

**TEACHER CERTIFICATION WORKBOOK
ONE-LEVEL**

General Sunday School Division
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	3
1.	THE BIBLE: OUR SOLE RULE OF FAITH	4
2.	APOSTOLIC THEOLOGY	19
3.	THE CALL AND MISSION OF BELIEVERS	33
4.	THE TEACHING MINISTRY	46
5.	CHILD EVANGELISM	58
6.	TEACHING METHODS	71
7.	CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	88
8.	LESSON PREPARATION	104
9.	PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP	119
10.	KNOWING YOUR STUDENT	141
11.	KEEPING THE TEACHER FIT	161
12.	SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION	183
	APPLICATION FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION	197
	ANSWER KEY	198



INTRODUCTION

The fact that you have acquired this *Teacher Certification Workbook* is evidence that you really care about your responsibilities as a teacher. Teachers who care enough to invest time and effort into personal development and enrichment are on their way to becoming all that God plans for them. The effort you invest in this workbook will pay personal dividends as well as blessing those you teach. You have an exciting adventure before you.

Read each chapter and then find a mentor to help you take the exams at the end of each chapter. This person will help to make you accountable (the Score Sheet is at the end of the workbook). If you score eighty percent or higher, you are ready to move on to the next chapter. If not, study the material a little more and then take the exam again (make extra copies before you take the exam). Proceed to each chapter until you have completed the entire workbook. If you have to take the exam again, remember, this can be a learning experience. When you are finished, sign the Certification Application and have your mentor and pastor also sign. Send the application, along with the application fee, to the General Sunday School Division and you will receive a beautiful Teacher Certification Certificate in a professional certificate folder.

CHAPTER 1

THE BIBLE: OUR SOLE RULE OF FAITH

Nathaniel Binion

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:14-17)

INTRODUCTION: WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW, I’M THE TEACHER?

Have you ever wondered why there are so many jokes about boring preachers and tiring sermons about the Bible? Some might blame it on a lackadaisical generation only wanting to be entertained; others think all are full of carnality. While both of these beliefs have nuggets of truth, they are crutches for people who are afraid to acknowledge the unmentionable; maybe we are not conveying our passion for God’s Word effectively. How could someone be uninterested in a book full of adventure, failed love, profound love, sinister hate, devious plots, governmental intrigue, timeless leadership principles, incredible proven history, timeless questions, and oh yeah, eternal salvation?

The example of Jesus shows us that teachers must know the material so well that we can embody it, therefore relaying it through passion. This is why you need to continually seek to know the Bible more, both theologically and sociologically. If you understand how the Bible came to us, then it is easier to have faith in God. If you know that the Bible truly has only one message, it is easier to displace a cloud of confusion. If you can know there is a difference between timeless truth and cultural traditions, then you can discern the difference between temporary beliefs and God’s eternal message.

This chapter is going to deal with how we received the Bible in its present form, how we can interpret the Bible, and a brief survey of the Bible. To facilitate learning, some terms to know will be given at the beginning of some sections. Remember that these are terms for better understanding and not to show someone your “brilliance.” The goal of teaching is to make the complex simple. If we do not accomplish this, we are failing. So, look for the application to the learner within every section in this chapter. This chapter will not give specific footnotes unless direct quotes are taken, but it will give a place for resources at the end.

THE ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE

Terms to know:

Pentateuch: The Greek word for the first five books of the Bible.

Septuagint (LXX): The Greek translation of the Old Testament.

Tanach: The Jewish Bible (The Christian Old Testament).

Torah: The Hebrew word meaning law, or constitution for the Jewish people.

Canon: Literally, the accepted standard (i.e. Jewish canon, biblical canon, Catholic canon, and so forth). There is an open canon, which says books can be added to the Bible, and a closed canon, saying that the Bible cannot be added to any more.

Some try to debate the claims of the Bible and point out that the Bible *is a translation of a translation of an interpretation of an oral tradition*. While the aforementioned statement is partially true, it is an effort to undermine the credibility of the Bible. The best way to address these concerns is not to argue, but to know a timeline of how our Bible came into existence.

The Bible is God's letter to humanity collected into sixty-six books written by forty divinely inspired authors that span over fifteen hundred years or more. The goal of this section is to show the timeline in which God's message came into fruition. A brief overview of the Bible will be given later in the chapter.

Current Biblical Canon:

Canon is a standard which a group agrees upon. For Christians, *canon* is what books of the Bible we have agreed to accept as usable. It is important to note that there are different *canons* based upon different Christian traditions. The Catholic, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Ethiopian, and Latter-Day Saint canons all have minor differences from our Protestant canon. We as Apostolic Pentecostals widely accept the Hebrew Bible as our Old Testament, reject books that are called the *Apocrypha*,¹ and accept the New Covenant and Paul's writings as our New Testament. Keep in mind there has always been and still is debate over certain books of the Bible.

A closed *canon* was not agreed upon until a heresy came to the surface; *Marcion*, a Gnostic Christian,² began to throw out certain widely accepted books because of their connection to Judaism. This forced the church to start proposing a closed canon.³ By A.D. 397, the current twenty-seven books (I and II Corinthians are combined) of the New Testament were formally confirmed and canonized in the Synod of Carthage. The process of *canon* can be better understood if the timeline of the Bible is given.

Old Testament:

Our Bible begins with the Jewish Scriptures. The historical record of the Jews was written in leather scrolls and tablets over centuries. The authors include kings, prophets, captured people, fishermen, shepherds, intellectuals, doctors, and leaders of all types.

Our journey to understand the origin of the Bible begins with Moses. He was given the *Torah*, literally meaning the "constitution" or the "teaching" for the Jewish people, some thirty-three hundred years ago on Mount Sinai. The first five books of the Bible, what some refer to as the *Law*, make up the *Torah*. The Greek equivalent is called the *Pentateuch*.

¹ Because they were not included in the Hebrew canon.

² This is a belief that there is a key to a special knowledge that only a few possess. Gnostic Christianity believes Jesus Christ came from a different God than the Hebrew God and was not human.

³ Closed canon is the belief that additional books cannot be added to Scripture. On the other hand, open canon believes that books can be added to the Scriptures.

According to Jewish thought, there are two components of the *Torah*: The written *Torah* and the oral *Torah*. The oral *Torah* is the subtle explanation of what is written from Genesis to Deuteronomy. Simply, it acts as a commentary to what was written. Some believe that without the oral *Torah* the written counterpart would not be able to be comprehended. This is where the belief comes from that the words of God were orally passed down from generation to generation. The Christian tradition does not hold credence to the oral *Torah*.

Approximately 450 B.C., the Jewish Scriptures were compiled by a council of rabbis. This collection of writings, known as the *Tanach*, was acknowledged as the Word of God. The *Tanach* is the Jewish canon and was written mostly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic exceptions. In A.D. 90, the Jewish scholars at the council of Jamnia compiled the final Hebrew Bible canon in which, until the invention of the printing press, an amazing system of scribes and scribal practices retained the uniformity of all copies. The uniformity of the Dead Sea Scrolls, found from 1947 to 1956, to the previously existing copies of the Hebrew Bible proves the consistency and reliability of the scribes.

Returning to 250 B.C., the Hebrew Bible (*Tanach*) was translated into Greek. This translation is called the *Septuagint*. In many texts, the *Septuagint* is denoted by the symbol *LXX*, meaning seventy. This refers to the tradition that seventy to seventy-two men comprised the translation team. At this point, the Hebrew Bible was organized by topic, including history, poetry, and prophecy. It is important to note that the Scriptures that Jesus and His disciples used were the *Septuagint*.

New Testament:

When Christianity began in the first century, the *Septuagint* and the oral tradition of what Jesus said, as reported by his apostles (A.D. 40 to A.D. 90) and close followers, were closely trusted. Even after the writing of the Gospels as we know them, the oral gospel held as much weight as the written gospel. This could be because the first culture to be impacted by the message of the gospel was the Jewish culture. They already held a high esteem for the oral *Torah*, so it would be natural to hold an oral gospel in high esteem.

The New Testament canon as we know was letters that were circulating throughout Christianity and were acknowledged as words of God. By A.D. 150 early Christians were referring to the writings of the first-century writers as the New Covenant. By the A.D. 200s the *Septuagint* was translated into Latin, Coptic (Egypt), and Syriac (Syrian) texts. The widely accepted version of the Bible was the Vulgate Bible (literally the vulgar or common tongue). In the A.D. 400s, Jerome proposed the most authoritative version of the Bible. Until the Middle Ages, no complete English version of the Bible existed. Therefore, the Bible was uncommon to the less educated. There was great debate over the use of English for the Bible. John Wycliffe believed that the way to fix a church was to close the chasm between the unlearned people and the manipulative clergy. Soon English versions were banned, but it was too late—an interest in the Bible had already begun.

There are two factors that contributed to the growth of the English Bible. The revival of learning, under the influence of Erasmus, started a renewal of the study of classical languages. This opened the door to study ancient biblical texts. The other factor was the invention of the printing press. In 1455, Johannes

Gutenberg printed the first Vulgate Bible. This opened the door for mass production and mass consumption of the Bible.

Amidst the Reformation, in 1523, William Tyndale began to formulate his English version of the Bible. This Bible is the foundation upon which the King James Version was built. In 1536 he lost his life over his Bible, but it was made legal the very next year.

By the early 1600s, King James I desired a better translation of the Bible because he felt some other translations, the Geneva Bible for example, encouraged disobedience to kings. Therefore, fifty-four men were chosen to accomplish a project that took more than seven years. There were six panels that were separated to translate different books of the Bible. Then they were checked so that personal prejudice and political bias were not included in this new version. The King James Version has been a standard that has stood the test of time. In fact, it was unrivaled in its first 250 years. Although the King James Version was never endorsed by James I, it has been the most widely used English translation.

APPLICATION

It is important to remember as a teacher all of these facts are useless and boring to a learner if they are not taught in a practical way. Therefore some points must be remembered when teaching:

- While there are different translations, all agree to the overall message.
- We do not accept the Apocryphal writings because the first-century church did not accept them, and they are not unified to the overall message of the rest of the Bible.
- Some argue for the Apocryphal writings because they are quoted by some New Testament writers. This is a false premise, since Paul also quoted some poets on Mars Hill (Acts 17).
- Despite all detractors, the Bible has stood the test of time. There still exist over twenty-four thousand copies of New Testament manuscripts, while only ten copies of Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars* still exist.
- Finally, over 668 prophecies have been fulfilled.⁴

At the end of this chapter is a chart showing the evolution to our current English translation.

Knowing how our Bible was given to us should give you confidence that God's Word will be safe from enemies. Therefore, we can trust that multiple translations may not necessarily mean that we are tampering with God's plan. Before we can understand this, we must have a clear understanding as to how to interpret the Bible.

INTERPRETING THE BIBLE

Terms to know:

Exegesis: The process of reading the Bible as the original writer wrote it.

⁴ Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 2002).

Hermeneutic: The process of interpreting our exegesis for contemporary application.

Literal Translation: A translation of the Bible that is identically translated (word for word).

Dynamic Equivalent: A translation of the Bible that is identically translated but put within the intended culture's grammatical structure.

Free Translation: A translation that gives the overall thought but is freer in grammatical structure. The goal is ease of reading.

When discussing terms like theology, exegesis, and hermeneutics, some consign them to the “high and lofty towers” of academia or treat them as sacred words that only the elite few can partake of. “Only people who teach theology would need these terms,” some might assume. Actually, these terms are incredibly relevant to everyone.

Theology is defined as opinions concerning God and religious questions, while *exegesis* is the “practice of explaining or interpreting a text,” and *hermeneutics* is how a person arrives at his or her conclusion concerning a text. Every decision that an Apostolic makes is a theological decision. Every scripture you read, you *exegete*, or interpret. And every conclusion and application you make after investigating the meaning of that text is a *hermeneutic*. Theology, exegesis, and hermeneutics play an intricate part in every Christian's life. Since everyone does these three things wittingly or unwittingly, the goal of the church should be to equip everyone to interpret the Bible based upon God's mission of reconciliation, rather than on personal agendas. When *understanding* of purpose is acquired, then healthy *exegesis* of Scripture will result in an apostolic hermeneutic.

Exegesis: The objective of *exegesis* is not to “show off” or find something no one else has found. Gordon Fee says that interpretation that “aims at, or thrives on, uniqueness can usually be attributed to pride (an attempt to out clever the rest of the world), a false understanding of spirituality, or vested interest.” We need to lovingly approach the Bible to consistently hear His Word afresh.

To *exegete* the Bible is the “attempt to hear the Word as the original people were to have heard it.” A crucial first step is to read the entire passage. You might be surprised how many people wrongly interpret the Bible because they do not read the entire chapter, section, or even book of the Bible that is being addressed.

It is not necessary to be a Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic scholar to accomplish this task (although you should be thankful for these people, for we are relying on their expertise when we read an English translation). To exegete a passage, various reliable translations of the Bible are needed. There are three kinds of English translations: Literal, dynamic equivalent, and a free translation.

A literal translation is seen in the King James Version or New King James Version. The positives of these translations are that they seek to “keep the historical distance intact.” A problem with literal translations is that they at times make the English hard to understand, rendering English in a way that would not normally be constructed, while the Greek or Hebrew was quite clear to the original recipients. For example, if I were to translate the French words *maison blanc* literally they would say “house white,” rather than “white house.” A biblical example is seen in the phrase “coals of fire” as stated in Romans 12:20 (KJV). No native English-

speaking person would construct his sentence in this manner. To overcome this hurdle, a dynamic equivalent version of the Bible is helpful.

A dynamic equivalent, such as the New International Version, corrects ambiguity by translating “words, idioms, and grammatical construction of the original language into precise equivalents of the receptor language,” such as English. A dynamic equivalent would change “house white” to “white house” or “coals of fire” into “burning coals.” While you could use a literal translation (KJV) as a first resource, both literal and dynamic equivalent translations are unified in their message and can be used side by side.

An example of a free translation is the Living Bible. A free translation attempts to translate ideas, with less concern for using exact words. This translation is the least reliable, but could be useful to get the overall idea of the passage. No doctrine or interpretation should rest solely upon a free translation. When using these resources, you are looking for three things: what God is doing in the context, the literary context, and the historical context.

Knowing what God is doing in the passage means that the Bible is not about me, you, Abraham, Isaac, Esther, Peter, Mary, or Paul. The Bible is about God and His desire to have a relationship with humanity. To decipher this central theme, observe the *literary context* of the passage. Words will only have meaning in relation to “the preceding and succeeding sentences” around the word or passage in question. Continually ask the question, “What is the point of this passage and how does it connect to the whole writing?” Next, look to the *historical context* of the scripture. It makes a difference to understand the “time and culture of the author and his readers.” For example, to know about the culture of Paul and the intended audience helps to interpret both of Paul’s letters to the Corinthians.

To answer some of these questions, some resources are: the four-volume *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (ed. G.W. Bromiley, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) or the five-volume *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (ed. Merrill C. Tenney, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975). If one wishes to study further, the bibliographies show other resources available. Remember that we exegete the Bible not to prove our unique intelligence, but to understand the plain meaning of the text in order to interpret God’s mission for our contemporary society.

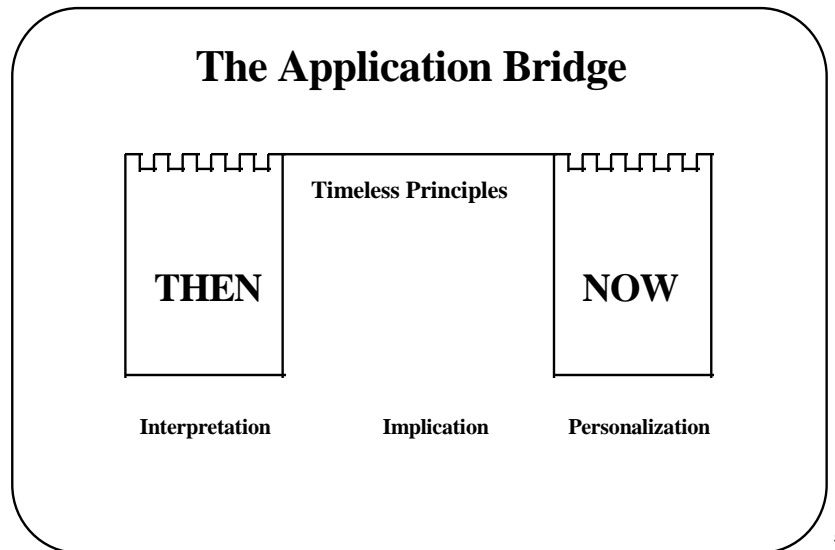
Hermeneutics:

Exegesis then is followed by a method of interpreting what you have read. Hermeneutics is how one interprets what has been found through exegesis. One might ask, “If the Bible is so easy to understand, then why do we need Greek and Hebrew scholars, other writers, and discussions on biblical interpretation?” God did not intend for His Word to be hard to understand or so superior to our mind that only a few can understand it. God intended His Word to be clear.

We need sound hermeneutical principles and good resources because humans are involved in this process. This does not take away from the power of the Word of God or the infallibility of the Bible. It acknowledges that biblical writers were communicating an infinite gospel to finite beings. They used

contextual examples of their day to relay the eternal gospel. So hermeneutics' task is to recognize those cultural contexts and relate the infallible Word of God to our contemporary society.

Sound hermeneutical principles acknowledge what Kaiser calls the three horizons of interpretation. When interpreting the Bible, there are three horizons that are crossed as interpretation happens: the culture of the Bible, the culture of the interpreter, and the culture of the receptor. Simply stated, you must relate to your students how it was then, the timeless principles, and how your local context is going to apply your interpretation or hermeneutic, similar to the graph below.



5

"The Bible was written within the confines of certain cultures and time. No interpreter has the right to make that text say whatever he or she wants it to say. The text must be allowed to say what it wants to say, but with due respect for the particular setting and culture in which it was based." When interpreting the Bible, acknowledge that there was a cultural context and specific genre (style of writing; poetry, narrative, epistle, and so forth) in which the specific scripture was written.

Secondly, do not forget that the interpreter, which may be you, must be aware that he or she is a part of a culture that may "force some questions while being blind to others." Our first instinct of interpretation should not be to prove someone else wrong. Interpreters must constantly go through self-examination to see if our motives are pure, honest, and our eyes open to our inconsistencies.

Thirdly, we must not forget the culture of the person reading the Bible today. Those to whom we are communicating the message of the gospel also have a diverse way of looking at the world. Just as we come to the text with our own ideas, our audience will have personal prejudices. Do not assume your students think the same as you. If the teacher sticks to the mission of God, principles rise above the fray of personal prejudice.

⁵ This chart is taken from New Life Center FOCUS Class. You can obtain a copy of this chart by email www.nbinion@newlifecenter.com.

The gospel then is allowed to flood the honest heart. Make sure that you allow honesty to accompany you through these realms.

Some resources for interpretation are: the fifty-four-volume *Word Biblical Commentaries* (ed. Bruce M. Metzger, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, over fifteen years of various authors) or the twelve-volume *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, Grand Rapids: Zondervan). Both of these commentaries can be bought in CD-ROM or hard copy version. A principle to remember when using resources is that it is important to understand up to seventy percent of the addressed material; any less will frustrate you and any more will waste your money and time.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

The next two sections will give an overview of the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is important to understand that this is far from a comprehensive review but will be consistent with the goal to give practical applications to your teaching. It is important to remember that countless years of study could be dedicated to any one book of the Bible. The purpose of these two sections is to give you the teacher an overview of each section of the Bible, the possible time period, the main thesis, and a possible overall application to your teaching setting.

OLD TESTAMENT

Pentateuch or the Law:

The Law is the first five books of the Bible. The author of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy is universally known to be Moses. The date of authorship for these books is roughly thought to be from 1446 B.C. to 1406 B.C., although the date of authorship varies from scholar to scholar. This would be when the children of Israel were roaming through the desert between Egypt and the Promised Land.

It is interesting to note that *Genesis* is a Greek word for “source, origin.” The Hebrew name would be derived from the book’s first words—“In the beginning.” Both terms would be appropriate, for Genesis sets the stage for a “full understanding of biblical truth.”⁶ All of the book titles within the Law derive from the Septuagint or Greek titles. The Law is the history of origins of humanity and the patriarchal history. The concepts of sin and the need of a savior come to light. It is important to remember that these books are more about God and His values than if dinosaurs existed or if the earth is seven thousand years old or millions of years old. The Law is a story of a God who created humanity for relationship, and when that was separated by sin, He started a process by which a holy God could commune with sinful humanity (covenant).

The Pentateuch shows us that God is just in His response to sin and repentance. God truly desires a relationship with humanity. In the Law, three acts define God’s love: His rescue of Israel from Egypt, a return of His presence as distinguishing them from other peoples, and the gift of the law through a covenant with Israel. This covenant, included in the written law, proves to us that holiness to God and to our neighbor matters

⁶William LaSor, David Allan Hubbard and Frederic William Bush, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), page 15.

to God. If He took the time to precisely give instructions on everything included in worship, then how we approach God is important. God will make a covenant with His people that will forever be settled as long as the terms are kept. The Law told the nation of Israel, and us, how to approach a holy God. Furthermore, all of our life is worship, for we ought to love him with all our “heart, soul, and strength” (Deuteronomy 6:5).

History:

The History section of the Old Testament includes quite a number of books. The books are: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The authorship ranges from 1450s B.C. to 330 B.C. (Esther). The included books show a timeline of military conquest that is akin to a holy war against Canaan, and a people who are searching to establish their identity in a new land while they forget that they are already supposed to possess an identity—the people of God. The reason that it is noted as the history section is because it gives a historical account of the maturation of the children of Israel while they struggled to live in covenant. The authorship of all of the history books is really unknown. Tradition credits Joshua as the author of the book containing his name (except his funeral), and Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles are historically credited to Samuel and Jeremiah. Ezra and Nehemiah are credited to Ezra, depending upon the source; Esther is universally unknown. The application that one should make is that it is completely acceptable to debate the initial authors, for the message is universal. God desires a relationship with humanity and will even accept someone who is a pagan as long as he comes to Him on His terms.

Poetry:

To understand why the following books are categorized as poetry—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon)—is understood if the intricate details of each book are noted. Job, while its authorship is unknown, is a masterpiece when its thought structure is illuminated. The timeline of all of the books of *poetry* ranges from 1000-2000 B.C. to the captivity of the Jewish nation in the late 500s B.C. Solomon is the most acknowledged writer due to his own credits. Psalms, a compilation of compositions with many writers including David, is beautifully put into prose that completely flows concerning the nature of God. The books mentioned in this section tell the story of the human condition as compared to a God who is faithful throughout all of time and events.

Major Prophets:

The Major Prophets include: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The body of work included in these books points to a people who are in captivity. The date of authorship of these books ranges from 740 B.C. to the early 500s B.C. Isaiah is a book that deals with the Yahweh’s sovereignty and majesty through His dealings with His chosen people. Like most of the writings of the Major Prophets, Isaiah deals with judgment also. Jeremiah addresses Yahweh’s dealings with Judah. Lamentations is credited to Jeremiah because of a reference to Jeremiah’s laments for Josiah the king in II Chronicles 35:25. Ezekiel announces the fall of Jerusalem but promises a restoration to Yahweh. Daniel is a story of God’s deliverance to him and his

three friends. It also contains four apocalyptic visions for the future kingdoms. What must be understood about the Major Prophets is they are books that deal with a chosen people in covenant. More importantly, they contain proof that God is faithful even in the midst of adversity. These are stories of how God will deliver His people if they will follow Him.

Minor Prophets:

The Minor Prophets are denoted as such not because of their place of importance but of size. They still hold a high place within the Hebrew Bible canon and should within our minds as well. The books are: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Malachi, and Zechariah. The dates range from the mid 750s to late 500s. It is important to note that the Minor Prophets are similarly placed to the Major Prophets. The reason is that they are dealing with the same issues: God's faithfulness and His children's inconsistent faith. All of this is culminated into trying to know what captivity means in covenant.

Following the Minor Prophets, we see a time of silence from God. The Old Testament shows that God is constantly trying to recommit His relationship to His people. Furthermore, all are invited to this relationship if they will repent from their ways and follow Him in faith. The separation of time between the Old and New Testament is known as the intertestamental period. Israel went through a period of becoming a small territory of larger nations; first through Babylon to Alexander the Great's acquisition of all the territories in the Ancient Near East (332 B.C.). By 63 B.C., the Roman Empire took control. Thus began another period of history in which God would continue to show His identity—He would come in flesh.

NEW TESTAMENT

Gospels:

The first four books of the New Testament are called the Gospels. They were written with firsthand accounts. While the Bible has Matthew chronicled first, Mark (John Mark, a companion of Paul) was written first around A.D. 65. It is commonly accepted that Mark was the template for all of the other Gospels. Matthew was written in the A.D. 70s, while Luke is debated between the late A.D. 60s and mid 70s. To best understand why there are four similar stories, with unique interpretive problems, you must understand that each book was written to a different audience with a unified purpose.

The purpose of the Gospels is to tell the world of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a story showing the God all humanity is searching for came in flesh and died for our sins. Why there would be some minor differences is that the authors knew the audiences. For example, Matthew was writing to Greek-reading Jews, while Luke was aimed at the Gentile Christians. Mark also was writing to Gentile readers; he explained Jewish customs and some Aramaic words.

John has been discussed later because it is the most unique of the other Gospels. As narrative as it is in nature, it is theological also. John was giving a narrative and including complex theological pieces within every thought. John 1:1 connects the God in the beginning to the Savior that he was preparing to write about. Some

think that John did not write this Gospel until the late A.D. 80s or 90s, possibly after he wrote the Book of Revelation.

History:

There is some debate as to why the Book of Acts would be put in its own category. The reason is Acts is connected to Luke. Therefore it is called Luke-Acts by many. The logic for its placement is that it is after the earthly life of Jesus and begins to tell the next phase of God's people—the introduction of the church. The date of this book is either A.D. 63 or 70.

Pauline Epistles:

The Pauline Epistles are letters written by Paul to certain individuals or groups of people. Most of the time, he was dealing with a crisis or question that was hindering the message of the gospel. The books included are: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. The timeline of these books is contained within the A.D. 50s and 60s. *Romans* is a formulative theology for the Christian church, while the other books deal with circumstances that hinder the mission of the church (worship in *Corinthians*, the meaning of covenant in *Galatians*, meaning of the body of Christ in *Ephesians*, stopping heresy and encouraging growth in Timothy, freeing a slave to work with Paul in the gospel in *Philemon*).

The problem with these books in Christianity today is that many make doctrinal statements based upon these letters while ignoring the narrative in Acts. This causes wrong theology to be formulated. It is vital that we understand that Paul believed in one God, repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues first. All of Paul's letters to the churches assume these things while dealing with current and developing heresies.

General Epistles:

The General Epistles are Hebrews, James, I and II Peter, I, II and III John, and Jude. These books were written by multiple writers addressing various problems within the church. These books were written in the mid to late first century. The only debatable book for authorship is Hebrews. We do not know who wrote this book. Paul did not write it, for the grammatical structure is more refined than any of Paul's other works. These books deal with a people in search of significance and freedom from persecution. Hebrews compelled a people to not leave their faith. The other books also deal with a church that was dealing with some very "human" problems. Whether it was emotional strife or physical strife, these letters were trying to keep the church focused upon their main objective: the mission of Jesus Christ. All of these books never lose focus on the high calling of Christ Jesus. They compel all to, as the writer of Hebrews wrote, to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us . . . looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1b-2).

Revelation:

It is so tempting to follow the sensationalism of certain people and get sidetracked as to the overall purpose of John's Revelation. It is to encourage God's people to understand that we are safe from spiritual harm and that God has a plan for final redemption of His people. It is the same story as written in the Old Testament through the New Testament. All of the other interpretations are speculations of what John meant through all of the imagery that he used to convey his revelation. The date of this book is the late A.D. 90s. The difficult part of Revelation is that the genre (style of writing) is *apocalyptic* and uses imagery to convey its message. The imagery is where there is much debate within the church.

As a teacher, remember that the overall message of Revelation is about God's plan for His people, not the peripheral events. Also, many people only attempt to understand what the imagery stands for. Usually most people fall into four camps:

- Preterists—People who believe that all of the imagery and prophecy were concerning first-century events and have already happened.
- Historicists—People who believe Revelation is dealing with a long chain of events that began at Patmos and continue until the end of time.
- Futurists—People who believe that most of the events described deal with the very end of time.
- Idealists—People who believe Revelation as timeless truths of good triumphing over evil.

There is a plethora of material that will guide you to understand the ramifications of all interpretations. Remember these all are attempts to know and are not necessarily God's thought to man, but man's attempt to know God's thought. As you teach others, a simple thought to remember is that Revelation proves that the Bible is unified for one purpose: God coming to the rescue of humanity. Therefore Revelation is about God and His ultimate triumph.

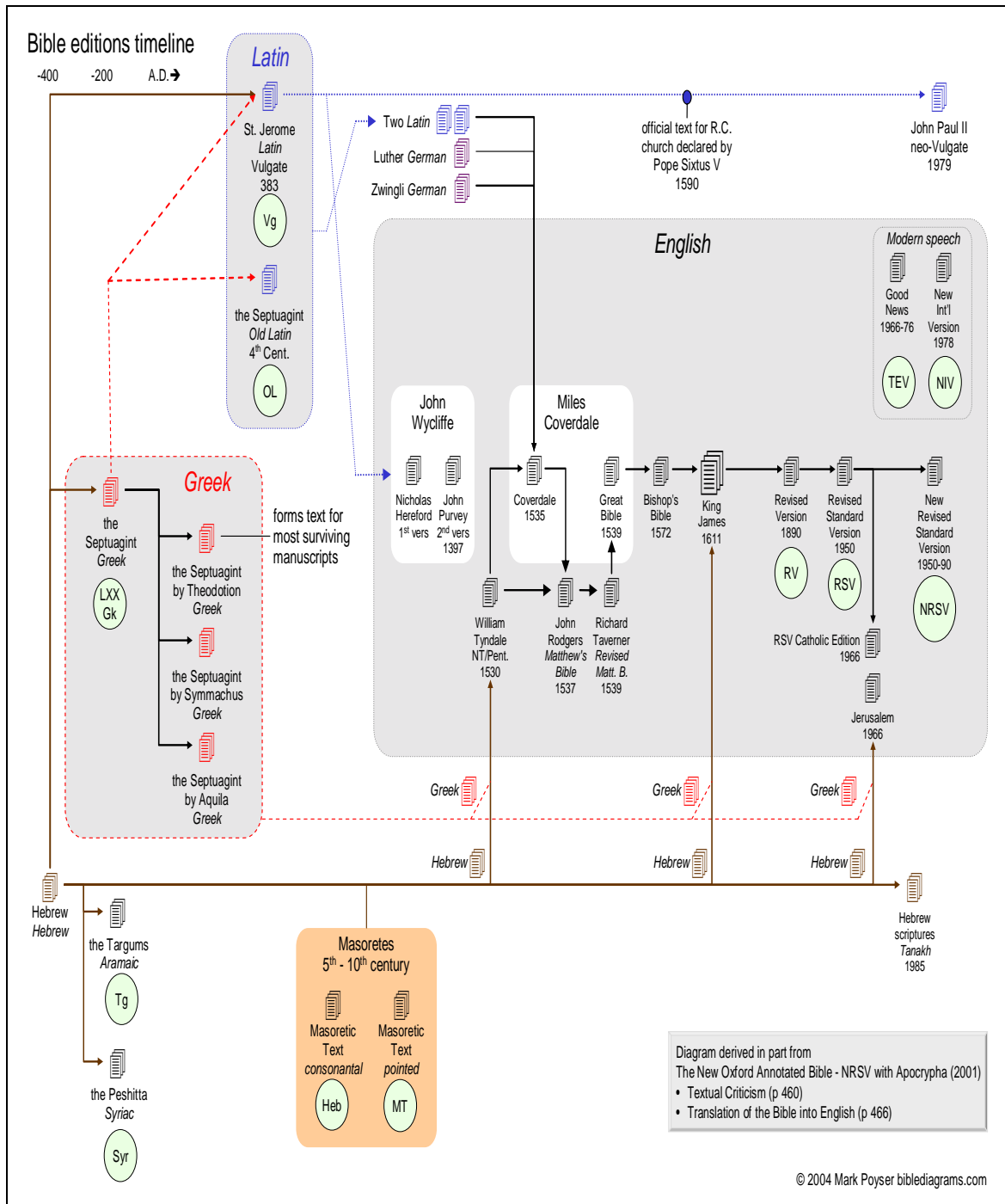
CONCLUSION

This has been a brief overview of the Bible. It is by no means a conclusion but serves as a launching pad for you to lead your students closer to God. It is important to understand the overall purpose of the Bible is a story about God. Therefore, your purpose as a teacher is not to impress your students with your unique understanding of the Bible but to simply relay to them an eternal message of redemption. You can only do this if you understand how we received the present Bible, know how to interpret it, and then be able to simply give the overall plan to the learner. The goal is application, which is your job to connect students with a Book that is many years removed from them. To accomplish this goal, you must never let pride get in the way but allow the Holy Spirit to lead others through you.

Resources:

1. Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible Book by Book*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2002.
2. Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1993.

3. Kaiser, Walter C. and Moises Silva. *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1994.
4. LaSor, William and David Allan Hubbard and Frederic William Bush. *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing 1982.
5. McGrath, Alister. *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How it Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture*. New York: Anchor/Doubleday 2002.



EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|-----|-------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | The Bible mainly is a story about humanity. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | The Bible is God's letter to humanity collected into sixty-six books written by forty divinely inspired authors who span over fifteen hundred years or more. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | The <i>Septuagint</i> is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible translated in 250 B.C. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | Every Christian tradition has the same biblical <i>canon</i> . |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | <i>Exegesis</i> is the process of reading the Bible as the original writer wrote it. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | <i>Torah</i> is the first six books of the Bible. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | While there are different translations, all agree to the overall message of the gospel. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | <i>Hermeneutic</i> is the process of interpreting our exegesis for a contemporary application. |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | <i>Dynamic Equivalent</i> is a translation of the Bible that is identically translated, but put within the intended culture's grammatical structure. |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | The <i>Minor Prophets</i> are noted minor because they are less important. |
| 11. | _____ | _____ | <i>Synoptic Gospels</i> are called synoptic because they were chronicled with firsthand accounts. |
| 12. | _____ | _____ | The Book of Acts was written by Paul the apostle. |
| 13. | _____ | _____ | It is important to remember that the Book of Revelation is about God's redemptive desire for humanity over individual interpretations of the end of time. |
| 14. | _____ | _____ | John the apostle wrote the Book of Hebrews. |
| 15. | _____ | _____ | The <i>General Epistles</i> consist of eight books. |
| 16. | _____ | _____ | When choosing biblical resources, it is important to understand up to 70 percent of the addressed material; any less will frustrate you and any more will waste your money and time. |
| 17. | _____ | _____ | The King James Version was the first English translation of the Bible. |
| 18. | _____ | _____ | A <i>closed canon</i> believes that the Bible is a finished document and cannot be amended. |
| 19. | _____ | _____ | To interpret a scripture, the literary genre and historical context must be considered. |
| 20. | _____ | _____ | As teachers, the goal of interpreting the Bible is to make the text understandable to the learner, rather than to prove our unique intelligence. |
| 21. | _____ | _____ | The overall purpose of the Bible is to tell the story about God. |
| 22. | _____ | _____ | The Revelation proves that the Bible is unified for one purpose—God coming to the rescue of humanity. |
| 23. | _____ | _____ | We are not sure who wrote the book of Hebrews. |
| 24. | _____ | _____ | The Pauline Epistles are letters written by Paul to certain individuals or groups of people. |
| 25. | _____ | _____ | Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. |

CHAPTER 2

APOSTOLIC THEOLOGY

David K. Bernard

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (I Timothy 4:16).

“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9).

“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines” (Hebrews 13:9).

SALVATION THEOLOGY

God came in the flesh as Jesus Christ in order to provide salvation for His fallen creation. The Incarnation was for the purpose of the Atonement. The gospel, literally the “good news,” is that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again for our salvation. Unlike any other religion, Christianity depends upon the death and resurrection of its founder.

The holiness of God demands that He separate Himself from sinful humanity. Separation from God, the source of all life, means death—physically, spiritually, and eternally—so God’s holy law requires death as the penalty for sinners. Without the shedding of blood (the giving of a life), there can be no remission or release from this penalty and no restoration to fellowship with the holy God (Hebrews 9:22). The death of animals is not sufficient to remit our sins (Hebrews 10:4); we are much greater than they in that we were created in the spiritual image of God. Neither can an ordinary person suffer the penalty in our place, for each one deserves eternal death for his or her own sins.

In order to provide a suitable substitute, God came to earth as a sinless human. Jesus was the only sinless human who has ever lived, so He was the only One who did not deserve to die and who could be a perfect substitute. His death became the permanent atonement for our sins. God does not excuse our sins but has inflicted the penalty for those sins on the innocent man Christ. Thus the death of Christ was made necessary by (1) the sinfulness of all humanity, (2) the holiness of God, (3) God’s law requiring death as the penalty for sin, and (4) God’s desire to provide salvation for sinners.

The Bible describes Christ’s death in several ways:

1. *Redemption or ransom* (Matthew 20:28; Galatians 3:13; I Timothy 2:6). To redeem means to deliver by paying a price; ransom is the price paid. Christ’s blood (life) was the ransom required by God’s holy law to redeem us from sin’s bondage and penalty (I Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 5:8-10).

2. *Propitiation* (Romans 3:25; I John 2:2). This means atonement, satisfaction, or appeasement—something that allows God to pardon sin without compromising His holiness and justice. Christ’s death fulfilled God’s just requirements, thus purchasing remission of sins (Matthew 26:28; John 1:29).

3. Reconciliation (Romans 5:6-11; II Corinthians 5:14-21). Christ the man mediates between God and humans (I Timothy 2:5). As a sinless human, He removed the barrier between holy God and sinful humans, restoring us to fellowship with God.

4. Substitution (Isaiah 53:5-6; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:24). Jesus Christ took our place and suffered the penalty we deserved for our sins. In this sense, He became the sin bearer, the sacrifice for our sins (I Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 9:28; 10:10-17).

On the third day after His death, Christ arose with a glorified physical body, victorious over death and hell. His resurrection is essential to our salvation because it made His death effective; it secured His victory over death (Romans 4:25; I Corinthians 15:14). Because of His resurrection, we have overcoming power and new life in Christ as well as assurance of future immortality (Romans 5:10; 6:4; I Corinthians 15:20-23).

The Cross was the one, final sacrifice for all time (Hebrews 10:12), and that supreme sacrifice provides present intercession for our sins and free access to the throne of God (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-16; I John 2:1). The Cross reverses all the consequences of sin. Believers enjoy many resultant blessings in this life and will receive the fullness in eternity. The benefits of Christ's work include forgiveness of sin, new spiritual life, power over the devil, healing for the body, and ultimately liberation of the creation from sin's curse and eternal life for believers (Isaiah 53:5; Romans 8:19-23; Colossians 1:14, 20; Hebrews 2:14).

The present work of salvation has several aspects, which we receive by faith as we repent, are baptized in Jesus' name, and receive the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:11):

1. Justification (Romans 3:24, 26). To justify means to declare, count, or reckon as righteous. This involves forgiveness of sin, including removal of all guilt and punishment, and imputation of Christ's righteousness.

2. Regeneration, or new birth (John 3:5; Titus 3:5). This is more than a reformation; it is the impartation of a new nature—God's nature—with a change of desires and power to live a new life.

3. Adoption (Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:1-7). The believer is placed into God's spiritual family and chosen as His heir.

4. Sanctification, or separation (Hebrews 10:10). At conversion, we are set apart from sin. The Holy Spirit then continues to transform us, perfect us, and make us holy (II Corinthians 3:18; I Thessalonians 3:13; 5:23).

Salvation comes by grace through faith: We cannot save ourselves. No amount of good works or adherence to law can save us. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation is a free gift from God, which we cannot merit, earn, or deserve. The atoning work of Jesus Christ has made this free gift of salvation available, and the only way to receive it is to believe in Jesus and in the sufficiency of His sacrifice (Romans 3:24-28; 4:22-25).

Saving faith: To believe on Jesus includes believing His Word, and truly believing His Word includes obedience. Faith is more than mental assent, intellectual acceptance, or verbal profession; it includes trust, reliance, commitment, appropriation, and application. We cannot separate saving faith from obedience. (See

Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; 2:6-10; 10:16; 16:26; Hebrews 11:6-8.) Obedience to God's Word is absolutely necessary to salvation. (See Matthew 7:21-27; John 14:15, 23; Romans 6:17; 15:18; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Hebrews 5:9; I Peter 1:21-23; 4:17; I John 2:3-5; 5:1-3.) Faith is alive only through response and action (James 2:14-26). It is possible to have an initial degree of faith in Christ and still not be saved if there is not complete acceptance, commitment, and obedience. (See Matthew 7:21-23; John 2:23-25; 12:42-43; Acts 8:12-23; James 2:19.)

Faith is the means of appropriating God's grace. It is the means by which people yield to God, obey His Word, and allow Him to perform His saving work in them. Saving faith, then, is (1) acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ as the sole means of salvation and (2) obedience to that gospel (application or appropriation of that gospel).

The gospel and the new birth: The gospel of Jesus Christ is His death, burial, and resurrection for our salvation (I Corinthians 15:1-4). A person responds to the gospel, or applies the gospel to his or her life, by repentance from sin (death to sin), water baptism by immersion in the name of Jesus Christ (burial with Christ), and receiving the Holy Spirit (new life in Christ) (Acts 2:1-4, 38; Romans 6:1-7; 7:6; 8:2). Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

When someone believes on Jesus Christ and obeys Acts 2:38, he experiences the birth of water and the Spirit. He is "born again," actually becoming a new creation (John 3:3, 7; II Corinthians 5:17). At repentance and water baptism, he or she buries the old sinful lifestyle, the record of past sins, and the death penalty for sin. When he or she receives the Holy Spirit he begins to live a new, godly life.

On the Day of Pentecost, the birthday of the New Testament church, the apostle Peter preached the first gospel sermon to the crowds who had gathered to observe the newly Spirit-filled believers as they spoke in tongues and worshiped God. Convicted of their sins by his simple yet powerful message, the audience cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter gave a precise, complete, and unequivocal answer: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

Those saved in the Gospels were saved under the old covenant while they awaited the new. The new covenant did not come into effect until after Christ's ascension (Luke 7:28; 24:47-49; John 7:39; 16:7; Acts 1:4-8; Hebrews 9:14-17). Thus Acts 2:38 is the comprehensive answer to an inquiry about New Testament conversion, expressing in a nutshell the proper response to the gospel.

Not only did the Jews on Pentecost receive the Acts 2:38 experience, but so did the Samaritans, the apostle Paul, the Gentiles, and the disciples of John at Ephesus (Acts 8:12-17; 9:17-18 with 22:16; 10:44-48; 19:1-6). In short, the New Testament message of salvation is repentance from sin, water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and receiving the Holy Spirit with the initial sign of speaking in tongues.

Repentance: Repentance is a turn from sin to God (Acts 26:18-20). It has three necessary aspects: an intellectual change (change of views), an emotional change (change of feelings), and a volitional change (voluntary change of purpose). It includes recognition of sin (Mark 2:17), confession of sin to God (Proverbs 28:13; I John 1:9), contrition or godly sorrow for sin (Psalm 51:17; II Corinthians 7:10), and a decision to

forsake sin (Proverbs 28:13; Luke 3:7-8). With repentance comes the willingness to make restitution for past sins as much as possible (Matthew 5:23-24; Luke 19:8). Repentance is the first response of faith to the call of God (Mark 1:15). It is absolutely necessary to salvation (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30; II Peter 3:9). Without repentance baptism is not effective, and without repentance a person cannot receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 3:19).

At repentance, we begin to let God work in our lives. We decide to turn away from sin and allow God to turn us. As part of the turn from sin, God enables us to break away from sinful habits and desires. As part of the turn to God, repentance prepares the way for us to have a personal relationship with God, qualifying us for baptism of water and Spirit.

The work of forgiveness and remission comes through repentance and water baptism (Acts 2:38). Repentance deals with a person's sinful lifestyle, and baptism deals with the record and consequences of sin.

Water baptism: Water baptism is part of salvation (I Peter 3:21). It expresses faith in God by obedience to His Word (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41). The scriptural mode of baptism is immersion in water, and only this method retains the biblical symbolism of baptism as a burial (Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:4). Faith in Christ and repentance from sin are necessary to its validity; thus infant baptism is not proper (Matthew 3:6-11; Acts 2:38; 8:37).

The biblical significance of water baptism is as follows: (1) God remits sins at water baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16). God erases the record of sin and cancels its penalty. He washes away sins, burying them forever. (2) Baptism is part of the new birth (John 3:5; Titus 3:5). (3) Baptism identifies a person with Jesus' burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). It indicates death to sin by repentance and is a burial of past sins, the dominion of sin, and the sinful lifestyle. (4) Water baptism is part of the one baptism of water and Spirit that places believers into Christ (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5). It identifies them personally with Jesus and is part of the entrance into His family. (5) Baptism is part of spiritual circumcision (Colossians 2:11-13).

The Bible teaches that baptism should be administered in the name of Jesus Christ. This means invoking the name of Jesus orally (Acts 22:16; James 2:7) and rebaptizing those who have been baptized some other way (Acts 19:1-5). The name of Jesus in the baptismal formula expresses faith in His true identity, atoning work, and saving power and authority. The name of Jesus is the only saving name, the name by which to receive remission of sins, the highest name, and the name in which Christians are to say and do all things (Acts 4:12; 10:43; Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 3:17). Thus using Jesus' name is the proper way to fulfill all the purposes for baptism.

The Bible records five historical accounts of baptism in the New Testament church that describe a name or formula. In each case, the name is Jesus (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16). The Epistles also allude to the Jesus Name formula (Romans 6:3-4; I Corinthians 1:13; 6:11; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12). Even Matthew 28:19 refers to this formula, for it describes a singular name that represents all the redemptive manifestations of the Godhead, and that name is Jesus (Zechariah 14:9; Matthew 1:21; John 5:43; 14:26; Revelation 22:3-4). Moreover, Jesus is the name described in the other great commission accounts (Mark 16:17; Luke 24:47).

The baptism of the Holy Spirit: The baptism with, by, in or of the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit) is part of New Testament salvation (John 3:5; Romans 8:1-16; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Titus 3:5). The phrase describes how the believer is immersed in and filled with God's Spirit. In Acts the terms "baptized, filled, received, fell on, came upon, and poured out the gift on" all describe this experience (Acts 1:4-5; 2:4; 10:44-47; 11:15-17; 19:1-6). It is promised to all who believe on Jesus and obey His Word (John 7:38-39; Acts 5:32; 11:15-17; 19:2; Galatians 3:14; Ephesians 1:13).

The Bible records five historical accounts of receiving the Holy Spirit in the New Testament church: the Jews, the Samaritans, the Gentiles, the apostle Paul, and the disciples of John at Ephesus. This record establishes that the baptism of the Spirit is indeed for everyone (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:39) and is accompanied by the initial sign of tongues (Mark 16:17). Speaking in tongues means speaking supernaturally, as the Spirit gives utterance, in a language the speaker has never learned (Acts 2:1-11).

Three of the accounts explicitly describe speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of receiving the Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, a sound of wind signified the coming of the Spirit and tongue-like flames signaled the availability to each person, but speaking in tongues "as the Spirit gave them utterance" was the initial sign of each individual filling (Acts 2:1-4). Tongues convinced skeptical, astonished Jews that the Gentiles had just received the Holy Ghost; tongues alone sufficiently identified this as the Pentecostal experience (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17). The Ephesian disciples also spoke in tongues as the first sign of receiving the Spirit (Acts 19:6).

