

The Challenge to be

*An Effective
Bible Teacher*

12 Lessons

Prepared by:
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2005

THE CHALLENGE:
TO BE AN
EFFECTIVE
BIBLE
TEACHER

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Lesson One

“The Importance of Teaching and Teachers”

“It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught by God. Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.” (John 6:45). God has made Covenants with mankind that need to be taught. Man basically is what he is taught to be. A criminal is such because he was taught to be such. A Mohammedan is a Moslem because he was taught to be such. And a Christian is such because of teaching. The entire world is lost without teaching. Thus, the great commission of Jesus: ***“Go teach, baptize, and continue to teach....”*** (Matthew 28:18-20). There is no other way to convert the world than through teaching. Man’s salvation depends upon teaching. The highest need of the Lord’s church is trained and devoted teachers of God’s Word. Every Christian should be a teacher to the extent of his or her ability (Acts 8:4; Hebrews 5:12). The church should be in the “schooling business!” We should be teaching and training teachers by the scores so that they can go out and teach others (2 Timothy 2:2). Without many trained teachers, the sowing of seed will be minimal! Jesus said that the harvest was ready, but the reapers are few....pray to the Father for many more reapers!

JESUS WAS A TEACHER

He was called “teacher” some sixty times out of the ninety times that He was addressed. In reality Jesus was “THE teacher!” It was said of His teaching: ***“that the people were astonished at his teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”*** (Matthew 7:28-29). For some three and one-half years Jesus was busy teaching people in general, but especially teaching and training His disciples so they in turn could go and teach. The teaching took with the disciples! It is obvious from the fact that they filled Jerusalem with their teaching of Jesus (Acts 5:28, 42). Those that the Apostles had been teaching, upon being scattered by persecution ***“went everywhere preaching the word.”*** (Acts 8:4). They knew the vital importance of not only being taught the Word of God, but of teaching it to others as well. The only way a troubled church can be helped is by willingness to be taught the Word of God (Colossians 1:28; 1 Corinthians 4:17). Christ has the most important message in the world and He has entrusted this to His followers to make it know in all the world (Mark 16:15). You have heard the saying: ***“We are what we are taught!”*** We need to resolve to be faithful disciples of Jesus and will spend the rest of our lives as learners, scholars, and effective teachers of His message. Man’s salvation depends upon how well we respond to the right kind and the right amount of teaching.

THE SERIOUS CHARGE TO TEACHERS

“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.” (James 3:1). We believe that this admonition was given not so much to discourage teachers, but to realize the seriousness of the work of teaching the Word of God. The church and the world need teachers and teaching, but it is serious minded teachers that are needed who fully realize the criticalness of their work. The Apostle Paul’s parting words were about the great need of teachers being faithful to teach the Word of God and not that which tickles the ears of their listeners (2 Timothy 4:1-5). It is interesting to notice that God spent

eighty years in preparing Moses to lead and teach His people. Jesus was thirty years old when He began his teaching ministry among the people. The work of teaching souls is incomprehensibly the greatest work anyone can engage in. The reward of teaching the Word of God is great. The neglect or doing a bad job of teaching is indescribably horrible.

THE NECESSITY OF SACRIFICE

The Apostle admonished the Corinthians to *“abound in the work of the Lord...”* (1 Corinthians 15:58). To abound or to excel in God’s work is not only desirable, but a must in order to be effective. Every teacher should strive to excel. We can only become better teachers if we are willing to make the sacrifice of our time, ability, and our heart. Self-satisfaction can become a stumbling block for the teacher. God’s truth needs to be mastered. Nothing can substitute for the labor of study to attain this knowledge (2 Timothy 2:15). Someone has advocated that teaching is 5% talent and 95% hard work. The reason why teachers either fail or become only mediocre teachers is a lack of preparing. Not only the preparing of their message, but of their life as well. You have heard the expression: *“How can I hear what you are saying when what you are is forever thundering in my ears?”* People do not separate the message from the messenger, so it is important that we spend time developing our life as well as our presentation. Always be willing to be a learner first and a teacher second. You do not know it all!

BASIC ATTITUDES NEEDED

We will be talking about different things that help to make an effective teacher in succeeding lessons, but at this point we want to emphasize at least four attitudes that are basic to being a good teacher:

- 1) **He must believe what he teaches.** He needs to be thoroughly convinced of what the Bible teaches. He can appear hypocritical very quickly before those who know him. Jesus saw this in the religious leaders of His day (Matthew 23:4, 23). They who speak for the Master should possess the kind of knowledge, earnestness, character, and manner of life that points clearly to his absolute dependency upon Christ.
- 2) **He must live what he teaches.** Again, the accusation of “hypocrisy” can be the road block to learning by people who know the inconsistencies of the teacher (Matthew 15:8-9). We do not expect the teacher to teach others how to smoke, drink, how to be mean, how to show temper fits, how to murmur or complain, how to pout, how to deceive, how to be covetous, how to gossip, how to envy, how to have uncontrolled pride, how to be indifferent, or how to be a hypocrite or other Spirit-quenching practices. No we need teachers who are Christ loving and Christ living who enjoy their work and who count it an honor to represent Christ as they speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11).
- 3) **He must have as his goal to serve God and his fellow-man.** He does the best job that he can because he desires to unselfishly serve others.....and what better way can you serve than to help a person get to heaven.

4) He must be willing to cooperate. The loner may be talented as a teacher, but will run into problems by working by himself. We need others. We need to fit into the program with others. We need to cooperate to help make things more effective.

The impact of an effective teacher can be almost unlimited for good. The reason is obvious: (1) He is working with the powerful word of God (Romans 1:16); and (2) He is striving to live according to its teachings. There is no greater power to change men for time or eternity than a godly teacher teaching the Word of God.

The eternal destiny of many souls depends upon you and me being effective teachers of the Word. The job is before us—to make a better world and to help prepare souls for eternity. Our work is indeed a serious task! There are three kinds of teachers: (1) Those forgiven for their failures; (2) Those forgotten because they were not what they should have been; and (3) Those remembered with honor and gratitude. Which will it be for you and me?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Man is what he is taught to be.**
- 2. Man's eternal salvation depends upon teaching.**
- 3. My life doesn't have to be perfect in order to be a good teacher.**
- 4. The message is more important than the life of the teacher in influencing people.**
- 5. A teacher can impact others whether he believes the message or not.**
- 6. Teaching is said to be 95% hard work.**
- 7. To be an effective teacher requires a lot of sacrifice.**
- 8. Jesus was 30 years old before he began His public teaching.**
- 9. No one can come to God unless he is taught by God.**
- 10. We are warned against being teachers.**

Lesson Two

“Ways to Improve Our Teaching”

Once we have come to realize the great importance God has placed on the teaching of His Word to others, the next thought that we should have is---- *“I need to become a better teacher of His Word!”* I hope that is your reaction because that is what this lesson is all about—Ways to Improve our Teaching! When we realize how critically important proper teaching is, we should certainly see the need to do the very best job that we can. Obviously, there are some more talented than others, some that have a better background in the Bible than others, and some that have a greater opportunity to teach others. But none of these should keep us from wanting to do the very best that we can with what God has blessed us. It was said of King Josiah that he turned to the Lord with all his heart, soul, and might (2 Kings 23:25)—with all his being he wanted to serve God. Apollos was a man who was mighty in the Scriptures and was able to powerfully refute the Jews publicly (Acts 18:24, 28). Such teachers are needed today, but they don’t come by accident or indifference. They become such because they set their minds, hearts, and strength to want to serve God to the best of their ability. The Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed because there were teachers of the Word in that city who wanted to serve God with all their hearts (Acts 19:20).

BASIC WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR TEACHING

1. There must first be the understanding that improvement can be made. There are natural differences in the ability to teach, but every teacher should grow to the limit of his capacity. God had to rebuke his people in Hebrews 5:12 for not growing as teachers. They had evidently not seen the value of improvement in their lives. One should never have the attitude that *“I have learned all I need to know about teaching others.”* Improvement can come with all of us and we should strongly desire such.

2. Improvement needs to be constant. Spasmodic efforts will do little good. We need to be like the widow who constantly, persistently came to the judge wanting to be avenged, but he didn’t want to listen. However, her persistence won the day and he gave in to her request (Luke 18:1-5). It is usually the persistent that gets the job accomplished. Improvement is usually over a period of time and is gradual....so, don’t give up! Keep working at it!

3. Improvement through other people. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to be imitators of Him as he was of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). One of the best ways of improving our teaching is to watch and listen carefully to those who teach before us. Be analytical and try to analyze why the teacher is effective or non-effective. You might even want one or more persons in your class to offer constructive criticism on how to improve your ability to be more effective as a teacher. But most of all, we need to study the life and teachings of Jesus and learn from the Master! There is no greater one to imitate.

4. Improvement through actual teaching opportunities. A person will never learn to teach unless he jumps in and gets his feet wet! James expressed the idea very pointedly when he said: ***“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”*** (1:22). We can read, learn, and listen (which is important), but until we start doing, we are only deceiving ourselves. Take advantage of opportunities to teach by doing the very best you can and have a good spirit about your efforts before the group. The early Christians had only been in the church a short time, but when they were persecuted, they went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:4). They did what they could do to the best of their ability.

5. Improvement through Study. If we want to be a workman that needs not to be ashamed of our efforts, we need to be in the Word (2 Timothy 2:15). Learning should cause us to want to learn more. Blessed is the man who has a hunger and thirst for the Word of Righteousness, Jesus said (Matthew 5:6). Good reading habits are a must if we really desire to learn God’s Truth well. Not only should he be studying himself, but he should also be taking advantage of any other opportunities to learn the Bible and learn better how to present it to others.

6. Improvement through Self-Supervision. Self-discipline is a key factor in anyone’s life that leads to improvement. Self-control is one of the virtues that Peter said we need to add in our lives (2 Peter 1:6). If we want to improve in our ability to teach, we must be willing to constantly study ourselves, our abilities, and the places where we need to improve. As one who stands before others for the purpose of teaching, we must strive to cultivate and deepen our own spiritual life, as well as our understanding of the teaching process.

