

The Principles of Teaching

*A manual to help all those who teach children
and who want to become better teachers*

BY
SAMDOHERTY

A series of devotional manuals for children's workers

"The Problems of a Children's Worker - and God's Solution"

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Table of Contents

Foreword	v
Introduction	vii
Section A: “I Am Thinking about Teaching”	1
The Six Basic Principles of Teaching	
Chapter 1: “First Things First”	2
The Principle of Dedication	
Chapter 2: “Why Bother?”	7
The Principle of Motivation	
Chapter 3: “What Are We Talking About?”	18
The Principle of Definition	
Chapter 4: “Let There Be Light”	25
The Principle of Illumination	
Chapter 5: “The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock . . .”	33
The Principle of a Good Foundation	
Chapter 6: “The Key Which Unlocks the Door”	40
The Principle of Intercession	
Section B: “I Am Getting Ready to Teach”	48
The Four Introductory Principles of Teaching	
Chapter 7: “Get Ready, Get Set . . . Go”	49
The Principle of Preparation	
Chapter 8: “Understandest Thou What Thou Readest?”	54
The Principle of Comprehension	
Chapter 9: “Less Means More”	61
The Principle of Concentration	
Chapter 10: “System—The Seed of Success”	69
The Principle of Organisation	
Section C: “I am Involved in Teaching”	78
The Ten Operating Principles of Teaching	
Chapter 11: “Presentation Without Clarification Brings Frustration”	80
The Principle of Explanation	

Chapter 12: “Feed Lambs—Not Giraffes”	86
The Principle of Simplification	
Chapter 13: “Once Is Not Enough”	95
The Principle of Repetition	
Chapter 14: “I Beseech You Therefore Brethren . . .”	101
The Principle of Application	
Chapter 15: “Seeing is Believing”	108
The Principle of Illustration	
Chapter 16: “Tractors and Teachers”	116
The Principle of Attraction	
Chapter 17: “Use Me or Lose Me”	123
The Principle of Participation	
Chapter 18: “Eyes Front”	137
The Principle of Visualization	
Chapter 19: “Oh, Not That Again”	143
The Principle of Variation	
Chapter 20: “Are You Comfortable?”	148
The Principle of Situation	
Section D: “I Am Reflecting on Teaching”	153
The Four Concluding Principles of Teaching	
Chapter 21: “Modelling Our Message and Our Methods on the Master”	154
The Principle of Imitation	
Chapter 22: “Don’t Just Tell Me—Show Me”	166
The Principle of Demonstration	
Chapter 23: “Touch My Heart, Lord”	172
The Principles of Compassion and Passion	
Chapter 24: “What I test Is Best”	177
The Principle of Evaluation	
A Concluding Assignment	186
Bibliography	188

FOREWORD

When asked what subjects she taught, a teacher laughed and replied, “I don’t teach subjects. I teach children!”

She wasn’t suggesting, of course, that **content** in education is unimportant, because it is. Rather, she was reminding us that **intent** is also important in the classroom; for unless learning is translated into living, the student hasn’t really learned.

That’s why this book is important: it tells you what teaching is and how you can teach effectively in the service of the Lord.

“A teacher affects eternity,” wrote Henry Adams in his autobiography; “he (or she) can never tell where his (or her) influence stops.”

That’s what “*The Principles of Teaching*” is all about: teaching for eternity, influencing children to live for Christ.

His training, gifts and experience make Sam Doherty eminently qualified to write this book. He was trained to be a teacher and served in the public schools before entering Child Evangelism Fellowship full-time. He has taught children and adults in many countries and under many circumstances, and God has wonderfully blessed his ministry. He not only instructs but he also inspires, as you’ll discover when you read these chapters.

We live in a dangerous world. People have deliberately abandoned truth for error and aren’t afraid of the consequences, for they’re convinced that there are no consequences. They not only don’t know the difference between right and wrong, but **they don’t want to know!** Moral absolutes are extinct, the word “sin” is no longer in the vocabulary, and everybody does what is right in his own eyes.

Surrounded by the bad examples of adults, the pagan influence of the secular media and the absence of positive moral instruction, today’s children barely have a chance to learn the truth about life let alone the truths about God. Things have gotten so bad that we now weep as we hear of the shocking crimes that young children commit. The only hope for change is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Word of God.

Whether we like it or not, reaching and teaching the children in today's world is a matter of life or death. May we be found faithful as we hold forth the Word of life to a generation in peril!

Thank you, Sam Doherty, for sharing yourself and your insights with us in these pages!

Warren W. Wiersbe
Author and Conference Speaker

INTRODUCTION

This book has for its subject “The Principles of Teaching.”

I have had it on my heart for years to think this whole subject through carefully, and to put some things down in writing—both for my own benefit, and for the benefit of others who work with children. I am anything but an expert on the subject; and the more I have studied it, the more inadequate I feel.

Teaching is an art—like painting, cooking or playing a musical instrument. Each art has its own techniques. The painter must learn how to mix his colours, and how to make his brush strokes. The cook must learn how to choose his ingredients, and how to blend them properly. The musician must learn how to master his instrument, and how to read music.

The teacher must also learn the techniques at **his** disposal. We must not be afraid of the word “technique” or the word “principles.” Some are suspicious of these words when used in connection with Christian work. Techniques are often thought to be unspiritual in case the teacher’s “know how” would become a substitute for the Holy Spirit.

However, the study and use of techniques and principles in no way deny God’s call to us, or God’s ability to work through us. The word “technique” or “principles” only means **“the right way of doing a thing.”** A principle is a fundamental truth, guideline or law with regard to any given subject. The understanding and putting into practice of recognised principles of pedagogy and teaching do not, in any way, minimize the work of the Holy Spirit.

We must keep a balance at all times. We must teach as well and as thoroughly as we can and, at the same time, we must leave the question of spiritual understanding and results in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

There are two errors that we need to avoid:

- It is wrong to believe that teaching is purely a mechanical and human process, and that if I teach in a certain way spiritual results must follow. There can be no such guarantees. Such reasoning is generally true for a day school teacher when

teaching a secular subject—but not for us who are aiming at life changing results.

- It is equally wrong to believe that, because the Holy Spirit gives understanding, I do not need to prepare myself to be a good, capable and effective teacher. It is dangerous to feel that if I just “open my mouth, the Lord will fill it.” Teaching is governed by a number of teaching principles, and we will seek to outline these principles in this book. It is my responsibility, as a teacher, to understand these principles, and to put them into practice in my teaching. As I do so, I will be praying that God, the Holy Spirit, will use what I teach to open the understanding of the children (or the teachers) who are being taught. Someone has said that we should “prepare and present as if it depended **entirely** on us; and we should trust and pray as if it depended **entirely** upon God.”

The subject of this book is “teaching.” Not the teaching of children specifically—but **teaching!** The principles of teaching adults are exactly the same as those for teaching children. A change of age group does not mean a change in the basic principles on which the teaching of that group is built. Applications and methods may change; but the principles never change. This point will be stressed at different places in the book.

We also need to remember that variation and differences in the needs of those we teach do not necessitate a change in the basic principles of teaching (which are always constant). Therefore, for example, while much of the content may vary, the **principles** for teaching unsaved children are the same as those for teaching saved children.

In my book I frequently mention John Milton Gregory and the seven laws of teaching. Dr. Gregory was a famous educator in USA, a minister of the Gospel, and the founder and first president of the University of Illinois. In 1884 he wrote a book called “The Seven Laws of Teaching” which has become a standard textbook on teaching.

His seven laws are as follows:

1. A teacher must be one who knows the lesson or truth or art to be taught.
2. A learner is one who attends with interest to the lesson.

3. The language used as a medium between teacher and learner must be common to both.
4. The lesson to be mastered must be explained in the terms of truth already known to the learner—the unknown must be explained by the known.
5. Teaching is arousing and using the pupil's mind to grasp the desired thought or to master the desired art.
6. Learning is thinking into one's own understanding a new idea or truth or working into habit a new art or skill.
7. The test and proof of teaching done—the finishing and fastening process—must be a reviewing, rethinking, reknowing, reproducing, and applying of the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideas and arts that have been communicated.

All of these laws are included, at one place or another, in this book.

The pages which follow, then, outline the **principles of teaching**.

There are three things which we need to do with these principles of teaching—whether we are teaching children, teaching teachers, teaching Institute students or teaching Bible College students—or even writing literature.

- We need to **understand them** ourselves—and that requires study.
- We need to **apply them** to ourselves and to our own ministry—and that involves fearless self-examination.
- We need to **teach them** to others so that we can help them be better teachers.

We all want to be better teachers. If we have reached the stage when we think we know or have heard everything, it is time to retire! There is nothing more dangerous than a teacher who thinks he knows everything. We all need to keep improving our teaching. Some are better teachers than others; but **all** can improve. Even those who are “born teachers” need continually to improve, and they will only do so through study, training, observation and experience. Every teacher has successes and failures. But the ones who improve are those who consistently try to better their performance.

We could all well pray, “Oh, God, I want to be a better teacher.

Please help me to understand how I can be. Help me not to be content or self-satisfied with my present level of teaching ability. I want to be my best for You, and for the work You have called me to do; because I know it is so important in Your great plan to build Your church.”

It is possible that as you study these principles, and as you examine your teaching in the light of them, you may discover that you have made mistakes. I personally have come to see many mistakes which I have made in my teaching ministry.

However, you should not allow this discovery to discourage you or to depress you. To have made a mistake is not a catastrophe:

- Provided you know that you have made a mistake. The danger is when you make mistakes and don't realize you have done so.
- Provided you determine not to make the same mistake again. You can learn so much from your mistakes!
- Provided you decide to help others not to make the same mistake. In this way you can be of great help to other less experienced teachers.

Much of what is written in this book has been culled from what others have learned and written, and I want to acknowledge this. However, as the contents of this book have “evolved” gradually over a period of many years I have not usually been able to identify and acknowledge the sources from which this help has come. The teaching and writing of Jennifer Haaijer, one of the outstanding instructors in the ranks of Child Evangelism Fellowship, have been a special help, and a source of many ideas and quotations. I have also included much of what I myself have learned from my own experience as a teacher of adults, young people and children during these last forty-seven years—both in public school teaching, and in the work of Child Evangelism Fellowship.

Would You Like to Be a Better Teacher?

As you will read later in the book (page 177) one of the key principles of teaching is that of evaluation, and self-examination. You and I should always be looking at our teaching to see if there is something that needs to be corrected or improved, and I believe that this book can, and will, be a help to you with regard to this.

I see this book as a book to study and not just as a book to read. My own personal advice to you would be to read, study and digest each chapter on its own before proceeding to the next chapter.

I would therefore suggest that as you read each chapter you should look at your teaching in the light of what has been presented in that chapter, and subject yourself to “merciless” self-examination. I am sure that you will gain most from the reading and study of this book if you stop at the end of each chapter, and consider carefully and prayerfully the contents of that chapter. It would also be a help for you to think about the answers to the questions I have included, and to discuss these with others.

Also at the end of each chapter I have provided a little self-assessment chart. This will help you to assess yourself and your ministry with regard to the teaching principle taught in the preceding chapter. You should fill in (with an X) one space in each of the four horizontal lines. I trust that you will find this both a help and a challenge.

The purpose of all of this is not to discourage or depress you, but to stimulate you and encourage you to use what you read and study to reach a higher and better level of teaching.

It is absolutely essential that what is outlined on these pages results in practical application and improvement, and does not become just an academic exercise.

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2 v2).

I am very pleased that Dr. Warren Wiersbe has written the foreword to my book. He is a personal friend of long standing, and has been the Bible teacher at four of our European CEF Conferences. I have sat under his teaching ministry many times and he exemplifies in his ministry the principles of teaching which I have outlined.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *If a new teacher asked you to tell him how he could become a better teacher what would you say to him?*
- *“Teachers are born not made.” What is your reaction to this statement?*

Section A:

“I am Thinking about Teaching” The Six Basic Principles of Teaching

Chapter 1	2
The Principle of Dedication determines WHO should teach Effective Teaching Demands Dedication To God On The Part Of The Teacher	
Chapter 2	7
The Principle of Motivation emphasizes WHY we teach Effective Teaching Requires That The Teacher Be Motivated For His Ministry	
Chapter 3	18
The Principle of Definition explains WHAT teaching is Effective Teaching Depends On A Clear Understanding Of What Teaching Means And Involves	
Chapter 4	25
The Principle of Illumination indicates HOW our teaching can be effective Effective Teaching Depends On The Illumination Of The Student By The Holy Spirit	
Chapter 5	33
The Principle of a Good Foundation shows WHERE we find the message we teach Effective Teaching Is Founded On The Bible, The Word Of God	
Chapter 6	40
The Principle of Intercession reminds us of our most important responsibility Effective Teaching Begins With, Continues With, And Ends With, Prayer	

Chapter 1: “First Things First” The Principle of Dedication

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEMANDS DEDICATION TO GOD ON THE PART OF THE TEACHER

God blesses and uses the teacher who has given his life over to Him, and really wants to serve Him (and the children) in a teaching ministry.

God is more interested in the teacher than in what he is teaching; more in the man than either his message or methods; more in the person than in the presentation. God blesses and uses that which is dedicated to Him. Paul encouraged Timothy to take heed, and to be careful, about his teaching. But before doing that he reminded him to take heed, and be careful, about **himself**.

“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” (1 Timothy 4 v16).

Set Apart for God and for the Children

The Bible often uses the words “hallowed,” “consecrated” and “sanctified.” The basic meaning in each case is that of “setting apart.” That is what the word “dedication” means. Sometimes the emphasis is upon God’s work in “setting apart” (Exodus 20 v11; Genesis 2 v3). Sometimes the emphasis is upon man’s responsibility to “set himself apart” (Jeremiah 17 v22; Exodus 13 v2). Both are essential elements in the process of a teacher’s dedication. God sets us apart to be teachers; and we set ourselves apart to do what He wants us to do.

Webster’s dictionary defines “dedication” as “set apart for a special use.” The teacher is a man or woman **set apart by God** for a special use. He is a dedicated person. Knowing this to be so, he **dedicates himself** or sets himself apart for God and for His service.

The Teaching of Deuteronomy

The book of Deuteronomy stands at a strategic place in the Old Testament. The Israelites' years of wandering in the wilderness have drawn to a close and they are preparing to enter the promised land. Before they do so, God speaks to them once again, and gives them His final instructions concerning what they should do, and what they should not do, in the promised land. These final instructions are contained in the book of Deuteronomy.

There is much teaching in this book about children. God knows, and warns them, that their future in the land depends upon their children, and how they minister to their children. They should therefore **dedicate** themselves to God, and to His ministry among the children.

God underlines, in this book, the importance and the necessity of teaching the children:

. . . "teach them thy sons . . ." (Deuteronomy 4 v9)

. . . "teach them unto thy children . . ." (Deuteronomy 6 v7)

. . . "teach them your children . . ." (Deuteronomy 11 v19)

But before commanding the people to teach their children, God, through Moses, emphasizes each time the importance of the teacher's responsibility to be in a right relationship with God. He makes it clear that the person who teaches the Word to the children must be a dedicated person. He must understand the principle of dedication as a necessary preparation for, and foundation of, his teaching.

He needs to be set apart by God, and to set himself apart, so that his teaching will be effective teaching.

➤ **The teacher of the Word of God needs to study, understand and know the Word of God.**

"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." (Deuteronomy 4 v9)

The dedicated teacher studies and meditates upon the acts of God as revealed in the Word of God, and as seen in God's Creation. He is then better equipped to teach them, and also the great truths which can be deduced from them, to his children.

He needs to have a **mind** which is **saturated** with the Word of God.

➤ **The teacher of the Word of God needs to love the Lord his God.**

“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” (Deuteronomy 6 v5–7).

The dedicated person loves his Lord. He hears the Lord Jesus say to him, “Lovest thou Me?” and he replies, “Yes, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.” Then his heart rejoices as his Lord commands him “Feed My lambs” (John 21 v15).

The dedicated teacher is one who knows, and loves, the Saviour; who knows and loves children; and who knows and loves the message he should teach them.

He needs to have a heart which is **stirred** for the Son of God.

➤ **The teacher of the Word of God needs to separate himself from those things which displease God.**

“Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them: And then the Lord’s wrath be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord giveth you. Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deuteronomy 11 v16–19).

The dedicated teacher separates himself from that which he knows to be wrong and sinful. He does not bow down before

other gods. His one goal is to love, serve, and obey the God of Heaven.

The teacher who turns his back on idols is better able to set an example to boys and girls and to encourage them to do the same.

He needs to have a **will** which is **submissive** to the commandments of God.

God Blesses the Teacher Who Is Set Apart

God invariably blesses the ministry of teachers who understand and practice the principle of dedication, even though they may not understand and put into practice many other principles of teaching!

God spoke to a young man in Northern Ireland a number of years ago; and laid upon his heart a burden to reach children with the Gospel. He did not have much educational background; he had a quite serious physical handicap; he did not have a “good flow of speech”; and he had no training or experience. But he was sure God was calling him to do this work, and he was truly dedicated to his Lord. God greatly used this man for many years in his ministry to children. Many children have trusted the Lord through him.

God is still looking today for yielded and dedicated vessels through whom He can and will work. Are you willing to be one of these vessels?

Of course we all realise how far short we fall from the standards outlined in this chapter. But we need to pray that God will give us a new view of this principle of dedication, and a new desire to be the kind of teachers that God wants us to be.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *Do you know of anything in your life which is preventing the blessing of God from flowing through you and your teaching into the hearts of the children?*
“Make me a channel of blessing today.”
- ↗ *How would you explain 1 Corinthians 1 v26–31 and 1 Corinthians 2 v1–5 in the light of what has been outlined in this chapter?*

- *Read Acts 5 v20, 21, 25, 28–33, 40–42. Would you agree that the “success” of the apostles’ teaching depended more on their dedication than their education, their experience, or their ability?*
- *Can you think of someone who taught you the Word of God and whose life and ministry displayed this principle of dedication? Was that teaching effective in your life?*
- *What would you see as the **necessary** qualifications for a teacher of God’s Word? Which other qualities could be developed with training and experience?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Dedication

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 2: “Why Bother?” The Principle of Motivation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING REQUIRES THAT THE TEACHER BE MOTIVATED FOR HIS MINISTRY

A teacher is more effective when he has a definite reason and purpose for teaching.

The first principle of teaching answers the question “Who can teach?” This second principle answers the question “Why should we teach?”

People do best what they are motivated to do. The motivation to teach the Word of God to children is not one of the motivations which are so evident in the world today—a desire for money, a longing for power, or a wish to be famous.

What are, or should be, our motives? There are a number of biblical motives which encourage a teaching ministry. All of these are valid and correct. Some may be more important than others, and we will look at them in what could be seen to be an ascending order of importance.

God's Blessing

We teach because God has promised His special blessing upon those who teach.

“They that be teachers (“wise” in King James translation) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12 v3).

“And whoso shall receive one such little child in My Name receiveth Me” (Matthew 18 v5).

Rewards are promised to the teacher, and to every person who faithfully serves God in the capacity to which he is called. Such rewards are surely a biblical motivation.

The Lord Jesus “endured the Cross, despising the shame . . . for the joy that was set before Him” (Hebrews 12 v2).

In addition to the blessings and rewards which God has promised to the one who is faithful to His call, the teacher soon discovers that there are still more blessings for him. The more he prepares and teaches the Word of God, the more he himself comes to understand it and to be blessed by it. Experience shows us that the best way to understand the Bible is to teach it to children, and, at the same time, to allow it to work in our own hearts.

The Future

We teach because the future of the church and the nation requires that the present generation of boys and girls be well taught.

God made it clear to the children of Israel that their future in the land depended on how they taught their children.

"Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily . . . in the land . . . and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children" (Deuteronomy 6 v3-7).

"And ye shall teach them your children . . . that your days might be multiplied, and the days of your children in the land . . . " (Deuteronomy 11 v19, 21).

" . . . make them known to their children . . . that they . . . might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God" (Psalm 78 v5, 8).

The Children's Needs

We teach because God has shown us the spiritual need of the children, and that this need can only be met as they are taught the Word of God. When the Lord Jesus saw the needs of the multitudes we read that,

". . . He was moved with compassion on them because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9 v36).

May God give us that same compassion as we see the needs of the children.

"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18 v14).

God uses our teaching to speak to the hearts of the children, and to meet their needs.

“How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10 v14).

“. . . the unfeigned faith which is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice . . . continue thou in the things which thou hast learned . . . 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” (2 Timothy 1 v5 and 3 v14, 15).

The teaching ministry is important because the Holy Spirit uses teaching to enlighten a child’s mind. The child needs to be acquainted with, and to understand, the truths of the Bible so that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, he might be able to put his trust in Jesus Christ, and then grow in Christ. This knowledge comes through teaching. It is clear, from the Bible, that conversion and spiritual growth are always brought about by the Spirit of God working through the Word of God (1 Peter 1 v23; 2 Timothy 3 v15; Romans 10 v14). He does not usually work “in a vacuum.” It is, therefore, logical to assume that this Word needs to be learned before it can be lived, understood before it can be applied. Romans 6 v17 makes this clear.

“God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”

The Romans were first taught; then their hearts were touched through that teaching; and finally they exercised their wills in obedience to what they had been taught, and what they had felt.

The central and primary method for presenting the Gospel in the New Testament is through preaching or teaching (1 Corinthians 1 v21–23). God uses the foolishness of **preaching** to bring salvation. This is explained in the epistles and exemplified by Jesus Christ in the Gospels and by the apostles in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Children’s Ignorance

We teach because many children are ignorant of Bible truths. Today we live in a world of children who are, for the most part, biblically illiterate. Past generations of children, in many parts of

Western Europe at least, had some Bible background which had been gleaned from attendance at church or Sunday school, or from the influence of parents and grandparents who had themselves connections with the preaching of the Word of God. But this is usually no longer the case. Most of our children have little or no biblical background whatsoever. Even when they come into contact with the Bible (for example in religious instruction at school) they are often taught only the historical facts of the Bible, and not the truths which they need to know.

In addition to this ignorance or spiritual vacuum, there is also today a definite teaching and influence **against** Bible truths. This is, I believe, a satanic attack to destroy our children.

- In many churches and Sunday schools doubt is cast upon the truths of the Bible.
- In many schools evolution is taught as a substitute for the Bible teaching concerning man's creation and his responsibility to his Creator. Many teachers of religious instruction are, themselves, humanistic and agnostic, and seek to give the impression that believing the Bible is old-fashioned and quaint.
- Much of the literature read by our children, and many of the TV programmes viewed by them, are anti-Christian and pour scorn on spiritual things. The Christian is portrayed as weak, effeminate and out of date.
- The increase in materialism militates against any teaching which seeks to emphasize the spiritual and that which is eternal.

We must realise that this is the position today, and that the average child knows little about God, sin, Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation.

Hosea describes the situation well when he writes:

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4 v6).

Paul writes:

"How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10 v14).

God's Commands in the Old Testament

We teach because it is the command of God to do so in the Old Testament.

“Teach them thy sons and thy sons’ sons” (Deuteronomy 4 v9b).

“And that they might teach their children” (Deuteronomy 4 v10b).

“Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children” (Deuteronomy 6 v7a).

“And ye shall teach them your children” (Deuteronomy 11 v19).

“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 v12, 13).

“. . . He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children” (Psalm 78 v5).

We teach because we are told to teach. Teaching has always played a predominant role in God’s redemptive plan. It has never been more needed than it is now.

Commands and Examples in the New Testament

We teach because we are commanded to, and encouraged to, throughout the New Testament.

Our Lord’s Example Encourages Us to Teach

He, of course, is the greatest teacher, and the perfect example to follow—both in His life and in His ministry.

- His own testimony was, “. . . I ever *taught* in the synagogue, and in the temple” (John 18 v20).
- Nicodemus said, “We know that Thou art a *teacher* come from God” (John 3 v2).
- Matthew records that:
“Jesus went about all Galilee, *teaching* in their synagogues” (Matthew 4 v23).
- Mark writes:
“He entered into the synagogue and *taught*, and they were astonished at *His doctrine*; for He taught them as one that

had authority, and not as the scribes" (Mark 1 v21, 22).

- At the end of His Sermon on the Mount, it is recorded:
"And they were astonished at *His doctrine*, for He *taught* them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7 v28, 29).

Our Lord's Command Encourages Us to Teach

In Matthew 28 v19–20, the Lord Jesus commanded His disciples:
"Go ye therefore, and *teach* (make disciples of) 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."

This command emphasizes the two-fold nature of teaching:

- A teaching which evangelizes with the aim of leading children into salvation and discipleship, and of bringing them into the Kingdom of God. There is a strange view which tries to distinguish completely between evangelism and teaching; and says that we should evangelise unsaved children and that we should only teach saved children. But there can obviously be no evangelism without teaching: nor should there be, in the case of unsaved children, teaching without evangelism. Our goal should be a teaching evangelism.

As we have already seen, conversion is always brought about by the Spirit of God working through the Word of God (Romans 10 v14; 1 Peter 1 v23). The Gospel needs to be understood before it can be trusted and applied.

- A teaching which edifies, and has the aim of helping saved children to grow in the things of God.

The Apostles' Example Encourages Us to Teach

The apostles, in the days of the early church, soon earned the same reputation for teaching as their Master and Teacher. We can see this especially in the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Sadducees were "grieved that they *taught* the people" (Acts 4 v2).

"They called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor *teach* in the Name of Jesus" (Acts 4 v18).

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and *taught*" (Acts 5 v20, 21).

"Then came one and told them saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and *teaching* the people" (Acts 5 v25).

"The high priest asked them saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not *teach* in this Name? And, behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your *doctrine*" (Acts 5 v28).

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to *teach* and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5 v42).

The disciples were, therefore, obedient to the command of the Lord Jesus—and taught! There are many such examples through the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul's Example Encourages Us to Teach

Paul, like the other apostles, was first and foremost a teacher.

"And he continued there a year and six months, *teaching* the Word of God among them" (Acts 18 v11).

"Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and *teaching* those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him" (Acts 28 v30, 31).

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and *teaching* every man in all wisdom" (Colossians 1 v28).

"The Gospel whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a *teacher* of the Gentiles" (2 Timothy 1 v10, 11).

Paul's Command Encourages Us to Teach

Paul in his letters (and especially in his letters to Timothy and Titus) makes it clear that a ministry of teaching was to be carried on to those who were saved, and also to those who were unsaved.

"Charge some that they *teach* no other doctrine" (1 Timothy 1 v3).

"An elder must be apt . . . to *teach*" (1 Timothy 3 v2).

"These things command and *teach*" (1 Timothy 4 v11).

"Elders . . . who labour in the word and *doctrine*" (1 Timothy 5 v17).

"These things *teach* and exhort" (1 Timothy 6 v2).

"The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same *commit* thou to faithful men, who shall be able to *teach* others also" (2 Timothy 2 v2).

"The servant of the Lord must . . . be . . . apt to *teach*" (2 Timothy 2 v24).

"An elder . . . holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by *sound doctrine* to exhort" (Titus 1 v9).

"Speak thou the things which become *sound doctrine*" (Titus 2 v1).

The Practice of the Early Church Encourages Us to Teach

The early church was based firmly and squarely upon teaching. This can be seen:

- In the Acts of the Apostles. In Acts 2 v41, 42 the first converts came into the church on the day of Pentecost, and we read that "they continued steadfastly:
 - ✓ in the apostles' *doctrine*
 - ✓ and fellowship
 - ✓ and in breaking of bread
 - ✓ and in prayers."

It is important to notice the order. Continuing in the apostles' doctrine was the first priority.

- In the letters written to the early churches by Paul and others. The function and purpose of these letters was primarily to teach.

The Epistles Show that Teaching Is the Basis of All Life and Service

The structure and contents of the epistles show that teaching, and our response to it, form the basis of all that we are, and all that we do. Truth is the foundation. Practice and experience are the superstructure. This is especially obvious in the letters written by the

Apostle Paul. For example, in his letter to the Romans, the first eleven chapters are devoted to teaching truth. These are followed by five chapters of practical application to the daily life of the believer. Similarly, in Ephesians, the first three chapters are devoted primarily to teaching truth, and the last three chapters primarily to application and practice. In Colossians, the first two chapters are primarily teaching, and the last two practice. In his other epistles the teaching and the practical applications are interwoven.

The fact that truth must come first, and experience come second, and be based on it, is also found in 2 Timothy 3 v16:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine* (**teaching**), for reproof, for correction in righteousness.”

The Holy Spirit's Guidance into a Teaching Ministry

We teach because the Holy Spirit guides and calls people into the ministry of teaching, and He equips them for it.

“And He gave some . . . *teachers* . . . for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4 v11, 12).

Included among the saints are the little saints—the boys and girls who have put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (Ephesians 1 v1 and Ephesians 6 v1), and who need to be taught. The gift of teaching is one of the most needed of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit today. If God has led you, and called you, into this ministry, thank Him for the joy of having a part in His work, and trust Him for the ability to do it. I personally am thankful that many years ago He called me and led me into a teaching ministry. If teaching is a gift and ability from the Holy Spirit, and if it performs such an important function in the work of God, then it is a vital ministry today.

Everyone in the Body of Christ is responsible to teach someone something (e.g., parents should teach their children). But God has given to a number the gift or ability to teach, and to many of these, the ability to teach children. However, it must be remembered that such gifts and abilities do not preclude the need for training and preparation. There should also be a willingness not to neglect the gift we have (1 Timothy 4 v14), but to “stir it up” or “kindle it afresh” (2 Timothy 1 v6). Often a teacher of children does not realise he has the

ability to teach until he has tried to do so, and has endeavoured to develop, in the power of the Holy Spirit, whatever little talent he seems to have.

Obedience to the calling and guidance of the Holy Spirit results in blessing and peace for the teacher himself, and a real sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. In addition, he can know that as the Holy Spirit has guided him in this way He is going to use his ministry to the salvation and blessing of children.

God's Glory

We teach because, by doing so, God is glorified.

