

Teaching Strategies

Book One

James G. Poitras

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Chapter 1

THE TEACHER AND CORE VALUES

“A good reputation is more valuable than costly perfume”
(Ecclesiastes 7:1, *New Living Translation*).

“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold” (Proverbs 22:1, *New International Version*).

“Choose my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than pure gold”
(Proverbs 8:10, NLT).

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Define core values.
2. Discover core values (by outlining the process).
3. Divide sub-values into major categories of core values.
4. Describe ways of distributing (spreading and reinforcing) core values.
5. Develop a biblical/spiritual culture through implementing values.
6. Defend the selection of core values. (What questions can be asked to test core values?)
7. Discuss the validity of universal core values for any spiritual organization.

INTRODUCTION

You and your team have been dropped into a jungle of opportunities. You have limited time to make an impact and leave a legacy. Your final destination is Heaven. You are determined to please your Maker. You are destined to make a difference. But you

must first discern what is important, your mode of operation, and your route on the expedition. What tools are given? Your charter (mission) is to evangelize the world. You are tasked with transforming and training next-generation leaders. A set of binoculars will establish vision. Your map is the Word of God. Last, but not least, carefully accept and protect a compass demarcating your core values. Our prayer is that you will finish the course and hear “Well done!” Welcome to the journey called Ministry!

This lesson focuses on core values. *Core* speaks of something essential, fundamental, or central. *Value* speaks of what is significant, useful, or important. What is valuable to one person may not be so to another. An elderly missionary lady I once worked with bought me a tiny crystal globe. Her message was as valuable as the gift. She said, “I bought you this globe because your vision is as big as the world.” That little globe is priceless and precious. However, someone ransacking my room probably would toss it aside, looking for greater treasures. I also have a little box of papers colored, created, or crafted by my children and loved ones. Perhaps to others these have minimal worth. Yet there *are* things in life and ministry that we *all* could—and should—value. We can’t succeed without them. They are core values that exist at the heart of all we do, think, and speak. If removed, the context of everything that surrounds them is destroyed. There can be no solid system or structure without a set of core values.

Let’s pause for a minute for some tech-talk. A compass is a direction finder used for navigational purposes. It is a proven lifesaver and instrument of survival. A compass is always used in connection with a map. It contains a magnetic needle that points to the true north. There are four cardinal points on the compass. Using the cardinal four points on a compass as a model, our study will use four core values. They help us determine what is important in our lives. Ray Disney, the nephew of Walt Disney, once said, “It’s not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are.”

DEFINING CORE VALUES

Core values:

1. Create the organization and church culture/community.
2. Guide organizational and personal behavior.
3. Assist in making decisions.
4. Anchor all that is central to life, mission, and vision.
5. Are rooted in principles that do not change based on circumstances, culture, or time.
6. Outline the never-changing definition of what we stand for.
7. Declare what we are willing to live and die for.
8. Are pivotal to the organization’s success or failure.
9. Provide a lens through which we accomplish our goals.

10. Advise us what we need to be and do every day, in every action.
11. Are clear. You don't have to wait around for someone else in order to know what to do.
12. Identify the common core of understanding.

DESCRIBING CORE VALUES

Core values describe:

1. What matters most and how we go about our lives and responsibilities;
2. A common language and culture for all to understand;
3. The soul of the leader and the organization;
4. The organization's DNA; its life's blood;
5. The heart or foundation by which we conduct ourselves;
6. The values and ideals we embrace;
7. Our reason for existence.

DISCOVERING CORE VALUES

Andrew Seidel revealed in *Charting a New Course*, "We all have values that we live by, whether we are conscious of them or not. Our values energize the motives that drive our actions. The important thing is that we consciously choose the values we live by."

We propose that every spiritual organization—church and theological school—shares at least these four values:

- We value truth.
- We value spiritual growth.
- We value evangelism.
- We value relationships.

The following chart gives a deeper overview of the personal and organizational values/habits we stand for.

We value <i>truth</i> .	This includes: (a) doctrinal correctness; (b) telling the truth; (c) willingness to take a stand for what is right; (d) possessing integrity; (e) being sincere; (f) having a blameless character; (g) practicing financial accountability; (h) refusing to be captivated by compromise and pressured into tolerance.
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We value <i>spiritual growth</i> .	This consists of: (a) setting a standard of excellence; (b) being involved in lifelong learning and continuous improvement; (c) possessing a servant's heart; (d) providing stewardship in every aspect of life; (e) being faithful, reliable, and dependable; (f) being committed; (g) staying obedient to God's Word, commandments, and principles; (h) being responsible; (i) utilizing spiritual wisdom; (j) being willing to sacrifice for the sake of others and God's kingdom; (k) developing Christian leadership; (l) mentoring; (m) discipling; (n) being an avid reader and student of God's Word; (o) preparing saints for ministry; (p) equipping the next generation of leaders.
We value <i>evangelism</i> .	This entails: (a) having a God-directed vision, purpose, and mission; (b) being involved in evangelism—the priority of the church; (c) participating in world missions; (d) focusing on church growth; (e) promoting revival.
We value <i>relationships</i> .	This includes relationships with: (a) God; (b) spouse; (c) family; (d) others; (e) society. It involves: (a) unity; (b) love; (c) fellowship/sense of community; (d) caring for others; (e) humility; (f) ability to work with a team; (g) proper communications; (h) respect; (i) openness; (j) compassion; (k) moral purity; (l) embodying proper ethics.

DEVELOPING CORE VALUES

Values are planned, proclaimed, and practiced. They don't just appear. They must be planned. This requires work. In *Purpose Driven Youth Ministry*, Doug Fields says planned values reveal what is important to our ministry. They are our keys to success because they influence all we do. Proclaimed values are those we say we hold. Practiced values are the ones we actually live by. The difference between the two is sometimes referred to as hypocrisy.

Your personal and organizational values need not be limited to four. One can have many values, but only a few values can legitimately be considered as core. We have selected values we feel are evident in every church, theological institution, and Christian ministry. These are made up of any number of sub-points capable of standing on their own as values. Additionally, using four core values will enable everyone to be able to remember them. Some organizations use as few as two. Other ministries have ten or

twenty. Some distinguish between biblical, cultural, personal, and family core values. We want to make our study as easy, practical, and applicable as possible.

Core values, in order to be relevant and have cross-cultural acceptance, should be deeply connected with principles. Principles are consistent. They do not change. They are applicable in any culture, anywhere in the world, and at any time. Core values are lived out through the application of principles and in obedience to God's Word. Core values and principles operate hand in hand. Our values need to be rooted in principles so they do not change based on the situation.

Lately, I have been captivated by the potential of core values in our churches and Bible schools. In the past this subject has been one that has confused me. It is usually tackled from a secular point of view. Organizational values tend to change based on the type of product or service rendered. The church is universal, so it has a set of core values that do not change based on location. They are worldwide, timeless, and vital. They serve as the compass for all we do. If handled properly and consistently, they not only will impact, but transform the cultures we work in. There is no need for us to testify, "We will never be able to change the culture!" Take a look at history. Such statements do not hold true with someone whose distant ancestor was a cannibal, slave trader, or headhunter.

Admittedly, I do not often see all of these values displayed in my cultural context. A drought of commitment to integrity, honesty, accountability, and faithfulness exists. The church operates in maintenance mode instead of evangelistic enthusiasm. However, it is not time to declare defeat but to take action. Graffiti on the Berlin Wall read, "When you change points of view, you can change the world." We can change the world for Jesus Christ. One helpful way is to institute core values in our organization. Great leaders are agents of positive, progressive change. We can create a biblical and spiritual culture.

In *The Shepherd's Covenant for Pastors*, H. B. London Jr. and Neil Wiseman say, "One social scientist recently expressed . . . the quality of a whole culture can be changed if just two percent of the population has a new vision of what needs to be done and starts doing it." What better place to start the revolutionary process than with Bible school teachers, those who mold the hearts and minds of the next generation of Apostolic/Pentecostal preachers.

Our values not only define (organizational) culture, they create it. Culture in its simplest terms is the way we do things around here. It includes values shared by old members and those values taught to new ones. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny."

Plato said that a society cultivates whatever it honors. Make no mistake about what we honor. We honor truth. We honor spiritual growth. We honor evangelism. We honor relationships. We pass along values to the new and reaffirm them to the old. A prerequisite for exemplifying and embodying core values is that people in our organization need to understand them.

In *Principle Centered Leadership*, Stephen Covey stated, “The people who are transforming education today are doing it by building consensus around a common set of principles, values, and priorities.” Our aim exceeds transforming education. We transform lives. Our curriculum with the Global Association of Theological Studies (GATS) is value driven. It is organized around core values. It also is an objective-based, criterion-referenced, transformation-oriented delivery system. William Ralph Inge advised, “The aim of education is the knowledge not of facts but of values.”

DISTRIBUTING CORE VALUES

In *Leadership Theory and Practice*, Richard L. Daft stated that culture is made up of assumed values, understandings, and ways of thinking shared by members of the organization and taught to new members as correct. We pass on values to new members and reaffirm them to the old ones. It is important to build an organization that preserves core ideology in tangible ways. We can shape our Bible school culture through core values by utilizing ceremonies, stories, symbols, songs, quotations, and examples.