PRACTICAL WAYS OF IMPROVING OUR TEACHING ABILITY

1. Realize the meaning, purpose, and power of Bible teaching in the New Testament church. No other teaching can change lives for eternity like this can. Have faith in the power of God’s Word (Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12).
2. Be reverent, devout, spiritually-minded, and consecrated to Christ. Be at every meeting of the church that is possible. Be an example to others.
3. Possess a working knowledge of the Bible. Learn the books, divisions, dispensations, and memorize as much as you can. If the desire is there, the filling will come (Matthew 5:6).
4. Develop a good personality. Be neat in dress and let your posture show poise and vitality. Have pleasant manners and gestures. Dress in keeping with the group (1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Peter 3:1-7). In principle, such can apply to the man as well.
5. Have a definite aim for each lesson. Use the lesson material to drive home that lesson. Application of the material is a must to be an effective teacher. Unless the Word is put into practice, it will profit us nothing.
6. Make a thorough preparation for each lesson. Good discipline in class depends on it. Have confidence in your ability to teach. This comes from thorough preparation.

7. Develop a good grasp of the nature of learning and what is good teaching. Analyze the process in your own life of the learning process as well as how the teacher got his message across to you. When we teach, we are actually passing on to others what we have ourselves learned (2 Timothy 2:2). Develop the ability to ask questions and try to vary your presentation methods. Occasionally, it may be good to provide an activity situation for the student to learn how to make critical decisions about things he will face.
8. Be able and alert to relate Bible teaching to social realities. We need help in making decisions in our lives. We need to know the Bible well enough to make use of it like Jesus when He was facing strong temptations (Matthew 4:1-11).
9. Know your student! It is important to become acquainted personally and/or generally with the basic understanding of people at different stages of their lives. Temperament studies, Personality studies, and Basic Human Needs studies can help with a better understanding of people.
10. Learn how to maintain order in class. Learning is hard to do in the midst of disorderliness.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Every Christian is expected to be a teacher of God's Word.**
- 2. Improvement only comes to the persistent.**
- 3. We can't have too many Bible Scholars in the church.**
- 4. One can only learn to teach if he has opportunity to teach.**
- 5. A person must be willing to supervise himself if he expects to improve his teaching.**
- 6. It is highly desirable to see how the Bible applies to everyday situations of life.**
- 7. Knowledge of the student can be helpful, but is not really necessary.**
- 8. An orderly class does not just happen, it is designed.**
- 9. Lack of thorough preparation is a basic reason for poor teaching, even by a good teacher.**
- 10. Searching the Bible for answers to life challenges is a good way to learn.**

Lesson Three

“The Willingness to be Evaluated”

One of the obvious things about people is that we do not necessarily like to be evaluated, judged, criticized, or even ridiculed. Most of us are “thin skin” people—we bleed easily when judged. We often can be accused of “wearing our feelings on our sleeves” or “having a chip on our shoulder.” We could probably be accused of being “too touchy” or having “too much pride” to take constructive criticism, much less pure criticism. These are the ideas generated usually when we talk about evaluating someone. But if we are ever to really see improvement in our ability as a teacher, we must be willing to be evaluated by those who know us best.

God evaluated those to whom the Hebrew writer wrote to when he told them that by this time you should be teachers, but because of your being dull of hearing you are still in a position of needing to be taught rather than to teach (Hebrews 5:11-14). This criticism was straight to the point, needed, and should have been listened to. But this criticism came from God—that makes a difference! Yes, I am sure that all of us could feel this way, but we also need the help of others if we are to make the progress in our abilities as a teacher. We need to thicken our skin, stop wearing our feelings on our sleeves, and being too touchy. Certainly, love teaches us to be kind and thoughtful of others, but at the same time love teaches us to be concerned about our brother and his welfare, as well as the church.

Forms for evaluating teachers have been prepared for use by different congregations over the years. The following forms can go from the simple to a more complex one.

SIMPLE EVALUATION FOR A TEACHER

- 1. Did he stick to his subject?**
- 2. Did he make his points clear?**
- 3. Did he use the Bible properly and sufficiently?**
- 4. Did he involve the class directly in the study?**
- 5. How would you rate his effectiveness?**
- 6. How would you suggest he be used in the future?**
- 7. Recommendations for improvement?**
- 8. What is his best asset?**

TEACHER EVALUATION FORM
(Check-list for class observation)

- KEY:** 1 - Excellent
2 - Good
3 - Average
4 - Poor

OVER-ALL EVALUATION

- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's interest in the class.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's knowledge of subject matter.
1 2 3 4 General teaching ability of teacher.
1 2 3 4 The teacher's Christian personality.
1 2 3 4 Impression made by the teacher upon the students.

ABILITY TO HELP STUDENTS LEARN

- 1 2 3 4 Use of a variety of learning activities.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to guide the learning activities.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to cause students to think for themselves.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's use of learning activities which will produce understandings, appreciations, attitudes, and functional knowledge.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's understanding of what learning products will control conduct.

THE LEARNING PROCESS

- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to make second-hand experience vivid to the pupil.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's effectiveness in obtaining desired reaction to teaching activities.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's recognition of individual differences.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to maintain interest.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to unify the educative experiences around the purposes of the pupils.

AIMS IN TEACHING

- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's recognition of an all-inclusive aim.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to direct the learning activity toward his aims.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's selection of objectives for a certain class period.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to guide the development of Christian personality.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to stick to the subject.

BASIC FACTORS IN THE CLASSROOM

- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's recognition of the four fundamental desires of the pupils.
1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to hold attention.

- 1 2 3 4 Preparation made by students before class.
- 1 2 3 4 Students' participation in classroom activities.
- 1 2 3 4 Freedom of class from disturbances.

MAKING TRUTH VIVID

- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's appeal to the imagination.
- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's conception of the use of memory.
- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to relate new knowledge to something familiar to the learner.
- 1 2 3 4 Appeal of the teaching to the whole mind.
- 1 2 3 4 Ability of the teacher to relate stories vividly.

ORGANIZATION OF MATERIAL

- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's use of a good plan.
- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's knowledge of the Bible.
- 1 2 3 4 What type of organization did the teacher use? Check one: Logical
 Chronological
 Psychological
 Haphazard Plan

METHODS IN THE RECITATION

- 1 2 3 4 What method or methods of recitation was used by the teacher? Check One:
 Topical method
 Lecture method
 Question & Answer method
 Story method
- 1 2 3 4 Appropriateness of method used for the particular group and occasion.
- 1 2 3 4 Teacher's ability to use the method he chose.

**PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW TO GIVE
A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CLASS IN YOUR ESTIMATION**

TEACHER EVALUATION FORM (#2)

(Check-list for Class Observation)

- KEY:** 1 - Excellent
2 - Good
3 - Average
4 - Poor

MORAL & SPIRITUAL VALUES

- 1 2 3 4 Possesses positive religious conviction and faith.
1 2 3 4 So interprets religion in his own life as to win others to it.
1 2 3 4 Character, speech, ideals, acts square with Christian standards.
1 2 3 4 Is altruistic, unselfish, ready to serve others.
1 2 3 4 Shows growth in Christian life, knowledge, and influence.
1 2 3 4 Is a loyal and dependable member of the church.

PHYSICAL & MENTAL QUALITIES

- 1 2 3 4 Appearance, dress, carriage.
1 2 3 4 Voice, manner, features, physique.
1 2 3 4 Health, vitality, physical skill and control.
1 2 3 4 Intellectual ability, grasp, insight, breadth.
1 2 3 4 Mental balance, soundness of judgment, sanity.
1 2 3 4 Fund of information, broad, interesting, accurate.
1 2 3 4 Interests, enthusiasms fresh, worthy.
1 2 3 4 Initiative, originality, independence.
1 2 3 4 Executive quality, forcefulness, competence, ability to “carry through.”

QUALITIES INSURING EFFECTIVE WORK WITH OTHERS

- 1 2 3 4 Cheerfulness, joyousness, optimism.
1 2 3 4 Kindness, courtesy, tact.
1 2 3 4 Loyalty, dependability.
1 2 3 4 Sensitiveness to social proprieties: “fine grained.”
1 2 3 4 Patience, calmness, self-control.
1 2 3 4 Generosity, readiness to forgive.
1 2 3 4 Co-operation, adaptability.
1 2 3 4 Social influence, leadership.

KNOWLEDGE, INTERESTS & SKILLS

- 1 2 3 4 General education, culture.
1 2 3 4 Specialized knowledge of field taught.

- 1 2 3 4 Specialized knowledge of child's religious nature and needs.
- 1 2 3 4 Professional interest in educational methods, materials, movements.
- 1 2 3 4 Interest in lives of pupils.
- 1 2 3 4 Interest in school and church.
- 1 2 3 4 Skill in speech, vocabulary, grammar, ease of expression.
- 1 2 3 4 Capacity for growth, interest, time, effort spent in self-improvement.

SKILLS IN MANAGING & TEACHING

- 1 2 3 4 Mastery of routine, care of details, management of equipment and materials.
- 1 2 3 4 Governing skill, discipline, control of class.
- 1 2 3 4 Clearness, definiteness, validity of aims, functioning as guides for procedure.
- 1 2 3 4 Skill in selection and organization of materials.
- 1 2 3 4 Resourcefulness in selecting appropriate methods, as story, discussion, etc.
- 1 2 3 4 Skill in use of method employed.
- 1 2 3 4 Skill in motivating lesson preparation.
- 1 2 3 4 Skill in securing pupil participation in recitation.

ATTITUDES & ACTS IN & OUT OF CLASSROOM

- 1 2 3 4 Loyalty to class, measured by punctuality, regularity of attendance.
- 1 2 3 4 Readiness to do work assigned or carry out projects agreed upon by class.
- 1 2 3 4 Attitude in class and worship services, quiet, reverent, attentive.
- 1 2 3 4 Lessons and ideals carried over into everyday conduct.
- 1 2 3 4 Growing interest in religion and loyalty to the church.

**PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW FOR ANY
WRITTEN EVALUATION**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

1. Evaluation of a teacher must also involve the evaluation of the student's reactions to the teacher.
2. Criticism should only be given to "thick-skinned" people.
3. Since God criticizes people in His Word, we should be able to also.
4. Concern for the welfare of students does not guarantee they will listen.
5. The more education a person has, the better teacher he will be.
6. A teacher's physical and mental qualities can have a big bearing on whether the students will listen.
7. Methods of teaching need to be learned so that more than one can be used in order to be effective.
8. The organization of one's thoughts can make a big difference in getting the message across.
9. Improvement in lives comes from well-thought-out words of wisdom.
10. I don't need to be evaluated as a teacher.

Lesson Four

“Willingness to Evaluate One’s Self”

It should be the desire of every child of God to live a righteous, godly life (Titus 2:11-12) that can bring honor and glory to our God (1 Corinthians 10:31). To do this we must be on our guard constantly to see that we abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9). Jesus is our example, our guide, our teacher, and our inspiration to live this way. Our spiritual life depends upon such as well as our eternal destiny (Hebrews 5:8-9). So, it should be no surprise that the Apostle Paul admonished Christians to ***“examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.”*** (2 Corinthians 13:5).

But, of all people in the church that should really take this admonition to heart, it should be those who teach and preach the Word of God to others. So much depends upon them backing up their teaching by their godly lives. This is clearly indicated in Paul’s 1st letter to Timothy when he exhorted him ***“be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*** (4:12). Since Timothy was a teacher of the Word of God, it should be obvious that whatever Paul was encouraging him to do, we can pass on to anyone who is striving to teach others the Word of God. The following will give some of the specific admonitions found in this 1st letter to Timothy.

Inspired Admonitions to Teachers

- 1:4 -- Teach what brings about godly edification in the faith.**
- 1:5 -- Encourage love from a pure heart, conscience, and sincere faith.**
- 1:18-- Wage a good warfare.**
- 1:19-- Keep faith and a good conscience.**
- 2:1 -- Encourage prayer for all men.**
- 2:8 -- Encourage prayer out of a godly life.**
- 3:1-13-- All of the qualities that a man should possess to be an elder or deacon who are also teachers of the Word.**
- 4:6 -- Carefully instruct from the Scriptures.**
- 4:7 -- Reject things that lead to ungodliness.**
- 4:15 -- Let your progress be obvious to all.**
- 5:1-3-- Be respectful to all.**
- 5:21 -- Do not show preferential treatment.**
- 5:22 -- Keep yourself pure.**
- 6:6 -- Realize that godliness with contentment is great gain.**
- 6:8 -- Warn those who would be rich.**
- 6:11 -- Flee evil, pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.**

What a challenge we have as teachers of God's truth to a world so badly in need of such. But we have other ideas to suggest for your evaluation that should help us in trying to evaluate ourselves. The following three areas of self-evaluation were suggested by another person:

I -- With Regards to the Teacher's Personality:

- 1) A sincere, consecrated Christian (a good example).
- 2) One with a happy disposition (very pleasant to be with).
- 3) Patient, mild-mannered, and long suffering.
- 4) Calm and composed at all times (disciplines correctly).
- 5) In good health.
- 6) Mentally alert, willing to study and improve.
- 7) Remember names of students.
- 8) Good tone of voice.
- 9) A sense of humor.
- 10) Enthusiasm.
- 11) Dependable, on time, early to class every week.

II -- With Regards to Teacher-Pupil Relationship:

- 1) Fair and considerate to all.
- 2) Meet parents of pupil with ease.
- 3) Sincere interest in age group teaching.
- 4) Be sympathetic when needed.
- 5) Be "young in spirit" to fit with the age group.
- 6) Work hard in preparation of lesson for students.
- 7) Have open mind and desire suggestions.
- 8) Use prayer in behalf of work.

III-- With Regards to Teacher-Church Relationship:

- 1) Faithful in attendance.
- 2) Good understanding of the teaching of the Word of God.
- 3) Good understanding of the over-all program of the church and support such.
- 4) Work well with others.

SUGGESTED THOUGHTS TO CHALLENGE

1. I have yielded my life for the Lord to use.
2. I feel a definite sense of loyalty to the Lord and His people.
3. I spend hours each week working and planning my lesson.
4. I try to read books and magazines about teaching each year to keep up to date and improve my skills.
5. I try to keep my classroom attractive.
6. A visitor to class is visited by someone in the class.

The following form for self-evaluation is a combination of ideas gathered from different places to give a more over-all picture for evaluation.

TEACHER SELF-EVALUATION CHECK-LIST

I – MY DEDICATION TO GOD

- 1. Is my daily prayer time adequate to fortify me for the task?
- 2. Do I apply the spiritual truths in my daily life and help my students to do the same?
- 3. Do I display a Christ-like attitude in every classroom situation?
- 4. Do I possess positive religious conviction and faith?
- 5. Am I devoted and consecrated to the task of serving God?
- 6. Do I attend all classes and services of the church that I possibly can?
- 7. Do I strive to serve God not only in my class teaching but in every phase of the work of the church?

II – MY DEDICATION TO TEACHER PREPARATION

- 8. Do I begin my lesson preparation early enough to be ready for an interesting and informative lesson?
- 9. Do I have a clear concept of the over-all aim of the study for this quarter and see each lesson as it relates to it?
- 10. Are my lesson's introduction and illustrations carefully planned?
- 11. Do I read all materials available that might help to make me grow as a teacher?

III – MY DEDICATION TO TEACHING

- 12. Do I use a variety of teaching methods?
- 13. Do I make adequate use of visual aids and prepare them well?
- 14. Am I a good listener? Do I encourage the students confidence?
- 15. Am I present and early to class each week?
- 16. Do I put Christ, His teachings, and my responsibility to my class first in my busy schedule?
- 17. Do I demonstrate initiative, originality and enthusiasm?
- 18. Am I mentally balanced showing soundness of judgment?
- 19. Am I cheerful, joyous, and optimistic?
- 20. Do I use every medium such as training courses to improve in the art of teaching?
- 21. Do I cooperate with other teachers and with those selected to be in charge of the Bible School?
- 22. Do I pray not only for my class collectively, but also for each pupil individually naming them one by one before the throne of God?

IV – MY DEDICATION TO IMPROVE MY LIFE

- 23. Am I studying to become a better person?
- 24. Do I consistently and systematically study God's Word?
- 25. Do I interpret religion in my own life as to win others to it?

- ___ 26. Are my character, speech, ideals and actions such as to conform to real Christian standards?
- ___ 27. Do I show constant growth in my Christian life, knowledge and influence?
- ___ 28. Am I altruistic, unselfish and ready to serve others?
- ___ 29. Am I loyal and dependable as a member of the Lord's church?
- ___ 30. Is my appearance, dress, marriage such as to enhance the lesson I would teach?
- ___ 31. Do I maintain my health, vitality, physical skill and control so as to help me in teaching God's Word?
- ___ 32. Do I possess such traits as kindness, courtesy, tact, loyalty and dependability?

V – MY DEDICATION TO MY STUDENTS

- ___ 33. Do I show a personal interest in each pupil?
- ___ 34. Do I visit homes to become acquainted with the backgrounds and interests of my pupils?
- ___ 35. Do I contact absentees and visitors promptly?
- ___ 36. Am I patient and calm both with others and my self?
- ___ 37. Do I arrive in my classroom before my first pupil arrives?
- ___ 38. Do I see that ample materials are ready for each class taught before class begins?
- ___ 39. If my pupils become like me will God say to them "Well done, thou good and faithful servant?"
- ___ 40. Do I appropriately stress obedience to the gospel to my students?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ **1. Teachers have a responsibility to God, to self, and to their students.**
- ___ **2. God actually commands His people to examine their lives and test themselves.**
- ___ **3. A person with natural ability to teach should only be used if he is sound in the faith.**
- ___ **4. A teacher can do a good job even if they don't really want to teach.**
- ___ **5. A personality of a teacher has a lot to do with his/her effectiveness.**
- ___ **6. Teachers should teach only that which brings about godly edification in the faith.**
- ___ **7. God actually wants His people to see progress in the lives of His teachers.**
- ___ **8. Teachers are to warn their students as well as to flee the same things.**
- ___ **9. Remembering the names of students is a minor thing in teaching.**
- ___ **10. Being early to class is a must for teachers.**

Lesson Five

“Personal Questions for Teachers”

The need for teachers is great in the Lord’s church! But not just teachers, but trained teachers! The willingness of untrained teachers is certainly appreciated and they should be encouraged not only to keep on teaching, but to take advantage of every opportunity to better prepare themselves to teach the truth of God effectively. The admonition, “***be not many of you teachers,***” is certainly to be taken to heart in the sense of fully realizing the gravity of what teaching is striving to accomplish. But, at the same time, it would seem that the Scriptures are also emphasizing the great need for teachers. In reality, the church is an educational institution (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Ephesians 4:11-12, etc.). The growth of the church spiritually and numerically depends greatly upon not only teachers, but the quantity of teaching as well as the quality of the teaching done. In other words, we need more teachers and better trained teachers. Our school systems insist on teachers being trained. It would seem logical that the church should feel the need for training of our teachers. Our mission is great—the saving of souls for eternity. Our challenge to teach the Word of God is unending.

But there are some personal questions that need to be asked by those who want to teach. We will look at three questions in this lesson.

WHY DO I WANT TO TEACH?

The church at Corinth had many with spiritual gifts that could be used to teach the church. But their motives for teaching were not what they should have been. They were causing mass confusion in their assemblies because they were not using the gifts correctly. It was almost like: “*Look at me, look at my gift, look what I can do!*” (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). Chapter 13 shows that they needed love in their hearts to help govern the use of their gifts properly. Chapter 14 helps us to see what they were doing wrong and the correcting of the problems in their use of the gifts. The reason for teaching should not be an ego trip. False teachers were accused of this in Romans 16:17-18 and 2 Peter 2:1-3. Diotrephes certainly seems to have had this problem (3 John 9). The “ego problem” definitely is showing when a person is unwilling to be guided only by the Word of God and pushes his own agenda.

