DEVELOPING YOUR SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING (DYSU)
An Interactive Confirmation Study Lesson

By Ralph E. Williamson, D. Min.

“...You are a part of the body of Christ. God has chosen different ones in the church to do his work.”
1 Corinthians 12:27-28
“The role of the church is to meet people where they are regardless of who they are”
For the wisdom of this world is foolishness unto God.

(1 Corinthians 3:19)
My own Pain

My own Experience

My falling down and rediscovering God in my life

Through much Prayer
INTRODUCTION

Salvation is not a function of education, nor reputation, money, acts or deeds; it does not appear organically and grow passively in our hearts by natural design. Each individual must confess with their mouth and believe in their heart that Jesus is the Son of God. Salvation redeems forever the eternal soul of humankind to God who is love.

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Confirmation, allows youth, many of whom were baptized as children to learn about and make a public declaration of their faith in Jesus Christ thereby confirming their salvation and commitment to God, their faith and church.

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1 Corinthians 12:27-28
INTRODUCTION

God commanded the Israelites in (Deut. 4:9; Deut. 6:6-7; Deut. 11:18-19), to take their spiritual responsibilities seriously. This charge resonates through time with particular urgency to both parents and the church as a command to teach, train and instruct youth in the ways of righteousness.

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INTRODUCTION

- If we are obedient, our young people will, *Live no longer as the unsaved do, for they are blinded and confused. Their closed hearts are full of darkness; they are far away from the life of God because they have shut their minds against him, and they cannot understand his ways. They don’t care anymore about right and wrong and have given themselves over to impure ways. They stop at nothing, being driven by their evil minds and reckless lusts.* Ephesians 4:17-19 (TLB)

- Indeed scripture reminds us that when we, *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

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Confirmation class anchors the minds, hearts, souls and spirits of our youth in present while orienting them to actively create and determine how they will enter their future in this life and the next. Confirmation classes are one of the ways that the family and the church work together to fulfill God’s spiritual command with our youth.

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INTRODUCTION

Many youth are looking for answers and solutions that provide hope, happiness, and success in their lives. The church is challenged to provide godly guidance that supports and prioritizes spiritual development based on the Bible and Christian doctrines.

For What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? (Mark 8:36)

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Youth are constantly inundated with negative images, ideas and language which influence their ability to make spiritually sound decisions. Illegal drugs, gang activity, promiscuity, broken families, bullying, suicide and violence, are just a few of the issues that youth must make conscious decisions about as they live their daily lives.

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INTRODUCTION

In every community it is the shared responsibility of everyone to educate youth on principles that influence making the right moral decisions.

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INTRODUCTION

During confirmation classes, youth confirm their salvation, deepen and expand their knowledge of Christian traditions and beliefs, while developing a closer relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Each lesson teaches fundamental doctrines of the church, Christian Apologetics and explores the tenets and principles of building godly relationships in the 21st century grounded in the ongoing development of their primary relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

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The purpose of Confirmation is much more than teaching youth about the Bible and Christianity. Confirmation does indeed begin to cover those topics. But mastery of the Bible and Christianity are life-long processes. Confirmation classes prepare youth to begin this journey by:

(1) Increasing confidence in their self;

(2) initiating or increasing active participation in churches, schools, communities and the world; and

(3) explicitly teaching youth how to make Christ-centered decisions. Youth develop confidence and strength in themselves but most critically in the God of their salvation when they know God for themselves and have the skills and tools to make sound Christian choices.

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1 Corinthians 12:27-28
PURPOSE

Youth who participate in confirmation classes will confirm their salvation and:

Develop confidence applying Biblical principles and scriptures to every aspect of their lives.

- Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (Joshua 1:8)

Become Empowered with knowledge of the Word of God.

- For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Be Transformed into disciples of Christ by demonstrating the importance of supporting one another and working together in small groups.

- I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)
Each lesson is specifically developed for youth to work together in small peer groups. Youth are not just members of a local church, but are citizens of the world. They must learn to build Christ centered, functional relationships in their churches, schools, communities and the world.