Tongues are implicit in the other two accounts. An unnamed miraculous sign indicated the exact moment the Samaritans received the Spirit; its prior absence denoted they did not already have the Spirit despite joy, belief, and baptism, and it was so spectacular that Simon the Magician coveted the power to bestow the Spirit with this sign (Acts 8:5-19). Acts 9:17 mentions Paul's experience without description, but I Corinthians 14:18 says he spoke in tongues often.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the normal, basic New Testament experience with God, the birth of the Spirit. The Spirit is the rest, guide to all truth, adopter, intercessor, seal, earnest of the inheritance, and sanctifier (Isaiah 28:11-12; John 16:13; Romans 8:15, 26; Ephesians 1:13-14; I Peter 1:2). Someone can receive the Spirit by repenting, having faith in God, and asking God for His gift. When we receive the Holy Spirit, we receive power to overcome sin and live a holy life (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:4, 13). If we let the Spirit continually fill (control and guide) us, we will bear the fruit of the Spirit and become Christ-like (Galatians 5:22-23).

Conclusion: We should not reject those who have not received the New Testament experience, but we should encourage them to receive everything God has for them. There are many sincere and even repentant people, like Apollos and the disciples of John at Ephesus, who need to be led to further truth so that they can have an apostolic new birth. A person's experience and doctrine should conform to the complete biblical, apostolic pattern; those who seek God without fulfilling this pattern will answer to God. Our responsibility is clear: we must act on the truth.

In summary, (1) the Bible is the sole authority for salvation; (2) the basis of salvation is Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; (3) salvation comes only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ; and (4) the application

of grace and the expression of faith come as a person obeys Acts 2:38, thereby receiving the new birth of John 3:3-5.

ONENESS THEOLOGY

“God is a Spirit” (John 4:24). He is not made of flesh, blood, bones, or physical matter. He is invisible to the human eye unless He chooses to reveal Himself in some way (John 1:18). God has individuality, rationality, and personality. He is self-existent, eternal, and unchanging. He is omnipresent (everywhere present), omniscient (all knowing and all wise), and omnipotent (all powerful).

God’s moral nature includes holiness, justice and righteousness, mercy and grace, love, faithfulness, truth, and goodness. He is absolutely perfect in every way. I John 4:8 says, “God is love”; no other religion identifies God so totally with love.

God is absolutely and indivisibly one. “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4). His eternal nature contains no essential distinctions or divisions. All names and titles of the Deity such as God, Jehovah, Lord, Father, Word, and Holy Spirit refer to one and the same being. Any plurality associated with God is only a plurality of attributes, titles, roles, manifestations, modes of activity, or relationships to humanity. Many passages emphasize God’s oneness. (See Isaiah 42:8; 43:10-11; 44:6-8, 24; 45:21-23; 46:6-9; Mark 12:28-30; Galatians 3:20; I Timothy 2:5; James 2:19.)

The title of Father describes God’s roles as father of all creation, father of the only begotten Son, and father of the born-again believer (Deuteronomy 32:6; Malachi 2:10). The title of Son refers to God coming in the flesh, for the baby Jesus was literally conceived by the Holy Spirit, who was literally His Father (Matthew 1:18-20; Luke 1:35). The title of Holy Spirit identifies the fundamental character of God’s nature. Holiness forms the basis of His moral attributes, while spirituality is the basis of His nonmoral attributes. The Holy Spirit is specifically God in activity, particularly anointing, regenerating, and indwelling humans—works that God can do because He is a Spirit (Genesis 1:2; Acts 1:5-8).

These terms can also be understood in God’s revelation to humans: Father refers to God in family relationship to humans; Son refers to God incarnate; and Spirit refers to God in activity. For example, one human can have three significant relationships or functions—such as administrator, teacher, and counselor—and yet be one person in every sense. God is not defined by or limited to an essential threeness. The Bible nowhere speaks of God as a “trinity” or as “three persons” but often calls Him the Holy One.

The title of Word relates to God’s self-expression or self-revelation. The Word is God Himself (John 1:1), particularly His thought, mind, reasoning, or plan. In the person of Jesus Christ, “the Word was made flesh” (John 1:14). “God was manifest in the flesh” (I Timothy 3:16).

Jesus Christ is both God and man. He is the one God incarnate. “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (II Corinthians 5:19). Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, God manifest in flesh, our God and Savior, and the express image of God’s own person (substance) (II Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15; I Timothy 3:16; Titus 2:13;

Hebrews 1:3; II Peter 1:1). He is not the incarnation of one person of a trinity, but the incarnation of all the character, quality, and personality of the one God.

Acknowledging the deity of Jesus Christ is essential to salvation. Jesus said, “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins,” making reference to God’s name of I Am (John 8:24, 58). Only if Jesus is truly God does He have power to save from sin, for only God is the Savior and only He can forgive sin (Isaiah 43:25; 45:21-22; Mark 2:7).

All names and titles of the Deity properly apply to Jesus. He is God (John 20:28), Lord (Acts 9:5), Jehovah (Isaiah 45:23 with Philippians 2:10-11), I Am (John 8:58), Father (Isaiah 9:6; Revelation 21:6-7), Word (John 1:14), and Holy Spirit (John 14:17-18).

God the Father dwelt in the man Christ. Jesus said, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). “The Father is in me, and I in him” (John 10:38). “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . . The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works” (John 14:9-10). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus (Galatians 4:6; Philippians 1:19), which is the Spirit of the Father (Matthew 1:18-20; 10:20). “The Lord is that Spirit” (II Corinthians 3:17). Jesus is the One on the heavenly throne, as we see by comparing the description of Jesus in Revelation 1 with that of the One on the throne in Revelation 4 and by noting that “God and the Lamb” is one being in Revelation 22:3-4.

Jesus is also the Son of God. The term *Son* refers to Christ’s human identity (as in “the Son died”), and it acknowledges the union of deity and humanity in Christ (as in “the Son shall return to earth in glory”), but it is never used apart from God’s incarnation. It never refers to deity alone. The terms “God the Son” and “eternal Son” are nonbiblical. The role of the Son began when Jesus was conceived miraculously in the womb of a virgin by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 1:5).

The Scriptures emphatically proclaim Christ’s genuine and complete humanity (Romans 1:3; Hebrews 2:14-17; 5:7-8). He was human in body, soul, spirit, mind, and will (Luke 22:42; 23:46; Acts 2:31; Philippians 2:5; Hebrews 10:5, 10). Jesus was a perfect human, with everything genuine humanity includes. Christ’s true humanity does not mean He had a sinful nature. He was without sin, He did no sin, and sin was not in Him (Hebrews 4:15; I Peter 2:22; I John 3:5). He came with the kind of innocent human nature that Adam and Eve had in the beginning.

Belief in Christ’s true humanity is essential to salvation (I John 4:3). If God did not truly come in the flesh, then there is no blood for remission of sin, no sacrifice of atonement. The very purpose of the Incarnation was to provide a holy human to mediate between holy God and sinful humanity.

It is necessary to distinguish clearly between the deity and the humanity of Christ. Jesus acted from both the human viewpoint and the divine viewpoint. He spoke from both the divine self-consciousness and human self-consciousness. Only as a human could Jesus be born, grow, be tempted by the devil, hunger, thirst, become weary, sleep, pray, be beaten, die, not know all things, not have all power, be inferior to God, and be a servant. Only as God could He exist from eternity, be unchanging, cast out devils by His own authority, be the bread of life, give living water, give spiritual rest, calm the storm, answer prayer, heal the sick, raise His body from death, forgive sin, know all things, have all power, be identified as God, and be King of kings. In an

ordinary person, these two contrasting lists would be mutually exclusive, yet the Scriptures attribute all of them to Jesus, revealing His unique identity as both God and human.

Although we must *distinguish* between Christ's deity and humanity, it is impossible to *separate* deity and humanity in Christ (John 1:1, 14; 10:30, 38; 14:10-11; 16:32). The Father united with humanity to form one being—Jesus Christ, the Godhead incarnate. While on earth Jesus was fully God, not merely an anointed human. At the same time, He was fully human, not just an appearance of a human. He possessed the unlimited power, authority, and character of God. He was God by nature, by right, by identity; He was not merely deified by an anointing or indwelling. Unlike a Spirit-filled believer, the humanity of Jesus was inextricably joined with all the fullness of God's Spirit.

We can identify four major themes in the biblical description of the Incarnation: (1) the absolute and complete deity of Jesus Christ; (2) the perfect, sinless humanity of Jesus Christ; (3) the clear distinction between humanity and deity in Jesus Christ; and yet (4) the inseparable union of deity and humanity in Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the fullness of God dwelling in perfect humanity and manifesting Himself as a perfect human being. He is not the transmutation of God into flesh, the manifestation of a portion of God, the animation of a human body by God, or God temporarily dwelling in a separate human person. Jesus Christ is the incarnation—embodiment, human personification—of the one God.

HOLINESS THEOLOGY

The Christian life is a daily walk of faith (Romans 1:17). No one is saved by individual predestination; all are saved as they respond in faith to God's universal grace (John 3:16; Titus 2:11-12). The Bible does not teach unconditional security; each person lives by obedient faith in Christ (Romans 11:17-23; Hebrews 2:1-4; 10:35-39). If Christians remain in Him, they have assurance of eternal life, for no external force can take away their salvation (Romans 8:35-39; Hebrews 6:11; 10:22).

Several basic disciplines are integral parts of Christian living:

1. Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15; Ephesians 6:18; I Thessalonians 5:17; Jude 20-21).

2. Bible study (Psalm 119:11, 16, 105; II Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17).

3. Faithful church attendance and submission to godly leadership (Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 10:25; 13:17).

4. Giving of tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4; Luke 6:38; 16:10-12; I Corinthians 9:7-14; II Corinthians 9:6-7).

5. Worship (Psalm 100:1-5; 111:1; John 4:24; I Corinthians 14:26-33, 40; II Corinthians 3:17).

6. Fasting (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14-15; 17:21).

7. Holiness of life. Pursuing holiness is as important as the new birth. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). God commands His people to be holy in all conduct because He is holy (I Peter 1:15-16). They are to obey this command in order to (1) please God, for they belong to Him, (2) communicate Christ to others, and (3) benefit themselves, both now and for eternity.

For God's people, holiness means conformity to God's character—thinking as He thinks, loving what He loves, hating what He hates, and acting as Christ would act. Specifically, holiness is (1) *separation* from sin and the world system and (2) *dedication* to God (Romans 12:1-2; II Corinthians 6:17-7:1).

Christians must not love this ungodly world system, identify with it, become attached to the things in it, or participate in its sinful pleasures and activities (James 1:27; 4:4; I John 2:15). They must avoid three major areas of sin: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (I John 2:16). They must discipline themselves, and they must abstain from all appearance of evil (I Corinthians 9:24-27; I Thessalonians 5:22).

Holiness is both inward and outward (I Corinthians 6:19-20; II Corinthians 7:1; I Thessalonians 5:23). It includes attitudes, thoughts, and spiritual stewardship, but also actions, appearance, and physical stewardship. Both aspects are essential.

The life of holiness is a continual striving for perfection (Matthew 5:48; II Corinthians 7:1; Philippians 3:12-16). No one is absolutely perfect, but everyone can be relatively perfect and become mature. God expects continual growth in grace and knowledge and increasing production of spiritual fruit (John 15:1-8; II Peter 3:18). The Christian's daily goal is to overcome sin (John 5:14; 8:11). We are not to sin; if we do, we can receive forgiveness by repentance and confession (I John 1:9; 2:1).

Holiness is not a means of earning salvation but a result of salvation. It comes by (1) faith, (2) love, and (3) walking after the Spirit. All aspects of salvation, including the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work, come by faith (Ephesians 2:8). If someone truly believes God, he will obey God's Word. Moreover, if someone truly loves God, he will obey God's commandments (John 14:15, 23; I John 2:3-6). Love is far stricter and more demanding than law or duty. The Holy Spirit imparts a holy nature. Through the Spirit's guidance and power, the believer can overcome sin and live righteously (Romans 8:2-4; Galatians 5:16; I Thessalonians 4:7-8).

The Holy Spirit teaches holiness by (1) the inspired Word of God, (2) anointed preachers and teachers who proclaim and apply the Word, and (3) internal promptings and convictions (which do not deviate from the Word).

Following holiness requires personal effort; it is not automatic. The Christian must yield to the working of God's Spirit and actively implement spiritual principles (Romans 6:11-14; Philippians 2:12; II Peter 3:14).

The Christian life is one of liberty, not legalism. Legalism means basing salvation on works or law or imposing nonbiblical rules. All true holiness standards are either specific biblical statements or valid applications of biblical principles to contemporary situations.

Christians have freedom from sin, freedom from the law, and freedom to act as they will in nonmoral matters. Christian liberty does not negate the responsibility to follow moral law and scriptural teaching (Romans 6:15; Galatians 5:13). Moreover, the Bible presents several guidelines for the proper exercise of Christian liberty even in nonmoral matters: (1) Do all to God's glory (I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17). (2) Avoid anything unbeneficial, detrimental or a "weight" (I Corinthians 6:12; 10:23; Hebrews 12:1). (3) Avoid anything that will gain dominance (I Corinthians 6:12). (4) Avoid harm to others (Romans 14:13-21; I Corinthians 8:9-

13; 10:32-33). Here are important areas in which biblical, and therefore universal and unchanging, principles of holiness apply:

1. Attitudes (Galatians 5:19-23; Ephesians 4:23-32). Christians must put away evil attitudes, including hatred, malice, wrath, envy, jealousy, covetousness, bitterness, pride, prejudice, vengeance, strife, and discord. The essence of holiness is to bear the fruit of the Spirit, which includes love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Christians must forgive, be obedient to authority, be thankful, not let anything offend them, and not be busybodies in others' lives.

2. Thoughts (Matthew 15:18-20; II Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8). We are what we think, and we become what we allow our minds to dwell upon. Christians are to think on true, honest, just, pure, lovely, reputable, virtuous, and praiseworthy things. They must cast out evil thoughts, taking captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

3. The tongue (James 1:26; 3:1-2; 4:11; 5:12). Christians must avoid talebearing, backbiting, slander, sowing discord, swearing by oath, using the Lord's name in vain, pronouncing curses, reviling, lying, idle words, and suggestive, indecent, or obscene speech.

4. The eye (Psalm 101:2-3; 119:37; Matthew 6:22-23). The eye is the gate of the soul and the primary source of input for the mind. Christians should not read sensual or vulgar materials. They guard themselves with regard to television and movies, because violence, illicit sex, sinfulness, and vanity dominate those media.

5. Appearance (*adornment, dress, and hair*) (Deuteronomy 22:5; I Corinthians 11:1-16; I Timothy 2:8-10; I Peter 3:1-5). The appearance reflects the inner self, both to God and to others. Ungodly appearance promotes lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life, molding wearer and society in ungodly ways. Biblical principles here are (a) modesty, (b) rejection of ornamentation, (c) moderation in cost, (d) distinction between male and female, and (e) separation from worldly connotations. Thus Christians should abstain from immodest clothing; ornamental jewelry; colored cosmetics and hair dye; very expensive, extravagant or gaudy attire; men wearing dresses; women wearing pants; men wearing long hair; women cutting their hair; and fashions with carnal associations.

6. Stewardship of the body (I Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:12, 19-20). The body is the temple of the Spirit, so Christians should not use things that harm or defile the body, cause intoxication, or cause addiction. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and illegal drugs violate this principle.

7. Sanctity of marriage (I Corinthians 6:9-10; Colossians 3:5; Hebrews 13:4). The Bible condemns all sexual relations outside of lifelong marriage of a man and a woman. It opposes lustful thoughts and actions.

8. Sanctity of human life (Exodus 20:13; Matthew 5:39, 44). Christians should not participate in violence or taking of human life, including warfare, abortion, and suicide.

9. Honesty (Mark 10:19). The Bible rejects all dishonesty, including lying, theft, fraud, refusal to pay debts, extortion, bribery, and cheating.

10. Fellowship (Matthew 18:15-18; I Corinthians 5:9-6:8; 15:33; II Corinthians 6:14). Christians must not be identified with sinful attitudes or lifestyles. They should not fellowship so-called believers who continually indulge in sinful activities. They are not to become unequally yoked with unbelievers, such as by

marriage. They must resolve internal disputes according to the procedure given by Christ, not by suits in civil court.

11. *Worldly activities* (I Thessalonians 5:22; Titus 3:3; I John 2:15). Christians must maturely regulate amusements, music, sports, and games, avoiding worldly atmospheres and appearances. Some amusements are inherently worldly, such as gambling, dancing, hard rock music, and the occult.

In sum, holiness means to imitate Christ, to be Christ-like. Holy people will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature but will put on the personality and mind of Christ (Romans 13:14; Galatians 4:19). They will judge every decision and action by asking, What would Jesus do?

Holiness is an integral part of the salvation of the whole person from sin's power and effects. It is a joyful privilege; a part of abundant life; a blessing from God's grace; a glorious life of freedom and power. The life of holiness fulfills God's original intention and design for humanity. For the Spirit-filled believer who truly loves God, holiness is the normal—indeed the only—way to live. Holiness is the essence of the Christian life.

BIBLICAL PROPHECY

The next great event for the church is the catching away of the saints and the return of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13). At the catching away (sometimes called the Rapture), the dead in Christ will be resurrected and the living saints will be transformed, both receiving immortal, glorified bodies (I Corinthians 15:51-54; Philippians 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:13-18). Together they will meet the Lord in the air to live with Him eternally.

An unparalleled time of great tribulation will come upon the world (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 6-19). Satan will seek to dominate the earth through a man and system described as “the Beast” (sometimes called the Antichrist) (Revelation 13). The Beast and his false prophet will establish a religious, political, and economic system to control the world. These satanic maneuvers will bring war, famine, and death. Eventually the Beast will claim to be God and desecrate the rebuilt Jewish temple. Those who oppose this evil system and turn to God will be persecuted and martyred; some will have divine protection.

In the middle of the Tribulation, God will pour out His judgment upon unrepentant, degenerate humanity by various great plagues (Revelation 6-18). Many believe that the church will be caught away before the Tribulation, while some believe the church will go through part or all of it. In any event, the church will be protected from God's wrath (Luke 21:36). At the close of the Tribulation, the satanic armies will gather in the Valley of Armageddon to crush all opposition. Seemingly victorious, they will march to Jerusalem to claim their prize. Then Jesus Christ will physically return to earth with His saints, descending to the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 12-14; Acts 1:9-12; Revelation 19). The Jewish nation will recognize Him as their Messiah, and He will destroy the Beast and his armies.

Jesus will establish His kingdom on earth for a thousand years (often called the Millennium), and the saints will rule with Him (Revelation 20). Satan will be bound, but at the end of the age, he will be loosed for a short time. He will foment a final rebellion, which God will destroy with fire from heaven. Then will come the Last, or White Throne, Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). All those not in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire (also called *Gehenna* in Greek), there to be separated eternally from God. God will destroy the

present world and create a new heaven and a new earth. The saints will live with Him forever in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21-22).

The Bible describes many signs that will precede Christ's second coming, and they are being fulfilled today (Matthew 24:1-39; Luke 21:7-31; II Thessalonians 2:1-8; II Timothy 3:1-13). The present age will soon end. Despite different ideas about prophetic details, several key truths are evident from any literal interpretation of Scripture:

1. Jesus Christ will soon return to earth physically.
2. No one knows or can set the time of His coming; the church must be ready at all times (Matthew 24:42-44; Mark 13:33-37; Romans 13:11-14).
3. Every person will face Him in the judgment to receive either the reward of eternal life or the punishment of eternal death.

What is the proper response in light of these awesome truths? "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. . . . He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:17, 20).

EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|-----|-------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | Christ redeemed us by His blood, paying the price that God's law required. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | Justification means that we have performed the works necessary for salvation. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | Sanctification is a continuing work of God's Spirit in the life of the believer. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | We are saved by faith; therefore, the new birth experience comes after we are saved. |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | We cannot separate saving faith from obedience to God's Word. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | The Bible records five historical accounts of water baptism using a name or formula, and in each case the name is Jesus. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | The Bible records five historical accounts of people being baptized with the Holy Spirit, but only one of the accounts specifically mentions speaking in tongues. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | If people have not received the Holy Spirit, then we should reject them because they do not have any experience or relationship with God. |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | The title <i>Son</i> refers to the eternal, divine nature of Jesus Christ. |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | The Bible teaches that God is a compound unity with three distinctions in His eternal nature. |
| 11. | _____ | _____ | The title <i>Word</i> refers to God's self-expression or self-revelation. |
| 12. | _____ | _____ | All the names and titles of God properly apply to Jesus Christ. |
| 13. | _____ | _____ | The title <i>Holy Spirit</i> refers to God in spiritual activity. |
| 14. | _____ | _____ | Jesus was completely human in every way except for sin. |
| 15. | _____ | _____ | We can distinguish both deity and humanity in Christ, but it is impossible to separate these two aspects of His identity. |
| 16. | _____ | _____ | While the Bible calls Christians to a life of holiness, it teaches that holiness is not essential because we are saved by grace. |
| 17. | _____ | _____ | Holiness means separation from sin and the world system and dedication to God. |
| 18. | _____ | _____ | Holiness includes inward attitudes and thoughts as well as outward actions and appearance. |
| 19. | _____ | _____ | The purpose of holiness standards is to help us earn our own salvation in the sight of God. |
| 20. | _____ | _____ | The New Testament does not contain any specific teachings about adornment and dress. |
| 21. | _____ | _____ | In the church age, we should no longer feel an obligation to pay tithes or to fast, since those practices were under the law, although it is good to practice them if we wish. |
| 22. | _____ | _____ | The next great event for the church in prophecy is the catching away of the saints and the return of Jesus Christ. |
| 23. | _____ | _____ | As we get closer to the coming of the Lord, it will be possible through prayer and diligent study of prophecy to know when He will return. |
| 24. | _____ | _____ | During the Tribulation, God will chastise and purge the church so that it will be ready for the final judgment. |

25. _____ Everyone will face God in the judgment to receive either the reward of eternal life or the punishment of eternal death

CHAPTER 3

THE CALL AND MISSION OF BELIEVERS

James Littles

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy”
(I Peter 2:9-10).

INTRODUCTION

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. . . . They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (John 3:16; 17:16-18).

Each time we think about the wonder of God’s love for us, we cannot help but worship Him! Joy and gladness fill our hearts as the reality of what is meant for the Word to be made flesh washes over us again. As apostolic Pentecostals, the truth of God’s oneness further amplifies what it means for the Son to be sent into the world with only one mission: that people might feel the love of God as they are given everlasting life.

God began the sending of Himself at the inception of Creation. He sent His word to make everything that was made. Without the continued work of His word, the world would degenerate into a formless void. Instead He sustains His creation as He did from the beginning. The psalmist wrote in awe as he thought about God’s creation of the world in general (Psalm 96) and of humanity in particular (Psalm 8). God’s Word accented His continued love for humanity through the giving of the rainbow, Mt. Sinai covenant, and prophetic utterances of His chosen men and women throughout the Old Testament.

Ultimately Jesus was born as a means to bridge the chasm between the holy, righteous, loving God and fallen humanity as all the fullness of God dwelt in Him bodily (Colossians 2:9). In the works of Jesus, we see God’s love brought to humanity in terms they could understand. Jesus spoke in parables that used everyday symbols. He healed the sick, raised the dead, and multiplied bread and fish. Jesus spoke against oppressive spiritual leadership and for those He called to make a new start when they had no hope. He did not come only for the elite, wealthy, and well educated—He came for “whosoever believes” (John 3:15-16)! He cast out demons and forgave sins wherever He went. Finally He died and rose again so human beings could be reconciled to God.

In such a short period of time, Jesus modeled a holy life, preached the Word, cared for others, and prepared men and women for faithful service. His few followers were notably shaken when Jesus told them of His imminent departure (John 16:16-20). They had just experienced someone who cared for them and gave them a reason to live each day and hope for the world to come. Why did He have to leave so soon after waiting thousands of years to come? Had Jesus grown tired of His few years of human existence to only retreat to His splendor-filled throne in heaven? Did He find Himself powerless to bring substantive change to miserable

human existence and retreat in failure after giving it His “best shot”? Certainly every reader of this book should be able to shout, “He has set me free, praise God, He has set me free!”

The Gospel writers not only tell us of Jesus’ reason for coming and the success of His mission, they also confirm that Jesus *sent* His disciples to continue His mission in the world upon His departure. As wonderful as a personal relationship with Jesus Christ may be, it is short-lived and anemic unless the newborn believers are aware of their purpose in God’s plan. This chapter seeks to explore the mission of believers and apply it to the life of Christian educators in the local church. It is assumed the readers have read, understood, and applied the material from chapter 2, “Apostolic Theology,” in their own lives. The mission of apostolic believers is inseparable from the beliefs and virtues that we hold to be true. In fact, Christian educators are *sent* to live out the gospel message each day as they care for those the Master has placed in their hands.

This chapter will examine four critical aspects necessary for believers to be *sent* as God’s mission in the world. First personal discipleship formation will explore foundational issues of spiritual maturity that are needed in a teacher’s life. Next Jesus’ commission to make disciples will be applied to Christian education. Then a brief review of mentoring principles will be used to view the relationship between teacher and student. Fittingly the last topic is the life of worship Christian educators will live as they fulfill their mission in the world.

PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP FORMATION

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:36-40).

A Christian educator’s responsibility toward God starts at the same place as every other believer: everyone must love the Lord with everything and love neighbors as himself. Jesus explained that this love had to incorporate all aspects of the believer’s life. He did not make an attempt to place one domain of life above the other; rather the challenge is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in everything that one believes, does, and feels. The beginning place for teacher development is to focus on the teacher. Teachers must seek continued development in right understanding of doctrine, right practice, and right heart or emotions.⁷ The commandments to love God and neighbor as self provide the basis for all the remainder of Scripture. Love of God and neighbor is not some type of emotional response that will fluctuate with the individual’s mood or worthiness of the love object. To love God with everything we are and have is a “matter of reverence,

⁷ Sometimes these three elements will be described as orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

commitment and obedience.”⁸ Love of neighbor is “acting toward others with their good, their well-being, their fulfillment as the primary motivation and goal of our deeds.”⁹

Being a disciple is all about following the One who has called for a transformed life. To be a disciple of Christ is to spend time getting to know who Jesus really is. Time spent studying the Bible, examining quality theological writing, and synthesizing the material is time well spent. Fortunately we are not left to create a relationship with God all by ourselves. First of all, the Comforter was sent to be with us and in us. Jesus said the Comforter would bring all things to our remembrance (John 14:26) and would guide us in the way of truth (John 16:13). Secondly, Scripture is filled with examples of godly women and men who faithfully walked with God in all kinds of situations. These individuals are shown in their triumphs as well as in their failures; they lived real lives just as we do today. Thirdly, we have the stories of modern saints who learned to walk in the Spirit and blaze the trail for apostolic faith in the twentieth century. Fourthly, we have spiritual leadership who model and care for the church today. As the world goes through ever increasing rates of change, these spiritual leaders are constantly bringing the Bible into dialog with shifting culture. Finally, we have other brothers and sisters who are personally verifying the way of faith through their daily lives. These people whom we follow, in Scripture, history, and everyday experiences, are spiritual models or exemplars of what it means to be spiritual women and men today.¹⁰ To love God with our entire mind requires a commitment to learning through the experiences of other Christians. As Paul said, they are epistles written and read of all people (II Corinthians 3:1-3). Knowing Jesus is inseparable from knowing His people and acting on that knowledge with right motives.

Perhaps the example of knowing God and His holiness will provide an example of loving God with everything and neighbor as self. From Eden to the cross, God’s holiness was an ongoing part of the equation to restore the relationship between God and humanity. In both the Old Testament and New Testament, holiness is God’s core identity and is inseparable from His love (Leviticus 19:2 and I Peter 1:15-16). In fact heavenly beings spend much of their worship time proclaiming God’s holiness (Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8). God’s holiness is not primarily about condemning humans to judgment and death; rather the holiness is seen in God’s loving action in making humans holy as He is holy.¹¹ Isaiah 6:1-7 illustrates the outcome of a human encounter with divine holiness: sin was uncovered, the individual cried out to God, God provided atonement with a connection to an altar, and God sent the individual to fulfill a divine mission. The cross is the supreme example of God’s loving holiness. Jesus suffered outside of the city to make humans holy through His blood (Hebrews 13:11-14)! All those who respond to divine love are sent on a divine mission.

⁸ Donald A. Hagner, “Matthew 14-28,” *Word Biblical Commentary*, Volume 33B (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1995), 648.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Doug Oman and Carl E. Thorensen, “Spiritual Modeling: A key to spiritual and religious growth?” *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 13 (2003), 149-165. This journal volume contains three additional articles on spiritual modeling that build on the social learning theory of Albert Bandura.

¹¹ G. F. Hawthorne, “Holy, Holiness,” *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, edited by Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 485-489.

An awareness of this right understanding of who God is should bring about transformed behavior in *all* disciples. The New Testament shows a major change from the Old Testament by its democratization of holiness.¹² No longer are just a few priests engaged in the work of holiness; now *all* the people of God are a royal priesthood and holy nation (I Peter 2:5, 9). Every disciple, Christian educator, and their students alike are called to live holy because God has made them holy by the blood of Christ. They are *sent* to fulfill God's mission.

This understanding of God's holiness and love requires a response of the whole person. The Christian educator who follows God will thirst after Him in his mind (right teaching), actions, and heart or emotions. People can tell if he knows God's love in his life—he will actively love those who are around him. He understands God's love in action with Christ's sacrifice and in turn gives his possessions, time, and life for others (I John 3:16-18). Amazing as it seems, the love of God is not complete until love is active in disciples (I John 4:7-12)! The motivational force behind faithful holiness and love is not guilt, shame, or fear, for His love removes the power of these forces in our lives (I John 4:16-18). Christian educators who are disciples of Jesus first and foremost *will* believe, be, and act out holy love because He has made them holy. They also realize the ongoing work of holiness in their own lives as they grow in active holiness and love.¹³

Being a Christian educator requires careful consideration of spiritual formation. Rather than thinking only in terms of spiritual disciplines, which can sometimes be reduced to a checklist of activities such as Bible reading and prayer, the focus is on growing as the disciples who God would have us to be. Fortunately, the job is never finished! This reality should not be a frustrating realization; rather it provides a glorious opportunity to explore new ways of being remade in the image of God on a daily basis. Teaching students about the ways of God will only be as exciting as the teacher finds his or her own spiritual formation to be. Christian educators must continue to develop in spiritual formation one step at time.

The simple recognition that we will never be complete in this life forces the teacher to rely on the work of the Holy Ghost to lead, guide, and empower him for daily service. In essence, personal spiritual formation insures that service as a teacher is a cooperative effort between the teacher and the Holy Ghost. Just as Mary was invited to carry the Christ-child in her womb and had to respond with, "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), we too are invited to participate in God's work! Just as Mary asked, "How can these things be?", we too frequently wonder how we are able to make a difference in our hurting, ever changing world. The answer is the same as it was for Mary, "The Holy Ghost will come upon you."

Though spiritual formation includes actions such as prayer, meditation on the Word, service to others, and growth in the way of humility, it is more about being in such a relationship with God that we make room for Him in absolutely everything we think, feel, and do.¹⁴ Spending time with God and His people is the only way to attend to spiritual things in a Christian educator's life. The beauty of a Pentecostal experience is found

¹² S. E. Porter, "Holiness, Sanctification," *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid (eds.) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 397-402.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Klaus Issler, *Wasting Time with God: A Christian Spirituality of Friendship with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 24.

in the continual awareness of God's presence on both personal (I Corinthians 3:16) and corporate (II Corinthians 6:16) levels as we serve as the temple of God.

Spiritual maturity allows one to move beyond infancy (where one constantly argues about foundational things) to the place where the person can serve others as a teacher (Hebrews 5:12). Only people who remain on the Potter's wheel—actually enjoying His hands on every area of their life—can dare to teach others. Whether the Christian educator serves in the nursery, elder care center, or any age group in between, the work can only begin and flourish under the guidance of the Spirit. To attempt to serve otherwise is the epitome of arrogant works of the flesh and will only end in destruction. Unfortunately the destruction of a flesh-oriented teacher is felt by both the teacher and his or her pupils.

The apostolic teacher is a spiritually gifted part of the body of Christ (see I Corinthians 12 and Romans 12). As such she fulfills a vital function in the local community of saints. She is able to rely on the Spirit's work in everything she does. The Head of the body directs her work as He fitly joins all of the parts together to achieve His good pleasure. The teacher can have complete confidence in the fact that the church is put together and sustained by the great Architect! The Lord knows exactly what He is doing in the student, teacher, and all other members of the body. As each member finds her place in the body, the Lord is glorified.

Finding one's place in the body is not some impossible task. Prayer, study of the Word, counsel with friends and spiritual leaders, and looking for places to serve are all vital ingredients in successful placement in the body. As with all aspects of spiritual growth, a person's place in the body is not achieved in a moment and is never a completed task. Some Apostolics have used instruments such as "Discover Your Talents and Abilities" questionnaire¹⁵ to aid in finding meaningful ways to use their talents in the local church.

The beauty of finding one's place in the body is something that nothing else can provide. When an individual receives the Holy Ghost it is assumed she will grow in her place in the church. In fact the church is gifted with spiritual leadership to assist in this function. After proclaiming the oneness of God, Paul examined God's gift of leadership in the church. After listing several leadership offices, Paul explained their function: for perfecting of the saints, equipping saints for service, and edifying the body. The results of the body's maturity will bring unity of faith, knowledge of Jesus, and perfection to the stature of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13). What wonderful promises for God's ongoing provision in His body! The alternative to growing in one's proper place in the body of Christ is to be an infant that is subject to the changing whims of humanity and false doctrine. Christian educators have both the opportunity and promise of becoming ever more mature, confident, and purposeful in their service.

This portion of the chapter has explored the role of personal discipleship formation in the life of a Christian educator. It is the basis and power behind everything teachers do in the life of the church. Teaching flows from obedience to the interlocking commandments to love God and neighbor. Teaching is sustained by

¹⁵ The questionnaire is available from the UPCI General Sunday School Division, 8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042. The instrument provides 108 questions that can assist a person in finding their place in the local church. The instrument deals with "those innate talents and abilities that allow each of us to contribute an important ministry to the kingdom of God" rather than supernatural spiritual gifts as found in I Corinthians 12:8-10.

the ongoing work of the Spirit in the individual and community. Finally, the teacher's discipleship formation, as the consequence of a relationship with Jesus Christ, is a wonderful ongoing process for maturing. Teaching is an ordained gift of God in the local church and is a work that can only be done by mature men and women who build on the basics of the faith with right doctrine, right actions, and right heart or motives. Personal evangelism and disciple making are natural behaviors for those who are sent to be God's mission in the world.

PERSONAL EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLE MAKING

“Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20).

One of the frustrating parts of contemporary North American life is the split between the variety of roles individuals fulfill. Beginning in previous centuries, individual and family private life has grown ever more divorced from public spheres. Marriage, children, and home life are not connected to the worlds of work, shopping, entertainment, government, education, other social organizations, or even the church.¹⁶ While individuals and families may appreciate the additional resources in raising children, caring for elderly, earning college degrees, shopping in malls, and participating in economic opportunities on a global scale, all of these systems tend to further compartmentalize life into boxes that have little or no interaction. In fact, these various “support” structures may compete for time, energy, and resources. Work hours may conflict with a child's medical appointment or a required course for academic and professional development.

This problem of various splits in the lives of individuals and families is further complicated with the lack of unifying principles in a postmodern world. It seems each person is left to create his own meaning out of the building blocks of society through his own personal experiences and preferences. Science, education, economics, and government are unable to establish unifying principles to either guide citizens' daily lives or make sense out of our ever changing world.

Fortunately Christians are not left to their own resources in the buffet line of conflicting philosophies! Those who have been baptized in water and Spirit have testified to the fact that their lives are no longer their own and they are directed “from above.” When they partake of communion, they confess the sacrifice of Christ, the ongoing work of Calvary in their own lives as they live as a community of believers, and the anticipation of the end when all things are remade in a new heaven and earth. When they use spiritual gifts, they demonstrate the continual in-breaking of the kingdom of God in their daily lives. When they pray, they both worship and confess they rely completely on the One who has called them out of darkness into the marvelous light. And they do so in *all* aspects of their lives!

As Oneness believers, Apostolics understand what Jesus was saying in Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus explained His authority again after some of the disciples worshiped while others doubted. He has complete

¹⁶ See Diana R. Garland, *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999). Chapters 2 and 3 are particularly helpful in understanding the various contexts in which families are connected.

authority in both heaven and earth! Everything is subject to Him! As with all sources of power, the fact that power is available is not the whole equation. The question is always the purpose or use of the power. The commission in Matthew 28 is in force because Jesus has all power. His power is used to *send* His followers into the world and make disciples.¹⁷ The task is far more important than just giving information; the command is to make disciples follow in the way of Jesus.

The use of Jesus' power in disciple making covers all areas of life rather than just a limited view of formal classroom teaching. Christians should integrate all of their private and public lives around this authority of Jesus Christ. Home life is about discipleship; singles, married couples, widows, and children are all to mutually assist each other in progressing as disciples. Lifestyle and clothing choices are opportunities to show reverence and discipleship to believing and unbelieving household members (I Peter 3:1-7).

Church life is about discipleship rather than attendance records. Attendance will be necessary for disciples because they desire to be with fellow Christians, worship corporately, and enjoy various expositions on Scripture. True disciples, however, will understand that attendance is not sufficient for disciple making purposes. Relationships with believers outside of services are equally important as the formal worship services as the contemporary church seeks to be disciples as the first-century predecessors as seen in Acts 2:42-47.

Maturing Christians will also realize their public life is about discipleship. The apostles taught that the workplace was service to a heavenly Master rather than an earthly overseer (Ephesians 6:5-8 and I Peter 2:18-20). In fact Peter taught that all areas of life should be lived as foreigners in a strange land (I Peter 2:11-17). He felt a Christian lifestyle in the context of a pagan world would bring others to the place where they would glorify God. Faithfulness at work and before government was seen as an opportunity to witness to the world.

A biblical understanding of Jesus' authority and sending the church as His mission in the world goes beyond what is generally defined as evangelism. To really share the good news of Jesus Christ, share personal experiences about God's goodness, or to teach a personal Bible study is to expect transformed lives. His Word will not return void (Isaiah 55:11)! When someone really hears the word, he will be on the road to discipleship. The evangelist rejoices with heaven when one sinner repents, but he or she also recognizes this is the beginning of a new life. The work of discipleship sustains the joy as Christians mature in their new life.

At this point, it is good to remember the motivation for right behavior as was outlined in the first section of the chapter. Right motivation for discipleship is the power of Jesus Christ as we fulfill our mission as Christians. Wrong motivation focuses on fear of hell for not evangelizing, guilt at not sharing the blessings we have received, or shame for not meeting the expectations of others. Evangelism and discipleship are certainly not about competing with other evangelists to prove who is better or more important; such competition is foreign to the life of a disciple. Finally, engaging in evangelism and discipleship is not about earning God's favor or to get His attention. Disciples realize a holy God, who saves them by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, already wondrously loves them! Good works cannot earn divine favor; rather good works follow from a right relationship with God.

¹⁷ The Greek text of UBS4 and NA27 supports NKJV, NIV, JB, and other translations that say "go and make disciples." A different word is used in verse 20 for the second use of "teach" in the KJV and other translations.

MENTORING FELLOW SERVANTS

“Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” (Titus 2:6-8).

Some modern mentoring methods actually follow biblical principles. In fact, the call to make disciples is a call to mentor people in the ways of Jesus Christ. Jesus was a great mentor as He walked daily with various groups of people. Three members of the twelve received more attention than the other nine. The twelve received more attention than the other constant followers. These followers, including Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, received more mentoring than the occasional member of the crowd.

The apostle Paul was a gifted mentee (one who is mentored) and became a gifted mentor. Barnabas recognized the calling on Paul’s life and introduced him to the church (Acts 9:27). Barnabas and Paul were sent on evangelism crusades as partners (Acts 13:1-3). At some point in time, the relationship changed to a more egalitarian status as each eventually went on to lead his own evangelism team and mentor others. Paul was concerned that this happened at all levels of the church. He expected the older men and women to exhort or encourage the younger members of the church in the ways of righteous service and living.

Effective Christian education naturally includes mentoring. God and the church have placed teachers in the position to intimately care for those in their classes by encouraging them to grow in faithfulness. This is the curriculum of Christian education. Biblical wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge to everyday life experiences. Through modeling, prayer, study, group lessons, individual dialog, service trips, and any number of other activities the Christian educator is able to mentor tens if not hundreds of people during a lifetime of ministry. To say this is a privilege is certainly an understatement!

Several aspects of contemporary mentoring theories can help Christian educators apply the biblical directives to mentor others. Effective mentors:

- Seek to develop mentoring skills,
- Emphasize the relational task by realizing both parties have something to share,
- Recognize individual differences and context of each mentee,
- Seek moderate levels of activity and structure for mentoring interaction,
- Commit time required for the relationship to develop,
- Contribute a high level of trust and empathy to the relationship,
- Balance fun, pursuit of goals, and exploration of emotions,
- Look for solutions when problems arise rather than blame or punitive actions against the mentee,
- Examine consequences of mentoring actions for the church and wider community, and
- Inspire hope for the future.¹⁸

¹⁸ See “Making Mentoring Work: The Heart and Soul of Mentoring” online: www.mentoring.org/program_staff/research_corner/making_mentoring_work.php?pid=all and “Mentoring: Theory and Practice” online: www.mentorresearch.net/rosstirz.htm. Both articles were accessed June 16, 2005.

One of the wonderful things about mentoring relationships is the benefit available for all parties involved. The mentor receives a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment for doing the work he was made and called to do. The mentee receives the attention and guidance to develop to his fullest potential and prepare for the next stage of development. The church community receives the care within the body from a variety of equipped and gifted people. Even the next generation of mentees will receive the help of men and women who were blessed by their mentors in previous years.

Mentoring may be a recurring theme in management, education, and social work, but it is rooted in biblical truths. Mentors must be secure in their own identity in Christ; otherwise an honest, trusting relationship will not develop. Mentors must also be prepared to walk into the unknown with those they lead. Mentors must be able to confess that they do not have all of the answers, but they have developed a relationship with the One who does. Mentoring relationships must be led by the Spirit as are all other aspects of a Christian educator's life. This leading of the Spirit will ensure the Christian educator models and leads others in worship, the final aspect of a believer's mission we will explore in this chapter.

WORSHIP

"All the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not" (Exodus 20:18-20).

God kept His promise made to Abraham in Genesis fifteen when He brought the Israelites out of slavery. We must realize the desire of God was not so much to bring the people *out* of slavery but *into* a lasting relationship with their Creator.¹⁹ While the beginning of the fulfillment could take place by simply following the prophet, the purpose and conclusion of the promise required risking the encounter with God who cared so much for them. In Exodus 20, we find the oral giving of the law and visible signs of God's presence on Mount Sinai. The people were overjoyed to be out of Egypt, and even joined with Moses and Miriam as they led the people in songs of worship, but the people feared intimacy with this holy God. As we have seen above, God's holiness is inseparably linked with His love. Israel was unable or unwilling to trust God's holiness and His love.

In his book *Pentecostal Worship*, Gary Erickson defines worship as "the recognition of ultimate reality; it is acknowledging the supremacy of God and the deficiencies of humanity."²⁰ True worship calls God's people to risk this encounter with the Creator. Perhaps later Israel would not have had the same reaction to Moses' absence if they had risked true worship at the oral giving of the law. Rather than trusting in the human leader, they would have been able to continue to "recognize ultimate reality" even during times of doubt and fear. Instead we see false worship in Exodus thirty-two; those who were afraid of God were comfortable with idols.

¹⁹ H.U. Ashby Jr., *Our Home is Over Jordan: A Black Pastoral Theology* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003).

²⁰ Gary D. Erickson, *Pentecostal Worship: A Biblical and Practical Approach* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame Press, 1989), 223.

Christian educators must take the risk of living in the awe-inspiring presence of a holy, loving God or they too will be destined to creating alternative forms of worship that only lead to destruction. Worship cannot be limited to songs, raising hands, or spirited response to God's presence in a corporate worship service. Worship actually begins with a reconstructed view of the world where God is placed at the center and human beings surrender to His lordship. As such, worship begins with an understanding of who Jesus is and how this truth has an impact in all of life.²¹ If worship becomes ritual practice that is discussed as one style of music or other specific aspects of worship, then institutional forms have taken precedence over relationship with Jesus.²² When Jesus is removed from the center, then worship is a new golden calf that is destined for destruction.

Apostolic Pentecostal education must make an effort to connect its theological understanding and worship in everyday lives. Some examples of these connections can be given here; a more extensive review of apostolic doctrine is needed to fully develop these concepts. The oneness of God helps us understand God's self-sacrifice on our behalf. Worship is available for us today because Jesus gave up His divine prerogatives and became obedient to death on the cross (Philippians 2:5-10).²³ We are called to have this same attitude in our lifestyle of worship. Baptism in water is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and is a burial of the old life in preparation for resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:4-10). Baptism understood in this way leads to a true life of worship; baptism misunderstood causes one to distance himself from the radical call to encounter and obey the holy, loving God.

Apostolics are committed to living in the Spirit. Since the Spirit is poured out on all believers, all are called to worship moment by moment in this most intimate of relationships. The outpouring of the Spirit also distributes spiritual gifts as God wills. *Every* Christian is to exhibit spiritual gifts to the glory of God. A life devoid of spiritual gifting is a life devoid of worship for it is only by Spirit and truth that we are able to worship Him (John 4:23-24). Life in the Spirit is also a life of faith. Worshiping God calls for living now in the light of that which is to come. A quick review of faithful men and women in Hebrews 11 confirms this wonderful truth of worship. Facing trials and difficulties leads to maturity and patience for believers because they live in worship (James 1:2-8 and I Peter 1:3-9). Each situation does not define the reality of this life or the next; rather the things that will be are lived out in our existence today. Worship-filled lives look forward to the end of time when every knee will bow and tongue will confess the lordship of Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:9-11). They endure weeping here because they know that all tears will be wiped away when they are called to abide with Jesus for eternity (Revelation 21:3-4).

Christian educators worship God in everything they do. As mature Christians, they are able to face situations that come their way in faith. They worship the One who not only calls them *out* of bondage, but also the One who calls them *into* intimate relationship and service. In worship they acknowledge God's ways are far superior to their own, and they are willing to grow their relationship with God and His people. As spiritual

²¹ Nathaniel Binion, *Pentecostal Theology of Music: Using God's Mission Through 'Covenant to Deconstruct Cultural Colonialism'* (master's thesis, Urshan Graduate School of Theology, Hazelwood, MO, 2004).

²² C. Van Gelder, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Crested by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000), 158.

²³ Herbert W. Bateman, "A Call for Authentic Worship," *Authentic Worship: Hearing Scripture's Voice, Applying its Truths* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2002), 23-52.

mentors, they model faithful worship for their mentees, teaching them to abide in the shaking of the mountain rather than retreat to secondhand accounts of what God wants to do in their lives. They teach living in both God's holiness and love by their actions and their words. In short, everything a Christian educator does brings glory to God.

CONCLUSION

God has always sought to be in a relationship with humanity. In fact some believe the human quest for perfection and a better life is rooted in humanity's earliest days in the Garden of Eden.²⁴ The Old Testament saw covenants with Abraham and Israel. The law and prophets saw their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Jesus left a legacy of teaching, healing, serving, and sacrificing for His disciples to follow. This legacy was necessary because the mission of Jesus Christ was to continue down through the ages in millions of His followers. All Christian believers are *sent* on a divine mission just as Jesus was sent by God.

A radical transformation is needed for human beings to fulfill God's mission in the world. In fact a whole new creature is needed to perform this mission. Believers must commit to lifelong personal discipleship formation to ensure they grow into mature Christians who can be and do the mission of God. Those who reject the discipleship challenge will stagnate in infancy and possibly die. Mature believers are well suited to fulfill the discipline-making commission. Jesus' authority is to be used in the process of discipling, baptizing, and continuing to teach. Discipleship provides a unifying principle where believers can pull all areas of their life back together.

Christian educators can guide new converts and others in this lifelong process. One way teachers follow Jesus' example is by mentoring their students. This emphasis is on a personal relationship that leads toward greater maturity. Mentors know they also are on the journey and do not know all the answers to life's challenging questions. The mentor's greatest gift is the hope he or she shares with mentees. Spiritual insights and direction are transmitted from one generation to the next.

A life well-lived worships God and brings joy to the believer. Each act of service, word of encouragement, Bible study, prayer, and smile brings honor to the One who has sent us to do His work. Christian educators live each day as an act of worship as they fulfill their mission.