We should want to teach for many good reasons. The need for such should be obvious from the introductory statements. We certainly should want to spread the gospel into the entire world to the extent of our ability and opportunity (Mark 16:15-16). I should want to teach to help people in their lives here and to prepare them for eternity with God (Philippians 4:17; 1 Timothy 4:16; James 5:19-20). It has been suggested that we should want to teach because that is what God expects of His people (Hebrews 5:12; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Corinthians 9:15-16; 2 Timothy 2:2, etc.). The Lord is calling on all of His people to teach His Word—this can be privately or publicly, in our homes or in our church building. The early church illustrated this concept when it was said of them: “***they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ***” (Acts 5:42). We believe that a real conviction of truth will develop a desire to teach others these same truths (Acts 4:19-20).

DO I NEED PERSONAL PREPARATION TO TEACH?

It is possible that a person, out of conviction of truth, may want to teach before they are ready and end up doing more harm than good. The leadership of the church can be helpful in stressing this concept and primarily using those teachers who are well enough grounded to be effective in their teaching. It is not only important to “know” what we are teaching, but to know how to get it over to those we are teaching. A teacher needs to know how to use illustrations, visuals, questions, posing problems and seeking for the solution, etc. It also helps greatly to know the person or persons you are trying to teach.

But a fact about teaching is—you are not a teacher until you teach! A person learns to teach by trying to teach. He needs practical experience in addition to the head knowledge. But he also needs a more mature person in the class to help in the process. A person can learn by observing another teach, but he needs to put what he learns into practice. God’s plan is for a person who is faithful, like Timothy, to teach faithful men, so they in turn can teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2).

We usually will not tolerate doctors or lawyers without professional training. Then, should we accept teachers who openly admit (or it is obvious) that they do not really know the Bible that well and brag about the fact they have not really prepared as they should for teaching. If we are willing to accept such, it is no wonder that we strive in vain to build Bible Class attendance! One of the basic things that needs to be looked for in those who are asked to teach is that they are spiritually-minded (Romans 8:1-9). The teacher needs to put his mind to work in preparation, his soul into his presentation, and his life to illustrate his teaching. Whether we teach in the classroom or in everyday life contacts, we need to be prepared mentally and spiritually for the task to do so effectively.

HOW IMPORTANT IS MY LIFE TO MY TEACHING?

The old saying: *“I had rather see a sermon than hear one”* is still just as valid today as when first spoken. The Apostle Paul admonished Timothy, a young teacher-preacher of God’s Word, ***“let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*** (1 Timothy 4:12). He further advised Timothy, ***“take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”*** (Timothy 4:16). Example is one of the simplest ways of teaching for good or bad. It can be very effective, persuasive, and even powerful (Matthew 5:13-16). To be the most effective, a teacher of the Word should be an example of the Word in action in his life. It has been said that a teacher who gives good precepts, but follows them by a bad example is like a foolish man who takes great pains to kindle a fire and then throws cold water upon it to quench it. But we should let no man be our example unless they are imitating Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

There are some basic fundamentals that help us to be good examples to others. If we are really serious about be such, we should:

1. Be a learner ourselves.
2. Posses a growing personality for the better.
3. Be a consecrated child of God.
4. Have a deep interest in the salvation and spiritual welfare of others.
5. Be humble.
6. Have a growing sense of victory over selfishness, worldliness, and sin.
7. Willingness to serve without thought of recognition.

We must insist on those who stand before us to teach on a regular basis that their lives are reflecting the above things.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Once the great professions met in contest to present their claims for superiority. The lawyer, physician, minister, banker, merchant, statesman, and others addressed the audience in turn to show that theirs was the most useful and important occupation. After all had spoken, the chairman observed an aged teacher in the rear of the hall and asked him if he cared to present the claims of his profession. Whereupon he arose and said, *“I have no defense to make. The gentlemen who have spoken tonight are all my pupils. My occupation speaks for itself.”* Teaching people the Word of life is even greater because it deals with the eternal destiny of man. We need to do our job well.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. One does not have to teach to be a teacher.**
- 2. Those who desire to teach must have some preparation in knowing and living the Christian life.**
- 3. Good teaching is the foundation for all jobs being well done.**
- 4. A pre-requisite of an acceptable teacher is that he should be spiritually-minded.**
- 5. My purpose for wanting to teach must be examined closely.**
- 6. Willingness to serve without much recognition is to be expected by teachers.**
- 7. One’s preparation for teaching needs to include both proper and sufficient knowledge.**
- 8. God expects all of His people to be teachers.**
- 9. The warning, be not many of you teachers, is a way of cutting down on teachers.**
- 10. A successful teacher will be rewarded here and hereafter.**

Lesson Six

“The Self-Disclosure of Teaching”

Have you ever put on a “false front” to deceive people into believing that you are something that you are not? Those that can do this well are often referred to as “con artist.” But even with the best, sooner or later the real person will be seen in spite of trying to hide things from those about them. To illustrate—a boy and girl begin dating. Usually both will put their “best foot” forward and make out like they are actually better than they are. They quickly decide to get married, but a short-time later they are ready for a divorce. The real person or persons finally came out. Teaching has a way of opening up the teacher and his life to others. To teach is to put one’s self in a vulnerable position of exposing the real person. It is important for teachers to realize this fact and be ready to handle it correctly for his good and the good of others.

IT IS HARD TO SEPARATE THE PERSON FROM WHAT HE SAYS

In the process of teaching others, the teacher is exposing himself to the hearer(s). While it is possible that faulty conclusions can be drawn about the teacher; yet, generally speaking, the teacher is revealing the type of person that he is. It probably will take more than one teaching situation for good decisions to be made about the teacher, but each time he teaches he is unveiling himself before his student(s). We understand that when someone criticizes or compliments a lesson taught by the teacher, he is also complimenting or criticizing the teacher as well. And as he teaches, he is revealing his weaknesses (ignorance, prejudices, inconsistencies, defenses, etc.) as well as his strengths.

VULNERABILITY AND DISCOURAGEMENT

Teaching does not come easy for most of us. There are a few very gifted persons that can be very effective. But even they have one of the same problems as the rest of us—dealing with discouragement! Most of us have weaknesses that we are aware of and possibly would prefer that others not know of such. When we teach, we are opening ourselves up for others to see our weaknesses. This opens the teacher up for criticism—and when it comes, it can be painful and discouraging. One writer suggests that when one becomes deeply discouragement in teaching, it may be primarily because he has consciously or unconsciously been hiding from or refusing to openly admit his weaknesses. James talks about a person deceiving himself (James 1:22, 26). Such then is obviously possible. We may deceive ourselves about our weaknesses, but the longer we teach the more obvious they will be to others. The real danger here is when the teacher does not see his weakness and does not want to look at it or accept it. He then opens himself up to criticism, frustration, anger, discouragement and may even stop teaching. Those who criticize the weaknesses of a teacher may not realize how damaging it can be to him or his self-esteem. So, both student and teacher needs to be aware of this unveiling and know how to handle it correctly so that it will do less harm and lead to a better teaching environment. Good teachers are needed and we should not expect perfect teachers. So, let’s try to encourage all the good teachers that we can.

OUTCOME OF COVERED WEAKNESSES

A teacher that tries to cover up their lack of knowledge, preparation, or weaknesses in general will have a tendency to present his lesson with a rigid, arrogant, and defensive attitude. In doing so, it is hoped that he will discourage any opposition from the students. When students begin to make critical comments on what the teacher is saying or question the accuracy of his teaching, he can go one of two ways: (1) He can accept the statements graciously and profit by what he has learned; or (2) He can feel threatened and become even more defensive, rigid and arrogant. In some instances, the teacher may even attack the students and try to embarrass them for even thinking, much less making critical comments or asking such questions in his class. This can lead to each attacking the other in the name of studying the Bible. Distrust, anger, and frustration will be an outcome of such. The teacher may give up teaching or the student may no longer come to class.

The solution to avoiding such an undesirable teaching situation is for both the teacher and the student to have the attitude that Paul talks about in Galatians 6:1: ***“a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”*** Or, in Paul’s 2nd Letter to Timothy 2:22-26, where he challenged Timothy pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace out of a pure heart. He also adds that he should avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, not to be quarrelsome, be patient, and in humility correct those who need such.

The Apostle Paul evidently had things about his life that brought him criticism...and in some instances cruel criticism (2 Corinthians 12:10, 15; 11:5-6; Galatians 4:11-16). But he was able to deal with them in a constructive way by not only giving recognition to the weaknesses, but thanking the people for accepting him in spite of such weaknesses.

STRENGTH FROM RECOGNITION

The Apostle Paul had his weaknesses and even his thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7, 10), but he was able to say that he became strong when he was weak—in other words, he gave recognition to his weaknesses and became the stronger for it. All of us have our weaknesses for there is none perfect, no not one (Romans 3:10). We can become stronger when we recognize, accept, and cultivate our weaknesses. This is the way to use weaknesses constructively. To attempt to hide such from others and self will cause more problems rather than less. A teacher of the Word of God has power and security when he is able to recognize, accept, and even verbalize his vulnerabilities.

One of the most valuable lessons a teacher can teach his students in regards to teacher-student relationship is that both are in a growth process and both need to accept one another where they are with hope of both making progress towards maturity. In trying to cover up our weaknesses, it only makes it harder to have a proper learning situation, if not an impossible one. The teacher must also realize that communication takes place on a verbal and non-verbal level—the non-verbal being the more significant. The teacher’s tone of voice, look in the eye, facial expressions, body posture and movements, gestures, etc., all communicate much more and on a deeper level than his words do. It is possible for the teacher to send a non-verbal contradictory

message that will invalidate his spoken words. It is strongly believed that the non-verbal will override the spoken word in many instances.