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Confirmation Classes

Each lesson begins with the recommended opening song written by Israel & New Breed, “I Am Not Forgotten” followed with a prayer and scripture for each lesson. The instructor will separate youth into small groups of 5-7 individuals. Each group should have a balance mix of both genders. If possible, try separating youth who know each other. The intent of the confirmation process is to emphasize:

- The value of collaborating in small groups
- Developing positive relationships
- Making Christian decisions

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1 Corinthians 12:27-28
Confirmation Classes

Developing Your Spiritual Understanding is an interactive study guide. Each lesson has four key components:

1. Instruction
2. Application
3. Presentation
4. Personal Journal

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Confirmation Classes

- Every scripture used in the lesson are all printed in bold letters, the objective is to enhance youth knowledge of the books of the bible by locating and highlighting each scripture in their own bibles. It is our hope after the confirmation process is completed youth will continue to use their bibles and when coming upon the scriptures they highlighted, it will reinforce what they have learned.

- The use of a New International Version (NIV) Youth Study Bible is used in conjunction with each lesson.

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1 Corinthians 12:27-28
Lesson Summary:

Lesson I—Understanding Confirmation

The lesson will discuss the following topics:

- Defining Confirmation
- Building Community
- Confirmation Goals
- Your Decision to Become a Disciple of Christ

(This lesson includes a pre/post test questionnaire. The objective of the questionnaire is to provide the instructor with valuable insight into knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors of members in the group.)

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Lesson Summary:

Lesson II—The Trinity

The lesson provides biblical references about God in three persons.

- What is the Trinity
- God the Father

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Lesson Summary:

Lesson III—Jesus Christ Is Lord

- The lesson will focus on the various aspects of Jesus.
- Jesus is the Son of God
- Jesus is the Christ
- Jesus is the Savior of the World

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Lesson Summary:

Lesson V—Salvation

- The lesson will focus on the importance of Salvation.
- What is Salvation
Lesson Summary:

Lesson IV—The Holy Spirit

- The lesson will highlight the third part of the Trinity.
- What is the Holy Spirit
- Life in the Spirit
- Fruit of the Spirit

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Lesson Summary:

Lesson VI—Worship

The lesson was developed to help youth understand how we worship in our daily lives, church and in our communities.

- Defining Worship
- Where We Worship
- The Ways We Worship
- How We Worship
- Worship Terms and Definition

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Lesson Summary:

Lesson VII

Lesson Summary:

- The Bible
- The Books of the Old Testament
- The Books of the New Testament
- What I Believe
- The General Confession

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Lesson Summary:

Lesson VIII

- The Mission
- Statements of Faith
- My Responsibility
- Final Questionnaire
- Preparation for Confirmation Service (See Handout 13)

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Special Instructions

It is important that participants take Confirmation seriously. All information provided in the lessons is important; nothing is optional therefore regular attendance is vital. When youth decide to be actively committed to attendance and participation in Confirmation, they will experience the power of the Holy Spirit working in their life like never before.

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It is proven that journaling helps to enhance our learning, understanding and centering our thoughts. Journaling allows us to express our thoughts and feelings, while allowing for reflection at a later time. Corporate and world leaders, educators and every day citizens keep personal journals and so will we.
Special Instructions

- Explain that each participant is encouraged to complete a journal following each confirmation lesson. Their entries should be an honest summary of their personal feelings about the material presented. Youth are encouraged to highlight scripture references to practice Bible study skills and support their daily meditations.

—and You are a part of the body of Christ. God has chosen different ones in the church to do his work."
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Special Instructions

- Do not use individual names when completing the questionnaires. Assign a number to each participant. This number will be placed on Questionnaire I and the Final Questionnaire.

- Divide students into small groups of 5-7. The groups will remain intact throughout the entire confirmation series. The group experience will help students understand the importance of working together while building a spiritual community.

- Appropriate breaks should be given during each class. Each class will open with a prayer and the confirmation goal.

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Each youth should have access to or receive:

- A New International Version (NIV) Youth Study Bible
- Pen
- Highlighters
- Lined and blank paper
- Handouts and questionnaires
- Magazines and newspapers

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Lesson I—Understanding Confirmation

Opening Song: I Am Not Forgotten.

“...You are a part of the body of Christ. God has chosen different ones in the church to do his work.”
1 Corinthians 12:27-28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Am Not Forgotten</th>
<th>Light Over Darkness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am not forgotten</td>
<td>Strength over weakness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not forgotten</td>
<td>Joy over sadness,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God knows my name</td>
<td>He knows my name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not forgotten</td>
<td>Father to the fatherless,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not forgotten</td>
<td>Friend to the friendless,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not forgotten</td>
<td>Hope for the hopeless,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God knows my name</td>
<td>He knows my name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He knows my name.</td>
<td>I will praise You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I will praise You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am fearfully and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wonderfully made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“…You are a part of the body of Christ. God has chosen different ones in the church to do his work.”
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Prayer: Heavenly Father, Creator and Giver of every good and perfect gift, we acknowledge that You are awesome! You are all powerful. We know that all wisdom and knowledge comes from You. Bless us with a desire to receive all You have to offer. Amen.