²⁴Richard Winter, *Perfecting Ourselves to Death: The Pursuit of Excellence and the Perils of Perfection* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 122.

EXAM

True or False

T F

1. ____ ____ Jesus sent His disciples to continue His mission.
2. ____ ____ God's work with creation ended on the sixth day.
3. ____ ____ As long as believers have a relationship with Jesus, they really do not need to concern themselves with their place in God's plan.
4. ____ ____ Love for God is primarily an emotional response to the work of Christ.
5. ____ ____ To love God with our entire mind requires commitment to learning through the experiences of others.
6. ____ ____ God's holiness is primarily concerned with judging human sin.
7. ____ ____ The love of God is not complete until love is active in His disciples' lives.
8. ____ ____ Discipleship formation must be complete before someone can be in Christian education ministry.
9. ____ ____ Christian education does not require spiritual gifting.
10. ____ ____ All Christians should expect to find their place of service in the body.
11. ____ ____ Faithfulness at work and before the government should not be seen as a form of witnessing.
12. ____ ____ Disciples earn God's love by doing good works.
13. ____ ____ Jesus did not spend the same amount of time mentoring each disciple.
14. ____ ____ Mentors do not have to know everything to be a mentor.
15. ____ ____ True worship requires the believer to remain at a distance from God's holy presence.
16. ____ ____ Christian education should seek to connect doctrine and worship.

Fill in the blank

17. According to Matthew 22:36-40 believers are to love God with all their _____, _____, and _____.
18. In the Old Testament and New Testament _____ is God's core identity and is inseparable from His _____.
19. Christian education is a cooperative effort between the teacher and the _____.
20. Jesus Christ uses His power and authority to send His followers into the world and make _____.
_____ was Paul's mentor.

Multiple choice

21. Love of neighbor is primarily a(n) _____.
 - a. Action
 - b. Emotion
 - c. Mental decision
 - d. Act of God
22. How does Old Testament and New Testament holiness compare? _____

- a. They are the same: spiritual leaders are the ones who focus on holiness.
 - b. New Testament is not concerned with holiness because it was part of Old Testament law.
 - c. Holiness is democratized; all the people of God are to be concerned with holiness.
 - d. Everyone who receives the Holy Ghost is covered with Jesus' holiness; no growth is needed.
23. The motivational force behind holiness should be _____.
- a. Fear of hell
 - b. God's love for humanity
 - c. Shame in sinful human nature
 - d. Guilt for personal wrongdoing
 - e. Competition to be more holy than others
24. Christian education should focus on _____.
- a. Children's ministry
 - b. Teenager needs
 - c. Young and midlife families
 - d. Elderly saints
 - e. All age groups
25. According to Gary Erickson's definition, worship is primarily related to _____.
- a. Visible actions in church service
 - b. Recognition of divine ultimate reality
 - c. Living by strong holiness standards
 - d. Surrendering to the moving of the Spirit

CHAPTER 4

THE TEACHING MINISTRY

Gary D. Erickson

“Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates” (Deuteronomy 6:1-9).

Can you imagine what your life would be like if you removed every teacher’s influence from your past? Sometimes teachers make us uncomfortable. They are always pushing, nagging, and insisting on more from us. Nevertheless, their role in our life is vital. Just as teaching forms an essential part of the secular life, the teaching ministry has been an important ministry for the Hebrews as well as the New Testament church. The following analogies will illustrate the teacher’s importance to the well-being of the church.

- Teaching is a link in the “generational chain.” If the teachers fail to pass on knowledge, that link is broken and a generation could be lost. The church is always just one generation from extinction. If you can, imagine the church hanging from a chain over a dangerous precipice. If one single link were to break the church would plunge into destruction. Each teacher, to a great degree, holds the lives of the students in his or her power to save or lose.
- Teaching is like the relay race runners who do not run as individuals, but as a team. When one runner has run his distance, he then will pass the baton to his teammate who will carry the baton to the next runner—on and on until the race is complete. If while in the race the baton is dropped, that team will lose the race. The teacher passes the baton of understanding to the next generation.
- The teacher is like a large vessel that after years of learning and experience accumulates a reservoir of knowledge. The teacher then pours that knowledge into smaller, less experienced vessels. We must share our large container of knowledge through the ministry of teaching.

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

God put an emphasis on teaching to the Hebrew people. This is illustrated in the preceding text. God made them wonderful promises: they were promised a land to possess as an inheritance, that they would

increase mightily, the land would be a land that flowed with milk and honey, they would have goodly cities which they didn't build, houses full of good things, wells they did not dig, vineyards they did not plant, and that they would cast out their enemies. Nevertheless, there were principles to apply before these promises were experienced. They were required to teach His precepts diligently to their children. They were required to talk about them in their houses and when walking in the way. They were to meditate when they lay down and when rising up. They were to bind His law on their hands and make them frontlets between their eyes. They were to write His law on the doorpost and the gate.

Among the orthodox Jews today, it is the mother who teaches the child until he is five years old. They go to the synagogue after school on weekdays, and on Sundays they study the holy Scriptures. The *Mezuzah* is a wooden or metal box containing tiny scrolls of parchment written in Hebrew and taken from Deuteronomy chapter six. They are fixed above the doorways on the top right side. *Rabbi* is an honorary title given to those who attain high standards in the study of Jewish law. This dedication to teaching their children is a contrast to other religions. How much time do our children spend in religious training?

God rebuked Israel for failing the teaching ministry: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:6). As a result, Israel lost the glory experienced under King David and King Solomon. They had six successive kings to die violently. Their priests were compared to bakers allowing cakes to burn on one side while remaining raw on the other (Hosea 7:8), like *silly doves* who have lost their way (Hosea 7:11), like *empty vines* they had foliage but no fruit (Hosea 10:1), and they were accused of engaging *hired lovers* (Hosea 8:9).

JESUS THE MASTER TEACHER

Jesus was a teacher! He used the ministry of teaching as a means of establishing His church. The miracles and wonders attracted the crowds so that He might teach the kingdom of God.

- He taught in the synagogue (Matthew 4:23).
- He taught daily in the Temple (Luke 19:47).
- He went through the cities and villages teaching (Luke 13:22).
- He taught in the streets (Luke 13:26).
- He taught throughout all Jewry (Luke 23:5).
- He employed all the basic teaching methods available in His day.
- He taught in parables which were allegories used to illuminate truth to those who were sincerely hungry for it. They confused the insincere. Jesus knew the power of the story to pique interest and draw humankind.

Jesus used the following methods:

Drama: (The following are examples) writing in the sand; coin in the fish's mouth; coin with Caesar's inscription; cleaning the Temple of money changers; cursing the fig tree; washing the disciples' feet; wine and the bread; using children to illustrate the kingdom, mud balls on the blind man's eyes, and so forth.

Lecture: The lecture is the most common teaching method, not only in Bible times, but today as well. It is the most convenient and useful tool for transmitting information rapidly and clearly. Jesus taught in the synagogue (Matthew 4:23), from a boat (Matthew 13:2-3), from the seashore (John 21:4), in houses (Matthew 9:10), in rural settings (Matthew 14), and many other places where people were gathered.

Objects: Everyday objects were used by Jesus to illustrate spiritual truth. He took people from the known to the unknown through the use of objects (i.e. cursing the fig tree, coin in the fish's mouth, children, bread and wine, birds, trees, seeds, water, wind, and so forth).

Stories: Jesus was a master storyteller. The stories He told are called parables. These allegories were not only entertaining, but were illuminating to those with spiritual receptivity.

Questions: He asked the disciples who they thought He was. After the parable of the Good Samaritan, He asked who was a neighbor to the man. He asked about the baptism of John; about David eating shewbread (Matthew 12:4); how Satan's kingdom can stand (Matthew 12:26); about the shepherd looking for one lost sheep (Matthew 18:12); the "Lord said to my Lord" question (Matthew 22:45).

Common interest: He witnessed to the woman at the well about living water (John 4). Birds, sowing seeds, harvesting crops, trees, coins, rocks, fish, weather, robbers, prison, debts, kings, servants, rich people, poor people, vineyards, building houses, grass, flowers, candles, sweeping, wine, wineskins, banquets, treasures, fishing nets, the marketplace, taxes, music, and so forth.

The teaching of Jesus was unique.

He taught with authority: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). Large crowds gathered to hear Him (five thousand were fed on one occasion).

His words were life: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). Jesus taught with an objective: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19).

Jesus taught with love: "And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things" (Mark 6:34). "And the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again" (Mark 10:1).

THE DISCIPLES WERE ALSO TEACHERS

Apollos: "For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (Acts 18:28).

The apostles: "Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us" (Acts 5:28). "And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught" (Acts 5:21).

“And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26).

WE ARE URGED IN THE EPISTLES TO TEACH

- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16).
- The teacher is one of the five main ministries in the church (Ephesians 4:11). Teaching skills are a requirement for the pastor: “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach” (I Timothy 3:2).
- Teachers are worthy of honor: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” (I Timothy 5:17).

THE INTEGRITY OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

Integrity is the quality or state of being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty, and sincerity (*New World Dictionary*). The following are synonyms: soundness, perfection, flawlessness, or mint condition. The Hebrew word translated “integrity” in the Old Testament is *thom* which means “whole” or “complete.” The plural for *thom* is *thummim*. This was the name given to an outer garment worn by the Hebrew priest. It was called the “Urim and Thummim” (Exodus 28:30; Ezra 2:63; and Nehemiah 7:65). The exact function and design is unknown. Some think it was a breastplate covered with twelve stones—each stone representing one of the twelve tribes of Israel. High-level decisions could not be made until it was consulted for guidance. Since “Urim” means light or fire, it could be called “lights and perfection.” Some think that the stones shown brightly when they met God’s approval and dark when they did not. It was to be worn over the priest’s heart before he entered the Holiest of Holies. He was to have perfection over his heart.

When a teacher stands before a class, he should have his heart covered with integrity. “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness” (Ephesians 6:14).

FIVE AREAS OF INTEGRITY — MESSAGE; METHOD; MOTIVE; MESSENGER, AND MINISTRY

1. Message:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1: 8-9). Paul pronounced a curse on those who would willfully pollute the gospel! The teacher must fully face the seriousness of maintaining the integrity of the message. We are the link in a generational chain! The serious challenge today could be called the “Pop Gospel.” This is an idea that God wants to make us happy instead of holy! A symptom of this

philosophy is an overemphasis on grace to the neglect of repentance and discipleship. This is a Pentecost without the cross!

The God of Abraham asked him to sacrifice his son. The God of Isaac allowed his sons to bring him grief and shame. The God of Moses kept him from the Promised Land because of his disobedience. The God of the apostles allowed them to be martyred. The God of John the Baptist allowed him to be beheaded. Our great Example was “smitten of God, and afflicted” (Isaiah 53:4). Calvary is not a sanctified credit card giving us the privilege to go on a hedonistic shopping spree. It is to conform us into the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). We make entertainment the primary focus of ministry. We cannot deny that entertainment has a vestige of importance in preaching, teaching, music, writing, and so forth. Nevertheless, our society is inordinately preoccupied with this aspect of life (music, movies, TV, MTV, magazines, Internet, sports, travel, hobbies, and so forth). The prevalence of “easy-believism”—this is a watered-down gospel that does not require repentance nor discipleship. Salvation is based on a mental acceptance that Jesus is our personal Savior. The new birth is nonessential.

The true gospel is repentance, water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and the receiving of the Holy Ghost evidenced by speaking in other tongues (Acts 2:38). Discipleship: Holiness of life, producing the fruit of the Spirit, growing in knowledge and maturity.

2. *Methods:*

“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Matthew 10:16). The teacher’s job is to persuade students to give their hearts to God. We must be wise in the way we undertake this mission. The gospel and Christian principles never change, but methods will. Teachers need to be sensitive to the changing times and the cultural implications upon the students we teach. The following cautions are offered to avoid inappropriate methods. We should use methods that most effectively reach the students. As we seek for the best method, the following cautions are being offered:

a. *Methods that manipulate:* Touching a student’s emotions can be an effective way to reach him. Someone once said, “The human intellect is only a speck on the sea of emotion.” Nevertheless, emotional appeals that are coercive can be detrimental. We should never attempt to override the individual’s will. Emotional appeals that use sentimentality and other overly charged appeals will overwhelm students and cause them to make poorly thought-out decisions. When a student is swept along by the crowd or by some excessive emotional appeal without proper reasons, their commitments will not last. A person’s mind must be made up for decisions to be lasting!

b. *The celebrity syndrome:* In today’s world, we have too many celebrities and not enough servants. We have too many medals and not enough scars! Appealing to Christian celebrities as a proof of truth is erroneous. Students must learn that movie stars, sports heroes, music celebrities, and the rich and famous are not our role models. Jesus must be the only celebrity. It is exciting when someone famous accepts the truth.

Using these stories as a side note will add interest to the subject. We should always temper the use of these examples with caution about where our real faith is derived.

c. Deceit: Jesus listed “deceit” with other foul sins in Mark 7:22. Deceit (Greek, *dolos*) means “cunning maneuvers designed to ensnare someone for one’s personal advantage.”²⁵ The apostle Paul included the same Greek word for deceit with his list of vices in Romans 1:29. The word can also mean “bait the hook” or “set a decoy.” We must always be honest. God will never need for us to be dishonest for Him. With time, normally all tricks are disclosed. When people learn that they have been tricked, it will make them angry and resentful.

3. Motive:

Paul said, “For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts” (I Thessalonians 2:3-4). The NIV says, “From impure motives.” Paul’s primary motive was to please God! When pleasing God, we will not always please men. When we attempt to avoid criticism and strive to cultivate praise, these are telltale symptoms of wrong motives. We must always remember that we are building God’s kingdom and not our own. “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).

4. Messenger:

Teachers are examples of what they teach. There is an old saying that makes this truth visual, “Words are pennies and deeds are dollars.” Jesus, our Master Teacher said, “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15). We must practice what we preach! Paul said, “Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:14-15). Paul exhorted Timothy with these words: “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (I Timothy 4:12). If we do not practice the principles we teach, our teaching will be ineffective. There are areas of vital concern for setting an example for the students.

a. Integrity with personal finances: Every Christian should pay tithing on their increase and give in offerings as God blesses them to do so (Genesis 14:20; Malachi 3:8-10; Luke 6:38). This will keep God as the Lord of our finances. We should also pay our bills and pay them on time. In doing so we are keeping our financial vows. (See Romans 12:11 and I Thessalonians 4:11.) We can love money too much and make it an idol. Jesus said, “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Luke 16:13). On the other hand, we can be careless with money, not regarding it properly—overspending with credit cards and charge accounts until we are hopelessly in debt.

²⁵J. F. Walvoord, R. B. Zuck, and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, Libronix Digital Library System, 1983-c1985), Mark 7:22.

b. Integrity with family members: Sometimes we hurt the ones we love the most. We let our hair down at home—saying rude things and acting selfishly. Our behavior at home should always be respectable and Christ-like. The following verses exhort us to have integrity at home: “That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children” (Titus 2:4). “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee” (Exodus 20:12).

c. Integrity of leadership: John Maxwell says, “Leadership is influence, nothing more and nothing less.” The number-one virtue of leadership is integrity. Almost all books on leadership will make integrity among the most important character traits of an effective leader. Being a leader is living in such a way that others will look to us for guidance and role modeling. Having integrity will cause students to trust our words and actions. Paul said, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour” (I Timothy 2:1-3).

d. Integrity in friendships: Being loyal to friends is an important virtue for building a reputation of integrity. The writer of the Proverbs said, “A friend loveth at all times” (Proverbs 17:17). Signs of disloyalty are being warm one day and cold the next in our relationship with friends, deserting them when they are in trouble, and not defending them in times of unfair criticism.

e. Being true to yourself: Shakespeare said, “This above all: to thine own self be true” (Hamlet, Act I, Scene III).²⁶ We cannot be completely sure what Polonius meant by this statement, but he probably meant to keep the conscience pure. If so, this is good advice. Paul said, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (I Corinthians 9:27).

f. Integrity with the Sunday school class: Taking responsibility seriously is essential for maintaining integrity—praying for the students daily, preparing for teaching the lesson, allowing the Holy Spirit to use you, and being a confidant to the students in and out of the class. Christ is the head of the church and the pastor is under Christ. The Sunday school teacher is an under-shepherd serving as an extension of the pastor. Paul said, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Jesus cautioned farther, “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6).

5. Ministry:

There is a diversity of ministry in the kingdom of God. Finding our ministry is one of the most important responsibilities as a Christian. Some of these ministries in the church are listed in the following scriptures: I Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:1-8; Ephesians 4:11. These ministries may not be all of the special gifts God has given to the church. In today’s world, there are so many new areas of ministry (sound

²⁶ <http://www.William-Shakespeare.info/William-Shakespeare-quotes.htm>.

technology, children's ministry, youth ministry, single's ministry, Bible quizzing workers, counseling, radio ministry, and other media). We must endeavor to find where we fit into the kingdom of God.

Paul was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 15:16), yet he continued to have a burden for the Jews. His personality was suited to working with the Greeks, but his efforts to reach the Jews resulted in stirring up anger and violence. When he left his calling, he got into trouble (i.e. going to Jerusalem when he was warned against it [Acts 21]). Perhaps this is the reason he said, "Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God (I Corinthians 7:24). Paul also said, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (I Corinthian 12:18). Our God-given talents and abilities should be anointed with the Holy Spirit through prayer and sacrifice. Ability alone is not enough. We need to be called and anointed to work effectively in the kingdom. God will use a flawed vessel. Otherwise no one would be qualified.

We must never assume that our talents and the anointing are signs of God's approval upon our spiritual life. Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22-23). Balaam was a rebellious, greedy, and lustful man, yet God used him as an instrument of ministry (Numbers 22-24). He heard the word of God, knew the knowledge of the Most High, saw visions from the Almighty, and prophesied of the coming Messiah (Numbers 24:16-19). Centuries later he was used as an example of a false prophet (II Peter 2:15-16; Jude 11; Revelation 2:14).

THE WALLS OF INTEGRITY:

All leadership experts say that integrity is the leading virtue of a leader. If a person cannot be trusted, he will be completely ineffective as a leader. Ancient city walls were the chief form of defense against the enemy. They were built high, deep into the ground, wide, and were guarded by watchmen. Some had moats, guard towers, and strong gates. The farmers would tend their herds and plow their fields during the day and return to the safety of the city at night. When the strong gates were closed at night, they provided safety until morning. Defects in the walls were a serious threat to the city. The Great Wall of China was breached at least three times. It was always by bribing the guards. The Word of God is a strong wall of defense, but if the guards and gatekeepers fail to do their jobs, the city is vulnerable.

THE TEACHER AND THE NEEDS

First and most importantly, the teachers need to work on themselves. Personal devotion to God and His Word is imperative for the Sunday school teacher. Prayer life; good study habits; discipline for faithfulness; consecration from sin; letting the fruit of the Spirit grow in our lives. We cannot give to others what we do not have ourselves.

a. *We need anointing:* Priests in the Old Testament were anointed with oil before they were allowed to work around the tabernacle. We need the anointing of the Spirit to be effective. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6).

b. *The Ten Commandments for the Teacher:*

Thou shalt depend upon the Lord.

Thou shalt be an example.

Thou shalt know the lesson.

Thou shalt select the best teaching method.

Thou shalt use words clearly understood by the students.

Thou shalt move from the known to the unknown.

Thou shalt stimulate the students to action.

Thou shalt make the lesson appealing.

Thou shalt give opportunity to respond.

Thou shalt help the student live the lesson outside the classroom.

c. *Dealing with teacher burnout:* The following can be symptoms of burnout:

Resentment toward the students.

The lessons become boring.

You are void of new ideas.

You are in a rut.

You have difficulty controlling your class.

You want to resign.

This is a normal process in the procession of life's cycles (i.e. our bodies have bio-rhythms, life is filled with vicissitudes, our circumstances change, and our resources can become depleted). When we repeat things over and over they become monotonous, routine, and tend to lose meaning and significance. Perpetual tension will weaken the strings of a musical instrument and it will get out of tune. Our nerves, when under constant stress, will also get out of tune. We tend to go around in our circle of responsibility, settling into a comfortable path, and fail to look beyond the norm for fresh information and ideas. We must seek times of diversion, rest, and relaxation. We also must seek opportunities for challenge (reading good books, listening to audio tapes, taking a class, and attending seminars). We must continually seek for new information, new methods, and new ideas.

If we are teaching children, we need to look at life through the eyes of a child. They are filled with wonder at the simple things in life (bugs, leaves, sandboxes, pictures, stories, sounds, shapes, colors, touch, taste, and so forth). If we are teaching teens, we must see life through the eyes of a teen (i.e. hormonal changes, peer pressures, academic challenges, parent-child conflicts, and so forth). We must use our imagination to relate to the class we teach.

d. *Tips to avoid teacher burnout:*

- *Do not expect too much:* Building lives takes time. It took years of teaching and preaching to get us to where we are today. One lesson will not be a cure-all. The farmer waits patiently for the harvest.
- *Do not take too much responsibility:* Trying to do too many things will make you feel like a one-arm paper hanger. When you are too busy to pray and prepare properly, you are too busy!
- *We must take enough responsibility:* Being lazy and undisciplined will make us feel unfulfilled, depressed, and out of touch. Assuming the challenge with energy is stimulating. The lazy person can always find an excuse: “The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets” (Proverbs 22:13).
- *Do not get spiritually deficient:* We need a recurrent drink from the fountains of living water. We should seek ways to energize our spirit (reading, attending revivals, listening to tapes of preaching and singing, and so forth).
- *Deal with disciplinary problems properly:* One child can ruin a class. Work with the parents, Sunday school superintendent, and pastor to keep order in the classroom.

EXAM

True or False

T F

1. _____ _____ *Rabbi* is an honorary title given to those who attain high standards in the study of Jewish law.
2. _____ _____ God, through the prophet Hosea, rebuked Israel for their lack of knowledge.
3. _____ _____ Jesus did not depend upon teaching, but miracles and wonders to get the message out.
4. _____ _____ When Jesus taught, He only taught in the Temple and the synagogue.
5. _____ _____ Jesus always avoided teaching with drama.
6. _____ _____ The parables of Jesus confused some and brought great understanding to others.
7. _____ _____ According to Ephesians 4:11, the teacher is one of the five main ministries in the church.
8. _____ _____ Since Jesus knew all of the answers, He never asked the audience questions.
9. _____ _____ Jesus never used common, everyday things in His teaching, but taught strictly in a spiritual dimension.
10. _____ _____ According to I Timothy 5:17, teachers are not to be given special honor.

Fill in the blank

11. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with _____, and having on the breastplate of _____" (Ephesians 6:14).
12. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other _____ unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be _____" (Galatians 1:8-9).
13. Name four characteristics of Jesus' teaching: _____, _____, _____, _____.
14. Priests in the Old Testament were anointed with _____ before they were allowed to work around the tabernacle. We need the _____ of the Spirit to be affective.
15. Jesus said, "No servant can serve _____ masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and _____" (Luke 16:13).
16. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the _____, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you _____, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).
17. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; _____ and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).
18. The _____ is the most common teaching method, not only in Bible times, but today as well. It is the most convenient and useful tool for transmitting information rapidly and clearly.
19. Jesus was a master storyteller. The stories He told are called _____.
20. The lazy person can always find an excuse: "The slothful man saith, There is a _____ without, I shall be slain in the streets" (Proverbs 22:13).

- 21. Teacher _____
- 22. Integrity _____
- 23. Apollos _____
- 24. Anointing _____
- 25. Calling _____

- a. Teacher and preacher
- b. One of five main ministries
- c. Essential for effectiveness
- d. Every Christian must find
- e. Teacher's greatest virtue

CHAPTER 5

CHILD EVANGELISM

Gary D. Erickson

“And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:13-16).

Those who understand God’s nature as fair, loving and compassionate assume that God will provide universal salvation for all children, regardless of their culture or his or her guardian’s religious beliefs and practices. Making an assumption of this magnitude will need strong biblical basis. Embracing this belief based upon the premise of what we believe to be God’s justice is easy enough; nevertheless, finding strong biblical support is more difficult. There is a lack of clear biblical support for the universal salvation of young children.

This issue is of grave relevance due to the current baby boom that is sweeping the North American demographical landscape. This growth is larger than the post-World War II baby boom. There are currently eighty-one million people between the ages of three years and twenty-one years of age in the United States.²⁷ Not only North America, but many third-world countries are bursting at the seams with a population explosion. Coupled with this growth of children is the severe epidemic of the AIDS/HIV virus on the African continent resulting in shorter life spans. “In Zimbabwe, without AIDS, life expectancy in 2010 would be seventy. With AIDS, it is expected to fall below thirty-five years.”²⁸ In addition to natural causes, the deaths of children are staggering. Since Roe versus Wade, over thirty-five million children have been aborted in this country alone. As we watch these children die, we must ask ourselves, “Are these children saved?” “Should we attempt to evangelize these children who are old enough to understand the gospel?” “Should we just leave these matters to fate?” “Are children of Christian parents saved and others lost?” “At what stage of childhood does God hold an individual responsible for his or her eternal destiny?”

David Bernard, in his book *The New Birth*, lists five views concerning the spiritual destiny of children and the mentally handicapped. (1) They cannot go to heaven because they have sinful natures. (2) They will all go to heaven since Jesus used them to illustrate the kingdom of God. (3) They will be resurrected at the Millennium and given opportunity to accept or reject salvation. The Jehovah’s Witnesses teach this. (4) God will judge children based upon His foreknowledge concerning what they would have done had they lived. (5) The child’s salvation is determined by the parents.²⁹

ORIGINAL SIN

²⁷ Rick Hicks and Kathy Hicks, *Boomers, Xers, and Other Strangers* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 268.

²⁸ “Worldwatch Say AIDS Devastating Africa Demographics,” *CNN News*, <http://www.CNN.com>. [cited 31, October 2000].

²⁹ David K. Bernard, *The New Birth* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame Press, 1984), 320-321.

What is the spiritual condition of a child at conception? Are children conceived as sinners or do they just have a sinful nature? There are three views on this issue. (1) The Calvinist view holds that the sins of Adam have been imputed upon the entire human family. Not only are we deprived, but we are also guilty because of the first transgression.³⁰ (2) The Pelagianistic view holds that the human race was unaffected by Adam's sin. Every person born into the world is by nature just as pure as the first Adam.³¹ (3) The Arminian view holds that the entire human race has inherited from Adam a proneness to sin. This position is based on the premise that sin must be a voluntary transgression—a decision of the will.³²

The Bible makes it clear the entire human race was affected by Adam's sin: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). "Passed" was translated from the Greek word, *dierchomai*, which means "to come or go through."³³ Adam was not just a bad example, but his sin profoundly affected the human race, bringing universal death spiritually and physically (Romans 6:23; 7:13). From chapter six we learn that "Death is universal (verses 12 and 14), all die: sinless infants, moral people, and religious people, equally with the depraved."³⁴ Paul explained that the reason death spread to all is that all sinned. The consequence of Adam's sin is stated in verse 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners. . . ." Adam's sin did not become our personal sin, but his sin brought the universal state of sinfulness. God does not hold one responsible for another's sins: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (Ezekiel 18:20).³⁵ Since personhood begins at conception, there are many months that a child, before birth and after, is not self-aware, has no ability to choose, and has no knowledge of right and wrong. Therefore, it is impossible for that child to sin. James defines sin with these words: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).³⁶ Nevertheless, every child has a sinful nature and will sin given time and opportunity. Paul expressed the human dilemma with these words:

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:21-24). "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

³⁰ Merrill F. Unger and R.K. Harrison, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1988), 1198.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 1198.

³³ Robert Young, LL.D., *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 733.

³⁴ C.I. Scofield, D.D., *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), 1197 (footnotes).

³⁵ See also Deuteronomy 24:16; Job 19:4; and Jeremiah 31:30.

³⁶ See also I John 3:4 and 5:17.

The psalmist does not paint a glamorous picture of the human condition: “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies” (Psalm 58:3). He went on to say, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5). Paul, speaking of our sinful nature, said, “In times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:3). “Not that we are born children of wrath, but only that by birth they have a nature which tends to such personal choice and conduct as invite the divine displeasure.”³⁷ Condemnation would not actually strike an individual until after personal acts of disobedience. Jesus made a profound declaration as pertaining to children: “Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14). “These words unequivocally denote that little children, all the newly born, are innocent and uncondemned members of the divine Kingdom. Their standing in that Kingdom might not be altogether secure.”³⁸ Jesus indicated that He was aware of the proneness to sin and the nature of human conditions in this world. Nevertheless, children are not born aliens and outcast, but into the light of divine favor.

THE CALVINISTIC AND ARMINIAN VIEW OF CHILDREN

“Calvinists hold that the election of individuals to salvation is absolute, unconditionally, by virtue of an eternal divine decree. . . . By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death.”³⁹ According to the Calvinists, God chooses His elect, not during their lifetime, nor at conception, but before an individual is conceived. The Calvinists say, “God foreordains who will be saved just as He chose one of Rebecca’s twin sons to be loved and blessed and the other to be hated (Romans 9:10-12).” If this were the case, a child would either be saved or lost, totally predetermined by God, and a child’s age at death would not be a relevant factor. This belief does not align itself with the whole trend of Scripture, which declares the responsibility of men and their actual power to choose between life and death. The Bible declares that it is the will of God that the entire human race should be saved.⁴⁰ To doom to eternal death any number of mankind who were born in sin without sufficient remedy would be injustice. The atonement of Jesus Christ is for all mankind.⁴¹

The austerity of God’s judgment against children in the Old Testament is cited as proof of God’s deliberate and sovereign punishment of the innocent. It is true that God assisted the Israelites to slaughter the Canaanite children.⁴² It should be noted that children were killed because of their parent’s sinfulness, but the destruction was physical and not spiritual. Another example cited is the “little children” who mocked the prophet Elijah saying, “Go up, thou bald head” (II Kings 2:23-24). Apparently, God allowed two she bears to come from the woods and tear forty-two of the children. The Hebrew word for “children” is *naar*, which means

³⁷ John T. McFarland, D.D., LL.D., *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education*, Vol. I (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1915), 218.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, 345.

⁴⁰ See the following scriptures: I Timothy 2:4; 4:10; John 5:40; and Acts 7:51.

⁴¹ See the following scriptures: Hebrews 2:9; John 1:29; 3:16-17; I Corinthians 15:22; and Romans 5:18-19.

⁴² See I Samuel 15:3, 18.

“youth, or young man.”⁴³ These were not little children after all, but young adults who were old enough to be accountable.

The system of strict Calvinism has received various modifications by theologians. In an effort to soften hard-line Calvinism, May 1903, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America adopted the following: “We believe that all who die in infancy, and all others given by the Father to the Son who are beyond the reach of the outward means of grace, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, Who works when and where and how He pleases.”⁴⁴ This provision remedies the Calvinistic unfairness of dooming aborted fetuses and infants to hell. Nevertheless, it is based on logic and not explicit biblical references.

The Arminians view the atonement in more universal terms. God has provided salvation for every race of sinner, but election is not absolute but conditional. Salvation is contingent upon the proper acceptance of God’s gift as God, by His providence and Spirit, and puts it within the reach of mankind. The individual may be chosen by God before birth; nevertheless, the human will is a vital ingredient in determining whether or not that individual will become a part of the elect.

With Calvinism and Arminianism, the salvation status of children remains a difficult issue. Calvinism leaves parents of small children with uncertainty. They can only hope that their child is in that mysterious number of the elect. On the other hand, Arminians hold that even though a child may be a part of the elect, they must believe and accept God’s provision in order to be saved. Children before the age of reason are incapable of believing the gospel and obeying God’s demands. This puts children in the hands of a gracious God. We have no clear answers.

INFANT BAPTISM

“The Roman and Lutheran churches teach that baptism admits children into the church and makes them members of the body of Christ. The Reformed churches, generally, teach that children of believers are included in the covenant, and are therefore entitled to baptism. The Methodist Church holds that all infants are redeemed by Christ, and are therefore entitled to baptism, wherever they can receive instruction and care of a Christian church or family.”⁴⁵ Even though there is no explicit example of infant baptism in the Bible, the following biblical arguments are used to support this position. (1) Peter included children in his message on the Day of Pentecost as being promised the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:39). (2) There were several households baptized in the New Testament.⁴⁶ It is assumed that “household” would also include infants. (3) There is no record of an older child of Christian parents being baptized in the Scripture. Neither is there any mention of an age of accountability. (4) Paul compared baptism to Old Testament circumcision (Colossians 2:11-12). Circumcision

⁴³ Robert Young, LL.D., *Young’s Analytical Concordance of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 163.

⁴⁴ Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, 346.

⁴⁵ *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. I (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1891), 648.

⁴⁶ See the following scriptures: Acts 11:13-14; 10:48; 16:15, 31, 33; and I Corinthians 1:16.

was a sign of God's covenant with the children of Israel and baptism is a sign of God's covenant with the church. Children were circumcised under the law.⁴⁷

Baptizing infants and young children is not only without a biblical example, it assumes an incorrect purpose of water baptism. Peter made it plain that baptism is for the remission of sins.⁴⁸ John's ministry, which was characterized as the forerunner of Jesus Christ, came introducing the kingdom of God. John administered water baptism "unto repentance" for the remission of sins.⁴⁹ Infants have not committed sins and have no need for this remission.

Peter does include children in his promise of the Holy Spirit, but only if they repent (Acts 2:38). Repentance is a prerequisite to baptism. It is a decision of the will to give one's heart to God. An infant or an unborn child does not have the mental sophistication to make such a decision. Repentance is associating one's self with the death of Jesus and baptism with His burial (Romans 6:1-4). Infants and young children do not have the mental capacity to repent; therefore baptism imparts no spiritual benefit.

CHILD DEDICATION

Jesus responded warmly to the parents who brought their children to Him by touching them and blessing them. "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them" (Mark 10:16). If Jesus acknowledged the desire of New Testament parents to have His blessing upon their children, He will bless our children also. Dedicating children to the Lord is not without biblical precedent—Samuel (I Samuel 1:11), Samson (Judges 13), Moses (Exodus 2), and John the Baptist (Luke 1). Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple and performed the rite of circumcision on the eighth day. Simeon and Anna blessed the child and rejoiced in knowing that the Messiah had come (Luke 2:21-39). The practice of dedicating children to the Lord is not a biblical requirement; nevertheless, it is a commendable act in which parents acknowledge children as a gift from God and publicly pledge a vow of faithfulness to godly parenting.

THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The term "age of accountability" is used frequently by fundamentalists to indicate the age in which a child becomes accountable to God for his or her moral and spiritual behavior. Even though "age of accountability" is not a biblical term, it is logical that at some stage in the maturation process a child learns right from wrong, understands the gospel, and develops the capacity to make important personal decisions. Due to diversity in the maturation process, no particular age can be set for such spiritual accountability. A child's spiritual maturity will depend upon his or her exposure to religious training, intelligence, physical maturity, and that mysterious capacity to discern spiritual things.

Historically, the Jews have considered a boy reaching the age of puberty automatically considered a bona fide man. "Among the Jews, starting with the final Second Temple period, what had formally been a tribal

⁴⁷ Jordan Bajis, "Infant Baptism," *Greek Orthodox Archdiocese*
<http://www.goarch.org/access/orthodoxy/infant.html>, (accessed April 18, 2002), 2-3

⁴⁸ See the following scriptures: Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16.

⁴⁹ See the following scriptures: Matthew 3:6, 11; Mark 1:4-5; and Luke 3:3, 12-14.

rite of initiation took on a moral, spiritual concept, marking an important religious-social milestone in the life of every male Jew. . . . A Mishnah elaboration written during the first century C.E., makes reference to thirteen years as being the appropriate age. . . .⁵⁰ Today the first Sabbath after the thirteenth birthday a Jewish boy celebrates his Bar Mitzvah. It is at this ceremony that the father releases his personal responsibility for his son.⁵¹ It is interesting that the Gospels record so little of Jesus' childhood years. "After the first year of the nativity and infancy, the curtain on the scene of His life falls, and the evangelical narrative passes over twenty-six years, with the sole exception of one brief incident, when the boy at the age of twelve visited the city of Jerusalem with His parents on the occasion of the Passover."⁵² ⁵³ "Since Jewish lads assumed adult responsibilities in Judaism at the age of thirteen, this visit to the temple may have the purpose of preparing Jesus for those responsibilities."⁵⁴

The Old Testament considered twenty years of age a significant time in the maturation of a Jew. They were not counted in the census until they were twenty years of age (Numbers 1). They were required to begin paying the Temple tax at twenty years of age (Leviticus 27:3). Military service began at twenty years of age (Numbers 1:3). Those who were twenty years of age and older were not allowed to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:29; 32:11). Some believe that the Levites began training at twenty years of age and actually entered service at twenty-five years of age (Numbers 8:24). Perhaps during the time of David the age was changed to thirty (I Chronicles 23:3, 24-26). Some believe this is a precedent for age of accountability.⁵⁵ Setting an age for all children is impossible considering the diversity of developmental speed. Only God knows the heart of a child.

Paul, while teaching about the law of sin, said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Romans 7:9). This verse seems to be referring to an age of accountability. "Evidently the apostle was speaking of his personal experience as a child and perhaps even a youth prior to his awareness and understanding of the full impact of God's commandments."⁵⁶ The words, "but when the commandment came," are the dawning of the significance of the commandments. Once he understood, Paul said that sin "deceived me, and by it slew me" (Romans 7:11). Understanding brought accountability, and with accountability came death because of sin. He explained the transition from childhood to adulthood with these words: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (I Corinthians 13:11). Children develop moral consciousness early in life. The writer of the Proverbs made this clear: "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11).

⁵⁰ Nathan Ausubel, *The Book of Jewish Knowledge* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1970), 31.

⁵¹ Ausubel, *The Book of Jewish Knowledge*, 31.

⁵² J.W. Shepherd, *The Christ of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1939).

⁵³ See Luke 2:41-50.

⁵⁴ Robert H. Gundry, *A Survey of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 218.

⁵⁵ "Scriptural Age of Accountability," *Yahweh's New Covenant Assembly* (Wheaton, IL: <http://www.ynca.com/>), March 5, 2002.

⁵⁶ John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, New Testament (USA, Canada, England: Victor Books, 1988), 466.

I CORINTHIANS 7:12-14

In this portion of Scripture, Paul was dealing with conflict that arises within a marriage when one mate becomes a Christian and the other remains a nonbeliever. Neither the Old Testament nor the church sanctioned marriage between believers and nonbelievers.⁵⁷ Therefore, the question arose, “Should the Christian partner leave the unsaved partner upon conversion?” The second problem was that the marriage union was described as two becoming one flesh.⁵⁸ Since the new Christian was born again and was a new creature in Christ, perhaps some were asking how they could possibly remain within this strained unequal marriage. Paul emphasized the sanctity of the marriage vows by urging the saved spouse to remain in the marriage with these words: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy” (I Corinthians 7:14).

Since Paul said that the children are “holy,” some have assumed these words to be a promise that children are saved if one or more spouse is saved. Based on this interpretation, a careful look at this verse would mean that the nonbelieving spouse would also be saved. Paul was not addressing the salvation of children, but simply saying that the children are not illegitimate, nor the product of an unwholesome marriage in such situations. “Apparently Paul distinguishes between the absence of contamination and salvation.”⁵⁹ There could also be a recognition here of the positive spiritual influence of the believer upon the entire family. An entire family could ultimately be led into the Christian life by the saved spouse. There is no assurance that children of saved parents are also saved in this text.

THE SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY OF CHILDREN

“As a general rule, the religions of the world show slight recognition, or none at all, of childhood capacity for religion. . . . Christianity, however, has shown a tendency to push backward towards infancy the date, not so much of initiation (or confirmation, reception into Church membership, etc.), as of recognized religiousness.”⁶⁰ Christianity brought a higher value to childhood. At the time of Jesus’ ministry, the Roman Empire had all but crushed the natural affinity between fathers and children. “Infants were looked upon as encumbrances to be gotten rid of. The mothers of illegitimate children, sometimes even mothers who were married, killed or deserted their children without scruple, or called in the aid of women who made a business of the art of abortion.”⁶¹

Jesus made a child the model for entering the kingdom of God. He said, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). The humility, sincerity, faith, and the forgiving disposition of a child provide godly virtues that are a challenge to the mature adult. Making children the example of spirituality is an indication of their spiritual sensitivity. Jesus went on to

⁵⁷ See the following scriptures: Ezra 10:10 and II Corinthians 6:14.

⁵⁸ See the following scriptures: Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5 and Ephesians 5:31.

⁵⁹ George Authur Buttrick, *The Interpreter’s Bible*, Volume X (New York, NY: Abingdon Press, 1953), 80.

⁶⁰ James Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1911), 520.

⁶¹ William Smith, and Samuel Cheatham, *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Vol. I (London, England: William Clowes and Sons, 1875), 351.

say, “And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me” (Matthew 18:5). This statement is an explicit rebuke to those who consider children unimportant in the kingdom of God. Ministering to them is equivalent to ministering to the Lord Himself. On another occasion Jesus dramatized the importance of children: “And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein” (Luke 18:15-17). Mark said that on this occasion He took them up in His arms and blessed them—laying His hands on them (Mark 10:16). “It was customary for parents to bring their children to the Rabbis for a blessing, and so it was reasonable that they would bring the little ones to Jesus.”⁶² This show of affection was more than a fondness for children. There is a lesson in everything Jesus did.

In Peter’s message on the Day of Pentecost, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was promised to children (Acts 2:39). Children have great faith, are tenderhearted and respond quickly to the gospel message. Those who work with children find them more receptive to the gospel than adults. George Barna, the Christian researcher, says, “If a person is ever going to become a Christian, the chances are great that he or she will do so before reaching the age of eighteen. About three-quarters of all people who have consciously, intentionally and personally chosen to embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior did so before their eighteenth birthday.”⁶³ April 2002, Bob Morgans conducted children’s crusades in Wara, Ethiopia, and witnessed thirty thousand children receive the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking with tongues.⁶⁴

Samuel, as a child, heard the voice of God when Eli was not listening and provides an excellent example of the spiritual capacity and sensitivity of a child (I Samuel 3). David was only a lad when he was anointed by God to slay Goliath, the Philistine giant (I Samuel 17). It was a “little maid” who witnessed to Naaman about the prophet in Israel who could heal his leprosy (II Kings 5). God called Jeremiah to be a prophet and assured him with these words, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee” (Jeremiah 1:5). John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb (Luke 1:15). The little lad’s five loaves and two fishes fed the multitude (John 6). Jesus gave a stern warning about offending a child’s faith: “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). He also gave children more credit for spiritual discernment than some adults: “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (Matthew 11:25). Children responded to the wonderful deeds of Jesus by crying out “Hosanna to the Son of David.” This

⁶² Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 145.

⁶³ George Barna, *Generation Next: What You Need to Know About Today’s Youth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1995), 77.

⁶⁴ These crusades were sponsored by the General Sunday School Division of the United Pentecostal Church International. There were an additional two thousand who received the Holy Spirit in another city. This is an unprecedented occurrence. Perhaps never in the history of the world have so many children been filled with the Holy Spirit in one crusade.

praise made chief priests and scribes “sore displeased.” Jesus responded to their criticism by quoting from Psalm 8:2: “Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?” (Matthew 21:15-16). Jesus Christ came into the world as a child. “Luke could well be called the ‘gospel of little children.’ The stories of Jesus’ birth and childhood introduce central motifs. . . . The nativity stories resemble Scripture meditations on the OT.”⁶⁵ Paul complimented Timothy with these words, “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures” (II Timothy 3:15).

From these scriptural references, we can conclude that children are spiritual beings and should be included in evangelism, discipleship training, ministry, and worship. The words of Jesus are revelatory to the spiritual status of children when He said, “of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14). “These words unequivocally denote that little children, all the newly born, are innocent and uncondemned members of the divine kingdom. Their standing in that kingdom might not be altogether secure.”⁶⁶ Jesus has an acute sense of the moral exposure and the proneness to sin that is innate within the heart of a child. David mourned the loss of his child with these words, “Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me” (II Samuel 12:23). David understood that even though the child could never return to this physical realm, he was in a place that he would proceed to one day.

The following points can be concluded concerning the salvation of children:

1. “We conclude that the Bible simply does not say what happens to infants and the mentally incompetent.”⁶⁷ Going beyond the bounds of Scripture would only be speculation. The lack of clarity in Scripture concerning the destiny of children does not satisfy our desire to know; nevertheless, we must be satisfied that these matters are in the hands of a loving, merciful, and just God (John 5:30; Psalm 103:17; and John 3:16).
2. Since the age of understanding or the age of accountability is an undefined stage in a child’s mental and spiritual development, every effort should be made to evangelize children when they become open and responsive to the gospel message.
3. Children are spiritual beings and are responsive to the Holy Spirit. They have been promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit which is an obvious confirmation that we should provide for them opportunities to receive it (Acts 2:39).
4. When considering the whole body of Scripture, we can conclude that there must be an age in childhood development in which the Lord holds a person responsible for his or her spiritual life. We can refer to it as the “age of accountability.” This age will vary from one child to another.
5. Since we have no explicit biblical assurance that our children are saved, we should not be uncaring about evangelizing them. Considering the serious possibility that God holds them responsible and they could be lost, we should not only train children for future involvement in Christianity, but evangelize them as well.

⁶⁵ David Noel Freeman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. I (New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1992), 906.

⁶⁶ John T. McFarland, *The Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education*, Vol. I (New York, NY: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1915), 218.

⁶⁷ David Bernard, *The New Birth* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame Press, 1984), 321.

6. Children should be respected with the dignity afforded all human beings. The mistreatment of children brings stern rebukes from the Scripture. The ancient Jews placed high value upon children. “The verse, ‘Be fruitful and multiply’ (Genesis 1:28) was considered to be the first commandment in the Bible.”⁶⁸ The presence of children in the family was a sign of God’s favor.⁶⁹ To be childless was considered a curse.

7. Evaluating the spiritual status of children from Scripture and life’s experience, it appears possible that a child can believe the gospel, repent of their sins, be baptized and be filled with the Holy Spirit, and be under the age of accountability. Nevertheless, such conditions could bring no harm to the child but could spare him from many scars of sin. It would also remove the uncertainty of his true standing with God.

8. Children are not responsible for the sins of their parents. “As the one who controls the lives of all humans, God decrees that children shall not die for their parents’ sin. Only the individual who sins shall die.”⁷⁰ “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4). Nevertheless, the Bible states that children can suffer for their parents’ sin to the third and fourth generation (Exodus 20:5). Children will benefit from their parents’ righteousness as well (Exodus 20:5-6). The conclusion is that children are greatly affected by their parents’ faith. Nevertheless, with a God-given will, each person has a choice not to be influenced by his or her parents or guardians.

PRAYING WITH CHILDREN

Praying with a child is different than praying with an adult. In some ways, it is easier. Some adults are proud and extra sensitive to your comments and being touched. Adults are more discriminating in their judge of an individual and sometimes will be suspicious of our motives. Even though children will not have the understanding of an adult, they are spiritually sensitive and will follow your coaching more readily than an adult. The following suggestions will be helpful in praying with children:

1. Get the facts: Find out if the child needs the Holy Ghost and get his or her name. Ask the child if he wants the Holy Ghost. If he doesn’t, perhaps he does not understand what you mean. Time spent explaining the Holy Ghost is not wasted. If he still does not want the Holy Ghost, move on to another child.

2. Repentance: If the child wants the Holy Ghost, explain that repentance is asking for God’s forgiveness for his sins and surrendering his heart to Him. Lead him in repentance, assuring him that God forgives him as soon as he asks.

3. Worship: Make sure they have fully repented and know they are forgiven. Lead them in worship, explaining that they need to forget about everything around them and focus solely on Jesus.

4. Encouragement: This is the stage where they need strong encouragement. When you detect that they are feeling the Holy Spirit, explain to them, “That’s the presence of the Lord you feel!” Encourage them to yield to the Holy Ghost. Do not shake them or scream in their ears.

⁶⁸ Geoffrey Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Judaism* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1989), 158.

⁶⁹ See the following: Genesis 15:2; 30:1; I Samuel 1:11, 20; Psalm 127:3; and Luke 1:7, 28.