The teacher, therefore, who is sensitive to his own vulnerabilities should be able to be sensitive to those of his students. If both are aware of such and both accept one another, both teacher and student can grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. A teacher automatically opens himself up to exposure of weaknesses in his life.**
- 2. A teacher that is rigid, defensive and arrogant may be trying to hide things about himself.**
- 3. Those who offer criticism may not fully understand how damaging such can be to a teacher.**
- 4. Strength can come out of a proper recognition of our weaknesses and dealing with them positively.**
- 5. The Apostle Paul said that when he was weak then he was strong.**
- 6. It is a weakness for a person to openly admit his weaknesses.**
- 7. Divorce often comes because the two did not really know each other sufficiently before marriage.**
- 8. Non-verbal communication is many times more important than verbal.**
- 9. A person's weaknesses control him when he is not aware of what they are.**
- 10. Non-verbal communication can often undermine the verbal.**

Lesson Seven

“Attitude and Disposition of Teachers”

“There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10). This is in the ultimate sense of perfection. No one is perfect—not even teachers! All have sinned and fallen short of what God has a right to expect of us (Romans 3:23). Some may be more effective than others, but we are all teachers in some sense—with imperfections. And, because we are not perfect, we have need of improvement, study, council, and help. To make out that we don’t need any of these is only to deceive ourselves. And, God has chosen to use imperfect human beings to carry out the great work of teaching the lost and encouraging the saved.

There are several basic areas that teachers need to be aware of and work at for improvement. One of those areas deals with the teacher’s attitude and disposition. This comes across more in a non-verbal way than verbal. For instance, pride can be shown by actions as much or more by non-verbal than verbal. We want to look at four basic areas in this lesson.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS GOD

God deserves all honor, glory, power, and praise from the lips and in the lives of all human beings. He has shown his concern for all in both areas: Physical and Spiritual. In the physical, ***“He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”*** (Matthew 5:45). This is God’s way of saying I have amply provided for the well-being of all mankind. In the spiritual, ***“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*** (John 3:16). In this great act of giving, God shows His concern for the eternal well-being of His creatures.

While God has provided salvation from the penalty of sin and has given us a promise of everlasting life, he does not force or coerce us into either. These are freely offered to all, but they must be accepted by man through the avenue of faith in Christ. We must become a willing servant of God (Romans 12:1). He wants us to know that we desperately need Him, but He wants us. The great commission emphasizes this (Mark 16:15-16). But He also wants us to work together with him in reaching the lost of this world (1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Timothy 2:20-21). We show that we want to work with God by teaching His truth, not error; by teaching all of His truth, and not just the part we like; and by living according to His truth, and not our own way. We need to be motivated to serve God out of love for Him rather than to be motivated by the praised of men, prestige, or dominance over others. Such is obviously unworthy of the name “Christian.”

As a teacher, is your attitude and disposition towards God what it should be? Do we show our respect and reverence for God by our words, by our body-language, and by our godly lives? Do we strive diligently to keep the commandments of God—thus showing our love to Him? (1 John 5:3).

ATTITUDE TOWARDS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

As teachers, do we realize the gravity of teaching the Word of God and making sure that we teach only the truth of God? Teachers not only teach the lost, but the saved as well. It is a continual job (Matthew 28:18-20). Do we realize that we are accountable human beings that will stand in judgment before the God of heaven some day (2 Corinthians 5:10). Are we concerned that we do our part of the great work that God has placed in our hands—using whatever abilities that we have been given to His honor and glory (2 Corinthians 8:12-14). A teacher with the right attitude towards his responsibility will not be found shirking his duty, or being unconcerned, or have the attitude “*Let George do it!*” It is my job to work in the kingdom, to be fruitful, and to bring glory to God (John 15:2-5).

ATTITUDE TOWARDS OUR STUDENTS

If we have the privilege to stand before others to teach the living and active Word of God, we need to do it with the right attitude towards those we teach. If we have the right attitude:

1. We will emphasize the great value of the soul (Matthew 16:26);
2. Place emphasis upon the spiritual (Romans 8:1-6);
3. Stress the great and primary mission of the church (Matthew 28:18-20);
4. Exhort God’s people to fill their lives with good works (Titus 3:14).

The teacher needs to truly believe that his work can be a help in influencing a soul for good (1 Corinthians 11:1), and that each individual has a potential in the kingdom that needs to be filled.

The following attitudes should not be expressed or shown towards his students—in class or out of class:

1. To be proud, haughty, “better than you” attitude, superiority attitude (James 4:6).
2. To have a “don’t care” attitude or a “take it or leave it” attitude towards students (Matthew 22:30). Love says, “you may not care, but I care about you!”
3. To be irresponsible. To go to class unprepared, being late, not feeling the great responsibility that has been placed upon your shoulders (Matthew 25:26-29).
4. Not being concerned to teach only the Truth of God. Have loose teaching, leave the student in doubt of what is true (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

If our attitude as a teacher is correct, it makes it much easier for the students to respect me as a teacher. Our thinking, our attitudes, our example will great influence and affect their lives.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE BIBLE

As a worker with God, I need to be a diligent worker that knows the Word of God and how to rightly divide it (2 Timothy 2:15). I show my respect for God when I respect his Word. I show my respect for my students when I teach them only the Word of God. I show that I realize I have a grave responsibility when I fulfill it to the best of my ability to teach others the Word of God. It is the inspired Word of God capable of giving right instruction in righteousness that will prepare me for every good work of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Every teacher should strive to be a Bible Scholar (2 Peter 3:18). When the students see and know that you study; hopefully, they will also want to study to learn.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Continued ignorance of God's word is inexcusable of a teacher. No, we will never know it all, but we should be striving towards that goal. We are laboring to produce a good work that will endure for eternity, that will stand up under the fiery test of temptation, and be able to give a good accounting in that Great Day (1 Corinthians 3:11-16). It is when the teacher has a fundamental and spiritual understanding of the Word of God that the Bible Study hour can be changed from a most wasted hour or from a baby sitting effort, to a great learning situation. Little requirements for teachers in our classes will result in shallow teacher and shallower learners.

"As the teacher goes, so goes the pupils." This seems to be what Hosea is saying in 4:6-10. God's people were destroyed for a lack of knowledge. Was that because they didn't want to learn and know, and/or they had very poor teachers in their midst? Our work as teachers is truly a grave and great responsibility. The tone, feeling, working, and spirituality of a congregation greatly depends on those of us who teach and our attitudes. Will we accept the great challenge as teachers and shoulder the responsibility willingly, but also with diligence?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

1. Teaching is not my primarily work, so I should not be expected to put a lot of time and effort into it.
2. A teacher doesn't have to have everything down correctly to teach others.
3. My attitude towards God is vital if I expect to teach others the way of Truth.
4. I don't have to feel responsible for others' soul; they have to feel responsible for themselves.
5. The best teacher is one that is always growing spiritually.
6. The primary mission of the church is to teach, teach, and more teaching.
7. Wrong attitudes toward students can have an effect on their desire to learn.
8. The Bible taught by and lived by a teacher is the power to change people's lives.
9. We don't really need Bible Scholars in the congregation.
10. Imperfections in a teacher should keep him from striving to teach others.

Lesson Eight

“Characteristics of a Good Teacher”

How should teachers be characterized? In some instances, plain common sense will help us to see the answer to this question. But we have the Word of God to give us an answer to this question that is beyond doubt. But sometimes it is good to see the negative characteristics that teachers should not have in order to enhance the positive characteristics that they should have. So, in this lesson we will be looking at both from a Biblical viewpoint.

NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

In Jesus' day they didn't have the best image before God based on how Jesus viewed them. Matthew 23 is one of the best sources to look at to see so many negative things that these teachers of the Law were guilty of. Jesus began His thoughts with: ***The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works.*** Following is how he characterized them:

1. They teach people what to do, but they do not do it themselves (23:3)
2. They bind heavy burdens on the people that are hard to bear, but they will not move them with one of their fingers (23:4).
3. All they do is to be seen of men (and praised) (23:5).
4. They wear special garments to set them apart from others (23:5).
5. They love the best seats at the feast and in the Synagogue (23:6).
6. They love to be called “Rabbi” by men (23:7).
7. They shut up the kingdom of heaven by not going in themselves and you try to keep those out that want to go in (23:13).
8. They devour widows' houses (23:14).
9. They have long prayers pretending to be holy (23:14).
10. They make proselytes and when they are through with them, they are worse than their teachers (23:15).
11. They were leaving undone the weightier matters of the Law: Justice, Mercy, and Faith (23:23).
12. They were straining out a gnat, but swallowing a camel (23:24).
13. They looked righteous outwardly, but inwardly they were full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (23:25-28).
14. They had built tombs for the prophets who had been slain by their forefathers, but they have the same spirit as their forefathers (23:29-30)

Jesus ended these statements by asking them, ***“How can you escape the condemnation of hell?”*** (23:33). Jesus was constantly being confronted by these teachers, but generally not for the good, but to try to undermine and destroy His efforts. John's Gospel records a very strong statement that Jesus expressed towards these teachers: ***“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”*** (8:44)

POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS

The following characteristics will be in stark contrast to the ones on the previous page. And while each of the following are very important to teachers, these are not all that could be given.

Consecration. The teacher must not only be consecrated to the task of teaching, but also to the Christian life. He must be able to say with the Apostle Paul: ***It is not longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me.***” (Galatians 2:20).

Love. A faithful teacher will have a full measure of love for God, His Word, and the students he teaches. ***“Love is the fulfilling of the Law.”*** (Romans 13:8). All that God’s Word teaches us to do, we will be willing to be obedient in all things because we love God and our fellow-man. This love is not only expressed in word, but in deed and in truth (1 John 3:18).

Devotion. To be devoted to someone or something is to give ourselves to them. A teacher needs to be devoted to the task of teaching and to be known as such (Matthew 6:33).

Prayer. He needs to be known as a person who believes and practices prayer. He prays not only for his own life and needs, but for others as well—especially his students (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

Faith. The teacher should be known as a person of faith—abiding faith and trust in God and His promises. But the teacher needs to have faith in men that their lives can be changed for the better and can become the children of God. God showed that faith in us when He sent His Son to die in our stead (John 3:16). He believed in us...and so should the teacher!

Purpose. No one can faithfully discharge the responsibility of teaching without having the right purpose for teaching. Teaching is not an aimless gathering of souls, but it is the attempt to teach God’s Will to God’s children or to those we strive to lead to become God’s children.

Faithfulness. The teacher needs to be faithful, dependable, and always there to be counted on. It is unto the faithful that God will give the crown of life (Revelation 2:10).

Vision. The teacher needs to have a vision of what his teaching can accomplish in the lives of others. Great numbers can eventually go to heaven if we can stay busy teaching. The Apostle Paul expressed this vision on different occasions, but primarily to the Christians at Rome (Romans 1:13-16).