- He is glorified in our obedience to His commands (Matthew 5 v16; John 15 v8; 1 Peter 4 v11).
- He is glorified in the lives of children who respond to the teaching of His Word (Acts 4 v21; Acts 11 v18; Acts 21 v20; Galatians 1 v24).

Our primary motive in being teachers is that, by so doing, we might bring glory to the Name of God.

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10 v31).

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *I outlined eight possible motivations to teach children in this chapter. I also tried to list them in ascending order of importance with the least important at the beginning and the most important at the end. Do you agree with the order in which I have placed them? Or would you alter this order? Why?*
- *Which of the motivations in this chapter played the greatest part in leading you into a ministry to children?*
- *Which one or ones would you emphasize if you were challenging a group of young people to become involved in a teaching ministry to boys and girls?*
- *Can you think of any other valid motivations which have been omitted from this chapter?*

- *James writes:*
 “My brethren, be not many masters (*teachers*), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (*James 3 v1*).
What do you feel James meant by this statement?
What is your reaction to what he writes?
- *Someone has said, “All Christians are teachers.” Is this true? Explain what is meant by this statement.*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Motivation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 3: “What Are We Talking About?” The Principle of Definition

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEPENDS ON A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT TEACHING MEANS AND INVOLVES

It is absolutely necessary for a teacher to know clearly what teaching actually is, and to realize that his job is to help his students to learn.

If the first basic teaching principle answered the question “Who,” and the second answered the question “Why,” this third principle answers the question “What.”

What does the word “teaching” mean?

It needs to be emphasized again that an understanding of what teaching means is needed at every level—the teaching of children (both saved and unsaved), the teaching of teachers and the teaching of Institute students and full-time children’s workers.

The first and best way to answer this question is to study the word “teaching” as used in Scripture.

“Teaching” in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, eleven different Hebrew words are translated by the word “teach” or “instruct.” The main word is “lamath” which is used 86 times. On 55 of these times, it is translated “teach.” A further 22 times, it is translated “learn.” It is interesting to realise that this word is sometimes translated “teach” and sometimes translated “learn.” The context determines which way it should be translated. In other words, there is a close association between these two words. Something has not really been taught unless it has been learned, and something cannot be learned, unless it has been taught.

The word “lamath,” according to Hebrew experts does not mean “a mere dumping of facts or information into the subject” but “the stimulation of the student to be able to imitate or apply in his life-action that which he has come to know.” This word is therefore used with “the thought of stimulation to imitation, and to the creation of a

response.” Examples of its use can be found in Deuteronomy 5 v1; 6 v1, and Psalm 32 v8.

There are ten other words used for teaching in the Old Testament—but they are used on a much lesser scale.

“Teaching” in the New Testament

The main word for teaching in the New Testament is the Greek word “didasko.” It is translated “teach” 97 times; in other forms, as “teacher” or “master” 56 times; and as “teaching” or “doctrine” 50 times. Like the word “lamath” in the Old Testament, it emphasizes learning by experience and involvement, and not just the giving of information. It generally focuses on the activity of teaching, and the helping of a person to learn. Examples can be found in Ephesians 4 v21; Colossians 1 v28; 3 v16; 2 Timothy 2 v2.

Other Words for “Teaching”

There are eight additional words used for “teaching” in the Bible. It is helpful to look briefly at some of these other words in the Bible which are translated “teaching.”

- “Shah-nan” is a Hebrew word which is generally translated “sharpen.” It is only translated once as “teach diligently”—in Deuteronomy 6 v7. It means “to whet the appetite or senses for learning.” In other words, we are required to sharpen our children’s minds, and to cut deep into their understanding so that they may really learn. The NIV translation of the word is “impress.”
- “Katateo” is a New Testament word which is used 8 times. In Luke 1 v4 and Romans 2 v18, it is translated “inform,” “instruct” or “teach.” It means “to din into the mind or ear,” with the thought of learning by repetition or rote. This is the word from which we get the word “catechism.”
- “Matheteuo” means “to make a disciple.” It is used 4 times in its verb form, but 269 times in its noun form. It is only found in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles. It concentrates on the thought of instruction, with reference to loyalty and devotion. Its best known use is in Matthew 28 v19.

- ↗ “Hodegeo” is a word which means “to lead, guide or to cause someone to discover practical doctrinal truth.” It is generally translated by the word “guide” or “lead.” It can be found in John 16 v13, and in Acts 8 v31. It is used 5 times in the New Testament.
- ↗ “Paideuo” is used in its verb form 11 times, and in its noun form 8 times. It comes from the word “paideon” which means “little child,” and it means “to give guidance, instruction and training.” It often emphasizes the thought of the corrective or disciplinary aspects of education. Examples of its use can be found in Acts 22 v3 and 2 Timothy 2 v25.

Word Studies

When we think of the principle of definition, it is also interesting to examine the meaning of the English words used with regard to “teaching.”

The word “teach” itself comes from an Anglo-Saxon word “taecean” which means “to show how to do.”

The Oxford dictionary defines “teach” as “to give instruction or lessons, to show or make known to a person how to do something, to give instruction to, explain and state by way of instruction.”

Webster’s dictionary defines the word “teach” as “to give instruction, to impart knowledge to, to cause to learn, to direct the development of.”

The word “education” comes from two Latin words “duco” which means “to lead,” with the prefix “ex” which means “out of.” “Education” means, therefore, “a drawing, or leading, **out of** a person.” The emphasis is on expression rather than impression.

The Oxford dictionary defines “educate” as “bring up from childhood so as to form habits, manners and intellectual aptitudes; to instruct, provide schooling for; to train, discipline, so as to develop some special aptitude, taste or disposition.”

Webster’s dictionary defines the word “educate” as “to draw out and to develop harmoniously, and in the fullest sense the mental and moral powers.” In other words, education does not just mean what is poured into the child; but what is brought out of him. We must always avoid the “jug-mug” theory, where we look upon the child as a passive

vessel which we as jugs are to fill with all kinds of information and facts. The child is only being taught when he is himself active in his thinking, and has been stimulated to thought and response.

The word “instruct” comes from two Latin words. One is “structo” which means “to build,” and the other the prefix “in.” It means “to build into.”

The Oxford dictionary defines the word “instruct” as “to teach, inform, direct, command, give information to.”

Webster’s dictionary defines the word “instruct” as “to impart knowledge with special method and completeness.”

Dr. Gregory’s fifth law of teaching is that “teaching is arousing and using the pupil’s mind to grasp the desired thought or to master the desired art.” The pupil’s mind needs to be stimulated to action so that he becomes a discoverer for himself.

Dr. Howard Hendricks says that:

“The teacher should be a stimulator, the student an investigator.
The teacher should be a motivator, the student a discoverer.
The teacher should be a coach/trainer, the student a player.”

In other words, what counts is not so much what I teach, but what I help him to learn; not so much what I do, but what I help him to do.

A Definition of Teaching

A short and simple definition of “teaching”—“To teach is to help another to learn.”

It is vitally important that we, as teachers, understand what teaching means and involves. If we do, we are more likely to achieve our goal of being good teachers.

- Teaching is not just telling. All who hear do not learn.
- Teaching is not just getting children to listen. They can listen without learning.
- Teaching is not just getting children to repeat something. This can help but is not necessarily learning.

Teaching is that which helps a child to understand, learn and absorb something which he did not previously learn or understand. The aim of teaching is a change in thinking, or feeling or doing—or all three.

The effective teacher understands that his teaching should aim at the whole child—his mind, first of all, and through it, his heart (or emotions) and then his will. We have already seen Paul’s explanation of this process with reference to the believers at Rome.

“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have *obeyed* (with the will) from the *heart* that form of *doctrine* which was delivered (given or committed to) you” (Romans 6 v17).

The message of the Gospel had been addressed to their whole personality and they had responded to this message in a three-fold way:

- Their intellects had been enlightened. Paul speaks of “that form of doctrine which was delivered you.” We teachers need to teach God’s Word clearly and intelligently and trust God to enlighten their intelligence.
- Their emotions had been stirred. Paul says, “ye obeyed from the heart.” Our desire, and goal, in teaching is that God the Holy Spirit will speak to the child’s heart and give him a desire to turn from sin and trust the Saviour.
- Their wills had been brought to submit to Christ. Paul emphasizes that they had obeyed what they had heard.

We need to pray that in response to our teaching there will be a definite act or movement of the child’s will in obedience to God.

A teacher therefore has three objectives:

- Knowledge objectives. He wants the children to know the Bible and what it teaches.
- Feeling objectives. Knowledge alone does not change lives. He wants the hearts and the attitudes of the child to be touched by and influenced by the Word of God.
- Decision objectives. He wants the child to act on the basis of what he has learned and what he has felt—and it is that action or reaction of obedience to God’s Word which is the ultimate and all important goal of our teaching.

Learning is making a helpful or meaningful change in what one knows, feels or does. It has been well said that learning means that one has overcome something, arrived somewhere, or has become something that he was not before he learned. **Learning always involves progress.**

Teaching according to its simplest definition is therefore simply helping another to learn; and unless those who come to our teacher training class or Good News Club have learned something, we have not truly taught. If I am teaching someone to swim, I cannot say I have really taught him until, and unless, he can swim. However, we need to add that we cannot completely transfer that idea into a spiritual ministry. I could have truly and thoroughly taught the truth of repentance, and yet the child may not repent.

We are therefore thinking of learning as **thinking** into one's own understanding a new truth or concept; and teaching as the effective helping of pupils to learn that new truth or concept. At the same time, we are praying that God the Holy Spirit will so work in the pupils' understanding and hearts that they will respond volitionally to what they have learned.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *Examine your own teaching. When you are "teaching" are you really teaching—or are you just talking or trying to "dump" information?*
- ↗ *How can you best find out the answer to the previous question?*
- ↗ *Can you prove that the ability to recite or repeat something is not an inevitable evidence of learning?
Does it follow therefore that pupils should not be required to memorize? Why? What should they memorize? Why?*
- ↗ *Would you agree that it is difficult to put this principle into practice?*
- ↗ *What advice would you give to a young teacher who was just beginning in his ministry to help him understand this principle and put it into practice?*
- ↗ *Think about and trace the effects on your Christian life of several of your past teachers. Did those who taught you most put **this** principle into practice?*
- ↗ *Can you remember or think of some "teacher" you had who did not put this principle of teaching into practice? He talked a lot but you did not learn very much because he was not really teaching.*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Definition

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 4: “Let There Be Light” The Principle of Illumination

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEPENDS ON THE ILLUMINATION OF THE STUDENT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

A Christian teacher is not alone. The Holy Spirit who lives in him helps him to teach and helps the children to understand.

The first three basic principles answered the questions “Who,” “Why,” and “What.” This fourth principle deals with the question “How.”

In some ways, the principles of teaching are similar for a day school teacher and a Sunday school teacher. However, there are two main differences. Firstly, the day school teacher’s purpose is simply to impart knowledge; whereas the Sunday school teacher’s purpose is to introduce his hearers to a Living Person and bring about life change. Secondly, the day school teacher works purely by natural means; whereas the Sunday school teacher depends upon divine and supernatural help. It is this divine and supernatural help about which we now need to think.

The Holy Spirit is the source of all effective teaching. There can be no real spiritual understanding of the Word of God apart from Him. He is not only the Author of the Scriptures, but also their Interpreter. All true understanding, both for the unregenerate and the regenerate child, comes from Him. This could well be the most important teaching principle of all!

The Holy Spirit will not, of course, do the teacher’s work. He will do what the teacher **cannot** do. For example, if you use words like “regeneration” when teaching children—without any kind of explanation—the Holy Spirit will not, in some mysterious way, explain what the word means to the child. That is **your** responsibility. You must do that. The work of the Holy Spirit is, if He wills, to make that truth real to the mind and heart of the child but only when you have explained its meaning as carefully and as thoroughly as you can.

The Holy Spirit Is the Divine Teacher

This truth is brought out, over and over again, throughout the Bible.

"When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin" (John 16 v8).

"My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Corinthians 2 v4).

". . . we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth" (1 Corinthians 2 v13).

"For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance . . ." (1 Thessalonians 1 v5).

"It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God" (John 6 v45).

"The Comforter . . . He shall teach you all things" (John 14 v26).

"When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16 v13).

"God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2 v10).

"That God . . . may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (Ephesians 1 v17, 18).

"But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John 2 v20).

The teaching of spiritual truth is only effective as the Holy Spirit illumines the mind of the listener.

The Holy Spirit Gives Understanding to Unsaved Children

Man's mind, emotions and his will have all shared in the devastating effects of the Fall. The mind has been darkened, the emotions deadened and the will degraded. The total depravity of man means that every part of him has been corrupted by sin. The mind of the unsaved child, therefore, is blinded (2 Corinthians 4 v4).

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2 v14).

This applies to **all** spiritual truth and not just to some truths. For example, he cannot understand spiritually and in his heart that Jesus Christ died for him, or that God loves him, or that he needs to be saved. All these truths are hidden from him, from a spiritual point of view, unless the Holy Spirit illuminates his mind so that he can understand them.

Sometimes we get the idea that there are some truths an unsaved child can understand spiritually and others he cannot understand. Therefore we feel we should concentrate upon the former and not the latter. But we need always to remember the teaching of the Scriptures that he cannot understand **any** truths spiritually apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The unsaved child can have no spiritual understanding of what we teach him, unless the Holy Spirit enlightens and illumines his mind (1 Corinthians 2 v13, 14).

- ↗ He reveals the things of God (1 Corinthians 2 v10).
- ↗ He brings the words of Christ to remembrance (John 14 v26).
- ↗ He guides into all truth (John 14 v26; 16 v13).
- ↗ He testifies of Christ (John 15 v26).
- ↗ He directs into the way of godliness (Ezekiel 36 v27).

One CEF worker writes, “There is all the difference in the world between understanding on a human level and understanding on a spiritual level. For years I understood the Gospel on a human level. I cannot remember a time when I did not; and yet it was only when I was 12 years old that the Holy Spirit gave the spiritual understanding that was essential.”

Our responsibility is to “prepare the fire.” We find the paper, the wood, and the coal, and then we lay them together in the right way. But without the flame there will be no fire. It is only God the Holy Spirit who can “ignite” what we have prepared. He is the One who gives light and life.

The understanding of this principle will result in certain conclusions with regard to our evangelism.

- ↗ We will realize that there are no “mechanical” or “guaranteed” spiritual results to our teaching.
- ↗ We will understand that we cannot reason or pressurize our students into a response to our teaching.
- ↗ We will appreciate that a lack of response is not **necessarily** a reflection upon us or our teaching (although it might be!).
- ↗ We will take none of the praise and glory for ourselves when it pleases God to work in a special way.
- ↗ We will realise that in both teaching and counselling a child we cannot and should not be “mechanical” in our approach, but be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- ↗ We will learn to be patient and dependent upon the Holy Spirit.
- ↗ We will check and examine our lives to be sure we are consecrated to Him; because He uses yielded vessels.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Evangelism

We need to pray, that God the Holy Spirit will do His work as we engage in a teaching evangelism. His work is seven-fold:

- ↗ To give the teacher knowledge and understanding of the Word of God as he prepares.
He is the Spirit of knowledge—John 16 v13.
- ↗ To give the teacher wisdom as he prepares, so that he will know what to teach the children in the light of their needs, and so that he will know how to apply it to those needs.
He is the Spirit of wisdom—Acts 6 v3.
- ↗ To help the teacher as he teaches, so that he will have utterance, and freedom of speech; so that he will know what to say, and what not to say; and so that, above all, He will give power to his teaching—
That the Gospel will come to the children “not, in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit” 1 Thessalonians 1 v5.
He is the Spirit of power—Acts 1 v8.
- ↗ To give understanding to the darkened minds of the children, sight to their blind eyes, conviction to their careless hearts, and a new direction to their perverse wills.
He is the Spirit of illumination—Ephesians 1 v17, 18.

- To regenerate dead children, leading them to repentance and faith.

He is the Spirit of life—John 3 v5.

- To minister to the children, when they trust Christ, indwelling each one (John 14 v16, 17; Romans 8 v9) and assuring them of their sonship (Romans 8 v16).

He is the Spirit of adoption.

- To help the children who have just trusted Christ to understand the Word of God; to stand by them and strengthen them; to cause them to start to grow in their spiritual life through the Word (John 14 v26; 1 Peter 2 v2).

He is the “Paraklete”—the Comforter.

Our Responsibility in Evangelism

However, it needs to be underlined again that this principle of illumination does not eliminate the need for the teacher to prepare himself adequately for his task. Although the Holy Spirit is all-powerful He almost always chooses to work through and in co-operation with the human teacher. You do not want the truth of illumination to become the truth of elimination! God wants you and me to be good teachers, but He also wants us to depend upon the Holy Spirit at all times.

The work of a teacher can be compared to that of a gardener. A gardener sows the seed according to what he knows about the principles of gardening. He prepares the ground, he sows the seed carefully, and he makes sure that weeds don't grow to choke the seed. This is **not** a denial of the fact that only God can give life. He realises that he cannot make the seed grow. He has to depend upon God to give the life. But that does not eliminate his responsibility to do all **he** can.

Occasionally, he gets a surprise, and seeds grow in a place which has not been well prepared. But when a plant grows in a most unlikely place and in most unfavourable circumstances, the gardener does not use this as a reason for abandoning good gardening methods.

Sometimes spiritual seed grows in ground which was not well prepared. I have known people who have been converted with very little knowledge and preparation. They had so little knowledge that I was surprised that they were converted! But we would never dream of abandoning all we know of teaching principles because of these

“unusual” happenings. The fact that there are those who have been illuminated on the basis of very little truth, or when teaching principles have been given no place, is no reason for ignoring these principles.

We know that only God can give life, and that we have to depend on Him. But we still apply teaching principles to our work. We learn the principles of teaching, and we follow them as carefully as we can. He is our Maker, and we must not ignore the way that our God-created minds and thought processes function.

“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3 v6).

This principle of illumination does raise in the teacher’s mind a number of questions and problems:

- ↗ “Why does God not always illuminate the children’s minds?”
- ↗ “Why do some seem to understand and respond; and others don’t?”
- ↗ “Why may the same lesson result in blessing and illumination on one occasion, but lack of understanding and response on another?”

These are questions we cannot answer. The issues and results are in God’s Hands. He is sovereign and works as He chooses. Our responsibility is three-fold:

- ↗ to pray earnestly that God will illuminate
- ↗ to prepare our lesson thoroughly
- ↗ to present it as effectively as possible—with a challenge to the children to act on the basis of what they have been taught

Then we can leave the results and issues in God’s Hands.

The Holy Spirit Gives Understanding to Saved Children

The Holy Spirit indwells each saved child (John 14 v16, 17; Romans 8 v9; 1 Corinthians 6 v19) and He continuously ministers to them, illuminating their minds and helping them to understand the Word of God (John 14 v26; John 16 v13; Ephesians 1 v17, 18).

In the last verse mentioned Paul prayed:

“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the

knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . ." (Ephesians 1 v17, 18).

This can be also seen clearly in Luke 24 v31, 32 and 45, when the disciples were led to a deeper understanding of the Word of God, and its teaching concerning the Lord Jesus.

Even disciples need to have their eyes enlightened and opened; and without the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit your saved children will not really understand what they are taught and will not grow.

As you prepare, and as you teach the Word of God, you should be in an attitude of complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit. As a farmer sows his seed, and depends upon God to give it life and growth, so you should teach the Word of God, depending upon God, the Holy Spirit, to give it life and growth.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *On what or whom are you really depending as you teach?*
 - Your personality?*
 - Your methods?*
 - Your materials?*
 - Your experience?*
 - Your ability?*
 - Or—the Holy Spirit?*
- *Does that dependence rule out your personality, methods, materials, experience and ability—or do you still need to work on those?*
- *Is there any way to know that the Holy Spirit has blessed and used your teaching in the lives of your students?*
 - Finish the following sentence (if possible):*
"I know that the Holy Spirit has used my teaching when . . ."
- *Compare and contrast the work of a gardener and the work of a teacher of God's Word. In what ways are they similar? Dissimilar?*
- *What advice would you give to a young teacher to help him to find a balanced position between depending upon the Holy Spirit for His illumination as he teaches, and ensuring that his preparation and presentation are as effective as he can possibly make them?*

- How would you answer the person who tells you that we should only **evangelize** unsaved children because they have no spiritual understanding; but that we should **teach** saved children because they do have spiritual understanding?
- Is it possible to hear truths which have been well taught (even over and over again) and not really understand them; and then one day they suddenly become clear? How would you explain this?

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Illumination

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 5: “The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock . . .” The Principle of a Good Foundation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING IS FOUNDED ON THE BIBLE, THE WORD OF GOD

A teacher’s life should be built upon the Bible; and the Bible should also be the source of all that he teaches.

The fifth principle of teaching could be said to answer the question “Where.” Where can the teacher find a foundation for his ministry? Where can he find a source from which he can learn both his message and his methods?

There is only one answer to these questions. The Bible, the Word of God is the only sound foundation and the only inerrant source.

THERE ARE THREE QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE BIBLE WHICH NEED TO BE ANSWERED.

For the Bible to be properly understood, well handled, and thoroughly taught, the teacher needs to ask himself three question about the Bible. He must understand what the Bible is, what it does, and what to do with it.

What Is the Bible?

The Bible is the written revelation of God. It outlines His character, His works and His will for mankind. It consists of 66 books in 2 sections, and “contains everything we need to believe and do, so that our souls might be saved and God glorified and served.”

The Bible is verbally inspired. Inspiration is the process by which God so influenced, guided and assisted the authors of the Scriptures that they were able to record in writing what He revealed without error or mistake. Inspiration has resulted in the perfect written record of what God has revealed. Men wrote with their own style and personality, but as led and guided by the Holy Spirit, so that there is no error whatsoever in any word of the original writings.

- “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3 v16).
- “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1 v21).

The verbal inspiration of the Scriptures means that every word of the original Scriptures is true and without error.

Bishop Ryle wrote, “I have no hesitation in avowing that I believe in the plenary inspiration of every word of the original text of Holy Scripture.” And that is my position also.

What Does the Bible Do?

The Bible has four main functions and purposes:

- It tells us what God is like. It outlines and describes His character, His words and His actions.
- It tells us what we are like. It describes and explains our nature, our words and our deeds.
- It tells us God’s answer to our sin problem, and shows what He has done for us in Jesus Christ.
- It tells us what God wants us to do.
 - ✓ to be saved
 - ✓ to grow in Christ

The Bible contains all we need to know about God, and His will for mankind. Our responsibility is to pass on to the children these teachings of the Bible.

The fact that so much of the Bible is in story form, is a tremendous help to us who work with children. But these stories are not just history. They enshrine the great eternal principles of God’s revelation of Himself, and His dealings with men; and they are the best possible vehicles for conveying these principles to children.

What must We Do with the Bible?

- Believe it
- Read it
- Study it

- Learn it
- Meditate upon it
- Obey it
- Teach it
- Love it
- Apply it
- Respect it
- Share it
- Quote it
- Thank God for it
- Sing it
- “Pray” it
- Defend it
- Hold it
- Carry it
- Buy it
- Translate it
- Sell it (or give it)

The first “man of the written Word” was Joshua. God told him: “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth (read it); but thou shalt meditate therein day and night (think about it), that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein (obey it): for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Joshua 1 v8).

Someone has said:

“Study the Bible as a source of knowledge. Read it repeatedly. Use the Bible as a map. Consult it constantly. Listen to the Bible as your Commander’s voice. Obey it instantly.”

THERE ARE THREE FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE WHICH NEED TO BE EMPHASIZED

Every building requires a good and a firm foundation; and, in our lives and ministries as teachers, that foundation is provided by the Bible, the Word of God.

The Teacher's Life Needs to Be Founded on the Word of God

Your life needs to be moulded by the Word of God, and you need to be faithful to it at all times.

- ↗ Through this Word you have been convicted of sin and your spiritual need (Hebrews 4 v12; 2 Timothy 3 v16).
- ↗ Through this Word you have come to know Christ (James 1 v18; John 20 v31).
- ↗ Through this Word you are growing in sanctification (1 Peter 2 v2; John 17 v17).

The Teacher's Ministry Needs to Be Founded on the Word of God

Your teaching ministry needs to be based upon, and influenced by, the Word of God in four ways:

The Principles of Your Ministry Are Determined by the Word of God

Sometimes in Christian work we can be influenced too much by what happens in secular education. There **are** certain things we can learn from teachers in the secular classroom; and certainly there are good teaching principles which apply there as well as in our work. But when we go to the Bible we find that there are certain principles and facts which can only apply to Christian teaching.

Your teaching principles must be subject at all times to the Word of God. All theories—secular or otherwise—must be examined in the light of Scripture. If there is a biblical reason why you should not apply any theory to your teaching, then you dare not do so. For example, several years ago in secular education there was a swing against rote learning or memorisation; and in Christian education it was often felt that we should not encourage or compel memorisation. In many Sunday schools there came a lack of memory work—either in the form of catechism or in the learning of Bible verses. If those involved had examined what the Bible says about memorisation in passages such as Deuteronomy 6 v6–9; Deuteronomy 11 v18, 19 and Psalm 119 v11, they would not have followed this trend. You must

bring every teaching principle to the Word of God and ask if there is a Scriptural reason for doing it or not doing it.

It is really interesting to examine the principles of teaching contained in this book, and see if you can find them in the Word of God; and also in the teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus. He was the “Teacher who came from God.” He could have imparted understanding to the disciples, without teaching, if He had wished. But He chose, instead, to follow the principles of teaching.

The Purpose of Your Ministry Is to Teach the Word of God

What you teach needs to be centred on the Word of God, and should lead the children to obey that Word. You do not need to depend on “gimmicks” and “gadgets”; nor should you endeavour to entertain or amuse the children. Your ministry is a ministry of the Word of God, and God has only promised to bless His Word. **Technique must never replace content.**

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55 v10, 11).

This also applies to a teacher training class. The teachers who get a blessing themselves from the Word of God in that class are the ones who will continue to come to the class.

The Content of Your Ministry Is Decided by the Word of God

The actual truths which you teach should be the truths which you find in the Bible. Your purpose is to teach the whole Word of God. Paul could say:

“I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20 v27).

Over a period of time nothing should be omitted. The children need to know and understand what the Bible actually says, and what it teaches. This is especially necessary today when there is so much ignorance of Bible truths and when there is even, in many cases, opposition against them.

The Results of Your Ministry Come from the Power of the Word of God

God uses His Word to speak to people's hearts (Romans 10 v17; 1 Peter 1 v23; Psalm 126 v6).

- It is a sword to pierce and discern (Hebrews 4 v12).
- It is seed to produce fruit (Luke 8 v11).
- It is a light to illuminate (Psalm 119 v105).
- It is a hammer to break the rock (Jeremiah 23 v29).
- It is food to nourish and to help grow (Jeremiah 15 v16).
- It is rain and snow to refresh (Isaiah 55 v10, 11).
- It is a mirror to reflect sin (James 1 v22–24).
- It is honey for yourself and for your students (Ezekiel 3 v3).

The Teacher Wants the Children's Lives to Be Founded on the Word of God

God has given us His Word to accomplish seven results in the lives of those who hear it, understand it and believe it. These are outlined in 2 Timothy 3 v15–17:

“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.”

These two verses teach us that God's Word is given:

- for salvation
- for doctrine
- for reproof—especially with regard to conduct
- for correction—especially with regard to doctrine
- for instruction in righteousness
- that the child be perfect, fitted, ready
- that the child be equipped for all good works

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *How would you answer an older child or teenager who asked you the question: "How do you know the Bible is completely true? Prove it."*
- *Are you really a teacher of the Word of God? Or are you just a story teller or a baby-sitter, or even an entertainer of some kind?*
- *What percentage of your teaching time is occupied with the exposition and explanation of God's Word?*
- *What advice would you give to a saved child concerning his reading and study of his Bible?
How often?
How long?*
- *What plan do you follow in your own daily study of the Bible? Do you find your daily study profitable and helpful? Do you have any "tips" for a young teacher which would encourage him? Can other books be a help for such studies? Which books would you recommend?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of a Good Foundation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 6: “The Key Which Unlocks the Door” The Principle of Intercession

EFFECTIVE TEACHING BEGINS, CONTINUES, AND ENDS WITH PRAYER

The illuminating work of the Holy Spirit in our teaching is not automatic. There is nothing in the Bible to encourage us to believe that we just need to teach—and that the Holy Spirit will do the rest!

On the contrary the Bible emphasizes that we have responsibilities which we need to fulfil if we are going to experience the Holy Spirit at work and if we are going to be effective teachers; and we neglect these responsibilities at our peril.

Later chapters will outline many of these responsibilities; but in this chapter as we prepare to teach we need to see the most important responsibility of all. If we are going to be effective teachers we need to be men and women of prayer.

Bible Teaching on Prayer

The Bible continually commands and challenges every servant of God to spend much time in prayer:

- The Bible teaches over and over again that God works in answer to prayer:

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5 v16).

“Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth . . .” (Luke 11 v9, 10).

“Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name that will I do . . . If ye shall ask anything in My Name I will do it (John 14 v13, 14).

“This is the confidence that we have in Him that if we ask

anything according to His Will He heareth us; and if we know that He hears us whatsoever we ask we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John 5 v14, 15).

- The Bible shows us that God's servants such as Paul spent much time in prayer.

"Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers" (Romans 1 v9).

"Always in every prayer of mine for you . . ." (Philippians 1 v4).

"Without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day" (2 Timothy 1 v3).

"My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Romans 10 v1).

- The Bible commands us as believers and as God's servants to pray:

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks, be made for all men" (1 Timothy 2 v1).

"Finally brethren pray for us that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified . . ." (2 Thessalonians 3 v1).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication, in the Spirit . . . for all saints and for me" (Ephesians 6 v18, 19).

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4 v16).