⁷⁰ James L. Mays, *Harper’s Bible Commentary* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988), 676.

5. Laying on of hands: If you feel led to lay hands on them, explain to the child that when you do they should expect to receive the Holy Ghost. This will create a point of contact and build a child's faith (three out of five received the Holy Ghost by laying on of hands in the New Testament).

6. Receiving the Holy Ghost: At this point, they should receive the Holy Ghost. If they do not, after about fifteen minutes of seeking, they should be stopped and coached. Seeking for long periods of time is not profitable and will hinder a child's faith. After you have reaffirmed the things you have already told them, pray again.

7. If they do not receive: If a child does not receive the Holy Ghost and seems ready to stop praying, they should be complimented for praying and encouraged not to give up. They need to know that the Holy Ghost is not difficult to receive.

8. Let them be satisfied: If they have spoken in tongues and you are sure they have received the Holy Ghost, ask them, "Did you speak in tongues?" Let them say "yes." Then ask, "Did you receive the Holy Ghost?" It is good to let them confess their experience. Some children may be uncertain and may need some counsel about their experience. This is a delicate area. We should never tell a child he has received the Holy Ghost if he seems unsatisfied.

9. Celebrate: When a child receives the Holy Ghost, it is the most wonderful event in his life. It should be made a big deal! He should be recognized before the congregation and great celebration should take place.

10. Follow up: When a child receives the Holy Ghost, an adult who knows the child personally should be notified so that he or she can inform the child's parents and pastor. His salvation is not complete until he has been baptized in water in the name of Jesus. Giving him a Holy Ghost certificate is a lifetime document and memento of this great event.

EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|-----|-------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | There is currently another baby boom occurring in North America. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | Calvinists believe all children are lost. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | The term "age of accountability" cannot be found in the Bible. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | The Arminians believe that the entire human race has been affected by the sin of Adam and Eve and as a result every person is born with a sinful nature. |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | God does not hold us responsible for Adam's sin. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | Adam's sin brought a curse, both spiritually and physically, upon the entire human race. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | From the Bible, we can conclude with certainty that all children are saved. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | The dedication of our children does not have any biblical precedence. |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | The first Sabbath after the thirteenth birthday a Jewish boy celebrates his Bar Mitzvah. |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | Children are less sensitive to the Holy Spirit than adults. |

Fill in the Blank

11. Jesus set high standards for the protection of children when He said, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a _____ were hanged about his neck, and that he were _____ in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).
12. The first thing a person should do when praying with a child is to "get the _____."
13. When a child receives the Holy Ghost, time should be taken to _____ the occasion.
14. Paul was addressing the unequally yoked _____ in I Corinthians 7:12-14.
15. When Paul stated in Romans 7:9 "When the commandment came, sin revived," could have been referring to reaching the age of _____ where his understanding of spiritual things brought him into account by God.
16. Jesus made children a _____ for entering into the kingdom of God (Matthew 18:3).
17. The following are three people in the Old Testament who as children were sensitive to God's dealings _____, _____ and _____.
18. When the chief priests and scribes were critical about the children praising Jesus, He responded by saying "Out of the mouth of _____ and sucklings thou hast perfected _____" (Matthew 21:15-16).
19. Jesus said, "Suffer little _____, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).
20. Jesus said that some things are hidden from the wise and prudent, but that He has revealed them unto _____ (Matthew 11:25).

Multiple Choice:

21. When we ask the question “Are young children saved without the new birth experience?” we have to conclude

- (a) The Bible is not clear about the destiny of young children.
- (b) Young children and aborted fetuses are not affected by the Fall, therefore they are all saved.
- (c) Young children are not saved or lost before they reach the age of accountability.

Answer: _____

22. When praying with a child you should lay hands on them when

- (a) You first begin to pray with them.
- (b) When you believe they are ready to receive the Holy Ghost.
- (c) When you think they have an evil spirit.
- (d) When you are receiving a personal blessing.

Answer: _____

23. What are the essential things to keep in mind when praying for a child who is seeking the Holy Ghost?

- (a) Make sure they understand what they are doing, have repented, and that they worship and believe.
- (b) Make sure they have cried and prayed a good length of time.
- (c) Make sure someone with the anointing has laid hands on them.

Answer: _____

24. We are affected by the sin of Adam and Eve in what way?

- (a) We are not personally affected at all.
- (b) Some are condemned by God and others are not.
- (c) We are not personally responsible for their sin, but we inherited a fallen nature as a result.
- (d) We are all guilty of Adam and Eve’s sin in the eyes of God.

Answer: _____

25. Since God is the Savior and He is the One who determines who is saved and who is lost

- (a) God chooses who will be saved and lost before we are born.
- (b) Even though God knows all things and is the ultimate judge, He saves those who are obedient to His commandments and trust His redemptive work.
- (c) God saves those who overcome the flesh and achieve perfection.

Answer: _____

CHAPTER 6
TEACHING METHODS
Arlo and Jane Moehlenpah

“And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him” (Matthew 13:53-57).

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING.

The teacher must have clear aims as to what the students are to know, feel, and do as a result of the lesson. The message (lesson) though is more important than the method or the messenger. However, to communicate the message, the messenger uses methods such as words (lectures, stories, questions), visual aids (charts, chalkboard, overhead projector, puppets, objects), audio aids (tape recorder), audio-visual aids (computer projector), and deeds (example).

One should consider several factors in selecting teaching methods:

1. *The nature of the aim or goal.* If your goal is to develop a skill, then your teaching method must provide some way to practice. For example, if you desire for your students to learn to teach, you must give them an opportunity to teach, in either a laboratory session or an actual class.
2. *The maturity of the students.* The discussion methods are not usually profitable for preschoolers, nor are handcrafts usually acceptable for adults.
3. *The attitude of the pupils toward learning.* The project research method is good for eager students but is a flop for lazy, unmotivated students.
4. *Previous study in the same field.* Those students with much experience can contribute much if discussion is allowed.
5. *Nature of the material.* The story method is excellent if you wish to provide incidents from the lives of Bible characters. When using an unfamiliar Bible passage, you may prefer the lecture method.
6. *Physical equipment and facilities.* Do not assume an easel, adequate chalkboards and chalk, or an overhead projector will be available. If you plan to use projection equipment, you need a proper source of electricity, a screen or light-colored wall, and in some cases the ability to darken the room. If possible visit the teaching site days ahead.
7. *Time for teaching.* Some methods take longer than others. For example, it takes longer to write on a chalkboard than to use prepared charts or the overhead projector. The discussion method can also take a lot of time when you have a number of students who have much to contribute. If you have a lot of material and just a short period of time, you may wish to lecture and prepare a handout that the students can read at another time.
8. *Skill and qualifications of the teacher.* Every teacher is not skilled in every teaching method. A wise teacher uses methods he can employ with best results. A good storyteller should tell stories frequently,

while those talented in art may use charts and the chalkboard more often. If you cannot carry a tune, put less emphasis on music or have someone else help you get started with a melody. Nevertheless, you can develop skills in teaching methods, and your class will appreciate a variety of teaching methods. Good teachers will use several methods during one class.

LECTURE

The lecture is probably the most overworked teaching method. It does have the advantage that little equipment is needed and much material can be covered in a short period of time. However, students are often not involved and may not be paying attention.

STORYTELLING

Much of our teaching is based on the ability to tell a story.

The first component of a story is the *introduction*. The function of the introduction is to get started and arouse the interest and curiosity of the listeners. The introduction should provide a clue as to the problem the character faces. The introduction may tell when the story happened or where it happened. The introduction can be used to review a serial story and bring the students up to date as to what has happened so far in the story before continuing with the new chapter. The main thing to remember is not to retell the whole story again, but to put first-time visitors or absentees in possession of a few salient points so they too can enjoy the story. The teacher can start the story as soon as the students arrive; then when the listeners are interested and curious about the story, he can stop to take the attendance or offering, welcome visitors, or have the group sing. This gives the listeners a sample of the story, and if the teacher has chosen a good story, they will be interested to hear the rest of it.

The next part of a story is the *body*, which is the sequence of events containing action and suspense that move the story to a climax. Most of us are aware that Bible stories have action, but they also have moments of suspense, so remember to make the most of them.

The third part of the story is the *climax*, which is the high point of the story. At the climax, the purpose of the story is made known, the victory takes place, or the winner is revealed. Any action or words that tend to weaken the climax should be eliminated. This may mean editing a story that continues long after the thrilling, emotional climax.

The *conclusion* is the last part of the story. It is just as important to end well as to start well. When it is time to end the story, the teller should simply conclude. If the story has suggested problems, those problems should be solved or the way opened for the solution. The story characters should all be accounted for.

The *application* is the final part of a story. Stories told to a Sunday school class should have a spiritual application. A teacher may weave the application throughout the story. Ideally, the application will be as interesting as the story, and the teacher should show as much excitement about it as about the story itself. It is important to keep the application simple. Emphasize one or two main points.

Here are some helps for story preparation:

1. *The first rule is read it first.* If the Bible provides several accounts of the same story, it is helpful to read each account to obtain insight and details unique to each account. If you do not feel that you are imaginative and creative, you may find it helpful to read the story in other books and commentaries.
2. *You need to be enthusiastic about the story,* for it is as hard to interest someone else in a story you are not interested in as it is to get someone to eat a vegetable you do not like.
3. *It is wise to decide the character of the story.* Is it humorous? Does it deal primarily with courage or heroism? Is it a sad story or one that is told just for fun? It is important to remember that these features do not always mix well. Humor in a solemn, thought-provoking story does not mix.
4. *A story does not always have to be told the same way.* You can choose a different viewpoint each time you tell the story. One time you can tell it as a narrator and reveal everyone's feelings and thoughts. Another time you can present a one-man play and be the main character yourself, telling the story from that character's point of view. In this case, you might start the story like this: "My name is Mordecai. I am a Jew." Another way to add variety to the story is to tell it from the viewpoint of a bystander. This is more difficult in that the uninvolved character has limited knowledge. He is like a witness who can only tell his view of things. Or you may tell the story from the viewpoint of a signpost or other object. A limited number of Bible stories such as Balaam's donkey could be told from the animal's point of view.
5. *It helps to visualize the characters in your story.* The Bible may reveal something about their physical characteristics. Goliath was over nine feet tall. To help your listeners understand his size you can compare it with something in the room. The weight of the armor he carried also gives insight into his size.
6. *Give thought to the sound of their voices.* Voices can be loud, soft, low, high, worried, sweet, helpful, sloppy, mature, gravelly, or nasal. Peter probably had a loud voice because he was a fisherman.
7. *You can use your imagination to fill in probable details.* Consider the way your story character might react. For example, James and John were impetuous. They were filled with indignation and anger and ready to call down fire from heaven to devour the Samaritans when they apparently would not receive Jesus.
8. *You will probably need to edit a story that was written to be read.* A story often has to be edited to fit into the available time. Delete details that are not essential to understanding the point of the story. Read the remaining sections to see if they still work together. Usually you will need to add some transitional words such as "three weeks later," "meanwhile," or "he said." The edited version should make the point without the listeners feeling that you left something out.
9. *It is difficult to tell stories well without practice.* Tell the story aloud in order to become accustomed to your own voice. You can identify problem areas in your story as you practice. For those trouble spots, refer to your edited version or re-read the story. Most storytellers advise against memorizing every word, but when you practice, you will tend to use the same phrases at the same places in the story because they will seem to be the most natural.
10. *Your best stories will happen when you allow your own personality to show.* Some storytellers are very active and include a lot of dramatization while other storytellers are effective by depending mostly on words to convey the picture.

11. *The story will have a greater impact if you make eye contact with your listeners.* In a large group, you can make eye contact with a few and use them as a gauge to determine how your story is being received.
12. *It is important to use good grammar,* especially when quoting God.
13. *By imitating sounds (drip, drip as well as other more sophisticated sounds) you can add variety and interest to your story.* The same is true with repetitious phrases.
14. *Dialogue also adds interest, so let your characters do the talking.* Instead of saying, “David said he would fight the giant,” say, “And David said, ‘I’ll fight this giant myself.’” A little dialect can also add interest to a story.
15. *You do not have to rush through a story.* You can use pauses to emphasize what you are saying, to change scenes, or to show time changes.
16. *Gestures can be as subtle as a nod of the head, a warning frown, or a shrug of the shoulders.* They can also be more encompassing, such as sawing boards for the ark or flinging a stone from a sling. Unconscious gestures such as buttoning and unbuttoning a suit coat can be distracting, so make an effort to avoid them.
17. *A storyteller appeals to the emotions of the listeners* by using his or her own imagination and emotions.
18. *Avoid making miracles from the Bible story seem like magic;* instead, emphasize a person’s need and Jesus’ ability to meet it.
19. *When telling a story, be sure to indicate at some point whether it is a biblical account,* a historical fact, a tradition, or a might-have-been situation.
20. *Unless it is absolutely necessary for discipline, it is best not to interrupt a story.* Ideally, a helper should be available to take care of discipline problems while you are teaching.
21. *Explain unfamiliar words* such as priest, Levite, or Samaritan. It is important to study every time you retell a story.
22. *You might try telling the Bible story using modern terms.*

A story can make Christian attitudes and conduct desirable and reveal the understanding and insight of the characters. If you learn your stories well, your listeners will want to hear you tell and retell them. Storytelling is exciting and enjoyable. Join the fun!

VISUALS

Visuals are important because a student remembers what he both sees and hears longer than what he hears alone.

Objects: Of all visual methods of teaching in the Bible, the object method is used the most. For example Haggai likened investing in self and forsaking the house of God to putting wages into a bag with holes. Solomon compared the awful odor of flies in the ointment of the apothecary to the ruined reputation of a wise and honorable man because of folly. Solomon also asked us to consider ants, conies, locusts, and spiders and thereby be wise. To show His disciples who was greatest in the kingdom, Jesus set a little child in their midst. Jesus also used the “fowls of the air” and the “lilies of the field” to teach complete reliance on God for material needs.

Objects help students understand more clearly. Concepts of God, love, forgiveness, and other spiritual truths are often foreign to students. A reason to use objects is to transfer the student's understanding of what they know about the object to what they do not know regarding spiritual truths. Objects can be exciting, arouse curiosity, and help the student remember. If a teacher uses an object with sufficient emphasis, when a student sees that object thereafter, he will immediately associate with it the spiritual truth.

Principles for Using Objects While Teaching:

1. *In general, keep the object concealed until referring to it.* The object will gather little attention when used if it has been exposed all period.
2. *Show and explain the object first, and then explain the spiritual truth.* This is better than explaining the spiritual truth first and then using an object to illustrate it.
3. *Make certain that the object is clearly visible to all students.* If possible, use large objects and hold them high enough for everyone to see. Using a mustard seed to teach on faith may seem nearly impossible since the seed is so small, but it could be placed on an overhead projector and shown on a screen. For the proper effect, another object such as a penny should be placed alongside the mustard seed to give a proper perspective as to its size.
4. *Allow pupils to touch objects if possible.* If possible, collect enough mustard seeds for each pupil to have one to take home. Of course, if an object is expensive, fragile, dangerous, or messy, the students should not handle it.
5. *Be sure objects are compatible with the lesson.* Everything in the lesson, including the objects, must serve to accomplish the aim of the lesson.
6. *Use objects in conjunction with other methods such as questions and discussion.*
7. *Be sure the object lessons are clearly comprehended.* A good way of testing this is to allow pupils to explain the spiritual truths they have derived from the lesson.

Types of Object Lessons:

1. *Objects suggested in the Bible.* A good concordance can aid in finding scriptural references for many objects that teach truths. Some objects suggested in the Bible are too expensive or too large to bring to class, so a model will suffice. For example, a model of a ship could be used to illustrate how a small helm turns a great ship. James used this illustration when referring to the tongue.
2. *Environmental objects.* Often objects located within a teaching area such as a door, a foot, a hand, an eye, hair, coins, or keys can be used for a lesson. This will impart naturalness to the teaching presentation. Although most objects used in a lesson are planned in advance, by using an environmental object on the spur of the moment, a teacher can drive home a truth quite smoothly and efficiently.
3. *Special objects.* These are objects not mentioned in the Bible nor are usually found in a classroom. For example an electric mixer is useless unless it is connected to the source of power. Likewise a Christian is useless unless he is "plugged" into God with God's Spirit moving through him. A sanctified imagination combined with prayer will provide an unlimited supply of objects.

If Jesus and the prophets used objects to communicate spiritual truths, it behooves modern-day instructors to do likewise. Since a classroom environment will only provide a limited supply of objects, the teacher must allot time to search for instructional objects. The reward to an instructor who uses objects effectively will be an excited, enthusiastic classroom of students.

The greatest object a teacher can bring to class is his dedicated, consecrated life as an example for the students. In Acts 3:4, Peter and John said, "Look on us," while Paul exhorted, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (I Corinthians 11:1; see Philippians 3:17).

Flat Visuals:

God used flat visuals. He wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone. He made a tremendous impression on Belshazzar when He wrote some words on the wall. In the New Testament, Jesus wrote something on the ground that caused the accusers of the woman taken in adultery to leave. God instructed His people to use flat visuals when He commanded the Israelites to write His Word upon the posts of their houses and on their gates.

The most common flat visuals used in teaching are charts, chalkboard or white board, and the overhead projector. The following suggestions will help when using any of these methods:

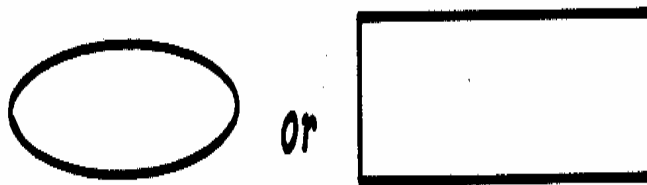
1. *Show the title of the presentation on the first visual.* Some students come in late and others occasionally daydream. Titles will help them to capture the thought.
2. *Make scale models of each visual on sheets of paper* before preparing the final copy.
3. *Prepare each visual as though it were a billboard,* using just one idea per sheet. Those who prepare billboards realize their message must be grasped at a glance and that the first impression is the last impression.
4. *Do not crowd or clutter the visual;* otherwise the audience will read ahead of your presentation.
5. *Prepare the final visual by drawing straight lines* using a T-square, a yardstick, or ruled pads.
6. *DO NOT CAPITALIZE ALL THE LETTERS.*
7. *Make the letters are large enough to be seen easily.* The size of the lettering will be governed by the size of the audience.
8. *Do not mix writing and printing* except for emphasis.
9. *DO NOT MiX UPpeR AnD LOWER CaSE letters arbitrarily.*
10. *Make sure that everyone can see.* Write on the top half of the chalkboard if the chalkboard is too low in relation to objects between the students and the chalkboard. With the overhead projector, keep the screen as high as possible and project the image at an angle rather than straight behind you. This will minimize the obstruction of view caused by your body.
11. *Use a pointer.* Avoid standing in front of the visual, thereby obstructing the view. Instead, point toward specific items with a pointer. A ruler or broomstick will suffice if nothing else is available. With an overhead projector, one can point out items with a pen or pencil by pointing directly on the transparency (the pen or pencil will show on the screen as a large black pointer).
12. *Check to see that equipment such as an easel, chalk, and erasers, or an overhead projector are in the room.*

13. *Check on glare.*
14. *Be accurate.* Look up the spelling of words and check your facts.
15. *Be concise.* A phrase is better than a sentence. A word is better than a phrase. A cartoon or picture is better than a word.
16. *Use emphasis and variety.*
 - a. CAPITALIZE
 - b. Underline
 - c. Use color. (Some colors do not show up clearly. Try them in advance.)
 - d.

LARGE

← ←

e.



17. *Prepare complicated illustrations beforehand.* With the chalkboard, these should be covered with paper.
18. *Allow adequate time for note taking.* It may help to outline the lesson.
19. *Remove unrelated material.* Otherwise, the unrelated material tends to be a distraction.
20. *Avoid talking to the visual.* A poor planner concentrates on the material to avoid making an error and thus turns his back to the audience.

COMPARISON OF CHALKBOARD, CHARTS, AND OVERHEAD PROJECTOR

CHALKBOARDS

ADVANTAGES

1. Easy to erase.
2. Easy to do progressive work.
3. Several students can use at same time.
4. The teacher's movement creates variety.
5. Good for note taking.
6. Convenient for spur of-the-moment illustrations.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Least portable.
2. Difficult to prepare work in advance.
3. Cannot store work for future use or review.
4. Messiest in that chalk dust can get on clothes.
5. Time-consuming during class.

CHARTS

ADVANTAGES

1. Most portable.
2. Least expensive for limited use.
3. Can be three-dimensional and have different textures by gluing items to chart.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Large charts are difficult to store.
2. Something is needed to support the charts.

OVERHEAD PROJECTOR

ADVANTAGES

1. Easiest to use revelation technique.
2. Easiest to store and save visuals.
3. Good for large audiences.
4. Can prepare visual from printed material.
5. Can face audience easier.
6. Can project outline of solid objects.
7. Handiest for exams when time does not permit other copying methods.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Needs electricity.
2. Bulbs can burn out.
3. Needs a screen or light-colored wall.

Often an idea can be presented equally well with a chart, chalkboard, or an overhead projector. Which method should you use? If all three will apply equally well, use the method you have not used lately. If you have been mainly using the overhead projector and the chalkboard, try some charts for variety. You may find some artistic talent among the members of your class that you can utilize for chart preparation, and the students may enjoy getting involved.

COMPUTER PRESENTATIONS

Notebook computers and projectors are slowly replacing transparencies and overhead projectors as the technology of choice. Except for the ability to project outlines of solid objects, it has all the advantages of the overhead projector. With the use of a scanner, almost anything printed can be put into a computer presentation. Also, clipart, pictures, and sounds are available on the Internet. A digital camera can be used to obtain photographs not easily available on the Internet. The lowering of prices has made this equipment more affordable. There are many advantages of a computerized presentation.

1. *It combines text, color, animation, graphics, and sound* to enhance your message visually. Clips from videos and DVD can also be shown.
2. *You can change your presentation the night before* your lesson. You would not be able to do this with overhead transparencies or charts.

3. *You can easily customize the presentation*, including the names of the people you are teaching.
4. *An electronic presentation suggests that you are on the cutting edge of technology*. While the teacher is still very important, in today's media-saturated world, a successful presentation requires more than just standing before an audience and giving a speech.

Recommended Equipment:

1. *Projector*. Normally you will use the projector that is available. You should check that your laptop is compatible with the projector. However, if you are involved in the selection of a projector, the main things you need in the projector are adequate brightness, resolution, and ease of setup. Also, a zoom lens enables you to change the size of the image to fit the size of the screen, and you must have at least a manual focus.
2. *Radio frequency wireless remote-control device*. This will enable you to move around while teaching instead of having to stand next to your computer.
3. *Laser pointers* are ideal for electronic presentations. Most remote-control devices will have a built-in laser pointer.
4. *Removable storage drive*. A backup can become imperative and mean the difference between success and disaster. A removable storage device such as a USB flash drive can be very beneficial.
5. *Powered speakers*. If your presentation contains audio and the room does not have a public address system to plug into, you will need to bring additional speakers along. The speakers in the projector are usually not loud enough for a large audience to hear.
6. *An extension cord*. You might have to position the projector quite a distance from the power source.
7. *An adapter*. Some old buildings might not have three-hole plugs.

Your presentation's success will depend on how much you prepare and practice. If you have not previously taught in the location, you should visit the speaking venue the night before to check the room for the location of the power source, the screen, the podium, and so on. Also, check to see that your lettering size and colors can be read easily by persons sitting in the back of the room. On the day of the presentation, you should arrive early and, if possible, run through your presentation one more time, checking the equipment, sight lines, room temperature, and lighting. Churches typically have challenging lighting conditions. The secret is to keep most of the room and window light off your screen. You may have to put some cardboard over the windows. Test all your equipment in advance of the presentation. Also have backup plans: If your projector dies or your computer crashes, what is plan B? (And did you practice it?)

AUDIO AIDS

One of the simplest and most effective audio aids is the tape recorder. Here are some ways to use a tape recorder in teaching.

1. *Enhance a story or puppet play with sound effects*.

You can add interest to a story or puppet play with recorded weather sounds. For rain you can try to record a real rainstorm or use rice dropped on a cookie sheet. For wind you can blow into the microphone, varying the volume of air. For fire simply crackle cellophane paper. Some tape recorders

allow you to record at a slow speed and play back at high speed. This can result in unusual voices that can be used in some situations.

2. *Set moods.* Recorded music can help set the right mood for your class and help students settle during the pre-class time.

3. *Play background music.* When telling a story, you can use background music with silence at the climax. Short, quick, high-pitched notes can draw the picture of fast action in your story, while booming or slow deep notes can be used to designate fear or authority. Use an instrumental recording to avoid distraction from your own words. Some impact of your presentation will be lost if your voice is

4. *Present voices of people who cannot be in class.* Many times children who attend Sunday school do not know the pastor of the church. If he records a short welcoming message, you can introduce him and make him a more familiar person to them. You could display a picture of the pastor during his recorded message. A missionary, a missionary child, or an authority on a subject that interests your class could also be shared in this way.

5. *Record interviews.* Elaborating on the previous idea, you can prepare pretended interviews with Bible characters. You can also use your tape recorder to stage a mock two-sided telephone conversation. The caller's voice can be recorded with pauses so that you can answer as if the conversation is taking place at the time the class hears it. A phone interview can also be used to call up a Bible character or to present the biblical answer to a friend's modern-day problem. It takes practice to get the pauses and interruptions in the right place, but the end result is well worth the effort. The most effective phone to use is a whole unit or a portable phone with an aerial.

6. *Play songs.* You can teach new and unfamiliar songs by a tape recorder.

7. *Practice storytelling techniques and other presentations.* Listen for obvious places to improve your voice tone, volume, speed, and to remove unplanned pauses. Check your choice of words, and determine if the words in assumed voices can be understood.

8. *Play foreign languages.* Use the tape recorder to share Bible verses in another language. Have your students follow in their Bibles at the same time. When sharing a message in another language, it is good to explain or translate it.

9. *Play the narration for a slide or filmstrip presentation.*

10. *Be a silent teacher for the pre-session children.* The children can take turns listening to a prerecorded story.

When using the tape recorder to share an entire story with the class you need to decide what you will do while the story is being shared. You may wish to sit down with the class and observe their reactions to the story. You might combine charts, an overhead projector, or use a chalkboard with your recording.

When using a tape recorder, you do not have to record all the material for the lesson. You can start and stop the tape often to make comments during the presentation.

Eye contact while using an audio aid is very important. You need to look at your listeners while you

are making your presentation to gauge their response to your lesson and to keep on top of discipline problems that might arise.

It is important to have the tape and volume cued up before you start your presentation. Limit the time that the tape recorder will be used, for you could lose the interest of your students if you depend entirely on a prerecorded teacher.

Be familiar with the controls of the tape recorder. Check your recording for problems before sharing it with the class. A loud hum can result when the volume is turned up too high, so you may be required to use a microphone to amplify your recording in order to avoid this problem.

If you tape over a previous recording, allow plenty of empty space so that your class will not be distracted by unrelated words or music in case you forget to stop the recording immediately.

Be responsible for bringing your own tape player to class, and write down what you need in the “Materials needed” section of your lesson plan.

The use of the tape recorder as an audio aid will not take the place of preparation and practice before class time. If you prepare well, you will make your presentation with confidence.

DRAMA

1. Play or Drama—Full-length plays or dramas with costumes can be used to portray Bible passages. A pantomime is a shorter dramatic presentation played without words or costumes and using only action or gestures.
2. Role Playing—Students participate in a would-be situation to teach things such as witnessing.
3. Hand Puppets—Puppetry provides an opportunity for people to loosen up and become creative. Shy people often open up behind stage when they are hidden from the audience. Puppets can be used to teach songs, friendliness, faith, Christian principles, character, morals, and many other topics.

ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS

One of the chief tools of good teachers is the ability to ask and answer questions. Jesus and the apostles asked and answered many questions. It is interesting to note that Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost consisted of answers to four questions. Anybody can ask questions, but it takes skill to ask good questions that will cause the students to respond and really learn.

Advantages of Questioning

1. Questions increase student interest. In addition to hearing the instructor, students like to hear the voices and opinions of others. Students also feel more involved in the class when they can ask and answer questions.
2. Questions stimulate student thinking. Students pay closer attention when they are held responsible for learning.
3. Questions gear instruction to the ability of the class. Asking questions is one way to check the

general level of ability in the class.

4. Questions provide an opportunity for the expression of attitudes. From the students' questions, the teacher can learn their interests and attitudes in order to motivate them.
5. Questions introduce student experiences. Many times, because of reading, travel, and personal experiences, students can contribute material to the class that otherwise would not be available.
6. Questions emphasize main points and provide drill. At the end of a class period, often an instructor can ask questions that summarize the high points of a lesson.
7. Questions test the effectiveness of the instruction. Questions can reveal what the students have understood. Some points may need to be taught in a different manner so the students will understand.
8. Questions direct thought. Jesus often used a series of questions to direct a conversation. For example, in Luke 11:11-13 He asked if a father would give a stone to a son who asked for bread, or a serpent instead of fish, or a scorpion instead of an egg. After asking these three questions, He asked another: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"
9. Questions drive home a truth. In reply to the question "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus told the story about the Good Samaritan. Afterward He drove home the truth by asking, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" After receiving the obvious answer He said, "Go, and do thou likewise." (See Luke 10:29-37.)

Characteristics of Good Questions:

1. *Good questions have a specific purpose.* Questions are used to arouse interest and attention, stimulate thought, provide opportunity for expression, test understanding, obtain opinions, apply truth, and strengthen faith.
2. *They are brief.* The question should not be so long that the student does not remember the question after it is asked.
3. *They are understood by students.* Questions should be phrased in the vocabulary of the students. Those who know the answer should be able to answer the question.
4. *They emphasize one point.* Unless a progressive series of questions is used to direct thought, the teacher should avoid asking more than one question at once. Otherwise it may not be clear as to which question the answer applies.
5. *They require a definite answer.* Good questions do not allow students to bluff.
6. *They discourage guessing.* Questions should require an answer based on knowledge rather than guesses. In general, the teacher should avoid asking oral questions that merely require yes or no or true or false as answers.
7. *They arouse curiosity.* A good question will sometimes so motivate a student that he will research the answer by further study.

Method of Asking Questions:

There is a definite method to use in asking questions. Some teachers obtain no class response because they do not adhere to the following steps:

1. *Ask the question.* Ask it to the whole class before designating a student to answer. Each student will then be motivated to think, because anyone may be called on to answer.
2. *Pause.* Allow the pupils sufficient time to formulate an answer. There is nothing wrong with a period of silent thinking. We are to love the Lord with all our mind as well as soul, body, and strength.
3. *Call on the student.* Sometimes students will acknowledge that they wish to answer a question by raising their hands. At other times, the teacher should call on students in an unpredictable way. Otherwise, if he goes alphabetically down a list or down a row, for example, most of the students will relax and not think about the question.
4. *Recognize the student's answer.* Comment positively when a student replies correctly. Do not repeat the answer. If it was too soft to be heard by the class, have him repeat it. Rarely, if ever, rebuke a student for a wrong answer. Even if he answers incorrectly, you should appreciate that he tried. You may then call on another student.

Suggestions for Asking Questions:

The following suggestions will help in using the question-and-answer method of teaching.

1. *Do not read your questions.* Even though good teachers prepare their questions in advance they ask them while looking at the students.
2. *Ask questions in a natural, conversational tone of voice.* Questions should be a part of the instruction and not an abrupt, separate segment of the class or a threat to the students.
3. *Avoid questions that reveal the answer.* Otherwise the students do not have to know the material to answer the question.
4. *When a pupil says he cannot answer a question, assume he is telling the truth.* Do not further embarrass him by saying, "Surely, Johnny, you know the answer," or by trying to give him clues. If he is still unable to answer the question, it will further alienate him by causing the rest of the class to chuckle at him.
5. *Occasionally ask questions to those who are sleepy or inattentive.*
6. *Beware of asking too many questions.* The class should not sound like a spelling bee all of the time.
7. *Avoid foolish and unlearned questions that gender strife.* Some discernment is necessary to recognize this situation. Two people may ask the same question, one sincerely wanting to know the answer and the other wanting to stir up strife. If this is the case, you may offer to discuss the question after class but not during class.
8. *Do not allow one person to answer all the questions.* Some Bible studies have been ruined when a teacher allowed one student to monopolize the class. One technique that can be used in this situation is to acknowledge the student by saying, "Tom knows, now who else can answer the question?" In this manner Tom's ego is satisfied, but the rest of the class becomes involved.

9. *Do not be afraid of questions you cannot answer.* Most people realize that no teacher knows the answer to every question. There is nothing demeaning about admitting you do not know something. Perhaps you could ask if anyone else in the class can answer the question, or else you could say you will try to research the answer by the next class period. If you consider that the student is sincerely interested and able to find out the answer on his own, suggest possible sources for the answer. If the question is of general interest have him report the answer at the next class period.

A teacher should encourage questions, for questions are an indication of an inquisitive mind. Questions indicate interest and readiness for instruction. Good questions enliven classes.

Plan to ask and answer questions; you will be pleased with the results.

LEADING A DISCUSSION

The recommended group size for a discussion is from five to twenty. The chairs should be in a circle or around a table so each face is visible to all in the group. It is difficult to discuss something when some people are facing the backs of others, as is the case in most classroom arrangements.

To be a teaching method, the discussion must be a directed but free conversation on some well-selected, though somewhat controversial, question or problem. A solution to this question or problem must be sincerely sought. The discussion can be aided by writing on a chart or other visual the pertinent information or ideas as they are given. The problem or question should affect the lives of the members in some way; otherwise the members will probably lose interest and not participate. For the discussion method to be effective, the members of the group must have a spirit of unity but also some honest differences.

The discussion method provides for the sharing of experiences, knowledge, opinions, convictions, ideals, and dedication rather than just facts and figures. It tends to create interest and eliminate the stiffness of a formal class setting. Members learn to be tolerant of the viewpoints of others. A discussion facilitates clear-cut reasoning since the views presented will be often challenged in the climate of the discussion. The discussion provides a natural connection between the lesson and the practical needs of the pupils in their daily living. The discussion method encourages cooperative and group thinking and attempts to arrive at a solution to the problem which should be better than what any one member could have come up with by himself. The solution may need to be tried out before being accepted and sometimes compromises may be required.

The success or failure of the discussion method depends on the teacher. While he must keep the discussion on the subject, he cannot dominate the discussion. He should know the material well and should plan for the discussion well in advance. By skillful questions, he should guide the group to the goal. He will ask questions such as "What do you mean by. . . ?" and "Why?" to get further clarification and purpose. He will ask "What can be done?" to attempt to obtain a solution and "How?" to arrive at a plan of action. He will see that the facts given are accurate and authentic. He will put questions to the group as a whole; and when he is asked questions, he will usually throw them back to the group. He will not allow a few members to monopolize the discussion. At appropriate times the teacher will summarize the ideas and opinions so that the group will feel that it is making progress. He will point out unanswered questions and attempt to lead the class to a plan of

action.

Panel Discussion:

A panel discussion occurs when two or more persons discuss a topic, question, or problem in front of the class. Usually the panel members are experts in their fields. The teacher or someone else serves as the moderator, asking prepared questions and guiding the discussion.

Panel Discussion Rules:

1. Only the questions which have been turned in will be used. The students are to write out questions and give them to the moderator, preferably a day before. This enables the moderator to select and perhaps rephrase the best questions. Often the panelists are allowed to see the questions the night before the panel discussion and ponder possible answers.
2. Questions will be asked of all panelists.
3. Panelists will volunteer to respond.
4. All panelists do not need to respond to each question.
5. Responses will be limited to two minutes.
6. The moderator does not answer the questions.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

Perhaps the greatest method of teaching is teaching by example. Whether we are conscious of it or not, much that we learn is by imitation. This is especially true with small children, which is why it is so important for them to have proper role models. The teacher needs to be one of those good examples.

Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher of all times. He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. He not only taught with words, but He lived what He taught. In addition to lessons on forgiveness, He set the example by forgiving those who crucified Him.

Actions speak louder than words. The teacher's example will either contradict or underscore what he is trying to teach. If a teacher tells his pupils about the dangers of smoking and yet smokes himself, his example contradicts his teaching. If he teaches about honesty yet lies, his example contradicts his teaching. Even when a teacher is not aware of it, his students are carefully observing all aspects of his life.

If we are to be effective teachers, not only our words must be right but also our attitudes, actions, appearance, and affections. Years after the students have forgotten the facts we have presented, they will remember our attitudes and our lives.

STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING METHODS

Most teaching methods are teacher-centered teaching methods. For example, in lectures, storytelling, and use of visual aids, the teacher does the talking, explaining, or sharing. By contrast, student-centered teaching methods involve the students to a greater degree. Many student-centered methods are discussed in the reference stated below. These methods often result in more interest and retention of learning because the students are doing as well as hearing and seeing. They also add variety to a class.

EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|-----|-------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | The teaching method is more important than the message of the lesson. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | The aim or goal of a lesson needs to be considered when selecting teaching methods. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | One can assume that the equipment you need such as an easel will be available at the teaching site. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | The lecture method is one of the best methods of teaching and that is why it is used so often. |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | One advantage of storytelling is that you do not have to practice telling familiar stories. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | The middle of the story (also called the body) is a series of actions and events leading to the climax. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | Stop your story if you notice that a student is not paying attention. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | When a story is well written it is not necessary to show enthusiasm when you tell it. |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | If you memorize every word of a story you will have no trouble telling the story. |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | When teaching with objects it is a good idea to have the object sitting on a table when the students enter the class in order to arouse curiosity. |
| 11. | _____ | _____ | One should teach the spiritual truth first and then use the object as an example of this truth. |
| 12. | _____ | _____ | One should use a lot of objects in one lesson in order to keep the presentation exciting. |
| 13. | _____ | _____ | The object method is the most used visual teaching method in the Bible. |
| 14. | _____ | _____ | The best source of object lessons is object lesson books. |
| 15. | _____ | _____ | DVD is slowly replacing overhead projectors as the technology of choice for teaching. |
| 16. | _____ | _____ | The use of a tape recorder as an audio aid can take the place of preparation and practice before class time. |
| 17. | _____ | _____ | It is important for the teacher to have eye contact with the class when using a tape recorder as an audio aid. |
| 18. | _____ | _____ | The teacher should assign someone else to bring the tape recorder to class when using an audio aid. |
| 19. | _____ | _____ | A tape recorder can be used to present voices of people who cannot be present in the class. |
| 20. | _____ | _____ | One should call on a student before asking a question in order for him to have time to think of an answer. |
| 21. | _____ | _____ | When a student says he cannot answer a question, assume that his statement is correct. |
| 22. | _____ | _____ | When a student asks a question that you cannot answer, it is all right to ask him to find out the answer as a research project. |
| 23. | _____ | _____ | An ideal setup for the discussion method is two rows of chairs facing each other. |

24. _____ To be an effective teaching method the recommended size for a discussion group is ten to twenty-five.
25. _____ Student-centered teaching methods involve students to a greater degree than teacher-centered teaching methods.

CHAPTER 7

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

David Reynolds

“Let all things be done decently and in order” (I Corinthians 14:40).

Never has there been a time when you, Christian teacher, are needed more. Children are coming to us with hurts and anger caused by abuse and neglect which have nothing to do with you or your Sunday school class. It has everything to do with stress in the home and the dismantling of family values.

The dismantling of our family values is caused primarily by the liberal influence of Hollywood facilitated by the media and the music of our day. The media glorifies and promotes everything contrary to the principles taught by Jesus Christ. Hollywood promotes abuse and sex outside of marriage. It promotes families without fathers. It promotes disrespect for all authority.

Many of the children coming to us are accustomed to being entertained by a medium highly financed, colorful, and moving very quickly. They are used to turning their back, talking or leaving the room when they cease to be interested.

Children are the casualties of our modern society. They have been given things but without love and without individual attention. Many live in poverty and broken homes within the borders of the most affluent society in the history of mankind. They have been physically, sexually, and verbally abused. They have been shuttled from day care to day care; the majority live in a home with no father. The majority of their mothers are working out of the home and some are chemically addicted. In many homes, it is the grandmother that is keeping a semblance of order and sanity.

As the family goes—so goes the schools. The public schools are going through changes which make them no longer a refuge for hurting youth. The schools of today have become large, impersonal institutions. We need loving Sunday schools and caring Christian day schools manned by dedicated teachers called to the ministry of teaching.

“A Sunday school teacher is a person whose job is to welcome a lot of live wires and keep them grounded.”—
source unknown

Those of us who have experienced the metamorphosis in public education have seen a dramatic rise in discipline problems. We have also experienced an increase of truancy and a decrease in dedication to study. It is interesting that this decline started in the early 1960s at the exact time when the courts threw the Bible and prayer out of our schools.

Top Discipline Problems Experienced by Teachers	
1940	2005
1. Talking out of turn	1. Drug abuse
2. Chewing gum	2. Alcohol abuse
3. Making noise	3. Pregnancy
4. Running in the halls	4. Suicide
5. Cutting in line	5. Rape
6. Littering	6. Robbery and assault

Thank God, most of the discipline problems we as Christian teachers are facing in Sunday school are still of the 1940s variety. The problems in our society, however, are real and are increasingly reaching our Sunday schools and churches every week. You can expect more problems in your classes. It increasingly will be a battle to teach without interruptions. You must be called by God, prayed up, and armed with the best training in classroom management you can get.

Let us first look to Jesus as our model of good teaching and let the Holy Spirit talk to us about our reasons for teaching as well as our attitude toward young people. Many times we as teachers create our own discipline problems. If we change our attitude and our methods, we will go a long way toward solving many of the frustrations of teaching.

Jesus came to teach hurting people—people with problems. Many teachers see problem students; Jesus only saw people with problems. The way you see them is the way you handle them.

Much of the advice given in this chapter are excerpts taken from the book *Classroom Discipline . . . with a Christlike Touch* written by the author on this very subject. If you have an interest or need more help with classroom management, you are encouraged to read the entire book which is written especially for you.

GOOD CLASSROOM MANAGERS

Teach with Authority

Jesus taught with authority. Jesus had a presence about him which commanded immediate attention and respect. In the teaching field, it is referred to as the “Locus of Control.” This is a calm assurance that is projected to others—which assures the students that the teacher is in charge and that the teacher does have a message that is important. The students need to be assured the teacher is quite capable of teaching the lesson and it is to their best interest to listen.

A teacher who teaches with authority will have few discipline problems. Students will take advantage of a teacher who is unsure of himself, his subject, and his authority.

In order to teach with authority:

1. The teacher must know his or her subject.
2. The teacher must believe in what he or she is teaching, and that it is important to the students.
3. The teacher must believe he or she is sent to teach.
4. The teacher must live what he or she is teaching.
5. The teacher must thoroughly prepare the lesson.
6. The teacher must have a well-defined objective in mind for the lesson.

LOVE YOUR STUDENTS

The vast majority of the discipline problems will cease if the children know you love them—really love them. Jesus loved His students. “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost” (Luke 15:4-6).

A good teacher loves his students and proves it by going to where they are and doing whatever it takes in order to reach them. Apostle Paul said, “I am ready to come to you. . . . I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved” (II Corinthians 12:14-15).

Students who know they are really loved will accept discipline as long as they also feel the consequences are fair. Teachers who show love will have fewer discipline infractions than the teacher who is not bonded to them.

Research has shown that if one hurting child with problems can find just one adult, for just one year, who will reach out to them to touch their lives—just someone who will show them they are special; this may be all it takes to save that one. I am talking about a special touch for one lonely young person.

“You Never Know Who You Have in Your Basket.”—Sermon by Jerry Jones

Only God knows the potential of one who is presently “in your basket.” The men who let Saul of Tarsus over the wall did not know what a force for God was in their basket. The mother of Moses, although loving this little baby and feeling like so many parents before her that this child was special, yet she never realized she had God’s leader in her basket. The show salesman who brought T. L. Moody to Christ never knew the potential of this young man, who later brought two continents closer to God.

USE DISCIPLINE NOT PUNISHMENT

One cannot talk about classroom management today without addressing the subject of promoting good discipline. To “discipline” comes from a Latin word meaning “to disciple.” I think we would be wise to keep this in mind at all times. Discipline is not “punishment.” To discipline is to encourage another to follow—not forced—not pushed. You drive cattle, but you lead sheep. The method of Jesus in recruiting disciples is a model for all teachers. His disciples followed because they were convinced Jesus “knew the way.”

Balance Love and Restraints:

As teachers for the correct way “to disciple” children, it would be well if we choose the balanced approach in all that we do. A teacher should not go to the extreme of pampering children nor to the other extreme of harshness. Love alone will not do the job. Harshness will only bring rebellion. Good discipline is a balancing act—with “control” on one side and “love” on the other.

The Permissive Teacher:

The permissive teacher loves his students so much and tries to show it by giving and going constantly for the students. He does not want to see them unhappy in any way. A caring teacher will not allow a child to remove a seatbelt in a moving car—and call it love. God expects us not only to love our children but to set controls and limits on them. God judged Eli severely for not “restraining” his sons. “I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not” (I Samuel 3:13).

The result of a permissive teacher is a classroom in chaos—where no learning is taking place. The teacher has lost control and blames the students. He feels helpless so he constantly sends the behavioral problems to the Sunday school superintendent or to the pastor.

The Neglectful Teacher:

The “neglectful teacher” is really a “non-teacher.” He does not want to be involved in discipline, so he abdicates his responsibility. The result is a hurt and turned-off child.

In this classroom, rules are not communicated and rules are not enforced. Agape love is never evident or shown to one another. In this classroom, the youth feels that no one cares enough to discipline—no one cares enough to love. You would think teenagers would like to be given a free rein—not so. Children and teenagers want our guidance. They know it comes from a love for them. Students do not want to be ignored. They will get attention somehow. Many of these youth get into trouble as a cry for attention. Negative attention is better than no attention at all.

The Authoritarian Teacher:

“Fathers, provoke (embitter NIV) not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged” (Colossians 3:21). “But bring them up in the nurture (love) and admonition (restraints) of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

An authoritarian approach results in a hostile child and an angry student. Usually youth will accept very stern discipline if it is balanced with love; but if there is no love, it will produce anger. Anger over time will produce hostility and discouragement. In the authoritarian’s classroom, there is an overdependence on physical force and yelling in order to ensure compliance.

Verbal abuse can be just as cutting and long lasting as physical abuse. Statements such as “Why are you here?” “You’re stupid!” or “Act your age!” have no place in a Christian classroom. An authoritarian teacher is a destructive teacher.

The Responsible Teacher:

A teacher who balances love with restraints is a “responsible teacher.” A teacher who gives a child support and control will have disciplined youth. Love alone will not do the job. Avoid the extremes on both sides of the scale.

A responsible teacher is an assertive teacher. An assertive teacher says what he means and carries through with discipline at all times. Rules and consequences are communicated. Reasons are given but not debated. The responsible teacher is firm with dignity and respect. A responsible teacher never rescues the child from the consequences of life. Responsible teachers use their voice sparingly in discipline. They save their voice for teaching. They talk “to” their children, not “at” them.

In a teacher-student relationship, the teacher is friendly and approachable but always the teacher. Remember—the youth needs a teacher, not another “buddy.”

BE PROACTIVE . . . NOT REACTIVE:

Good and poor classroom managers do the same things . . . after the infraction happens.”—Allen H. Harris

Good and poor classroom managers do basically the same things after an infraction happens. The difference is that the good classroom manager goes to great lengths to keep problems from happening. They are “proactive” rather than “reactive” in their philosophy and discipline methods. A proactive teacher will spend hours in planning in order to save minutes handling misbehavior after it happens.

Allen H. Harris compares good and poor classroom managers and sees the difference between the two rooted in two different philosophies of classroom management.

Reactive Classroom Management Style:

Reactive Classroom Management Style

Focus:

On discipline procedures.

On intervention when infractions occur.

Emphasis:

On consequences.

On punishment for misbehavior.

On rewards for good behavior.

The focus of a reactive teacher is on discipline procedures. They believe that if they have enough rules for good discipline that students will follow them. They are discouraged when it does not happen. They then focus on “infractions” and the procedures to follow when misbehavior happens—and they do happen.