John W. Gardner said in *On Leadership*, “Every healthy society celebrates its values. They are expressed in art, in song, in ritual. They are stated explicitly in historical documents, in ceremonial speeches, in textbooks. They are reflected in stories told around the campfire, in legends kept alive by old folks, in the fables told to children.”

In *Leadership Is an Art*, Max DePree tells of a friend, Dr. Carl Frost, who had an interesting experience in Nigeria during the sixties. Electricity had been newly introduced to the village where Dr. Frost and his family were living. Each family received one light bulb in its home. This was progress. Problems came at night. Families would sit in their little houses and stare at the lonely light bulb. Light bulb watching replaced gathering around the fire where storytellers had passed along history. The people “were losing [their] history in the light of a few electric bulbs.” DePree concludes that every family, college, and institution needs storytellers. “The penalty for refusing to listen is to lose one’s history, one’s historical context, one’s binding values. Like the Nigerian tribe, without the continuity brought by custom, any group of people will begin to forget who they are.” It has been said, “We teach what we know. We reproduce what we are.” I would like to rephrase that. “We teach what we know. We reproduce what we value.”

Leaders, Bible school administrators, and teachers should do the following:

1. Confirm shared values.
2. Retain, refine, and redefine core values.
3. Stress them.
4. Reject values not appropriate to the organization.
5. Celebrate “value victories.”
6. Embody the values; walk the talk. We lead others based on the values we embrace as leaders.
7. Reflect on and review values regularly.
8. Align actions with values.
9. Evaluate students based on core values.
10. Teach values.
11. Become men and women of value—valuable.
12. Define acceptable and unacceptable behavior based on core values.

The *Little Blue Book* of the United States Air Force encourages the “Schoolhouse Weave.” This means (in our context) that core values need to be a major, recurring topic in education, training, and woven into existing Bible school courses. This can be done by: (a) creating a short lesson defining core values; (b) building opportunities within courses to discuss core values in the context of the subject matter one is teaching; (c) weaving core value discussions into lesson plans and interaction with students; (d) taking advantage of unexpected opportunities that arise during instruction; (e) incorporating core values into all education and training; (f) designing and teaching a core values series within the curriculum; and (g) as you teach a lesson, indicate which core value is highlighted.

DEFENDING CORE VALUES

Each (core) value should be put to the test. Ask the following questions:

1. Is it biblical?
2. Does it engender passion? Am I willing to fight for it?
3. Is it shared?
4. Is it constant?
5. Will it pass the test of time?
6. Is it clearly expressed?
7. Does it harmonize with other values?
8. Can it be implemented?

(Above points were adapted from a list by Aubrey Malphurs.)

DISCUSSING CORE VALUES

- A. Can you think of ways to remember core values?
- B. Provide examples from song, proverbs, history, speeches, or the Bible that reveal cultural, biblical, and family values in your context.
- C. List several courses in the Bible school curriculum and suggest which core value is quickly revealed.
- D. Go over the list of lessons recently taught in faculty education seminars and assign core values to each.
- E. Reflect over the past month of your preaching, teaching, and writing. What were your messages? What core values are attached to each?
- F. Mention a lesson taught or a message preached that touched your life in a special way. Which core value would be associated with it?
- G. What can be done to ensure that teachers and other leaders have a clear understanding of core values?
- H. What can be done to ensure that students have a clear understanding of core values?
- I. What can be done to ensure that core values are clearly understood in our curriculum?
- J. What can be done to measure, identify or highlight students (or team members) behaving or acting out the core values?
- K. What can be done to secure an understanding of core values taking a top-down approach within the church organization? This would be from national leadership, moving to regional or district leadership, to the local pastors, local church lay leaders, all the way down to membership in the local church.
- L. How can we prevent corrosion of core values?

CONCLUSION

Jane Fleming, in her book *Staying Found: The Complete Map and Compass Handbook*, provides different methods of route finding. She said, “When searchers

eventually locate lost hikers, alive or dead, they sometimes have with them compasses they never learned to use.” It is imperative that each learn how to use our *core values compass*. Otherwise, we risk wandering lost and unmindful of what should guide us in life and ministry. We lose focus of what is truly important and fail to have a guiding compass pointing us in the right direction when making key decisions.

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. Using your own words, define core values. _____
2. Why is a compass a good metaphor in studying core values? _____
3. Why is it important to select only a few core values? _____
4. What are four types of core values mentioned in this lesson?
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
5. List several ways one can share core values within the organization. _____
6. What four core values are applicable and/or shared by every spiritual organization?
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
7. According to Stephen Covey, how is education being transformed today? _____
8. What process can one follow when determining/discovering core values? _____
9. What percentage of the population does it supposedly take to change a whole culture? _____

10. Once core values are determined, what are some things leaders and/or Bible school administrators can do to implement them? _____

11. What is meant by the “Schoolhouse Weave”? _____

Chapter 2

THE TEACHER AND CREATIVE IMPACT

By Pam Sisco

“Creativity is the power to connect the seemingly unconnected” (William Plomer).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, the learner will be able to accomplish the following:

1. List several barriers to creative thinking.
2. Analyze chief culprits to creative thinking.
3. Assess their attitude toward creativity.
4. Explain how they know they have creative potential.
5. Recall four ways in which they can develop their creativity.
6. Summarize the need for creativity in their teaching.

INTRODUCTION

In their article “Awaken Your Students to Scripture,” Bill McNabb and Steven Mabry tell the following story:

A woman read somewhere that dogs were healthier if fed a tablespoon of cod liver oil each day. So each day she followed the same routine—she chased her dog until she caught it, wrestled it down, and managed to force the fishy remedy down the dog’s throat.

Until one day when, in the middle of this grueling medical effort, the bottle was kicked over. With a sigh, she loosed her grip on the dog so she could wipe up the mess—only to watch the dog trot to the puddle and begin lapping it up. The dog loved cod liver oil. It was just the owner’s method of application the dog objected to” (www.youthspecialties.com).

How are you teaching the Word of God? Do you feel as though you are in a wrestling match for the learner’s attention? If so, this lesson is for you. God’s Word is inspired, thus life changing. It’s exciting and relevant, ready to meet the needs of the learner. Howard Hendricks cautions us in *The 7 Laws of the Teacher*: “Whatever you do, don’t bore people with the Word of God.”

Keep in mind that just because you value the Word of God does not mean the learner does—although most people do want to know more about the Bible. We as Christian educators do ourselves an injustice not to take advantage of all the research that has gone into how and what motivates people to learn. So I’m glad you’re here! Let’s discover how creativity can impact your teaching.

BARRIERS TO CREATIVE THINKING

In his book *A Whack on the Side of the Head*, Roger von Oech identifies several barriers to creative thinking. Read the following list on the left and place a check beside any that reflect your attitude, then read the counteracting statements by John C. Maxwell.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> That’s not logical. | 1. Listen to your intuition. |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Follow the rules. | 2. Think results. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Be practical. | 3. Be outrageous. |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> To err is wrong | 4. To err and learn from the mistake is to one step closer |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> There’s one right answer. | 5. The possibilities are endless. |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Play is frivolous. | 6. Play is refreshing. |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid ambiguity. | 7. Explore ambiguity. |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> That’s not my area. | 8. Be a no-limit thinker. |
| 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Don’t be foolish. | 9. Take a leap of faith. |
| 10. <input type="checkbox"/> I’m not creative. | 10. I am creative—I was formed in God’s image! |

“But that’s just not my personality,” you say. Hmm . . . take fear out of the picture, and then what would you do?

Howard Hendricks, in *Color Outside the Lines*, suggests five chief culprits that discourage creative thinkers.

- Parents
- Culture
- Teachers
- Television
- The Aging Process

Do you agree? Why or why not? Take a few moments to brainstorm.

THE CALL TO CREATIVITY

It all began with God. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). With His words, the world came into existence. Light penetrated darkness, giving us day and night. Waters were divided and gathered together to form oceans, seas, rivers, and streams. Dry land appeared at His bidding, and upon it He placed a carpet of grass, herbs, and fruit trees. God saw that it was good. He continued by hanging the sun, moon, and stars. Birds of the air and creatures of the sea took their place. All colors, shapes, and sizes were represented in a grand and glorious display. Our God is a God of impact! Thousands of years later, men and women are still devoting their life to studying one small aspect of God’s inexhaustible creation.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26-27). “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7).

Man . . . God’s great finale. Of all the creatures God created, this one stood alone in the image of the Maker. One plus one equals two—a fact easily understood. If we are created in His image, there is no denying His creative powers.

“Now wait a minute,” you say. “Are you implying that we have the ability to create?” No. The ability to create lies only with an omnipotent God. However, Spirit-filled believers do have a responsibility to exercise that creative Spirit that lies within. Anyone who relies totally on his own abilities will not produce impacting results in the Kingdom (John 15:5).

Paul said, “So everywhere we go we talk about Christ to all who will listen, warning them and teaching them as well as we know how. We want to be able to present each one to God, perfect because of what Christ has done for each of them. This is my

work, and I can do it only because Christ's mighty energy is at work within me" (Colossians 1:28-29, *The Living Bible*).

