LEARNING THE CATECHISM

Why we teach children the catechism in Sunday school

It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.
LUKE 1:3–4

When we learn the catechism, we are…

- **Learning the basics by heart**
  - A catechism summarizes the Christian faith in simple questions and answers.
  - Our children's catechism puts these truths in words children can understand and remember.
- **Learning with our whole bodies**
  - Each answer has hand motions. Young children remember what they move, not just what they hear.
  - The motions give children something to do with their hands while the words settle into their minds.
- **Going slowly and going deep**
  - We learn one question per unit, repeating it week after week.
  - We would rather children know one answer well than recite many answers they've forgotten by next month.
- **Building a foundation for later**
  - Milk comes before solid food (1 Corinthians 3:2).
  - Older students take a full catechism class using the Westminster Shorter Catechism. The questions they learn now prepare them for that deeper study.
- **Having words ready**
  - Scripture tells us always to be prepared to give a reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15).
  - A child who has learned the answer to "Who made you?" has words ready when a friend asks, or when doubt comes later.
- **Joining the church's long practice**
  - Christians have taught new believers and children through question and answer since the early church.
  - When children learn the catechism, they're learning the same truths the church has taught for centuries.