Proactive Classroom Management Style:

Effective Proactive Classroom Management Style:

Focus:

- On training children to work together in groups.
- To understand the norms of the classroom.

Emphasis:

- Direct instruction of classroom and school procedures.
- Modeling group work skills.
- Defining expectations and goals.
- A neat and orderly classroom.

The focus of a proactive teacher is to prevent misbehavior and confusion from happening. This teacher spends his time in planning. Classroom procedures and student expectations are planned in precise detail. This teacher believes in training young people to work together as a team. The norms and expectations of the classroom are actively taught. Not only are they taught but they also are modeled and practiced—just like a lesson in mathematics. These expectations are then monitored daily to make sure they are followed. A proactive, Christian teacher defines expectations and goals for the classroom.

Effective Proactive Classroom Managers

1. With-it-ness
2. Smoothness
3. Momentum
4. Group alerting techniques
5. Promotes individual accountability —*Jacob Kounin and Carolyn Evertson*

Jacob Kounin and Carolyn Evertson suggest the following distinct characteristics are exhibited by the proactive teacher and can be observed in their classroom.

Let us further define those characteristics and skills that can be learned and used to make a teacher a better classroom manager.

a. *With-it-ness:* This is the ability to communicate the awareness of a student's behavior without stopping instruction. The teacher keeps all students in view and moves in quickly when problems arise. Have you heard about certain teachers who have "eyes in the back of their head"—who have great peripheral vision? These are the teachers. Even when helping a single student, they are aware of what is going on with the rest of the class.

b. *Smoothness:* An effective proactive teacher develops the ability to move in and out of activities smoothly without losing time. Not only are instruction and activities planned but also the transition times.

Remember, there is no such thing as a natural vacuum. If you, the teacher, do not have something planned for every second—the students will fill it—probably with chaos.

c. *Momentum:* An effective proactive teacher develops the ability to sustain a good lesson pace. Going too fast will leave some students behind, and going too slow will bore the academically gifted. This teacher is like an automatic transmission to a car—it allows for no sudden starts or abrupt stops.

d. *Group Alerting Techniques:* An effective proactive teacher learns to interject "learning tone" into the classroom. Learning tone, like muscle tone, is achieved by never allowing opposing muscles to relax. There is always a little stress, which keeps the muscles alert.

A good teacher never gives the students a clue which student will be next to respond and recite. They accomplish this by never using a set pattern (such as alphabetical list), which flags students as to when they are to recite.

A good teacher uses techniques such as placing each child's name on a flashcard, then shuffling often before pulling out a card. The student never knows when he will be called and thus must be ready. It is kind of like the Second Coming—you never know the day nor the hour.

e. *Promotes Individual Accountability:* An effective proactive teacher is constantly on the move. You see him on his feet circulating around the room. This sends the message, "In my classroom, everyone will be involved—there are no escapes."

Generally speaking, the students sitting at the back of the room have the least desire to be involved in the class. The proactive teacher moves in quickly on any student who seems to be having a problem attending or is "off task." She answers flags and raised hands immediately.

A good classroom manager glances often at individual work and encourages students with positive comments. When the students are "off task," the teacher asks if he can be of help and then tutors individually. He is quick to suggest ways for the student to be successful.

An effective teacher dignifies all answers. This means that he salvages the parts of a student's answer which are correct and directs the student to a more perfect understanding. A proactive teacher makes comments such as, "That was good thinking, but have you looked at it this way?" The student might not be entirely correct but the teacher can encourage their effort. If a student is constantly told he is wrong, he will soon not try—which will certainly lead to misbehavior.

THE PHYSICAL CLASSROOM – Set Up for Good Management

The proactive Classroom

1. Classroom set up for monitoring all students.
2. Classroom is neat and orderly.
3. The teacher is on duty.
4. Students always supervised.
5. Classroom arranged to facilitate learning.
6. Rules and expectations are posted.

Classroom Discipline. . . with a Christ-like Touch, p. 129

1. Classroom set up for monitoring students:

A wise teacher sets up his classroom so he can view every student at all times. He also sets up the classroom to allow for free teacher movement around all students. The best configuration is a circle without tables. Tables and desks are psychological barriers between students and teacher. If the students need a surface to write on, tables are better than desks for they allow dialogue between students (as long as the discussion is on the lesson).

2. Classroom is neat and orderly:

Nothing promotes chaos more than a classroom that looks confusing with desks out of order or paper and books scattered around. Nothing, however, promotes good discipline more than a classroom that is orderly and clean. An orderly classroom is usually the result of a teacher who thinks in an orderly fashion. Structure and order in a classroom promote security within the students.

It is wise to have a place designated for all equipment, paper, pencils, and toys. The teacher must model the plan and then teach the students to always put materials back in the designated place before they leave.

3. Teacher is on duty early:

All teachers must be on duty and in their classroom before the students arrive. It is much easier to greet students at the door and direct them into constructive activities than it is to try to come into a classroom where students are running and chasing each other, and then try to calm them down. Activities must be planned for the time before class begins, for it creates the atmosphere for the entire session. If the day starts out without order, very likely the rest of the day will continue in that vein.

4. Students always supervised:

Not only is this a wise policy, which will promote good discipline, but this is also required by law. I remember a teacher who just stepped out of the room to talk to another teacher. One of his students pushed another causing him to slip and hit his mouth on the edge of the desk and knocked out a number of teeth. This teacher left himself and the school wide open for a lawsuit for negligence. The same thing might have still

happened with the teacher on duty, but the parents would not have a case. It would have been deemed an accident.

5. Classroom arrangement should facilitate learning:

Student's desks should never face the doorway which is used for student and adult traffic. The classroom should be set up so that the teaching station is the focal point of the room.

Bulletin boards with wild colors and distracting pictures should be eliminated. Warm pastel colors should always be used in a classroom. If it is possible, a carpet or rug should be placed on the floors to minimize any noise during class activities.

6. Rules should be posted. Routines should be taught:

After teaching and modeling expectations, it is wise to post them in a prominent place for students and parents to see. When a rule is flagrantly violated, it offers a chance to reinforce that rule. The teacher should never single out one child for ridicule and embarrassment.

Bells and intercom interruptions:

A proactive teacher will regulate interruptions by volunteers and parents. She will schedule and limit lavatory and water breaks taken by students. Teachers and parents must communicate as to any medical reason a child must go during instruction. Bells, attendance taking, and intercom messages should be eliminated or at least limited.

Bulletin boards neat and subdued:

Bulletin boards and pictures with wild colors and distracting pictures should be eliminated. Items on the board should direct the student to the objective and focus of the lesson. Items that are not on the subject will just bring confusion.

Color of walls and furnishings:

Warm pastel colors should always be used in a classroom. Research has shown that bright and wild colors set children off who have emotional and behavioral problems.

Carpets supplied:

If it is possible, a carpet or rug should be placed on the floor in order to minimize noise during class activities. Carpets give students a cozy feeling and are warmer for children when they are asked to sit on the floor for stories or oral group activity.

Research and experience has taught me there are other good teaching practices that if used not only promote learning but also promote good student behavior. I will just mention them here for those who would like to do further study in the area of good instruction. Good instructional techniques all promote good classroom management.

Proactive Teaching Practices

1. Teacher directed
2. Student directed
3. Individualized instruction
4. Guided practice
5. Teaching to an objective
6. Teaching to a teaching plan

HANDLING MINOR DISRUPTION

Every teacher, even master teachers, have their instruction interrupted by misbehavior at times. If you are working with children, you are working with potential discipline problems. It comes with the territory. Children will naturally try out the boundaries of their environment.

The good teacher does not get discouraged when a child misbehaves, but rather, learns the skills to redirect this behavior. They use the least amount of time, effort, and force possible in order to keep instruction going. The successful teacher soon learns that it is not the severity of the punishment, but rather firm consistency that keeps order in the classroom.

The successful teacher learns to attack the problem, which is the behavior, and not demean the character of the child. The teacher never accepts or rationalizes negative behavior, yet at the same time the teacher will attempt to salvage the dignity of the child. He uses only enough force to change the behavior in order to allow instruction and learning to continue.

I will share with you a continuum of actions suggested by the book *Classroom Discipline . . . with a Christ-like Touch* to use when discipline problems arise. It starts with little things that can be done and then increases in severity and force until order is back in the classroom.

1. Ignore the infraction for the time being. Most misbehavior is an attempt to gain attention. Negative attention is better than no attention at all. Sometimes drawing attention to the violation causes more disruption to instruction than ignoring it. It also takes the satisfaction away from the perpetrator.

2. Give positive reinforcement to those who are following the rules. I have seen this work many times. Give “general praise” such as, “I like the way most of you are behaving—give yourself a pat on the back.” Praise a student sitting close to the student you are targeting. Praise someone he or she really likes. Usually the student misbehaving will straighten right up.

3. Discipline with dignity. Increase the pressure for conformity until the misbehavior ceases. Do not stop instruction unless the child is receiving more attention from the other students than you are. Suggested steps are:

- a. Narrow the space between you and the student as you continue to teach. Do not draw more attention to the infraction. By you “invading their space,” they will usually become uncomfortable and stop.
- b. Touch them. Place your hand on their shoulder as you continue to teach.

- c. Offer to help them. “I see, John, that you are having problems with this assignment. How can I help you?”
- d. Use the student’s name. “*Denise, I am going to ask Joe a question. See if you agree with his answer.*”
- e. Give the student a job. The student then can get attention for doing something positive rather than negative.
- f. Send the student an agreed upon signal. This will get across the message that the student is approaching the limit—that consequences are about to be enforced. Look him directly in the eye, or give him the “peace” signal. If that does not work walk up to the board, without a word and place the child’s name there with a check (later, if the child takes the hint you can erase the check—then the name).
- g. Make an appointment for a private conversation after class. All of the above can be done, almost as second nature without interrupting instruction.

4. If misbehavior continues, stop instruction and handle the problem.

Do this only after the student and his or her behavior are the focus of the class. Use the following—increasing in severity until the behavior changes.

- a. Remind all the children of the rules. A rule ceases to be a rule—unless it is enforced.
- b. Remind the problem student of the rule and the consequences.
- c. Remove the student to a neutral “Time-out spot.”
- d. As soon as possible, talk to the parents, requesting their help and support. Get your message to the parents before the child arrives home. Request their help on a mutual problem; do not attack the child or the parent.
- e. Remove the child from the classroom to a predetermined spot where there is supervision, preferably to another classroom. Teachers can help each other.

5. For open defiance, send to the Sunday school superintendent. This is your last resort, so save this option for very serious discipline problems such as willful disobedience and open defiance to your authority. You should rarely get “open defiance” unless you back the child into a “corner” with no way out to save face before his peers.

- Remember to discipline the behavior, but save the child.
- Never box a child into a corner—always provide the child a way out with dignity.
- Enforce the consequences every time!

BUILDING A TEAM

You are not alone in this ministry to children and youth. “We are workers together” with Jesus Christ and with others in the Sunday school department. You are part of a team. You may be the only beginner teacher now, but by faith you will grow. Although recruitment is primarily a function of the pastor and the Sunday

school superintendent, you need always to be looking for those you can recommend and train to share your burden and your ministry to children. It is not only a great help to you, the teacher, but also you are giving others a place to minister.

I have known of teachers who teach on Sunday morning and then teach in “Kid’s Club” on Wednesday night. This is not wise, for you need to be in Bible study yourself at least once a week. Building a team allows a teacher to not only have help in the management of the classroom but allows every teacher to be relieved at times.

When there is more than one person working together, it calls for cooperation skills. You must always include the others on your team in all of the planning. Each member coming to the class must know what part he or she is to play in the program, or there will be confusion and hard feelings. Each member must feel he has real input into the planning and that his ideas are worthy. In building a team, it is important to give recognition often and to celebrate every victory together.

Cooperation must have real communication. Communication takes time. It is important that the team members are talking and planning together. If there are only two teachers in a class, a phone conference each week may be enough. The class period must be highly planned and tasks must be assigned. If you are in charge of the Sunday school ministry, it is important to have monthly staff meetings. Remember, you must also communicate with your superintendent. The superintendent must communicate regularly with the pastor.

Never forget the parents; they must be part of your team. Talk to them often about their child. Never tell them what they are to do but rather ask them what you can do together for the salvation of their child. If there has been a problem with their child be sure you talk to them before they go home from church. Tell your story before the child gives their version.

CONCLUSION

A good classroom manager learns to be proactive. The goal should be to keep discipline problems from ever happening. It is best to put more energy into planning and organization than in disciplining. A good classroom manager maintains a neat and orderly classroom. Routines are established and followed.

A master loves his students and will not allow a student to stop his instruction and the learning of others. The teacher loves them so much that he refuses to allow them to walk down a self-destructive path.

The final advice to you as a Christian teacher is:

There are big problems and there are small problems . . . know the difference! Do not plow a small field with a big tractor!—*Classroom Discipline . . . with a Christ-like Touch*, p. 133

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EXAM

True or False

T F

1. _____ It is best to stop and handle even the minor discipline problem at the very beginning of misbehavior.
2. _____ Research has shown that classrooms should be painted in bright and cheery colors.
3. _____ In spite of the pressures the schools are facing today, the discipline problems are surprisingly similar to those faced before World War II.
4. _____ A teacher's voice is the most effective tool in classroom discipline.
5. _____ In order to keep to a schedule in Sunday school, you must have a system of bells.
6. _____ Carpets in the classroom are not recommended for they are hard to keep clean.
7. _____ One can learn to use effective management skills so as to keep teaching.
8. _____ Verbal abuse is not as emotionally damaging as physical abuse.

Fill in the blank

9. Children are coming to Sunday school hurt and damaged chiefly because of the _____ of the _____.
 10. The moral fiber of our society is being destroyed mainly by the influence of _____ and the _____ of our day.
 11. Jesus came to teach hurting people. Jesus did not see _____ but rather He saw _____.
 12. Like Jesus, a teacher who teaches with _____ will have few discipline problems.
 13. Research has shown that if one _____ child can find one caring _____ for just _____ year, this may be enough to cause them to become a caring and productive citizen.
 14. "To discipline" comes from the Latin word meaning "to _____."
 15. When handling misbehavior in the classroom, it is important to use _____ not _____.
 16. A responsible teacher will balance _____ with _____.
 17. Good and poor classroom managers do basically the same things _____.
 18. A "proactive teacher" spends the majority of his time _____ so that problems will be few.
- planning
break up, family
after the infraction
media, music
problem people, people with problems
love, restraints (consequences)
disciple
authority

hurting, teacher, one
discipline, punishment

Multiple Choice

19. Students usually will accept discipline if they _____.
a. Know they are loved
b. The consequences are fair
c. All of the above
d. None of the above
20. Many classroom problems are caused by _____.
a. Lack of lesson preparation
b. Lack of lesson objective
c. Lack of knowledge of the subject matter
d. All of the above
21. A “proactive teacher” spends time training children in _____.
a. Working together in groups
b. The expectations of the classroom
c. All of the above
d. None of the above
22. A “proactive” classroom teacher _____.
a. Is aware of all that is happening in the classroom
b. Has the ability to move smoothly from one activity to another
c. Promotes individual accountability
d. All of the above
23. When a misbehavior occurs, the good classroom teacher will progressively _____.
a. Narrow the space
b. Touch the student on the shoulder
c. Use student’s name in the teaching lesson
d. All of the above
24. When a problem finally has to be addressed, the first thing to try is _____.
a. Make an appointment after class
b. Send immediately to the Sunday school superintendent
c. Talk to the class about the reality of hell fire
d. All of the above
25. In the building of a team it is important _____.
a. To communicate often with each member

- b. To set up well-defined responsibilities
- c. To assign tasks that are important and worthy of effort
- d. All of the above

CHAPTER 8

LESSON PREPARATION

Joni Owens

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” II Timothy 2:15).

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it. . .” (Luke 14:28).

“Fail to plan, and you are planning to fail.”

Fifteen faces look expectantly at you. Thirty hands are surprisingly folded in laps; thirty feet are resting quietly on the floor. You have their undivided attention—for about that long. What are you going to do to keep it? One puppet skit that requires three puppets. Fifteen paper crowns from Burger King. Gummy worms mixed in chocolate pudding. One problem: these are needed for tomorrow’s lesson, and it is eleven P.M. on Saturday night.

Work eight hours. Drive through rush-hour traffic. Then cook supper, wash a load of laundry, feed the dog, and wash the dishes. Help with homework. Go to church. Put kids to bed. Wash hair. Pay bills. Fall into bed. Repeat for the next four days. On Saturday help with the church yard sale, visit Grandma in the nursing home, shop for groceries, wash kids’ hair, do three more loads of laundry, iron, put kids into bed, and collapse. Study the lesson? Pray? *When?*

Do any—or all—of these scenarios sound uncomfortably familiar? Do not worry; you are not alone. These unfortunately typical scenes are played out all too often by Sunday school teachers around the world. Dedicated teachers are not plentiful. Often it is due to lack of training; sometimes it is due to lack of commitment. Do you want to be better? Before you read another word, decide if you want to change.

What makes a good Sunday school teacher? God’s Spirit is a must; we cannot *assume* His direction and calling to teach, but rather they must *consume* us. Commitment to His Word—living it and sharing it—is the central focus of life. Add to this a love for souls, a desire to make a difference, and a realization that this is not a “pie in the sky” job. If you have these desires, the makings of a good teacher are underway.

A great Sunday school teacher does not read to her class from her manual. She does not scrounge for supplies while the children wiggle expectantly. Chaos does not exist in her classroom, her supply closet, her file cabinet, or her mind. However, she

- establishes good study habits;
- plans each lesson carefully;
- communicates to and with her students;
- possesses an impressive library of help books; and
- understands her curriculum.

Do you want to be a great teacher? Read on.

It was the end of a hectic week. I wearily pulled out my teacher manual to glance over my lesson. David and Goliath. Great! A no-brainer, especially since I had written that lesson for the editor. I put the book away and collapsed into bed.

Imagine my chagrin when I arrived the next morning to discover I had “studied” the wrong lesson!

STUDY HABITS OF A TEACHER

The “Saturday night special” is a trap—an easy one to fall into. The children are young and they will never know that you omitted half the material. Just let them have some extra playtime. The problem is this: *you* know, *Jesus* knows—and the children leave *without* knowing all that they could and should have learned. All because you failed to establish good study habits.

The first key to good study habits is time management. No matter how busy life gets, you will always find (take) time to do what you want to do. If you want to catch that sale at the mall, you will drop something from your schedule. When Sara needs help with her science project, you will forget the dishes to help her. (Okay, that last one was a stretch: who in his right mind wants to help on a science project? And how hard is it to forget the dishes?)

The point is, a teacher must learn to manage his or her schedule to allow study time—real study, not this glancing-over-the-lesson stuff. In the book, *Help! I Teach Youth Sunday School*,⁷¹ a daily plan is offered for teacher preparation. Commit twenty minutes each day to study. A revised version follows:

Sunday: Read the entire lesson just to plant it in your mind. Think about what this lesson needs to say to your class. Pray for your class and their families.

Monday: Read the Bible passage for the lesson (try several translations). Read the Bible background, teacher insight, and memory work. Pray for the central points to be made clear to you.

Tuesday: Read the activities and decide which ones you will use. Check the “before-class preparation” and supply lists. Make your “to-do” and “to-buy” lists. Pray for your class needs, fellow teachers, and church leaders.

Wednesday: Study the Bible lesson. Highlight key points. Write notes on index cards to insert in your Bible. (In class, a great teacher “reads” from her Bible, not from her manual.) Pray for guidance and an effective delivery.

Thursday: Study the debriefing and wrap-up segments. Highlight key points; these are what the student must know when he leaves class. Pray for the Spirit to reach your students.

Friday: Prepare your sample activities. Gather supplies. Cut, copy, stencil, fold, and organize the students’ materials. Pray for a good attitude of cooperation to prevail in your class.

Saturday: Read the entire lesson again, focusing on highlighted segments. Pray for God’s truth to be

⁷¹ Brian Foreman, Bo Prosser, & David Woody, *Help! I Teach Youth Sunday School* (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2004).

opened to your students, as well as to yourself.

Sunday afternoon: Review your Sunday morning. Grade your effectiveness. Glance at next week's lesson to see if something special is needed early in the week. Pray a prayer of thanks.

Does this sound overwhelming? Actually, it is the easiest method of weekly lesson preparation, for it takes only twenty minutes per day—less time than it takes to prepare dinner, grocery shop, or do laundry. Set this attainable goal and see what a difference it makes in your teaching.

THE PRAYER FACTOR

Scripture requires it!

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Joshua 1:8).

Prayer is communication with God. Unless we communicate with Him, how shall we know how to communicate with our students?

“Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say” (Exodus 4:12).

It is a two-sided opportunity: you meditate (talk to God), and He in turn will be your mouth and teach you what to say. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1). When we pray, we are asking Him how to teach our students.

“I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also” (I Corinthians 14:15).

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit . . . that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel” (Ephesians 6:18-19).

The study habits of a great teacher absolutely must include prayer; how else shall we make disciples of our students?

“The goal of Christians today is to make disciples—men and women, boys and girls who love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. The test of the teacher is the life of the student. The test is not the preparation or the level of knowledge of the teacher or even the quality of the lesson. The test is the life. The bottom line is not creating great lessons; it is creating great lives.” —Josh Hunt, “Philosophy Behind Good Question Sunday School Lessons,” www.joshhunt.com/teaching.html (accessed June 1, 2005).

Since the goal of a great teacher is to make good disciples, we must follow the best example given: Jesus Christ. In Luke 11:1, we read that as Jesus prayed His disciples asked to be taught how to pray. Jesus Himself was seeking in prayer what He might give to His followers. This request to be taught was not a coincidence, not a fluke. If we truly want to make disciples, we must be like Jesus in prayer so that our

disciples-to-be may ask to be taught, and we can follow through with sound teaching.

What will your students experience from your lesson? Will they learn character, grow in wisdom, attain faith, become prayer warriors, and have life-changing experiences? Regardless of age, every teacher's goal, every week, should be to see his or her students leave the classroom different from the way they arrived. Your lesson preparation (study, prayer, gathering supplies, practice, study, and more prayer) will meet that goal. Do not shortchange yourself (you need prayer to handle classroom situations as well as to teach a great lesson) or your students (they need prayer if they are going to be disciples). There is no such thing as too much prayer.

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Psalm 105:4).

Be disciplined in your prayer life. As you pray, ask God for understanding—not only of His Word, but also of His children that have been placed in your care. He has chosen you to impact their lives. What can you say that will influence them today? Will you see a light bulb turn on in their minds?

Did your prayers include their salvation, their homes, their families, and their schools? Are you prepared to spiritually reach out to them, or is your motive for teaching a duty—because no one else will do it? Remember that your students will remember *you* long after they have heard your lesson. Be certain your heart is right with God before you enter the classroom. The children must see Christ in you. Pray *for* them, *about* them, and then *with* them.

<p>"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." —Henry Adams</p>

LESSON PLANNING

Actual lesson planning is a breeze when one uses Apostolic curriculum such as that offered by Word Aflame Publications. Every aspect of the time spent in your class is covered: the welcome, offering, attendance, activities, prayer and worship, Bible memorization, Bible lesson, debriefing (review), extra activities to fill the time, wrap up, and goodbye. More material is offered than what a teacher will use. This allows him or her to pick and choose what will be most effective in reaching his or her special children.

Another advantage of Apostolic curriculum is that no false doctrine issues arise. The material is biblically sound, doctrinally correct, innovative, and resourceful. A teacher will never need to spend hours researching and correcting unsound statements.

What, then, must a teacher do each week to plan her lesson? Lesson planning actually begins before each new quarter, with a staff meeting to determine job assignments, followed by planning and decorating of the classroom. At this meeting, briefly review each lesson to see if any special items are required for crafts or lessons (e.g., oatmeal boxes, biblical costumes), and begin gathering these. Make copies of scripts that require puppets or actors, and distribute them as needed. Discuss ideas with teachers of other levels, getting their insight on particular lessons, décor ideas, and students. Variations of theme decors are often used in other levels, so other teachers may have some items that you can use, saving you hours of preparation.

Follow the staff meeting with a more thorough review of the quarter. Once you know the basic lessons

and Bible points (a one-line objective that is the life application of the lesson), let them incubate in your mind over the upcoming weeks. As you plan each week's lesson, having these thoughts in the back of your mind will actually help you deliver that week's Bible point more effectively, knowing that further opportunities await you to impart more Bible truths. Too often we try to cram too much into a lesson, subconsciously thinking that we may never have opportunity to reach these children again. The end result is that we teach too little by trying to teach too much.

THE WEEK'S LESSON

Whether you are using ready-made curriculum or writing your own, some basic rules should be followed.

Determine your motive: Do you teach because (a) of guilt; (b) no one else will do it; or (c) for the Lord? Don't expect thanks; your rewards usually come later!

"I touch the future. I teach." —Christa McAuliffe

Be Flexible: Prepare well, but do not be rigid in your planning. Have a back-up activity since your class may be full of added students. Listening to books on tape as an activity simply will not work. A child may feel a strong need to pray. This will interrupt your plans for the rest of the day—great! Let it! But be sure to include plans for the rest of the children who do not feel inclined to pray (your team teacher should be prepared to take over, either with the prayer or with the remaining students). And do not feel pressured to complete the entire lesson. Select what is best suited for your particular students first, and then fit in what you can.

Plan your words: If your lesson includes sensitive material, plan your wording. Sensitive subjects are not limited to premarital sex, dating, or other teen-related subjects. Even kindergartners face sensitive issues such as death. Know your students as well as your subject.

Speak their language: A beginner's vocabulary is growing, but he or she still needs kid-friendly terms for abstract terms such as sanctification, idolatry, and countenance. Do not fall into the trap of grown-up language for children.

Do not assume: Never assume that your students know the basics. Even "church kids" do not know it all, and this may be after years of Sunday school classes and church services. Asking may not help, because many will be reluctant to admit what they do not know. Be prepared to *briefly* explain terms in your lesson without losing focus on your main goal.

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five- and six-year-olds. After explaining the commandment to "honor" thy father and thy mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?" Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."

Teach people, not curriculum: While the curriculum/lesson is vital, never lose sight of your students—their needs, understanding, and relevancy of the topic to them.

In an article for *Children's Ministry* magazine, Lisa Wheeler⁷² shared the realization that she wanted her students to take home more than a cute craft, memory verse, and good morals (rules). Like her, we must determine that our ultimate goal is to make sure that each student knows the love of Christ. If the child must wrap up into one sentence his favorite Bible story, will it be rules, such as, “be nice, be good,” or will it be, “Jesus gave His life for me”? Lisa determined to put her lessons through a test:

1. Is it true to the Scripture passage, revealing God?
2. Does it highlight relationship over rules?
3. Are forgiveness and consequences accurately portrayed?

Tweak your material: Tweaking ready-made material is not a crime—it is often a necessity! Sometimes the material provided simply does not work for your students; what can you do? Here is a list of possible ideas to consider; remember to remain focused on the lesson aim/Bible point, and then have fun.

Activity Bible Verses: add actions, repeat, sing, mime, or draw.

Brainstorming: present a question or situation, and let the students suggest solutions or ideas.

Chalk/Dry Erase Boards: use for chalk talks, lists, brainstorming, display contest points, or let the students draw.

Dioramas: miniature drawings or sculptures (Play-Doh or craft supplies) representing a story, usually in a box.

Examples: explain concepts (e.g., a child will understand one-tenth better when shown ten pennies, and then placing one in a tithe envelope).

Flannel Board: great visual aid; children love to play with flannel graph figures as they retell a story.

Games: teach sportsmanship, but should relate to the lesson.

Guest Speakers: pastor, Sunday school director, policeman, or nurse.

Maps: small children do not understand distances, but they enjoy following paths on a map. Recreate the map in the classroom, letting the children “travel” the distance.

Music: vital worship tool; sing a cappella or with CD or cassettes. Let the children make up songs.

Projectors (overhead or computer): visual aids, Scripture reading, songs, quizzes, and shadow-puppets.

Puppets: professionals not required, but do learn basic rules of puppetry. Children prefer puppets whose mouths actually move in time to their speech.

Role Playing: scripts with assigned characters, or simply let the children mime as you teach (a few whispered instructions in a child's ear will not detract from the lesson).

Work Sheets: provided in curriculum, or can be pulled from coloring books, activity books, word

⁷² Lisa Wheeler, “Rules, Rules, Rules!” *Children's Ministry* magazine (November-December 2004). Online: www.cmmag.com.

search books, and so forth.

A great teacher will know the importance of his or her lesson, not just as a time-filler on Sunday mornings, also as an opportunity to reach souls for Christ. While age-appropriate activities are necessary, always be sure that they convey a truth (your lesson aim) and do not simply meet the “cute” requirement. Games are great learning tools, but will they teach more than good sportsmanship? Activities, games, even memory work must ultimately instill in the children that lesson’s Bible aim; they are a means to an end—to know Christ.

“If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn’t lead anywhere.” —Anonymous

TEACHER/STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Preparing for your lesson each week involves more than prayer and reading. You must study your students. What do they know about God and His Word? What are their backgrounds? What is their home life? Do you know their learning styles? Are they church kids or bus kids? Do they have learning disabilities? Who of them have obeyed, or started obeying, the plan of salvation?

The way in which you tell your lesson each week must be directly related to the children’s specific needs. Consider the following example.

Today’s lesson is about David and Goliath. Your visual aids include a slingshot, a giant inflatable sword, and a cassette player. With great drama, you play both roles, using voice changes to represent each character, and ending with a playing of the song “Only a Boy Named David.” Crystal sits with her head bowed low throughout the story. Nathan keeps poking the child next to him. Ami continually stares off into space. Shawn falls out of his chair. Three children out of seven sit quietly, but unresponsively. How much of the story did any of them absorb?

Did you know that Crystal’s dad is unemployed? The family is considering moving, and she is sad about leaving her friends. Nathan comes from an abusive home. He thinks hitting is the way to get attention. Ami has ADD. Without direct involvement, she loses focus after a matter of seconds and goes into her daydreaming. Shawn’s every attempt to reach out for love at home is rebuffed, so he resorts to clown behavior just to get noticed. How can your lesson reach each of these students? Will your visual aids make a difference? Does your tone of voice, your interaction with the children, your love for Christ and His children impress them?

“Let me urge today’s teachers never to underestimate the worth of a child, especially the one that comes from a broken home. Locked inside that child is a soul worth more than all the possessions of the world. Someday that boy or girl may remember you the way I recall my teacher, Mrs. Baldwin, and thank you for the contribution you made to his or her life.”

—Mrs. Shirley Dobson, Chairman, National Day of Prayer Task Force;
Cofounder, Focus on the Family

Knowing your students is so much more than knowing their names, addresses, phone numbers, and birthdays. You may well be their only contact with Christ. You are the living Bible that they can read. Unless you know them (their desires, fears, battles, frustrations, loves, abilities, homes, families, you are simply talking to bodies in chairs. Your Sunday school lesson is so much more than an animated recitation of a story. It is a golden opportunity to change a life. You may help a hurting child find faith in a God who will fight his battles, conquer his giants, and take him to a better life and ultimately heaven.

FRIEND OR FOE

What you know or think you know about your students determines your approach to them. You can be a child's friend—offering love, support, and belief in his or her abilities. Or you can be his or her foe, always “picking” on him, belittling him, and generally getting frustrated with him. The child who constantly begs for attention through bad behavior will usually receive constant correction in class, and likely be labeled as a problem child. In every staff meeting, the other teachers will hear of his latest exploits. This will build a strong resentment against this child, leading his future teachers to wonder what they can do to keep from getting him promoted to their class. No one takes the time to discover why he behaves as he does. Does he come from an abusive home? Is he learning impaired? Do his parents ignore him? Has he been told he is an accident, unwanted and unloved? Any one or more of these circumstances may cause the child to reach out for attention in the only way he knows, even though he knows that bad behavior results in punishment discipline. He has not been shown that love goes further than anger, that cooperation brings accomplishment, and that obedience brings reward. Unless you, the great teacher, look beyond the behavior to the child, he will not learn any of this from you, no matter how exciting your lesson.

“You teach a little by what you say. You teach the most by what you are.”—Dr. Henrietta Mears, Christian Educator/Founder of Gospel Light

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

One of the reasons that Word Aflame curriculum offers so many ideas in each lesson is not to confuse you, but to let you decide which activities will reach your various students. Some students learn best by being involved; let them mime David and Goliath's roles. Another child loves music; let her sing the song. The artistic child loves to create; he can create the Play-Doh rocks for David's sling. These are simple solutions to help you handle problems before they arise.

Not every child will be reached by every Bible story. It is not possible to use every learning style (see chapter ten) in every lesson. Nor can you make crafts every week while never using games or music. Some weeks will be more beneficial to some children while others may not get as much as you would like. However,

every student every week can and should feel loved and valued. This is accomplished through your communication skills. And you can only effectively communicate when you study. No speech is given without much thought, preparation, research, and soul-searching. Does the speech say what you want, express your beliefs and communicate the message you are responsible for sharing? The same must go into your lesson. Not only must the child feel God's love, see His mercy, understand His compassion, but he must also know that His love, mercy, and compassion do not belong only to his teacher but is also for him.

The thesaurus offers these alternate words for communication: connection, contact, conversation, expression, making known, talking, and telling. A great teacher's utmost desire is to help make the *connection* between her students and Christ; to observe that first *contact* with His power; and to initiate *conversations* between the created and the Creator. *Expressions* of worship and adoration are first taught in your class. You have the opportunity to *make known* His ultimate love and sacrifice. *Talking* to a child on his level about his interests, needs, and desires shows love and concern he or she may never find elsewhere. *Telling* a Bible story that will change a life—that is true communication.

God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY

Every great teacher will build a personal library of books, magazines, music, messages, and Web sites. These do not need to be expensive; often the local library will carry what you need. Keep a file listing of your favorite books; then when the need arises, you will know just what book to check out and avoid the research time at the library.

Treat the Internet the same; teacher Web sites are in abundance and can easily be bookmarked into a folder. Do not limit yourself to religious Web sites. Make use of secular Web sites also; they offer fantastic craft ideas, training articles, evaluation formats, and training courses that can be adapted for Sunday school.

Collect music CDs or cassettes. Music builds atmosphere. Have some playing as the children enter the classroom. With a library of music selections, selecting songs that are appropriate to the day's lesson will be a breeze.

Subscribe to magazines. Again, do not limit yourself to Christian magazines. Many children's and teen magazines will offer craft ideas, child characteristics and statistics, and pertinent current events.

Include books that the children can use, such as a children's Bible atlas and dictionary, as well as books with maps, charts, and Bible facts.

Share your library with other teachers, and they will hopefully do the same. Establish a library at your church for all to share. Subscribe to online forums. Keep an open mind to all you see and hear. Almost any idea can be adapted for Sunday school.

Following is a list of suggested books, magazines, and Web sites.

- www.joshhunt.com/teaching.html June 1, 2005
- www.upci.org/WAP/discussions an Idea Exchange forum from Word Aflame Publications, UPCI

- www.sundayschooldivision.org Sunday School Division, UPCI
- www.upci.org UPCI home site; links to Foreign and Home Mission Divisions
- lds.about.com/library/weekly/2003/aa_teacher_training_s.htm
- www.joshhunt.com/teaching.html Author; offers tips, newsletter and articles
- <http://www.nncc.org/> National Network for Child Care (child development, characteristics, etc.)
- ebibleteacher.com Computer resources for the Bible teacher
- www.expage.com/page/craftlinks1 Craft links for Sunday school teachers
- www.happyheartmusic.com/childrensmagazines.htm Best-selling children's magazines
- www.family.org *Focus on the Family*; offers articles as well as magazines and Web sites for children, teens, and parents
- www.cmmag.com *Children's Ministry* magazine
- www.highlights.com *Highlights* magazine; dual site: for kids, for teachers
- Almost Every Answer for Practically Any Teacher! Edited by Dr. Bruce Wilkinson
- *Teaching to Change Lives: Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive* by Howard Hendricks
- *Learning Styles: Reaching Everyone God Gave You to Teach* by Marlene D. Lefever
- *Disciple-Making Teachers* by Josh Hunt with Dr. Larry Mays
- *If You Were There Biblical Times* by Antony Mason
- *Holman Book of Biblical Charts, Maps, and Reconstructions* Broadman and Holman Publishers
- *The Awesome Book of Bible Facts* by Sandy Silverthorne
- *The Student Bible Dictionary* Barbour Publishing, Inc.
- *Lamps, Scrolls, and Goatskin Bottles* by Julia B. Hans

USING CURRICULUM

As has already been mentioned, Word Aflame Publications offers Apostolic curriculum for every age level, including nursery. Visit their Web site for more detailed information: www.upci.org/wap.

Adult curriculum is available every quarter, offering a teacher's manual, student handbook (small and large-print versions), take-home paper, lesson leaves, transparency and visual packets, and a Power Point presentation. Every fall a hardbound version offering four quarters of the teacher's manual (fall, winter, spring, summer) is available, as well as a CD version of the same.

The Elective Series offers a series of individual, undated textbooks of thirteen lessons, each book covering a specific topic. These can be used in small groups; specialized classes such as seniors, singles, or young marrieds; as Bible studies; or for individual study. Titles include *Bible Doctrines*, *The Christian Parent*, *Financial Planning*, *Life's Choices*, and others.

Youth material is divided into three-year segments:

Teen grades 7-9

Youth grades 9-12

The material is fresh, up-to-date, and covers today's issues that will allow teens to explore their inner thoughts and turmoils, distinguish and decide upon right and wrong choices, and discover and know a God who loves them for who they are. A teacher's manual, student handbook, student take-home paper, and teacher's resource packet are available each quarter.

The children's curriculum is divided into two-year segments:

Toddler	ages 2-3 (nursery ideas provided)
Kindergarten	age 4 through kindergarten
Beginner	grades 1-2
Primary	grades 3-4
Preteen	grades 5-6

Each level includes theme décor ideas. A special memory passage is included. (In addition to weekly verses, this passage is worked on throughout the quarter to expand the child's hidden Word; these include the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, fruit of the Spirit.) Also included are the following: before and after Bible lesson activities; song and worship suggestions; contests (offering, attendance, memory); and a Bible lesson designed to reach the children through various teaching aids, including involvement.

An old Chinese proverb states: a child retains 10 percent of what he hears; 20 percent of what he sees; and 90 percent of what he hears, sees, and does.

A student paper/handbook is designed to help the students understand the lesson aim through the completion of puzzles, quizzes, coloring, or writing. Each student needs his own book, although the books themselves are not distributed to the students (pages are torn out each week and distributed).

The teacher's resource packet is an invaluable aid to the teacher, for it contains décor props (posters, maps, cutouts, and so forth), as well as weekly visual aids to accompany the lessons. Much of the material may be laminated and saved for future uses. Create a file in the Sunday school office that will hold these pieces, allowing other teachers (especially children's church staff) to have access to ready-developed material.

Within each lesson in the teacher's manual is a bit of Bible background about the day's Bible text. While this material is not necessary to the actual lesson, it is helpful bytes of information that give the teacher a broader understanding of Bible times and relationships.

A teacher's insight segment offers greater understanding of the age/grade level. These informative paragraphs may discuss special needs children, dysfunctional children/situations, characteristics, or resource ideas.

Every week a Bible point or lesson aim is included; the entire lesson is built around this point. The goal is to send the children home knowing the material to apply to their own lives. Samples of Bible points include: God is in control; God keeps His promises; God heals us; and God is our best friend.

Generally, each lesson will offer one to three activities to do in a pre-session setting (before the

lesson). Although the Bible lesson has not yet been taught, these activities remain true to the Bible point. They may be a craft, drama, game, discussion, puzzle, or reading. These will introduce the point, sometimes in a subtle way, while guiding the children toward a greater understanding of God and His Word. Select one of these activities. Even with extended sessions (two-hour Sunday schools), every activity cannot be done. You know your students; decide which activity will meet the most learning styles and be prepared to give attention to those whose styles are not being met (see chapter ten). Gather supplies, make a sample (if it is a craft), and remember—these are children’s activities, not adults’, so they will not be perfect, but they must be fun.

After prayer, worship, and Bible memory time, the lesson is told. The key to a successful Bible lesson is student involvement. Attention spans vary from child to child, age to age, but very few people including adults do well with lectures. Involve the children in your lesson. Michael can be a tree with extended arms; Kari can be a maid serving snacks; troublemaker Travis can be Goliath. The manual provides these ideas, but every idea can be expanded, modified, and improved to meet your needs. Use the visual aids provided in the resource packet, adding props as mentioned in the manual, or adapt your own.

After each lesson is a debriefing, or review time, that allows the teacher to ensure that the students understood and can apply the lesson to their own lives. Yes, it was fun to see David kill Goliath, but what does that mean to the child? Does he understand that it was David’s faith in God that allowed him to kill the giant that was bothering his family and countrymen? Never let the child leave the classroom without knowing what God’s Word can do for him.

If you have an extended session, or extra time after the Bible lesson, several more activities are offered. These include snacks (often story-related), the student paper activity, and optional activities similar to those offered in pre-session. Again, decide what will work best in your classroom with your students.

Many Sunday schools do not have the resources to do all that is suggested in the curriculum. They share rooms with their Christian school, preventing them from doing any theme decorating. Facilities are rented each week, so all supplies must be brought in and set up each week. There are not enough classrooms or teachers, or perhaps there are too few students to warrant the suggested class breakdown. With brainstorming, ingenuity, love, and patience, these obstacles can be overcome.

Make portable walls that can be brought into the room, changing the atmosphere from a schoolroom to the designated theme that quarter. Purchase clear plastic tubs for storing all supplies, use easels and portable devices for mounting, and change your rented facility into a solid Sunday school room. Divide your students into the closest possible age groups; then select a middle-of-the-road level to teach. For example, if you have one four-year-old, three first-graders, one second-grader, and two third-graders, use the Beginner material designed for grades one and two. Some activities may be a little tough for the younger, a little boring for the older, but all can be adapted to meet the needs. When two years of the material have been used, you will be promoting children into the next class, and hopefully growing so that no repetition is needed. If, however, a child remains in a class beyond the two years, consider using another level and adapting it to meet the general needs of those in your class. Teach Beginner the full two-year cycle. At that time, the third-graders have moved out, the first- and second-graders may still be in your class or perhaps moved on. The kindergartner is now in

second grade, and more young ones have been added. You may decide to use the Kindergarten material for one or two years, again depending on how the children move up.

Another option for children is to use children's church material, such as *kids POWER hour* curriculum. This material is designed for ages 4-11, is undated (can be used any quarter), is theme-based (such as western or Bible days), is adaptable, and can stand alone (each book is its own entity, and is not dependent on a previous book being taught). Several manuals offer a resource kit that includes a manual, music CD, and décor and prop items. All manuals offer pages of reproducible art, allowing the teacher to create her décor and teaching aids with the help of overhead projectors, which helps to keep the cost to a minimum.

The time saved in using ready-made, Apostolic, biblically correct curriculum is invaluable. Even so, as detailed as the curriculum is, nothing will take the place of study time, prayer, lesson planning, communication, and resources. To be a great teacher, follow the Master's examples. His teaching techniques cannot be bettered.

EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|----|-------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | Once the class is dismissed, the teacher can breathe easy; her job is done for another week. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | When we pray, we are like Christ's disciples, asking Jesus how to teach our students. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | We often teach too little by trying to teach too much. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | Any curriculum on the market is okay to use, since it all saves the teacher from writing his/ her own. |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | Labeling a child as "quiet," "daydreamer," or "troublemaker" is necessary knowledge for his future teachers. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | Unless you, the teacher, look beyond the behavior to the child, he will not learn of Christ's love, no matter how exciting the lesson. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | Your teacher's manual is the only tool you will ever need to be a great Sunday school teacher. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | All curricula are designed to work for your class and should be followed to the letter, thereby saving you much time. |

Fill In the Blank

9. Uncomfortable Sunday school scenarios often result from a lack of _____ and _____.
10. A great Sunday school teacher will not _____ from her _____.
11. The first key to good study habits is _____ management.
12. A good study plan offered in this chapter is to commit _____ minutes each day to study.
13. Name the one thing that must be done daily to make a great Sunday school teacher:_____.
14. The goal of a Christian teacher is to make _____.
15. Every week, every student should leave the classroom _____ from the way they arrived.
16. God has chosen you to _____ your students' lives.
17. Pray _____ your students, _____ them, and _____ them.
18. List three basic rules necessary to planning the week's lesson.
19. Name three abstract terms that should be converted to kid-friendly terms.
20. Name three alternate words for *communication*._____,_____,_____.
21. Name only three things a great teacher's library might include _____, _____, _____.
22. As detailed as curriculum is, nothing will ever take the place of _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, and _____.

23. You may be your child's only contact with _____; you are the living _____ that they can read.

Multiple Choices

24. Lesson planning begins with: _____
- a. Sunday school staff meeting
 - b. Decorating the room
 - c. Making job assignments for the quarter
 - d. All of the above
25. The most important information on each child includes:
- a. School grades
 - b. Best friend's name
 - c. Home life
 - d. Race

CHAPTER 9

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

Galen Thompson

“And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd”
(Numbers 27:15-17).

The ability to progressively lead others is the key to success as a teacher. Effective learning is the result of good leadership. Therefore, leadership principles become the bedrock for effective teaching. In fact, teaching and leading cannot be separated; they are two sides of the same coin. Christ, the greatest leader of all, was also the greatest teacher of all. Leaders teach and teachers lead. Not all leaders are great teachers. However, all great teachers are leaders. Christ magnified the importance of teaching with His life and commission to us: two-thirds of the great commission is fulfilled through teaching. The command is to teach and baptize; “teach” is mentioned twice. (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul established teaching as an important and vital part of the leadership team within Christ’s body when he said, “And He Himself gave some to be . . . teachers, for the equipping of the saints [of all ages] for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12, NKJV).

Again, to lead is to teach and to teach is to lead. This becomes expressly clear when we note the definitions of both “teach” and “lead.”

Teach: *to show how to do something; give instructions to; demonstrate; train. To guide the study of; instruct. To provide knowledge, insight. The basic sense of the word is “to show, demonstrate,” as in cognate*⁷³ (emphasis added).

Lead: *to show the way to, or direct the course of, by going before or along with; conduct; guide—by direct implication, entails constituents or followers. To guide, or cause to follow one, by physical contact, holding the hand, pulling the rope, and so forth. To show (the way, and so forth) by traveling a course or path: as lead the way! To show the way to; mark the path for. To guide by persuasion; induce to a course of action or thought; direct by influence: as, a teacher leads pupils to think clearly. To be the first or foremost among, chief, or head*⁷⁴ (emphasis added).

Observe the commonalities in the two definitions: to show, to guide. We teach what we know, but we reproduce what we are. You are a teacher by definition of what you *do* and what you inspire others to *want to do*. What are you reproducing? What are you inspiring others to want to do?

Observe also: Webster’s definition of “chief, or head” is appropriately a secondary definition. “Chief” and “head” are terms that often denote title or position. Title and position, however, have little, if anything, to do with leading. Leading is a process. Leadership is a collection of practices and behaviors, not a position. Students will not *willingly* follow because of the position you hold; they willingly follow one who is engaged in

⁷³ Webster’s *New World Dictionary*, College Edition (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1957), 1494-1495.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 830.

a process—passionate, inspired, anointed, challenging, prepared, loving, visionary, encouraging, and empowering.

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, in their best-selling book *The Leadership Challenge*, made an appropriate statement concerning what constituents expect of leaders:

If there's a clear and distinguishing feature about the process of leading, it's in the distinction between mobilizing others to do and mobilizing others to *want* to do. People in positions of authority can get other people to do something because of the power they wield, but leaders mobilize others to *want* to act because of the credibility they have. There are monumental differences between enlisting support and giving orders, between gaining commitment and commanding obedience. Leaders sustain the requisite credibility by their actions—by challenging, inspiring, enabling, modeling, and encouraging.⁷⁵

“Leadership” is a compound word made up of two parts: “leader” and “ship.”

Leader: one who leads, guides, and directs by influence.

Ship: to shape (by *ability or skill*).

You are not *leadership* until your influence has *shaped* something or someone. A person's influence shaping someone is what teaching is all about. Thus, it is the end result of your leading/teaching that qualifies you for leadership.