Let me illustrate . . . you are in a large room. A friend is leaning on the opposite wall. He blows with all his might. Will you feel it? Not likely. You both move a little closer and he blows again, letting a big gust of air billow forth. Yuck, you think. Feeling it yet? Probably not. Now you are standing very close. He once again blows—this time right in your face. You most definitely feel it! This would be a very gross illustration if not for the spiritual application. That "friend" is none other than the One who sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24).

Do you realize that *breath*, *spirit*, and *wind* all come from the same root word as *creativity*? "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). It is only when we draw close to God that we are able to feel that creative breath. Then He is able to speak to our spirit and give us that creative idea that will solve our situation. He crowns our human effort with His supernatural impact.

We all want to teach with impact. "God-breathed" creativity is the key.

As Christians we are called to creativity. Marlene D. Lefever, in *Creative Teaching Methods*, said, "It's a gift that we have from God, and it's a gift that we can give back to Him." Without it we will be an incompetent servant, at worst, or handicapped, at best. (Read Matthew 25:14-30.)

DEVELOPING YOUR CREATIVE POTENTIAL

"They're just not getting it," you silently groan. "Why does it always have to be this hard?" Imagine the Sermon on the Mount in this light:

Jesus took His disciples up onto the mountain and, gathering them around Him, He taught them.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are the meek;
Blessed are they that mourn;
Blessed are the merciful;
Blessed are they that thirst for justice;
Blessed are you when persecuted;
Blessed are you when you suffer;
Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven."
Then Simon Peter said, "Are we supposed to know this?"
And Andrew said, "Do we have to write this down?"

And James said, “Will we have a test on this?”
And Philip said, “I don’t have any paper.”
And Bartholomew said, “Do we have to turn this in?”
And John said, “The other disciples didn’t have to learn this.”
And Matthew said, “Can I go to the bathroom?”
And Judas said, “What does this have to do with real life?”
And Jesus wept.
(Bill McNabb and Stephen Mabry, *Teaching the Bible Creatively*)

Obviously this is not the biblical account, but it reminds us of situations we have been in. Jesus was the master Teacher. Let’s learn from Him. Dorothy Sayers once said, “The people who hanged Christ never . . . accused Him of being a bore—on the contrary; they thought Him too dynamic to be safe” (Hendricks, 14).

The age-old question arises, “Can creativity be taught or are we born with that special gifting?” True, there are those born with an added measure of creative genius, talents, and motivational drive. However, it is just as true that one can develop his personal, God-given creativity beyond its present level.

Want to develop your creativity? Ready or not . . . here we go!

- Break Away!

I admit—I’m a creature of habit. I even like assembly line work! It doesn’t matter which restaurant we go to, I already know what I’m going to order. I figure if I like it, why try something new? Talk about a creativity squelcher!

I’m convinced this fear of breaking patterns has more to do with laziness than the reassurance of the familiar. How many times have we heard it said, “But we’ve always done it this way.” Uh huh . . . and we’ll always get the same results too!

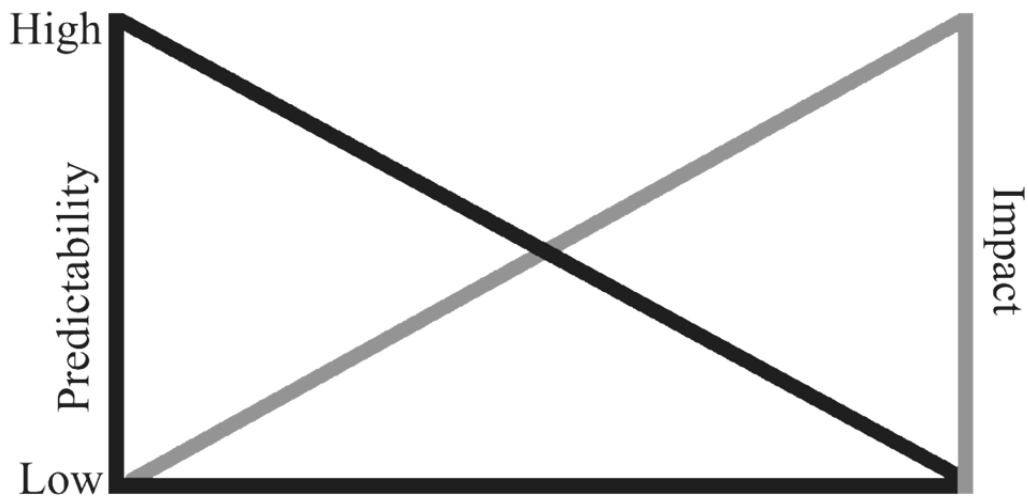
“The old patterns seem so much more right. Yet, they might not be; they might be just more familiar” (Lefever, 16). In order to stir up your creative powers, you must be willing to look beyond the “always done” and see new possibilities. Step out of your comfort zone. Try a new method of teaching. Add the element of surprise. Adopt the idea of “failing forward.”

He failed in business in ‘31. He was defeated for state legislator in ‘32. He tried another business in ‘33. It failed. His fiancée died in ‘35. He had a nervous breakdown in ‘36. In ‘43 he ran for Congress and was defeated. He tried again in ‘48 and was defeated again. He tried running for the senate in ‘55. He lost. The next year he ran for vice president and lost. In ‘58 he ran for the Senate again and was defeated again. Finally, in

1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected the sixteenth president of the United States (*Dare to Soar*, Byrd Baggett).

In our efforts to be more creative, however, we sometimes accept an idea too soon. Ask yourself, is this idea helping to fulfill my lesson aim? If not, keep thinking! Don't give up. Break Away!

Study the following chart adapted from *Color Outside the Lines* by Howard Hendricks. What exactly is being inferred?



- Start Now!

We've all heard it said, "There's no time like the present." This is an attitude that must be adopted if we are ever going to begin the creative journey. Unlike what some people suppose, creativity just doesn't happen. It's plain old hard work! There is a saying, "Perspiration oils inspiration." Pray, pick an idea, and go—start now! Sure, you might fail but keep trying.

A student once lamented, "I've tried to do everything you have taught me, but it just didn't work." Creativity is developed. Boom! It just doesn't hit you and all of a sudden you are a creative person. Starting is the hardest part but from there you must continue with spiritual discipline. It's not an "if I get around to it" kind of thing. It's a conscious effort to continue to grow.

There was a very cautious man
Who never laughed or played.
He never risked, he never tried,
He never sang or prayed.

And when the day he passed away
His insurance was denied,
For since he never really lived,
They claimed he never died.
(*Color Outside the Lines*, Howard G. Hendricks)

A study examined 1,000 creative achievements. The average age of the creator when creativity occurred was seventy-four years. The more we use our creative abilities, the better they become. So . . . start now!

- Challenge the Familiar!

Still with me? Assuming your answer is yes, you probably do want to become more creative. The desire is most likely there. You are on your way. That aspiration can free you to step out of your pattern and challenge the familiar.

Masaru Ibuka once said, “Creativity comes from looking for the unexpected and stepping outside your own experience.”

By “challenging the familiar,” I do not mean challenging the Word of God that hopefully has become a part of who we are. The Word of God is forever settled in Heaven (Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8). It will never change. However, how we communicate that Word in our generation changes.

In my culture growing up, door-to-door evangelism used to be very effective. Today I would not open the door to a stranger due to the rise in crime. There was also a day when a twelve-week Bible study was the way to train new converts. In today’s busy world you would be hard pressed to find someone who would commit to twelve weeks. I’m not saying anything is wrong with either method, but I am suggesting there may be a better one.

The World Future Society estimated that human knowledge would double every seventy-three days by the year 2020. Living in our generation is a challenge. The Lord said to Jeremiah, “If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?” (Jeremiah 12:5, NIV). “Trust me, the days to come will find us in a footrace with more than just horses, and in thickets more treacherous than the Jordan’s. What we face will test more than our courage; it will test our creativity” (Hendricks, 10).

Go to God in prayer. He alone has the answer that will meet the needs of your students. I believe that answer will be different for each location, people group, and student body you work with.

Go ahead . . . challenge the familiar!

- Let Loose in God!

Some teachers believe they should simply trust God to lead them and the class concerning what should be taught in that particular period. True, He may change your direction but spontaneity is not God's way of working in the vast majority of situations. Paul cautioned the Corinthian church whose approach to worship had gotten out of hand, "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace . . . Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way" (I Corinthians 14:33, 40, NIV).

"It's God's nature to plan. In fact, we take personal encouragement in the midst of our life struggles from this truth. We rest in the fact that God is not haphazard. He has a sovereign plan for our lives" (*Creative Bible Teaching*, Richards/Bredfeldt, 152). Being created in His likeness, we tend to plan. Don't you find yourself planning your day, planning your weekend, planning your life? Why do any less in the classroom?

"Creativity is not a synonym for unlimited freedom" (Lefever, 20). In today's world of weird and wacky, the word *creativity* has been severely abused. We recognize as Christians that there are limits to what we do. But have we really explored excellence within those limits? Let loose those self-imposed limits. Pull yourself out of that "it's always been" mentality. S-T-R-E-T-C-H!