E.M. Bounds in his classic study on prayer entitled "Power Through Prayer" writes: "The preachers who gain mighty results for God are the men who have prevailed in their pleadings with God ere venturing to plead with men. The preachers who are the mightiest in their closets with God are the mightiest in their pulpits with men. The preacher is commissioned to pray as well as to preach. His mission is incomplete if he does not do both well. The preacher may speak with all the eloquence of men and of angels; but unless he can pray with a faith which draws all heaven to his aid his preaching will be "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal" for permanent God-honouring, soul-saving uses."

Subjects for Prayer

There are at least three directions in which you should pray:

↗ Pray for yourself

Ask the Lord to bless you through your study of His Word, and to help you to be able to align your own conduct and attitudes to His standards.

Ask Him to speak to you in your preparation so that He may speak through you as you teach your lesson.

Confess specific sins in your life asking for His forgiveness and His power to forsake those sins (Proverbs 28 v13; 1 John 1 v9).

Set aside any sin which may be weighing you down and may be hindering full spiritual joy and the power of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 12 v1; Ephesians 5 v18; 1 Thessalonians 5 v19).

Ask the Lord to give you the proper attitude towards Him, His Word, your students and others, knowing that you teach by your attitudes as much as by your admonitions.

↗ Pray for your students

Pray for them **personally**—by name; bring before God what you feel to be the weaknesses and needs of each; and pray believingly for their definite conversion and spiritual growth.

Pray for them **daily**. This will mean taking time and expending energy but it is tremendously worthwhile in the light of its results:

- ✓ in your understanding of each child
- ✓ in the atmosphere of your class
- ✓ in the blessing which your children will receive

Pray for them **fervently**. This is a great opportunity to influence them. Even the most “difficult” child who resists all your efforts in the classroom cannot resist your efforts at the Throne of Grace.

It is a help to have the names of your students recorded in a small notebook with information concerning each one and their spiritual needs.

- Pray for your ministry to the children
 - ✓ Each week as you undertake **the preparation** of the lesson begin and continue with prayer. Without prayer your preparation becomes routine and your teaching anaemic.
 - ✓ Pray that God will bless and use **the presentation** of your lesson and that He will speak to the children through you, that He will open their understanding of the message, and that He will enable the children to respond to it.

Your Daily Quiet Time

One of the most important requests our Lord's disciples ever made of Him—and a request with which many Christians can identify is "Lord teach us to pray" (Luke 11 v1).

It is essential for you as a teacher to have a regular quiet time every day when you can be alone with the Lord, and when you can, in a disciplined way, set aside time to PRAY. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism said on one occasion, "I resolve to devote an hour morning and evening to private prayer, no pretence, no excuses whatsoever."

It is also important that your quiet time should be systematic and organised, and approached each day in a disciplined way.

When Should You Have It?

The best time is generally in the morning before the day's activities commence and as a preparation for those activities. However, some find another time, such as the evening, before bed-time, to be more suitable and fit in better with their family circumstances.

How Long Should this Quiet Time Be?

This question is impossible to answer. The quality of the quiet time is more important, than the length of it. Henry Drummond said, "Ten minutes spent in Christ's presence every day—any ten minutes be it face to face and heart to heart—will make the whole life different."

But you should not try to compress your quiet time into a few minutes. On the other hand you should not aim too high. If you set yourself a longer time and then find that this length of time is not possible or practical, you can easily feel guilty. Start with a shorter

time, and increase it as you feel the need to do so.

Personally, I feel that we should spend **at least** 30 minutes alone with God in our quiet time each morning.

Where Should You Have It?

Somewhere that is quiet and away from people.

What Should You Do?

A quiet time could consist of three main parts:

➤ A TIME OF BIBLE READING AND BIBLE STUDY

✓ **Follow a pattern**

It is helpful to follow a system in your Bible reading. There are several possibilities:

- to read extensively and, for example, to read right through the Bible in one year
- to read intensively and, for example, to work your way verse by verse through one book of the Bible
- to study systematically a theme such as “the Grace of God” or “the results of salvation” or “the work of the Holy Spirit.” A book or a series of outlines on this subject can be a help with this type of study; or you can use a chain reference Bible such as the Thompson Bible
- to follow a Bible reading plan produced by an organisation like Scripture Union

✓ **Have a purpose**

What do you want to achieve as a result of your Bible study? What is your goal?

The main purpose of the Bible is to show us what God is like. The Bible is the Word of God and reveals God to us. Therefore as you study, the first, and most important, question you should ask yourself is:

“What does this verse (passage) teach me about God?”

This method of Bible study is a veritable treasure trove. As you “dig for this treasure” you will come to know, more and more, what God is like, and then you will come to know Him better. Why not start with Isaiah 40? Read this

chapter, asking God to show you something about Himself from it. When He does, underline it in your Bible or write it down in your notebook. Then read Isaiah 41—and so on. After you finish Isaiah start doing the same with all the Psalms. Then read Mark’s Gospel, chapter by chapter, asking the question “As I look at, and listen to, the Lord Jesus Who is God (John 1 v1, 14) and Who is the image of His Father (Hebrews 1 v3; John 14 v9)—what can I learn about God?”

I have gone into this method of Bible reading and study in more detail in my first book “The Problems of a Children’s Worker—and God’s Solution.” If you do not have a copy of it, please write to the address given on the first page of this book and a copy will be sent to you.

➤ **A time of worship**

This time might be short, but is very necessary. When you worship God you are not thinking of yourself, of your needs, or even of your blessings, but you are thinking of God Himself.

The Lord Jesus teaches us that we should worship **the Father** in spirit and in truth (John 4 v23, 24).

✓ Worship is based upon truth. As you read the Word of God and as you **see** or learn some truth about God, then you should say that truth to God, and tell Him how wonderful that truth is (e.g., 1 Chronicles 29 v11, 12 , 13; Psalm 95 v6).

✓ Worship is conducted in spirit. Having seen something about God and said something to God about what you have seen, then you love, adore and worship God in your heart and spirit on the basis of what you have seen and said.

God is looking for those who will worship Him in this way (John 4 v23). Consequently, worship needs to be part of your quiet time.

This time of worship will often include or lead to both confession and thanksgiving.

➤ **A time of prayer and intercession**

Charles Spurgeon once said, “If you cannot prevail with men

for God at least you can prevail with God for men.”

It is a great help if you can use simple and systematic reminders and outlines to guide you in your time of intercession, rather than relying upon your memory.

One possibility is to produce and use a small personal “prayer book” in which you have recorded all those people whom God has laid upon your heart and for whom you should pray.

I would suggest six prayer lists:

- ✓ Those for whom you will pray twice each day. This means each morning (in your main quiet time) and each evening (in your shorter quiet time). These will usually be close family members.
- ✓ Those for whom you will pray each morning—that is once each day.
- ✓ Those for whom you will pray each evening—also once each day.
- ✓ Those you will pray for once each week. You will therefore need seven lists of names.
- ✓ Those you will pray for once each month. You will need 31 lists here.
- ✓ An “emergency” prayer list. This will consist of prayer requests which have just arisen, and for which you will pray each morning and each evening until the prayer is answered. You will then remove those requests from this list.

These can all be put together in a small portable prayer book.

In addition, I would suggest that for each of the above pages (daily, weekly and monthly) you include at the beginning one item for which you would praise and worship God. This would not apply to the emergency prayer list.

I believe that you would find this type of “prayer book” to be a real help and blessing in your quiet time. I have introduced it to many Institute students and teachers and they have invariably spoken of how God has helped them and blessed them in their daily times of intercession through this little book.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Do you have a daily quiet time? When? How long does it usually last? How do you use the time?*
- *What pattern of Bible reading/study do you follow in your Quiet Time? Why? Could you recommend this pattern to those whom you teach—whether adults or children?*
- *Do you teach your saved children to have a quiet time? What advice do you give them?*
- *Do you use a “prayer book?” Do you prefer yours to the one I outlined in this chapter? Why? What would you recommend to a Christian child?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Intercession

	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I understand this principle			
	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I agree with this principle			
	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
God has blessed this principle in my ministry			
	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it
My resolve			

Section B:

“I Am Getting Ready to Teach” The Four Introductory Principles of Teaching

Chapter 7 49

The Principle of Preparation

Effective teaching depends upon careful and conscientious preparation.

Chapter 8 54

The Principle of Comprehension

Effective teaching is only possible if the teacher, himself, understands thoroughly what he is teaching.

Chapter 9 61

The Principle of Concentration

Effective teaching demands that the teacher make it his goal to teach less, and do it more thoroughly.

Chapter 10 69

The Principle of Organisation

Effective teaching is helped by logical thinking in preparation, and logical teaching in presentation.

Chapter 7: “Get Ready, Get Set . . . Go” The Principle of Preparation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEPENDS UPON CAREFUL AND CONSCIENTIOUS PREPARATION

A teacher who takes enough time before the class to make sure he is ready for the class will have a good class. Both the teacher and the students will enjoy the teaching.

The Importance of Preparation

It is a general rule in teaching, that the more we prepare, the better we teach; and the less we prepare, the worse we teach. A lesson well prepared is 90% given. Benjamin Franklin once said, “Failure to prepare is preparing to fail.”

What makes a good teacher? Someone has answered this question as follows:

“It is an iron determination to do a great deal of hard work in preparation for your lesson each week. This is the crucial feature in successful teaching. Without it you will never succeed no matter how fine a Christian you may be.”

In secular education the teacher is expected to prepare his lessons thoroughly. Sometimes a school inspector will visit a school teacher’s class, and ask him to produce the notes and the outline of what he intends to teach. We, who are teaching the Word of God to children, are engaged in the most important activity in the world. Surely we will be ashamed if our ministry to children suffers through lack of preparation. The same result will invariably occur in our teaching training classes if we do not take enough time to prepare thoroughly. Someone has said, “It takes a lot of preparation to know just a little.”

The Christian teacher needs to discipline himself. During the week previous to his class, he needs to take much time to prepare himself, to prepare his message, and to prepare his materials! Someone has said: “The more we think before we speak, the more our listeners will think after we speak.”

In Romans 12 v6–8, we read of the varying gifts given by God to His Church. In verse 7 the gift of teaching is included. J.B. Philips paraphrases this verse:

“If our gift is teaching let us give all that we have to our teaching. Let us not allow slackness to spoil our work!”

This is also true even when we are experienced and capable teachers. It is easy to become slack in our preparation (or to omit it completely) when we have taught certain lessons many times. But the experienced teacher also needs to prepare. He might add to his subject, or present it in a different way. Otherwise, his teaching becomes very mechanical, and loses the freshness and spiritual impact it would otherwise have. The experienced teacher might not spend as long in preparation as he did the first time, **but prepare he must!**

The Teacher Needs to Prepare Himself

You need to take time to be with God, during the week, so that you can grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Him. Someone has said, “The more you learn to fear God, the more you will learn that you have nothing else to fear. The more you know Him, the better you can teach about Him.”

It is recorded of Ezra that:

“he *prepared* his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to *do* it and to *teach* in Israel statutes and judgments” (Ezra 7 v10).

Therefore you, as a teacher, should have a disciplined and regular quiet time each day (see pages 43–46).

The Teacher Needs to Prepare His Message

The ideal time to start your preparation is right after teaching last week’s Bible Lesson. Everything is still fresh in your mind, and you can best see how to relate what you will be teaching next week to what you have already taught. Truth comes through your personality; and you need to live with your message for a week until it grips your heart. If it does not grip your own heart it won’t grip the hearts of your listeners.

Try to set aside a period each day, if possible, to prepare your lesson. Read the passage, study it, and think about what you will say. More information on how to do this is contained in the book “Teaching

a Bible Lesson To Children” by Jennifer Haaijer which is published by European Child Evangelism Fellowship.

You need to take time:

- ↗ To read the passage—at least six times.
- ↗ To study the passage carefully yourself.
- ↗ To use other available aids and materials which will help you to understand the passage. Just be sure that they are the best you can obtain. There are many books and teaching materials on the market which are not biblical or fundamental. Don’t use them. There are also materials which, while correct in their biblical facts, do not include or encourage the evangelism of children. Look for the best. I believe that you will not find any better than those produced by Child Evangelism Fellowship. These are, of course, only helps and aids, and should not be slavishly followed.
- ↗ To find the main truth taught by the passage or story you will teach, and which you want your children to understand.
- ↗ To decide how that truth can be applied to both the saved and the unsaved children in your class.
- ↗ To construct a lesson outline which will do justice to the passage. Indicate the places where the truth will be taught and the applications made.

One expert insists that a teacher should never spend any less than three hours on the preparation of his lesson—and that is, I believe, quite conservative.

The full-time children’s worker who is engaged in a teacher training ministry must also ensure that he sets aside definite periods of preparation time in his diary during the week which precedes his class. The time spent in preparation for a teacher training class usually needs to be **at least** seven or eight times the length of the teaching period in the class itself, and is often longer. However, you must be careful not to spend too much time in preparation. There is a danger of using this preparation as an excuse for not doing other things which are important and need to be done.

The Teacher Needs to Prepare His Materials

The next step is to prepare and assemble the visuals and materials you will use to teach the lesson. This will take time and should be commenced early. It can often be done at the same time as you prepare the message.

Flannelgraph figures, if they are to be used, need to be cut out; backgrounds, if they will be used, need to be selected; songs need to be carefully chosen; a visualized memory verse needs to be prepared and a review idea needs to be made or purchased.

Then the visuals need to be practised. This is important. You should use the materials yourself before you use them in class. One good plan is to use them in front of a mirror so that you can see how you are doing it.

Conclusion

In many ways the most important part of the lesson is its preparation. Most people, if given patience, stickability, some know-how and lots of preparation can become good teachers, and develop a real ability to teach.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *How much time did you spend in preparation for the last Bible Lesson which you taught to children? Was it too short? Too long?*
- ↗ *Did the children listen well? This question and the answer to it is closely related to the previous one.*
- ↗ *Would you agree with this statement: "Preparation and presentation are the two greatest tasks and responsibilities for every teacher?" Explain your answer.*
- ↗ *Some media analysts have estimated that more effort is devoted to the first minute of a TV show than to any other portion. Why could this be true?
What percentage of preparation time do you think should be devoted to planning the introduction of a lesson? Why?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Preparation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 8: "Understandest Thou What Thou Readest?" The Principle of Comprehension

*EFFECTIVE TEACHING IS ONLY POSSIBLE IF
THE TEACHER HIMSELF UNDERSTANDS THOROUGHLY
WHAT HE IS TEACHING*

The more clearly you understand what you are teaching the more simply and clearly you will be able to teach.

Preparation and comprehension go together. If you prepare thoroughly, you get a better understanding of what you will teach. It is impossible to teach that which you do not understand.

The Importance of Comprehension

One of the main problems in teaching, and one of the greatest hindrances to effective teaching, is the teacher's lack of understanding of his subject. Gregory's **first** law of teaching is "A teacher must be one who knows the lesson, or truth, or art to be taught." The message is always more important than the method. It is usually obvious to discerning pupils if the teacher does not really understand what he is teaching. He will become very involved and complicated; or he may rush quickly through his presentation; or he may shout more loudly; or he might avoid certain parts altogether. Certainly he will not teach effectively.

Howard Hendricks writes, "If you stop learning today you stop teaching tomorrow." How true!

Knowledge is the material with which the teacher works. Imperfect knowledge will be reflected in imperfect teaching. What you do not know or understand, you cannot teach. It is a recognised fact that the less you really understand a subject, the more difficulty you have in explaining it, and making it simple. The reverse is also true. It is so easy to make simple things difficult; and it is so hard to make difficult things simple.

You should know more than you have time to teach, and not just enough to fill the time. This requires earnest study and investigation

so as to have a grasp of the complete lesson. Someone has said, “A teacher should know more than he teaches and, if he knows more than he teaches, he will teach more than he knows.”

The teacher who masters his subject will be at ease as he directs the class in its thoughts and active participation.

You Should Seek to Develop a General Comprehension

First of all you need to have a good overall understanding of the Word of God. You need to be familiar with three subjects at least.

- **Bible history**, and the main events of the Bible in their correct order. You need to see the general sweep of God’s historical/redemptive plan for the world, and to be able to place specific events in this plan.
- **Bible characters**. You should see in them good examples to follow, and bad examples to avoid. This will be of real benefit in your own life, and in the lives of those whom you teach.
- **Bible doctrines**. You need to study carefully the main doctrines of the Bible, assembling together the teachings from different parts of the Scriptures and seeing how they fit together into the panorama of biblical teaching. You should feel at ease with Bible doctrine, and realise that this is the basis upon which all else is built. You should therefore be a continual and regular student of the Word of God, and also a systematic reader of good doctrinal and expository books about the Word of God.

I trust that you have received a copy of my book “How to Teach Bible Doctrines to Children.” This will, I feel, be a real help to you both in the understanding and in the teaching of doctrine. If you have not received a copy, please write to me at the address given at the beginning of this book and I will send you one.

You Need to Develop a Specific Comprehension of the Passage You Are Going to Teach

You should study the passage carefully so as to see what it actually teaches. Exegesis is the art of discovering the meaning of any verse

or passage. Every teacher needs to be an exegete. You need to be able to find the central truth of any passage or lesson, and understand what this truth means for yourself, and for those you are teaching. You need to know what the passage means and teach what it says. You need to find out why this particular passage has been included by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God and what God wants to say to us through it.

There are at least four steps to follow if you want to understand a passage, and what it is teaching:

- Read it carefully and examine it closely. What truth(s) is (are) here? Someone has said, “The meaning of a passage is never ours to decide; but only ours to discover.” You need to teach the truth which is **there**. Every passage is different, and that gives freedom and variety to your teaching.
- Find if there is anything in the surrounding context which helps in the correct understanding of this passage. A verse or passage should never be taken out of its context.
- Discover how the truth of this passage fits into the general teaching of Scripture.
- Avoid over-spiritualizing when there is a surface meaning which is obvious. It has been said that “the primary meaning of a passage is what those words, from that particular writer, would have conveyed to those readers at that time on that subject.”

For example, the Lord Jesus stilling the storm in Luke 8 v22 is not primarily a lesson to teach us what to do “in the storms of life.” It is, instead, a demonstration of the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. That is the obvious truth the Apostles understood from this lesson.

Again, the lesson of the good Samaritan in Luke 10 is not primarily a picture of the sinner and his salvation through the Lord Jesus. The obvious surface truth is that we, as believers, must love our neighbours as ourselves.

Sometimes it is easy to spiritualize so as to avoid very practical implications.

One of the major problems for teachers of children is that they do not always really understand the meaning of the passage they are

teaching. If you are a teacher of teachers you need to help your teachers to understand the passage to be taught. However, you must not underestimate the teacher's ability to understand the passage for himself, nor should you, in any way, underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit to give the teacher understanding. You should explain to your teachers the basic principles to be followed in studying and understanding a passage; you should discuss the passage with the teachers, giving them opportunities to air their views; you should explain any difficult points; and only as a last resort you should explain what you feel the passage to mean. You should then give a demonstration of how to teach and apply that specific passage to children. It is also a help to put a written or photocopied lesson outline (in sketch form, or even in detail) into the teacher's hands so that he can see how to teach the lesson.

However, you always need to remember that when teaching teachers it is much more profitable to show them how to find the meaning of a passage rather than telling them what it means.

You Need to Use all the Material at Your Disposal to Help You in Your Comprehension

There are many aids to help in the comprehension of a passage:

- The Bible itself. It should always be the major source of your materials, and the primary basis for your teaching. You must start off with the passage you are studying, and look in it (at the story, at the incidents, at the persons) for truth. Then other portions of Scripture can help explain and interpret the passage you are studying.
- A good Bible commentary can be a help, after you have already studied the passage for yourself.
- A Bible concordance can give help with the meaning and understanding of the individual words used.
- A Bible dictionary can give more information about the people, places, and events mentioned in the passage.
- Teachers' manuals can be a great help in comprehension. Others who have much ability and experience have produced material which you can read and from which you can receive much help

and encouragement. In this way you can utilize and benefit from the lessons others have learned. However, they should be a supplement to your study of the Bible passage, and not a substitute for it.

You Need to Have an Understanding of the Needs of Your Students

It is absolutely necessary for you, as the teacher, to know and understand those whom you are teaching, and their needs, so that you can relate the central truth and its applications to those needs. This involves close contact with them both inside and outside of class; and a good rapport with them. You need to be aware of their life situations, their needs, their concerns, their burdens and their problems, and be able to relate yourself and your teaching both to their spiritual needs and the things they are interested in.

There are many ways to get to know better your children and their needs:

- ↗ by talking to them about their family and pastimes
- ↗ by talking to them about school
- ↗ by listening to them!
- ↗ by spending extra time with them—in outings, and recreation activities
- ↗ by visiting them in their homes
- ↗ by writing or telephoning.
- ↗ by asking questions in Good News Club
- ↗ by making yourself available to those with needs and problems
- ↗ by having a “question box”
- ↗ by keeping details of individual birthdays, hobbies, prayer requests in a notebook to help as reminders

You must be careful not to answer questions and problems which don't exist and, at the same time, completely ignore and avoid those which do exist.

You need to be flexible in your presentation, always relating your teaching to the children who are there. This might even involve last minute changes or adaptations when you realise that the teaching situation is different from what you had anticipated.

It is interesting to see how the apostles adapted the method of their teaching to the groups to which they were ministering—but without weakening their message. For example in Acts 17 v22–31 Paul in his preaching took his listeners (who were completely heathen) right back to Creation, and to the existence of the One True God. He then developed his message from there. But when Peter was speaking to Jews in Acts chapter 2, he could take much of that knowledge for granted and move quickly onto the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. You can also see this principle of adaptation by contrasting Paul's preaching in Antioch to the Jews in Acts 13 v16–41 with his preaching in Athens to the Gentiles in Acts 17 v22–31.

It is essential, at all times, to keep in your mind the fact that the children you are teaching are either saved or unsaved. Your teaching and applications should, therefore, have two purposes:

- To evangelise the child who is unsaved. He needs to know how to trust Jesus Christ as his Saviour.
- To help the child who is saved to grow. He needs to learn how to live for Christ—at home, at school and at play.

You Need to Have an Understanding of the Principles of Teaching

It is possible for you as a teacher to understand the passage from which you are going to teach and to understand your students and their needs and yet neglect to study the teaching principles such as are outlined in this book. If this happens there could possibly be a failure in your teaching. You always need to be examining yourself and your methods to see what aspect of your teaching is weak and needs strengthening. This book will, I trust, help you in your self-examination. A good teacher is always developing, growing and progressing in his understanding and in his personal applications of good teaching principles.

You should remember also that this principle of comprehension, like all the other principles outlined, applies to your teaching of adults in a teacher training class as much as it does to your teaching of children. Read these chapters, and the other chapters, through again with your training ministry of teachers in mind.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Do you have a clear understanding of Bible doctrines? Do you take time to study them systematically?
Have you considered using my book “How to Teach Bible Doctrines to Children” as a basis for your own personal studies—on a daily basis?*
- *Give a list of the ways you plan to increase your knowledge of the Bible over the next year.*
- *How would you explain and teach the doctrine of adoption to children? Do you really understand it yourself?*
- *How can you better understand the needs of the teachers who come to your training class so that you can help meet those needs?*
- *Would you have difficulty in explaining to a group of teachers that, according to the Bible, children are lost? If the answer is “yes”—is it because you do not really and exactly understand what the Bible does teach on this subject?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Comprehension

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 9: “Less Means More” The Principle of Concentration

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEMANDS THAT THE TEACHER MAKES IT HIS GOAL TO TEACH LESS, AND TO TEACH IT MORE THOROUGHLY

This is one of the most important, and one of the most widely accepted principles of teaching. Yet when I have asked students in our Leadership Training Institute which of the teaching principles they have failed most often to implement, they almost always choose this principle.

It is a fundamental teaching principle that the more you try to teach at any one time, the less you will actually teach. It is better to teach a little and teach it well. Your ability as a teacher imposes limits on the amount you can teach effectively, and the child’s understanding imposes limits to the amount he can learn thoroughly. Your teaching will be more effective if you can direct it towards a single, specific and measurable learning goal. If you have one target and can see it clearly, you have a much better chance of hitting it. But if you aim at many targets you will probably hit none! This principle applies to all your teaching situations whether they be with children, with teachers or with Institute students.

In a Regular Teaching Ministry among Children

It is obvious that what you can teach in one lesson, or even in one hour, is limited. Therefore each lesson, in your regular teaching ministry, should be used to teach one specific truth, and to teach it well. The more specific your aim is, the more likely you are to achieve it. For example if, in one Bible Lesson, it is your aim to teach that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that Christian boys and girls should read their Bibles every day, that sin is breaking God’s Law, that Jesus Christ is coming back again some day, and that Christian children should obey their parents—it is MUCH TOO MUCH. A specific aim is one which **can** be achieved. The whole lesson is therefore orientated

towards that one aim.

The truth or aim should not only be specific, but it should also be short and simple. It is something which can be stated in one short sentence and can be easily remembered. It should be brief enough to be remembered, clear enough to be written and specific enough to be taught. The wonderful thing about having one clear truth or aim is that it keeps you as the teacher “on the right track” both in your preparation and in your teaching. This will give a unity to the lesson which will help you in your preparation and in your presentation; and will help the students in their understanding and response.

It is therefore better to teach a little, and to do it so thoroughly that the children will understand it, remember it and act upon it rather than to try to teach a lot, most of which will be forgotten!

In the earlier days of Child Evangelism Fellowship here in Europe, I and many of my co-workers, at that time, made it our aim to teach seven truths in each Bible Lesson—one truth for the saved children, and a further six Gospel truths for the unsaved children. This is also what we taught in our training classes and in our 3 month Training Institute. There is no doubt that God blessed our ministry. However, we now feel that we have found a better way which is in agreement with this principle of concentration and yet, at the same time, does not in any way lessen or weaken our evangelism of the children. Indeed we believe it strengthens our evangelism. We believe that the most effective way to teach children, in a regular ministry, is to teach one truth thoroughly each week, and to apply that truth carefully and clearly to both the saved and the unsaved children. This gives the lesson unity, and that is important.

This same truth should also be taught throughout the whole teaching programme for that week, so that when the children leave the meeting they have really got hold of that one truth, and have also seen its clear application to their own lives.

One of the problems which I now see in our old method of teaching was that the lesson was not unified. There were two quite separate lines of teaching followed by the teacher:

- The six “points” of the Gospel were presented to the unsaved children.
- A teaching point was taught to the saved children.

Generally speaking, these two lines were not at all linked, and the consequence was that the lesson was not unified.

When the teacher concentrates his teaching on one central truth, and then builds his applications to both the saved and unsaved children on **that** truth there is unity in the lesson, and this makes it, I believe, a more effective lesson.

This could almost be seen as a separate principle of teaching—the principle of unification; but it is so closely linked to the principle of concentration that I felt it could best be included as part of the latter.

I would advise you strongly to consider this matter of a unified lesson, and avoid having two separate, and quite unrelated, lines of teaching running through your Bible lessons.

It is obvious that concentration on one truth, while a good teaching principle and a real help to understanding, also involves more work for the teacher. It would be easier for him to touch on a number of truths rather than to concentrate on, and teach effectively, one truth. I am sure that the seven point system we once used in Europe in Child Evangelism Fellowship was, in many ways, easier and simpler to use. But I believe that it was not in agreement with this basic principle we are now speaking about. It was therefore, I believe, a less effective form of teaching. Although it involves more work, the effectiveness of this principle of concentration makes the extra work involved well worthwhile.

It is important for all teachers and children's workers to remember the formula TMO. In any lesson there is one truth which you seek to **TEACH**. Then there are other truths which you will **MENTION** whether they are in the passage or not, provided they help you to teach and apply the central truth. Lastly, there are truths that you will **OMIT**.

The central truth is the one to be **taught**. Other truths can be **mentioned**. These have often been taught, in a regular ministry, on previous occasions, and they will frequently help the children to understand the central truth. You should not try to teach these truths. Also there will always be truths which, because of this fundamental teaching principle, you will **omit** altogether—without having a guilt complex!

In a lesson where many truths seem to appear and one is tempted to try to teach all of them or a number of them, it is still better,

because of this teaching principle, to concentrate on teaching one truth.

This method of concentrating on one truth at a time is especially effective if each truth taught in a regular teaching ministry is carefully linked to truths which have been previously taught. In this way you will “build” your teaching. A well planned revision and review time will help greatly with regard to this.

HOW COULD WE TEACH THE BOOK OF GENESIS TO CHILDREN USING THE PRINCIPLE OF CONCENTRATION?

The first five lessons could each be used to teach **one** important truth **about God**:

- ↗ “The Creation story.”
God is the Creator and is **all-powerful**.
- ↗ “Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.”
God is **holy**, and cannot allow sin in His presence.
- ↗ “Cain and Abel.”
God **loves** sinners, and has provided a way of salvation for them through the shedding of blood.
- ↗ “Enoch.”
God is a **personal** God, and wants His creatures to know Him, and have fellowship with Him.
- ↗ “Noah.”
God is **just** and must punish sin.

The following ten lessons could then each be used to teach **one** way by which we can please this God, who is all-powerful, holy, loving, personal and just.

- ↗ “The call of Abraham.”
You can please God by **believing** what He says, and by putting your trust in Him as Abraham did.
- ↗ “The sacrifice of Isaac.”
You can please God by **obeying** Him as Abraham did.
- ↗ “Abraham seeks a bride for his son.”
You can please God by **depending upon His help** in difficult situations, as Abraham and his servant did.

- ↗ “Jacob and Esau, the birthright and the blessing.”
You can please God by **being honest**, unlike Jacob who told lies.
- ↗ “Jacob away from home.”
When you sin you can please God by **coming back to Him** for His forgiveness and cleansing as Jacob did.
- ↗ “Joseph the beloved son.”
You can please God by **living for Him** when you are **at home**, as Joseph did.
- ↗ “Joseph sold by his brothers.”
You can please God by **living for Him** when you are **away from home**, as Joseph did.
- ↗ “Joseph in prison.”
You can please God by **living for Him when everything seems to be against you**, and there are many problems, as Joseph did.
- ↗ “Joseph, the prime minister of Egypt.”
You can please God by **living for Him when everything is going well**, as Joseph did.
- ↗ “Joseph forgives his brothers.”
You can please God by **forgiving those who sin against you**—as Joseph did.