Processes, traits, and principles, thankfully, can be learned. Leadership is not hereditary, neither is it exclusive to those “born into it.” Leonard Ravenhill, in “The Last Days Newsletter,” tells about a group of tourists who were visiting a picturesque village. As they walked by an old man sitting by a fence, one tourist asked in a patronizing way, “Were any great men born in this village?” The old man replied, “Nope, only babies.”⁷⁶ Leadership is developed, not discovered or born. It is not what you know, it is what you *do* with what you know.

Leadership is not a new phenomenon or just a present-day buzzword. It is biblical. Christ planned for, trained, and equipped leadership for a New Testament church that would be birthed with explosive growth and faced with immediate leadership crisis. God was not caught off-guard at Pentecost. Preparation and leadership training began long before the event of the birth of the church. Christ had a leadership team prepared: E³ = Equipped, Experienced, and Empowered! Likewise, *we* must prepare (E³) and be prepared that we may reap an apostolic harvest. As the New Testament church rapidly grew, so did its demands. This resulted in a need for additional leadership. The qualities that the respectfully co-acting Twelve sought in their first leadership selections were these: “Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint. . . . And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost . . .” (Acts 6:3, 5).

The combined qualities sought after by the apostles and the congregation provide us with a simple leadership qualities model: be of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, full of wisdom, and full of faith. (For additional qualities of church leadership, see I Timothy 3, Titus, and I Peter 5.) Let us examine these four.

⁷⁵ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), 31.

⁷⁶ John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), Introduction.

Honest Report:

Wuest interprets “honest report” as “accredited.” Though honesty is certainly a foremost and necessary trait in a leader, here the word means much more than “being honest.” It was necessary that others attest to a person’s spirituality. Thayer defines it, “to be borne (good) witness to, to be well reported of, to have (good) testimony borne to one, accredited, attested, of good report, approved.” In other words, one must be *credible*—worthy of belief or trust, reliable. M.D. Treece notes, “The reasons for this prerequisite may not have been to insure the man’s honesty, but to be certain that they were compatible with reference to priorities.”⁷⁷ Authentic testimony to a person’s character develops over time. Great leaders do what it takes to have such a testimony; they *build trust relationships*. Be of honest report!

Full of the Holy Ghost:

J.B. Phillips, in *The New Testament in Modern English*, translates “full of the Holy Ghost” as “spiritually minded”—spiritually sensitive, discerning, and controlled. Barnes’ states that it means “people who are eminently under the influence of the Holy Spirit.” The ones the early church would choose must not just *have* the Spirit (Acts 2:4, 38) but be *filled* with the Spirit, as they themselves were. “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness* [anointing]” (Acts 4:31, emphasis added). One cannot adequately or effectively fulfill a ministry without the unction and *inspiration* of the Holy Ghost. Do not step to the lectern without it. Do not shortchange yourself or your students. Pay the price. PRAY! Be anointed!

It would do us well to hear what Paul shared with the Corinthians about his own teaching:

As for me, brothers, when I came to you, it was not with any show of oratory or philosophy, but simply to tell you what God has guaranteed. . . . Far from relying on any power of my own, I came among you in great “fear and trembling” and in my speeches and the sermons I gave, there were none of the arguments that belong to philosophy; *only a demonstration of the power of the Spirit*. And I did this so that your faith should not depend on human philosophy but on the power of God (I Corinthians 2:1-4, *Jerusalem Bible*).

God, grant each teacher a fresh anointing to teach with a demonstration of Your power. Be “full” of the Holy Ghost!

Full of Wisdom:

Thayer defines and Wuest translates “full of wisdom” as “filled with broad and full intelligence.” Adam Clarke notes “prudence, discretion, and economy; for mere piety and uprightness could not be sufficient.” Phillips translates it “practical minded.” It is evident that we must be both spiritually minded and practically minded; a balance must exist between “spirit and truth” (John 4:24), heart and head. You must be *competent*. One must be well read (more than your lesson), *broad-minded*, prepared, and wise and *intelligent* in approach and delivery, varying teaching and communication styles to match the varied needs of the constituents. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown define wisdom as “aptitude for practical affairs.” Paul admonished Timothy to “study.” The best teachers are also the best students. Do not shortchange yourself or your students. Pay the price. Study! Be full of wisdom!

⁷⁷ M. D. Treece, *The Literal Word, Acts I* (Shippensburg, PA: Treasure House, 1993), 208.

Full of Faith:

W.E. Vine defines faith as “a firm persuasion or conviction, producing a full acknowledgement of God’s revelation or truth.” The writer to the Hebrews taught:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the *evidence of things not seen*. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that *things which are seen were not made of things which do appear* . . . But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. . . . Noah . . . Abraham . . . Sara . . . all died in faith, not having received the promises, but *having seen them afar off, and were persuaded* of them, and embraced them, and confessed (Hebrews 11:1-3, 6-13, emphasis added).

One full of faith is a *visionary*—forward-looking—seeing, being persuaded of, embracing, and confessing what God wants to do. “While the world has always placed a premium upon visible things, the effort of the Spirit within man forever prompts him to reconsider the value of things that are not seen. This appreciation should not be discounted as minimal.”⁷⁸ Be full of faith!

Famed consultant Peter Drucker said, “Don’t worry about doing everything right, just do the right things.” God’s not looking for perfection, but progression; not genius or natural ability, but availability. You ask, “But what are the right things?” Certainly, having an honest report and being full of the Holy Ghost, wisdom, and faith are “right things.” Do the right things!

Thankfully, the right things for excellence in leadership involve basic *behaviors* that can be *learned* and immediately put into practice and basic *character traits* that can be *developed* over time. Neither behaviors nor character traits have anything to do with gene pool or genius. Anybody with desire and the Holy Ghost can have them. Below are lists of basic behaviors that can be learned and character traits that can be developed.

Basic Behaviors:

Prayer habit (see “Lesson Preparation”)

Varying leadership and teaching styles (see “Teaching Methods” and “Knowing the Student”)

Study habits (see “Lesson Preparation”)

Lesson planning/preparation

Communicating and listening well (see “Lesson Preparation”)

Good organization (see “Lesson Preparation”)

Setting clear goals/expectations

Empowering others/delegating

Involving others (see “Classroom Management”)

Giving positive recognition

Handling problems appropriately

Notice how the above basic behaviors fall within the Acts 6:3-5 leadership qualities model: prayer

habits = full of the Holy Ghost; study, planning, preparation, organization = full of wisdom; set clear goals and expectations = full of faith; and so forth.

Character Traits:

⁷⁸ Ibid., 287.

Kouzes and Posner conducted research that spanned nearly two decades, asking over twenty thousand business and government executives on four continents, “What personal traits or characteristics do you look for and admire in your superiors?” Of the many responses, they flushed out twenty of the most frequently given characteristics:⁷⁹

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Honest | 11. Courageous |
| 2. Forward-looking | 12. Cooperative |
| 3. Inspiring | 13. Imaginative |
| 4. Competent | 14. Caring |
| 5. Fair-minded | 15. Determined |
| 6. Supportive | 16. Mature |
| 7. Broad-minded | 17. Ambitious |
| 8. Intelligent | 18. Loyal |
| 9. Straightforward | 19. Self-controlled |
| 10. Dependable | 20. Independent |

The combination of applied basic behaviors and Christ-like characteristics equals credibility (Behavior + Character = Credibility). Credibility empowers, grants rights of, or qualifies leadership. The above lists are not all-inclusive but basic. Notice how man’s study validates God’s principles. Kouzes and Posner’s top four “most looked-for and admired character traits in leadership” directly mirror the four qualities of Acts 6:3-5:

Kouzes and Posner	Acts 6:3-5
Honesty	Honest report
Forward-looking	Faith
Inspiring	Full of the Holy Ghost
Competent	Full of wisdom

Man only confirms what God taught long ago.

Please take the following “Excellence in Leadership Inventory.”

EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP INVENTORY

Directions: Below are fifty items that represent critical leadership performance competencies. Please write the appropriate number from the following scale in front of each item to indicate how you would rate yourself in each area. Rate yourself as you really are instead of what you would like to be. Note: The term “people” equals *staff and students* in the inventory.

Scale:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 = Strongly disagree—definitely not me! | 4 = Somewhat agree—like this person. |
| 2 = Somewhat disagree—unlike this person. | 5 = Strongly agree—definitely me! |

⁷⁹ Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 31.

3 = Neither agree nor disagree—neither unlike
nor like this person.

- ___ 1. I am matched for my ministry and have a burning passion for it.
- ___ 2. I train or coach to help people improve performance.
- ___ 3. I build rapport with my people.
- ___ 4. I keep in touch with key issues concerning my department (feedback sessions, student/staff/parent surveys, and so forth).
- ___ 5. I give positive feedback regularly.
- ___ 6. I manage my time and resources well.
- ___ 7. I am accountable to my people, superintendent, and pastor.
- ___ 8. I handle people in a consistent manner, yet adjust my approach based upon the need.
- ___ 9. I communicate with my people, superintendent, and pastor about my goals.
- ___ 10. I conduct effective meetings and lessons.
- ___ 11. I express my feelings appropriately.
- ___ 12. I listen attentively even though I am able to anticipate what others are going to say.
- ___ 13. I provide clear communications on job tasks and expectations.
- ___ 14. I adjust my communication approach to match people's different communication styles.
- ___ 15. I restate or paraphrase what people say, and I ask if I got it right.
- ___ 16. I take responsible risks—act on faith.
- ___ 17. I communicate a clear long-term strategy to my people.
- ___ 18. I inspire others toward a common goal and communicate positively about the future.
- ___ 19. I try new ideas and approaches to improve my department.
- ___ 20. I set and review specific and measurable goals consistently with my department.
- ___ 21. I find innovative ways to overcome barriers to goal attainment.
- ___ 22. As staff, we consistently pray over goals and plans effectually.
- ___ 23. I inspire people regardless of their experience or skill.
- ___ 24. I involve others appropriately in decisions that affect them.
- ___ 25. I delegate tasks effectively.
- ___ 26. I encourage, support, and empower people to make important decisions.
- ___ 27. I know when to direct, participate, facilitate, and delegate when leading teams.
- ___ 28. I create commitment to projects in others.
- ___ 29. I foster collaboration and openly share ideas with others.
- ___ 30. I celebrate and reward individual and team/class achievements.
- ___ 31. I say thank you for a job well done.
- ___ 32. I motivate through positive comments.
- ___ 33. I reward superior effort appropriately.

- ___ 34. I tell others about my people's accomplishments.
- ___ 35. I give others courtesy and respect.
- ___ 36. I recognize my people formally and informally (e.g., with plaques, certificates, notes, or verbally).
- ___ 37. I maintain staff and classroom discipline.
- ___ 38. I consult effectively with individuals on problems to help people improve their results.
- ___ 39. I "care-front" poor performance or offer genuine care that promotes growth effectively and appropriately.
- ___ 40. I handle complaints and criticisms professionally and in a timely manner.
- ___ 41. I develop written plans to improve guest/student/parent satisfaction issues.
- ___ 42. I create an environment where bad news or correction does not obscure the good.
- ___ 43. I act based upon principles and values rather than react upon emotion or circumstances.
- ___ 44. I set an example by doing what I say. I practice what I preach.
- ___ 45. I have defined leadership principles based upon Christian values.
- ___ 46. I am honest, sincere, and genuine.
- ___ 47. I am committed to personal spiritual growth (prayer, Bible reading, meditation, and faithfulness in church attendance and giving) and to learning (reading and attending seminars).
- ___ 48. I strengthen my people by providing choice, developing competence, giving power away, and offering visible support.
- ___ 49. I am balanced—predictable, dependable, responsible, punctual, and prepared.
- ___ 50. I project the image of Christ, a positive image of the church, and sincerity with all.

**Excellence in Leadership Inventory Results
and Corresponding Seven Leadership Principles**

If you scored a three (3) or below on statement #1, please ask your Sunday school superintendent, pastor, or elder for a “Gifts Assessment.” You may not be matched for a teaching ministry. God has given everyone a gift. Discover yours and serve Him faithfully in it.

Be Credible—Build Trust Relationships. (Add scores on statements 2-8.)

Total _____

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate. (Add scores on statements 9-15.)

Total _____

Be a Visionary—Set Clear Expectations and Goals. (Add scores on statements 16-22.)

Total _____

Involve Others. (Add scores on statements 23-29.)

Total _____

Give Positive Recognition. (Add scores on statements 30-36.)

Total _____

Handle Problems Proactively. (Add scores on statements 37-43.)

Total _____

Be a Role Model. (Add score on statements 44-50.)

Total _____

Strengths

List five to seven strengths from the Inventory.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Improvement Areas

Identify three to four areas to improve from the Inventory.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Compare the total scores on the seven leadership principles listed above to determine skills or strengths and weaknesses. Broaden your self-perspective by having your staff/peers/supervisors complete the inventory on you also. Compare their rankings with yours. Look for common scoring. Focus on improving your skills in the seven areas listed above and you will truly become an excellent leader/teacher worthy of following.⁸⁰

The seven leadership principles do not have clearly defined borders but are intrinsically linked, crossing over one another. Let us view them one at a time.

⁸⁰ This leadership evaluation questionnaire has been adapted with permission from Rick Conlow’s *Excellence in Management* (Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 2000).

BE CREDIBLE—BUILD TRUST RELATIONSHIPS:

Wuest translates “honest report” as “accredited” or credible. In the chapter “Credibility x Capability” of the Drucker Foundation series *Leader of the Future*, Dave Ulrich aptly states, “Credible leaders have the personal habits, values, traits, and competencies to engender trust and commitment from those who take their directions.” In Acts, the attesting by others to one’s spirituality was a prerequisite to leadership. (Note: God is looking for maturation, not perfection. Strive for perfection and settle for excellency and maturity. “Perfect” in the KJV means “mature.” No one is spiritually perfect, but many are spiritually maturing and striving for excellency. Thank God for the blood and for second chances!)

To be credible and build trust relationships, you must first love and accept yourself—just the way He designed you. (See Mark 12:29-32; Romans 12:1-8). If you cannot love yourself, you cannot love others, build trust relationships, or make a lasting positive impact.

Next, you must be a lover of people. Building trust and rapport is about getting along with other people. That is something we all have to work at constantly. Be genuine. Be caring. Show yourself friendly (Proverbs 18:24), learn some people skills, and pick up a burden for the lost and for the perfection of the saints. Dale Carnegie states that eighty-five percent of success is attributable to people skills. Genius and talent cannot overcome the lack of people skills. On the other hand, if you can master people skills, you positively will influence lives regardless of genius and talent. In fact, abrasive, insensitive, and crude people skills destroy trust (thus relationships) and even invalidate anointing.

Trust is built. Something built takes assembly. The problem is that too many do not have the instructions for assembly. They maintain a concept that trust comes pre-assembled with “position” or “title.” God told Moses to appoint “elders of Israel, *whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people*” (Numbers 11:16). Proof of their credibility and influence, attained without a title by living as an engaged elder/leader, qualified them for the position of elder. Thus it is as a teacher that you must earn your right to be trusted and heard.

Think of the best leader/teacher you ever worked for or have known. What made that person credible? List below the character traits and behaviors that made this leader extraordinary. Next, think of the worst leader/teacher you ever worked for or have known. What made that person the worst? List below the character traits and behaviors that made that leader deplorable.

GAIN TRUST	LOSE TRUST

Trust is built through these developed character traits: honesty, integrity, respect, temperance, self-control, balance, discipline, fairness, caring, and loyalty. (See Galatians 5:22; I Peter 3; Titus 1.) Trust is built through these learned behaviors: effective communication and listening, setting clear goals and expectations, involving others, giving recognition, and being a role model.

In maintaining a relationship, it is important for you as the leader/teacher to keep your people informed of how well or poorly they are doing without damaging trust. It is difficult to balance the support your people need with the level of candor necessary to improve performance.

The key is to create an environment where bad news or correction does not obscure the good. You must create a “trust account” with each staff member and student.

Establishing a Trust Account



- Praising or standing behind your associate will deposit money into the account *one penny* at a time.
- Complaining or reprimanding will result in withdrawals and often damage the trust account:

-10 cents for a complaint or negative



Balance: The object is to fill up the person’s account and keep it from getting too low or overdrawing the account. Are you “in the black” with your staff and students or overdrawn?

COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, AND COMMUNICATE:

Communication is a broad term. It can mean many things to many people. Holding a staff meeting once in a while and only speaking to students during the lesson does not cut it. The best teachers communicate, influence, and persuade well. Most often, communication is a priority that is worked at frequently and involves one-on-one contact. It begins with understanding style differences in people's communication patterns. (See "Knowing the Student" for personality and temperament differences.)

The following three items affect the results of communication most: words, voice tone, and body language. "Words account for seven percent of your communication impact. Voice tone equals thirty-eight percent. Body language influences the outcome fifty-five percent. What you say is one thing. How you say it is more significant. What you do about what you say is most powerful."⁸¹ Solomon said, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

Whenever two people meet, there is a communication climate that exists between them. Sometimes it is positive and other times negative. It can be like the weather. There are distinct signs that give you clues to what is happening. For example, if it is a cloudless day, about eighty degrees with a five- to ten-mile-per-hour breeze and low humidity, you know you are in for a comfortable day. On the other hand, if the day has high humidity with the temperature falling rapidly from the high nineties to the low eighties, it's dark and there are fast-spinning clouds filling the sky, do you know what is happening?

Communication climate does exist, and it affects how people communicate. Some people are pleasant to talk to and be around. On the other hand, there are others you do everything you can to avoid. They are rumbling thunderheads. What kind of climate do you exude? The good news is that unlike the weather, you can change communication climate. You can make changes to be more effective by becoming aware of behaviors and attitudes that contribute to a positive or a negative climate. As a teacher, you must be a thermostat that sets the climate rather than a thermometer that reacts to climate.

To engender positive climate, try some of the following techniques: make good eye contact, use the person's name, talk on the same level as an equal, allow no interruptions, eliminate distractions and barriers, smile, ask questions, give compliments, be sincere, courteous, enthusiastic, and positive, do not interrupt, stay on the subject, and LISTEN.

Effective listening is a vital ingredient to great communication. God made us with only one mouth but two ears. We should listen more than we speak! To listen effectively, you must first *want* to listen. Listening can be tough work. Here are some techniques that will help:

- Make eye contact.
- Eliminate distractions.
- Smile, nod your head, and otherwise encourage the other person to talk.
- Find out what the other person means through clarification.
- If the other person hesitates, encourage him or her to go on.

⁸¹ Ibid., 87.

- Restate or paraphrase what the person said, and ask if you got it right.
- Withhold judgment about the idea or problem until the other person is finished.
- Ask what is meant by certain words to eliminate misunderstanding.
- Listen regardless of the person's manner of speaking and choice of words.
- Listen even though you anticipate what the person is going to say.

Learn to be an effective communicator and listener. It is a principle of excellent leadership.

BE A VISIONARY—SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND GOALS:

What a visionary and risk-taker God was! He perfectly created the whole universe and all that is in it and then gave full control or dominion of it to one of His creations, meanwhile determining not to control or manipulate the creature in His exercise of that dominion. What a plan! What a risk! God did not leave man, however, without help or support. He communicated with him daily. When man did fail in his role and relinquished dominion to Satan, God already had a plan, a long-term goal of redemption, set in place since the foundation of the earth. In the meantime, He gave man a set of clear short-term expectations. The whole Bible is an unfolding of vision, expectations, and goals.

“Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). God expects of us vision and faith—to be forward-looking, seeing, being persuaded of, embracing, and confessing what God wants, God's goals becoming our reality. Get a vision from God in prayer of where He wants to take you and your people, stand upon it by faith (embrace it), cast the vision to your people (confess it), and then make plans and set goals for it. “By faith Noah, being warned of God of *things not seen as yet*, **moved** with fear, **prepared** an ark *to the saving* of his house; by which he condemned the world, and *became heir* of the righteousness which is *by faith*” (Hebrews 11:7, emphasis added). Once Noah got the vision, he proclaimed it, *prepared*, prioritized, and planned his life around it. He acted upon it (Genesis 6:22; 7:5).

A goal, simply put, is what someone is trying to accomplish. It is the objective or aim of an action. Goals improve performance. Locke and Latham's book *Goal Setting: The Motivational Technique That Works!* identifies research studies where, in ninety percent of the cases, goal setting increased employees' performance. “Over 110 studies in the last twelve years show that goal setting is the motivation that works! Research has concluded that goal setting:

- Raises productivity
- Improves work quality
- Clarifies expectations
- Relieves boredom
- Increases liking for a task or job
- Increases satisfaction with effort
- Creates more spontaneous competition

- Builds self-confidence.”⁸²

If setting clear expectations and goals works in the practical world, how much more so in the spiritual where there is divine influence. However, dreams and visions do not self-apprehend, even though their source is divine. By faith you must take action and be a steward of the vision.

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), the Lord rewarded and called “faithful” those who were forward-looking and visionary enough to take the talents given them by the Master and *gain a hundred-fold return*. They limited their risks by setting goals and expectations. Then they invested their talents. You and I have been given talents or gifts. It is up to us to determine what we are going to do with what we have been given. We need to set clear expectations and goals for our people and ourselves. That’s stewardship.

How do you set goals? Write a specific goal in the present tense in terms of actions, behaviors, or outcomes. For example, “I am achieving teacher certification in June of this year.” Include how to measure success. Make the goal challenging but realistic. Set a timeline. When setting goals, Ken Blanchard and other management consultants recommend you set **SMART** goals:

Specific—Is it focused?

Measurable—Can you tell if it is accomplished? Are the goals in writing?

Attainable—Is it a realistic target?

Relevant—Is it a priority? Is it worthy of my time?

Time-bound—What is the timeline for review?

Notice the following examples: *Like this*: Our team/class will achieve a thirty percent increase over last year’s attendance by the fourth quarter. *Not like this*: We want to grow. *Like this*: We will handle all student disciplinary problems on the day of the infraction by using a disciplinary action form for documentation. *Not like this*: We will do a better job with classroom discipline.

Excellent leaders have a clear vision or calling. Leaders must know where they are going if they expect others to *willingly* follow on the journey.

INVOLVE OTHERS:

In more than 550 original case studies, Kouzes and Posner observed,

“We didn’t encounter a single example of extraordinary achievement that occurred without the active involvement and support of many people. And this hasn’t changed with our subsequent research. In thousands of additional stories, from all professions and from around the globe, people continue to tell us, ‘You can’t do it alone. It’s a team effort.’”⁸³

So enlist the support of others, develop and promote cooperative goals, seek integrative solutions, share information and resources, *build trusting relationships*, foster collaboration, and always say “we.”

Understand and accept the definition of “ministry” as set forth in Matthew 20:26-28: Be a servant. Servants serve others. Use your power or influence in service of others by providing choice, developing

⁸² Edwin A. Latham and Gary P. Locke, *Goal Setting: The Motivational Technique That Works!* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984), 30.

⁸³ Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 151.

competency, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support. Enable others to act. Empower others. “Credible leaders choose to give power away in service of others and for a purpose larger than themselves. They take the power that flows to them and connect it to others, becoming generators from which their constituents draw energy. Credible leaders accept and act upon the paradox of power: *we become most powerful when we give our own power away.*”⁸⁴

What did Jesus do? After a period of teaching and mentoring, “He called his twelve disciples together, and *gave them power and authority* over all devils, and to cure diseases. . . . After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them. . . . And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-18). Note the sequence: Jesus gave away power, the disciples exercised their faith and gifts, thereby giving away the power to others through healings, and so forth, which resulted in their joy (a sense of purpose and fulfillment) and Jesus’ exuberance at seeing Satan fall (a sudden surge of power in the spiritual realm).

So, involve your people in goal setting, decision making, and problem solving. When you do, *give positive recognition*; celebrate their progression or success. Share information. It will give your people a sense of purpose and fulfillment, and it will make your team more productive and joyful.

GIVE POSTIVE RECOGNITION:

Almost all people say they want more recognition. Half say they receive none at all. Our society today is starving for love and positive affirmation. Our church pews and classrooms are filled with hurting, lonely people. What an opportunity we have to lastingly impact a broken person with a little kindness, compassion, positive recognition, and Christian love. Positive recognition is a simple and most effective means of mobilizing others to *want* to do. Unfortunately a majority of leaders surveyed in a recent study did not realize “praised behavior was repeated behavior.”⁸⁵

Here are some informal techniques (low cost or no cost) that teachers can use to recognize staff and students:

- Greet them as they enter class.
- Know them by name.
- Talk small talk occasionally.
- Show sincere interest in them.
- Praise progress.
- Recognize contributions.
- Say thank you.
- Send an “I prayed for you today” card (purchased through World Network of Prayer).
- Encourage your people to recognize the exceptional work of other staff/students.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 185.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 46.

- Praise them publicly (studies show that some 60 percent of managers do not think it is okay to do this.)⁸⁶
- Have a party or inexpensive rewards for achieving excellent results.
- Celebrate and reward individual and team achievements.
- Motivate through positive comments.

Put a smile on their faces and a sense of self-worth in their hearts and you will be a respected teacher/leader. Begin by deciding who you will give positive recognition to today. Whose trust accounts will you deposit into? Complete the recognition exercise review on the following page.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Recognition Exercise Review		
<p>Directions: Think of three staff/students whom you work with. Give them appropriate recognition. Make the effort. Use this chart to outline your thinking.</p>		
<p>PERSON Example—Bill</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>WHY RECOGNIZE? He befriended a new student, introduced him to his table, and sat with him in church.</p>	<p>HOW TO RECOGNIZE Send a thank-you note to his home expressing my pride.</p>
<p>How do you think they will react?</p>		<p>How did they react?</p>
<p>What can you learn from this?</p>		

HANDLE PROBLEMS PROACTIVELY:

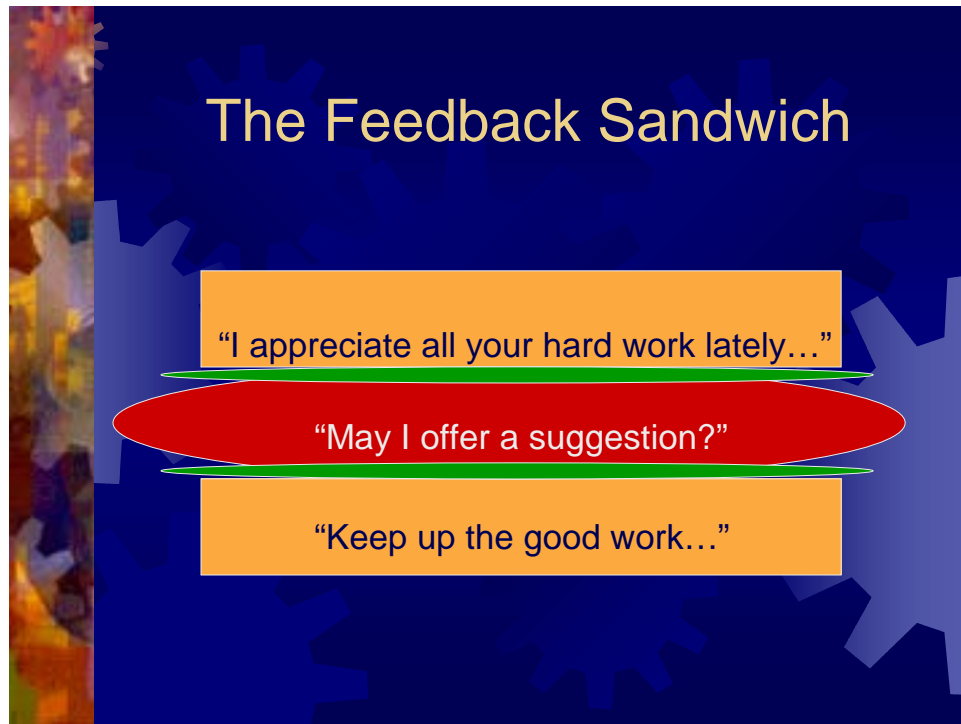
Problems are not bad. They are inevitable. Without problems, you are doomed to fail because you are probably not taking risks as you strive to improve your efforts and results. If you have no problems, you are probably already dead!

We have misconceptions that “confrontation” is a bad word, that confrontation causes hurt and must be avoided, that we do not hurt the people we care for, and that to genuinely care, candor and confrontation must, at least for the moment, be forgotten. This just is not true. If we truly love, we will proactively and appropriately handle problems. The Bible speaks clearly to this issue:

- We were meant to speak the truth in love, and to grow up in every way into Christ, the head. For it is from the head that the whole body, as a harmonious structure knit together by the joints with which it is provided, grows by the proper functioning of individual parts, and builds itself up in love (Ephesians 4:15-16, Phillips Modern English). Observe: to avoid *speaking the truth in love* is to avoid **opportunity** to allow someone to *grow up in every way into Christ*. True love then motivates us to confront with *truth in love*.
- Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt (Leviticus 19:17, NIV). Observe: in God’s eyes, negligence in confronting is equal to hating your brother. If you really loved him, you would do something about it. When you do, you will not incur his guilt. Negligence brings guiltiness.
- Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault [misbehaves or is detected in some sin], ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness [without a sense of superiority and with all gentleness]; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ (Galatians 6:1-2).

To be effective as a teacher/leader, you must handle problems proactively. Foresee potential problem areas and act before they become problems: move a student, develop a policy, and so forth. When an unforeseen problem does arise, handle it immediately and be specific about the problem. Here are some principles in handling problems:

1. Be sure that your purpose is to be helpful.
2. Make sure the person is ready to receive feedback.
3. Deal with behavior that can be changed.
4. Deal only with specific, observed behaviors and keep your judgments to yourself.
5. Describe the behavior, do not evaluate it.
6. Use “I” statements.
7. Offer feedback in a sandwich.



David Augsburger, in his book *Caring Enough to Confront*, sums up the proper approach to confrontation positively:

A good word: Caring

A bad word: Confronting

A third word: Care-fronting

Care-fronting is offering genuine caring that bids another's growth. Care-fronting is offering real confrontation that calls out new insights and understanding. Care-fronting unites love and power. Care-fronting unites concern for relationship with concern for goals. One can have something to stand for (goals) as well as someone to stand with (relationship) without sacrificing one for the other or collapsing one into the other. Thus one can love powerfully and be powerfully loving. These are not contradictory. They are complementary.

To handle problems proactively is to welcome, invite, and support growth in others. To handle problems effectively is to offer the maximum of useful information with the minimum of threat and stress. With God's help, you can handle problems effectively and proactively.

BE A ROLE MODEL:

Review the seven leadership principles listed previously. One who puts the first six principles into practice will consequentially accomplish the seventh—be a role model. It is an accumulation of who you are. We teach what we know, but we reproduce what we are. Role models do what they say they will do; practice

what they preach; walk what they talk. People first listen to your words and then watch your actions. Are they congruent?

Models have, and proceed upon, vision. They act based upon principles and Christian values rather than react upon emotion or circumstances. They are balanced, predictable, dependable, responsible, punctual, and prepared. They involve and strengthen others by providing choice, developing competence, and giving power away. They readily accept ideas and contributions of others and give them the appropriate praise.

Models are also committed to personal spiritual growth (prayer, Bible reading, meditation, and faithfulness in church attendance and giving) and to learning (reading and attending seminars). They project the image of Christ. They are *not* perfect, but progressive.

Finally, models are people worthy of following.

In conclusion, John Maxwell aptly states, “This is what I know: The effectiveness of your work will never rise above your ability to lead and influence others.”⁸⁷ You must provide the desire and God will provide the anointing.

Oh, the power of leadership! Oh, the privilege to influence and shape lives in Christ for today, the future, and eternity! This is an honor that cannot be taken haphazardly or latently. You must avidly excel in leadership. You must desire to learn and apply the skills and principles of leadership that you might more effectively and positively influence those under your tutelage. Remember these words of motivator Zig Ziglar, “The greatest enemy of excellence is good.”

Abigail Adams wrote Thomas Jefferson in 1790, “These are the hard times in which a genius would wish to live. Great necessities call forth great leadership.” These are also hard times in which teachers/leaders face unprecedented challenges. The mediocrity of a casual commitment to your cause will not be enough to positively and effectively impact students of today. No longer are you simply competing with Grace Livingston Hill or Mark Twain novels, but today’s teacher faces unprecedented challenges such as the following:

- Fast-paced changes due to technological advances
- Fractured and dysfunctional homes
- Media negativity, mockery, and intolerance for Christianity
- Culturally diverse neighborhoods
- A morally depraved culture
- Open homosexual lifestyles portrayed as “normal”
- Fear of terrorism
- Christian-unfriendly public school systems
- World political/economic instability
- A godless society drunk on self-gratification
- Internet opportunities (positive and negative)
- Children with immense “baggage” at an increasingly younger age.

⁸⁷ Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You*, Introduction.

Great necessities call forth great leaders. The times demand it. “Good” is **not** enough. God is looking for great leaders. Thank God it does not take genius; it takes anointing, passion, and applied skills. *You* provide the passion born out of a prayerful burden, and *you* apply the practical leadership principles of this lesson. God will provide the anointing. Then nothing can stop you from being an excellent, effective teacher worthy of following.

EXAM

True or False

T F

1. ____ ____ God is looking for perfection, not progression.
2. ____ ____ Leadership is determined by your title and position, not your practices and behaviors.
3. ____ ____ Leadership is not hereditary, in spite of the common phraseology: a born leader.
4. ____ ____ Phillip's Modern English translates "full of the Holy Ghost" as "practical minded."
5. ____ ____ Excellence in leadership involves behaviors that can be learned and character traits that can be developed.
6. ____ ____ Excellent leaders treat everyone the same; they do not need to adjust their approach dependent upon the listener's style.
7. ____ ____ To be credible and build trust relationships, it is necessary to first love and accept oneself.
8. ____ ____ Abrasive, insensitive, and crude people skills destroy trust and even invalidate anointing.
9. ____ ____ Trust automatically comes with the "position" or "title."
10. ____ ____ Whenever two people meet, there is a communication climate that exists between them.
11. ____ ____ As a teacher, you must be a thermometer rather than a thermostat.
12. ____ ____ Study and competency are not so important as long as you have the anointing.
13. ____ ____ Dreams and visions do not self-apprehend, even though their source is divine.

Fill in the blank

14. Leadership is a compound word made up of two parts: leader and ship. Define ship:

15. Christ prepared His leadership team with the E³. E³ = _____
16. The apostles and congregation of the early church provided us with a qualities model for selecting leadership. To qualify one must be "full" of what three things?

17. What character quality that the New Testament church sought for in leadership selection in Acts 6 means "accredited, to be borne witness to, approved?" _____
18. Behavior + Character = _____
19. What is the top three most frequently given personal traits or characteristics that people look for and admire in superiors? _____
20. Dale Carnegie states that _____ percent of success is attributable to people skills.
21. It takes at least _____ positive acts to balance out one negative act.
22. In communication, words account for _____ percent of your communication impact. Voice equals _____ percent. Body language influences the outcome _____ percent.
23. To which of the seven principles of leadership covered in this lesson does the parable of the talents most relate? _____

24. When setting goals, it is imperative that you set SMART goals. What does the acronym SMART stand for?

S_____ M_____ A_____ R_____ T_____

25. According to Zig Ziglar, “The greatest enemy of excellence is _____.”

CHAPTER 10

KNOWING YOUR STUDENT

Judy Erickson

“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel’s sake” (I Corinthians 9:19-23).

An effective teacher understands the broad spectrum of human diversity and its many tenets. He or she knows that while teaching is, for the most part, the exchange of information from teacher to students, that information must be prepared and taught in a variety of ways to reach all the students in the classroom. The age of the students, the cultural climate from which the students come, the home environment, and the emotional temperament and mental condition of students all play a part in preparing the proper approach to teaching.

AGE CHARACTERISTICS

A basic understanding of the characteristics of your students’ specific age group should be an integral part of how your lesson is taught. The speed of the maturation process will vary from one child to another. Understanding that there are exceptions, here is a brief overview of all ages and their characteristics.

Ages 0-24 months

Physically

Grows rapidly. Crawls, walks. Doubles weight in first six months. Senses begin to develop.

Mentally

An investigator. Begins to talk. Attracted to color and large objects.

Socially

A small world—members of family. Plays individually.

Emotionally

Sensitive. Afraid of strangers. Selfish—wants own way. Temper tantrums. Certain behavior accepted.

Spiritually

Imitates those around him. Concepts of God determined by parents.

Special Facts

Cradle Roll. Very important. Contact between church and home.

Ages 2-3

Physically

Very active. Tires quickly. Needs a nap. Needs room to play as muscles are not fully developed. Susceptible to disease. Never pressure this age to sing.

Mentally

A discoverer. Feeling sense very keen. Limited attention span. Limited vocabulary. Make concepts simple.

Socially

Self-centered (me, mine). Dependent on others. Shoes, hair, blow nose, coat, love and care. Why? No!

Emotionally

Afraid of unfamiliar. Does not

Spiritually

An imitator: parents,

Special Facts

Responds to love;

like crowds, noise, confusion.
Unstable, learns fear from
adults, sensitive to surroundings.

teachers, children. Quality
of parents' life—greatest
influence. Read, pray.

cheerfulness; bright, cheer-
ful atmosphere; calmness.
Learns through attitudes.

Ages 4-5

Physically

Use purposeful activity. A player—
loves it. Must have plenty of
sunshine, exercise, rest, proper
food. Gets tired easily.

Emotionally

A conformist. Stubborn. Learns
to abide by rules. Restrictions,
leaders.

Mentally

A questioner. This is how he
learns and develops. Self-
realization . . . self-seeking.
Increased vocabulary. Under-
stands concepts. Talks freely,
expresses self. Has a great
imagination.

Spiritually

Confused between reality
and imagination. Does not
deliberately lie. Loves God's
home. Worships. Develops.

Socially

A responder. Better self-
control. Many fears—dark,
thunder. Occasionally jealous
(new baby, friends).

Special Facts

Attitudes are great teachers.
Parents are greatest teacher.
Never relinquish this role.

Ages 6-8

Physically

A hustler. Child grows. Purposeful
play. Boys, girls different. Activities.

Emotionally

Insecure—needs reassurance. Desires
affection and guidance. Seeks to do
service.

Mentally

An observer. Good memory.
Literal thinker.

Spiritually

A discerner. Facts are important.
Right and wrong. Follows
examples. Ready for a decision.
Interested in worship.

Socially

Friendly. Group participation.
Cooperation.

Special Facts

Special love and attention.
Present plan of salvation.

Ages 9-11

Physically

Active. Abounding energy. Increased
muscular coordination. Teach
appropriate care and grooming.

Emotionally

Expressive. Impatient. Hides feelings
well. Loves humor.

Mentally

Investigator. Collector. Good
reader. Keen observer. Quick
memorizer. Good thinker.

Spiritually

Relates to persons well. Hero
worshiper ready for
salvation. Responds to instruct-
tion well. Discerns truth.

Socially

Adjust well. Conscious of
peers. Identifies with people.
Segregate sexes. Fairness
important. Special friends.

Special Facts

Expect a decision. Lead to
Christ. Guides. Growth into
fruitfulness. Usefulness their
desire.

Ages 12-14

Physically

Rapid, uneven growth. Puberty. Heart doubles in size. Active. Gets tired.

Emotionally

Unstable. Ups and downs. Laughs and cries. Talks and is silent.

Mentally

Criticizes. This develops into convictions. Increased mental powers. Very capable of learning.

Spiritually

Accepts a challenge. Wants to be involved. Clear convictions, moral restraint. Wants boundaries. Character.

Socially

Companionship. Home. Ties very important. Peer group. Special friends.

Special Facts

Communication channel important. Keep open. Fellowship. Read Bible. Pray.

Ages 15-17

Physically

Strengthened. Wants to achieve. Growth slows down. Appearance important, develops good hygiene.

Emotionally

Experienced now. Likes emotional involvement.

Mentally

Alert. Reasons well. Increased self-control. Independence begins. Outlook expands.

Spiritually

Real. Genuine. Principles important. Crusader. Experience preferred. Must know to be sure. Loves heartfelt worship.

Socially

Friendly. Home ties weaken. Peers important. Opposite sex interests. People are important.

Special Facts

Action. Balance. Purpose in worship and life.

Ages 18-40

Physically

At the peak. Full. Complete. Rest. Exercise. Proper diet very important. Use energy in God's work.

Emotionally

More stable than ever. Learns that every experience is not a calamity. More optimistic. Things will work out. Rest in the Lord. Confident.

Mentally

Full capacity. Reasons convictions. Respect for others, their opinions. Doubts gone on most things.

Spiritually

Happy with Jesus! Thankful for every blessing. All things in right place. Home, job, church, etc. Learns to live not just make a living. Builds for eternity.

Socially

Family centered. Children a part of life now. Adjusted. Unselfish. Balance in life.

Special Facts

A worker in the church. A soulwinner. Loyal to home and church.

Ages 41-64

Physically

Begins a decline. Limitations. Sex drive begins to decline. Concerned about acceptance. Appearance very important. Use body and energy wisely.

Mentally

Productive. Persistent. Judgments sound and dependable. Can learn. Become involved in new ventures.

Socially

Renewed interests. Group relations (civic, social, governmental). Home adjustments. Children grown. Marriage problems. Needs sound fellowship.

Emotionally

Deep and full. Watch out. Fix attitudes—must be mellowed by love and understanding. Fruit of Spirit so important. Susceptible to vanity—looks, health, foods, etc.

Spiritually

Burden-bearing. Senses spiritual realities in a deep way. More than emotions. Powerful, purposeful, full of poise. A worker in the church. Success is measured by personal feelings.

Special Facts

Trained for Christian service and living. Useful.

Ages 65 and up**Physically**

Geriatrics, “health of aging.” Body is declining. Health limitations. Afraid of falling, breaking bones, disease (many are psychological).

Mentally

Wise counselor. Able to learn. Past emphasized if no interests today. Misunderstanding increased due to hearing loss.

Socially

Interests narrow. Grandparent important. Organized activities. Keen-agers. Encourage group activities.

Emotionally

Set patterns. Experience can mellow us or harden us. Sweet or sour; Graceful or bitter. Need to trust the Lord now as before. (You will become what you are developing today.)

Spiritually

About ready to receive all we have lived for. Keep looking up to the future. God is great. Outwardly perishing—inwardly renewed day by day. Keep on top. You are useful.

Special Facts

Fellowship. Activities. Programs. Mix with all ages. Can be saved if not already.

GENERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

We are living during times of great change. George Barna says that every five years society reinvents itself. There are great differences between generations in the present demographic milieu in the American population (values, emotions, beliefs, and preferences). These differences effect our financial decisions, fashion preferences, recreational choices, religious beliefs, musical style, food consumption, moral concerns, and so forth. Cultural circumstances in which each generation has grown up have impacted their thinking process dramatically. Some demographic researchers have divided our present population into four groups: builders, boomers, busters, and the net generation (*Boomers, Xers, and Other Strangers*, Rick and Kathy Hicks, Tyndale, 1999).

Builders: Born between 1909 – 1945

Boomers: Born between 1946 – 1964

Busters: Born between 1965 – 1976

Net Generation: Born between 1977 – 1997

The Builder Generation: This large group spans a forty-year period. The reason is that their values were the same. The GI builders (1901 – 1924) were the generation that experienced the Great Depression and World War II. This had a profound effect upon their lives. They built the great bridges, dams, interstate highways, and the airlines. They built the national parks system, conducted massive tree planting campaigns, and developed serums and medicines that helped the world. They were disciplined, courageous, and were committed to their country with an unwavering patriotism. They had respect and trust in government and acknowledged authority.

The silent builders (1925 – 1945) did not suffer like the GI builders did. They adopted the same values of the former generation. They felt trapped between the GI Builders and the Baby Boomers.

The Baby Boom Generation: Nine months after World War II ended, the maternity wards filled up and stayed full for the next seventeen years (seventy-six million children were born). The birth control pill was introduced in the sixties and the population rate began to drop. Three major things affected this generation:

1. ***Dr. Benjamin Spock's new philosophy of child rearing:*** Rather than the cold, sterile structured methods of the past, he recommended that children be treated like little people with real needs that needed to be met. Parents wanted their children to have it better than they did so as a result they grew up spoiled and pampered. A more permissive approach was used in the discipline of children. They grew up focusing on themselves, thinking they were unique and privileged. Rather than building and waiting, their motto was "Don't wait, get it now!"

2. ***Television:*** Even though the early programs were innocent compared to today's, it alienated society and they became glued to the set. Television watching became ingrained as a part of the American culture and shaped our beliefs, attitudes, and actions. Advertisers could create instant national fads through advertising campaigns. Problems on the television were always solved before the hour was up. This added to the concept, "We want answers, and we want them now!"

3. ***Education:*** This generation became the most educated generation in history. They took a more intellectual outlook at running their lives. The previous generation was more concerned with learning skills for doing work. This generation was more concerned with education. Boomers looked upon their parents as being less educated and rejected their views about money, sex, religion, drugs, and war. This created a massive generation gap. The Boomers adopted a new morality (loose sexual behavior, shunning responsibility, drug use, dabbling in Eastern religions, burning draft cards, and so forth).

In more recent years, the Boomers have demonstrated a yearning for simplicity and traditional values. Nostalgic reflections have become entertainingly popular. They have become more attentive parents after observing the earlier Boomers' failures in this area.

The Buster Generation (Generation X): This group does not have the size (forty-four million) of the Boomers. Like the Silent Builders, they are sandwiched between the Boomers and the Net Generation (over eighty million). This generation is difficult to define, for they have not taken their full place in adult society yet. The following list describes their characteristics:

1. They are skeptical of others and institutions. They are pessimistic about mankind and the future.
2. They feel abandoned: Being emotionally neglected as children by their parents (workaholic parents, latchkey kids, working mothers), they feel cheated.
3. They want a high quality of life: This means a high fun quotient without sacrifice.
4. They are independent: Behaving as individuals, they listen to counsel, but reject demands made on them when not given opportunity to debate.
5. They are comfortable with change: They are used to a fast pace and lack of stability. They are

not concerned with traditions.

6. They are more sensitive to people: They have a desire to build lasting relationships.
7. They are pluralistic: They have no problem holding two contradictory perspectives. They will accept divergent approaches to religion, politics, and relationships.
8. They are pragmatist: Denying the existence of absolute truth, they handle each situation on its own merit.

MTV first aired when they were in adolescence. This medium elevates feeling and sensation above thought, is fast-paced, exciting, and is sensual entertainment. They have the lowest percentage of voting participation, are more educated than any previous generation, and have fewer tangible skills. They have the highest suicide rate of any age group (five thousand each year). Being nonconformist, they do not respond well to authority. They buy into the politically correct movement. They seek equality, opportunity, individualism, and justice for all people, regardless of their background. Having grown up with the computer, they are the group with great computer savvy.

The Net Generation: This group comprises thirty percent of the population (eighty-one million). They are even larger than the Boomers. They have a positive view of themselves (happy, responsible, self-reliant, optimistic, and intelligent). Coca-Cola did a survey of twenty-seven thousand twelve-to nineteen-year olds (Generation Y) and found the following traits among this generation:

- a. Self-reliant: Finding a good job is a top priority.
- b. They love family: Even though their definition may not be traditional, they tend toward relying on them. They are consumers.
- c. They love brand names: Nevertheless, they are skeptical of slick marketing.
- d. They are mobile: They have aspirations to travel.
- e. They are mediavores: This generation is addicted to media (do homework while listening to CDs, watching television, and talking on Internet). This generation is not like the previous one. They are optimistic about the future.
- f. Fun lovers.

In a survey done by Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, only thirty-seven considered marriage the cornerstone of societal values. This generation tends to look up to their parents. Parents are more involved with their children than past generations. There is also a growing knowledge of the impact that bad television, movies, music, and so forth have had on children. This generation is the computer experts. Having grown up with computers, it is as natural as breathing. Some think the computer generation's thinking process has been affected. It's having an effect on how they collect, organize, and analyze information. They have shifted from the traditional "linear" style of learning (moving from point A to point B) to a "parallel" or "mosaic" style (moving randomly among a series of points). Mosaic learning permits faster processing of information. A strong identifying mark of this generation is "tolerance." They are able to live with all sorts of contradictions in their lives without complaint. This is good but could make them prey to fall for anything.