No one on the planet is quite like you and—never will be. God uniquely designed you. Let loose in God and see what He does through you!

CONCLUSION

God-breathed creativity is the ingredient that adds "impact" to teaching. You are a potentially creative individual. Notice the word "potentially." It's really up to you. Break away from predictability. Start now! Really look at your students and see their needs. This may mean challenging the familiar approach. Focus on the students, not the lesson. How will they learn best? Let loose in God . . . He alone will take you places you've never been.

I close with this challenge: "Live creatively, friend. . . . Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourselves into that. Don't live vicariously. Each of us must take responsibility for doing the creative best we can with our own lives" (Hendricks, 38).

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. List several barriers to creative thinking. What do you think is your biggest obstacle? _____

2. Do you have the potential to be creative? How do you know? _____

3. What is the key to teaching with impact? _____

4. List four ways to develop your creative potential.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

5. Can creativity be taught or are we born with that special gifting? _____

6. What is the biggest hindrance to breaking patterns? _____

7. What does Marlene Lefever have to say about old patterns? _____

8. What do you think the idea of “failing forward” means? _____

9. Predictability yields what? _____

10. What is the hardest part of creativity? _____

11. In your own words, what is meant by “challenging the familiar”? _____

12. “Creativity is not a synonym for _____.”

13. Summarize the need for creativity in your teaching. _____

Personal Study Notes

Chapter 3

THE TEACHER AND CRITICAL THINKING

“But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law”
(Hebrews 5:14, *Amplified New Testament*).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, the student will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Explain the following terms: *critical thinking, cognition, indoctrination, synthesize, analyze, worldview, and evaluate.*
2. Develop and utilize critical thinking and problem-solving skills in life.
3. Provide four scriptural references that advocate critical thinking in adult education.
4. Identify the extremes of critical thinking and becoming an independent, autonomous thinker.
5. Uncover the limitations of indoctrination.
6. List ten things instructors of critical thinking teach students.
7. Outline how critical thinking is an integral part of biblical interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

You’ve likely heard the old saying, “If you feed a person a fish, you have fed him for a day, but if you teach him how to fish, you have fed him for a lifetime.”

The table that follows humorously depicts a few of the feeding options available when it comes to education:

Spoon feeding	Here is what we believe. This is what you will believe! Repeat after me.
Force feeding	Eat it. It is good for you whether you like it or not.
Intravenous feeding	Do not take any thought for what you are eating. The mind is in neutral. “Intravenous” reminds one of inoculations. It will hurt, but it is for your own good.
Regurgitating the feeding	Throwing up and out answers is not the same as thinking.
Self-feeding	Student learns to eat on his own, to reach his own conclusions in accordance with God’s Word. This is not only what to eat, but why and how.

We are to teach others how to fish for a life span; not expect them to be like goldfish in an aquarium, mouths open and protruding just above the water, waiting for someone to drop in the nutrients.

Christian educators are not merely fish feeding for the day, but offering critical thinking and problem-solving skills for a lifetime, “So that the man of God may be complete and proficient, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Timothy 3:17, AMP).

Like the key Scripture for this lesson states: “But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law” (Hebrews 5:14, AMP).

INDOCTRINATION

One alliance of Bible schools stated their mission was “to equip and train God-called men and women to effectively accomplish apostolic ministry.” To achieve this, one of four explanatory points was “to indoctrinate in biblical doctrine.” The Jesuits used to say, “Give me a child until he is five and I will have him the rest of his life.” Both approaches are similar since they advocate indoctrination. The difference is in what is truly “biblical” and the age level referenced. Indoctrination has its limitations. It merely provides typical answers to ordinary questions. Unfortunately, life is not filled with the ordinary. It is illogical to imagine one can provide standard answers in a diverse, degenerate world. Sometimes one is answering questions no one is asking.

David Martz stated:

The challenge before Christian educators is to help learners grow in Christ and become responsible Christian disciples. This means the ability to think, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and make decisions based on sound exegetical and theological principles becomes essential. Christian educators have the responsibility to help students learn how to learn for themselves (32).

Exegesis refers to the explanation or critical interpretation of the (biblical) text. The abilities mentioned in the block quotation are demarcated in the following table:

Think	Cognition is concerned with the transfer of knowledge. It is the process of knowing or getting knowledge. Incorporating as many methods as possible deepens remembering. Learning is heightened when it is quickly and repeatedly put to use. The physical body ages but the mind continues to develop.
Analyze	Break components down into parts and compare.
Synthesize	Combine and integrate information from various sources.
Evaluate	Assess the value of something and show evidence (Jalongo, et al., 1999, 29).

WORLDVIEW

Christian education entails the transformation of mind and life. “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2, NIV). Another phrase for “pattern of this world” is worldview (the way a person views the world and sees reality). It is a combination of assumptions, presuppositions, perspectives, values, beliefs, and lifestyles, knowingly or unknowingly, that determine how a person will act; and colors how one sees and interprets their society (Edwards, 2000, 33-34).

A Dutch ambassador was entertaining the king of Siam, explaining the wonders of Holland. He told the king that the water in his country would, in cold weather, be so hard that men could walk on it, and even an elephant could saunter across it. The king replied, “Hitherto, I have believed the strange things you have told me, because I look upon you as a sober fair man, but now I am sure you lie” (Locke, Modified 2007, 3). The king’s worldview did not allow him to visualize elephants on ice.

One missionary recalls a visitor from New Brunswick, Canada, to Nigeria, West Africa. The gentleman was trying to explain a little about his homeland to a group of village women. He said, “I come from Canada. It is so cold and there is a lot of snow.” The women were baffled. Snow didn’t fit into their worldview. The man quickly saw

their bewilderment, “Snow; you know that is a lot like ice.” In tropical African rural life, snow and ice did not fit into the picture.

Each of us evaluates what we perceive, read, or hear through the filter of our worldview and most of us tend to measure anything new by what we already believe and feel. . . . However, because of emotional biases, desires, wishful thinking, and lack of knowledge we often deceive ourselves and interpret our experiences in a way that is consistent with our worldview rather than open ourselves to other possibilities . . . If we encourage our students to accept their worldviews as yardsticks against which to measure every idea and value they come upon, we are not teaching them to think critically (Carroll, 2007, 10).

DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING

Robert Carroll states, “Critical thinking is thinking that is clear, accurate, knowledgeable, reflective, and fair in deciding what to believe or do.” The term became popular in 1980 and has gained much ground since then. It is not the same as finding fault, but “critical” in the sense of being crucial.

Instructors of critical thinking teach students to:

1. challenge assumptions;
2. think deeply about issues;
3. pursue the truth;
4. examine honestly and fairly the positions of others;
5. look beyond what is being written by the writer to determine the genuine message being conveyed;
6. advance past simply recalling facts;
7. develop skills for the college years and for a lifetime;
8. apply thinking in a variety of situations;
9. think at higher levels;
10. reflect for themselves instead of only following the crowd;
11. make responsible decisions;
12. support their point-of-view with evidence and reasoning;
13. point out that there are multiple sides to every issue;
14. compare and contrast such ideas;
15. determine and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of differing viewpoints;
16. build a strong foundation or path to sound reasoning;
17. improve problem-solving skills;
18. appreciate the perspectives of others, although not necessarily agreeing with them;
- 19.

20. research and recognize suppositions;
21. openly discuss and appreciate (not necessarily be in agreement) of opinions not the same as one's own;
22. safely ask questions;
23. admit errors and change beliefs when necessary;
24. go beyond what is stated and elaborate on the idea;
25. get to the heart of the matter rather than staying on the surface;
26. clarify ideas and present them in a concise, clear manner;
27. get others thinking about thinking.

Bible students are called upon, through critical thinking, to reflect on the differences between what they have been taught, what they believe, and what the Bible actually teaches. They are avid critical thinkers of the Word. “Now the Bereans were of more noble character . . . for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true” (Acts 17:11, NIV). “Test everything. Hold on to the good” (I Thessalonians 5:21, NIV). “A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps” (Proverbs 14:15, NIV). “Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved . . . a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth” (II Timothy 2:15, AMP).

God's Word is inerrant (without mistakes) and inspired. “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17, NIV). We legitimately compare various interpretations of scriptural passages and doctrines, and debate or explain, with intelligence, why one interpretation is superior to another, and perform a number of hermeneutical (interpretative) tasks closely related to critical thinking. Every Bible reader is an interpreter, a critical thinker. It is a way of life. Each is wholeheartedly devoted to finding and following the truth. Robert Carroll said:

Students quickly learn that I'm not interested in what they think or what their opinion is on anything. Anybody can think and have an opinion, but what matters to me as a teacher of critical thinking is what reasons you have for thinking what you do and can those reasons stand up to scrutiny? (Carroll, 2007, 26).

Additionally, is the student's thinking consistent with the theme or entirety of the Bible? Some may think that critical thinking has the potential of destroying faith and confidence in God's Word and ask, “Is there any such thing as truth? Can I be sure of anything?” Both of these questions “are indeed the very seeds of faith and critical to student development. The leap of faith required by Christianity is actually critical thinking at its best” (Dutton, Hart, and Patten).