Patience. The teacher that thinks in terms of quick-fix may be in for great disappointment. It usually takes time to accomplish anything worthwhile. This certainly is true in teaching and training people. A good definition of patience is “waiting on God.” We must patiently sow the seed and water it with hope of a harvest to come (1 Corinthians 3:6-7).

Cheerfulness. ***“Rejoice in the Lord always.”*** (Philippians 4:4). Be cheerful when things are going good or bad because we are the Lord’s people with a purpose and a promise! Even when

manifold trials come, we are to count it all joy (James 1:2-3). A teacher needs to maintain an atmosphere of joy and peace—a happy, contented Christian.

Energy. The task of the teacher is not easy. It requires time and effort in addition to our regular duties or responsibilities. We need to care for ourselves well so that we will have the energy level needed to do the work well (3 John 2-3; Ephesians 5:28-29).

Cooperation. The teacher should not be a “loner,” but one who loves and wants to be with people. He wants to be a partner that cooperates with others to bring the greatest good. We are not only laborers with God (1 Corinthians 3:9) but with our fellow-Christians as well (1 Corinthians 12:25).

Perfection. A teacher should not be satisfied with the past or present, but always striving for improvement in every phase of the work of teaching (Matthew 5:48).

Enthusiasm. Teacher can be dull or it can be exciting. The teaching of the Word of God should by all means be taught with enthusiasm (2 Peter 1:10-11).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ 1. Teachers who will not cooperate with the Bible School program should not be allowed to teach.
- ___ 2. A person can teach enthusiastically even if he feels that his teaching falls on deaf ears.
- ___ 3. A teacher who does not believe God answers prayer will not have any problem teaching about prayer.
- ___ 4. Teachers who are more concerned about themselves will probably find little time to show concern for their students.
- ___ 5. It is wrong for a teacher to wear something different from other people.
- ___ 6. It is definitely wrong to be called “Rabbi” (or teacher).
- ___ 7. A teacher cannot teach another how to win souls to Christ if he has never done so.
- ___ 8. The teacher that puts on a “front” will sooner or later be seen for what he really is.
- ___ 9. I characterize other teachers that I hear.
- ___ 10. I characterize myself as a teacher.

TEACHER QUALIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The following information is to be used by the elders in the selection of teacher personnel. All information will be kept in strictest confidence and is to be used only for teaching purposes. Would you please supply the information asked for on this sheet and hand to one of the elders.

Name _____ Date _____
 Address _____
 Age _____ Male or Female _____ Phone _____ Date of Birth _____
 Name of Mate _____ Name and ages of Children _____

1. For how long have you been a member of the Lord’s church? _____
2. Are you now teaching or assisting in a Bible class? _____
3. On which age level(s) do you prefer to teach?
 Pre-School
 Primary
 Junior
 Jr. High
 Sr. High
 Adult
4. Do you think it would be helpful for a teacher to visit in the home of each of his or her students? _____
5. Are you willing to get behind the program of the church and be a real booster in the Lord’s work? _____
6. Do you realize the importance of you and your family being good examples to the congregation? _____
7. Do you realize the danger of “loose talking” or “gossip?” _____
8. If you have any bad habits that will hurt your influence, are you willing to give them up? _____
9. Do you use language unbecoming of a teacher? _____
10. Do you believe a teacher should want to attend all the services of the church? _____
11. Are you a proper example in manner of dress in public at all times? _____
12. Have you been married previously? _____ If yes, please explain _____
13. Has your mate been married previously? _____ If yes, please explain _____
14. Have you taught previously in Public School? _____ How long? _____
15. Have you taught previously in Bible Classes? _____ Where? _____
16. What educational and professional training do you have? _____
17. What suggestions do you have that would be helpful in using you in our teaching program?

Lesson Nine

“Imitating the Master Teacher”

God made man teachable, which implies the need for teachers. Jesus became flesh and dwelt among mankind (John 1:1-2, 14). He not only lived as a man, but He was a teacher of men—a master teacher! He set the pace for teachers to emulate. There is no better example for us to pattern our teaching after than His. Since Jesus delegated the continued work of teaching to His followers, we need to learn how best to carry out our responsibility. Jesus used several different methods of teaching that caused people to be astonished at His teaching. To succeed as a teacher, we would have no better example to imitate (Proverbs 22:29).

JESUS’ SUCCESS AS A TEACHER

1. His purpose for coming was to teach (Acts 1:1). He set his heart and mind on His task and would not allow anything to deter him. He took advantage of every opportunity to impress on His audience the Word of God. He had contempt for those teachers who perverted God’s Word to the people (Matthew 23:1-3).

2. He prepared Himself for His work of teaching. Even at twelve years old He was capable of conversing intelligently with the teachers of Israel (Luke 2:46-47). These teachers were astonished at His understanding and answers. He expressed to His parents, ***“Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”*** (Luke 2:49). Not only was He subject to His parents, but he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52). His early life was spent in preparing Himself for His great work of teaching. The earlier the preparation, the better the teacher can be (2 Timothy 1:5-6).

3. What He taught was given great value. He made it very clear that what He was teaching was able to set man free (John 8:32; 17:17). However, the doctrines and commandments of men were worthless to do so (Matthew 15:7-9). Those teachings of men were to be rejected because they made void the Word of Truth. He also made the claim that those who come to the Father must be taught His Word and that He was teaching what the Father had given Him (John 8:28). Those who follow His teaching will not walk in darkness but in light (John 8:12). When men rejected His message, He did not lose faith in it. His message primarily dealt with man’s greatest need—a change of heart and life.

4. His teaching was to lead to Obedience to God. Mere knowledge of the truth of God was not enough, the truth must be followed (obeyed) in order to set man free (Matthew 7:21-29). He told the people that when their teachers teach the Law of Moses, they were to obey it (Matthew 23:2-3). Jesus followed up John’s teaching with the same message: ***“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*** Change your life to conform to the Will of God! Jesus’ use of the Scriptures to deal with the devil’s temptations showed how practical they are in dealing with life’s trials and tribulations (Matthew 4:1-11). He not only encouraged others to be obedient (Luke 6:46), but He Himself was obedient to the Father in all things (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 5:8-9).

5. Jesus was an optimistic teacher. He was not afraid of small beginnings. He would teach one person or many persons (John 3:1-5; Matthew 4:25). All things start small, but grow. His teaching about the kingdom being like a mustard seed or yeast put in dough illustrates His understanding of this principle (Matthew 13:31-33). Failure on the part of people to believe or even opposition to His teachings did not deter Him from His great work of teaching (John 9:4; John 16:33). When many of His disciples turned and walked no more with Him, He did not quit, but kept on teaching (John 6:66; 7:14).

6. Jesus had the proper attitude towards his students. He was compassionate towards them for they were like sheep without a shepherd. He spent time and effort to teach those who would listen. He was not unsympathetic and ugly-spirited towards those who were seeking to know the Truth of God. He did not look for an earthly reward or publicity for Himself. He came as the good shepherd of the people (Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:25; John 10:10-11) willing to give His life for them.

7. His methods of teaching were varied.

- a) He taught in Parables to illustrate heavenly truths by earthly things (Matthew 13:1-3).
- b) He used Questions that help the people to see more clearly the truth of God (Matthew 22:41-46).
- c) His teaching led to questions that gave further opportunity to teach (John 3:1-5).
- d) He used repetition. The Kingdom and other subjects were discussed many times.
- e) Much of His teaching was to individuals and it had a conversational touch that is not easy to do with the masses.
- f) He spoke as One who had the authority of the Father behind the message (John 8:28).
- g) He taught in various places: Homes, Synagogues, Temple courtyard, by the river side, before governors and kings.

8. He had a magnetic and dynamic personality. People loved him and wanted to be with Him, as well as little children (Matthew 19:2, 13-14). But in spite of who He was, He remained a humble servant of His Father (Matthew 11:28-30). Upon one occasion, Jerusalem soldiers were sent to apprehend the Lord and were so impressed with Him and His message that they returned without Him. When asked why, their reply was: “*Never man so spoke*” (John 7:45-46).

9. He was much in prayer to His Father. Jesus not only taught people to pray (Matthew 6:5-15), but He prayed often—much of it being in secret. Upon one occasion He prayed all night long (Luke 22:32; Matthew 14:23; Luke 6:12). Even though He was God in the flesh, the need of communion with the Father was an absolute must for Him.

10. Jesus was a persistent teacher. His success came because of His persistent efforts. Defeat was not a word He accepted. Nazareth may seek His life, the Gergesenes may request his hasty departure, and the ruling Jews may plan his death at Jerusalem; but, he would teach right up until the appointed hour of his atoning death. If one group ignored Him, another group would listen somewhere else.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

1. Jesus' persistence in teaching became a reason for His being put to death.
2. Jesus' public ministry did not begin until He was about thirty-three years old.
3. Prayer was one of Jesus' effective helps in His work of teaching.
4. Jesus' arrogance was rebuke by the Religious Leaders time and again.
5. Part of Jesus' work was to teach and prepare His disciples to be Apostles.
6. A pleasing personality is one of the best assets of a teacher.
7. Jesus' teaching caused some people to be astonished.
8. Jesus showed contempt for those who taught the doctrines and commands of men.
9. There is an amazing similarity between earthly things and heavenly things.
10. Jesus kept the Law of God perfectly.

Lesson Ten

“Personality Profile of a Good Teacher”

Possibly the first and most difficult requirement of the teacher is himself, his personality or character. A teacher must “do and then teach!” He must bring into his life and character that which he seeks to develop in his students. He needs to be the living embodiment of what he would lead his students to become. He must live the religion he would challenge them to accept. Students can perceive fairly quickly if this is his real concern. There is no question in my mind that character was one of the most important factors of Jesus’ effectiveness as a teacher. It was said by some that no man ever spoke like Him, but it could have also be said that no man live like He lived—for He was sinless. The old saying “*I had rather see a sermon than hear one*” still rings true—the life of a person is critical if he wants to be effective as a teacher—if he wants to be taken seriously.

The following is an effort by someone to list character qualities (both positive and negative) so that a person may evaluate themselves. Are you willing to do so, or let others do so?