DIVERSITY WITHIN THE HUMAN FAMILY:

A. *Temperaments:* Hippocrates developed a theory of personality that divided people into four personality groups. It continues to be the most popular. These are the four groups: sanguine; choleric; melancholy; and phlegmatic. The *Personality Plus Questionnaire* is available through the General Sunday School Division. This questionnaire will help determine your personality type.

B. *Ministries:* Each individual has God-given talents and abilities that can be used effectively in ministry. The *Discover Your Talents and Abilities Questionnaire* is another questionnaire that is available to help determine your greatest ministry potential. This questionnaire divides people into eight ministries: Soulwinner; Teacher; Exhorter; Shepherd/teacher; Mercy-shower; Server; Giver; Administrator. This questionnaire can be purchased from the General Sunday School Division.

C. *Seven types of intelligence:* (compiled by Howard Gardner, Harvard University)

- 1. *Linguistic intelligence:*** This refers to an individual's capacity to use language effectively as a vehicle of expression and communication (Examples: poets & writers).
- 2. *Logical-Mathematical intelligence:*** This refers to an individual's capacity to think logically, use numbers effectively, solve problems scientifically, and discern relationships and patterns between concepts and things (Examples: mathematicians and scientists).
- 3. *Spatial intelligence:*** This refers to the capacity to think visually and orient oneself spatially. In addition, spatially intelligent people are able to graphically represent their visual and spatial ideas (Examples: artists, decorators, architects, surveyors, inventors, and travel guides).
- 4. *Musical intelligence:*** This refers to the capacity to appreciate a variety of musical forms in addition to using music as a vehicle of expression. Musically intelligent people are sensitive to rhythm, melody, and pitch (Examples: singers, musicians, and composers).
- 5. *Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence:*** This refers to the capacity of using one's own body skillfully as a means of expression or to work skillfully to create or manipulate objects (Examples: dancers, actors, athletes, sculptors, surgeons, mechanics and craftspeople).
- 6. *Interpersonal intelligence:*** This refers to the capacity to appropriately and effectively respond to other people and understand their feelings (salespeople, social directors, travel agents).
- 7. *Intrapersonal intelligence:*** This refers to the capacity to accurately know one's self, including knowledge of one's own strengths, motivations, goals, and feelings (i.e. entrepreneurs, therapists, and so forth).

D. Learning Styles: Not only will teachers benefit from the study of the diversity of learning styles that can be found in the classroom, but parents, worship leaders, and pastors will glean valuable insights into how people receive and process information in order to learn.

There is a Learning Styles Questionnaire at the end of this lesson. You may want to take the questionnaire first, to discover your own learning style. Then as you look over the characteristics of each style, you will probably see yourself, possibly your students and children in one or more of the four quadrants. A learning styles questionnaire at the end of this chapter is compiled by Marlene D. Le Fever, David Cook Publishing Company. It would be good at this point to stop reading and take this questionnaire to determine your own learning style. Having this personal information will make the lesson more meaningful. The following is a definition of the four basic learning styles:

- a. **Imaginative:** The talkative, friendly, outgoing person.
- b. **Analytic:** The thinking, analyzing, introverted person.
- c. **Common sense:** The person who enjoys action and doing things to get results.
- d. **Dynamic:** The leading, experimenting, gamble-taking person.

Other questionnaires are available:

- Paragon Learning Style Inventory: www.oswego.edu/~shindler: Introvert/Extrovert; Sensate/Intuitive; Thinker/Feeler; Judger/Perceiver
- Aural Study Strategies: www.active-learning-site.com. Visual; Aural; Read; and Kinesthetic
- Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, CA: www.metamath.com/~lswweb/dvcllearn.htm. Visual/Verbal; Visual/Nonverbal; Tactile/Kinesthetic; Auditory/Verbal
- North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC: www.engr.ncsu.edu/cgi-bin/felder.cgi. Active/Reflective; Sensing/Intuitive; Visual/Verbal; Sequential/Global.

Looking Closer at Learning Styles:

The Imaginative Learner:

1. Sociable, friendly, and sensitive to others.
2. Empathetic with the needs of others.
3. Creative.
4. Likes noisy settings where the action is.
5. In tune with feelings.
6. Learns by talking. "I have to talk to learn what I believe."
7. Enjoys role-playing, simulation, and mime.
8. Values people above product.
9. Defines himself in terms of friendships.
10. Dislikes working alone, memorizing, lectures.
11. Dislikes win/lose situations.

The Analytic Learner:

1. Likes information logical and sequential order.
2. Likes facts, figures, and theories.
3. Values being right.
4. Enjoys listening and note taking.
5. Prefers quiet learning environment.
6. Learns from traditional methods.
7. Likes competition.
8. Impersonal.
9. Prefers to work alone.
10. Sees themselves as intellectual.
11. Curious about ideas.

The Dynamic Learner:

1. Leader.
2. Experimental attitude.
3. Demands flexibility and has been known to break the rules.
4. Likes student-directed classroom.
5. Great communicator.
6. Enjoys people.
7. Intuitive.
8. Future oriented.
9. Has sense of humor.
10. Slow completing assignments.
11. Values creativity.

Common Sense Learner:

1. Realistic and practical.
2. Goal-oriented.
3. Prefers to work alone.
4. Impersonal.
5. Excels in problem solving.
6. Loves action.
7. Mechanical and computer literate.
8. Sees skills as knowledge.
9. Learns through demonstration.
10. Dislikes lectures.

For more valid testing, you may want to order the Learning Type Measure (LTM) or Teaching Style Inventory (TSI) by Excel, Inc. (both are sold in packets of twenty-five), contact Excel, Inc., 23385 Old Barrington Road, Barrington, Illinois 60010. Phone: 708-382-7272.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Autism: Autism is a general term that is often used interchangeably with what health care providers refer to as “pervasive developmental disorders.” Individuals with a pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) have a unique set of symptoms that affect three areas or “domains”: communication, socialization (interaction with others), and behavior. Within this broad category, there are five currently accepted official diagnoses: Autistic Disorder; Asperger Disorder; Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified; Rett Disorder; and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

Autistic Disorder: Autistic disorder is a developmental disorder that affects a person’s ability to communicate, form relationships with others, and respond appropriately to the environment. Some people with autistic disorder are high functioning, with speech and intelligence intact. Others may be nonverbal and/or mentally retarded.

Asperger Disorder: Asperger disorder, sometimes referred to as Asperger syndrome, is a neurobiological disorder. In contrast to autistic disorder, individuals with Asperger disorder do not have a delay in spoken language development. However, they can have serious deficits in social and communication skills. They often have obsessive, repetitive routines and preoccupations with a particular subject matter.

Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD/NOS): PDD/NOS is a diagnosis often considered for children who show some signs of autistic disorder, but who do not meet the specific diagnostic criteria for the other PDDs.

Rett Disorder: Rett disorder is a complex neurological disorder that affects mainly girls, but there are reports of males who have this disorder. Rett disorder is genetic in origin and is among the most common genetic cause of profound intellectual and physical disability in girls, occurring more commonly than one in ten thousand female births. Individuals with Rett disorder develop normally until six to eighteen months of age followed by a developmental regression. This regression is followed by a deceleration of head growth, loss of purposeful hand movements and followed by the appearance of midline, stereotypic hand movements. A gene associated with Rett disorder was identified in 1999.

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder: Children with childhood disintegrative disorder develop normally for a relatively prolonged period (usually two to four years) before developing a condition that resembles autistic disorder. Typically language, interest in the social environment, and often toileting and self-care abilities are lost, and there may be a general loss of interest in the environment.⁸⁸

The distinctions between these diagnoses hinge on subtle differences in language development, severity, and age of onset (age at which symptoms first appeared), as well as other features that a health care provider can evaluate. For instance, the diagnosis of autistic disorder requires symptoms in all three of the areas described above, as well as a history of a delay in developing spoken language and onset of symptoms prior to thirty-six months of age. By contrast, Asperger disorder is an appropriate diagnosis for individuals who show

⁸⁸ *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition (Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association, 1994), 65-78.

many of the same features of autistic disorder in all three areas, but who specifically do not have any delay in developing spoken language. Pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD/NOS) is a diagnosis assigned to children who have symptoms in all three areas, but who do not meet the specific diagnostic criteria for any of the other pervasive developmental disorders. Parents often tell us their child has received several different PDD diagnoses, which may be due to changes in symptoms over time or variability in the methods of assessment. These diagnoses may include the five listed above, or others (not officially recognized medical diagnoses) such as “autism spectrum condition,” “high functioning autism,” or “atypical autism.” The only way to diagnose someone with a PDD is through clinical means (such as observation and interviews)—there is no “medical test” that can give a clear diagnosis.

The technical descriptions above may be helpful in understand an autistic child. But the following view from an autistic child’s eyes is enlightening.

Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew

By Ellen Notbohm, South Florida Parenting

Some days it seems the only predictable thing about it is the unpredictability. The only consistent attribute is the inconsistency. There is little argument on any level but that autism is baffling, even to those who spend their lives around it.

The child who lives with autism may look “normal,” but his or her behavior can be perplexing and downright difficult. Today, the citadel of autism, once thought an “incurable” disorder, is cracking around the foundation. Every day, individuals with autism show us they can overcome, compensate for, and otherwise manage many of the condition’s most challenging aspects. Equipping those around our children with a simple understanding of autism’s most basic elements has a tremendous effect on the children’s journey towards productive, independent adulthood. Autism is an extremely complex disorder, but we can distill it to three critical components: sensory processing difficulties, speech/language delays and impairments, and whole child/social interaction issues. Here are ten things every child with autism wishes you knew.

1. I am a child with autism. I am not “autistic.” My autism is one aspect of my total character. It does not define me as a person. Are you a person with thoughts, feelings and many talents, or are you just fat (overweight), myopic (wear glasses), or klutzy (uncoordinated, not good at sports)?

2. My sensory perceptions are disordered. This means the ordinary sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches of everyday life that you may not even notice can be downright painful for me. The very environment in which I have to live often seems hostile. I may appear withdrawn or belligerent to you, but I am really just trying to defend myself. A “simple” trip to the grocery store may be hell for me. My hearing may be hyper acute. Dozens of people are talking at once. The loudspeaker booms today’s special. Music whines from the sound system. Cash registers beep and cough. A coffee grinder is chugging. The meat cutter screeches, babies wail, carts creak, the fluorescent lighting hums. My brain cannot filter all the input, and I am in overload! My sense of smell may be highly sensitive. The fish at the meat counter isn’t quite fresh, the guy standing next to us hasn’t showered today, the deli is handing out sausage samples, the baby in line ahead of us has a poopy diaper,

and they're mopping up pickles on aisle three with ammonia. I cannot sort it all out, I am too nauseous. Because I am visually oriented, this may be my first sense to become overstimulated. The fluorescent light is too bright. It makes the room pulsate and hurts my eyes. Sometimes the pulsating light bounces off everything and distorts what I am seeing. The space seems to be constantly changing. There is glare from windows, moving fans on the ceiling, so many bodies in constant motion, too many items for me to be able to focus—and I may compensate with tunnel vision. All this affects my vestibular sense, and now I cannot even tell where my body is in space. I may stumble, bump into things, or simply lay down to try and regroup.

3. Please remember to distinguish between will not (I choose not to) and cannot (I am not able to). Receptive and expressive languages are both difficult for me. It is not that I do not listen to instructions. It is that I cannot understand you. When you call to me from across the room, this is what I hear: “*^%\$#@, Billy. #%^*&%\$&*.” Instead, come speak directly to me in plain words: “Please put your book in your desk, Billy. It is time to go to lunch.” This tells me what you want me to do and what is going to happen next. Now it is much easier for me to comply.

4. I am a concrete thinker. I interpret language literally. It is very confusing for me when you say, “Hold your horses, cowboy!” when what you really mean is “Please stop running.” Do not tell me something is a “piece of cake” when there is no dessert in sight and what you really mean is, “This will be easy for you to do.” When you say, “It is pouring cats and dogs,” I see pets coming out of a pitcher. Please just tell me, “It is raining very hard.” Idioms, puns, nuances, double entendres and sarcasm are lost on me.

5. Be patient with my limited vocabulary. It is hard for me to tell you what I need when I do not know the words to describe my feelings. I may be hungry, frustrated, frightened or confused, but right now those words are beyond my ability to express. Be alert for body language, withdrawal, agitation, or other signs that something is wrong. There is a flip side to this: I may sound like a little professor or a movie star, rattling off words or whole scripts well beyond my developmental age. These are messages I have memorized from the world around me to compensate for my language deficits, because I know I am expected to respond when spoken to. They may come from books, television, or the speech of other people. It is called echolalia. I do not necessarily understand the context or the terminology I am using; I just know it gets me off the hook for coming up with a reply.

6. Because language is so difficult for me, I am very visually oriented. Show me how to do something rather than just telling me. And please be prepared to show me many times. Lots of patient repetition helps me learn. A visual schedule is extremely helpful as I move through my day. Like your day planner, it relieves me of the stress of having to remember what comes next, makes for smooth transitions between activities, and helps me manage my time and meet your expectations. Here is a great Web site for learning more about visual schedules <http://www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/newweb/content/rsn/autism.asp>.

7. Focus and build on what I can do rather than what I cannot do. Like any other human, I cannot learn in an environment where I am constantly made to feel that I am not good enough or that I need fixing. Trying anything new when I am almost sure to be met with criticism, however constructive, becomes something to be avoided. Look for my strengths and you will find them. There is more than one right way to do most things.

8. Help me with social interactions. It may look like I do not want to play with the other kids on the playground, but sometimes it is just that I simply do not know how to start a conversation or enter a play situation. If you can encourage other children to invite me to join them at kickball or shooting baskets, I may be delighted to be included.

9. Try to identify what triggers my meltdowns. This is termed “the antecedent.” Meltdowns, blowups, tantrums or whatever you want to call them are even more horrid for me than they are for you. They occur because one or more of my senses has gone into overload. If you can figure out why my meltdowns occur, they can be prevented.

10. If you are a family member, please love me unconditionally. Banish thoughts such as, “If he would just . . .” and “Why can’t she. . . ?” You did not fulfill every last expectation your parents had for you, and you would not like being constantly reminded of it. I did not choose to have autism. Remember that it is happening to me, not you. Without your support, my chances of successful, self-reliant adulthood are slim. With your support and guidance, the possibilities are broader than you might think. I promise you I am worth it. It all comes down to three words: Patience. Patience. Patience.

Work to view my autism as a different ability rather than a disability. Look past what you may see as limitations and see the gifts autism has given me. I may not be good at eye contact or conversation, but have you noticed I do not lie, cheat at games, tattletale on my classmates, or pass judgment on other people?

You are my foundation. Think through some of those societal rules, and if they do not make sense for me, let them go. Be my advocate, be my friend, and we will see just how far I can go.

I probably will not be the next Michael Jordan, but with my attention to fine detail and capacity for extraordinary focus, I might be the next Einstein, Mozart, or Van Gogh. They had autism too.⁸⁹

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD): Attention deficit disorder is a syndrome characterized by serious and persistent difficulties in the following three specific areas:

1. Attention span.
2. Impulse control.
3. Hyperactivity (sometimes).

ADD is a chronic disorder that can begin in infancy and extend through adulthood, having negative effects on a child’s life at home, school, and within the community. It is conservatively estimated that 3 to 5 percent of our school-age population is affected by ADD. The condition previously fell under the headings, “learning disabled,” “brain damaged,” “hyperkinetic,” or “hyperactive.” The term attention deficit disorder was introduced to describe the characteristics of these children more clearly.

There are two types of attention deficit disorder, both of which are described below.

⁸⁹ Freelance writer and consultant Ellen Notbohm is a columnist for *Autism/Asperger’s Digest* and co-author of *1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders* (Future Horizons). She favors “common sense” approaches to raising her sons with autism and ADHD. She lives in Oregon.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):

According to the criteria in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (3rd ed., rev.) (American Psychiatric Association, 1987), to be diagnosed as having ADHD a child must display, for six months or more, at least eight of the following characteristics prior to the age of seven:

1. Fidgets, squirms, or seems restless.
2. Has difficulty remaining seated.
3. Is easily distracted.
4. Has difficulty awaiting their turn.
5. Blurts out answers.
6. Has difficulty following instructions.
7. Has difficulty sustaining attention.
8. Shifts from one uncompleted task to another.
9. Has difficulty playing quietly.
10. Talks excessively.
11. Interrupts or intrudes on others.
12. Does not seem to listen.
13. Often loses things necessary for tasks.
14. Frequently engages in dangerous actions.

Undifferentiated Attention Deficit Disorder:

In this form of ADD, the primary and most significant characteristic is inattentiveness; hyperactivity is not present. Nevertheless, these children still manifest problems with organization and distractibility, and they may be seen as quiet or passive in nature. It is speculated that undifferentiated ADD is currently underdiagnosed, since these children tend to be overlooked more easily in the classroom. Thus, children with undifferentiated ADD may be at a higher risk for academic failure than those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The following tips may be helpful for teaching ADD students:

1. Seat students with ADD near the teacher, but include them as part of the regular class seating.
2. Place these students up front with their backs to the rest of the class to keep other students out of view.
3. Surround ADD students with good role models, preferably students whom they view as significant others.
4. Encourage peer tutoring and cooperative/collaborative learning.
5. Avoid distracting stimuli. Try not to place students with ADD near air conditioners, high traffic areas, heaters, or doors or windows.
6. Children with ADD do not handle change well, so avoid transitions, physical relocation (monitor them closely on field trips), changes in schedule, and disruptions.
7. Be creative! Produce a stimuli-reduced study area. Let all students have access to this area so the student with ADD will not feel different.

8. Encourage parents to set up appropriate study space at home, with set times and routines established for study, parental review of completed homework, and periodic notebook and/or book bag organization.
9. When giving instructions to students with ADD, be careful to do the following: Maintain eye contact during verbal instruction. Make directions clear and concise. Be consistent with daily instructions. Simplify complex directions. Avoid multiple commands. Make sure students comprehend the instructions before beginning the task.
 - a. Repeat instructions in a calm, positive manner, if needed.
 - b. Help the students feel comfortable with seeking assistance (most children with ADD will not ask for help).
 - c. Gradually reduce the amount of assistance, but keep in mind that these children will need more help for a longer period of time than the average child.

Giving Assignments

1. Give out only one task at a time.
2. Monitor frequently. Maintain a supportive attitude.
3. Modify assignments as needed.
4. Make sure you are testing knowledge and not attention span.
5. Give extra time for certain tasks. Students with ADD may work slowly. Do not penalize them for needed extra time.
6. Keep in mind that children with ADD are easily frustrated. Stress, pressure, and fatigue can break down their self-control and lead to poor behavior.

MENTALLY HANDICAPPED

A mental handicap is defined as significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period. A student with a mental handicap may be eligible in one of three areas:

1. An educable mentally handicapped student is a student who is mildly impaired in intellectual and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of an educable mentally handicapped student generally falls between two and three standard deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below that of other students of the same age and socio-cultural group.
2. A trainable mentally handicapped student is a student who is moderately or severely impaired in intellectual and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of a trainable mentally handicapped student generally falls between three and five standard deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below that of other students of the same age and socio-cultural group.

3. A profoundly mentally handicapped student is a student who is profoundly impaired in intellectual and adaptive behavior and whose development reflects a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of a profoundly mentally handicapped student generally falls below five standard deviations below the mean, and the assessed adaptive behavior falls below that of other students of the same age and socio-cultural group.

These students do best with a one-on-one setting (teacher/student). Staff resources might not permit this setting. Having a mentally handicapped student in the classroom can be an educational experience for the other students. They can be taught to respect and love these wonderful human beings. Students can be a helpful resource to assist the teacher with these students.

EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED

Children found to have emotional disability exhibit behaviors that are severe, consistent, and sustained over a period of time. These behaviors are so severe that they interfere with the child's ability to learn, and they are beyond the tolerance level of individuals that the child comes in contact with at school and in the community.

When might I suspect that a child has an emotional handicap? You might observe that a child:

- Has an inability to build and maintain friendships and relationships with other children and teachers.
- Overreacts and exhibits feelings or behaviors that are not suited to the circumstances.
- Shows a general, consistent mood of unhappiness or depression, or have physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- Has an inability to achieve academic progress.

If a Sunday school can make arrangements to help handicapped students, normally parents are overwhelmed with gratitude. There are so few churches that care about these worthy human beings.

There are other handicaps that a teacher might encounter. Space in this workbook does not permit a discussion on all of the various challenges. In conclusion, the following are situations a teacher might encounter.

Epilepsy: This is a brain disorder. It occurs when the electrical signals in the brain are disrupted. This change in the brain leads to a seizure. Seizures can cause brief changes in a person's: body movements; awareness; emotions; senses, such as taste, smell, vision, or hearing. Some people may only have a single seizure during their lives. One seizure does not mean that a person has epilepsy. People with epilepsy have repeated seizures. Most people with epilepsy can control seizures with medication. Certain things can cause seizures: lack of sleep, infections, dehydration, alcohol, flashing lights, medications, fevers (in children). Some generalized symptoms are the following: blank stares, severe jerking, falling, loss of consciousness, loss of bowel and bladder control.

A teacher should be sympathetic with the student affected by epilepsy and avoid magnifying the problem in front of the other students. Good communication with the parents of the student is always advisable.

Communication Handicaps: This can include hearing, speech, and reading problems. Children with these handicaps are prone to misbehaving out of frustration. These handicaps include deafness or poor hearing, stuttering, dyslexia, and autism. If the teacher suspects a problem in these areas the parents or guardians should be notified so that proper diagnosis and treatment can be sought.

DISCOVER YOUR LEARNING STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions:

After reading each sentence, write the number that best describes your behavior. You cannot fail this questionnaire.

3 — Very much like me

1 — Moderately like me

2 — Somewhat like me

0 — Not at all, or very little like me

After completing the statements within each learning style, total your score. The style that has the highest points is your learning style.

IMAGINATIVE LEARNER

- _____ I do my best work when I'm with other people.
- _____ I like a colorful working environment.
- _____ I like to give essay-type answers to questions, rather than specific fill-in-the blank answers.
- _____ I see myself as a friend to my students.
- _____ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students wouldn't get along well together.
- _____ People describe me as a really nice person.
- _____ Part of my self-identity is wrapped up in the number of friends I have and the strength of those friendships.
- _____ Three words that describe me are *friendly*, *sharer*, and *hugger*.
- _____ TOTAL

ANALYTIC LEARNER

- _____ I do my best work alone, after gathering information I need from books or other teachers.
- _____ I like to work at a desk or table.
- _____ I like to solve problems by finding the right answer.
- _____ I see myself as an information giver to my students.
- _____ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students wouldn't learn the basics of their faith.
- _____ People describe me as a really smart person.
- _____ Part of my self-identity is wrapped up in how smart others think I am.
- _____ Three words that describe me are *rational*, *analytic*, and *smart*.
- _____ TOTAL

COMMON SENSE LEARNER

- _____ I do my best work alone, putting together information so it will work.
- _____ I like to work with my hands, as well as my mind.
- _____ I like to solve problems by checking out my own ideas.
- _____ I see myself as a trainer, helping my students do what needs to be done.
- _____ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students wouldn't learn to live their faith in practical ways.
- _____ People describe me as a hard-working, results-oriented person.
- _____ Part of my identity is wrapped up in how well my creations work.
- _____ Three words that describe me are *active*, *realistic*, and *practical*.
- _____ TOTAL

DYNAMIC LEARNER

- _____ I do my best work brainstorming new ideas and trying things not many people would dare to try.
- _____ I like playing with new ideas, making intuitive guesses on what works.
- _____ I like to solve problems by making guesses or following hunches.
- _____ I see myself as a facilitator or idea-stimulator for my students.
- _____ The worst thing that could happen in my class is that students wouldn't take what they have learned and make this world a better place.
- _____ People describe me as a highly creative person.
- _____ Part of my self-identity is wrapped up in how many new ideas I have.
- _____ Three words that describe me are *curious*, *leader* and *imaginative*.
- _____ TOTAL

Based on this questionnaire:

- My strongest learning style is_____.
- This quadrant may be your "home base," the place where you are most comfortable teaching and learning.
- The students I am most likely to miss are those who are strongest in these two learning style quadrants (my two weakest styles):

EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|-----|-------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | All students learn basically the same way. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | Due to the rapid changes in our culture, our population is divided into generational thinking patterns. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | The Builder Generation is patriotic and tends to have more faith in the government institutions than the younger generations. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | The Baby Boomer Generation could be called the “spoiled generation.” |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | The Net Generation has poor computer skills. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | The two- to three-year-olds love noisy crowds and confusion. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | The four- to five-years-olds confuse reality and imagination. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | The six- to eight-year-old has been called the “hustler.” |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | The nine- to eleven-year-old is sluggish and lazy. |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | From twelve to fourteen is a stable emotional age. |
| 11. | _____ | _____ | Personal appearance becomes very important to the fifteen- to seventeen-year-old. |
| 12. | _____ | _____ | Benjamin Spock had a great influence on child-care, especially for the Baby Boomer Generation. |
| 13. | _____ | _____ | The Buster Generation is comfortable with change. |
| 14. | _____ | _____ | As the first postmodern generation, the Busters believe everything is relative. There is no absolute truth. |
| 15. | _____ | _____ | The Net Generation is even larger than the Baby Boomer Generation. |
| 16. | _____ | _____ | Intelligence is an easy thing to measure. You either have it or you do not. |
| 17. | _____ | _____ | To reach the common sense learner use abstract, theoretic ideas. |
| 18. | _____ | _____ | The imaginative learner is anti-social. |
| 19. | _____ | _____ | The analytical learners see themselves as being intellectual. |
| 20. | _____ | _____ | Dynamic learners make poor leaders. |

Fill in the Blank

21. List four symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) _____; _____; _____; _____.
22. List three symptoms of autism: _____; _____; _____.
23. Name one famous person that suffered from autism: _____.
24. The greatest problem a teacher should look for in a student with epilepsy is _____.
25. List three communication handicaps: _____; _____; _____.

CHAPTER 11

KEEPING THE TEACHER FIT

Sidney Poe

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thessalonians 5:23).

*“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth”
(III John 1).*

Fitness means wholeness, wellness in body, soul, and spirit. *Body* refers to the physical man, made of various organ systems (heart, lungs, digestive) with ability to relate to the environment through the five senses. *Soul* is interpreted to be the mind, will, and emotions⁹⁰, areas in which man is most like God, but in which he may grow and change. Man is also *spirit*. When born again, he also has the holy Spirit of God. A redeemed spirit enables man to commune with God, and know peace, happiness, and joy. Fitness assures a teacher of good health, strength of character, and mental vitality, enabling him to serve with faith and optimism.

When energy reserves in a man are depleted, he becomes exhausted. This condition appears to result from life-related stress and tedium brought on by commitment to the incessant demands of job, family, church, and community. Exhaustion must be dealt with in a systematic way in order to restore the interactive homeostasis (balance) that maintains fitness and health in the individual in physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual areas.

Keeping a teacher fit calls for attention to several things:

- (1) Keeping sharp the mental ability, physical capability, and spiritual availability;
- (2) Being apt to teach, having knowledge of the learning process, but also possessing the art and skills necessary for successful teaching;
- (3) readiness to give account, being instant in season, quick to discern and meet specific needs;
- (4) being able to counsel those with special needs for salvation or healing using the Word;
- (5) being prepared in all areas: mental, physical, emotional, psychological, social, as well as spiritual;
- (6) being able to avoid or recover from stress and burnout;
- (7) having a supportive devotional life that replenishes spiritual vigor, renews mental zeal and faith, and prepares and equips the teacher for sustained service;
- (8) being the example for others to emulate; and
- (9) being a fit temple of the Holy Ghost while physically doing the teaching ministry.

This portion of the teacher certification manual concerns keeping the teacher fit by

- a) avoiding burnout,
- b) practicing a devotional life,
- c) being an example of the message we teach, and

⁹⁰ Watchman Nee, *The Spiritual Man*, v. 3 (New York, NY: Christian Fellowship Publishers, 1968).

- d) maintaining physical and mental health.

AVOIDING BURNOUT

The teacher can avoid burnout by being fit and prepared. The Bible account of David's conquest of Goliath helps us see what teachers need to be and to do in order to keep fit and be prepared to face the challenge of teaching (I Samuel 17). First, the emotion of young David was stung when he came upon a battle in array in which the courage of his countrymen flagged and no one accepted the challenge of the Philistine champion. Was there "not a cause," a flock for a shepherd to defend? He understood that the challenge of the uncircumcised pagan was made to Israel's God, and he was unwilling to allow that to stand. David was mentally confident and spiritually filled with faith because he had protected his lambs from a bear and a lion. Learning of the reward promised to the man who would kill this giant, David saw enticement of having his father's family free in Israel, wealth, and getting a princess wife. Socially, David was ready to defend the family honor. His older brothers served in the army with Saul, and here they were shamefully cowering behind rocks at the face of the enemy. Lastly, David prepared physically to meet the giant. His skill with weapons was using a sling, and he wisely chose to remain unencumbered by strange battle armor and untried weapons. He had courage and spoke with certainty of what the outcome would be. The final step in his physical preparation came when he put five stones in his script (bag) to use as ammunition. Preparations in place, David was now equipped, prepared, and ready for battle.

Likewise a teacher must be fit and prepared for battle in physical, mental, social, and spiritual arenas of his life.⁹¹ He must fortify his heart with godly righteousness and freedom from lust. He must renew his mind with knowledge of Christ, not being conformed to the world system but transformed unto godly understanding. He must charge his emotion with commitment to a zealous cause. He must maintain a healthy body as the temple of the Spirit offered as a living sacrifice unto God. (See I Corinthians 6:19; Romans 12:1-2). At the correct time, like David, the teacher must reach for the missiles he himself has selected and put in the script in preparation for this moment. A prepared teacher has a lesson, is full of the Word, and knows how to reach others.

A teacher draws from his own cistern the water trapped previously from a heavenly flow. God's anointing allows the water to flow from within as Jesus said in John 7:38 but it arises out of his own unique personality and being. Know that God prepares His teachers today for the challenge they will face tomorrow. We should never complain because there are lambs to protect, or because the bears and lions rise up against us; God uses them to prepare us for greater conquests for His glory.

Keeping fit requires that a teacher deal with any area of exhaustion arising from extended periods of service. The exhausted condition is deemed "burnout,"⁹² a popular term used since the 1980s to describe an occupation-related stress syndrome. It is prevalent in professional people who work at a specific task or job so

⁹¹ "Preparing the Messenger" in *Building Sermons and Messages*. Mississippi District Training Seminar for Ministers seeking Local License with the UPCI, Sidney L. Poe, 1988-2005.

⁹² Notes from *Coping with Teacher Burnout*. Presented at the Association of Christian Teachers and Schools Conference. Indianapolis, IN, Sidney L. Poe, 1990.

long or so intensely that their motivation, zeal, enthusiasm, and interest wane to the point that they are no longer effective. Literally it means to deplete one's reserve, exhaust one's physical and mental resources, so that little remains to give. Many people continue with reduced efficiency, prompting one individual to say it is like a furnace where "the blower still works but the fire has gone out."

Cost associated with spiritual and mental exhaustion is evident when one in three pastors considers leaving the ministry, and the service from the best trained people in a profession is no longer available. When burnout comes, the standard for quality performance drops and a "don't care" attitude, evident in the best, quickly rubs off, and the effectiveness of co-workers diminishes. Stress in workers warns of an environmental condition that needs attention. Spiritual exhaustion might be God's call for "*all ye that labour and are heavy laden,*" to "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls*" *Matthew 11:28-29*).

AT-RISK PERSONALITY TYPES

Greater risk of burnout occurs in people with a high need for approval and strongly goal-oriented workaholics. Also vulnerable are the unassertive, passive victims who continually give beyond resources. Included are individuals in the helping professions: clergy, teachers, physicians, attorneys, nurses, businessmen, psychologists, and social workers. The risk increases when roles as preacher, teacher, counselor, or parent are in conflict, and the individual must go it alone, listening without a means to purge or vent.

SYMPTOMS OF TERMINAL BURNOUT

Burnout victims show an array of physical, mental, and emotional symptoms of illness. The list includes listlessness and loss of drive, blood pressure changes, abuse of alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs), chronic fatigue, insomnia, weight change, tedium or boredom, depression, cynicism, moodiness, impatience, migraine, excess eating, inflexible stubbornness, and resistance to change. Individuals may be disillusioned, irritable, and withdrawn, be out of touch with family and friends, and worse, neglect communion with God. Of course individuals served by such people receive poor service. Other signs include being hostile, critical, and non-progressive, as well as showing a general malaise and psychological fatigue, followed by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness about making a difference in work and life. Depression is one of the key factors leading to attempted suicide. For an analysis of your status, fill in the "Burnout Rating Scale" given in Appendix 1 and the strain response in Appendix 2. These survey instruments will further familiarize you with symptoms and signs of burnout.

Progressive sequence of stages encountered in burnout:

Burnout progresses through identifiable stages in sequence, each with specific signs that reflect the attitude toward ministry and job service.

STAGE I: Intimate involvement, characterized by enthusiastic and eager performance of the job. There is zeal and joy at doing what one is called and trained to do.

STAGE II: Exhaustion and questioning, marked by great expenditure of energy but failing to gain recognition or reward, followed by a sense of loss, a draining of emotions, weariness, and hurt. This naturally leads to second guessing or questioning in the mind of whether or not the person is right for this work. Mockery of others' efforts, snide remarks or put downs, and detachment in a struggle to redefine their role at work sometimes appear.

STAGE III: Balancing act between the guilt and shame at one's own behavior and the resentment of people they serve as well as the choices of coping denote a continuing downward slope.

STAGE IV: Disappointment and withdrawal. Disappointment with its feelings of hopelessness, sense of helplessness, and being trapped, and loss of effectiveness on the job lead to a sense of inadequacy that causes the individual to withdraw and exhibit a malaise bordering on total exhaustion.

STAGE V: Terminal burnout, the final stage, is reflected when excessive cynicism takes over, the once optimistic attitude becomes resentful, and the person becomes uncooperative and exhibits a sense of why try or of utter failure. At this point, they have nothing left to offer and seek to get out of the responsibility and duty required of them.

Approaches to viewing burnout:

Two approaches are taken to view burnout, dispositional and situational. A person's disposition, character weakness, or inadequacy in self-perception leads to the conclusion that "I am just not cut out to be a teacher" (or other profession). What might be true in training for a secular profession is less likely true since God calls us to serve. When burnout threatens your success as a teacher, seek confirmation from God through the Word, sermon, and prayer.

The second general approach attributes burnout to conditions at work. Exceptionally difficult children, terminal patients, a high stress environment, and negligent leaders make one unable to cope. Obviously the action to take is to change the situation to relieve the stress and make it more tolerable.

The Bible and burnout:

Burnout is not a new phenomenon as two Bible instances will reveal. After three years of imposed drought, Elijah pushed for a confrontation with false prophets and idolatrous leaders that would bring Israel back to God. In a dramatic but emotionally draining victory at Mount Carmel, Elijah was exhausted and so despondent that he prayed to die (I Kings 18-19). Instead, God gently restored him (1) physically by providing food and rest, (2) mentally by giving him three new prophetic tasks, and (3) spiritually by assuring him that he was not alone. These assignments and choosing a successor to mentor into the office of prophet breathed new life into the old prophet.

In a second example, Jesus and His disciples dealt with the exhaustion brought on by long hours of intense spiritual, emotional, and physical demand. After Jesus was rejected at Nazareth, the Twelve sent and returned from a healing and teaching mission, and John was beheaded, Jesus said to His faithful, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while" (Mark 6:31). Principles Jesus provided in this post-

revival restoration merit attention.⁹³ He relieved their stress by (1) changing physical location, away from people, remote, solitary, quiet; (2) a change in responsibility and activity; the One who called and ordained their ministry now ordains a break from ministry; and (3) mandating a change of pace to simply rest awhile, a downtime amongst the clamor of needy people.

Teachers should heed the elements revealed in both instances. A weekend or mini-vacation to get away for rest is almost unheard of to a pastor or Sunday school teacher. Rest requires initiative to “take” a break from schedule. Downtime should be just that; do not fill your vacation with preplanned activities. Aim to restore the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual reserves by caring for yourself. The last section of this chapter will guide you, but remember, your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost helps us keep it fit. We must realize the interconnectedness of the whole body, soul, and spirit and that physical well-being promotes emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Coping Strategies:

The first step to prevent or avoid conditions leading to burnout is to develop strategies to buffer the tension of stress. Determine if your stress comes from work or at home; it is not the events in our lives that cause stress, but rather what we think and say to ourselves about those events. Self-defeating, irrational assumptions about the things that happen to us invite feelings of despair, depression, and anger. Challenge illogical thought patterns and implement simple solutions that redirect thinking. For example, a simple thing like changing “I must . . .” to “I would prefer . . .” gives you the choice. Instead of saying “I should have,” substitute “Next time I will.” A wise future is built on past mistakes.

Ideas you can use to develop a strategy include:

1. Become aware of the problem underlying the symptom(s). Pray to change the individual (disposition) or change the condition (situation). Presence of others who also feel hopeless, trapped, or inadequate suggests there is a situation problem.
2. Take responsibility to do something about the problem. At least tell your leader.
3. Develop new skills and improve the range and quality of old skills for coping.
4. Alter your lifestyle to include regular exercise, rest, proper diet, vacation, and adjusted priorities.
5. Seek inner satisfaction that comes from doing the will of God; avoid guilt from not doing what others expect. A driven person is pleased only by symbols of accomplishment.
6. Select to confide in a few close friends of proven honesty and confidentiality.
7. Accept burnout as a reminder of the inner need for quietness, brokenness, and strength from intimacy of your spirit with God. Suffering and struggles reveal in us the power and concern of God.
8. Allow God to ignite or re-ignite the flame by laying the sacrifice before Him.

⁹³ Frank Minirth, Don Hawkins, Paul Meier, and Richard Flournoy, *How to Beat Burnout*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986).

9. Practice stress-reducing activities that alleviate the causes of burnout:
- To avoid the loneliness of teaching know that you are important and part of something important. Rally a supportive group of colleagues who understand your frustrations and can listen empathetically.
 - Seek new mental challenges and break old routines. Take a new initiative, change class, age levels, or try teaching a different subject using different approaches: cooperative learning, independent study, peer tutoring, or teaming.
 - Learn something new. Cognitive people are inspired by learning something they can incorporate into teaching: facts, magic tricks, storytelling, drama, graphic design.
 - Seek a balance in your life by having interests beyond teaching. Make time for social activities, hobbies, and community service. Avoid talking only about school when you are with friends.
 - Maintain a healthy sense of humor. Humor helps keep things in perspective. Remember Henry Ward Beecher's admonition that "people without humor are like wagons without springs; they are jolted by every pebble in the road."
 - Set priorities to address the vital things. Decide which activities are truly urgent and important and allocate your energies and time accordingly.
 - Take care of your body and its organ systems: exercise vigorously at least three times a week, eat a balanced diet in modest portions, sleep eight hours a night.

Tips for spiritual recovery and restoration:

1. Allow yourself to be inspired by the Word of God.
2. As you go through routines, hum, whistle, sing, or play an old hymn.
3. Seek to apply the Scripture to everyday life activities.
4. Repent, confess, and abandon wrongdoing (I John 1:9) to live free of sin.
5. Practice communion to "feel" close to God (in His presence is fullness of joy).
6. Keep a running list of the specific things you have accomplished through Christ (Philippians 4:13).

THE TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE⁹⁴

Since our God is never weary nor does He faint, He is able to renew our strength as we wait on Him (Isaiah 40:27-31). Renewal is accomplished by time spent in devotion. You can be sure that the teacher who keeps emotionally fit and mentally balanced has an established routine for maintaining a stimulating relationship with God. In this section, we will consider aims of devotional life, its value to teacher fitness, and how it can be established. To devote means to commit or give attention, time, or one's energy to a particular cause. It means to set apart, dedicate, and consecrate oneself completely to a purpose, an activity, or another person. An aggressive approach to devotion can result in becoming exhausted, so be sure to use time wisely, relax, and keep priorities in order. Teachers serve a special place in the body of Christ so curb perfectionist

⁹⁴ Sidney L. Poe, "The Teacher's Devotional Life," *Global Sunday School Training Manual* (Hazelwood, MO: Sunday School Division UPCI, 2004).

tendencies, learn to look for true meaning in the little things in life, and commit to enlisting help in extreme situations.

Aims of a devotional life:

Devotions expand our knowledge of God and His Word, keep us close in relationship to Him, and enable us to sense and follow the Spirit leading, as we grow in grace and godliness to resist and rise above temptation. Devotion sets the stage to receive direction for improved teaching, spiritual gifts, discernment, and sensitivity to the Holy Ghost. Devotion deepens our relationship with God and His Word through religious exercises (prayer, fasting, Bible study, and meditation).

Prayer:

Prayer has a place of priority for people of faith recorded in the Bible and this emphasis makes prayer a high priority in the life of all believers and especially the teacher. Outstanding men of faith were marked by prayer. Jesus was a man of prayer, and through the ages, the church has been marked by prayer. Every great revival had its beginning with prayers of the saints of God. It seems that when God chooses to do something big in the earth, He sets His people to praying.

The disciples' appeal to Jesus to "teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), not merely how to pray seems fitting for every fit teacher. Simple guidelines for effective prayer are to pray in a secret place (Matthew 6:6), "Ask, and you shall receive" (John 16:24; 15:7; Philippians 4:19), "ask in prayer, believing" (Matthew 21:22), and "agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask" (Matthew 18:19). A prayer without faith is useless. If your faith is weak or spent, first, embellish your faith in God by hearing the Word (Romans 10:17).

Jesus' prayer life is a model for teachers. No one was busier than He, yet daily prayer was a higher priority than instructing or healing. His devotional prayer expressed intimacy "in secret" with the Father, focusing exclusively on God with intense emotion. Jesus' prayers are described as "supplications," often accompanied with "crying" and "tears." Devotional prayer is both one of thanksgiving and intercession. Other tips on devotional praying are to:

- Pray with persistence, as not all prayers receive an immediate answer. When motives are pure and the request unselfish (James 4:3), God wills the answer. The importunity of the woman in Luke 18:1-5 is a model for our persistence.
- Know that prayer is for God's children, and effectual prayer is a prayer of faith by a righteous man with an obedient heart (James 5:16).
- Pray in the name of Jesus; "And whatsoever you ask in my name, that I will do" (John 14:13).
- Set your affections on things above and desire only the will of God. Regardless of how much you desire to receive the petitions you ask, the will of God is more desirable (Matthew 26:42).
- Let your prayer, supplication, thanksgiving, and requests be for the glory of God. "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory" (Matthew 6:13).

Fasting and teacher's devotional life:⁹⁵

Fasting is important in a teacher's devotional life because certain things come only by prayer and fasting (Mark 9:29). Fasting means to voluntarily abstain from eating all or certain foods and from drink for a prescribed period of time in order to achieve a specific purpose. Fasting afflicts the body with its natural appetites, and allows the spiritual man within to be promoted to attention. Fasting deprives the body of the luxuries of life and participants often even put on sackcloth and ashes and set their mind to mourn for the period of the fast. Cornelius' fasting brought an answer to his prayers and salvation to his household (Acts 10:30).

The purpose of fasting is to loosen the grip of the temporal and material world. This enables one to concentrate on unseen, eternal values of the inner man. It is to be done in humility before God, in reverence to the Word and principles of God, and in secret (privately) without ostentation or seeking of praise, or honor of men. It is for a deepening devotional relationship. Isaiah 58:1-10 provides basic principles and guidelines for the exercise of a fast to please God. A profitable devotional fast will include:

- (1) Set clear goals for the fast and know what is to be accomplished. Posted reminders of goals and a partner who will hold you accountable will help you push through the quitting points.
- (2) Define what you are abstaining from and for how long, whether pleasures of food, drink, music, entertainment, sex, reading, or travel.
- (3) Accompany the fast with periods of prayer and meditation, asking for the will of God.
- (4) Evaluate your progress by checking your attitude, habits, desires, priorities, and activities. Record your progress notes in a journal.
- (5) Never boast about fasting, but do not feel compelled to keep the fact hidden. By sharing your lead others may be encouraged in spiritual discipline.

Bible study and the teacher's devotional life:

Studying the Bible has been likened to finding gold in a mine. Locating the richest ore, choosing tools to extract it, and the best way to process the ore to refine the metal become the challenge. Like mining, reading the Bible and sifting through much Scripture can be hard work, unexciting, even dull. Because the Word of God is important, we need a plan. First, have an aim for each Bible study as well as tools you can use to complement your learning style. Devotion aims at personal transformation, and internalizing Bible wisdom will transform until the image of Christ be formed in us. Devotional Bible study calls for more than knowledge for it is application that transforms us. Finding answers to the following questions will help.

- a. What attitude do I need to adjust?
- b. What things in my life can I start or stop?
- c. What should I believe or stop believing?
- d. What ethical relationships do I need to develop? And
- e. How can I show the plan of God to others?

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Establish a deliberate systematic or topical approach to Bible study in an individualized plan. Set a time each day and dedicate a special place equipped with reference books, writing implements for your Bible study and meditation. Begin with a few minutes of quiet meditation to read the Bible, think on the Word, and talk to God. Silence the telephone, video, computer, radio, tapes, and compact discs. Some find soft background music helpful to focus. Pray for cleansing from sin, for Spirit guidance, and for perfect understanding and harmony with God, knowing that the carnal mind is enmity and cannot understand God (I Corinthians 2:10-3:4). Finally, write out a practical application from insights you gain. To make the insights personal, use the first person pronoun singular (I will).

Devotion in the life of a teacher speaks of strong attachment and affection to God. A deep and abiding personal relationship with God exercised through daily interaction with God in prayer, meditation, study of His Word, and service provides both mental and emotional stability necessary to keep fit and avoid burnout.

Consistent meditation with prayer and thoughtful study of the Word allows God to systematically work in all areas of our life to remove exhausting things from the heart that detract from ministry, and to instill supportive things in the heart that enhance ministry. Through devotional meditation, the teacher allows the Word to deal with covetousness, envy, jealousy, carelessness, lust, insensitivity, pride, materialism, and other beggarly elements of carnality that limit effective teaching. In our devotions, we come to accept new strengths, courage, greater faith, purer intentions, deeper convictions, higher ambitions, and stronger inspiration for the work of the teaching ministry.

Tips for emotional recovery and good mental health:

1. Laugh (Proverbs 17:22) and practice positive self-talk.
2. Live in the present; stay focused on what is vital and important.
3. Do something for mental and emotional rest and relaxation three times per week.
4. Learn stress management skills: just say no, settle for limited objectives, and distinguish what is important from what is urgent.
5. Learn to deal with change in a positive way.
6. Cultivate rewarding and healthy sexual relations with your spouse.
7. Do something noble and sacrificing for someone else each week.
8. Forgive anyone who offends you, avoid being envious or jealous.
9. Vent your feelings and share your burdens to a spouse or trusted friend.

PRACTICING WHAT YOU TEACH

To practice what we teach, a person must be willing to be the example for Jesus on earth. He is to influence others who need positive role models living out biblical ethics and standards. Without godly models, we are cast into a restless sea that can only toss up refuse and mud (Isaiah 57:20). William J. Bennett said, “We—all of us, but especially the young—need around us individuals who possess a certain nobility, a largeness of soul, and qualities of human experience worth imitating and striving for.”⁹⁶

Teachers must realize that a disciple, when fully trained, will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40). Our godliness (or lack thereof) is revealed in action and actions influence students; sons, daughters, and the entire flock who tend to emulate their teacher for good or for evil. Never shy away from this key responsibility, but as a mature and fit teacher, accept the challenge of this responsibility.

Principles related to being the example who practices what we teach:

Being a godly example is commanded.⁹⁷ While the world looks for someone to follow, God appoints. Teachers must choose the *kind* of example and witness they are to be and provide others with an example of authentic Christ-like living. Any model followed solely because of dynamic personality, talent, giftedness, training, enthusiasm, or charisma leaves much to be desired. The fit teacher will manifest biblical qualities of spiritual character produced in them by the work of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:12; Galatians 5:22).