We as Christian instructors should avoid the extreme of allowing critical thinking to promote a secular agenda that attacks biblical authority. Neither should we, or our students, become so engrossed in the ideology of being independent and autonomous thinkers that we fail to have a teachable attitude, or reject spiritual authority (Ephesians 4:11-12), the Holy Spirit's guidance (John 17:17), or the role of the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:15-18). Every disciple longs for wisdom, understanding, knowledge (Exodus 31:3; 35:31; Proverbs 2:6; Isaiah 11:2; Daniel 1:4, 17), and the ability to discern what is right or wrong (I Kings 3:9; Ezekiel 44:23; I Corinthians 2:14; Hebrews 5:14).

Solomon was one of the greatest thinkers of all time. He believed a reverence for the Lord was the first step to obtaining wisdom: the ability to think critically (Proverbs 9:10; Psalm 119:99, 130). Well-informed decisions, through critical thinking, will enable our students to take a bold stand for truth. They will have a made-up mind.

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. Explain what is meant by “critical thinking.” _____

2. Explain what is meant by “cognition.” _____

3. Explain what is meant by “indoctrination.” _____

4. Explain what is meant by “synthesize.” _____

5. Explain what is meant by “analyze.” _____

6. Explain what is meant by “worldview.” _____

7. Explain what is meant by “evaluate.” _____

8. Why is it important to teach and practice critical thinking skills? _____

9. What is the purpose of Christian education, as reflected in this lesson? _____

10. What are the limitations of indoctrination? _____

11. List ten things teachers of critical thinking teach students

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____
- J. _____

12. Using this list evaluate a commonly held assumption, presupposition, or worldview in your cultural setting. _____

13. Write out three Scriptures that advocate critical thinking. _____

14. When is critical thinking taken to an extreme? _____

15. Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the view that only the twelve apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. _____

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Chapter 4

THE TEACHER AND CREATING AN ISLAND OF EXCELLENCE

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice” (Hebrews 11:4).
“And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way” (I Corinthians 12:31).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, the student will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Define *excellence*. Apply this definition personally and to the Bible school environment.
2. List five biblical areas where one is admonished to “excel.”
3. Distinguish between excellence and success.
4. Identify a Bible character whose life was marked by excellence and relate how.
5. Propose how one can rise above tribalism, racism, and sexism by utilizing a high standard of excellence.
6. State seven steps in creating an island of excellence.
7. Identify ways people can personally raise their own standard of excellence.
8. Explain how people can personally increase their level of excellence in the classroom.
9. Develop a strategy for creating a personal standard of excellence. Prioritize and state the various components of this strategy.
10. Relate the differences between covering a subject and learning it.
11. Appraise the statement, “He who learns, teaches.” (Do you accept or reject this statement? Why?)

INTRODUCTION

Growing up, I had an attraction to islands. Come to think about it, I still do! An island is any piece of land surrounded by water and separated from other landmasses. On my island, I knew I would be isolated and insulated from all of life's negatives—poverty, a dysfunctional family, abuse, confusion, and inferiority to name a few. Islands seem so peaceful stuck out in the middle of nowhere and disturbed by no one.

At the edge of our property was a large river that separates Canada and the United States. In the middle was a tiny island. I imagined I would escape to that little island, become its king, and live happily ever after. Unfortunately, there were flaws in my thinking. I would become a lonely king to a community of one. And no matter where one goes he still manages to take his problems with him. I'm still fascinated by islands and get energized when I catch a glimpse of one along the coastline. However, instead of moving to an island, I've decided to create one of my own. I call it my *island of excellence*. You can craft one too. This lesson explains how.

NOT AN ISLAND UNTO YOURSELF

John Donne wrote the often-quoted statement, “No man is an island unto himself. Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.” This captures the nugget of truth that we are all connected, part of the brotherhood of all mankind. All men are created equal. There are no lone rangers—in Ghana we call it the Mister-I-Walk-Alone attitude—in the body of Christ (Romans 12:4-5; I Corinthians 12:12-27). We are a building fitly framed together (Ephesians 2:21). A person who cuts himself off from everyone else will soon be wandering lost. It isn't good to be alone (Genesis 2:18; Proverbs 18:1; Psalm 133:1). One *can* be an island, just not *unto* himself, encompassed by selfish thinking and amassing benefits only for ourselves. We are all interconnected, and have individual responsibilities and functions. In speaking of an *island of excellence* I am referring to doing your work—and conducting your life—according to a high standard of distinction, despite or regardless what others do.

AN ISLAND UNTO OTHERS

The sense of community permeates African life, and it is an enduring, crowning achievement of African culture. It can also be seen in other areas of the world. It fosters *communalism*, not to be confused with *communism*. It advocates the worth and importance of the community. The group is the focus of its individual members. As we create an island of personal excellence, we receive a double blessing—one for ourselves and one for the community at large. Kwame Gyekye said, “The people hold that the welfare of each individual is dependent on the welfare of all.” Communalism and

individualism are both encouraged. He provides the following proverbs. See if you can discern those that speak of a sense of community, individuality, or both.

“The clan is like a cluster of trees which, when seen from afar, appear huddled together, but which would be seen to stand individually when closely approached.”

“Life is mutual aid.”

“Walking alone is a pitiable condition.”

“One finger alone cannot lift a thing.”

“The left arm washes the right arm and the right arm washes the left arm.”

“Life is as you yourself make it.”

Gyekye also states, “The individual is responsible for the life he or she fashions for himself or herself.” We can’t lazily sit back and expect others to do everything for us. That’s a good quotation, but there is one word I especially like: *responsible*. Each is responsible for creating an island of excellence. Stephen Covey played on that English word when he spoke of being “response-able.” Each individual is response-able of making a positive impact in the community. We are more than willing to receive—prosperity, blessings, gifts—but what are we willing to give? In his presidential inaugural speech, John F. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you—rather ask what you can do for your country.”

We are encouraged to excel in everything we do.

“Just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in earnestness, and in your love—see that you also excel in this grace of giving . . . it tests the sincerity of your love” (II Corinthians 8:7, TLB).

Notice the word *sincerity* in that Bible verse. An urban legend tells that in ancient times Roman sculptors would cover flaws in their work in order to deceive the viewer. Potters covered mistakes in pottery with wax. The happy buyer would take it home, pour in hot water, the wax would melt, and the pot would leak. So honest potters would hang a sign *Sincerus*, being interpreted “without wax.” That act of deception would never happen today, right? Wrong! What about the tomato seller who places the best product on top of the basket and the nearly rotten ones on the bottom, hoping the shopper will never realize—at least until she gets home. Or consider furniture makers who cover defects or use cheap materials. You may live in the midst of corruption and where dishonesty is the daily special. Doing your best is a personal decision. Create an island of excellence regardless of what others do, or whether they even notice your good deeds.

WHAT IS EXCELLENCE?

What is excellence, anyway? It is doing something in which one excels; an outstanding feature or quality; and speaks of one who exceeds in his actions. John Gardner said, “Excellence is doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.” Excellence is not only a skill; it is an attitude. It is about being, not merely doing. A poster at the Lake Williamson Retreat Center defines *excellence* as the ability “to surpass others or be superior in some respect or area; do extremely well.” It goes on to say, “Excellence can be obtained if you *care* more than others think is wise; *risk* more than others think is safe; *dream* more than others think is practical; *expect* more than others think is possible.”

Creating an island of excellence is not about competition—trying to be better than someone else. In *Rising Above the Crowd*, Brian Harbour says, “Success means being the best. Excellence means being your best. Success, to many, means being better than everyone else. Excellence means being better tomorrow than you were yesterday. Success means exceeding the achievements of other people. Excellence means matching your practice with your potential.”

“We’re not, understand, putting ourselves in a league with those who boast that they’re our superiors. We wouldn’t dare do that. But in all this comparing and grading and competing, they quite miss the point” (II Corinthians 10:12, *The Message*).

J. Hampton Keathley adds, “The pursuit of excellence refers to pursuing and doing the best we can with the gifts and abilities God gives, giving our best to the glory of God.”

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be firm (steadfast), immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord [always being superior, excelling, doing more than enough in the service of the Lord], knowing and being continually aware that your labor in the Lord is not futile [it is never wasted or to no purpose]” (I Corinthians 15:58, AMP).

Excellence is considered to be a core value in many organizations and educational institutions. Remember, core values describe what matters most and how we go about our lives and responsibilities.

How does one achieve excellence? Thomas Watson encouraged, “Stop doing less-than-excellent work.” That is a great place to begin.

Don’t you detest it when people are racist, sexist, or tribalistic? Oprah Winfrey said she grew up being taught, “Excellence is the best deterrent to racism or sexism.” If one achieves high-level excellence, another will not care if he is black or white, male or female, or from this place or that. Excellence breaks through barriers!

One of the biggest problems today is people excuse themselves from doing their best because of their circumstances. No one can stop you from creating an island of excellence, doing your best, and reaching your God-given potential except *you*.