Most of these fifteen lessons would allow a two-fold application to saved and unsaved children. Several of them, however, would only allow an application to one group of children, and in these cases there would need to be a clear presentation in some other part of the teaching programme for the second group of children.

In a Special Evangelistic Ministry to Children

It is important always to adapt oneself to the teaching situation in which one finds oneself. Not all lessons should be taught the same way. Your teaching will depend upon the situation and upon the circumstances.

In a purely evangelistic lesson, when you have the opportunity to speak to a group on one occasion only, you will generally want to teach, to some extent, as many gospel truths as possible. However, even here you should try to abide by the principle of concentration—

as much as is possible.

This is not the ideal teaching situation. But that does not mean that you should **completely** eliminate good teaching principles. You need to ask how you can apply a principle such as this one to that particular teaching situation.

It is obvious that the thorough teaching of one central truth in each Bible Lesson (in a regular and weekly ministry to, basically, the same children) is by far the best and more effective form of teaching. But this situation which we are now looking at is special and it is different. Many of these children are only here for this lesson. Consequently, you need to “spread your teaching,” with more breadth, but therefore with less depth. You will try, as best you can, to teach several (but not too many) Gospel truths which are in the lesson and which those children need to understand.

This is not possible in every Bible Lesson. Indeed it may not even be possible in many lessons. So it is necessary to choose special lessons which will enable this to be done in a normal, natural and effective way.

Special emphasis could be given to one Gospel truth if the lesson emphasizes it. Other Gospel truths should also be introduced, as the text indicates, but they should be linked, if possible, with the emphasized truth, to make it even more understandable.

If you are teaching a 5 Day Club (where there are a number of children who come each day and, at the same time, there are also a number of different children each day), you should still attempt to apply this principle of concentration. You could teach a specially chosen evangelistic lesson each day which would enable you to teach a different basic truth of the Gospel and teach it as thoroughly as possible. For example, on Monday you could deal thoroughly with the question of “sin.” This would help the regular attenders. That does not mean that you would omit other truths. For the sake of the irregular attenders especially but also for all the children, you would need also to teach, as well as you can, what Jesus Christ has done for sin; and what the sinner needs to do to be saved. On Tuesday you could lay special emphasis on another basic Gospel truth. In a 5 Day Club you cannot teach everything; but you should try each day to teach one Gospel truth as thoroughly as time allows—and yet try to teach other related gospel truths, although this would only be possible

in a very limited way.

This pattern is followed very effectively in the five evangelistic lessons written by Jennifer Haaijer and produced by European Child Evangelism Fellowship entitled “God’s Wonderful Salvation.”

It is also necessary to distinguish between an evangelistic lesson which you would teach in a Sunday school to children who have a good knowledge of the Bible, and one to children outside Sunday school who know little or nothing about the Bible.

In a Teacher Training Class

The same principle of concentration also applies to the teaching of adults in a training class. You have so much to share, and you want the teachers to know and learn it all! The danger is that you try to cram a number of things into the limited time at your disposal. You may get a sense of satisfaction from having covered so much. But you need to ask yourself the question: how much have they really understood, and how much will they retain and put into practice?

It is better to have clear cut teaching objectives, to teach less and to ensure that they understand what you have taught. Then, if there is a further opportunity to teach, another subject can also be taught thoroughly.

Consequently, the formula TMO is also applicable when teaching in a training class. One subject should be taught thoroughly; other related subjects can be introduced, mentioned, and related to the main subject. Further subjects or truths can be omitted. This is not because they are unimportant, but because they do not contribute to the understanding of the main subject, and also because they might interfere with the thorough teaching of that subject or truth.

For example, it is better to concentrate on one subject such as:

- ↗ “A child can be saved” or
- ↗ “How to counsel a child and lead him to Christ” or
- ↗ “Helping a saved child to grow.”

This means teaching less. But it also means that something will really be taught. One training class teacher said, “When I talk to teachers after a class, or I watch them in action, I am amazed at how very little they have learned or absorbed.” It could be because he was trying to teach too much and did not have a clear cut teaching objective.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *What is more important:*
 - ✓ *That you “teach” everything?*
 - ✓ *Or that your students learn something?*

Think back. Have you ever been guilty of trying to “teach” too much? Have you changed your teaching method since then? Why? How?
- *What one central truth would you teach children if your Bible lesson was “The Lord Jesus and the Samaritan woman” in John chapter 4?*
- *List six Bible Lessons which you could use as special evangelistic lessons and which could be used naturally to teach several Gospel truths. Name these truths in each case.*
- *If you were invited by the pastor of your own church to speak for 45 minutes to his Sunday school teachers what one subject do you feel you would concentrate on? Remember the principle of concentration. What do you feel is their one greatest need? Why?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Concentration

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 10: “System—The Seed of Success” The Principle of Organisation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING IS HELPED BY LOGICAL THINKING IN PREPARATION, AND LOGICAL TEACHING IN PRESENTATION

If you as a teacher lack system and organisation you will frequently find yourself with problems and in difficult situations. The effective teacher needs to be logical and organised in all that he does.

You Need to Be Organised in Your Thinking

Your thoughts and your understanding need to be organised in two main ways.

- **You should understand, in their logical order, the Gospel truths which unsaved children need to hear.**
You should have a clear, organised view of what the Gospel message is. Then you know what to look for when preparing your lesson.
 - ✓ The Gospel includes teaching about God
 - He is the Creator (Acts 17 v24–29)
 - He has spoken through His Word (1 Corinthians 15 v3, 4)
 - He is holy and just (Acts 17 v31)
 - He is love (John 3 v16)
 - ✓ The Gospel includes teaching about sin—its root, fruit and consequences
 - Sin is disobeying God (1 John 3 v4)
 - Sin must be punished (Romans 6 v23)
 - Sin is what we are by nature (Ephesians 2 v3)
 - Sin is what we do (James 2 v10)
 - ✓ The Gospel includes teaching about Jesus Christ
 - His Person
 - He is Perfect Man (1 John 4 v2, 3)
 - He is God the Son (Acts 9 v20)

- His Work
 - He lived without sin (1 John 3 v4, 5)
 - He died (1 Corinthians 15 v3)
 - He rose again (1 Corinthians 15 v4)
 - He is exalted (Acts 5 v31)
- ✓ The Gospel includes teaching about the way of salvation
 - Jesus Christ's invitation to come (John 6 v37)
 - Man's response
 - to repent (Acts 2 v38)
 - to trust Jesus Christ (Acts 16 v31)
 - The result
 - Justification (Acts 13 v39)
 - Regeneration (2 Corinthians 5 v17)

Three things need to be remembered by the teaching evangelist:

- ◇ It is not necessary for the child to understand all the Gospel truths outlined above to be saved. God is sovereign. Sometimes He regenerates on the basis of much truth and much understanding. Sometimes He regenerates on the basis of little truth and little understanding.
- ◇ It is not possible, or necessary, to try to teach, or even include, all the above truths in any Bible Lesson. The apostles certainly did not. We have already learned from the principle of concentration that it is better to teach less, and to teach it more thoroughly.
- ◇ The passage being taught will primarily determine which gospel truth(s) should be taught. But you need to know what to look for.
 - **You should have a clear organised understanding of the needs of saved children.**
Saved children need to be taught about:
 - ✓ Assurance of salvation
 - ✓ Sin in the Christian life
 - the reality of sin
 - the results of sin
 - the confession of sin
 - how to have victory over sin
 - ✓ The Bible
 - ✓ Prayer
 - ✓ Bible doctrines

- ✓ Christian conduct
- ✓ Witnessing
- ✓ Missions

But you should not try to teach all of these at the same time! Your teaching should be in accord with all the principles of teaching. These principles are closely related to each other, and they certainly include the principle of concentration!

But before approaching the Bible passage to prepare to teach it, you should already have in your mind a clear logical sequence of the truths which saved children need to understand. This does not mean, for one moment, that you will try to teach all of these or even a number of these. But you will know which truths may appear in the passage you will be teaching, and for which you should look.

You Need to Be Organised in Your Goals

You should know clearly and in an organised way what you are aiming at and what you want to see achieved and accomplished in the life of each child:

- ✓ To create right attitudes in all the children toward the Bible, God, the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the church
- ✓ To store the heart with God's Word
- ✓ To lead unsaved children to Jesus Christ for salvation
- ✓ To challenge and help saved children to live the Christian life victoriously
- ✓ To train in worship
- ✓ To lead them to witness for Christ by life and by lip
- ✓ To lead them to dedicate their lives to God for service
- ✓ To establish them in the doctrines of God's Word

You Need to Organise Your Time

A teacher's time needs to be organised. You should start preparing your lesson for next Sunday, as soon as possible, during the week; and you should set aside, in an organised fashion, time each day for your preparation.

You also need to be well organised with regard to your time of arrival at (and departure from) your place of ministry. You can increase

your time and the value of it by being there early. You can decrease it by a late arrival. You can also waste time during your programme by having to look for tunes, or sort out flannelgraph figures or pictures which are not in order.

This principle of organisation needs to be applied to every aspect of the teacher's life—sleep, food, exercise, recreation, hobbies and “fresh air.”

You Need to Be Organised in Your Preparation

You should approach a Bible passage logically, and aim to think through that passage in an organised way. There are certain basic questions you can ask yourself to get the true meaning and teaching of the lesson.

- What does the passage teach about God, man, Jesus Christ, the way of salvation, the Christian life?
- What is the main truth?
- Is this truth one which will help my children?
- How can I apply this truth to the two groups of children in my class?

The systematic exegesis of a lesson demands concentration and hard work. The time spent in preparation should be at least seven or eight times the length of the time spent in presentation—and it is always good to start early!

You Need to Be Organised in Your Presentation

Learning is structured. The pupil learns more readily when your presentation is organised and well structured. The best teachers are those who can present what they have to say in a clear logical fashion. When teaching in a Good News Club, or in a teacher training class, you should always seek to build upon what the students already know, and add to that which they don't know—step by step.

All truth taught must be based upon truth which is already known. Therefore you should proceed to new material by single, easy, and natural steps—letting the known explain the unknown. This includes relating what you are teaching to former lessons which are in the realm of the known.

Dr. Gregory's fourth law of teaching is that "the lesson to be mastered must be explicable in the terms of truth already known by the learner—the unknown must be explained by the known."

The Lord Jesus was a model at this skill. He constantly taught new truths on the basis of the previous knowledge of His hearers.

- When He taught about His death He used and built upon their knowledge of the brazen serpent in the Old Testament (John 3 v14, 15; Numbers 21 v7–9).
- When He taught about His resurrection, He used and built upon the story of Jonah and the great fish (Matthew 12 v39, 40; Jonah chapters 1 and 2).

This principle will have a number of obvious applications for you in your Bible lesson:

- You will use introductions and illustrations which are based upon the interests of the children.
- You will link your new lessons to former lessons.
- Above all you will teach each Bible lesson step by step—each step based on the previous step.

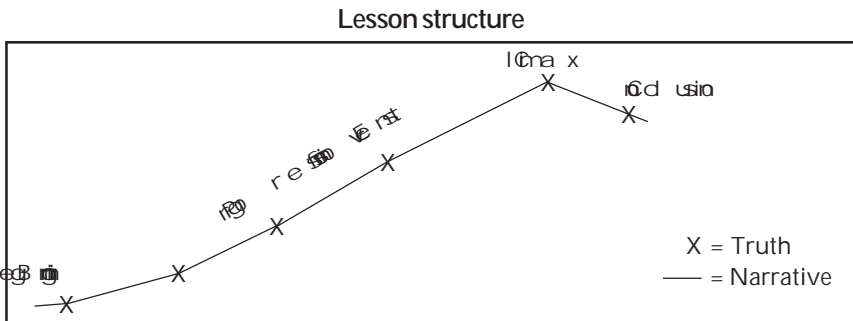
In each Bible lesson you should always proceed by graded steps—like a highjumper in the Olympic Games! The pupils should grasp each aspect of the truth before the next aspect is explored and understood. New ideas become part of the pupils' knowledge and serve as a starting place for each fresh advance.

You should always therefore make it your goal to be logical, structured and reasoned in both your thinking and your teaching. The teacher who thinks haphazardly and teaches haphazardly, is understood haphazardly.

Unfortunately, some lessons which are taught are not structured at all. They are simply a narrative with isolated truths introduced here and there; and there is no attempt at the structured organised teaching of one truth. Many lessons do have structure as far as the narrative is concerned, and a clear "progression of events"; but different and often unrelated truths are introduced here and there in the narrative. This is not a structured lesson. To be structured it needs not just a narrative structure, but a doctrinal structure. There should be a progression of thought throughout the lesson as the truth

is reasoned and explained, and each time the truth is introduced it should be built on what has been taught earlier. In other words, there should be two structures—a structure of events, and a structure of truth. This will make an interesting and also an effective lesson. You can receive much help or instruction on how to do this in your Bible lesson in the book “How to Teach a Bible Lesson” written by Jennifer Haaijer and published by, and available from, European Child Evangelism Fellowship (European CEF Headquarters, Kilchzimmer, 4438 Langenbruck, Switzerland).

Such organised teaching involves having a written teaching plan with all the main headings (beginning, progression of events, climax, conclusion). This plan will also show clearly the different points at which the central truth will be taught, and when it will be applied to the saved and to the unsaved children. This lesson plan helps you to determine, and to keep before you, the purpose of the lesson; it ensures that the time is used effectively with no time lost; it gives unity, order and continuity to the lesson; it encourages the pupils’ understanding; it helps you to teach with confidence; and it makes the lesson more interesting. Someone has said that a lesson well planned is already half taught.



Organised teaching always involves the carefully organised inclusion and teaching of the central truth at different parts of the lesson. You are not just telling a story; you are teaching and applying a truth. Each time you include the central truth, it is included in a slightly different way, and in greater depth—so that the child, at the end of the lesson, understands thoroughly that truth and its application to him.

In the teaching of a special evangelistic lesson there should also be a clear order and system in the way you teach, if at all possible. You must still aim at an organised and structured lesson. In such a lesson you **will** teach the Gospel; but you must also teach what the passage teaches. Therefore you must choose the lesson for such an occasion very carefully and prayerfully. Not every Bible lesson lends itself to this kind of teaching. If it is a good evangelistic lesson, it will all fit together. The Gospel message will flow naturally and logically from the lesson. If the story or narrative were taken away, there would still be a clear reasoned presentation of the Gospel. There will in such lessons often be a theme or special emphasis which is one aspect of the Gospel and which runs through the lesson and holds it together.

Also in the teaching of a training class, your teaching should be orderly and organised in its presentation. Point 1 leads to Point 2, and then to Point 3. The lesson should be clearly structured in this way both in your mind and in your presentation. Then when it is taught, it will be logically and systematically reasoned. This type of lesson can be easily visualized with word strips, or on an overhead projector or on a flannelboard; and it can also be more readily followed and understood by those present in the training class.

You Need to Organise Your 60-Minute Teaching Programme

A Good News Club hour, or Sunday school hour, should be carefully planned (as a whole) to achieve maximum effectiveness. The central truth of the Bible Lesson should be introduced into, and underlined in, the choruses sung, the memory verse learned, and the review time. Careful organisation of this type will ensure repetition of the truth, and yet avoid the monotony of something being repeated in a similar or stereotyped fashion.

You Need to Organise Your Overall Teaching

It is important to follow an overall plan if you are teaching the Bible regularly to a group of children. Try to teach in an organised way over a period of time. Be systematic and build your overall teaching. Otherwise the children hear some passages and stories in

the Bible over and over again—and many others they never hear at all.

Child Evangelism Fellowship has a 5-year cycle of visualized Bible Lessons which take the children through a study of much of the Bible. Series of lessons from both Old and New Testaments are included each year.

Your overall plan could teach and follow the Bible in a chronological way. In other words, you could work your way systematically through certain books of the Bible, or through the lives of Bible characters.

Or your overall plan could, over a period of time, teach one major doctrine or truth in a systematic way using lessons based upon passages and stories from different parts of the Bible to illustrate and explain it.

Better still, a good teacher could include both of the above plans. You could have, for one part of the year, a “narrative plan” and for the other part of the year, a “doctrinal or thematic plan.” But whatever way you go it is essential to have a plan and a system to follow.

Teaching a Bible Lesson should be an enjoyable experience, and not something arduous. The more you work at it, and the better you organise yourself, the more you will enjoy it. But you must always be careful not to become legalistic and to become so tied to method and plans, that you lose the very joy and exuberance which your presentation needs.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *What do you find the most difficult to organise:*
 - Your thinking?*
 - Your time?*
 - Your preparation?*
 - Your presentation?*
 - Your programme?*
 - Your overall plan?*
- Would more self-discipline help you to overcome this problem? Or is there another answer? What suggestion could you give a new teacher who felt his need of organisation?*

- *Do you always use a written plan of your lesson while teaching it? Why? How detailed should it be (or not be)? Should it be visible, in any way, to your students? What do you do with your plan afterwards?*
- *Can you see how the Gospel truths fit in with each other in a logical fashion? Look again at the four groups of Gospel truths on pages 69 and 70. What would be the best and most logical order in which to teach them over a period of time? Would you start teaching about the way of salvation, and then teach about Jesus Christ, and then teach about God and then teach about sin—or what?*
- *How long do you usually take to prepare a Bible lesson for your children? Do you feel this is adequate? If not, how could you find the extra time needed?*
- *Do you feel that the concept of teaching one truth in a logical and structured way throughout your Bible lesson is difficult? Plan how you could, in this logical and structured way, teach, from Luke 19 v1–10, the truth “Jesus Christ loves you and wants you to come to Him.”*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Organisation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has blessed this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Section C:

“I Am Involved in Teaching” The Ten Operating Principles of Teaching

Chapter 11	80
The Principle of Explanation Effective teaching necessitates the careful and thorough clarification and explanation of the truth(s) to be taught.	
Chapter 12	86
The Principle of Simplification Effective teaching demands that the words and the concepts taught be simple enough for the listeners to understand.	
Chapter 13	95
The Principle of Repetition Effective teaching depends on the constant repetition of the truth being taught.	
Chapter 14	101
The Principle of Application Effective teaching always includes a direct application of the truth taught to the hearts and lives of the children.	
Chapter 15	108
The Principle of Illustration Effective teaching necessitates the use of illustration—to let the light in!	
Chapter 16	116
The Principle of Attraction Effective teaching needs an attractive person, presenting an attractive message in an attractive fashion.	

Chapter 17 123

The Principle of Participation

Effective teaching depends upon the pupil being actually involved in the teaching process, and upon a definite reaction on the pupil's part to what the teacher has taught.

Chapter 18 137

The Principle of Visualisation

Effective teaching uses the eyes of the listener, as well as his ears.

Chapter 19 143

The Principle of Variation

Effective teaching avoids sameness and monotony in methodology and approach.

Chapter 20 148

The Principle of Situation

Effective teaching is encouraged when children are taught in the right, and congenial, kind of atmosphere, environment, and situation.

Chapter 11: “Presentation Without Clarification Brings Frustration” The Principle of Explanation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING NECESSITATES THE CAREFUL AND THOROUGH CLARIFICATION AND EXPLANATION OF THE TRUTH(S) TO BE TAUGHT

Many teachers who are willing to examine their teaching with a view to identifying their weaknesses may admit that this principle is the one which needs to be developed most of all.

Telling Is Not Teaching

Teaching is not just saying something, nor is it even saying something a number of times. Telling is not necessarily teaching. If telling were teaching then everybody who hears would learn and teaching would be a very simple matter requiring very little work and exertion. Do you remember the definition we gave of teaching in chapter three “Teaching is helping another to learn”? If you tell a child something, it does not necessarily mean that he has learned it.

Telling, if it is effectively done, is a help in teaching but in itself will never result in learning. Teaching means that you take time to make a truth really understandable to those who are listening; and that involves careful explanation.

Some feel it is just enough to mention something, and that there is something magical in the repetition of certain words and sentences. But if words and concepts are not understandable, their repetition will have no effect whatsoever, even if they are true and are part of the Gospel message. I have often been amazed at how little a student has understood from my teaching—whether he is a teacher attending training class or a child attending Good News Club. This was especially true when I was using the old method of teaching a Bible Lesson where I always tried to include at least seven truths in each lesson. There was always the danger that we who used this method would

congratulate ourselves, give ourselves a mental pat on the back, because we had said the seven truths which we felt our hearers needed to understand. But the question is: “Did we teach them?”

Good teaching helps the pupils to understand. The good teacher will always aim to motivate his pupils to learn. Someone has said that you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink. But someone else has suggested that you can feed him salt to make him thirsty. That’s motivation to drink!

Listening Is Not Necessarily Learning

A child can listen attentively, and yet learn very little. Dr. Gregory’s sixth law of teaching is that “learning is thinking into one’s own understanding a new idea or truth or working into habit a new art or skill.” His emphasis is upon the student’s reaction rather than the teacher’s action, and that true learning should always produce change of some kind. The truth needs to touch the mind first of all but it then needs to affect the emotions and the will. All of this is only possible when the truth has been well taught and properly explained.

Repeating Does Not Necessarily Result in Understanding

Some teachers feel, that if a child can recite something from memory, he has learned it. A child’s ability to recite something from memory does not mean he has learned it. Reciting, learning by rote, learning by heart may be (and should be) a help to the child in learning but in itself it is not learning.

Teaching is only effective when the child is actually learning; and he cannot learn unless the truth has been thoroughly taught and explained. Teaching is the explanation of a truth, a concept or a word, so that the children understand exactly what you are saying.

It is not sufficient, for example, just to say “God loves you” to the modern child—and even to keep repeating that phrase over and over again. First of all, you need to explain what love is. Many children have no understanding of what love is, or they may have a completely false conception of it. Secondly, you need to explain who God is and what He is like. To many children He is a swear word, a heavenly Father Christmas, or a fierce tyrant. Then, thirdly, you need to help the child to understand what he himself is—a sinful rebel

who has no time for the real God.

Then having **explained** all three words, you can now put it all together into a sentence which means something. "God loves you." It has been explained and the child understands.

It is not sufficient just to say "Jesus Christ died for your sin" or that "Jesus Christ gave His Blood for your sin."

You need to explain, firstly, who Jesus Christ is. Most children have little or no idea. You then need to explain what sin is, and the fact that it is our sin which is involved. Most children have little or no understanding of what the Bible teaches on this subject. For many, sin is "being caught." Then, lastly, you need to explain carefully and understandably how the death of someone almost 2,000 years ago and the Blood which He poured out can affect us and our sin.

The children are now better able to understand the sentence "Jesus Christ died for your sin."

In a training class it is not enough just to say to a group of teachers that children are lost and need to be saved, or to try to teach such "new" truths in fifteen minutes. They need to be explained and taught thoroughly, so that the teachers will really understand.

Good Teaching Takes Nothing for Granted

It is important when teaching children or adults, never to take anything for granted. Often we think our students know, or understand, things when in reality they don't. If in doubt, explain and clarify. If they already know what you are teaching no harm will be done. Repetition is always helpful. If they don't know it, you will have helped them to know it.

Good Teaching Uses Bible Stories

Stories from the Bible properly explained and taught provide far better material for children's talks, than the gimmicks and gadgets which many would-be children's speakers so often become involved with. The best way of teaching is a well told Scripture narrative explaining simple truths, plus illustrations from the Bible and from present day life. This was God's way. This was Christ's way. It should be our way also.

Also what you teach will always be associated in the child's mind with the way you teach. If you teach in a light, frivolous and entertaining way the child will come to apply those same adjectives to what he has been taught.

Good Teaching Explains Thoroughly One Truth from the Passage

In the light of all of this, you can see that it is necessary to analyse your passage carefully, to see firstly what one central truth you should teach from it, and then, secondly, to decide how this teaching can be developed in and through your story. The teaching of that truth must not be ignored throughout the telling of the story, and then finally brought in at the end. Some people tell a story, and there is no indication of its teaching until a concluding word of application brings it in. This puts all the emphasis on the story, and not on the message of God to the children. The story must be the servant and vehicle of the teaching of truth and not vice versa. It is the teaching of truth which is important. The story is simply that which contains it, illustrates it, reinforces it, explains it and carries it into the child's mind.

So you must see how you can use each scene of the story to develop that one basic and central truth so that you can explain it thoroughly and make it clear to the children. As you tell each incident in the story, you must show children not just the narrative, but the meaning of the narrative. As the story develops the teaching develops until both the story and the teaching are complete at the end. Each stage of the story points towards, and touches upon, the truth being taught. This is not just by the repetition of the actual words of the central truth, but by developing the truth at a deeper level of understanding each time it is introduced in the narrative. By the time the story is ended, the truth has been fully explained to the children in a way they can understand.

The Lord Jesus told stories in this way. There is nothing to compare with them for brevity and clarity, and yet for depth of meaning and teaching they are unsurpassed. Who has not thrilled at His stories of The Prodigal Son, The Lost Sheep, The Great Supper, and The Ten Virgins, and at the same time, been challenged by the teaching and truth in them? These matchless stories carried home to the hearts of

His pupils the lessons He intended to teach. There is plenty of action; they are true to life; one truth is clearly and simply taught; and there is positive application. Consequently, no extra moral is needed at the end.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Would you agree that this principle may be the one least understood and most commonly neglected by a majority of teachers? Is this true of your own ministry?
What have you learned from this chapter which will help you to understand this principle and put it to good use?*
- *Why is story-telling so effective as a method of teaching? Is it equally effective with students of all ages? Can you see any dangers in the use of the story method?*
- *How would you help, and react to, a young teacher who was concerned that his children needed to understand every truth he could find in the passage he was teaching, and insisted on including **all** of them in his lesson?*
- *Have you taught Bible doctrines to children? How did you do it? What was the children's reaction?*
- *Do you feel that I am trying to follow and obey this principle of explanation in this book? Or am I just saying things without explaining them properly? Give examples of places where I have obeyed this principle, and examples of places where you feel I have infringed it.*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Explanation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 12: “Feed Lambs—Not Giraffes” The Principle of Simplification

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEMANDS THAT THE WORDS AND THE CONCEPTS TAUGHT BE SIMPLE ENOUGH FOR THE LISTENERS TO UNDERSTAND

I am sure we have all been in a situation where someone was “teaching” us; and we had very little idea what he was talking about. Why? He was so complicated, involved and difficult to understand.

When teaching children it is so important to be simple:

- their knowledge is limited
- their experience is limited
- their vocabulary is limited

Your teaching is, therefore, only effective when it is simple.

Someone has said, “No teaching is any good unless it is so clear (and simple) that it cannot be misunderstood and so interesting that it cannot be forgotten.”

Good Communication Is Necessary

In communicating a message there are three factors. There is the sender, that is the person who is giving the message. There is the message itself. And then there is the receiver of the message. Good communication is where the message as understood by the sender, is received in exactly the same form and with the same meaning by the receiver. Dr. Gregory’s third law of teaching is that “the language used between teacher and learner must be common to both.” That is obvious to all of us, and yet we so often break this law in one way or another.

Many, many times the message which we “send” is understood in a different way by those we want to teach, especially when we are evangelizing children of different backgrounds. If you speak to Roman Catholic children and tell them, “You must be born again,” they may

nod their heads in agreement. But they may be thinking of something completely different from what you are. They may be thinking about being baptized whereas you were thinking of being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Consequently, there has been a breakdown in communication. There can be a similar result when you speak to Roman Catholic children about “receiving the Lord Jesus.” To many of them this means taking part in the Mass.

It is not so much what you say that counts. It is what they hear and understand. Good communication and good understanding depend upon the use of words and concepts which are familiar to your listeners.

Max Warren defined good communication as follows:

“Thinking out what I have to say, then thinking out how the other man will understand what I say, and then rethinking what I have to say so that when I say it he will think what I am thinking.”

One of the most significant battles in world history was between the forces of the Duke of Wellington and the armies of Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo in 1815. The people of Great Britain were waiting with baited breath to find out who won the Battle of Waterloo, because whoever won the battle would decide the future of Europe.

The news of the battle was flashed from town to town by semaphore until it reached the top of Winchester Cathedral and on to London.

The populace of London eagerly waited as the semaphore signals spelled out the words, “WELLINGTON DEFEATED.” Just then a dense fog settled down over the harbour and a fog of despair descended upon London’s inhabitants.

Finally the fog lifted and the semaphore signals came through again to complete the message: “WELLINGTON DEFEATED THE ENEMY.” Can you imagine the wild delirium of joy that spread like a prairie fire throughout all of London?

There can be so many problems when there is a breakdown in communication!

Avoid Difficult Words

One of the most common mistakes we make as teachers is to use language which is too difficult for the children to understand.

This can happen in two ways:

- **The use of big complicated and unfamiliar words which are not in the every day vocabulary, and within the understanding, of the children.**

Words like “agriculture,” “eventual,” “unbecoming,” “equilibrium,” “standards” and “devious” are not familiar to most children. It is so easy to get into the habit of using such words. You may have a larger vocabulary than the pupil (and should have) but you must limit yourself to the language of the latter.

You must learn to speak simply, and to look for words which say the same as more complicated words, but are more simple. Also you need to remember that some short words are not necessarily simple words. Words such as “drab,” “scope,” “slave” are often not understandable to children without careful explanation.

When the Lord Jesus taught there was no one who could fail to understand his language—from the fishermen of Galilee to the priests of Jerusalem.

“The common people heard him gladly” (Mark 12 v37).

Someone has said that, “Everything worthwhile can be put into simple language.” Someone else said, “The Gospel of Christ is like a sea in which whales can swim and children can paddle.”

A child will not put his confidence in a teacher who uses words and phrases which are above his head. You are commanded to feed lambs not giraffes (John 21 v15). A lesson cannot find its way into the child’s heart if it is not understood.