Problems teachers face in being an example include manifesting character that is the direct result of walking with Jesus Christ. How can the world note when a teacher, like the disciples, has been with Jesus? There is also the risk of being a poor example. Since students justify their behavior using the standards of what we say, of the way we live, of our priorities, values, and attitudes, as well as our actions, one wrong example will disillusion and pull people away from Jesus. There is also the problem of giving a clear reason for the way we live and purpose of life. When we fail to let others know why we are different, we fail in being godly examples. “*But set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope you possess*” (I Peter 3:15). One thing always worthy to be imitated is the pursuit of holiness from a pure heart set on heavenly treasures and divine objectives (Philippians 3:8-14, 19-20). Holiness serves as a powerful magnet to draw others to Christ.

We conclude this section on practicing what you teach by stating three conclusions. First, with Jesus as their own personal model (John 15:13; I Peter 2:21; Ephesians 5:1), mature teachers recognize that they are responsible to live out the reality and character of Christ for those they teach (I Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; I Peter

⁹⁶ *Kindred Spirit*, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 10. Dr. Bennett served as President Reagan’s Secretary of Education and gained national acclaim as President Bush’s “drug czar.” He is the author of *The Death of Outrage: Bill Clinton and the Assault on American Ideals*, and he served as editor of *The Book of Virtues*.

⁹⁷ I Corinthians 11:1 and I Thessalonians 1:6 “Be *imitators* of me, just as I also am of Christ.” “And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, when you received the message with joy that comes from the Holy Spirit, despite great affliction.” “Imitate” refers to one who mimics another. It is an active noun which brings out the concept of an active responsibility, but we should not let the word *mimic* fool us. This is not a superficial mimicry or a mere imitation. Christian imitation has little to do with outward conformity where someone merely copies the actions, mannerisms, or speech of another. The Greek word is from *mimeomai*, “to imitate, emulate, use as a model.” The main idea here is to follow someone as an ideal model or example as changed from the inside out by means of the Spirit and the application of biblical truth. See also Hebrews 13:7 and Philippians 3:17-18.

5:3). *Second, teachers may be emboldened to ask others to imitate or follow their example as they, in their own walk (I Timothy 4:12-16), follow the example of the Lord (I Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; II Thessalonians 3:9). Third, the ultimate goal of the teacher must be to help others become imitators of Christ. Teacher and student alike must recognize that the common goal is to become like Jesus who is our perfect model (I Peter 2:21).*

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH⁹⁸

To keep fit, a teacher must take steps to (1) maintain good health and (2) restore any area affected by stress and burnout. Dysfunction occurs when a body system or elements of spirit or soul are out of equilibrium, and although each area is somewhat distinct, they are interconnected. Good health results when body, soul, and spirit are kept in proper balance. It is the integration of physical body, the spirit, and soul that makes man more than the mere sum of his parts. The soul relates to mind (intellect and reason), will, and emotion. Man's spirit is identified in the godlike qualities of faith, hope, and love.

Physical health of the body is maintained by proper diet, rest, exercise, recreation and attending to the needs of each organ system. Recovery from burnout has much to do with emotional and spiritual renewal, as the incident with Elijah shows. Compared to the total value of godliness, Paul instructed that bodily exercise profits little (I Timothy 4:8), but we do feel better about ourselves spiritually when the body is toned and fit. Good habits for renewing physical health are straightforward but require attention to diet quality and quantity, timeliness, and resolute discipline. Tactics are:

(1) eat proper food: cut back salt, minimize caffeine, reduce intake of fats, and supplement the diet with vitamins, and minerals, practice fasting, and avoid heavy meals late at night;

(2) exercise frequently using the model of stretching to warm-up slowly, build-up gradually, slow-up naturally, and rest-up frequently;

(3) sleep regularly (eight hours a day), rest comfortably, and regulate temperature and ventilation. Release tension by lightening up and enjoying the work. Finish what you start, do it well, and you will feel good about what is accomplished. Learn to "respite relax," take a few minutes each hour to let the body systems and mind go into a relax mode; often deep sighs or breathing helps to let go. Set priorities and delegate your time, resources, and help. Avoid the tyranny of the urgent; do the most important things first.

Intrapersonal care and nurture of the soul (mind, will, and emotion):

Health for the mind requires some understanding of the separate function and interactions of the mind, will, and emotion which make up the soul of man. Mental health today is of much concern as there is a noted rise in mental illnesses and dysfunctions such as dyslexia, addiction, schizophrenia, and bipolar conditions. Hurt from broken family and marital relationships, loneliness, disappointment, depression, and other things that the mind often denies, rationalizes, or blames on others, take a toll on the emotions. Admitting to problems,

⁹⁸ Sidney L. Poe, Ph.D., "Excellence in Spiritual Renewal," Summer Conference of Bible Schools (Hazelwood, MO, Division of Education, July 13-17, 1998).

followed by apology, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation not only help to restore broken relationships but will work wonders to heal emotions. Many diagnosed mental and emotional disorders respond to godly wisdom in counseling. God provides a simple approach to deal with emotionally devastating relationships in the church (Matthew 18:15-17). The actions within the soul (mind, emotion, will) are made increasingly complex when we consider these in progressive interactions with all other areas in the nature of man.

Renewal of soul health is furthered by understanding rhythmic cycles of life. Body cycles are regulated by hormones and affected by environment, lunar phases, and seasons, as well as our emotional state. Cycles, whether circadian, lunar, seasonal, or annual, all include an interval of renewal. Daniel spoke of the rise of one who would change the seasons and wear out the saints, and I am convinced that we burn out when stress increases and the interval between periods of renewal is long.

The organization and purpose assigned to the Tabernacle in the wilderness (or Solomon's Temple) may be used in analogy to symbolize the complex nature of man.⁹⁹ Every aspect of each of the three areas of the Tabernacle and each item of furniture, even the size and composition of wood or precious metals and their uses, had meaning assigned from heaven. The outer court with its altar of sacrifice and laver for washing, externally visible to all, represents the physical body. The Holy Place with its three items, table of showbread, golden candlestick, and the altar of incense represents the soul of man with its mind, will, and emotion. The Holy of Holies symbolizes the spirit of man. What goes on in the Holiest of Holies is private, out of view and can be discerned only as manifest in results. Also, just as the Jews were called to rebuild the Temple after its being burned in order to restore religious function, so must we restore our body, the New Testament temple (I Corinthians 3:16), which houses and attends the functioning of the spiritual things of God. To glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are the Lord's (I Corinthians 6:20) demands attention to all three areas.

THE SOUL, LIFE IN THE HOLY PLACE

The first facet of the soul is the mind with its reason, intellect, perception, and consciousness. Fitness and stability demand housecleaning, renewal in mind. This is done by putting off the old man and his sensual habits followed by putting on a new man created in righteousness (Ephesians 4:22-25). People are led either by their desires or by their discipline (will); the former results in destruction, the latter in construction. The new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him (Colossians 3:10-11), so we intellectually remodel the mind through the power of the Holy Spirit and discipline of devotion, Bible study, and meditation.

Second, life in the Holy Place deals with human emotions, an area far too vast for detailed analysis. Generally emotions are considered to be untrustworthy because they are often triggered by sensory perceptions and not by faith; they are therefore to be held under rigid control. Every choice we make must be subjected to sound logic and disciplined will so that we avoid pitfalls of emotional feelings contrary to sound doctrine. Logical thinking will curtail impulsive actions as well as angry words. In spite of emotions, offer praise even for things that hurt and cause us to react defensively with resentment and impatience. Repent and forgive at once. Jesus taught action to be reconciled with our brother before being accepted by God (Matthew 5:23-24).

⁹⁹ James P. Gills, *Temple Maintenance: Excellence, with Love* (Orlando, FL: St. Luke's, 1989).

Never harbor bitter feelings because hurts nurtured in the emotion risk defiling others (Hebrews 12:15). Laugh at yourself, it's like a medicine (Proverbs 17:22), and use physical exercise (work out, plant a garden, take a scenic walk) to alleviate emotion-related stress.

The third facet of the soul, the will, may be classed as weak or strong, stubborn or reasonable, independent or surrendered. The will empowers the resolve to commit to and enforce decisions made by the mind. Morally, the will of man is free, to act as the mind dictates, but it must be conditioned, exercised for good and not for evil. Because the will is free we can voluntarily subordinate it to the will of God. "Not my will but thine be done" describes a decision in ongoing conflict between the human will and God's will. It is God that works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). In the fear of the Lord, submitting (Ephesians 5:21) the will to your spouse, pastor, and other authorities God has placed over you brings health a teacher needs. In submitting to His parents, Jesus increased in every area of His life (Luke 2:51-52).

LIFE OF THE SPIRIT: THE HOLIEST OF HOLIES

Physical, mental, and emotional renewal, as valuable as they are to balance and wellness, are not entirely adequate for spiritual renewal. Among Pentecostals, a "cry through" as we "pray through" releases anxiety, and abates tension of the moment, but is spiritual health restored? A broken spirit dries the bones (Proverbs 17:22).

The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord (Proverbs 20:27). Man's candle was not destroyed when Adam disobeyed, but it was extinguished, and sin still extinguishes the candle. Jesus said men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick and it gives light to all in the house (Matthew 5:15). The impact of darkness with no light at all is frightening. In a tour of Carlsbad Cavern in New Mexico, our guide turned out all lights at the deepest point where no light penetrates. The darkness was so intense you could almost feel it and perfect eyesight was useless to detect shapes or images inches from the face. This is the darkness in man without his candle. Attempts to rekindle the spirit candle through enlightenment by the New Age or various cults avail nothing, for without Jesus all who claim to help people put the human spirit under a bushel. Only Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12) and those who follow Him have the light of life. It is in the Holiest of Holies that man meets God and his spirit is renewed to health by three distinct functions: communion, conscience, and intuition.

Communion leads a man to God in fellowship, where in solitude, adoring worship, and intimacy, the soul is refreshed by being alone with Him. In the first level of intimacy, God supplies need, but at a deeper level, He becomes the object of devotional praise and adoration. In full communion, there is a helpless dependence on Him in which sharing is mutual. Jesus told the disciples, "ye are friends not servants" (John 15:15). A servant becomes tired and burns out, not knowing what his lord doeth, but disciples are called to come apart to a deserted area to rest awhile (Mark 6:31). The relationship that leads to intimate communion grows with time and experience of togetherness. From Bible devotions, we experience miraculous power, and proceed eventually to the level of fellowship achieved and experienced only in suffering.

Communion with God puts Him on the throne of our heart and our ambitions and sacrifices, even spiritual ambitions, in proper perspective. To personify, communion gently takes spirit by the hand and leads him beyond sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Communion moves along a path where spirit sees quieted gifts, muted understanding, fulfilled prophecies, and puffed up knowledge, standing like sentinels at attention. Along the way, communion climbs over discarded material things to bring spirit into in an area of sensitive stillness marked by the presence of kindness, mercy, and gentle longsuffering; there is no envy, self-vaunting, self-seeking, unseemly behavior, or provoking. In the Holiest of Holies prophecies end, tongues cease, and knowledge vanishes. All that man's spirit cherishes in its temple of flesh becomes subordinated to the presence of God and His abiding love where all is righteousness, joy, and peace. In this state, the spirit experiences comfort, refreshing, direction, boldness, understanding, and renewal of spirit purpose and priority.

Another aspect of the spirit's function in man rests in the conscience. It appears to be a state as well as a function. Conscience is formed in childhood by learning right from wrong, and is quickened by the Holy Ghost at the time of the new birth. Conscience makes one sensitive to acts and thoughts known to displease God. A conscience sensitive to God's will and pleasure quickly condemns any breach of God-like character in us. Further it is a conscience void of offense toward God that provides the means to measure the acceptability of our deeds, attitudes, thoughts, and emotions (I Corinthians 10:25-29). A great danger to spiritual renewal is unresolved disobedience that reduces sensitivity until the dullness results in a seared, unfeeling conscience confusing right and wrong (I Timothy 4:2).

A function of man's spirit that confers instant understanding seems to be intuition. Intuition is akin to extrasensory perception, an act of knowing without use of rational processes, not unlike a word of knowledge provided by the Spirit (I Corinthians 12:8). Spiritual intuition discerns what is revealed from the whole counsel of God that cannot be cognitively deduced. What burdened teacher has not "felt" led to pray for, fast for, or call a student without knowing why. Many speak of being drawn to a particular scripture knowing it was the spiritually inspired thing to do. The mind might think or feel it right, but the intuition knows without a doubt. The natural man cannot receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him because they are spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:14). God often bypasses the physical senses and mind perceptions to impress intuitive understanding directly on the spirit. A man who walks and lives in the Spirit follows intuition and relies on what at times gives understanding, but without conscious thought, senses, or any tendencies shaped by talent or ability.

THREE THINGS LEAD TO GOOD HEALTH OF THE INNER MAN:

First is a spiritual mind. A spiritual mind is achieved from relationship with God entered into through the doorway of listening to the Word and communion. Teachers should read the Bible and pursue knowledge from the heart of God that the mind can relay into the inner spirit. The spiritual mind developed to its fullest capacity links the spirit of the inner man to the outward man, manifesting holiness in the outward man. The mind also communicates what is received in the Spirit so that it can be humanly understood by those we teach.

Teachers and preachers who walk in the Spirit attend to the basics of strengthening and enriching the spiritual man.

Second, to gain deeper perspective through emotions and mind, the teacher must pray until every negative thing is submerged and the conscience is purged of any nagging doubt troubling the spirit. Learn to speak in communion being assured that God hears “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man.” It is also wise to listen as God speaks then rise to practice a “pray and obey” routine. Spiritually healthy teachers persuasively and ably verbalize with conviction what affects them deeply.

The third thing needful to good health is fellowship with the body of Christ. Seek out Spirit-filled fellowship like that described in Ephesians 5:18-21. When one has no appreciation for my psalm, hymn, or spiritual song, the melody of my heart, or if he is not thankful and willing to be subject to me as I am to him, how can fellowship with him enrich my spirit? Choosing to stay around such an individual suggests other, non-spirit motives and leaves the conscience in turmoil. Fellowship in the assembly provides an arena for a teacher to serve God by sharing his gift with those who need it, and to seek out those who have a gift he needs. Spiritual restoration comes only from the body of Christ; any other source is a cistern, not a well.

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APPENDIX 1

Burnout Rating Scale¹⁰⁰

To use this scale, circle the rating number that applies to you in each of the nine categories. Then sum the numbers circled.

1. The extent to which I am feeling negative or cynical about the students with whom I work, despairing of their ability to change and grow.

1	2	3	4	5	6
optimistic					cynical

2. The extent to which I have enthusiasm for teaching, enjoy my work, and look forward to it regularly.

1	2	3	4	5	6
High internal energy for my work				Loss of enthusiasm for my job	

3. The extent to which I invest myself emotionally in my teaching and in students.

1	2	3	4	5	6
High emotional investment			Withdrawal and emotional detachment		

4. The extent to which fatigue and irritation are part of my daily experience.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Cheerfulness, high energy			Fatigue and irritation much of the time		

5. The extent to which my humor has a cynical, biting tone to it.

1	2	3	4	5	6
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¹⁰⁰ Adapted from Roy Oswald et al., *New Visions for the Long Pastorate* (Washington, D.C.: Albans Institute, 1983), 103-108.

Humor reflecting a positive, joyful attitude

Cynical and sarcastic humor

6. The extent to which I find myself spending less and less time with school people.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Normal and anticipated contact				Increased withdrawal	

7. The extent to which I am becoming less flexible in my dealings with students.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Openness & flexibility to student needs & wants				Rigidity in dealing with students	

8. The extent to which I feel supported in my ministry.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Feeling of full support				Feeling of isolation	

9. The extent to which I find myself frustrated in my attempts to accomplish tasks.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Tasks completed				Tasks frequently thwarted	

Total of numbers circled: _____

Analysis of Burnout Survey Scores

0-18 = Positive and healthy attitudes toward self, others, and ministry.

19-25 = Borderline burnout. Care should be taken that burnout does not become more of a factor in your life and ministry.

26-35 = Burnout a factor in your life. Its important to set into motion self-care practices that will reverse this process.

36+ = Extreme burnout a reality in your life. More radical self-care practices needed to reverse this process.

Reaching out for help and assistance advised.

The above Burnout Rating Scale was utilized with participants in two study groups. Both scores and participation in the seminars revealed that 25 percent [one in four] clergy was bordering on burnout. 17 percent [one in six] was clearly in the burnout state, and 10 percent [one in ten] was an extreme case of burnout.

To ascertain the effects of your current state of burnout, the following Strain Response Scale may be helpful. It points up and measures the ways in which your burnout manifests itself in certain dysfunctional aspects of life.

APPENDIX 2

Typical Strain Responses to Burnout¹⁰¹

Our natural physical and psychological response to burnout is referred to as *strain*. The items below are examples of strain responses. When we are experiencing burnout, it is likely that we will respond as described by one or more of these items.

This instrument is designed to help you become more aware of your strain response patterns. It is not a complete list by any means, but it should provide a point of departure for further investigations.

Assign a value to each item according to how often it is true of your behavior or feelings as follows:

0 = Never

1 = Infrequently

2 = Frequently

3 = Regularly

- _____ 1. Eat too much
- _____ 2. Feel tense, uptight, fidgety
- _____ 3. Feel depressed or remorseful
- _____ 4. Like myself less
- _____ 5. Have difficulty going to sleep or staying asleep
- _____ 6. Feel restless and unable to sleep
- _____ 7. Have decreased interest in sex
- _____ 8. Have increased interest in sex
- _____ 9. Have loss of appetite
- _____ 10. Feel tired/low energy
- _____ 11. Feel irritable
- _____ 12. Think about suicide
- _____ 13. Become less communicative
- _____ 14. Feel disoriented or overwhelmed
- _____ 15. Have difficulty getting up in the morning
- _____ 16. Have headaches
- _____ 17. Have upset stomach
- _____ 18. Have sweaty and/or trembling hands
- _____ 19. Have shortness of breath and sighing
- _____ 20. Let things slide
- _____ 21. Misdirect anger

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

_____ 22. Feel unhealthy

_____ Total Score

Analysis of Strain Response Scale

0 - 20 = Below average strain in your life.

21- 28 = The strain of life and work is beginning to show its effects.

29- 35 = Above average strain. Burnout is having a very destructive effect on your life.

36 + = Unless you do something to alleviate the stress and burnout in your life, more serious illness is likely to follow.

EXAM

True or False

- | | T | F | |
|-----|-------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ | To be “fit,” it is not important for a teacher to be well and healthy in body, soul, and spirit. |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | The “soul” is interpreted to mean the mind, will, and emotion of a person. |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | Exhaustion and burnout occur when physical, mental, and spiritual energy becomes depleted. |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | A good way to deal with burnout is to talk to others about it but do nothing. |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | One cost associated with burnout is that the best trained individuals no longer serve. |
| 6. | _____ | _____ | Risk of burnout is generally reduced in personalities who have a high need for approval. |
| 7. | _____ | _____ | A person approaching burnout might become hostile and critical toward other workers. |
| 8. | _____ | _____ | The dispositional view of burnout suggests a person’s temperament and character might not be adequate for the job they are doing. |
| 9. | _____ | _____ | The human body is a temple of the Holy Ghost and should be kept fit. |
| 10. | _____ | _____ | Being a bad example seldom disillusion people or pulls them away from Jesus. |

Fill-in-the-Blank

11. A strategy for avoiding burnout is to practice _____ that reduce stress.
12. To be sure that the vital things get done, a person should set _____.
13. Spiritual recovery allows us to be _____ by the Word of God
14. God restored Elijah physically by providing _____ and _____.
15. “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their _____” (Isaiah 40:31).
16. One aim of devotion time is to expand our _____ of God and His Word.
17. All prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving should be for the _____ of God.
18. The true spirit of a man is reflected in faith, hope, and _____.
19. Dedicating a daily time and special _____ helps a teacher maintain commitment to devotions.
20. People are imitators, and a _____ when fully trained will be like his master (Luke 6:40).

Multiple Choices

21. To practice what he teaches, a person must _____.
 - a. be a godly example
 - b. say “do as I say not as I do”
 - c. withdraw so others can’t judge him
 - d. none of the above
22. Fasting is important in a teacher’s devotional life because _____.

- a. it disciplines the flesh
 - b. it results in spiritual progress
 - c. it voluntarily afflicts the body, mind, and emotions
 - d. certain things come only by prayer and fasting
 - e. all of the above are true
23. In the Temple analogy, life in the Holy Place pertains to the_____.
- a. the body
 - b. will
 - c. mind
 - d. emotions
 - e. a & c
 - f. b, c, & d
 - g. none of these
24. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord and is renewed by a _____.
- a. putting it under a bushel
 - b. snuffing it out
 - c. a & b
 - d. communion with God
 - e. sensitizing the conscience
 - f. d & e
25. In the conquest of Goliath, David's final preparation was to _____.
- a. pray for faith
 - b. gain confidence from his brothers
 - c. decide the cause of God was worth the risk
 - d. select stones for his sling
 - e. try on Saul's armor

CHAPTER 12

SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Gary D. Erickson

“Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law”
(Deuteronomy 31:12).

THE HISTORY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL



ROBERT RAIKES¹⁰²

One of the most characteristic and influential institutions of modern American Christianity is the Sunday school. Some believe the birth of Sunday school was the greatest lay movement since Pentecost. There is some debate concerning the origins of Sunday schools, but Robert Raikes (1735-1811), who was a layman, is traditionally credited as pioneering Sunday schools in the 1780s. He was the crusading owner and editor of *Gloucester Journal* in Gloucester, England. After becoming frustrated with ineffective jail reforms, Raikes was convinced crime could be better prevented than cured. While visiting in the slum section of the city, he was distressed with the idleness and corruption of children. Raikes shared the problem with Rev. Thomas Stock in the village of Ashbury, Berkshire. They conceived a school to be taught on the best available time—Sunday. They decided to use the available manpower—laymen. The curriculum would be the Bible, and they aimed at reaching the children of the street, not just the children of church members.

The movement began in July 1780. Robert Raikes started his first school for the children of chimney sweeps in Souty Alley, Gloucester, (opposite the city prison) in 1780. Described as a cheery, talkative, flamboyant, and warm-hearted man, Raikes was able to use his position as proprietor and editor of the *Gloucester Journal* to publicize the work. At first, Mrs. Meredith conducted a school in her home on Souty Alley. Only boys attended. In those debut classes, older boys coached the younger. Raikes wrote four of the textbooks, but the Bible was the core of the Sunday school. Later, girls were allowed to attend. Raikes shouldered most of the financial burden in those early years. Raikes knew the parents of the poor children were limited themselves, having no idea of instilling into the minds of their children principles to which they

¹⁰² <http://chi.gospelcom.net/GLIMPSEF/Glimpses/glimps034.shtml>

themselves were entire strangers. Some other means of teaching these youngsters must be found, or many more would end up in prisons. Since the children of the poor worked in the factories all week, they could not go to schools and hence had no education. Raikes decided to establish schools for these children to attend on Sundays.

After his first editorial in 1783, schools spread with astonishing rapidity. In 1785 an undenominational national organization, the Sunday School Society, was set up to coordinate and develop the work. By 1784 there were said to be eighteen hundred pupils in Manchester and Salford. Significantly, it was a characteristic of Sunday schools in both the North of England and in Wales that they were attended by adults as well as children.

The idea of Sunday school caught the imagination of a number involved in evangelical churches and Christian groups. They attempted to make school sessions entertaining and varied. Programs had to be planned and suited to the level of the students. Raikes died in 1811. By 1831, Sunday school in Great Britain was ministering weekly to 1,250,000 children, approximately twenty-five percent of the population.

In 1788 John Wesley wrote to a friend, "I verily think these Sunday schools are one of the noblest specimens of charity which have been set on foot in England since William the Conqueror."¹⁰³ The idea of Sunday school reached Virginia as early as 1786 and passed rapidly from there to the leading cities of the eastern seaboard, including Philadelphia in 1790, and Boston and New York in 1791. In 1811 it reached Canada. By 1815 it had become a powerful, popular movement, and by 1824 a national organization, called the American Sunday School Union, had been organized to promote Sunday schools on a nationwide scale. In 1830 this organization undertook a great missionary campaign "within two years to establish a Sunday school in every destitute place where it is practicable throughout the valley of the Mississippi,"¹⁰⁴ and in 1839 it resolved to establish a Sunday school "in every place in the West."¹⁰⁵

Even though Sunday school was started in Great Britain, it achieved its greatest growth and development in America. In 1785, two years after Great Britain had declared the thirteen original colonies a free and independent nation, the first Sunday school was started. Denominations gave credence to these schools by forming societies, unions and conventions which helped to organize, train teachers, and ultimately produce standard curriculum. At the fifth national Sunday school convention, held in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1872, the International Uniform Lesson was adopted. By creating an International Lesson Committee, they arranged, across denominational boundaries, common lessons for all Sunday schools.¹⁰⁶ This standard of curriculum across denominational boundaries continued for many years. Our own organization shared the Sunday school standard in the early days of our development until we were able to begin our own publishing house.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Mennonite Historical Society of Canada,

<http://www.mhsc.ca/index.asp?content=http://www.mhsc.ca/encyclopedia/contents/A45728ME.html>

¹⁰⁶ Clarence H. Benson, *The Sunday School in Action* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966), 20-21.

Historians will classify this era as a romantic age in which culture breaks away from the traditions of the past and pursues the new and the novel. Being idealistic, it emphasizes emotion rather than reason and logic. It disdains authority, favoring individualism instead. To be bold, risk-taking, and experimental in problem solving is praised as innovative and creative. The experimental is valued over the tested and tried. To do things differently is considered contemporary and on the cutting edge.

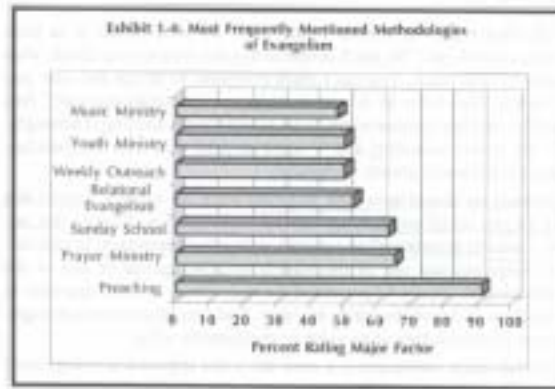
This philosophical view is most evident in the arts. The art critics are attracted to the novel. Anything that pushes the limits of acceptability is praised as being creative and artistic. As a result, the arts sink deeper and deeper into a pit of vulgarity and profaneness.

Our times have been shaped by many influences, the most profound being the explosion of knowledge and the amazing advance in technology. We have seen so many changes in the way we live our lives that change has become an expected occurrence, coupled with rapid and constant innovation in a vast moral breakdown. Our world has become a confusing swirl of moral and philosophical change. Traditional boundaries are being moved and new views of morality are being accepted. These head-spinning changes have deeply affected our philosophy of life and ushered us into a romantic age.

The church growth movement has sought for new ways to reach this generation effectively. Experimenting with fresh methods and innovative tools of evangelism is the spirit of the age. Any method that is old is suspect. This is not an unhealthy thing, considering the changes around us. Nevertheless, this romantic philosophy could cause us to abandon methods that have been tested and tried and proven successful over the years. Since Sunday school is an institution almost as old as the civilizing of North America, some in this romantic age might like to discard it as a relic of the past. Motivated by a desire to be progressive, some have decided that Sunday school is no longer an effective method of evangelism.

The fact that Sunday school is an effective tool in teaching and nurturing Christians is so obvious it has not been challenged, but its effectiveness as an evangelistic method has. This concept has been debunked in a recent survey by Thom Rainer and published in his book entitled *Effective Evangelistic Churches*. This book is based on one of the most challenging evangelistic research projects ever attempted. It is a vast survey that included 576 Baptist churches, which have had at least one convert per every twenty members in a one-year time period. The study included churches of less than a hundred to over fifteen hundred from forty-one states. An important factor to emphasize about this survey is that these churches were winning new people and not just growing in attendance. A church can grow in membership and attendance by drawing people from other churches and not really be evangelizing the lost.

The survey revealed a number of surprises, one of which was the effectiveness of Sunday school as a dynamic method of evangelistic growth. When asked which methodologies were most effective for evangelism, pastors revealed the “big three”: preaching, prayer ministries, and Sunday school (see exhibit).



Taken from *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, by Thom Rainer (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 83.

It is interesting that the category of “relational evangelism” was fourth in importance and that Sunday school is a relational ministry. This overlapping category puts Sunday school in a solid place of importance right behind preaching and prayer. “Sixty-three percent ranked Sunday school as a major factor in their evangelistic effectiveness. Nearly 90 percent of the churches in the follow-up interviews identified Sunday school as their most effective assimilation tool.”¹⁰⁷

Those who find their Sunday school a diminishing ministry should consider Rainer’s exhortation: “Those who think something is inherently wrong with Sunday school should consider two things: First, many Sunday schools are quite effective—the leaders in these evangelistic churches will attest to that. Secondly, churches with ineffective Sunday schools violate the very principles that make Sunday school a viable organization: they dilute biblical teachings, fail to train effective teachers, replace systematic Bible teaching with other types of group activity, and relegate Sunday school to the status of one more church activity.”¹⁰⁸

In follow-up interviews, pastors revealed a high level of enthusiasm for Sunday school. “Leaders have not been oblivious to comments about the prospective demise of the Sunday school. They expressed bewilderment that a methodology so effective in their churches was declared terminally ill by pundits. Indeed, several pastors shared that they listened carefully to the critics, trying to determine if they and their churches were about to be left behind in a future methodological wave. But ultimately all came back to the position that Sunday school is neither ill nor dying nor dead. On the contrary, Sunday school, done well, is one of the most God-blessed methodologies in the recent history of the church.”¹⁰⁹

Rainer says an important factor in making the Sunday school an evangelistic tool is intentionality. There must be a deliberate emphasis on soulwinning and the classes must be geared to evangelize. One church interviewed meets on Monday night for a dinner and then disperse to do visitation—visiting those who were absent from the Sunday school classes and contacting prospective members. The small class setting is

¹⁰⁷ Thom Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 83.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 82.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 90.

conducive to relationship development and one-on-one evangelism. It is also important that the plan of salvation be included in the lesson regularly. “Several church leaders told us that new members or new converts who did not become involved in the Sunday school were likely to drop out of the church within a year.”¹¹⁰

Citing a study by Dean Hoge, Benton Johnson, and Donald Luidens about the demise of the mainline denominations, Rainer emphasizes their conclusion: “The surprising conclusion of the study was that mainline churches were declining because they had failed to provide or emphasize regular biblical training for all age groups. Thus an entire generation grew up in the church without comprehending biblical truths, the uniqueness of the Christian faith, and the demands of discipleship. Without an anchor to hold them, millions left mainline churches.”¹¹¹

In follow-up interviews, one pastor said, “I have been a pastor in California, Florida, and now in Texas. . . . each of these churches, because of different contexts, we had to make some adjustments in our Sunday school organization. But the bottom line is that basic Sunday school principles worked in a blue-collar Florida church, a California yuppie church, and a Bible-belt middle-class Texas church. Sunday school works if it is worked right!”¹¹²

Rainer concluded with the following assessment: “If the responses we received are indicative of evangelistic churches across America, we may anticipate that Sunday school, a methodology from the eighteenth century, will be a methodology of the twenty-first century. Churches will continue to make changes in Sunday school, as they have for two hundred years. But the essential function of reaching, teaching, discipline, and ministry will probably take on a new priority in the renewed Sunday school of the twenty-first century.”¹¹³

In summary, Rainer offers the following keys toward making your Sunday school a dynamic evangelistic tool:

1. *Quality Leadership:* Recruiting qualified leaders and teachers is difficult, but rewarding. After recruiting a good staff, every effort should be made to educate and motivate the team—seminars, books, conferences, apprenticeship programs, and so forth.
2. *Accountability:* This involves making every teacher responsible for his or her class with some sort of reporting system. Making workers responsible to each other requires a lot of work and communication. Goal setting with high expectations of the workers is also essential for evangelism.
3. *Organization Quality:* Someone must have an administrative gift to keep it all together. The structure must be well designed and maintained.
4. *Evangelistic Intentionality:* Deliberately making the Sunday school evangelistic is necessary. It will not just happen. Soulwinning must be regularly emphasized to keep it in constant focus.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 97.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 91.

¹¹² Ibid., 97.

¹¹³ Ibid., 97.

The observance of the Sunday holiday is still a pervasive part of our culture—that has not changed! Sunday morning is still “church time” in North America! It is the most opportune time of the week to win the lost. The maxim applies—“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!”

THE VALUE OF BEING ORGANIZED

The industrial revolution was the movement that catapulted the Western economies into becoming the wealthiest empires in the world. During this era, we became focused on property and physical capital as a vital ingredient for financial success. One of the greatest changes in the business world in modern times is the shift from the physical and mechanical to the power of people. For many years, individuals owned farms or small businesses and the success of those enterprises were largely connected to equipment (tools, machinery, property, office space, factory space, and so forth). Today’s economy is largely dependent upon brain power. The computer age has made physical property less a factor in business. Brain power (the creativity of individuals), leadership skills, and the management of people are the important factors for making a business successful today. This has always been the case in the church. Since the Sunday school is about reaching people with people, it is less about facilities and more about people. Therefore, Sunday school should be thoroughly organized in such a way as to reach and keep as many people as possible.

A well-organized Sunday school is one of the most effective tools of evangelism and discipleship in the church today. It is like many other endeavors—if it is not organized great opportunities will be missed. The Sunday school should be organized into one unit with various parts, giving it unity, harmony, and direction toward one purpose. Organization allows for orderly planning, work delegation, and opportunities for problem solving. Having an organized structure allows the Sunday school to do the following:

1. It allows for formal goal setting.
2. It allows for planning a procedure for achieving the goal.
3. It permits the leader to assign responsibility and monitor progress.
4. It provides a channel of communications between workers of the church.
5. It gives each worker a clear understanding of his or her areas of responsibility.
6. It helps to identify problems that hinder the success of the Sunday school.
7. It provides cohesiveness among the workers.
8. It helps keep everyone working toward the same goals.

ORGANIZING PER THE SIZE OF CHURCH

The following suggestions are offered to help organize your Sunday school:

- A. The small church (0-50 attendance):
 1. Children: Pre-school.
 2. Children: Ages 6-11.
 3. Youth: Ages 12-24.
 4. Adult: Ages 25 and up.

B. Smaller medium church (51-125 attendance):

1. Nursery: Babies and toddlers.
2. Beginners: Ages 2-5.
3. Primary: Ages 6-8.
4. Junior: Ages 9-11.
5. Youth: Ages 12-14.
6. Youth: Ages 15-24.
7. Adult: Ages 25 and up.

C. Larger medium size church (126-200 attendance): At this stage of growth, department leaders can be helpful in keeping the operation flowing smoothly. Otherwise, the load will be too heavy on the superintendent.

1. Nursery Department.
 - a. Babies, toddlers, ages 2-3, and ages 4-5.
2. Primary-Junior Department.
 - a. Ages 6-7, ages 8-9, and ages 10-11.
3. Youth Department.
 - a. Ages 12-13, Ages 14-15, and ages 16-17.
4. Adult Department.
 - a. Singles 18 years old and older.
 - b. Married adults.

D. The large Sunday school (201-400 in attendance):

1. Nursery Department: Babies, Toddlers, and age 2.
2. Kindergarten Department: Age 3, age 4, and age 5.
3. Beginner Department: Age 6, age 7.
4. Primary Department: Age 8, and age 9.
5. Junior Department: Age 10, and age 11.
6. Youth Department: Age 12, age 13, age 14, age 15, and age 16-17.
7. Adult: Singles 18 years and older, young marrieds, and adults.

THE PASTOR'S ROLE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

The pastor is the most important person in a successful Sunday school. He is the chief executive officer. Everything must flow from him. His role is described in Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Paul said that a bishop (pastor) must be "apt to teach" (I Timothy 3:2). Therefore, the pastor should teach the entire church. As a church grows in attendance, this will become an impossible task without help from the talent within the church. The Sunday school teacher is a

delegated teacher, serving as an extension of the pastor. Just as the pastor is a shepherd of the flock, the Sunday school is an under-shepherd, helping the pastor guide the flock.

Everything rises or falls on the leadership. A pastor who grows a church through Sunday school will be considerate of the following:

1. ***He must lead by example:*** “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (I Peter 5:1-2).

2. ***He leads with preaching:*** “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).

3. ***He leads with watchful care:*** “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch” (Acts 20:29-31).

4. ***He is to lead with wise decision-making:*** “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (I Peter 5:2-4).

5. ***He leads by choosing good workers:*** Paul warned about installing workers to quickly. “Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure” (I Timothy 5:22).

The pastor’s excitement for Sunday school will spread throughout the congregation.

THE ROLE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT OR DIRECTOR

The superintendent should work under the direction of the pastor, helping him to reach his goals of the church. Submission to authority is a requirement for being in authority (Romans 13:1-5; Hebrews 13:17; and I Peter 2:13). The Sunday school superintendent should supervise the entire Sunday school operation. His duties should include the following:

Superintending: He or she should organize and execute the weekly Sunday school program by planning ahead and executing the plan.

a. ***Facilities:*** The superintendent should provide adequate classroom facilities by every means possible. Being knowledgeable of the church plant layout and the specific age-group needs will help in finding solutions to space requirements.

b. ***Curriculum:*** The superintendent should provide good curriculum for the teachers. Word Aflame Publications produces excellent materials for all ages. It is written by Oneness Apostolic writers and no editing will be necessary. The price for the material is competitive with the marketplace.

c. ***Supplies:*** The superintendent should provide crafts and teaching supplies such as scissors, crayons, glue, construction paper, bulletin board materials, audio/visual equipment, staplers, and so forth.

Building a supply room is a great idea or providing a budget for the teachers will allow them to purchase their own materials.

d. Structure: The superintendent should structure the Sunday school to reach all ages as efficiently as possible (establishing schedules, organizing reporting and record keeping, providing furniture suitable for the age level, and so forth).

e. Building staff: The superintendent should make sure every class has a teacher each Sunday. Discovering talent, recruiting and training teachers is a constant challenge. Building a good substitute pool is also important. Some teachers do not want to teach every Sunday, but they are great substitutes.

f. Efficiency: The superintendent should make sure that all aspects of the Sunday school are working efficiently by implementing a consistent schedule and seeing that workers are prompt at their stations and well prepared.

g. Communication: The superintendent should communicate thoroughly with the staff so that everyone knows what his or her responsibilities are. He or she should also follow up to make sure the job is done. People do not always do what you *expect*; they do what you *inspect*.

h. Record keeping: The superintendent should see that careful records are kept of the total attendance as well as the individual class records. A secretary in each classroom and a general Sunday school secretary will be helpful with this project. This will allow the leadership to plan and strategize for more efficient growth.

i. Promotion: The superintendent should promote Sunday school. He or she should believe in the ministry and persuade others to see the need for this excellent tool of evangelism. Enthusiasm for growth and progress is a necessity.

j. Outreach to community: The superintendent should seek ways to let the community know about the ministry of Sunday school (door-to-door canvassing, bulk mailings, bus ministry, car ministry, newspaper ads, radio ads, attendance drives, commemorating special dates, and so forth). The overwhelming majority of North American parents today want to put their children in a good Sunday school. We must let the community know what we have to offer.

k. Teacher training: The superintendent should seek ways to train teachers and Sunday school workers. Every possible way should be perused to educate the staff (weekly meetings, books and literature, attending seminars, teacher certification programs, and sharing any new insights). Some program should be implemented to train prospective teachers.

l. Recruiting: The superintendent should constantly be recruiting new teachers. The responsibility for building an efficient staff of workers is on his or her shoulders. Always follow the specific guidelines provided by the pastor.

m. Innovation: The superintendent should be innovative. We must stay abreast of the community and cultural trends and be creative in implementing cutting-edge methods of reaching souls.

THE ROLE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SECRETARY

The secretary should work under the supervision of the superintendent to collect offerings, attendance, and visitor information each Sunday from the class secretaries and construct a formal report.

1. Accurate records of the weekly attendance and offerings should be kept.
2. Some system of reporting to the church should be implemented (verbal public report, bulletin boards, church paper, and so forth). This will allow the church to be involved with the excitement of growth.
3. The secretary can assist in acquiring curriculum and seeing that it is distributed to the teachers within a reasonable time frame.
4. The secretary can assist with contacting visitors with cards and letters.

THE ROLE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

The Sunday school teacher should work under the supervision of the superintendent. The teacher is responsible for the decoration of the assigned classroom and for teaching, nurturing, and shepherding the students under his or her care.

1. The teacher should be prepared so he might teach with skill and efficiency.
2. The teacher should have a burden for the spiritual well-being of each student.
3. The teacher should have a consistent personal devotional life.
4. The teacher should use various teaching methods that will be effective in communicating the biblical truth to the students.
5. The teacher should get to know every student in the classroom (know their names, learning their personalities, home environment, mental aptitude, spiritual level, and any other personal information that would be helpful in reaching the student).
6. The teacher should be an example to the students inside and outside the classroom.
7. The teacher should serve as an under-shepherd (pastor) of the students (calling, visiting, sending cards, counseling, and so forth for the absentees and for those with special needs).
8. The teacher must be punctual arriving at least fifteen minutes before the class session begins.

THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT TEACHERS

Assistant teachers can be helpful with various chores associated with running the classroom. They should work under the supervision of the head teacher of the class. They can teach, tell the lesson story, decorate the class, build bulletin boards, lead in prayer, help with discipline, distribute and collect supplies, maintain supplies, and so forth.

THE ROLE OF THE CLASS SECRETARY

The class secretary should work under the supervision of the teacher to collect the offering, do roll call, keep records, and do reports.

1. The class secretary should conform to the system established by the Sunday school secretary.

2. They can send cards to absentees, monitor the supplies, and help in various ways to keep the class in order.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MEETINGS

Every effective Sunday school will have regular meetings (weekly, bimonthly, monthly, or quarterly). In addition, annual planning meetings can be helpful. These meetings should be chaired by the pastor or the superintendent.

1. These meetings will help to plan, monitor progress, educate workers, communicate goals and plans, trouble shoot, and boost morale.
2. The meetings should be set up on a consistent schedule that is suitable for the majority of the staff.
3. They should be concise, interesting, motivating, informative, spiritual, and professional. Do not waste workers' time by starting late and rambling without clear direction.
4. The entire Sunday school team should have times of prayer together for the progress of the ministry.
5. Provide a forum for workers to express themselves about the needs of the Sunday school. Make every worker feel like he is a part of the total operation.
6. Be sure to implement the decisions made at the meetings. If projects are not followed through, the meetings will be a waste of time. This will cause a loss of morale.
7. Remember the workers are volunteers. The time they give is an offering to God's work. They are not employees. They should be treated with respect and appreciation.
8. Gifts and special recognition to the teachers can be beneficial for morale.
9. Each worker should get a concept of the entire vision of the church and not just his classroom.

TEN ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS

1. Job descriptions: Each job in the Sunday school should have a written job description specifying exactly what is expected of the worker who fills that specific position. Each job description should be written in harmony with the other jobs of the Sunday school so that no serious overlapping or overlooking of responsibility occurs.

2. Use qualified people to fill these important roles: Every worker should have repented of their sins, be filled with the Holy Spirit, baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and living a victorious life for God.

- a. They should love people and be willing to give of their time for others.
- b. They should have good people skills and be a peacemaker.
- c. Every worker should be a supporter of the pastor.
- d. They should be faithful to all of the weekly church services.
- e. They should faithfully tithe their income to the church.
- f. They should comply with the standards of conduct specified by the pastor.

3. **Communicate:** “People business” is all about communication, and Sunday school is people business. There is no excuse for a lack of communication today. We have telephones, cell phones, email, fax machines, voice mail, pagers, answering services, and the old reliable snail mail. Communication must be frequent, thorough, accurate, sensitive, and respectful. In addition to the communication tools listed above, the Sunday school leaders have face-to-face communication, bulletin boards, meetings, church bulletins, and personal notes to facilitate better communication.

4. **Express appreciation:** Showing appreciation is a great motivation incentive. Although we should do our work for the kingdom of God and do not seek rewards in this life, receiving praise for the good we do is always helpful. We must remember that Sunday school workers are volunteers and are donating their time. Frequent words and gifts of appreciation, awards for achievement, and various perks will keep the staff motivated.

5. **Celebrate:** Frequently we achieve our goal to then immediately plunge into the next challenge. Keeping a challenge before the staff is an excellent idea if we take time to celebrate our victories (i.e. a dinner out, an informal meeting with refreshments to discuss the results, or a trip together).

6. **Mind the details:** The old saying is “the devil is in the details.” Broad concepts and plans are always exciting, but someone must do the hard work of refining the project to make it work. Without proper planning, a grand project will fall apart due to lack of detailed planning. The imagination must be engaged to foresee the pitfalls and challenges before they arrive on our doorstep.

7. **Plan ahead:** Projects must be planned far enough in advance to avoid having to induce panic getting the project finalized. Planning a timetable including comfortable margins will allow workers to systematically and comfortably get the job done.

8. **Pray together:** Prayer is a great way to melt walls of separation and detachment. Community prayer will unify the staff with common goals and purpose. They will learn to share with one another their triumphs and challenges. They will learn to be interdependent as the body of Christ.

9. **Allow input:** People need to be given opportunity to voice concerns and ideas. This will make each staff member feel a part of the program. Also, people do have excellent ideas! Providing a suggestion box or allowing a time during meetings to air out frustrations can be a productive time of insightful innovation.

10. **Learn to delegate:** Do not try to be a “one-man-show.” Delegation will free up your time and energy for more important things. It will give others opportunity to use their talents for the work of God. They may not do as good a job as you, but over time they will learn. Delegation is not “passing the buck,” but it is the mark of good leadership.

An organized Sunday school with a well-trained Sunday school staff is the number-one greatest tool of evangelism and discipleship in the church today! Sunday school is not a gamble; it has a proven track record! The investment of time and energy will not be wasted. With the passing of time, the dividends will be enormous!

EXAM

Fill in the blanks with the ten words/phrases listed below:

1. _____ is the man given credit for starting Sunday school over two hundred years ago in Gloucester, England.
2. Sunday school is a great tool for _____ the lost and _____ believers.
3. Sunday is still considered _____ in North America.
4. Sociologist will refer to this age as a _____ age due to its love for experimentation and lack of respect for tradition.
5. Thom Rainer's research found that _____ is the third most important tool of evangelism in the church today.
6. Some believe that the birth of the Sunday school movement was the greatest lay ministry event since _____.
7. Some believe one of the main reasons that mainline denominations are declining is due to the lack of good _____.
8. Thom Rainer's research found that nearly 90 percent of the churches in the follow-up interviews identified Sunday school as their most effective _____.
9. Being _____ helps a Sunday school to set goals and achieve those goals.
10. Writing a _____ for every position in the Sunday school will help to communicate the boundaries of responsibilities.

Pentecost	assimilation tool	organized
Bible training	Sunday school	job description
church time	romantic	Robert Raikes
evangelizing	disciplining	

True or False

T F

11. _____ Since Pentecostals depend upon the Holy Spirit for guidance, we do not need to be so concerned about organization.
12. _____ Sunday school is an old-fashioned and ineffective idea and should be replaced with Holy Ghost rallies.
13. _____ The pastor is the chief executive officer of the church.
14. _____ The pastor is the shepherd of the flock and the Sunday school teacher could be called an "under-shepherd."
15. _____ Sunday school teachers are under the authority of the superintendent/director and the pastor.
16. _____ Keeping Sunday school attendance records and recording visitor information is a waste of time.

17. _____ Little qualifications are needed for teachers, especially those teaching children.
18. _____ Do not waste time celebrating your victories—move on quickly to the hard work at hand.
19. _____ Every healthy Sunday school will have regular meetings with the staff.
20. _____ The Sunday school teacher should always arrive early for class.

Matching

From the list choose the corresponding responsibilities:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------------------|
| 21. Sunday school superintendent | _____ | a. Chief executive of church |
| 22. Pastor | _____ | b. Classroom manager |
| 23. Sunday school teacher | _____ | c. Organizes the Sunday school |
| 24. Sunday school secretary | _____ | d. Keeps class records |
| 25. Classroom secretary | _____ | e. Keeps records of the entire Sunday school |



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Pastor's signature _____ Print _____

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Mentor's signature_____ Print_____

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