Dr. Benjamin S. Carson Sr. is the director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at the esteemed John Hopkins Hospital. He shared his story in a series of inspiring books that explain his rise from poverty, hopelessness, and a single parent home in the poor section of Detroit to become one of the world's top brain surgeons. Like his other books, *Think Big: Unleashing Your Potential for Excellence* shares Ben's philosophy that it is not where you come from that matters, but where you are going, and how you plan to get there. His mother, Sonya, was an enormous influence in his life. She had only a primary three education, was married at thirteen, and had heart problems. She found out that her husband, a minister, already had a wife and five children. But she determined that her two boys would excel and worked untiringly toward her goal. She stressed that education was the only way they would ever escape poverty. She insisted that if Ben achieved excellence, it would overcome and surpass any concern anyone would have with the color of his skin or his ethnic background. Ben is living proof that we are more than products of our surroundings, that we can build an island of excellence.

Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. It was certainly not an ideal situation. However, Joseph did his best and God was with him. He still used all of his talents and abilities for God's glory. Eventually, he was thrown into prison. Even there, Joseph did his best, and applied himself. Ultimately, Joseph rose to be the second most powerful man in all the land, next to Pharaoh himself. The pit couldn't stop him. Slavery couldn't stop him. Prison couldn't stop him. He created an island of excellence in each pitiful situation.

"The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did" (Genesis 39:23, NIV).

AN ISLAND UNTO GOD

Excellence in the ministry is all about serving others in the same way that Christ served. We serve Jesus Christ. He is our real Master.

"In all the work you are doing, work the best you can. Work as if you were doing it for the Lord, not for people" (Colossians 3:23, *New Century Version*).

The pursuit of excellence is an appropriate response to the first and second greatest commandments. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

According to J. Hampton Keathley in his lesson “The Pursuit of Excellence,” these verses show that God wants us to excel in both what we *are* (our inward character) and what we *do* (our behavior). Pursuing excellence is a goal and mark of spiritual maturity. It must be motivated by the right values, priorities, and motives. Otherwise, the pursuit of excellence can become a mark of spiritual immaturity as man is possessed with his own significance.

HOW TO CREATE AN ISLAND OF EXCELLENCE

Value it: Make the decision that excellence is one of your core values.

Care about it: It all starts with caring about what you are doing. Refuse to have an I-Don’t-Care attitude. Eric Liddell, known as the Flying Scotsman and a 1924 gold medal runner, once said, “I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run I feel His pleasure.” He cared that he pleased God.

Decide it: Set the standard. Know what you want. Set goals and rules of conduct. Know the main thing. Do the main thing. Be committed. Be passionate. Decide today, *I will create an island of excellence. I will, with the help of God, do my best!*

In his book *The White House Years*, Henry Kissinger tells a story of a university professor who gave an assignment. Students handed in their papers, and days later they were returned. One student searched his paper for a grade or a comment. The only remark was, “Is this the best you can do?”

The student pondered the question, looked for ways to improve his paper, and returned it to the professor. It came back again after a few days with the same comment, “Is this the best you can do?”

He knew it was better than the first, but he could add a few quotes, and even make it a bit longer. He rewrote the paper again and passed it in. When returned, the comment remained, “Is this the best you can do?”

This went on ten times. Finally, the student was exasperated and went to the professor and said sternly, “Yes, this is the best I can do!”

The professor responded, “Good! Now I will read it!”

That story highlights two things. You should work until you reach a high standard of excellence. Then, and only then, have you earned the right for someone to sit up and take notice of what you have done. When you create an island of excellence, believe me, people will notice.

Repeat it: Form good habits. Right decisions that are done repeatedly over time compound success.

Aristotle said excellence is not an act, but a habit. Excellence is a result of what we do repeatedly. I might add, what we repeatedly do *correctly*. They say, “Practice makes perfect.”

A professional athlete or gifted musician spends more time in preparing than in performing. A preacher spends more time in preparing than in preaching (hopefully). Excellence requires repeated practice and discipline.

Pray it: God is able to help. Pray, “Lord, help me be all I can for your glory. Without you I can do nothing of any lasting or eternal value.” Prayer is talking to God concerning what He wants. It is an attempt to please Him. What made Abel’s sacrifice a more excellent one? Abel was trying to please God by obeying what God instructed.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Joshua 1:8, NKJV).

Deliver it: Do what you say. Make promises and keep them. Deliver more, and deliver it sooner. Go beyond the expectations of others. Be realistic about telling people when you will have something done. Make promises based on your current capacity to fulfill.

Learn it: Find continuous improvement opportunities. Grow through acquiring new knowledge. Research. Become an expert in your field. And don’t be afraid to teach others. Pass on what you know to the next generation.

Review it: Allow for positive feedback and input from your peers, your students, or your followers. Permit evaluation by others and conduct self-evaluation. How am I doing? How can I improve? Am I staying true to my God, my family, and my clients or customers? Ask, what am I doing that is not excellent? If you were the recipient of your work, would you be satisfied and/or impressed? Find ways to improve.

Specialize in it: Determine your gift mix and how it can be best used for the kingdom of God. Put the accent on strengths. People notice negatives first and become captured by them. Determine your strengths and allow them to open doors to freedom to do what you want for God’s glory. God expects us to use what we have been given to its fullest potential. Remember Paul said, “This one thing I do” (Philippians 3:13).

Focus on it: Keep your mind on your priorities and goals. Those who chase two rabbits end up catching none. Doing a little of everything usually means ending up with a whole lot of nothing. We don't need a jack-of-all-trades. He's usually master of none. Be careful of how you manage your time.

“But only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:42, NIV).

Expose it: Be willing to serve others. Give your excellence away. Be helpful. Hang around or be exposed to other people of excellence. This will challenge and encourage you to excel.

Finish it: Begin by doing your best in little things. Follow through. And remember to finish well. It is not only important how you begin the race, but how you finish it.

Colin Powell said, “If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.”

“Whatever work you do, do your best, because you are going to the grave, where there is no working, no planning, no knowledge, and no wisdom” (Ecclesiastes 9:10, NCV).

One company advertises, “If it must be done; it must be done well.”

It is often said, “If it is worth doing, it is worth doing right.” It's worth creating an island of excellence.

Rest from it: Take time to rest and reflect. This refreshes and restores.

James Michener said, “One who has mastered the art of living simply pursues his vision of excellence at whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing.”

CREATING AN ISLAND OF EXCELLENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

Now it's time for specific applications.

It is registration day. Students step into the classroom with a heart to learn. You feel it as you look over the class. You see it in their eyes. What will you teach them? How will you go about teaching it? Will you create an island of excellence in the classroom, or flounder in the muddy, murky, waters of mediocrity?

1. Use plain language. If people do not understand what is being said, the lack of understanding prevents the seeds from taking root. Clarify hard words to increase understanding. Keep it “simple.” The real test of intelligence is the ability to come down to the level of the students/learners.

2. Use good questions to deepen understanding. These should not only be recall questions that ask, “What do you remember?” but questions that ask, “What do you think?” Asking questions will allow you to know whether the student has understood what has been taught. Students enjoy answering questions if they know the answers. It builds confidence and motivates them to learn more. It also convinces them they can learn what is being taught. Teachers can also check and see if students are paying attention through asking questions. Let your students learn by asking questions. The only foolish question is the unasked question. When a student asks a question, do not punish him (or the rest of the class) by saying, “That is a good question. For an assignment I want you to find the answer.” Many times this is a cover-up for not knowing the answer yourself. If you don’t know the answer, admit it. Tell the student that you will find the answer and bring it to the next class.

3. Make your teachings “relevant.” We should teach things that are applicable to life. Jim Rohn once said, “Don’t let your learning lead to knowledge, let your learning lead to action.” Students must be encouraged to practice what they have learned. Check out the epistles. The writers not only taught content, but also how to apply it.

In their book *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, Howard and William Hendricks wrote, “One of the fundamental laws of education: people only learn what they can use. If information has no use, people won’t learn it. They may write it down, they may file it, they may be able to regurgitate it on an exam; but that doesn’t mean they’ve learned it. Learning involves change.”

Look for truth in the lessons you teach. Reinforce truth! Determine life principles in your lessons. This provides students with teaching they can apply to life situations.

4. Focus on learning and not just covering the content. “More” is not always better. Teach those things that are important and let your students know what is important. Ted Sizer says, “Less is more. Thoroughness counts more than coverage.” Jesus said, “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear” (John 16:12). Choose the main points and teach them.

Arlo and Jane Moehlenpah said in *Teaching with Variety*, “There is a great difference between covering a subject and teaching it. It is much better to cover less and teach something than to cover much and teach nothing. If the students fail to learn, the teacher has not taught.”

5. Make your subject interesting. You are teaching from the most exciting Book in the world. Don't be boring. Be an expert in your subject. You cannot teach what you do not know. People learn best when they enjoy the process.

Howard Hendricks has said, "If you stop growing today, you stop teaching tomorrow . . . If you don't know it—truly know it—you can't give it out."

We must learn first before we can teach it to others. The best teachers possess a teachable spirit. There is always a striving for excellence and continuous improvement in the life of a teacher. Before we can expect others to learn and grow, we must first grow ourselves. There are five teachers in life to glean from: family, school, media, peers, and church.

“As long as you live, you learn; and as long as you learn, you live”
(Howard Hendricks).