Scripture: Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it . . . (1 Corinthians 12:27)
What is Confirmation?

Confirmation confirms our faith beliefs. We verify or confirm our personal beliefs and about God our relationship with Christ Jesus and our church.

In our faith tradition, many of us were baptized long before we understood the meaning of baptism. When we were baptized, our parents or guardians took a vow and agreed to accept the responsibility to teach us about the nature and the meaning of the faith into which we were baptized.

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What is Confirmation?

The church also stood in agreement to help teach us the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the meaning of our Christian faith and about Christianity.

We believe that baptism is a sacrament ordained by Christ that is also a profession of our faith and a sign of God’s grace and good will towards us.

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What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is a formal process during which we personally accept and acknowledge God’s grace and love for us through the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The Bible tells us, “God so loved the world that he gave his One and Only Son.” *(John 3:16 NIV)* As a result of God’s gift to the world, our parents/guardians symbolically accepted the gift of Christ for us on the day we were baptized by choosing to teach us about our Christian faith. Although the gift is free, we have the right of acceptance or rejection.

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1 Corinthians 12:27-28
What is Confirmation?

- We are old enough to make decisions about our own salvation.

- While our parents and the church will help and guide us along this journey, our Christianity is now our responsibility. God requires each of us to make our own decision.

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What is Confirmation?

We are more mentally prepared to learn and comprehend and what it means to be a Christian and an active member of the body of Christ. And learn what we believe: our doctrine, discipline, history, Christian and denominational heritage why we believe and how we are to live as Christians.

While we may not immediately have the answers to all the questions, with God on our side and the Spirit of the Lord to guide us, we will learn.

Our confirmation gives us an active voice where we can now live out our faith in our church, school, community and the world.

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Building Community

In our dynamic world, it is imperative that we recognize the value of positive relationships with individuals and within a community of believers who will help us make Christ-centered choices. For several weeks youth build their own Christian community by interacting and engaging with their peers in small groups. They work together on selected projects or exercise to enhance their knowledge of Christianity.

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My Confirmation Goal

(The confirmation goal should be read and recited by students during each class.)

My Christian journey thus until now was decided for me. I am now old enough to decide if I want to accept God’s free gift of salvation.

My parents, guardians and church are here to help and guide me. However, the decision is now my responsibility. The instructions I receive during my confirmation classes will help me learn more about my faith. While I learn about my faith and how to be a Christian, I will not pretend to know all the answers. I will learn all I can and to be all I can in Christ. I will serve my church as I live out my faith in my school, community and the world.

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My Confirmation Goal

- My confirmation will teach me how to become an active member of the church body.

- My profession of faith will allow the Holy Spirit to begin a new work in me. By God’s grace and the power of the Holy Spirit I will become who God has purposed me to become from the very conception of time.

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Your Decision to Become a Disciple of Christ

During confirmation, youth will have the opportunity to make a decision to become a disciple of Christ. When the invitation is given, it is our hope that they will respond and be confirmed on Confirmation Sunday.

They do not have to be confirmed. The decision is entirely theirs. Youth may decide now or at a later time. However, it is our hope that they will accept the invitation to be confirmed and enter into Christian discipleship process at the time of confirmation. Choosing not to be confirmed does not affect their ability to participate in the church or in any activities of their local church.

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Your Decision to Become a Disciple of Christ

If you have been baptized, we affirm your baptism and there is no need to be re-baptized.

If you have not been baptized, you will be given an opportunity to be baptized following your acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Confirmation is complete when you publicly confess Christ. Following your confession it is our prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to work in your lives. If and when you choose to be confirmed, you will become an active member of the body of Christ with all rights and privileges to the kingdom of God.

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Your Decision to Become a Disciple of Christ

While you may complete these classes, confirmation is only the beginning of a lifelong journey with the Lord. Confirmation simply build on the values your parents have taught you, what you have learned in the church and your personal experiences with God.

Our prayer is that you will take confirmation seriously. Everything in these classes is important. When you make a decision to attend regularly, you will experience the power of the Holy Spirit working in your life like never before.

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Your Decision to Become a Disciple of Christ

When you are confirmed, you are making a public profession before your family, church and friends that you are now a part of the body of Christ!

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1 Corinthians 12:27-28
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