This does not mean that you should become childish in your language. Children resent you speaking in a way which implies that they don’t know very much. You should not overestimate their understanding, but you should not underestimate it either.

At the same time, it does not mean that you should avoid the use of bigger words, or words which the children do not understand—provided you explain to them carefully what these words mean. In this way you are enlarging the child’s vocabulary.

To understand a child's vocabulary and to think in a child's terms, you need:

- ✓ To listen to their conversations. This can be very revealing and very helpful.
- ✓ To read good children's books and literature, which have been prepared by experts, to listen to children's radio programmes and to watch children's television.
- ✓ To ask children to stop you every time you use a term they do not understand.

J.M. Gregory says, "Study constantly and carefully the language of the pupils. Express yourself, as far as possible, in their language. Use the simplest and fewest words that will express your meaning. Use short sentences with the simplest construction. Explain the meaning of new words by illustrations. Test frequently the pupils' understanding of the words you use."

Remember, too, that as a teacher of a training class you should also choose your words carefully and be sure that the teachers understand exactly what you are saying.

- **The use of theological words which may not be long or complicated but of which the average child of today has little or no understanding.**

Long words like "atonement," "sanctification," "transgression," "trespass," "justification," "redemption," "inspiration," and "creation" are, of course, beyond the understanding of most children and especially those with no Bible background. But, even short "theological" words of one syllable can be just as complicated and unknown to them—words like "sin," "faith," "grace," "saved," "just," "Lord," and "trust."

One of your greatest joys is to introduce the children to these words. But this must be done in a clear and simple way, and with careful explanation.

A newcomer, at a church service, said to the pastor afterwards, "I understood all that you said." The pastor felt that this was one of the greatest compliments he had ever been paid.

Avoid Difficult Concepts

Another mistake is that we use concepts and ideas which are too difficult for a child to follow or understand—without careful and detailed explanation.

Sometimes we make this mistake because our own understanding of the subject is inadequate. Sometimes it is because of lack of preparation. Sometimes it is just sheer bad teaching.

Most if not all biblical concepts and ideas can be taught to children in an understandable way, provided adequate preparation and work have been put into it.

There is no reason why symbolism cannot be used if the truth which is symbolised is properly and simply explained. Expressions such as “knocking at the door of the heart,” “open your heart to the Lord Jesus” and verses like Matthew 5 v13, 14 are permissible, and helpful, but only with proper explanation.

One of the greatest biblical truths is the doctrine of justification by faith. The Bible teaches that:

“That He might be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus” (Romans 3 v26).

How can this concept, truth or doctrine be taught simply and understandably to the children? It is a legal concept which is quite foreign to children. It involves the ideas of justice and reckoning; and it is taken from a court scene where there is a judge, a prosecutor and a defending counsel.

You could proceed as follows:

God is pure and clean, and cannot allow sin into His presence. But He is more than that. He is also just and fair. That means two things. He must always punish sin, and He must always reward goodness. If He does not do either of these two things, He is not fair.

Now look at yourself. What are you like? In your heart are all kinds of bad things, and because of these, out of your mouth come bad words, and with your hands and feet you do bad things. God must be fair, and He must punish your sin and separate you from Himself.

But God loves you even though you are bad, and He wants to save you, to bring you to Himself, so that you can

live in Heaven with Him forever. But how can He do this? For you to go to Heaven, you must be “not guilty” concerning sin. Yet you are guilty. How can a guilty person become a “not guilty person?”

There is only one way. If someone else takes the punishment for your sin and your guilt, then you can go free. Who can possibly do that? Only a man who has not sinned Himself could take one person’s guilt and place. But if He was also God He could take the place of many sinners. The only one who was both perfect Man and God, was the Lord Jesus Christ. He was God the Son, and He was a perfect Man. When He died on the Cross, He took our punishment for sin. God the Father punished Him for all the wrong things we have done.

God will punish you for your sin if you are not saved. But if you trust Jesus Christ you will not be punished—because Jesus Christ has taken your punishment. But there is one condition as far as you are concerned. There is one thing you must do. The Bible tells you to trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16 v31).

As soon as you do that, God says, “I pronounce this person not guilty because my Son paid the penalty for his sin.” God counts you not guilty when you trust His Son, because His justice has been satisfied by the Death of His Son. So all your sin—past, present, future—has been transferred or “swapped” to Jesus Christ, and He has taken the punishment for it, and all your sin is completely forgiven for ever.

And something else will happen also at the moment you trust the Lord Jesus Christ. God will also transfer or “swap” the goodness of Jesus Christ to you, so that when He looks at you, He will see you as perfectly clean and holy, because He sees you in Jesus Christ.

It should, of course, be obvious that if you were using this outline to teach children you would also include several illustrations to help them understand better what you were teaching.

Avoid Haste

A third mistake is that we go too quickly, and take too much for granted.

Do not take previous knowledge for granted. One of our most common mistakes is to expect children (or adults!) to know more than they really do. The child of today is extremely limited in his knowledge of the Bible, and the spiritual truths contained in it. Never take for granted that children know the basic truths of the Word of God. Make your teaching as clear and as elementary as possible.

Our problem is that we are usually in too much of a hurry, and we expect children to understand and apply truths to their lives which we have not adequately taught, and which they have not adequately learned.

We often make the same mistake when teaching teachers. We expect them to know and understand more than they really do. We cannot be simple enough, even in a training class situation.

Understand Your Students

A fourth mistake is that we often do not understand the background and beliefs of the children we are teaching

The more you understand the thinking, and background of the children the better you can communicate with them. There may be a great gulf between you and them with regard to your thinking and backgrounds. But your responsibility is, somehow, to get over to the other side of the gulf, to feel as they feel, to think as they think, and “to walk in their shoes.” You need to concentrate on the fact that they do not know what you are going to teach, and you must endeavour to teach it in a way they will understand. The message does not change, but the way you communicate it will depend upon the situation, the background and the needs of those you are teaching.

Similarly, if you are teaching Good News Club teachers you cannot stay in your “ivory tower,” and appear once each week with well prepared notes and theories. Visiting Good News Clubs will help you communicate with your teachers. You need to meet them in their homes, visit their clubs and actually see their problems at first hand. Also teaching a Good News Club yourself will help you to understand some of the problems they are facing.

The underlying principle involved here is stated by Ezekiel when he wrote:

"I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and *I sat where they sat*, and remained there astonished among them seven days" (Ezekiel 3 v15).

Two Concluding Reminders

KISS (Keep it simple sister)

BBBBB (Be brief brother be brief)

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *What is the most cardinal and the most paramount thesis in our educational and pedagogical strategy which will facilitate our predetermined aspirations in that field?
(Can **you** see anything wrong with this question?)*
- ↗ *Can you remember any times when you listened to someone teach (or preach), and you wanted to understand what he was saying—but you couldn't? What do you feel was his main problem? Why did you not understand? Was it his fault, or was it yours—or both?*
- ↗ *Write out John 3 v16. What percentage of the words used are simple one syllable words?*
- ↗ *How would you explain the doctrine of adoption to children in simple language, and as an understandable concept?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Simplification

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 13: “Once Is Not Enough” The Principle of Repetition

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEPENDS ON THE CONSTANT REPETITION OF THE TRUTH BEING TAUGHT

It is a well known fact that we retain that which we hear often. It is not enough, when teaching something new to children, to deal with it once. You need to come back to it—again—and again—and again—especially with younger children. Lessons studied once will soon be forgotten. But whatever is repeatedly reviewed becomes part of one’s knowledge, and will be permanently remembered and used. The man who goes round the country fixing posters to hoardings, showing in large letters the name of a product is not wasting time or money. The advertiser on television who repeats the same picture and jingle over and over again knows what he is doing. He knows that the greater the number of times the name of his product is seen by people, the greater is the likelihood of that name coming to mind when next they enter a shop to buy that type of article.

Repetition Is Necessary

Charles Spurgeon told the story of a visit he made as a boy to his grandfather’s farm. He watched his grandfather work in the fields; and he was especially interested to see his method of sowing peas. In each of the holes he had made in the ground the old man put three peas. This surprised young Charles, and he asked his grandfather why he should put three peas into each hole, when he only wanted and expected one to grow! Was that not waste?

His grandfather replied, “One pea is for the birds; one is for the worms; and the third is to grow.”

When Charles Spurgeon spoke to his Sunday school teachers he applied this story to them. He said that they needed to sow truths several times. One “seed” may be removed by “the birds of the air” because Satan is continually hindering children from listening to and understanding God’s truth. One seed may be devoured by “worms”

because the frailty of the human mind causes it often to wander, and not understand what has just been presented to it. The third seed is the truth which is received, understood and which grows.

A preacher of a bygone age used to say, “I tell them what I am going to tell them. Next I tell them. Then I tell them what I have told them. Finally, I ask them if they have understood.”

We can see this principle of repetition, over and over again, in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth. He frequently used repetition in His teaching ministry.

He often taught the same lesson over and over again to fasten the truth in the minds of those being taught. And, from time to time, He asked the question, “Have you understood this?”

For example He told the story of the Lost Sheep to His disciples in Matthew 18 v10–14; and He repeated it to the Pharisees in Luke 15 v3–7—and His disciples were probably present.

When the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples and to us His last Great Command and Commission, He did so five times! He, as the Master Teacher, realized the need for repetition—especially because (like ourselves) the disciples were so slow to learn. At the same time when He “repeated Himself” He did not just say the same words over and over again. Each time He emphasized something fresh and different.

- The MANDATE for evangelism can be found in Mark 16 v15: “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.”
- The MESSAGE of evangelism can be found in Luke 24 v46–47.
 - ✓ The core of the Gospel —“it behoved Christ to suffer —and to rise from the dead”
 - ✓ The command of the Gospel—“repentance . . .”
 - ✓ The consequence of the Gospel—“and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations”
- The METHOD of evangelism can be found in Matthew 28 v19, 20: “Go ye therefore and *teach* (make disciples of) all nations . . . *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

- The MEANS of evangelism can be found in Acts 1 v8:
“Ye shall receive *power* after *the Holy Spirit* is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . .”
- The MOTIVE for evangelism can be found in John 20 v21:
“As my Father hath sent Me even so send I you.”

Dr. Gregory’s seventh law of teaching is that, “the test and proof of teaching done—the finishing and fastening process—must be a reviewing, rethinking, reknowing, reproducing and applying of the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideals and arts that have been communicated.” In other words, there must be a constant process of review to ensure that as you teach new truths, the old truths are not forgotten.

What does repetition involve?

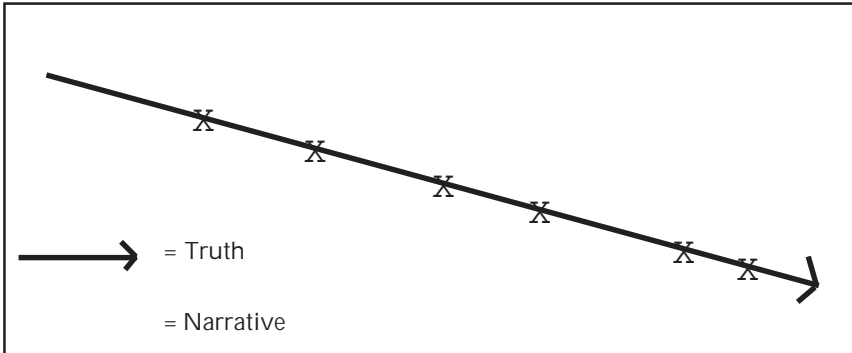
There Should Be Repetition in the Lesson

Repetition in the lesson does not mean saying the same words over and over again. That type of repetition does not make the meaning of the words any clearer and it may, at the same time, bore or even repel the listeners. You do need to keep coming back to the truth, which is being taught; but each time you do so, you should restate it in different words. You should look at it from a different direction, and go into it in more depth. In this way you are using the principle of repetition, but it is not verbal or exact repetition. It is repetition in the sense that you are dealing with the same truth over and over again. And because it is being dealt with from different points of view it will be helpful and interesting rather than boring and monotonous.

The first viewing of a picture will not reveal every detail. The second reading of a book usually brings out facts that are missed in the preliminary perusal. So, with Bible stories and lessons, you should be continually aiming to deepen the teaching of the lesson with new thoughts, using the story to give added meanings, correcting false views, and completing the true views. Even where other truths come naturally into the narrative, you will also endeavour to use them to teach the central truth more effectively.

In the diagram which follows, the narrative is represented by an undulating line and the truth taught by a straight line. As you proceed along the undulating line (in your narrative) you will, from time to

time, come in contact with, and include, the truth you are teaching (as indicated with an X). But you will not do so at the same place each time. Instead you will aim to teach the truth at a deeper level every time you come to it.



There are a number of questions you should endeavour to answer related to the truth you are teaching; and a number of aspects you should cover—if your goal is to teach in greater depth and follow the principle of repetition. Your lesson should cover these aspects and answer these questions.

If the central truth of the lesson is, for example, “God wants you to worship Him,” you would need, systematically, and as the narrative allows you, to answer questions such as:

- ↗ “Whom should we worship?”
- ↗ “Why should we worship?”
- ↗ “Where should we worship?”
- ↗ “When should we worship?”
- ↗ “How should we worship?”

There Should Be Repetition in the Programme

The truth which you have taught in the lesson should appear in other parts of the teaching programme. Choruses should be chosen which include the truth; and a memory verse taught which is based on it. Also, it is often possible to have a short, visualized, doctrinal

presentation which helps to explain the truth which will be included in the lesson; and even in a missionary lesson there may be the possibility of looking at the same truth from a very practical direction.

Consequently, the truth is being repeated in different ways. The children are not only being taught, but are being taught effectively, and in an interesting way.

There Should Be Repetition from One Week to Another

To teach a truth effectively, it is necessary to return to that truth the following week, and in successive weeks.

- This can be done by revising last week's lesson (with visuals) before starting this week's lesson.
- It can also be done by asking if any child would like to use the visuals to review last week's lesson
- It is always effective to have a carefully planned Bible quiz or a review contest, with the questions based on last week's lesson. Children appreciate competition and enjoy this type of review. At the same time, the truth of last week's lesson is being brought before them once more. Questions should not be just factual questions, but an attempt should be made to use the questions to review, teach and emphasize the truth which was taught in the last lesson. Questions which encourage the children to think and which ask "what" and "why" are the best kind of questions to use.

As you repeat and review in this way, you will refocus on facts and principles which have been learned earlier but, at the same time, you should take the opportunity to give deeper insight and even add to the students' previous knowledge.

It is also good to realize that children, and especially little children, often like to hear stories they have heard before—if they are well told. There is something warm and familiar about them.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Can you think of more stories, or lessons, or truths which the Lord Jesus repeated, at different times, in His teaching ministry?*
- *Can you find examples of repetition in this book? Are there for example any of the principles of teaching outlined so far which overlap each other and, to some extent, cover the same ground—without saying exactly the same thing? Is this a help or a hindrance? Why?*
- *Could you give examples of a Bible Lesson, a Bible verse, a chorus and a missionary lesson which all teach the same truth?*
- *Outline and give examples of how you would utilize this principle of repetition if you were teaching a weekly teacher training class.*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Repetition

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 14: “I Beseech You Therefore Brethren . . .” The Principle of Application

EFFECTIVE TEACHING ALWAYS INCLUDES A DIRECT APPLICATION OF THE TRUTH TAUGHT TO THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF THE CHILDREN

Teachers are often guilty of one of the following mistakes:

- ↗ They teach truth but do not apply it.
- ↗ They give applications, invitations and challenges without basing them on truth they have taught.

The good teacher does not just teach truth; nor does he just give applications. The biblical way to teach is firstly to teach truth and then, secondly, to apply that truth. It should not be one or the other. It should be both.

The Importance of Applying the Central Truth

Teaching can only be effective if it relates the truth in the lesson to the life, needs and experiences of the students. In good teaching the two most fundamental features are that the students should be interested in what is being taught, and that they should also see and understand what this means for them in their everyday life. If a lesson is not interesting or “does not make sense” to the students there is a real risk of inattention and even disciplinary problems.

Whenever a truth is taught, it is absolutely necessary that it be applied. A truth is something to be known and understood; an application is the practical outworking of that truth in the life of the child. An application is what it means to them personally. Just to state, or even teach, a truth is not sufficient. A child needs to be shown how this truth applies to him personally and in terms which he understands. So he needs to be challenged with the truth in order that he will know how to live it out. Such applications always need to be closely related to life and to the challenges the pupil faces in life.

Facts can be temporarily memorized but if the information is completely unrelated to any conscious need or experience of the pupil it will soon be forgotten. You must avoid giving a lesson which is completely irrelevant to the pupil's life and experience. The fundamental question you always need to ask is—"How can I link this fact with the needs and the experience of the children?" In other words, how can you utilize the principle of application?

You should therefore continually ask yourself the questions:

Am I really relating my lessons to life?

Am I really meeting the needs of my children?

Am I really applying the truth taught to matters which concern my children?

It is vital to see the difference between a central truth and an application. The central truth is the root from which the application comes. It is the foundation on which the application is built. The application is the fruit, the edifice, and the suggested consequence in the lives of the children of the teaching of that central truth.

In Romans chapters 1–11 Paul gives systematic teaching on a number of doctrines. But when he comes to chapter 12 v1 he starts with the application,

"I beseech you *therefore*, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you . . ."

And this application continues for five chapters. When we see the word "therefore" we should ask the question "What's it there for?" Paul follows the same pattern in his letter to the Ephesians. He gives three chapters of doctrinal teaching and then three chapters of practical applications, which start again in chapter 4 v1 with the word "therefore."

Many applications do, or could, start with the word "therefore." Each application should be the logical consequence of the truth which has been taught and be closely linked to it.

For example, if the central truth of the lesson is "Jesus Christ is coming back again" then the application could be "Therefore you need to be ready for Him when He comes."

In Genesis 12 v1–9 the central truth could be "God has a path for each child to follow." The application of that truth could be "Therefore God wants you to obey Him, whatever He asks you to do—so that you will follow His path."

A Two-Fold Application

There should always be a two-fold application of the central truth to both saved and unsaved children if at all possible.

There are two kinds of children. There are those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and who are spiritually alive. There are also those who have not trusted Christ; and who are therefore spiritually dead. Whenever possible, a central truth should have two applications—one to the saved children, and one to the unsaved children.

The vast majority of central truths can be applied in this two-fold way. For example:

Central truth—“God is faithful, and always keeps His Word.”

- Application to saved child—“Therefore you can know He is always with you. He has promised it.”
- Application to unsaved child—“Therefore you cannot enter Heaven. He has promised that no unsaved person can.”

Central truth—“The Lord Jesus is coming back again for His people.”

- Application to saved child—“Therefore you should live each day in a state of readiness.”
- Application to unsaved child—“Therefore you should trust Him or you will be left behind.”

You should always be able to express, in a few words, the response you are seeking and the applications you are making to the two groups of children. These should be in words understandable to children. These simple statements will help you considerably, both in planning and in teaching your lesson.

When you make your application, you need to make it clear to the saved and unsaved children respectively that you are speaking to them:

- “If you have asked the Lord Jesus to be your Saviour, then . . .”
- “If you have never trusted Christ, do you know that . . .”

An Application to the Unserved

Usually the central truth can be applied to both saved and unsaved. This is probably true in well over 90% of all Bible lessons. However sometimes the central truth will only allow an application for the unsaved children. So, do not force an application for the saved children. Apply the central truth thoroughly to the unsaved children. At the same time you should ensure that there is teaching and application for the saved children in some other part of your teaching programme.

Examples of this type of lesson include:

Lesson	Possible Central Truth	Possible Application to Unserved Children
Cain and Abel (Genesis 4)	Salvation is through the pouring out of blood	You must come to God through the Blood of Jesus Christ
Conversion of Saul (Acts 9)	God loves and saves even the worst	You are not too bad to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation
Rich Young Ruler (Matt. 19)	Jesus Christ commands everyone to follow Him no matter what it costs	You need to be willing to obey Christ. Trust Him and follow Him

An Application to the Saved

Sometimes a central truth can only be applied to saved children. If so, do not force a Gospel application to the unsaved. Apply it thoroughly to the saved children. At the same time you should ensure that there is teaching and application for the unsaved children in some other part of your teaching programme.

Examples of this type of lesson include:

Lesson	Possible Central Truth	Possible Application to Saved Children
A Bride for Isaac (Genesis 24)	God promises to guide His children	You should ask Him to guide you in all the decisions you make
Gideon and the Midianites (Judges 7)	God uses small things to do big things	Believe that God can use you even if you feel small and incapable
Daniel in the Lions' Den	God protects and cares for His children	Do not be afraid. God will take care of you

Application Always Includes Challenge

Always include challenge and invitation in your application—both for the unsaved children and for the saved children. Challenge each group of children to respond to what they have learned and heard. Use words such as “you” and “today” often.

Are you willing to . . . ?

Will you say “Yes” to God today . . . ?

Do not disobey God any longer . . . ?

This promise is for you today, will you believe it . . . ?

We want the child to move from “I understand” to “I feel I should” and then to “I am going to do.”

This note of challenge is especially appropriate at the end of the lesson, and you could follow it with a brief prayer, in which you would ask God to enable the boys and girls to respond to His Word. Usually the application from the last section of your story and lesson is the most important, and will be the freshest in the child’s mind, as he leaves. At the same time, earlier applications have led up to it, but it is the final blow of the hammer which drives the nail home.

It is good at some time in your teaching programme to let the children (both unsaved and saved) know that you are available to help them and counsel them, if they wish, after the meeting is over. This is not part of your message, nor part of your application nor part of the invitation. But it is simply a way to let children know that you are

ready to help them with regard to their response to what they have been taught.

Neither at this time nor at any other time should any kind of pressure be put on the children to respond—whether it be emotional pressure, social pressure (“follow the leader”) or physical pressure.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *Have you ever been guilty of teaching truth without making application, or making application without teaching truth? Have you resolved not to do so again?*
- ↗ *Do you remember times when you were taught truth—as a child or as an adult—but there was no application and no challenge to respond?*
- ↗ *Do you remember times when you were given applications, challenges and invitations without truth having been taught, and therefore without any foundation?*
- ↗ *As you have read this chapter on the principle of application what is the main application for your ministry?
“Therefore, I should . . .”
(complete the sentence)*
- ↗ *How would you apply the following truths to both saved and unsaved children?*
 - ✓ *God is holy*
 - ✓ *Jesus Christ is God*
 - ✓ *The Holy Spirit lives in believers*
 - ✓ *Everyone is a sinner and needs to be saved*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Application

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 15: “Seeing is Believing” The Principle of Illustration

EFFECTIVE TEACHING NECESSITATES THE USE OF ILLUSTRATION—TO LET THE LIGHT IN!

A story, or a picture in words can really open the door of understanding as far as the truth being taught is concerned.

Illustrations Are Necessary

Illustrations are like windows. They let in the light, and help children to see the view. The word illustration comes from a Latin word “*lustrare*” which means to light up. A house without windows would be a strange, dark and unattractive building. So, a Bible lesson without the windows of illustration is difficult to listen to and not easy to understand.

One primer on teaching includes this paragraph:

“In teaching, illustration is the progress of making clear the subject taught by bringing it into connection with something already well known to, and fully understood by, the pupil. It means literally lighting up a subject or throwing light upon a subject, and this light has to be sought among the ideas that the pupil already possesses.”

C.H. Spurgeon said on one occasion to a group of Sunday School teachers:

“Don’t forget to give your pupils a few anecdotes. Wherever you go, if you are a really good teacher, you can always find something to make into a good tale to tell your children. A dear child said, ‘Father I like to hear Mr. So and So preach, because he puts some ‘likes’ into his sermons—‘like this’ or ‘like that.’ Your children always love those ‘likes.’ Make parables, pictures, and diagrams for them, and you will always get them.”

Someone has said that to scatter seeds on rough grassland is futile. The gardener needs to lay his seed temporarily on one side and take a spade to obtain an entry for the seed. It is equally futile to scatter seeds of information over the unprepared and even closed minds of a

group of children. The teacher needs to penetrate the tough outer covering of ignorance and indifference. So he needs to set aside temporarily the truths and ideas he wants to teach the children and find a way to obtain an entry into the “grey matter” which is below this outer casing of indifference. Illustrations are the teacher’s spade with which he can open and gain entrance to the child’s mind. When one piece of turf has been removed and the soil exposed he can get to work on that soil.

You need to present to your children that in which he is already interested so that he can look at what is unfamiliar and uninteresting until at last he exclaims, “Oh, I see.”

The Lord Jesus Used Illustrations

The use of illustration was a basic principle in the teaching of the Lord Jesus. He used parables on many occasions. A parable is “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning,” and a window to help the hearers understand the truth which is being taught. He used object lessons frequently; He taught by means of that which people could see, hear, smell, taste, and touch. He used a little child to teach humility, lilies to teach God’s care, a sower and seed to teach the responsibility of the hearer.

He taught the unseen and the eternal by means of the seen and temporal. He used Old Testament incidents like the brazen serpent (John 3 v14) and the flood (Matthew 24 v37–42). He used current events like the disaster at the tower of Siloam (Luke 13), He used the familiar things of nature like the sparrows (Luke 12 v7), the foxes, the birds of the air (Matthew 8 v18–20) and the mountains (Mark 11 v22–25). He used the ordinary everyday things of life like builders (Luke 6 v46–49), millstones (Matthew 18 v6) and children (Matthew 18 v3, 4), He often used similes such as “The Kingdom of God is like unto leaven” (Matthew 13 v33), and sometimes metaphors such as “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2 v19).

He always used illustrations which could be easily understood and which were interesting. Consequently, His teaching was vivid, exciting, attractive and clear. The total number of words in Matthew’s Gospel used by the Lord Jesus, in His public and private teaching, is

reckoned to be about 12,000. Of these, no less than 6,600 (55%) were used in illustrations.

Throughout the Bible the same principle is followed.

You Should Illustrate Your Central Truth

Therefore you need to illustrate the truth you are teaching to help the children to understand it. These illustrations should be:

- **Brief.** If they are too long and vivid, the children will remember them and not the lesson.
- **Apt.** They should illustrate the truth being taught, and not something else.
- **Fresh.** Do not keep repeating illustrations which you, and others, have used time and time again.
- **Understandable.** Is the picture given clear? Is it one that the children can see? For example, the word “Father” with relation to God might (without adequate explanation) have a meaning to some children different from that which you want them to have.
- **Effective.** You want the illustration to drive home the central truth you are teaching. If you are teaching the importance of “Being prepared to meet your God,” and you use the illustration of a foolish frog who used to dive to the bottom of the pond to hibernate for the winter; and waited so long that the pond was frozen (and he could not dive), you are more likely to receive sympathy for the frog!
- **Elevating.** Do not use poor taste, or make illustrations too funny. There is a kind of facetious patter which savours more of the music hall than the Gospel.

It is hard work to gather such illustrations. But, as someone has said, “Inspiration in presentation is largely the result of perspiration in preparation.”

In every Bible lesson you should have at least two or three apt illustrations and these will be a real help to the children.

There are two extremes to avoid. On the one hand I have heard or read Bible lessons which have no illustrations, and I believe they would be difficult for children to follow. On the other hand, I have

heard or read Bible “lessons” which consisted mostly of illustrations. They were very interesting, but could not accomplish very much as far as teaching truth is concerned.

The main type of illustration is a short story. This could be a story from another part of the Bible, or a story about a child or an incident in today’s world, or even an imaginary story.

How could you, for example, illustrate the truth? “Jesus Christ became the substitute for sinners, and bore the punishment for all their sin.”

- The best way is to use another Bible story to explain this (e.g., the Passover lamb which died, and whose blood was shed so that the eldest boy in the household could go free. It died so that the boy might not die. It took his place and was his substitute.).
- Another possibility is to use a story from modern life and circumstances (e.g., the soldier in a battle during World War II who saw a hand grenade thrown by the enemy and about to explode and kill his companions, so he threw himself on top of it. He was killed so that they would not be killed.).
- Or you could use an imaginary story (e.g., the little red hen who saw the forest fire coming, and called her ten chicks underneath her wings. They all came except one. The fire swept over the area. The next morning the farmer saw the charred remains of the mother hen, and when he touched those remains with his boot, they fell apart and nine chicks ran out. Close by were the burnt remains of the chick who refused to “come in.”).

“Let’s pretend” stories like this can be easily made up and can be very effective. You can “invent” a story to illustrate your point exactly. However it is essential that you let the children know that it is a “let’s pretend” story and it will be no problem to the children.

But don’t overdo this type of story. Use it sparingly and sensibly.

There are many sources for illustrations:

- from nature
- from books and missionary magazines

- ↗ from daily life (watch children at work and play, and note their sayings, attitudes and temptations)
- ↗ from your experience
- ↗ from conversation with others (without betraying their confidence)
- ↗ from other people's stories

The best way to remember and use these illustrations is to record them in a note book, specially kept for the purpose, or file them under various subjects.

You Should Illustrate Your Application

You can also illustrate the application of the central truth, so as to relate it practically to the every day life of the child.

For example, if you wanted to make the application "If you are a Christian, you should take time every day to pray to God," you can do so in several ways:

- ↗ Show how this truth was applied in the life of a person in the Bible.
"So, soon after Daniel knew that the King had forbidden his people to pray to God, and knew what would happen to them if they did, he went home, opened his windows and prayed as he had always done before . . ."
- ↗ Show this truth being applied in the life of a person outside the Bible.
"George Muller was in a difficult situation. There was no food in his orphanage for the children's breakfast. What did he do? He prayed and asked God to supply these needs. Then just at this time there came a knock at the front door of the orphanage . . ."
- ↗ Show this truth being applied in a future situation in their own lives.
"What would you do if you were a Christian, and you found that you couldn't control that temper of yours? You have lost it every day this week, and tomorrow afternoon your little sister hides one of your books. Will you lose your temper again, and even hit her? Or will you just be quiet and pray, and ask God to help you keep control of yourself?"