6. Prepare well. Know your subject matter. You become more confident when you have prepared properly. Don't be caught pulling out your notes fifteen or thirty minutes before your session and rushing to class. In his article "Striving for Greatness," Rodney Shaw advises that you should treat each classroom encounter as another opportunity to connect with your students and with those to whom you minister.

7. Care about your students. It has been said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

8. Set the example. Someone is watching you. You are a walking Bible. People learn least by what you say. They learn a little more by what you do. People learn most by what you are. Students are saying to us, "Don't tell me, show me!" Teaching is not what you do, it is what you are.

9. Protect your teaching time through:

Study	You must learn first.
Specialization	Become an expert in your subject.
Prayer	Depend on the Holy Spirit to work.

10. Start from where your students are. Take them from the known to the unknown. Take them into a deeper understanding. Effective learning builds on what the student already knows. Assume nothing. Your students may not understand the basics. A pre-test helps determine knowledge students bring to the course.

11. Allow the students to discover truth and answers. Encourage their creativity. Give them assignments that cause them to discover the lesson you want to teach. Students learn by doing. Remember, “Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I’ll understand” (Anonymous).

“He who learns, teaches” (Ancient Proverb from Ethiopia).

12. Make your teaching time a priority. Do not allow yourself to be distracted by telephone calls, knocks at the door, and other things that pull you away from your class. Be on time for class.

13. Give regular tests and assignments to encourage learning and to check learning progress. Use more than one type of evaluation method in your classes.

14. Practice what you teach. Teach what you practice. Bruce Wilkinson says, “The teacher of God is a living link between the Word of God and the people of God.” He states that communication of God’s Word can be choked in one of four ways: The *character* of the communicator can dull the impact of the application. The *conduct* of the communicator can hinder teaching if the teacher is guilty of sin or carnal behavior. The *communication* of the teacher or poor delivery can greatly diminish the message. The *change* in the communicator is important. If it transforms the teacher, it can transform the students.

15. Personalize the lesson material. Build a skeleton by finding the main points. Add personal illustrations, things you have found from study or experience, and relevant verses of Scripture.

16. Most teachers place emphasis on “what” instead of “why.” Content alone cannot be our focus. Aim for understanding. William J. Durant said, “Woe to him who teaches men faster than they can learn.”

17. The first ten minutes of your class are most important for learning. Review is also important but should be done later in the class time. Review frequently: at the end of the class, week, and/or month. This reinforces learning.

18. The most often used teaching method is the lecture; yet it is the least effective for learning. Follow Jesus’ example. He used the lecture plus method; incorporate other teaching methods with your lectures.

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. What is referred to when the author writes concerning an “island of excellence”?

2. Cite Scriptures to prove we should excel in everything we do. _____

3. What is “excellence”? _____

4. According to the poster at the Lake Williamson Christian Center, how is excellence achieved? _____

5. How is excellence the best deterrent to racism and sexism? _____

6. What did Ben Carson’s mother promise him? _____

7. Explain five ways we can create an island of excellence. _____
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
D. _____
E. _____

8. How can one develop a specialization? _____

9. According to Howard Hendricks, what is one of the fundamental laws of education? _____

10. How can one (without money) show he cares for his students? _____

11. Outline ways you can make teaching your personal priority. _____

12. According to Bruce Wilkerson, the communication of God's Word can be choked in what four ways?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Chapter 5

THE TEACHER AND HIS FAMILY

By Linda Poitras

“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (James 3:1, KJV).

“Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged by God with greater strictness” (James 3:1, NLT).

“Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1, NIV).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Analyze requirements for church leaders. The word *masters* in James 3:1, means “teachers” and includes pastors, church leaders, missionaries, preachers of the Word, or anyone who gives instruction to a congregation.
 - A topical Bible study on this subject is outlined for completion in this lesson.
 - Following a chain reference of I Timothy 3:1-13, James 3:1, and I Timothy 5:7-8, students will learn the seriousness of teaching/training others.
2. List Scripture references, and be familiar with key verses (italicized), describing expectations for roles of different family members.
 - Husbands—*Colossians 3:19*; I Peter 3:7; Ephesians 5:25-33; Proverbs 5:15-18
 - Wives—*Colossians 3:18*; I Peter 3:1-5; Ephesians 5:22-24; I Corinthians 7:39
 - Fathers—*Colossians 3:21*; *Ephesians 6:4*

- Mothers—Genesis 3:16; Proverbs 6:20; 30:11, 17; 31:1; Isaiah 49:15; Psalm 139:13; Genesis 2:18; *John 16:21*
 - Children—*Colossians 3:20*; Ephesians 6:1-3; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Luke 18:20
3. Contrast these biblical roles outlined for husbands, wives, fathers, and mothers with their own culture, noting things that are alike and unlike God's Word. These similarities and differences should be written on a separate sheet of paper, with Scripture references that explain God's family plan beside each.
 4. Practice transforming cultural models unlike God's Word into those that agree with Scripture (Romans 12:1-2). Transformation happens when we:
 - Understand the importance of family for every believer's growth and walk with God (I Timothy 5:7-8).
 - Recognize where and when we fail to follow God's pattern for the family (Psalm 119:9-11).
 - Search the Scriptures to gain further insight on God's plan for the family (John 5:39).
 - Obey the Scriptures to transform our families into God's plan (Matthew 7:24-25; Luke 6:47-49).
 - Teach the Scriptures to our physical and spiritual children (I Timothy 4:11-16).
 5. Quote James 3:1 (KJV) as a reminder of the seriousness of teaching. This verse appears in subsequent lessons in this series for teachers as the key verse.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is serious business. God expects those who share Him with others to be true to His Word. The key verse for this series makes this clear (James 3:1). First Timothy 3:1-2 supports this with some requirements for anyone desiring any leadership place in the church. The desire and call to lead must be confirmed by the Word of God and the church (I Timothy 3:1-10; 4:12), using the qualifications given by God.

Beginning Exercise

(May be done in class or at home, depending on time available.)

- ✓ Memorize James 3:1 (KJV). *(One easy way to do this is by writing the verse five or more times, reading the verse aloud after every writing. Include the Scripture reference before and after the verse.)*
- ✓ After completion of this exercise, call on participants to stand and quote the verse at different intervals during the lesson.

TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

God’s requirements for the first church leaders—started in the Book of Acts and continued consistently throughout the New Testament—are still for the church today. As Bible college instructors, guiding men and women who will be entering the ministry, we need to understand clearly and obey these requirements.

- If you cannot rule your own house, you have no place in the leadership of God’s kingdom (I Timothy 3:2-5).
- Paul wrote Timothy, directing him to be careful of what he taught and to be an example to the believers (I Timothy 4:12; I Peter 5:3).
- Paul instructed him to proclaim the original faith taught by Christ and the apostles (II Timothy 1:13-14).

These requirements are especially true of those involved in training others to share the gospel. The “stricter judgment” of teachers (James 3:1) means we have to be more careful than others who lead.

Exercise 1 (*May be done in class or at home, depending on time available*)

- Using your Bible and an exhaustive concordance, look up every verse possible that speaks about the role of church leaders. (To help you get started, use the verses mentioned in the Lesson Objectives.)
- List these references and the qualifications mentioned, one at a time, on a separate sheet of paper.
- According to *The DAKE Annotated Reference Bible (KJV)*, there are at least sixteen qualifications for overseers/bishops, and ten for deacons. How many can you find?
- For clarification, write the meaning of each qualification, using a Bible dictionary.
- Put a special mark (*star, black dot, etc.*) beside each qualification that relates to the family.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

Teaching by example is one of the greatest ways to deliver a lesson. Our example must be blameless. God begins this search for “blameless” men with their leadership of the family (Titus 1:6). “An elder must be well thought of for his good life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who are not wild or rebellious” (Titus 1:6, NLT).

God has always made it clear that a man in Kingdom leadership must first follow the biblical plan in leading his family. The consequences of failure in this area appear often in Old Testament examples of men like Abraham, Jacob, and David. These men suffered their most serious heartache for failing to lead their family in a godly pattern.

- **Abraham** “hearkened to the voice” of His wife, and took her maid as the mother of God’s promise (Genesis 16:2). This was the same failure as Adam in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:17). Does this mean it is wrong to listen to your wife? Only when she is persuading you to go against God’s Word. Abraham’s mistake caused great heartache—to himself, his son by the bondwoman, and God’s chosen people, Israel. Throughout history, Abraham’s firstborn of the bondwoman (Ishmael—Arab nations of the world) and God’s covenant son of Sarah (Isaac—Israel) have remained bitter enemies.
- **Jacob** was the younger of Isaac’s twin sons, born after Isaac entreated the Lord for children (Genesis 25:21). Even though God had promised his mother “the elder shall serve the younger” (Genesis 25:23), Rebekah and Jacob took matters into their own hands by deceiving Isaac for the birthright (Genesis 27:1-29). This deception grew out of the partiality each parent gave to one of their sons (Genesis 25:27-28). For the rest of his life, Jacob suffered deception at the hands of others. His father-in-law tricked him into taking Leah instead of Rachel as his wife (Genesis 29:21-25). His own sons deceived him in their revenge for Dinah, their sister (Genesis 34:13-31), and again, most grievously, when they sold Joseph into slavery (Genesis 37:12-36).
- **David** was called “the man after God’s own heart” (Acts 13:22; I Samuel 13:14). Yet he committed serious offenses against the law of the Lord in His family. With Bathsheba, David broke three of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:13-14, 17). Although forgiven, the consequences of this act followed David the rest of his life and even after (II Samuel 12:7-12). Rebellion and trouble were a constant in David’s family (II Samuel 12-17) and the whole nation of Israel (II Samuel 18-20) because he failed as a family head.