POSITIVE QUALITIES	NEGATIVE QUALITIES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open-minded, inquiring, broad 2. Accurate, thorough, discerning 3. Judicious, balanced, fair 4. Original, independent, resourceful 5. Decisive, possessing convictions 6. Cheerful, joyous, optimistic 7. Amiable, friendly, agreeable 8. Democratic, broadly sympathetic 9. Tolerant, sense of humor, generous 10. Kind, courteous, tactful 11. Tractable, cooperative, teachable 12. Loyal, honorable, dependable 13. Executive, forceful, vigorous 14. High ideals, worthy, exalted 15. Modest, self-effacing 16. Courageous, daring firm 17. Honest, truthful, frank, sincere 18. Patient, calm, equable 19. Generous, open-hearted, forgiving 20. Responsive, congenial 21. Punctual, on schedule, capable 22. Methodical, consistent, logical 23. Altruistic, given to service 	<p>Narrow, dogmatic, not hungry for truth Indefinite, superficial, lazy Prejudiced, led by likes and dislikes Dependent, imitative, subservient Uncertain, wavering, undecided Gloomy, morose, pessimistic, bitter Repellent, unsociable, disagreeable Snobbish, self-centered, exclusive Opinionated, dogmatic, intolerant Cruel, rude, untactful Stubborn, not able to work with others Disloyal, uncertain dependability Uncertain, weak, not capable Low standards, base, contemptible Egotistical, vain, autocratic Overcautious, weak, vacillating Low standard of honor and truth Irritable, excitable, moody Stingy, selfish, resentful Cold, repulsive, uninviting Tardy, usually behind time, incapable Haphazard, desultory, inconsistent Indifferent, not socially-minded</p>

24. Refined, alive to beauty, artistic	Coarse, lacking aesthetic quality
25. Self-controlled, decisive, purpose	Suggestible, easily led, uncertain
26. Good physical carriage, dignity	Lack of poise, ill posture, no grace
27. Taste in attire, cleanliness, pride	Careless in dress, frumpy, no pride
28. Face smiling, voice pleasing	Somber expression, voice unpleasant
29. Physical endurance, vigor, strength	Quickly tired, weak, sluggish
30. Spiritual responsiveness strong	Spiritually weak, inconstant, uncertain
31. prayer life warm, satisfying	Prayer life cold, formal, little comfort
32. Religious certainty, peace, quiet	Conflict, strain, uncertainty
33. Religious experience is expanding	Spiritual life is static or losing force
34. God is near, an inspiring reality	God is distant, unreal, hard to approach
35. Power to win others to religion	Influence little or negative
36. Interest in the Bible and religion	Little concern for religion or the Bible
37. Religion makes life fuller and richer	Religion is felt as a limitation
38. Deeply believes great fundamentals	Lacking in foundations for faith
39. Increasing triumph over sin	Too frequent falling before temptation
40. Religious future hopeful	Religious growth uncertain

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF A GOOD TEACHER

PERSONAL TRAITS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Good personal appearance | 6. Physical strength |
| 2. Physical endurance | 7. Good carriage and posture |
| 3. Sound health | 8. Physical control |
| 4. Abundant energy | 9. Correct personal habits |
| 5. Physical vigor | 10. Good voice |

MENTAL TRAITS

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Genuine interest | 6. Scholarly attitude; will to learn |
| 2. Accurate knowledge | 7. Ability to see ahead; foresightedness |
| 3. Clear thinking | 8. Ability to concentrate |
| 4. Sound judgment | 9. Mental alertness; open-mindedness |
| 5. Power of decision | 10. Constructive imagination |

TEMPERAMENT & DISPOSITION TRAITS

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. General good health | 6. Sense of humor, enthusiasm |
| 2. Good cheer, joy, optimism | 7. Self-control, peace, caution |
| 3. Sympathy, tenderness, loves | 8. Kindliness, courtesy, politeness |
| 4. Patient, perseverance, objectivity | 9. Poise, attractiveness, purpose |
| 5. Sensitivity, responsiveness, serenity | 10. Zeal, reverence, exaltation |

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR TRAITS

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Address, understanding | 6. Reliability, sincerity |
| 2. Tact, sympathy | 7. Truthfulness, honesty |

- 3. Leadership, attractiveness
- 4. Resourcefulness
- 5. Punctuality, practicalness, responsibility

- 8. Tolerance, respect
- 9. Altruism, unselfishness
- 10. Ambition, dependability

MORAL LIFE TRAITS

- 1. Purity
- 2. Respect
- 3. High moral standards
- 4. Sensitivity
- 5. Unflinching devotion to the right

- 6. Fairness
- 7. Impartiality
- 8. Loyalty
- 9. Earnestness
- 10. Dignity

SPIRITUAL LIFE TRAITS

- 1. Absolute surrender to God
- 2. Vivid sense of the reality & presence of God
- 3. Recognition of Jesus Christ as the only way to God
- 4. Whole-hearted dependence on the Holy Spirit
- 5. Keen, deep interest in the salvation and the spiritual welfare of others
- 10. Deep, sincere love of God and of pupils.

- 6. Humble, growing, sense of victory over selfishness, worldliness, and sin.
- 7. Intelligent & genuine conviction concerning the great fundamental truths
- 8. Willingness to serve and to give without thought of recognition
- 9. Given to importunate effective prayer

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ 1. A good personality helps us to get along better with people.
- ___ 2. A teacher must know and believe what he is teaching to be effective.
- ___ 3. A teacher's moral and spiritual traits are not as critical as his social traits are.
- ___ 4. Natural ability as a teacher assures one of success.
- ___ 5. Personal appearance should have nothing to do with successful teaching.
- ___ 6. One's health could be a plus for his teaching.
- ___ 7. A teacher's ability to teach others the gospel is necessary to be effective in teaching others to do the same.
- ___ 8. To be tolerant is the opposite of being dogmatic.
- ___ 9. A teacher must first "do" before he can "teach" effectively.
- ___ 10. Jesus' effectiveness as a teacher was because of His sinlessness.

Lesson Eleven

“Principles of Good Teaching”

Teaching must be made to stick! It is only the lasting impressions that have permanent value. Truths that are dimly dealt with or felt by the student may soon fade from his memory. For teaching to be most effective, it needs to appeal not only to the mind (thought, imagination, and memory) but also to the emotions and will of man. True religion has nothing to fear from a full thoughtful investigation. Understanding, reason, and common sense are as necessary in religion as in any other field of learning. Students must be challenged to think, search, ask, inquire (Matthew 7:7-8). Teaching is more than telling—it needs to involve learning as well as application into one’s life (James 1:22). Until these take place, true teaching has not occurred. The little poem that follows certainly stresses such:

“Ram it in, cram it in, Children’s heads are hollow.

“Slam it in, jam it in, Still there’s more to follow.”

The following little story may help to illustrate just the telling. Mrs. Jones was trying to teach her class of children Matthew 5:39, ***“But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”*** In order to test the thoroughness of her teaching, she asked a little fellow, *“Now Jimmy, what would you do if a boy struck you on your cheek?”* He seriously scratched his head and finally replied, *“Well...er...teacher, it all depends on how big he is.”*

Another story may help to illustrate how a message can get through. A little girl was seen standing by the window in her home. She repeatedly stomped her foot and shouted “No!” Her mother became curious as she watched her and finally asked, *“Who are you talking to, dear?”* Her reply was quick—*“I’m saying ‘NO’ to the devil. He told me to go outside when you said stay inside. My teacher said to tell the devil ‘NO!’”*

PRESUPPOSITIONS IN TEACHING

Teaching presupposes at least four factors: (1) That the pupils are not as well informed as the instructor (2 Timothy 2:2); (2) There is a subject or concepts to be taught (2 Timothy 4:2); (3) The teacher is needed to guide the thinking of the pupils in the pursuit of the chosen subject or concepts (John 14:6); and (4) A method of stimulating interest while pursuing the course of study selected (Matthew 13:3).

KEY FACTORS IN TEACHING

It should be obvious that just telling is not real teaching, but learning and eventual application needs to be involved. To make teaching more effective, certain things would be helpful:

1. ATTENTION. Unless the teacher can secure the attention of the students, he may be just wasting his time. There are three kinds of attention that we can see:

- a) Involuntary attention is that which is demanded by something unusual, e.g., rapping the desk with a ruler. The noise factor often is the reason for the immediate attention.
- b) Non-voluntary or spontaneous attention is given easily and naturally. It is compelled by the interest of the student himself.
- c) Voluntary attention is compelled by effort of the will. Children should be trained to give attention.

Several factors can help to secure attention: (1) Change; (2) Novelty; (3) Repetition; (4) Size; and (5) Strength and intensity of the impression.

2. INTEREST. Every normal child is naturally alert, curious, and interested in what concerns him. If a person understands that God is offering eternal life to people and someone wants that life, it would be natural for him to seek out someone to tell him how he can have that life (Luke 18:18). Some things are of more interest to human beings than others. Interest may have to be developed by the teacher before they are given the truth on the matter. There are basic fundamental needs and desires that man wants fulfilled. They are: (1) Desire for security (Matthew 6:33); (2) Desire for recognition (John 3:16); (3) Desire for response (1 John 3:22); and (4) Desire for new experiences (John 14:1-3). Appeal can be made to these and other needs or desires to create interest on the part of the student.

There are four key factors about interest: (1) Interest depends upon comprehension. We are usually not interested in something we don't understand; (2) Interest can be aroused by action. A person is often more interested when he participates; (3) Interest requires variety and change. Using the same method all the time may not be as effective as some variation; and (4) Interest can be contagious. An interested and enthusiastic teacher or student can help beget interest on the part of others.

3. FREEDOM FROM DISTRACTIONS. Distractions can undermine a teacher's efforts and cause frustration. There are generally no good results possible when a teacher is constantly interrupted. It is best to free the class from as many distractions as possible (Acts 22:22-24). In some instances, the teacher himself may have several "quirks" that become a distraction to the students. Trying to keep irrelevant material out may improve the proper teaching of God's Word.

