

**MANUALS OF RELIGIOUS  
INSTRUCTION:  
DOCTRINAL SERIES. NO. 1,  
2**

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**COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN  
NEW-CHURCH SABBATH-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

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INSTRUCTION:  
DOCTRINAL  
SERIES. NO. 1, 2**



MANUALS  
OF  
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

**Doctrinal Series.**

No. I.

THE CATECHISM: PARTS FIRST AND SECOND.

No. II.

PART FIRST.—QUESTIONS ON THE FAITH OF THE  
NEW CHURCH. (*In nineteen Lessons.*)

PART SECOND.—QUESTIONS ON THE TEN COM-  
MANDMENTS. (*In twelve Lessons.*)

PART THIRD.—QUESTIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.  
(*In seven Lessons.*)

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PREPARED FOR THE AMERICAN NEW-CHURCH  
SABBATH-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

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NEW YORK:  
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1884.



## PREFACE.

THE following Catechism is in two parts : The First Part is the "Child's First Catechism" unaltered, and long in use in the English Conference, and in many of our own Sunday-schools, being contained in the "Welcome" and the "Hosanna" song-books. The Second Part is also largely taken from the longer Catechism of the English Conference, but changed by substituting for the "Creed" as there provided a brief formula of the *Faith of the New Church*, condensed from the *Universals of Faith* as contained in the opening chapter of the *True Christian Religion*; the instruction regarding the Church and the Life after Death has also been somewhat modified.

While the Catechism in both parts, is not beyond the mental reach or learning capacity of that age for which this kind of instruction is adapted — namely, from seven to fourteen years, yet the Second Part will be found to contain statements of doctrine and practical precepts of life which may be studied with profit and interest by still older pupils. Care has been taken to avoid verbal repetitions in the Second Part, of answers contained in the First ; and to make

the two Parts really consecutive and progressive. To facilitate the learning of the First Part by quite young children, the Ten Commandments are printed in type of two kinds, the italic portions only to be committed to memory at first. In concert recitations of the whole school however, it is desirable that the Commandments be recited entire by the older classes, and this will considerably help the youngest in their memorizing.

To the objection that young children find it difficult to commit to memory long passages, and that the catechetical method with its memorizing and its formal questions and answers is not calculated to interest or instruct a child's mind, may be answered that Swedenborg frequently alludes to the Lord's Prayer and the "Ten Commandments" as being the first things a child should learn; and that one member of this committee states from his experience that generally speaking, "if children have not learned by heart the Ten Commandments before they are ten years old, they are likely never to learn them perfectly, but once learned before that age they are never likely to be forgotten, especially if brought into the school exercises." Because a statement is committed to memory by some effort and by means of a more or less mechanical drilling or training, by continued uniform repetition, it does not fol-



low that the holy truth therein contained will be mechanically received or remain an image without life in the pupil's memory. To commit to memory passages from the Word and brief, terse and comprehensive statements of Christian doctrine is certainly a means of furnishing the child's mind with precious remains, which will be opened and filled with life more and more as they are called forth in the experiences of the maturer life.

At the same time while the Catechism requires careful and accurate memorizing, and in order to be useful in class instruction should be *recited with great uniformity and precision*, it would be a great mistake for the teacher to think his work necessarily completed when the questions and answers have been formally gone through with. Every question will to an intelligent and loving teacher suggest many other questions or illustrations by which the truth may be made interesting and impressive to the learner's mind; and, so also, by questioning the pupils on the meaning of the answers as recited, the peculiar thought and affection of their several minds will be drawn forth, and the exercise made to be far from a dull and lifeless one.

As to the manner of grading the classes in the *Catechism* the following is suggested:

The Youngest Class.—The Catechism, Part I. to the end of the Lord's Prayer,

learning the Commandments only in the abbreviated form.

Class II. — Age from eight to ten. The Commandments entire, and the remainder of Part I.

Class III. — Age from ten to twelve or fourteen. The Second Part.

Attention is called to the fact that in Part I., the child is instructed in the essential and primary facts of religion as given in the Word, and as they concern the individual life; in Part II. the child's attention is drawn to the *Church*, or the neighbor to be loved in the larger sense, and as a Divine provision for his spiritual instruction and growth, and his duties in this important regard are indicated. In this way the Catechism may be used according to its original purpose as a form of progressive instruction initiatory to the special preparation for confirmation and the first communion. The more complete doctrinal instruction which should precede confirmation may be found in the second Manual of the Doctrinal Series entitled, "Questions on the Faith of the New Church," "On the Ten Commandments," and "On the Lord's Prayer."

It is recommended that where the Catechism is used, the Pastor or Superintendent rehearse publicly the whole school from time to time in the entire Catechism, and that accuracy, clearness of utterance, and a

distinct, uniform and reverent manner of recitation be insisted upon. It is important that children should learn to revere the Word and the holy truths of the Church, by even the careful manner in which these are learned and uttered by them.