *A Beginning Course in the Compendium of Reformed Doctrine*, by Peter Y. De Jong and John R. Sittema. This curriculum will give the 6th graders a survey of Reformed doctrine that introduce them to the catechism they will study in depth for the next four years. They will also continue to integrate memorization of some of the Heidelberg Catechism.
- **Elementary** grades (3 year olds through 5th grade) will continue *Great Commissions Publications’* Bible curriculum along with memorization of some key Heidelberg Catechism questions and answers.