Dangers to Avoid

There are, of course, dangers to avoid in the use of illustrations:

- Do not use too many. A house with too many windows will not be too strong.
- Do not be incorrect in your illustrations, nor should you tell illustrations which are imaginary as if they were true.
- Don't forget that the illustration is to illustrate, and not to interest or amuse. Charles Spurgeon used to say, "Garnish your dish, but remember the joint is the main point to consider—not the garnish."

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Can you think of some of the illustrations used by the Apostle Paul to explain the church?
The church is like . . .*
- *One of the most effective illustrations in Paul's epistles was his comparison of the Christian life to a long distance race (Hebrews 12 v1–3). Could you answer/discuss the following questions:*
 - ✓ *Why is it appropriate to make this comparison?*
 - ✓ *In what spiritual condition were his readers (verse 3b)?*
 - ✓ *To run well what preparations should they make (verse 1)?*
 - ✓ *What should they do continually when running (verses 2 and 3)?*
- *Are there other illustrations of the Christian life in the New Testament?
The Christian life is like . . .*
- *Would you write/make up an illustration for each of the following:*
 - ✓ *We are saved by putting our **faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16 v31).*
 - ✓ *God sometimes allows **difficulties** into our lives to help us **develop** as Christians (Romans 8 v28).*
 - ✓ *When we trust Jesus Christ as our Saviour **everything becomes new** (2 Corinthians 5 v17).*
 - ✓ *We can enjoy **peace** in our hearts even when there is confusion and trouble all around us (Philippians 4 v7).*

- ↗ *What examples of people in the Bible could you give to illustrate the following applications?*
 - ✓ *You should learn to **obey** like . . .*
 - ✓ *When someone does something bad to you learn to return good for evil like . . .*
 - ✓ *Do not give up. Keep on doing what you know is right like . . .*
 - ✓ *God wants you to be brave and courageous like . . .*
- ↗ *What are the seven illustrations of a Christian in 2 Timothy chapter 2?*
- ↗ *What two vivid illustrations did the Lord Jesus use in Matthew 5 v14–16 to describe the Christian's role in the world? Outline the truths which are taught through these illustrations.*
- ↗ *What were the six illustrations James gave concerning the tongue in chapter three verses 2 to 12 of his epistle?*

"The tongue is like a . . ."

How effective are these illustrations?

What are the three conclusions we can come to about the tongue from these six illustrations (two illustrations for each conclusion)?

 - ✓ *the tongue is able to . . .*
 - ✓ *the tongue is able to . . .*
 - ✓ *the tongue is able to . . .*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Illustration

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 16: "Tractors and Teachers" The Principle of Attraction

EFFECTIVE TEACHING NEEDS AN ATTRACTIVE PERSON, PRESENTING AN ATTRACTIVE MESSAGE IN AN ATTRACTIVE FASHION

You and I long to be effective in our teaching of boys and girls. There are at least three basic conditions to be fulfilled if your teaching is to be as effective as you would like it to be.

You Need to Be an Attractive Person

To be effective in your work with children, you must be attractive to children. It is difficult for you to teach effectively, if they are not attracted to you. One little boy was heard to say to another, "I saw our Sunday school teacher down the street. You know, I hate her." That is a teaching situation which had gone astray.

You want to attract the children to Jesus Christ, of course. But it is difficult for the child to be attracted to Jesus Christ, who is not, to some extent, attracted to his teacher. Someone has said that, "if a person likes you it is likely he will learn from you." Someone else said, "First I learned to love my teacher; then I learned to love my teacher's Bible; and then I learned to love my teacher's Saviour."

How can you be attractive? The word "attractive" does not mean "handsome" or "beautiful." The word "attractive" (Latin ad = towards; Latin tracto = to pull) means "to pull others towards you." An attractive teacher is one who pulls children's affections and attention towards him.

➤ **An attractive person is a firm person**

Children respect firmness, and are attracted by it. Firmness is not harshness! Children should know that you mean what you say, and they should learn to do what you say. You should not allow misbehaviour in Sunday school, nor irreverence of any kind. You should make it clear to the children that you are in control of the class, and that they must behave themselves. If

firmness is administered in the right way and in love, the children will be attracted by it and respond to it.

➤ **An attractive person is a happy person**

Children are attracted to people who are joyful rather than gloomy. Children like people with a sense of humour, a twinkle in the eye, and the ability to smile and to laugh. A boy said to me a number of years ago, "I stopped going to Sunday school, because my Sunday school teacher had no sense of humour." Another boy said to his mother, "Mum, our donkey is a Christian." His mother asked him what he meant. The little boy said, "Because he has a long face just like Dad."

➤ **An attractive person is an enthusiastic person**

Sunday school teaching or Good News Club teaching is not a chore. It is not something you must do just because the pastor asks you. May God help you to be enthusiastic in your Sunday school or Good News Club teaching, and to come to class as if you were looking forward to it, and not as if it were the most unpleasant thing in the world. Enthusiasm, or the lack of it, is contagious. You cannot expect children to be interested and enthusiastic when you are not.

Charles Spurgeon once said to his Sunday school teachers, "Delight in your work will give you strength to perform it and make your teaching acceptable to the children. Children will never be attracted to you if your face betrays dullness of spirit or weariness in your work. A happy countenance, kind words, loving smiles and affectionate actions all spring out of a hearty delight in your work. Make your duty a pleasure and your labour a joy. Love the Sunday school and your children will love it too."

➤ **An attractive person is an interested person**

You should be interested in the children as individuals and seek to build a good relationship with them. You should be interested not only in their salvation, but also in their daily lives. If a child comes to class in tears because a little fish which he caught has died, it is no use telling him not to worry about such things, but to think only about eternity! Instead, you should volunteer to go with him the next day and catch some more fish. Also you should endeavour to know, and

remember, the birthdays of all the children you teach, and send birthday cards to each of them.

In these ways you will show your interest in the child, win his affection, make yourself attractive, and perhaps eventually have the opportunity of leading him to Christ.

You Need to Present an Attractive Message

Dr. Gregory's second law of teaching is "A learner is one who attends with interest to the lesson." If the lesson is not interesting and not attractive, he will not listen, and if he does not listen he will not learn.

Do we want the children to endure our teaching or enjoy it? Teaching does not need to be tedious, dull or boring.

"The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright" (Proverbs 15 v2).

One expert has paraphrased this verse, "The wise teacher makes learning a joy"—and so he should.

An attractive message is one which "pulls the children towards it." There is only one message that is really attractive. That is the message of the Word of God, presented and taught attractively and with a definite aim in mind. God has promised to bless His Word, and it shall not return unto Him void.

"So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My Mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55 v11).

God has not promised to bless anything else. You may be tempted to substitute other things for the Word of God, but there is no substitute for His Word and His message.

The Bible is a book full of many wonderful stories—spy stories, love stories, war stories, adventure stories, and many others. If properly prepared, and enthusiastically presented so as to teach the truth contained in them, the children will be attracted to the Word of God. There are many portions of the Bible which children do not know, and which they need to know. The Tabernacle, if properly explained with attractive visual aids, can become a fascinating subject even for young children. The books of Ruth, Esther, and Judges are

often unknown, and can be very attractive to children.

Do not aim at anything less than the presentation, and the exposition, of the Word of God. As you teach the Bible effectively to children, you will see a generation growing up that is interested in real Bible study, and not satisfied with some of the froth or surface activity which is so common in our churches today.

It is essential to remember at all times that the biblical method of evangelism is centred on "preaching," and upon the Word of God as it is spoken and proclaimed.

"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10 v17).

You must not allow other methods which may seem more attractive to replace or lessen the importance of preaching or teaching. God uses the foolishness of preaching to speak to the hearts of children.

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1 v21).

"How shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10 v14).

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10 v15).

When our Lord was here on earth, what did He do? He gathered people around Him. He preached. When He was sending out His disciples, what did He say? "Go and preach the Gospel" (Mark 16 v15). What did the Apostles do? They preached.

You also need to remember that an attractive message is one that helps the students in some way. If the message helps to meet their needs, answer their questions and solve their problems, they are more likely to be attracted by it and to return to hear more. Only God's Word, the Bible, can really achieve these results in the child's life and, the more the child realizes this, the more and more attractive it will be to him.

You Must Present Your Message Attractively

You cannot speak to children in the same way as you speak to adults. You cannot take a five point sermon that is presented to adults, and trim it down for children. Children are different from adults.

They need a different kind of presentation. You must seek to make your message live. You must put life into it. You must use all your abilities. Teaching is futile if it is not clear—and if it is not interesting.

- You may use visual aids like flannelgraph, object lessons, film strips and flashcards. When properly used, these can make your stories live, and help your message to be attractive.
- You must also use your own natural visual aids. You may use your hands to give the story some action, and they can also be very descriptive. You may use your voice with all its variations, volume and speed. It must never be monotonous or stilted. You may use your face with all its many expressions. It should always be mobile and don't be afraid to SMILE. You must live your story, and put plenty of action into it. Liking helps learning. Interest is the mother of attention.

Charles H. Spurgeon, the great pastor, was also a lover of children and often spoke to them in his church services and in the orphanage he had founded. In his instructions to his teachers, he said, "Get the children's attention. If they do not hearken, you may talk, but you will speak to no purpose whatever. If they do not listen, you go through your labours as an unmeaning drudgery to yourselves and your pupils too. You can do nothing without securing their attention."

You need to gain and keep the attention and interest of the pupils. Without their attention, you can accomplish nothing. It is of special help if you can get the close attention of your listeners at the beginning of your lesson by starting it in an interesting way—with an illustration, a visual aid, a discussable question, the presentation of a problem or even by making a controversial statement.

It is also essential that the methods you use when teaching your lesson are in accord, and in agreement, with the message you are presenting. The message and the method should always concur.

You need to ask yourself the following questions:

- What picture or image of God am I presenting?
- Is my method reverent?
- Is my method biblical? Did the Lord Jesus or the Apostle Paul use it—or something similar?

- ↗ Is the emphasis always upon “preaching and teaching the Word?”
- ↗ Could my method give the children the impression of fantasy and imagination—rather than truth?

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *Think back to the teachers you had when you were a child or a teenager. Is it true to say that your most effective teachers were “attractive?” What made them “attractive?”*
- ↗ *Give as many reasons as possible to explain why the message of God’s Word is the most attractive message of all.*
- ↗ *In the light of what has been written in this chapter do you approve of the use of the following when evangelizing children and teaching them the Word of God:*
 - ✓ *puppets?*
 - ✓ *drama?*
 - ✓ *“Gospel magic?”*
 - ✓ *“Gospel clowns?”**Give reasons for your answers.*
- ↗ *Outline some simple rules you would give to a new teacher to help him make his message attractive.*
- ↗ *How would you assess the qualities of your speaking style when you are teaching? How would others assess it?*
 - ✓ *Is your voice clear and strong enough?*
 - ✓ *Do you use it effectively with variations of speed and volume?*
 - ✓ *Does your voice ever tend to be monotonous, dull or lifeless?*
 - ✓ *Do your sentences come out as complete and logical thoughts which are easy to follow?*
 - ✓ *Do you have any mannerisms that may hinder your communication?*
- ↗ *Take a moment to think about yourself—not what you do in your teaching but about the kind of person you are. What are you really like? Jot down (honestly) some key words or phrases that picture you and describe you as a person.*
Now think about yourself from the point of view of the children you reach. How do you think they view you? How do you think they feel about you?

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Attraction

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 17: “Use Me or Lose Me” The Principle of Participation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEPENDS UPON THE PUPIL BEING ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN THE TEACHING PROCESS, AND UPON A DEFINITE REACTION ON THE PUPIL'S PART TO WHAT THE TEACHER HAS TAUGHT

This is one of the most difficult principles for you and me to put into practice. Most of us are inclined to talk (or even lecture) too much instead of encouraging our students to “come with us” and to think things through for themselves.

Learning Demands Involvement

Learning is not a passive process. Learning demands participation and involvement. Teaching and learning are not just the giving and receiving of information. The pupil must be involved if he is to learn. That does not necessarily mean that the pupil must speak or actually do something (although it could). But it does mean that he must, at least, think. If he does not think, he is not learning.

Someone has said:

“Telling is helping someone to know.

Teaching is helping someone to know and grow.

Training is helping someone to know, grow and **do**.”

Is participation a biblical principle? There is an interesting story in Jeremiah chapter 13. God told Jeremiah to go and buy a belt—a linen belt; and so he went and bought his linen belt, and put it on as the Lord told him. Then the Lord said, “Take this belt you are wearing and go and hide it in a rock.” So he did that. Then many days later the Lord told him to go and get the belt that he had hidden. When he dug it up it was stained. The Lord said to Jeremiah, “That is what I am going to do with the pride of Judah.” The Lord, instead, could have just said, “I am going to spoil or mar the pride of Judah”; but He didn’t. He allowed and encouraged Jeremiah to be totally involved as

He taught him that lesson. That is an example of pupil involvement.

The Lord Jesus also taught the disciples through their involvement. When the temple tax collectors asked Peter if his Master paid taxes, the Lord could have produced the coin from nowhere. But He didn't. He involved Peter. He sent him down to the water where he caught the fish, opened its mouth and found the coin. I am sure that Peter never forgot this.

On the day when the 5,000 were fed Christ could have fed the crowd without using the disciples; but He didn't. The Lord involved them in order better to impress this great miracle on their hearts.

In John chapter 4 the Lord Jesus met the woman of Samaria. He did not just speak to her and teach her. He encouraged her to participate. There are 13 times when a person spoke in that conversation. The Lord Jesus spoke 6 times and the woman of Samaria 7 times. That is participation! So often we tend to speak 13 times when we are teaching and our students 0 times.

Is such participation a teaching principle? Of course it is. We can see it practised in everyday life. When a mother is teaching her child how to cross the road, she goes with him. They cross the road together a hundred times before she trusts him to do it himself. We can see it in secular education. Pupils **do** what they are taught. The teacher cannot say that they have been taught multiplication until they actually do it.

We cannot apply this principle totally in the spiritual realm. We teach children what faith is all about; but we cannot, ourselves, engineer a situation where they can exercise faith. This is something we cannot do for them. That is the Holy Spirit's realm. But we should still remember the saying—"I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand."

Truth Should Result in Action

The pupil must reproduce, in his own mind and life, the thing learned, if it is to be any real and lasting value to him. There is no true impression without a corresponding expression.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them" (John 13 v17).

"If any man will *do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7 v17).

At the end of the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus said:
"Go, and *do* thou likewise" (Luke 10 v37).

The teacher can only judge the effect of his teaching, by what it produces in the life of the pupil. His greatest joy is to see his "children walking in the truth" (3 John 4). In every lesson you should aim to help the child make some definite life response to the truth you have taught. This may take the form of:

- A step towards Christ which will ultimately lead to his trusting Him as Lord and Saviour.
- An actual decision to become a Christian, and to make a life commitment to Jesus Christ.
- A move forward in the Christian life, and in obedience to the Lord.

Students Should Participate

It is the responsibility of teachers to encourage students to participate.

Teaching is not a one-sided exercise. As we have said before, we must avoid any concept of a jug-mug theory which implies that the teacher is the "jug" whose sole responsibility is to pour his knowledge into the "mug," which simply and quietly absorbs all he is given. It is not as simple as that. The truth which the student learns will be that with which he himself becomes involved, which he thinks through for himself, which he applies to himself, and which he puts into action. Your teaching ministry is to help the children think out the meaning of the Bible passage and truth for themselves, and then see how it fits into their own lives.

Teaching is only effective when the child is actually learning, and the child only learns when he responds in some way intellectually, emotionally or volitionally to what he has been taught. Very little learning takes place unless the pupils participate in some way. All learning involves activity on the part of the learner, and the thinking into his own understanding of a new idea or truth. Sometimes, and in some learning situations, the activity could be writing, drawing, storytelling or role play. At other times there can be discussion between you and your students, or a series of questions and answers. Generally, it is listening and the thinking through of questions, and the resolution

of problems. But there must be some activity, some definite learning response on the part of the child, or there will not be the kind of communication which will result in the change you are aiming at. Hearing and seeing have to be matched by saying and doing. Just as on the desk in an office there are two trays "In" and "Out," so there are two receptacles within the child. It is not so much what comes in which affects him, but what is responded to and goes out. It is what the child does, rather than what others do to him or in his presence, which develops, and educates him.

Someone has said we retain 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we hear and see, 70% of what we hear, see and tell, and 90% of what we hear, see, tell and demonstrate. Impression is not enough; expression is necessary. The child would say to us, "Use me, or lose me."

It is also true that participation of some kind, if well planned and properly controlled, can make the lesson and the truths taught through it not only interesting but also enjoyable.

There are three different types of student participation and the teacher will want to get involved in all three.

Participation During Teaching Time

Getting students to participate and to be mentally active while you are teaching is perhaps your greatest challenge!

There are a number of ways you can encourage the students to participate during your actual teaching time.

↗ **By using questions and answers**

It is possible to encourage pupil participation by stimulating them to think. To do this you need to ask questions.

Instead of just speaking, or just telling a Bible story or just teaching a Bible Lesson, you should periodically encourage the children to take part by putting well prepared and carefully thought-through questions to them. Such questions and the discussion which will follow will help the children to see the practical outworking of the truth taught in their own lives.

The Lord Jesus often asked and answered questions. It is said that He asked over 150 questions in the Gospels. They were

generally short and to the point, not too easily answered and they provoked thought. He encouraged people to think and to act for themselves. He did not provide ready made answers, but encouraged them to look at the facts which He had laid before them, and think out the conclusions for themselves. Also when people asked Him a question, He often responded with another question.

One father bought a model aeroplane kit for his son and made it for him. Another bought the same outfit, and showed the boy how to put it together. Who was the wiser?

It would be easy to give all the answers yourself, but it is better for the children themselves to find at least some of the answers.

- ✓ “Why do you think he did this?”
- ✓ “What would you have done if you had been in his place?”
- ✓ “How would you have answered him?”

When asking questions there are several rules to follow:

- ✓ Prepare the wording of your questions as carefully as you prepare your Bible Lesson.
- ✓ Make sure all your questions fit in with the goal and purpose you have in mind.
- ✓ Have a natural, friendly and unaffected attitude when asking your questions.
- ✓ When a child gives a wrong answer correct him tactfully. Perhaps you could say, “I didn’t make myself very clear; I meant . . .” Also there may be some truth you could “salvage” from his answer.
- ✓ If no response is given to a question, reword it; or add an explanation; or give a clue.

There are two kinds of questions:

- **The test question** which throws the students back on what he has already been taught. This question is used to test his memory. How many brothers had Joseph? Why were they jealous of him? To answer these questions the children need to remember information and facts. There is usually only one answer to questions such as these. These questions do have their value, and can be used

especially in review and quiz time. An example of this kind of question can be found in Luke 10 v26.

- **The training question** which makes the child use what he knows to reach forward to a new judgment or a new insight. The children have to think back and use the information they already know to find their answer. Now they must really think—and get involved.

Why did God bless Joseph?

Why did God allow these things to happen to Joseph?

Why did God leave Gideon with such a small army?

Why did Peter deny the Lord Jesus before a young servant girl?

This type of question stimulates the child's capacity to make a judgment. There are generally a number of answers to questions such as these.

An example of this question is Luke 10 v36.

This type of question can also be a real help in the teacher training class. Its purpose is to encourage the teachers to participate. You need to get your teachers to think. That is one of your greatest services to them.

It is this latter type of question which we are thinking of here. This question and answer method of teaching and participation is really only possible when the group of children is relatively small, and relatively homogenous in age. It could be more difficult in a larger and more mixed group, and could lead to problems of discipline.

These questions must be well prepared. Very few of us can ask good questions without such preparation. You need to think about what you will ask; and write these questions into your notes so that you will know when you are going to ask them.

- **By stimulating the children to answer questions in their own minds without spoken answers**

This is ideal in situations where questions with spoken answers are not possible—for example if you are speaking to a large group of children, or a group with a wider age range. Your

teaching should be an encouragement to the children to think out the issues for themselves, and to apply the truth of the lesson to their own situation.

In such cases, it is also good to suggest to the children that, if they have a question about the lesson or if they have a comment, they should speak with you afterwards.

- **By asking a Christian child well in advance to bring some personal thoughts on a Bible verse or passage**—especially one about which you have recently spoken. He should tell what it means and how it affects him personally.
- **By involving the children in a project.** Over a period of weeks the children could be asked to prepare a scrap book on a theme—preferably a theme you have been dealing with in class. For example the children could draw pictures to put into the scrap book to show what the Bible is like, or what each of the Ten Commandments tells us to do.
- **By encouraging children to use their Bible during the meeting**
There is no point in the children bringing their Bibles to Good News Club if they don't use them. There are several ways to do this:
 - ✓ By using Bible sword drill. Asking children to find out and read verses gives them more familiarity with the Bible. An even better way is to ask a question and give the reference where they will find the answer. So they have to find the place, read the verse and find the answer. In this way they are using the Word of God and thinking about it. For example, you could ask the question “Why did the walls of Jericho fall down when the people marched around them?” Then you would give the verse Hebrews 11 v30. But the children would only stand and respond when they find the answer “By faith.”
 - ✓ By introducing a new Bible verse. The best way is to ask questions about the verse, which are answered in the verse before finding it, quoting it or explaining it. For example, if the verses are Philippians 2 v10 and 11, you could ask the question “What two parts of our body are we especially

going to use when the Lord Jesus comes back again?" Then the children find the verses and give the answer—"Our knee to bow, and our tongues to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

- ✓ By doing so in the Bible Lesson itself. If the lesson was on the betrayal of the Lord Jesus, tell the children what Judas did; and then ask them what their reaction would have been to him. What would they have called him? What did the Lord Jesus call him? Read Matthew 26 v50. They will remember this much better by thinking about it, and by finding the answer for themselves. You would not want to do this in every lesson, and it would be very difficult (and even inadvisable) with a large, rather unruly group of children—or with smaller children.
- ✓ By giving a little five minute Bible study on the truth which will appear as the central truth of the Bible Lesson with everyone using their Bibles. If the central truth is "God is almighty," you could lead the children beforehand in a little study of some verses in Isaiah chapter 40. How big are the rulers of the world of God? Verses 15 and 17 say—drops, dust, nothing, less than nothing. Do you see anything special about these things? Yes, they get smaller all the time.

What size are all the people of the world to God? (verse 22). What three things does God do for the stars? He created them, He controls them and He calls them by name (verse 26).

Remember your aim is for the children to think for themselves and to discover truths for themselves. You want them to become thinkers and discoverers. When they do this, you are really teaching them. The danger is that you keep telling them things, but don't give them an opportunity to find treasure for themselves. That's what you want them to do. You want them to become students of God's Word.

- **By using Bible quizzes and reviews to enable the children to participate in last week's lesson**

The questions should be carefully chosen. Not just "What was the name of Abel's brother?" but, "What lesson did we learn

from Cain's sacrifice?" Not just "How long did Noah preach to the people before he entered the ark?" but, "Why did God wait 120 years before sending the flood?"

➤ **By encouraging the children to think about what they are singing**

For example, when teaching "Happiness is the Lord," you could ask the children to sing especially loudly the words which tell us that our parents will see a difference in our lives when we are Christians. These words are "having a change in my behaviour," and this encourages the children to think about what they are singing.

➤ **By allowing the children to use the visual aids**

Children can also participate in last week's lesson by being allowed to give a quick demonstration on the flannelboard using last week's figures. They really like to do this.

Student Activity after the Teaching Time

In some circumstances, it may be possible and advisable to encourage the children to participate, and share, in what has been taught—**immediately** after the completion of the lesson. This is possible in a camp, in a holiday Bible club, or even sometimes if time allows, after a Sunday school class or Good News Club. But you can only do it when there is extra time available.

➤ The simplest way is for the children to use work books which are carefully linked to the lesson itself. These should be well produced. They should stimulate thought and not just be a mechanical exercise or some form of entertainment.

You may need to help the children to use them. The child often needs guidance, supervision and help in completing the work sheets, so that they can be of maximum value. Alternatively the child can be encouraged to use the work books during the week which follows their teaching session.

➤ In some circumstances, especially in a camp or a holiday Bible club, an opportunity could be given for drawing, writing or modelling. This helps the child to hear, to see and **to do**.

However it is important, if the maximum value is going to be attained, that these be carefully integrated with what has been taught.

Neither of the two activities mentioned above should be just looked on as a way to keep the children busy or quiet. They should help, in some way, to underline and emphasize what has been taught. Also these should **never** be a substitute for teaching. They should only be used **after** the teaching has been given.

- ↗ If time allows, there are a number of other ways to encourage children to participate after the lesson has been completed, and the Good News Club hour is over. These should encourage practical involvement in the lesson and its application.
 - ✓ Peter's denial of Christ (Matthew 26)

Before the lesson read an imaginary letter from a Christian boy who had done something really wrong, and he wants to know what he should do.

After the lesson use a cassette recorder to record the advice from the children in the class, with the thought that this cassette tape would be sent to this boy.
 - ✓ Good Samaritan (Luke 10)

After the lesson discuss what the class can do to help others—either individually or as a class. This could involve a joint visit to an old person who is bed ridden, or making a tape for someone in hospital.

Another possibility would be to imagine a real life situation (in which we could be good Samaritans) and to actually act it out after the class. Role playing can be a help to children in relating Bible truths which they have been taught to present day experiences.
 - ✓ Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8)

After the lesson, have one child in the class witness to another one, by giving him a tract and telling him about Jesus Christ. After the conversation has been acted out, ask the rest of the class for their suggestions.

- ✓ Daniel as a boy (Daniel 1)
After the lesson, use an open ended story which the children should complete. “Steve and Bobby were close friends and were in the same class at school. Steve was clever, and Bobby rather slow. Bobby came over one evening to Steve’s house—and asked him if he could copy his home work. Steve said . . .”
- ✓ Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22)
After the lesson ask someone (an outgoing child) to take the part of Abraham—and allow himself to be interviewed by the other children in the class. This could take the form of a taped interview.
- ✓ Christ stills the storm (Mark 4)
After the lesson give each child a postcard addressed to you. On it print the incomplete statement “Today I remembered to trust the Lord Jesus when . . .” Encourage the children to complete the card during the week whenever they have found the Lord has helped them, and either post it or bring it to you. Read the postcards in club next week.
- ✓ Achan’s sin (Joshua 7)
Give the children an outline of a basic situation related to the Bible Lesson, where a boy called Tom is tempted to steal something from a friend. Divide the children into two groups, and after a few moments planning together, one group is to act out Tom making the wrong choice and the consequences; while the other group is to act out his making the right choice and the consequences.
Then finish with a discussion.
- ✓ The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20)
Choose one—say, the fifth commandment—and ask the children to think about how they can show honour and obedience to their parents. Then let some of them act out what they could do, and have the other children guess what they are doing.

Student Activity During the Week

The children should be invited and encouraged to DO what the lesson has taught during the week which follows. Then, you should give an opportunity at the beginning of the next week's class for children to share how they have participated in what was taught and applied the previous week. Your application of the truth will, of course, have given them some indication of how they could do this.

For example, if your lesson has been the Good Samaritan, and the application to saved children was that they should make it their goal to help others less privileged than themselves, the saved children should be exhorted to look for opportunities to do this during the week. They could help a blind person cross the road; they could carry an old person's shopping bag; or they could be friendly to a child who feels that others are prejudiced against him. Then, the following week, an opportunity could be given for these children to recount how they "participated" in the truth and application of the Bible Lesson.

Another possibility would be to arrange for your class to visit an old person or someone who is ill. Together in the class you could prepare to sing, to say a Bible verse, to read a passage, to say a poem, to pray, and even to give a small gift. The group could also prepare to take part in a special meeting or church service—for example during a Christmas or Easter programme.

Several Warnings

- ↗ This principle, perhaps more than any other one, can be misused.
 - ✓ It may be misused, for example, when a teacher thinks, "I have nothing else to say; let's have a discussion."
 - ✓ It can be misused when teachers do not prepare thoroughly, and look upon participation as an "easy way out."
 - ✓ It can be misused by encouraging activity which is not purposeful. Activity for the sake of activity does not result in teaching. The activity should always reinforce what has been, or is being, taught.
- ↗ This principle involves a lot of time in preparation. Some teachers think that it will cut down on the need for preparation. The opposite is true. Discussion and participation need to be

planned and prepared as much as (if not more than) the lesson itself. If the leader of a discussion has not thoroughly prepared, the result will be people talking but not going anywhere. Discussion needs to be guided with care and thoughtfulness; otherwise it becomes a “sharing of each other’s ignorance.”

- This type of activity, especially with children, may be hard to control. You never know what will happen! It can result in a real drain of energy from the teacher. If you have a large group of children, and especially if they are inclined to be restless or noisy, it is better not to have too much active participation. Also if there is a wide age range, it becomes difficult to find an activity to suit everyone. If you have an activity which suits little ones, the older ones feel insulted. If you have an activity which suits the older ones, the little ones cannot participate. In this case, it is better to divide the group into smaller groups of similar ages.
- Participation should not be overdone. Remember that God’s primary method to speak to children is through the spoken Word. You should only use participation to get that spoken Word deeper into the child’s understanding and into his heart.
- Student participation should not be forced. If some do not want to participate never bring pressure upon them to force them to do so. You might lose them.
- Watch out for the student who has all the answers and would like to take over. Kindly and firmly keep all discussion and participation under control.
- Do not expect too much from your students—or too little. In both cases they will not react or participate.
- Be sure to praise and encourage the ones who do participate—even if their answers are wrong. Find something good to say and they are more likely to participate again.

Having said all that, it is necessary to realise that there are many advantages in encouraging our students to participate. They remember far better; it helps them to learn; they feel involved; they have a sense of satisfaction in having actually done something; and it gives the teacher more opportunities for a one-to-one relationship with the children.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Why have I, as the author, made this the longest chapter in the book? Do you, like me, feel that this is the teaching principle which is weakest in your ministry and the one which needs most work and development? What have you determined to do to strengthen this principle in your ministry?*
- *From your observation and experience would you say that most teachers talk too much? Could you give any illustrations or examples to show how more effective teaching would have been if there had been less talking on the part of the teacher?*
- *Give some ideas on how a teacher can encourage his children to take part in discussion which is practical and profitable. What should he/she do? What should he/she not do?*
- *Think of, and write down, some ways you could encourage teachers in a training class to participate—effectively.*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Participation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 18: “Eyes Front” The Principle of Visualization

EFFECTIVE TEACHING USES THE EYES OF THE LISTENER, AS WELL AS HIS EARS

Experience tells us that a child learns more from what he hears and sees, than from what he only hears.