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD TEACHING

- 1. There is a difference in knowing a subject and how to impart that knowledge to others. Some teachers never get further than passing out cold facts.**
- 2. Every teacher of the Bible should be a Christian. If he does not know the way, he is unprepared to teach others the way; if he knows and will not walk therein, he is unworthy to lead.**
- 3. Start with the pupil where he is and work to lead him to the place you desire. It is to travel from the known to the unknown.**

- 4. Know the pupil so well that you can speak in terms they understand. It would help to know something about their lives, their environment, and their interests. Fit your teaching to their needs.**
- 5. Give the pupil something to do. Forced attention is better than no attention, but very little better. By getting the pupil involved somehow or appealing to his curiosity, imagination, or desire to achieve may help immensely.**
- 6. Have a definite purpose for teaching other than the mere satisfaction of a personal ambition. Be sure you appreciate the sacredness and tremendous responsibility of handling the Word of God when the souls of men are at stake.**
- 7. Be willing to prepare consecratedly and painstakingly. The reward is worth much more than all the effort expended. Prepare yourself by study, meditation and prayer.**
- 8. Prepare the pupils by gaining their interest in the particular lesson that you are going to teach. A few introductory remarks or questions can help. Tell them of the main thought, idea, or principle that you want them to learn and then precede to lead them into such an understanding.**
- 9. Realize that it is through your personality that the gospel must flow to the pupil. If you are impressed with such, your attitude will show it. The soul of a real teacher will strike through almost any kind of exterior. The pupil will possibly forget most of what you say, but he will remember you. Will that memory be an anchor and an inspiration in his times of testing in the years that are to come?**
- 10. An ounce of commendation is worth more than pounds of censure.**
- 11. Remember that your work is largely sowing the seed. The reaping may come after long and patient work. Sow the good seed abundantly and be an example to help water that which has been planted.**
- 12. Commit to memory some key vital doctrines that you may be ready for any opportune use of them.**
- 13. We should be so familiar with the chief characters of both the Old and New Testaments that we can promptly call forth the one that would help to illustrate the problem of life in the lesson.**
- 14. Prayer is an essential preparation of the heart to fit us to teach. Remembering the sacredness of the task of handling the Word of God and the responsibility of directing souls for eternity should drive us to preparation in prayer.**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. People prefer constructive criticism than they do false commendation.**
- 2. The personality of the teacher cannot be separated from the teaching process.**
- 3. Every teacher of the Bible should be a Christian.**
- 4. There is a difference in knowing something and being able to impart it successfully.**
- 5. Distractions only make it harder for the teacher to get his message across.**
- 6. Interest can only be generated from one source.**
- 7. Voluntary attention is better than spontaneous attention.**
- 8. No teaching takes place if the teacher is merely stated what the pupil already knows.**
- 9. Truths dimly dealt with will soon fade from memory.**
- 10. The ultimate end of teaching is obedience.**

Lesson Twelve

“Basic Principles of Learning”

Into the hands of every Christian has been placed a big responsibility—to teach the Gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:18-20). Everything necessary was provided for the early church to accomplish this task. In a generalized way, at least, the Apostle Paul said the job was done (Colossians 1:23). While they needed miraculous gifts to help them teach and confirm what they were saying was from God...we, today, have the confirmed Word of God that we must study, learn, and put into practice—and take it to others. The job of teaching and preaching will never cease to be needed by mankind in sin.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE MIND

Christianity is a religion that needs to be taught, understood (reasoned out), accepted, and put into practice. The processes involved will affect our mind, our feelings or emotions, and our will. An appeal to the mind or intellect may be done through the following avenues:

- 1. Perception**—The mind receives sensations of sound, color, taste, smell, and touch. It translates them into knowledge.
- 2. Memory**—The mind records, retains, recalls, and recognizes its perceptions.
- 3. Imagination**—These perceptions are woven into new combinations. A new creation can result from imagination. We can actually conceive of spiritual things...even though we cannot see, touch, taste, smell, or hear such. Religion calls for this as a basic foundation of learning about God.
- 4. Conception**—The mind can analyze and classify its perceptions.
- 5. Judgment**—The mind compares concepts and arrives at a conclusion or makes a judgment..
- 6. Reason**—The mind compares judgments and arrives at a conclusion from the reasoning processes. The term common sense indicates that there should be a common decision or outcome from the facts presented.

There is nothing about Christianity that will not bear full thought and investigation. Students need to be challenged to think, ask questions, and inquire into further ideas. Because the Bible deals with peoples, places, and events that happened years ago, his imagination is challenged to envision all of these things. Pictures often help in this process. Memory and memorizing can be a helpful tool in learning. But memorizing has to have a lot of motivation for most people. And just because something is memorized does not automatically cause the student to do what he has memorized. The emotions and the will of man must be motivated to become involved in the thoughts memorized and act upon them.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE EMOTIONS

Emotions or feelings give value to what we hear, see, or experience. They help us to appreciate things, objects, people, or promises, etc. They help to enlarge our lives. Someone has divided emotions into two classifications:

1. **Egoistic**—The emotions flow toward one’s self, making our selfish natures the center of the experience.
2. **Altruistic**—The emotions flow from one’s self toward others, making others the center of the experience.

The following are some fundamental human emotions: **Fear, Love, Curiosity (wonder), imitation, emulation, ambition, pugnacity, pride, ownership, constructiveness, Self-assertion, Self-abasement, Parental love, Sex, Gregariousness, Acquisition, Sympathy, Suggestion, Play, Rivalry, Habit and Temperament.**

INVOLVEMENT OF THE WILL

The will is the mind’s capacity to bring about actions so that things get accomplished. It is man’s will that gives him the power over his environment. Acts of the will may be of two kinds:

1. **Involuntary acts** are without thought as to purpose or results.
2. **Voluntary acts** are choices of ends. The more definite the end, the more unhesitatingly is the choice made.

Teaching and learning is to ultimately lead to the exercise of man’s will to put into practice what is good for him and good for others (Titus 3:8).

THE INVOLVEMENT OF LANGUAGE

A good teacher needs to have sufficient knowledge of that which he teaches, as well as sufficient knowledge of his students. But to be effective, this knowledge must be communicated in language that the student understands. This language needs to be common to both teacher and learner. Their significance to each need to be identical and the impression they make must be clear alike to teacher and student. Four basic rules need to be followed:

1. The teacher should express his thoughts on the vocabulary level of the student.
2. He should use the simplest and fewest words possible to express the idea.
3. If the pupils fail to grasp the idea, repeat it by using other words possibly.
4. In teaching a new idea, connect it with what they already know first.

The Holy Spirit must have chosen carefully the words that the Apostle Paul had written because he said that when they are read they can be understood (Ephesians 3:3-4). When one speaks in a language that a person does not know, he cannot understand and no teaching can take place (1 Corinthians 14:2-4).

BASIC PRICIPLES OF LEARNING

OPENNESS TO BE TAUGHT. To effectively teach others, we need to “know” our subject and to show ourselves as assured, poised, and in self-control. Teaching is a leading process. But no teaching takes place without the student’s willingness to listen, think, accept, and act upon what is taught. We learn when we have the urged to learn. Jesus emphasized the concept very strongly in talking to the Jewish people. He said that He talked to them in Parables because of their unwillingness to be taught. Their hearts were dull, their ears hard of hearing, and their eyes were closed—thus, they could not understand nor turn so Jesus could heal them (Matthew 13:13-15).

One of the big jobs of teaching is to motivate students to want to learn. An appeal has to be made to curiosity, imagination, desire to achieve, or some other need in their lives. All people have needs—needs that are calling to be satisfied. A teacher would do well to know of these needs and make his appeal to one or more of these to help motivate students to learn. Teach God’s Word and relate it to the student’s life. Forced attention is better than no attention—but very little better! The attitude that Cornelius had in Acts 10 made for a beautiful teaching situation—“*we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God.*” (Acts 10:33).

A WILLINGNESS TO USE OUR MINDS. Christianity is a teaching religion! It is intended to challenge the hearts and lives of mankind to turn them to God and righteous living. The Apostle Paul stated that changing or transforming a person into the image of Christ has to be done by the renewing of one’s mind (Romans 12:2). An appeal has to be made to the mind or heart to accept basic truths that will affect one’s life for good. It needs to be desirable information that we are hearing. It has to have something to offer to us that is good and has meaning for us. Without this, there is little reason for the student to pay attention or exert some effort to learn. We grow or learn when we can see that felt needs can be satisfied. We are willing to put out the efforts that are necessary to capture the ideas and understand them.

A WILLINGNESS TO PUT INTO PRACTICE. All the learning in the world won’t change us if we are unwilling to exercise our WILL to put these things into practice. James stated it very clearly and concisely: “*But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*” (James 1:22) Jesus made this very clear when he said: “*Why do you call me Lord, but are unwilling to do what I teach you.*” (Luke 6:46). Teaching requires change—and the more we are willing to change, the greater the learning processes. We learn the value of these teachings as we see the outcome of our practices. Someone has observed: “*The best way to learn something is to do it.*” Participation definitely enhances the learning process. The teacher needs to help the student to envision the outcome of believing and practicing the teachings of Christ.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Teachers of the Bible must realize that their teaching is for eternity—not only for this life. Our task is to lead, direct, and guide people in the learning of:

1. Facts of the Bible;
2. Understanding of its great principles;
3. Proper attitudes toward the Bible, God, Christ, the church;
4. And an appreciation for Christian living.

We learn these things only if we are open to be taught, willing to exercise our minds, and make a decision to put them into practice. One’s growth should be a steady, continuous process. However, individuals are different and will probably experience different rates of growth.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

1. Even Jesus could not force people to open their minds and hearts to be taught.
2. A willingness to listen and be taught is a necessity to the learning process.
3. Everyone should grow at the same rate since they are receiving the same teaching.
4. Cornelius illustrates the wrong kind of attitude if one wants to learn.
5. A student cannot be taught more on a topic if the teacher knows only what the student knows.
6. A self-deceived person is one who thinks he doesn't have to do what God says in order to be saved.
7. One of the hardest jobs of a teacher is the motivation of the student.
8. Forced attention is better than no attention.
9. Judgment has to be involved in every learning situation.
10. One's emotions must be stirred up in order for learning to take place.