Studies commissioned by Socony Vacuum Corporation in USA and published by Xerox Corporation, state the following:

“If we took the sum total of everything we know, we would find that the percentage of that total knowledge/learning from each of the five senses, would be as follows:

- By taste 1%
- By touch 1.5%
- By smell 3.5%
- By hearing 11%
- By sight 83%”

It is obvious, therefore, that you should seek, in your teaching, to use a child’s ability to learn through his eyes as much as possible.

The Use of Visuals

Visuals can be used to help memorize Scripture, to teach doctrine, to teach hymns and songs, to teach missions, to make Bible quizzes interesting and, above all, to teach Bible Lessons.

You need to consider carefully what pictures you can use, what flannelgraph lessons are available, what flashcards have been printed, if there are any overhead transparencies or videos which you could use, if there is any suitable object lesson available or if you can utilize the blackboard. Other types of visual aids include—diagrams, maps, sketches, films, film strips, slides, visualized hymns and choruses, posters and models.

Sometimes teachers hesitate to use visual aids because of the cost involved. Unfortunately this problem of cost is often valid. But with

some thought and hard work you can find visuals which are effective and which cost little or nothing.

Think of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. He never owned an overhead projector, a film strip, a flannelgraph lesson or a set of flashcards. But He was constantly using visuals. Here a child, there a coin, here a bird or a tree, there a fish or a flower. He often used the common things of nature which were inexpensive or free. These could still be used—and there are many more!

The Purpose of Visuals

Visuals are **not** an end in themselves. They are a means to an end. They are used to help teach truth. You do not want the children just to say, “Oh, how nice they are!” or “I wonder how he does that?”

They are **not** a form of entertainment with the sole purpose of keeping children quiet or intrigued. Your goal is to evangelise and edify and not to entertain.

They are **not** an “easy way out,” a simple solution to the teaching process, or a way to get children’s attention without having prepared adequately.

They **are** a supplement to your teaching. A visual aid will never make a bad lesson good, but it will always make a good lesson better.

Visuals **should** be used to **help** teach, and make interesting, the truths which are to be taught. Visual aids should always, and only, be **aids**. No more!

Before using a visual aid you should ask yourself the following questions:

- ↗ Will it help the children to understand the truth better or will it confuse them?
- ↗ Is it adapted to the age of the students?
- ↗ Is it neat and attractive (without necessarily being professional)?
- ↗ Are there any spelling mistakes?
- ↗ Is it clear and can it be easily seen?
- ↗ Is it simple and not too detailed?

The Value of Visuals

We can see over and over again in the Scriptures how the Lord Jesus used this method, because He realised and demonstrated how effective visual aids can be in the teaching process.

Those who use visuals find that they help in several valuable ways:

- They secure **attention**.
Nothing gets the interest of a child better than some kind of picture. Without visuals the children's attention will often wander. But visuals can prove a fresh magnet for the eyes of the children. It should be added that, for a visual to be effective, it should be changed periodically or built up during the story process. One picture of a Bible story on its own for a long time is not too helpful, as it freezes the action.
- They ensure **comprehension**.
A picture is worth a thousand words. Remember it is not what you say which matters, but what your students understand. And what they see helps them to understand what you say.
- They encourage **retention**.
When a visual clarifies the truth which is being taught, it reinforces that truth, and also keeps it fresher in the child's memory. We recall how much of our own instruction in day school depended upon a visual presentation. Who can imagine a lesson on geography or a lesson on history without pictures and maps, or a lesson on maths or physics without a black board? Is Bible teaching so different that we only teach by ear? Something seen is longer remembered. Apply this to your own memory. Don't you remember what you have seen better than what you have heard?
- They lessen **contention**.
One of the best ways to have good discipline when teaching children is to make the lesson really interesting and attractive; and one of the most effective ways to do this is to use visuals. Visuals are especially helpful at the beginning of the teaching time to get the interest of the children and to prepare them for the lesson which will follow.

- They cause the **prevention** of wrong ideas. When something has only been said, it can be easily misunderstood. This can happen when you use words, which the children know, or words which are similar to words they know, to mean something quite different. The word Pilate does not mean pilot—for example. A visual solves the problem. Pictures often avoid misunderstandings, and make the unfamiliar familiar. It can be difficult for children to understand what is meant by the pitchers held by Gideon’s men, the roof through which the paralyzed man was lowered, or the ark in which Moses was hidden. Visuals can explain to the children what these really were.

The Weaknesses of Visual Aids

There are also dangers in visualization which you need to understand and avoid.

- Preparation may be cut down, because you feel that visuals are all you need; and that they are some kind of “magic key” to the realm of teaching.
- Your presentation can become too dependent on visuals, and they become a substitute for your teaching. Your aim must always to be a good teacher, with the emphasis on what you teach and how you teach it rather than on the visuals you use. You should also remember that children do have a great imagination, and you should give them some scope for using it. Therefore you should not visualize everything.
- Pre-eminence may be given to visuals in your teaching. You must keep them in a place of subordination. God and His Word must have pre-eminence.
- Pre-eminence may be given to visuals in your thinking. The result is that you are always looking for new ideas, new pictures, and you can even find yourself jealous of others who have better visuals.
- Visuals can even become distracting at times. Some object lessons are so elaborate, and some flannelgraph backgrounds are so beautiful, that they take the attention away from what is being taught. In this case, any lessons drawn from them may be limited.

The Best Visual Aid of All

Remember that the best visual aid of all is yourself. It is interesting to note how often John emphasizes the words “we have seen” in the first three verses of his first epistle. He had heard the wonderful words spoken by the Lord Jesus but he is stressing here the importance of what “we have seen with our eyes . . . of the Word of Life” (1 John 1 v1).

You yourself are a visual aid for the children—perhaps the most important visual of all.

- ↗ In your attire. Cleanliness and neatness are always essential, and extremes of fashion should always be avoided.
- ↗ In your teaching. You should be active and involved. You should avoid monotony of voice and rigidity of expression. You should be vibrant and alive.
- ↗ In your life. You need to be sure that you are a witness to the children at all times, and that your life backs home the truths which you are teaching.
- ↗ In your attitudes:
 - ✓ Always prompt and punctual
 - ✓ Always enthusiastic
 - ✓ Always approachable
 - ✓ Always winsome, caring and attractive

Remember that for many of the children you are teaching YOU are the only Bible they see and read!

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *How would you respond to a person who said he could not, or would not, use pictures of the Lord Jesus in his teaching? He gives three reasons:*
 - ✓ *because we do not know what He looked like*
 - ✓ *because he feels it is not reverent*
 - ✓ *because he thinks it breaks the second commandment?*
- ↗ *What type of visual aid would you use, or recommend for use, in a large children's rally, with perhaps 400 or 500 children present?*

- *What type of visual aid do you find the most effective in your ministry? Why?
Would you recommend it to a new teacher?*
- *What types of visual aids would you recommend to a teacher who had very little finance available to buy them?*
- *Do you feel that visual aids could also be a help when teaching adults in a training class, or conference? What kinds of visuals could you use?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Visualization

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 19: “Oh, Not That Again” The Principle of Variation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AVOIDS SAMENESS AND MONOTONY IN METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

Variety, we are told, is the spice of life. Variety is also the spice of teaching!

If you never vary your teaching methods, you run the risk of losing the attention of your students. A teacher who, week in and week out, has the same type of teaching programme, the same type of visual aids, the same lesson structures, truths and applications, will be less effective.

Vary Your Programme Outline

Do not always follow the same pattern of, say, three choruses, prayer, one chorus, memory verse, one chorus, review or Bible quiz, one chorus and a Bible Lesson. Vary the order. An air of expectancy is a help to the children when they are not exactly sure what is going to come next. Otherwise you run the risk of monotony and even boredom.

Introduce new items from time to time. All of these items are not necessarily sacrosanct (on a weekly basis), and certainly the order is not. Why not have the Bible Lesson occasionally at the beginning of, or in the centre of, your teaching programme?

Vary Your Methods

Do not become stereo-typed as you conduct each part of the programme. It is a help if you do familiar things differently. You can, for example, sing a familiar chorus in a new way (e.g., boys sing one part and girls another).

- ↗ Vary your song time and the materials used
 - ✓ Use flashcard songs
 - ✓ Use action songs

- ✓ Use the overhead projector to project the words (with pictures)
- ↗ Vary your memory verse presentation
 - ✓ Use flashcards
 - ✓ Use the blackboard
 - ✓ Use action verses
- ↗ Vary your review/Bible Quiz ideas
 - ✓ Do not just stick to one method
- ↗ Vary your missionary presentation
 - ✓ Use visualized missionary stories
 - ✓ Plan a visit of a missionary
 - ✓ Use slides
 - ✓ Read prayer letters
- ↗ Vary your Bible Lesson presentation

It is easy to become addicted to one method of Bible lesson presentation and one method only. Personally, I like flannelgraph, and I generally use it. But you and I must not feel that that is the only way to teach a Bible Lesson.

What about:

- ✓ Flashcards?
- ✓ Chalk talks?
- ✓ Filmstrips?
- ✓ An overhead projector?
- ✓ Object lessons?
- ✓ A video tape?

In addition it is helpful to remember that there are at least five different methods of teaching:

- ✓ questions and answers,
- ✓ discussion,
- ✓ lecture,
- ✓ project
- ✓ Bible story/ lesson.

In your ministry to children you will generally use the last of these, but you should not rule out several of the others from time to time (as a means of variation), and you will often incorporate one or more of them along with your Bible story/ lesson presentation. In your teacher training ministry you should

also vary your methods, and all five of these could be used from time to time—even though your main method would probably be lecturing.

Generally speaking the method you choose will depend upon a number of factors:

- ✓ The age of the group you are teaching. Discussion for example would be out of the question with smaller children.
- ✓ The background of the students. For example discussion is of no value if the students do not have the information/teaching to enable them to discuss.
- ✓ The time available. Projects and discussion need time—on their own or linked with the Bible lesson. The Bible story/lesson and lecture method enable the best use to be made of a limited time.

Which method is the best? For children in a Sunday school class/Good News Club the Bible story/lesson is usually best although for the sake of variation other methods can be used from time to time—on their own or linked with the Bible lesson. In a training class the lecture method is probably best.

Which method is the worst? The worst method is the method which is used all the time, with no variation whatsoever.

Vary Your Content

It is easy to become stereo-typed in what you say, and to repeat from week to week and over and over again the truths you want to teach. This results in a sameness in your message.

How often we exhort the children, for example, in our central truths, to “Obey God.” How often we teach them “God will give you victory.” These are important truths, and must not be omitted. But there is a wide range of truths in the Bible to be covered, and you must not limit yourself to a few “pet” themes. The Bible exhortation is to teach “all the counsel of God” (Acts 20 v27). If you endeavour to teach the whole Bible you are almost bound to have variety.

Of course, there are important themes which should be the backbone of your teaching, for example, the truths of the Gospel message, the inspiration of Scripture, and the attributes of God.

But you should always seek to have variety in what you teach, so that the children do not continually feel, “Oh, here is that once again.” It is so easy for us “to ride hobby horses.”

Your ministry is to teach **all** the Bible. You should not restrict yourself to a few well known portions. There are many neglected portions of the Bible which children are rarely introduced to, and you should also seek to include them. The Book of Ruth or the Book of Esther or a study of the Tabernacle, or a visualized study of one of Paul’s epistles could be very helpful to the children if well prepared and attractively presented.

You also need to be careful in your teacher training ministry that you do not keep teaching the same few subjects to the teachers who come regularly—even if they are vital. Otherwise they will stop coming. There are of course key subjects which you need to come back to periodically. But there are many other subjects which will create interest and variety, and which also need to be taught and studied.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *Are there dangers involved in variation? Identify these dangers and outline how you would avoid them?*
- ↗ *Can you identify some of the variations the Lord Jesus used in His teaching ministry? Did He vary His methods? Did He vary His message or did He teach the same subject(s) at all times? (Read chapter 21 to receive some help in answering this question).*
- ↗ *Do you see any variety in the Gospel messages preached in the Acts of the Apostles? On the other hand, can you identify what always remained constant? Compare Peter’s preaching of the Gospel in Acts chapter 2 v14–40 and Paul’s preaching of the Gospel in Acts 17 v22–34.*
- ↗ *Should the programme of a Good News Club be similar to the programme of a 5-Day Club? If not, how do they vary and why? What about the visuals used in these two ministries? Are they similar? Why? If not, why not?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Variation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 20: "Are You Comfortable?" The Principle of Situation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING IS ENCOURAGED WHEN CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT IN THE RIGHT AND CONGENIAL KIND OF ATMOSPHERE, ENVIRONMENT, AND SITUATION

A good atmosphere makes learning more enjoyable, and teaching more easy. You must not neglect some very obvious simple and basic rules which are related to the immediate circumstances which surround your teaching situation.

A Good Physical Situation

You should do all you can to ensure:

- ↗ That the children are comfortable. This means that they have a good and a reasonably comfortable place to sit (even if it is on the floor), that the temperature is not too high or low, and that there is adequate ventilation. No child can give his whole mind to teaching if half his attention is taken up with the hardness or highness of his seat, or if through insufficient ventilation his lungs are starved of the oxygen they continually require.
- ↗ That the surroundings are pleasant. Avoid dark, gloomy atmospheres. Have as much natural light as possible. Decorate the walls with appropriate pictures. Use colours.
- ↗ That everything is clean and tidy. There is no excuse for untidiness. It gives a wrong impression and is not a good testimony.
- ↗ That the children can see you and the flannelgraph board without any problem. Otherwise, you will invite constant movement.

A Good Emotional Situation

The whole teaching situation should be bathed in love and understanding. Children are sensitive to these, and appreciate them. Some of them do not get much love and understanding at home. They

know when you really love and understand them and they revel in such an atmosphere. This type of atmosphere is an important step towards their listening to what you will teach. If children feel unloved and left out, you cannot teach them effectively no matter how hard you try.

It is your responsibility as the teacher to endeavour to satisfy the basic needs of the children, as best you can, and when you do so, or try to do so, the children you teach will be motivated both to listen and to learn.

All children have the same basic needs—physical well-being, safety, love, a sense of belonging, a desire for achievement, recognition, and self-realization—plus of course and, above all, the need for the knowledge and the understanding which will lead to change. As a teacher your ultimate goal is to reach and meet that highest need—the need to know, understand and change. But the rule is that you must first satisfy at least to some extent some of the more basic needs.

A Good Devotional Atmosphere

The meeting should be, at all times, reverent and purposeful. It is not your ministry to entertain or amuse the children. You should fix the thoughts of the children on God right from the beginning. It is important that the meeting be conducted with dignity. For example, the meeting can start with some quiet singing, followed by prayer and worship. The singing at all times, should be meaningful, and “entertainment choruses” should be avoided. Also, the Word of God should be handled with dignity.

This does not rule out, of course, the use of action choruses and lively choruses if they are appropriate, if they fit in with what is being taught and if they themselves contribute to this teaching.

A Good Social Atmosphere

Children are human beings with human personalities, and they like to meet with people, and have companionship and friendship with them. Therefore, there should always be, in the meeting, a spirit of fellowship and co-operation amongst the children, and between the children and yourself. This should also be true both before the

meeting and after the meeting. The child may not have opportunities for fellowship like this anywhere else.

Ten Questions for Every Teacher to Ask

- ↗ Do I under God and the power of the Holy Spirit inculcate the right attitude in my pupils—attitudes of “I like it here,” “This is a happy place,” “God loves me,” and “My teacher likes me.”
- ↗ Do I take a personal interest in each child regardless of background, appearance, or abilities, realizing Christ died for all, desires for each to be saved, and has a blueprint for each life, which if followed will bring him joy and satisfaction, and glory to the Creator?
- ↗ Does each child sense that I truly love him, that I am fair to all, that I have no favorites?
- ↗ Do I, before God, especially seek to understand and help the disobedient child, the discouraged one, the fearful one, remembering that many come from homes where nobody cares or loves them and that I may be God’s only contact person to reach them for Himself?
- ↗ Can I honestly say that I love disobedient Victor as much as well-behaved Paula, remembering that God Who called me to teach them is impartial in His love?
- ↗ Do I convey to each child the sense of worthwhileness, the feeling that he really matters, the “she-has-confidence-in-me” feeling?
- ↗ Do I avoid unfair comparisons with other children, bearing in mind differences in maturity and background?
- ↗ Do I myself set a good example when expecting self-control from my pupils?
- ↗ Do I stimulate my pupils to better Christian living, to full consecration, to greater love for God and His Word? Years hence, when they have long forgotten my words, will my life still remind them of the Saviour and continue to influence them to great aspirations for Him?
- ↗ Do I pray regularly for each of my pupils and their specific problems and needs? Do they know that I pray for them?

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Are these same four rules concerning situation and atmosphere outlined in this chapter also applicable to a teacher training class? If so, how can you ensure that they are put into practice **there**?*
- *Give a list of “choruses” which you would never teach children because they are irreverent or without any value.*
- *Do you find it difficult to find a balance between, on the one hand, dignity, reverence and seriousness and, on the other hand, joy, liveliness and action? How would you help a young teacher to find this balance? Do you have any suggestions?*
- *Would you encourage children to come early and well before your meeting starts (or would you discourage them?)? How early? What would you do with them when they come early?*
- *Do you believe your students see you as a person who loves them, listens to them and wants to understand them? Check to see just how much you know about them as persons. Write the name of each student on a sheet of paper, and then jot down everything you know about him—his interests, feelings, problems, parents, friends, relationship with God and so on. You should be able to tell very quickly if you have been truly focusing on your students as individuals.*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Situation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Section D:

“I Am Reflecting on Teaching” The Four Concluding Principles of Teaching

Chapter 21	154
The Principle of Imitation Effective teaching is helped by finding the very best example of a teacher and by then imitating him.	
Chapter 22	166
The Principle of Demonstration Effective teaching demands that the teacher demonstrate clearly what he wants the students to do.	
Chapter 23	172
The Principles of Compassion and Passion Effective teaching requires a love and compassion for the children, and a burden for their souls. These will result in a passion and urgency in presentation.	
Chapter 24	177
The Principle of Evaluation Effective teaching demands the continual examination and evaluation of his teaching—by the teacher (and by others).	
A Concluding Assignment	186
Bibliography	188

Chapter 21: “Modelling Our Message and Our Methods on the Master” The Principle of Imitation

*EFFECTIVE TEACHING IS HELPED BY FINDING
THE VERY BEST EXAMPLE OF A TEACHER
AND BY THEN IMITATING HIM*

We learn so much by watching and listening to others, and by seeking, to some extent, to model ourselves on them.

As you examine in the Gospels how the Lord Jesus taught during His ministry on earth, you will find the perfect example to follow. The Lord Jesus said:

“As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you” (John 20 v21).

This includes both the message He preached and the methods He used.

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke of Himself as a teacher (John 13 v13). He permitted others to call Him a teacher, and He was recognized as a teacher both by His friends and His enemies (John 3 v2; Mark 4 v38; Matthew 19 v16, Mark 12 v14). Forty-five times in the Gospels, the Lord Jesus is referred to as teaching and only eleven times as preaching. He was called a teacher, or something similar, about 100 times, but not once was He called a preacher. Those who followed Him were called disciples (followers or learners) over 240 times.

He never wrote a book. All His messages were oral. They were delivered in various places—beside the sea, on a mountain top, along dusty roads, and in homes, and they still influence countless millions of “listeners” all over the world. He was the perfect teacher, a model for everyone who would be a teacher.

The Lord Jesus Christ was supremely qualified as a teacher. He was, and is, God. Thus His understanding of human nature, and His ability to meet the needs of His students through His teaching are greater than ours can ever be. Nevertheless, although we are so very much more limited in who we are, what we know and what we can

do, the aim and desire of the Christian is always, by God's grace, to be like Him. The Christian teacher can therefore learn much from a study of the teaching ministry of Christ.

The Qualities He Displayed

These are qualities which you and I should seek to emulate and imitate as best we can.

- His knowledge of God, His Father.
- His knowledge of man. He knew what was in man.
- His over-riding purpose and goal—to relate men correctly to Himself, to God His Father and to each other.
- His perfect life, as a background to His teaching.
- His mastery of the subject taught.
- His aptness and skill as a teacher.
- His dignity in all circumstances.
- His friendliness and love towards those He was teaching.
- His personal touch. Each soul had eternal value and was worthy of His teaching and special attention.
- His sincerity, both in word and deed.
- His joy and peace at all times.
- His attractiveness to those He taught.
- His sense of reverence and lack of frivolity.
- His humility.
- His prayerfulness.
- His thoroughness and His systematic presentation.
- His tactfulness.
- His courtesy. He was never rough, ill-mannered, or uncivil.
- His brevity.
- His simplicity.
- His vividness.
- His directness. He dealt with vital and not secondary issues.
- His faith in God's power to work in the hearts and lives of those He taught.
- His knowledge of the Scriptures. He quoted or gave illustrations from 17 books in the Old Testament.

The life of the Lord Jesus was, at all times, the personification of what He taught.

The Places Where He Taught

The Lord Jesus did not teach in any one special place—or at one special time each week. He taught people wherever they were, and whenever He had the opportunity:

- ↗ beside the lake
- ↗ on the mountainside
- ↗ in homes
- ↗ in the temple
- ↗ in a boat
- ↗ beside a well
- ↗ at a wedding
- ↗ in a synagogue

Actually a very small percentage of His teaching time was spent in the temple and in a synagogue.

If you are to follow in His steps you will look for every opportunity to teach God's Word to boys and girls. This is not just a ministry to be exercised in church and Sunday school. The vast majority of children are OUTSIDE; and like the Lord Jesus you need to go out to them and teach them the truths of Scripture whenever you have the opportunity.

The Students He Taught

His students fell into three groups, and this created three kinds of teaching situations.

↗ **He taught the multitudes**

There were many times when large groups of people gathered to listen to Him, and He taught them (Matthew 13 v1, 2). These were usually mixed groups—adults, adolescents, and children; male and female; disciples, casual listeners and even His enemies. They came for different reasons. Some were concerned about their souls; others were interested in healing and miracles; and many were simply curious.

There are multitudes of boys and girls and men and women in the towns and cities where you may minister. It may be that you will have responsibility for teaching a large group of

children, young people, or adults. This is not always easy, and generally demands special ability and much preparation.

➤ **He taught a small group of people who loved Him**

These were His disciples whom He was training and teaching, and whom He was preparing for the great work ahead of them (Mark 3 v14). They were for the most part unlearned fishermen, and tax collectors and they were not always apt students. Yet they were to turn the world upside down (Acts 17 v6).

“The supreme work of Christ’s ministry was not preaching or teaching, but training.

The twelve disciples constituted the first teacher training class. He gave them a three year course. He not only taught them, He lived with them and directed their life and action. He made a point of seeing that His scholars assimilated and applied His teaching. He might easily have arranged for them to meet Him at a certain hour in Jerusalem for instruction, and then dismissed them that they might return to their work. But He lived with them, He entered into their life, hour after hour. He ate with them, slept with them, worked with them. He was their constant Companion. They developed under His supervision, not only from the information which He imparted, but because they worked out for themselves the things which He taught them. He sent out first the twelve, and then the seventy. There was a practical work department connected with this school.”

(Clarence H. Benson)

There are many opportunities open to Christians today to teach smaller groups of children as in a Sunday school, a Good News Club, a 5 Day Club, Holiday Bible school or Bible Camp. Your aim will always be to evangelize them but there may also be, among them, children who love the Lord Jesus, and whom you can both teach and train. Also it may be that God will use you as a teacher of teachers in a teacher training class or training course. In all these ways you are investing yourself in the lives

and ministries of others, exactly as the Lord Jesus did.

Each of us should have a definite goal and a clear purpose to look for those (young or old) whom we can train and prepare to serve the Lord. I would like to emphasize especially the importance and value of investing yourself in the lives of Christian young people and teenagers. Many of them need the help and teaching you can give them. Also they are very open to your teaching and could well become the co-workers and teachers you are praying for—to reach the children.

This is the practice of investment and the principle of spiritual multiplication.

➤ **He taught individuals**

A large part of His ministry was directed to one person here and one person there. Examples include Nicodemus (John 3), the woman of Samaria (John 4), the man at Bethesda's pool (John 5), Bartimaeus (Mark 10), Zacchaeus (Luke 19), the blind man (John 9), the woman taken in adultery (John 8), and the rich young ruler (Matthew 19).

Some of these individuals came to Him for help and teaching. Others He approached and initiated a conversation, and with it, an opportunity to teach. Some He taught in the open air, others inside.

There will also be opportunity for you to work with individuals and to invest yourself in them. A child may come for personal counselling, a parent may ask about the teaching his child has received, a pastor may need to share a burden, or a teacher may need help with a personal problem. Or you may feel that you should initiate a conversation with a child, or a teacher—to seek the opportunity of teaching him/her or counselling him/her on an individual basis.

The wise Christian teacher will be aware of these different aspects of his ministry, and prepare daily to be available for God to use him. A close walk with God, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, is essential if you are to have a worthwhile ministry to others.

The Goals He Had

The Lord Jesus had two goals in His teaching:

➤ **To bring His listeners into a personal relationship with Himself and His Heavenly Father**

His teaching and His challenges were many and varied but with this one over-ruling purpose.

“Ye must be born again” (John 3 v7).

“Come take up the cross and follow Me” (Mark 10 v21).

“Come down, for today I must abide at thy house” (Luke 19 v5).

Some of His listeners responded with trust and joy. Others did not.

➤ **To help those who had trusted Him to grow in that relationship**

He called His disciples (Matthew 4 v18, 19).

He promised to train them (Matthew 4 v19).

He taught them (Matthew 5–7).

He encouraged and motivated them (Matthew 8 v23–27).

He equipped them (Matthew 10 v1).

He trained them (Matthew 10 v5–42).

In your teaching you need also to have these two goals:

➤ To evangelize the children and, where possible, lead them to a saving knowledge of, and right relationship with, Jesus Christ (Mark 16 v15).

➤ To help them to grow in their faith and in their knowledge of Jesus Christ and in their relationship with Him (Matthew 28 v20).

The Methods He Used

The teaching methods of the Lord Jesus were many and varied. It is interesting to list them, to observe how He used them, and to see how we can use the same methods in our own teaching.

➤ **His use of problems**

Real thinking often begins with a problem. So the Lord Jesus often taught people using their **problem** as the springboard.

These problems were either brought to Him by those who knew they had them, or they were pointed out by the Lord Jesus to those who had not seen them (Mark 2 v5; Mark 9 v33, 34).

➤ **His use of questions**

He asked many questions to make people think, to encourage them to express themselves, or to introduce a story. He also used questions to awaken the conscience (Matthew 23 v17), to recall the known (Mark 2 v25, 26) to secure information (Luke 8 v30), to clarify a situation (Mark 10 v3) or to encourage response (John 21 v15). He often used leading questions which would introduce the subject He wanted to teach (Luke 13 v18). Sometimes He even used questions to answer questions (Luke 10 v26).

➤ **His use of answers**

He often taught by answering questions which were asked. He never laughed at a question, nor did He ever try to evade one. His answer depended upon the motive behind the question, and He did not just seek to satisfy curiosity. His answers tended to lead to more thinking and often called for action (Matthew 13 v10–23, Matthew 17 v19–21).

➤ **His use of conversation**

He taught individuals conversationally. His conversations were brief, purposeful, direct and pointed, tactful, personal, instructive, courageous, friendly, corrective, uncompromising, dignified, and stimulating; for example, His conversations with Nicodemus (John 3 v1–21); and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4 v6–26).

➤ **His use of discourses**

At times He taught in the form of a lecture. This was usually so when the group was too large for questions and answers and discussions; and especially when all the material was new to the listeners. A number of these discourses are recorded for us in Scripture (Matthew 10 v5–42; 18 v1–14, 24, 25; John 14 and 15). The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, 7) is an excellent example.

Some are recorded with considerable fullness. Others are recorded more briefly, and it is often difficult to know if this is the whole discourse as it was given, an excerpt from it or just an inspired condensation.

➤ **His use of parables**

This was His main teaching method. In this way great truths were taught by simple, and understandable illustrations. There are almost 70 parables, of one kind or another, recorded in the Gospels (e.g. Matthew 13 v3–53). This emphasizes for us the value of explaining the truth being taught to the children by using apt, clear and simple illustrations.

➤ **His use of imagery and visual aids**

His teaching was vivid and picturesque. He used all kinds of pictures which the people could see, or imagine, as a basis for teaching new truths to them.

He used “all kinds of natural phenomena (the sun, earthquakes, fire, clouds, rain); animal life (camels, oxen, sheep, wolf, fox, swine, fish, birds, serpents); plant life (olive, sycamore, fig and mustard trees, the lily, reed and thorns); and human life in its many aspects—physical life (flesh and blood, the eye, ear, hands, feet, hunger, thirst, sleep, sickness, laughing, weeping, bread, birth, mother, sister, brother, children, marriage); commercial life (fisherman, tailor, builder, merchant, business debts); agricultural life (shepherd, sheep, husbandman, soil, tillage, sowing, growth, harvest, vineyard, wine); civil life (robbery, violence, judgment, taxes); social life (marriage, hospitality, feasts, journeys); religious life (alms, tithes, fasting, praying, Sabbath, temple) and historical life (references to John the Baptist, slaughter of the Galileans, fall of the tower of Siloam, Herod Antipas, Herod the Tetrarch, Herod Archelaus).” (Dr. Graham Scroggie).

➤ **His use of the Scriptures**

This is an important lesson for you and me to learn. God speaks through His Word. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine all-knowing One, believed the Scriptures and accepted them as the complete, inspired Word of God. He was familiar with them,

knew them by heart, and knew how to use them. Also He saw Himself in them, and taught that He was the fulfillment of them (Luke 4 v16–21; Luke 24 v27, 32, 45). Above all, He taught and quoted them. He used stories from the Old Testament to teach truths; and He continually quoted Bible texts.

➤ **His use of natural occasion**

He never let an occasion slip, but was always watching for opportunities to teach, even in the most unlikely of places and circumstances. He did not usually make formal appointments to teach, but used the natural occasion as it arose, although at times He did seek someone out and created an opportunity for teaching (John 9 v35).

The coming of His mother and brothers in Matthew 12 v46–50 was the occasion to teach the supremacy of spiritual relationships. The plucking of the corn in Matthew 12 v1–8 was the occasion to teach the relationship between man and the Sabbath.

➤ **His use of apperception** (the interpretation of the new in terms of the old)

He continually used that which was familiar to explain and interpret that which was less familiar—for example living **water** (John 7 v37–39), the **bread** of life (John 6 v35), and the **light** of the world (John 8 v12).

➤ **His use of the concrete to teach the abstract**

He used what could be seen, felt and heard to illustrate what could not be seen, felt or heard and which was what He wanted them to learn.

The birds and lilies were used to teach trust, the wind to teach about the Holy Spirit, the sparrows to teach providence, fishing to teach evangelism, the harvest to teach service, the dove to teach harmlessness, and the yoke to teach close fellowship.

➤ **His use of contrast**

He often placed opposites against each other, so making it easier to listen, learn and remember (Matthew 5 v21–44; 7 v24–27).

➤ **His use of symbols**

A symbol is something concrete used as **an emblem** to typify the abstract. So the Lord Jesus often selected and used such symbols—the bread and wine to symbolise His death (Matthew 26 v26–28), the cross to symbolise sacrifice (Matthew 16 v24), and the child to symbolise humility and trust (Matthew 18 v2–4).

➤ **His use of application**

He always encouraged His student to do something, and to take some kind of action as a result of what He had taught. Consequently, He used words like “come,” “follow,” “go,” “seek,” “preach,” “watch,” “pray,” “come down,” “go and tell,” “sin no more,” “feed my sheep,” “turn the other cheek.” He was not only concerned with imparting knowledge, but with stimulating to action on the basis of that knowledge.

➤ **His use of adaptation and flexibility**

He always adapted to the situation in which He found Himself and to the state and needs of the one, or ones, taught. His approach, while always having the same ultimate goals and purposes, therefore varied in its details from one person to another. He began with people where they were, and sought to lead them to where they should be. Compare and contrast, for example, the approach of the Lord Jesus to Nicodemus in John 3 and His approach to the Samaritan woman in John 4.

The Lord Jesus is not only the perfect example to follow in your teaching, He is far more. Because He indwells you, as a Christian teacher, you can look to Him with assurance to equip you, to mould you, to use you, to teach through you and, above all, to change you into His image.

May you and I be more and more conformed to His likeness in our life and teaching.

Jesus Christ, The Perfect Teacher

“He never taught a lesson in a classroom . . . He had no tools to work with, such as blackboards, maps or charts . . . He used no subject outlines, kept no records, gave no grades, and His only text

was ancient and well-worn . . . His students were the poor, the lame, the deaf, the blind, the outcast, and His method was the same with all who came to hear and learn . . . He opened eyes with faith . . . He opened ears with simple truth . . . and opened hearts with love, a love born of forgiveness . . . A gentle man, a humble man, He asked and won no honours, no gold awards of tribute to His expertise or wisdom . . . And yet this quiet teacher from the hills of Galilee has fed the needs, fulfilled the hopes, and changed the lives of many millions . . . For what He taught brought heaven to earth and revealed God's heart to mankind" (Author unknown).

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Which of the 24 qualities displayed by the Master Teacher (page 155) do you feel needs strengthening in your life and ministry?*
- *In which of the three teaching situations outlined on pages 156–158 do you feel most gifted and most comfortable? Why? To which of these three situations did the Lord Jesus give most of His time? Why?*
- *Study the teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus for yourself. For example, read John chapter 6 carefully and list at least five specific lessons about His teaching which you can learn from that chapter.*
- *On pages 159–163 I have listed 15 methods of teaching used by the Master Teacher. Which ones have you used most frequently? Which least frequently? Why? Can you see several of these methods which you need to use more often?*
- *Is He able, and willing, to help you with these? What do you feel you yourself need to do to develop these methods?*
- *Are you sometimes discouraged with the immediate short term effects of your teaching? What do you see as the short term effects of the Master's teaching? Would He have been counted as a success by His contemporaries? What about the long term effects of His teaching? Aren't they what really count?*

Considerable help in writing this chapter was received from the book "Teaching Techniques of Jesus" by H.H. Horne (published by Kregel Publishers in USA) and from pages 77–81 of "History of Christian Education" by C.B. Eaves (published by Moody Press in USA).

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Imitation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
God has helped me with this principle	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 22: “Don’t Just Tell Me—Show Me” The Principle of Demonstration

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEMANDS THAT THE TEACHER DEMONSTRATE AND SHOW CLEARLY WHAT HE WANTS THE STUDENTS TO DO

Good teaching is not just the use of words (although they are necessary). Words need to be backed up by what the teacher does, and how he does it. You should see yourself not only as a speak-er, but also as a show-er.

There are two main areas where you need, in your teaching, to follow and put into practice the principle of demonstration.

In Your Teaching

As a teacher you should not just **tell** the pupils what to do but, from time to time, you should **show** them what to do **and** how to do it.

There are many practical subjects which can be better taught to children through demonstration than by instruction alone. For example, you should not just tell children that they should witness to their friends about the Lord Jesus Christ. You should show them how to do this. You should show them what materials they can use e.g. the Wordless Book, and a Gospel tract. You should provide them with these materials. You yourself should then give a demonstration, an actual prepared conversation, to show them what should be said.

The same principle applies to a teacher training class. It is relatively easy to tell teachers how to teach a Bible Lesson. But they learn more when you actually teach a lesson in front of them (as if they were children), and demonstrate to them how to do it. It is relatively easy to tell teachers how to counsel children. But it is more effective when you give a prepared counselling demonstration with another teacher acting as the child. The same applies to teaching a Bible verse, teaching a chorus, teaching Missions or how to review by using Bible quizzes.

When giving a demonstration in your teacher training class there are several guidelines which you should follow:

- Give the instruction on the subject first of all.
- Then tell the students what to look for in the demonstration you will give:
 - ✓ in its content
 - ✓ in its method
- Give them some questions (written or oral) or points to help them to know what to look for.
- Now do the demonstration. Give a correct positive presentation. Do not purposely demonstrate errors which may stick in the minds of the students.
- Then discuss with the students the points they were told to look for in your demonstration.

You should also encourage your teachers to take part in demonstrations in front of the other teachers in the training class. They might feel shy about doing this, but they should realise that every time they demonstrate in this way their own teaching ability will develop.

Consequently, you should emphasize to your teachers that they will learn by demonstration. The more they do a thing, the better they will understand it, and the more able they will be to do it. Practice makes perfect.

Incidentally, this principle is also true when you as a teacher are preparing your lesson. The more you demonstrate and practise your lesson before a mirror or before your wife or husband, the better you will be able to tell it when the time comes for teaching it to the children.

Someone has said, "If you want to learn how to climb mountains—climb them; if you want to learn how to teach—teach." Experience is the best teacher.

In Your Life

What you teach the children should be demonstrated in your life, both during and after the teaching hour.

You teach some by what you say
You teach more by what you do
You teach most by what you are

It is impossible to separate the teacher from his message. You must not only teach the Word but also live the Word.

“Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men” (2 Corinthians 3 v2).

The children need to see the demonstration of the power of the Gospel in your transformed life.

“Only let your conversation (manner of life) be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ” (Philippians 1 v27).

A man rebuked an inconsistent fellow Christian by telling him, “What you are is speaking so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.”

One of the greatest aids to successful teaching is a holy life. God does not do His best work with an unclean instrument. And the children themselves are invariably the first to find you out. They have an uncanny knack for discovering insincerity and inconsistency. Therefore you must take great care that what you are and what you say coincide.

➤ **During the teaching hour**

You cannot teach patience to children, if you demonstrate impatience in your reaction to them. You cannot teach them love, if you are harsh in your relationship to them. You cannot teach them humility, if you are obviously proud. You cannot teach them to trust God for everything, if you are an obvious worrier. You cannot encourage them to pray and read the Bible, if you don't.

➤ **After the lesson**

You cannot teach separated living if you are seen doing things which belie what you teach. You cannot teach regular church attendance, if you frequently miss church. You cannot teach honesty, if you “cut corners” in your dealings with others. This is especially true when you live in close proximity to the children you teach, and very especially if they are your own children. Someone has said, “If you don't live it, don't teach it.”

The Lord Jesus often taught by example. He began "both *to do* and *to teach*" (Acts 1 v1). He was "A Prophet mighty *in deed* and word before God and all the people" (Luke 24 v19). His life was always a demonstration of what He taught. In John 13 He showed humility by washing the feet of His disciples. He could say:

"I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13 v15).

His deeds either preceded or were mingled with His words. He was found by the disciples at prayer in the solitary place. **Then** He taught them how to pray.

The Apostle Paul could say:

"Be ye followers (imitators) of me even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11 v1).

"Brethren be followers (imitators) together of me" (Philippians 3 v17).

"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers (imitators) of me" (1 Corinthians 4 v16).

Paul could also write that the believers in Thessalonians became "followers (imitators) of us and of the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 1 v6).

It was also recorded of Moses in Acts 7 v22 that he was "mighty in words *and* in deeds."

When Paul wrote to Timothy he encouraged him not only to understand and teach doctrine but to be a good example in his own life; and to demonstrate and show to others his own personal walk before the Lord.

"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" (1 Timothy 4 v12).

"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" (1 Timothy 4 v16).

May you and I also "Take heed unto ourselves *and* unto the doctrine." If we do, the results will be blessing for ourselves and blessing for those we teach.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Are there other activities you would like your children, as believers, to get involved in—apart from witnessing? List them. How could you demonstrate to them what they should do?*
- *Does the idea of demonstration in a teacher training class make you nervous? If so—you are normal! How can you overcome this nervousness? How can you help others to overcome it?*
- *If you are the teacher of a training class how can you encourage your teachers to give a demonstration? What would you say to them? They are probably more nervous than you were when you gave one.*
- *Could a video camera and a television set be a help with regard to demonstration? If so, explain how you could use them.*
- *Paul invited people to copy or imitate him. Would you like your students to imitate you? What is your reaction to this thought? If they did imitate you what would be their main strengths and weaknesses?*

Complete these sentences:

“My students see me as a model of what the Bible teaches when I . . .”

I would like the children/teachers whom I teach to be like me in the following ways:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Demonstration

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

Chapter 23: "Touch My Heart, Lord" The Principles of Compassion and Passion

EFFECTIVE TEACHING REQUIRES A LOVE AND COMPASSION FOR THE CHILDREN, AND A BURDEN FOR THEIR SOULS. THESE WILL RESULT IN A PASSION AND AN URGENCY IN YOUR PRESENTATION

It is so easy for you and me as teachers to become "professional" in our thinking and preparation, as well as in our teaching. This means that our hearts remain cold and we lose our burden and vision. Our teaching may seem to be fine, but something vital is missing (and we know it). You and I so often need a new vision, a new burden, a new compassion and a new passion.

You Need Compassion in Private

It is vital to have a real burden for the souls of children. It is very important to see their deep spiritual need, and to share in the great compassion which the Lord Jesus had for the lost.

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9 v36).

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10 v16).

This burden for lost children will help you to teach them, and will encourage you to do all you can to bring to every child the good news of a Saviour from sin. You will then do so with a sincerity and a zeal which comes, alone, from the Holy Spirit. This is demonstrated in the words of the Apostle Paul:

"That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Romans 9 v2, 3).

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Romans 10 v1).

The same fervour and burning desire were displayed by John Knox, the great Scottish reformer, when he prayed in his garden at nightfall, “Oh God, give me Scotland, or I die.”

Mr J. Irvin Overholtzer, the founder of Child Evangelism Fellowship, was so burdened for the souls of children that he found it difficult even to speak about their need and their lost condition without breaking down, and weeping.

One of the early leaders of the Child Evangelism Fellowship, J.C. Brumfield, used to pray, “Oh God, give us tears for the children of the world.”

May God give you and me a similar compassion for unsaved children. For many of us it will never involve tears and outward emotion. But your compassion is not measured by your words or even by your tears. It is measured by what you actually **do**.

How can you have this compassion in your heart for the unsaved children?

- By understanding what the Bible teaches about them:
 - ✓ They are spiritually dead.
 - ✓ They are lost and outside God’s Kingdom.
 - ✓ They will go to a lost eternity if they are old enough to know what sin is and to reject God’s salvation—and if they die in this state.
- By asking God to give you some of His love and compassion for them
- By living in close fellowship with your compassionate and loving Saviour

You also need to love and understand the saved children, and be willing to pour your life into theirs. Many saved children need help, guidance and teaching from someone who cares for them and loves them. You can be that person. You can be a spiritual father or mother to them. But the quality which will most attract them to you is the compassion and love you have in your heart for them, and not primarily the teaching abilities which you possess.

You Need Passion in Presentation

If you have real compassion in your heart for the children it is almost certain to manifest itself in an outward demonstration of passion, warmth and urgency in your teaching. These are closely linked together.

But it should be pointed out, and clearly understood, that passion and urgency are not demonstrated by raising your voice and shouting, or by speaking more and more quickly. Also your urgency should not result in, or involve, any kind of pressure being put upon the children to respond to what you are challenging them to do.

You are not presenting academic truths. You are standing before lost souls who need to accept and believe your message if they are ever to be saved. You need to urge unsaved children to come to Christ **NOW**, to trust Him as Lord and Saviour, and you need to show them clearly how they can do so. It is so easy to lose your burden and zeal for the souls of the children. It is so easy to become cold, professional and mechanical, and no longer to have a passion and an expectation to see the boys and girls saved **now**.

There are many examples, throughout church history, of those who have demonstrated compassion in their hearts and displayed passion in their preaching.

George Whitfield, the great 18th century evangelist, used to say to his vast congregations “If you won’t weep for yourselves, dear sinners, on the way to hell, then I’ll have to weep for you.” Then he would break out into uncontrollable weeping, both in his preaching and during the meeting.

Richard Baxter, the well known Puritan, pastor and preacher, wrote, “I preached as never sure to preach again—as a dying man to dying men.”

Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, one of Scotland’s greatest preachers, almost invariably wept in the vestry before he ever went to his pulpit. Hardly a morning would pass that he did not break down in weeping over lost souls going to hell and over the poor spiritual condition of his congregation.

A traveler, anxious to see where Mr McCheyne had preached and worked, went to the Scottish city of Dundee and found the church. The church officer, a gray-headed old Scotsman, led the way into

McCheyne's study. "Sit down in that chair," he said. The traveller hesitated a moment, and then sat down; on the table in front of him was an open Bible.

"Now," said the church officer, "Drop your head in the Bible and cry like a child; that is the way our minister got ready to preach."

Beckoning the visitor to follow him, he led the way into the pulpit, where lay an open Bible. "Now, stand there and stretch out your hands towards the pews and preach with urgency and passion. That is the way our minister preached."

Few of us will ever shed tears like those we have mentioned above when we are teaching children; but a sense of compassion, urgency and seriousness should be evident to the children. They are sensitive and able to know if we really care for them.

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- ↗ *Why is it that our hearts are touched and moved by the physical suffering of children and yet are often so cold with regard to their spiritual condition?*
- ↗ *Could you outline some more suggestions on how you and I could have more compassion for children?*
- ↗ *How can you and I have more passion when speaking to them? How will this passion be demonstrated? Does it simply mean that we speak more loudly or more quickly?*
- ↗ *Think of several pastors and teachers under whose ministry you have sat. Were you aware of passion and feeling in their ministry? What was your reaction to that passion (or lack of it)?*

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principles of Compassion and Passion

I understand these principles	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with these principles	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with them
I have used these principles in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about them	To develop them more in my life	To make a new start on them

Chapter 24: “What I Test Is Best” The Principle of Evaluation

EFFECTIVE TEACHING DEMANDS THAT THE TEACHER CONTINUALLY EXAMINE AND EVALUATE HIS TEACHING

Do you approve of evaluation as a way to improve your own teaching? I trust that your answer is “Yes.” If not, I hope that you will have changed your mind and your answer before the end of this chapter!

Evaluation Is Necessary

Evaluation is one of the most important teaching principles of all even though it is the last one recorded in this book.

- You need to evaluate your own teaching—continually.
- You should allow others to evaluate your teaching without feeling hurt.
- You will then be ready to evaluate other people’s teaching (e.g., in a teacher training class).

In every teacher’s heart there should be the consuming desire to be his very best. He is never satisfied, nor does he feel that he knows everything. He always wants to do better. But progression and improvement of this kind are dependent upon continual self-examination and self-criticism.

- ✓ Where was I wrong?
- ✓ Why did they not listen?
- ✓ How can I encourage attention?
- ✓ Why are they not doing what I outlined?

It is questions like these which will help you firstly to see where you are weak in your teaching and presentation and, secondly, to help you change and make improvements so that the weakness will disappear. If you, as the teacher, do not have the desire to improve and a genuine willingness to see your mistakes you will never progress or

improve in your teaching.

Because it is so important, I would like to repeat what I said earlier in the book.

Making a mistake when teaching is not so serious, provided that:

- The teacher knows that he has made that mistake.
- He resolves not to make it again, and he starts to work on it.
- He helps other teachers not to make the same mistake.

Indeed, if these three conditions are met, the mistake can instead become a blessing!

How can you as a teacher best discover your mistakes? The most effective way is through the process of evaluation and examination and by conducting “post mortems” after every teaching session to find out your strengths and weaknesses.

But what steps should you take? How can you evaluate yourself effectively?

By Listening to Yourself

You could arrange for someone to tape-record your lesson, or indeed the complete teaching hour; and then afterwards you could listen to the recording, analyze your voice and evaluate your lesson. This could be a good help to you and your ministry.

As you “listen to yourself” you should ask yourself a number of key questions.

By Asking Yourself Questions

If you want to evaluate yourself there are many questions you can ask yourself. Here are a number of possibilities:

- Was I organized?
- Did my lesson relate to the students’ every day interests?
- How did my students respond to my questions?
- How did I respond to theirs (if any)?
- Was I too “wordy?”
- Was my lesson presented smoothly?
- Was I simple and understandable?
- Did my lesson flow?

- Was the Bible always central?
- Did I reach my teaching objective? If not, why?
- Was I sufficiently prepared? If not, how can I improve?
- Did I hold the children's attention?
- Did I use examples and illustrations that my children/my teachers could understand?
- How can I do a better job next time?

Or you could simply look at each of the principles of teaching outlined in this book, one by one, and see if they were followed and put into practice in your lesson.

By Giving an Examination

Examinations and the results of those examinations can help you greatly in your evaluation process.

In a public school teaching situation regular examinations play a major role. Several times each year (and sometimes more often) a teacher will set his students an examination based upon what he has been teaching. This examination has two purposes:

- To test the learning abilities of the students. How well have they been listening and learning?
- To test the teaching ability of the teacher. How well has he been teaching?

A good teacher will look carefully at these examination results, and use them to evaluate how well he has taught. If very few students show poor results but the majority have good results, his teaching has been effective. However, if most students have bad results, he is almost certainly at fault.

However, while this type of evaluation can be very effective it has two main limitations with regard to your ministry of teaching and evangelism:

- You are looking primarily for spiritual results, and these are usually difficult to measure or even to see.
- Examinations of this kind are rarely possible or feasible, as you are not in a regular school teaching situation. They might not even be regarded as desirable.

At the same time, I feel that there can be certain situations in your teaching ministry where examinations could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of your teaching.

- If you teach at a CEF Institute (or Bible school) it is perfectly normal to set examinations.
- Simple examinations can be given in training classes to the teachers after studying a book, a subject or a series of subjects for a number of weeks. These examinations can be done in the privacy of one's home and the answers returned later to the teacher or teachers. Certificates can be rewarded to the successful teachers. This method has been used in the past by CEF trainers of teachers with great success. While its primary purpose is to test and encourage the students, careful observation of the answers will help the teacher of the class to evaluate how effectively he has taught.

Also when training teachers in Bible lesson presentation it can be very helpful to encourage the students to give demonstrations of Bible Lessons on the basis of what they have been taught. This will help you as the teacher of the class to know how well you have taught. But the students who give the demonstration should also realise how helpful it is for them to do this, and to have the benefit of your evaluation as the teacher of the class.

- In most ministries to children examinations are not usually possible or feasible. But there may be some situations where there would be enough time to use them.

After teaching children in a Good News Club or a Sunday School class, or in a camp or Holiday Bible Club, it may be possible for the teacher to give them a work sheet to complete. This helps the children to participate in, and learn from, the lesson. But a careful examination of what the children have written will help the teacher to evaluate how well he has taught.

By Asking Your Students Questions

You can learn a lot about your teaching by asking your students questions during the lesson and while you are teaching.

A good teacher, by putting thoughtful and well prepared questions to his students periodically, can gauge how well they have understood what he has taught. Questions of this kind are not only aimed at student participation, but also at teacher examination.

A teacher who talks all the time and does not seek this kind of participation, will find it difficult to know how much his students have understood.

By Conducting Quizzes to Review Last Week's Lesson

The level of the students' understanding of last week's lesson can be judged by their answers to carefully chosen and prepared questions on that lesson. This applies as much to a training class situation as it does to a Good News Club.

By Returning Periodically to Subjects Previously Taught

Going back over subjects which have already been taught and opening them up for questions and discussion can be a real help in evaluation.

Repetition and revision of this kind is a good teaching principle and will help refresh the memories of the students. But it will also give you as the teacher a clear picture of how permanent and lasting your teaching has been.

By Watching Your Students Carefully as You Teach

Good teaching will usually result in good listening and rapt interest. If the interest is not there, it could be your fault. This is especially true when teaching children. A lack of interest will invariably result in a lack of attention and poor discipline. Consequently, the reaction of the children being taught can be one of the most effective ways for you to evaluate the effectiveness of your teaching.

By Watching for the Application of Your Teaching

After teaching a truth and its application it is helpful, as a means of evaluation, to watch the students to see if they put into practice what

they have been taught:

- ↗ Have the “knowledge objectives” of the teacher been achieved? Does the child understand the Word of God better?
- ↗ Have the “attitude objectives” of the teacher been achieved? Does the child seem to be open to and touched by the Word of God?
- ↗ Have the “decision objectives” of the teacher been achieved? What kind of actions/reactions are evident in the child’s life? (see pages 21–23)

If children are taught in a Bible Lesson to be kind and considerate to others, and such kindness and consideration are not at all obvious in the lives of any of the children, who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, the teacher may have reason to question the effectiveness of his teaching. If teachers are taught how to teach a Bible Lesson, but when observed do not teach it in this way, the teaching may not have been effective.

However, you do need to be careful and cautious with regard to this type of observation. Yours is a spiritual ministry, and the effectiveness of your teaching cannot just be measured by responses, results and statistics. You could have taught a lesson and a truth thoroughly and well, and the children could have understood it perfectly well, but a resistance or spiritual hardness in the children’s hearts could keep them from applying it properly and implementing it in their lives.

At the same time you want **to see** results from your teaching; and if you never do, you would have valid grounds for questioning your teaching, the prayer back-up of that teaching and the dedication of your own life as a teacher.

By Inviting Others to Comment On, and Criticize, Your Lessons

You should never be afraid of criticism. There is so much you can learn from others. If someone comes to you and criticizes your teaching, you should examine this criticism carefully and with an open mind.

Is it true?
What can I learn?

It may not be a just criticism but, on the other hand, it might be, and

you should be open to what others say.

There might even be certain people whose criticism and comments you would especially value. It is good to go to them, to ask them to listen to you when you are teaching, and to give you their criticism and comments afterwards.

The CEF Teaching Children Effectively training programme involves and includes the evaluation of each teacher's lessons and his teaching by the leaders of the course. While this might be difficult for some of the teachers it can be of tremendous help and value to them. A teacher should not feel hurt by any criticisms given; but he should examine them carefully to see what he can learn from them.

Evaluation is necessary, if a teacher is going to improve. Self-examination and self-criticism are healthy evidences of a teacher who is progressing, provided they lead to the development and strengthening of his ministry, and do not cause discouragement.

The student in a training programme has still not learned when he has listened to the teachers and watched their demonstration. He, himself, still needs to practise—preferably before others who can evaluate his teaching. He may need to overcome his shyness and, if you are leading the training class, you can help by creating a friendly atmosphere, and by finding something positive to say about his demonstration afterwards. It is also a help to the shy teacher if the class is divided into smaller groups.

There are several principles for the leader of the training class to follow when evaluating what a teacher has demonstrated:

- You should always start with something positive.
- You should speak first of all to the person who did the presentation before letting others give comments.
- You should not let other students attack him.
- You should evaluate the presentation on the basis of its usefulness e.g., "That was a good way to begin, because it would really have caught the attention of the unsaved children you were witnessing to."

"The way you explained that word was very helpful because it would have helped the teachers to understand its meaning."

- You should suggest practical ways that the presentation could have been strengthened. It is better to focus on the future, and to show how to do it better the next time.
 “Could you strengthen the section about sin by explaining . . .” is better than “You did not explain the section about sin very well”
- You should end on a positive note. The student should end up feeling that it has been a positive experience—“I really learned something” rather than “I made a real mess of that. I’ll never try it again.”

Questions to Answer/Discuss

- *Do you agree that this principle is one of the most important teaching principles outlined in this book? Why then is this chapter on the principle of evaluation the last chapter?*
- *What would your reaction be if a co-worker came to you and criticized the lesson you had just given to the children?*
- *What would be your reaction if all the children you were teaching were noisy and not interested in your lesson? What would you do?*
- *Is it possible to speak about someone as a successful teacher? What would you like to see in your teaching ministry which you would feel to be evidences of success? What would others expect to see if they were to conclude that you were a successful teacher?*
- *Think about this statement:*
 “The mediocre teacher tells
 The good teacher explains
 The superior teacher demonstrates
 The great teacher inspires”
Do you agree or disagree with it? Give your reasons.
- *Have you read right through this book on “The Principles of Teaching?” Has it been a help to you? Would you be willing to evaluate the book and its contents? Do you have any criticisms or suggestions to give to me, the author? Please feel free to write to me at the address given at the beginning of the book—and give me your evaluation! Thank you.*
- *“Teachers are born not made.” I now come back to this statement*

which was first mentioned at the end of the introduction. Is this true or false (or both)? Use the teaching outlined in this book to support your answer.

Self-Assessment Chart

The Principle of Evaluation

I understand this principle	Very clearly	Quite clearly	I am still not clear
I agree with this principle	Very strongly	Quite strongly	I struggle with it
I have used this principle in my ministry	Frequently	From time to time	Rarely/Never
My resolve	To challenge others about it	To develop it more in my life	To make a new start on it

A Concluding Assignment

I know that you want to be as good a teacher as possible. So I would like to ask you to do something which will, I feel, help you to become a better teacher.

I trust that as you were reading this book you have been examining your teaching chapter by chapter, in the light of all that has been outlined in each chapter. I hope that you looked at, examined, discussed and tried to answer the questions at the end of each chapter. I hope that you also completed the self-assessment charts with which each chapter concluded.

As you read and think back through the book, I would suggest you write down the answers to the following questions. I feel that by doing this you will put into practice the principle of evaluation, and you will be greatly challenged and helped.

Please do not just read and study the book. Apply it to yourself and your teaching. That is how you will develop, grow and improve!

- Which four of the twenty-four principles of teaching do you see as the weakest in your ministry, and the ones which most need correction or improvement?
- Give, in detail, an outline of how you plan to work on each of these and strengthen them, so that you will be a more effective teacher.
- As you think of a teacher with whom you have contact (e.g., in your own Sunday-school), which four of the principles do you feel are his or her weakest?
- How do you think you could help him/her strengthen these four principles in his/her teaching?
- Think back over your time as a student – in public school, high school, University, CEF Institute, or Bible school. Who would you

say was your best teacher? Which four of the principles of teaching could you see most clearly in his/her teaching, and which really helped him/her to be the effective teacher he/she was? Describe how these principles were put into practice by the teacher concerned.

- Can you think of a teacher in one of these situations who, you feel, was not effective or successful? Which principles did he/she not seem to understand and apply?

Bibliography

The following books are recommended for further reading and study. The first four on the list were also a great help in the writing of this book:

Teaching Techniques of Jesus by H.H. Horne (Kregel Publications).

Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers by C.B. Eavey (Zondervan).

The Seven Laws of Teaching by J.M. Gregory (Baker Book House).

Teaching a Bible Lesson to Children by Jennifer Haaijer (European Child Evangelism Fellowship).

Teaching to Change Lives by Howard Hendricks (Multnomah Press).

Understanding Teaching by Kenneth Gangel (Evangelical Teacher Training Association).

Education that is Christian by Lois LaBar (Fleming Revell).

Children in the Bible School by Lois LeBar (Fleming Revell).

How to be an Effective Bible Teacher by George Bourman (Presbyterian and Reformed).

How to be the Best Sunday School Teacher You Can Be by Terry Hall (Moody).

Can I help it if They Don't Learn by H. Mayes and J. Long (Victor).

Spiritual Power in Your Teaching by Roy Zuck (Moody).

Story-Telling – It's Easy by Ethel Barrett (Cowman Publications).

Creative Bible Teaching by Lawrence Richards (Moody).

Childhood Education in the Church by R. Clark, J. Brabaker and R. Zuck (Moody).

You the Teacher by Lawrence Richards (Moody).

Make Your Teaching Count by Wesley Willis (Victor).