These few examples are a clear warning to us of the seriousness of family leadership with anyone called and chosen of God. The New Testament brings this closer to home with the admonition given by the apostle Peter to believers everywhere: “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered” (I Peter 3:7 KJV). Wrong treatment of a wife creates a barrier between a man and God.

Since proper family leadership is so important, let us look at God’s plan for the chain of authority in the home.

ROLES OF FAMILY MEMBERS

Who is first?

In I Corinthians 11:3, Paul wrote to the church about the proper relationship between men and women. He upheld the marriage relationship as one ordained by God. This letter was written to those Christians living at Corinth, possibly the most prominent Greek city of Paul's time. The letter emphasizes the fact that no matter where you call "home," God's plan for the family is the same. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (I Corinthians 11:3, KJV). Paul taught the Corinthians several things here (points adapted from notes in *The Full Life Study Bible, KJV, 1785*).

- In Christ, there is true equality among men and women as heirs of God's grace. This equality comes from the order and subordination with respect to authority that is His plan (Galatians 3:28). God is head of Christ, Christ is head of man, and man is head of woman. This "head" refers to both authority and origination—the order in which each came into being (I Corinthians 3:23; 11:8, 10; 15:28; Ephesians 1:21-22; Colossians 1:18). When anyone—man or woman—gets out of this proper order, trouble occurs.
- The husband's headship is not because of culture (men are not "over" every woman), but because of God's creative activity in making the woman a help meet to the man (I Corinthians 11:8-9; Genesis 2:18; I Timothy 2:13).
- *Subordination* does not mean suppression or oppression. This mistake is made by too many cultures of the world. God's plan requires the husband to see the worth God puts on his wife. It is the husband's responsibility to protect and lead her so she can fulfill God's will in the home and church.
- Being the "head" does not make the husband superior to his wife. In the kingdom of God, leadership never implies "greater," but servanthood and obedience. These are the signs of greatness in God's eyes (Matthew 20:25-28; Philippians 2:5-9).

As "head," it is the responsibility of a man to choose a wife that is God-fearing. This process begins with one of the most serious commandments in God's Word—one that is too often ignored. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14).

The seriousness of this verse cannot be overemphasized. The marriage relationship is the closest kind. Your marriage partner will become a part of you—you

become “one flesh.” All the way back to the Garden of Eden, when God brought Eve to Adam, this has been God’s plan. “And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:23-24).

HUSBANDS

Too many times the role of husband is confused (or just fused together) with that of father. These two family titles are not the same and their job description is very different. Although both belong to the man, they have serious effects on all other family members.

The husband’s first responsibility is mentioned above: leaving father and mother and cleaving to his wife. In many societies of the world, this command is totally ignored. In order to become “head” of his family, a man must be out of the “headship” of his father’s house. As long as he is eating and sleeping under his father’s roof (or mother’s, as the case may be), he has a certain obligation to obey his father’s rules. A husband’s priority should be in taking care of his own family.

Jesus Himself considered this important enough to mention. Some Pharisees came to Jesus, asking questions about divorce and trying to trick Him. Jesus used this opportunity to remind them (and all His listeners) of the original family plan.

“And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4-6).

Mark’s record of this event is almost word for word (Mark 10:5-9). This cleaving is serious business, and cannot happen unless there is some “leaving” first. *Cleaving* means “to stick like glue,” and is vital to the growth of any marriage relationship.

Parents are not abandoned (continue to honor your father and mother), but there must be a change of loyalties. A husband must make decisions (even with mistakes), and make up his mind to consider and work things out with his wife *first*. *Together* they learn to weather life’s storms by following God’s plan for their lives as a new family unit.

Exercise 2 *(May be done in class or at home, depending on time available)*

- Be familiar with Colossians 3:19.
- Using an exhaustive concordance, locate other verses that speak to husbands. What is the repeated theme in these verses? *(Take note of the good examples listed in the Lesson Objectives. These will help you get started.)*
- On a separate sheet of paper, list references to husbands and write a short explanation of requirements mentioned in each. Be sure to keep this separate from the position of “father.”
- List requirements and expectations of husbands in your culture.
- Compare cultural expectations with biblical requirements.
- Mark those that are the same as Scripture with a check mark. Those that are different should be marked with an X.

Husbands who follow God’s family plan are truly rare. Too many times, men get caught up in the business of providing for their family’s physical needs. They forget that spiritual leadership in the home (pastoring their family) is one of God’s biggest priorities.

WIVES

A wife and a mother are not the same thing. Women in general are not to be treated the same as a wife, and when they are, it causes confusion and strife among men and women today. Discovering the God-given plan for wives will open our eyes to reasons why women are suffering at the hands of over-bearing, disobedient men.

Exercise 3 *(May be done in class or at home, depending on time available)*

- Be familiar with Colossians 3:18.
- Using an exhaustive concordance, locate other verses that speak to wives. What is the repeated theme in these verses? *(To help you get started, use the verses provided in the Lesson Objectives.)*
- On a separate sheet of paper, list references to wives and write a short explanation of requirements mentioned in each.
- List requirements and expectations of wives in your culture. Remember to keep this separate from the position of a mother.
- Compare cultural expectations with biblical requirements.
- Mark those that are the same as Scripture with a check mark. Those that are different should be marked with an X.
- Go over these biblical and cultural comparisons together in class.

Solomon said, “Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD” (Proverbs 18:22). The *New Living Translation* says, “The man who finds a wife finds a treasure and receives favor from the Lord.”

Then Lemuel—thought to be a pseudonym for Solomon—increased the market value of godly women when he said, “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:10). I checked, and rubies are the most valuable gemstone anywhere. They are more precious because they are rarer than other jewels. Women who understand and obey God’s plan for being a wife are definitely the most valuable possession a man can receive from God. She is valuable in so many ways, especially as his God-chosen helpmate (Genesis 2:18).

FATHERS

When He chose to create man first, God set the pattern for family leadership. God always intended fathers to be the spiritual leader at home, so He established the covenant with Abraham as the one responsible to train his children to “keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment” (Genesis 18:19). (See also Deuteronomy 6:7.) If you are blessed with a godly father, you are blessed indeed.

Exercise 4 *(May be done in class or at home, depending on time available)*

- Be familiar with Ephesians 6:4.
- Using an exhaustive concordance, locate other verses that speak of fathers. What is the repeated theme in these verses? (Take note of the good examples listed in the Lesson Objectives. These will help you get started.)
- On a separate sheet of paper, list references to fathers training their children, writing a short explanation of requirements mentioned in each.
- List requirements and expectations of fathers in your culture. Remember to keep this separate from the position of a husband.
- Compare cultural expectations with biblical requirements.
- Mark those that are the same as Scripture with a check mark. Those that are different should be marked with an X.
- Go over these biblical and cultural comparisons together in class.

“And now a word to you fathers. Don’t make your children angry by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction approved by the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4, NLT).

Two words in this translation make it clear that the father’s responsibility is a consistent, ongoing one. Can you find those two (2) words in the verse above?

Discipline implies daily exercise. What verse in the Old Testament supports this command of God? (Proverbs 22:6.) The word *train* in this verse speaks of consistent discipline that helps children “cultivate a taste for” God’s plan for their lives. Parents dedicate their children to doing what God says is right from the time of their birth.

Instruction implies consistency, and a change in material as growth occurs. This can take place only if fathers are present and observant of their children’s needs and capabilities. If your work hours are too long, make a change the priority in your life. Obeying God in regard to your children is not an option. It is a commandment to fathers everywhere.

- List three other Old Testament verses (besides Proverbs 22:6) that command fathers to train their children daily and consistently. (Use your concordance to help with this exercise.)

So many times, fathers turn the training responsibility for their children over to their wife. This is not God’s plan. It is true that mothers are in the home more. However, to place the mother in charge of the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4) for their children is to take her out of her God-given place in the home. This is the responsibility of fathers, and must be taken seriously.

With the strenuous work schedules of most men—especially men of God—what can be done to ensure the father’s role in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” for his children? (Below are some suggestions. Add other ideas [different time frame or setting] from your own culture.)

- Except for extreme emergency, spend time with your children every day.
- Endeavor to have family devotions together each day.
- Use this time together to talk about things of God.
- Allow family members—from oldest to youngest—to share a question or discuss something that is disturbing them.
- Do not allow disagreements or strife into family discussions.
- Make the Word of God a priority.
- If possible, assign verses to memorize, using methods that are fun and encouraging.
- Pray for, and with, each family member. Praying for each other—especially between members who are having difficulty getting along—is a special way to bond as a family.
- Encourage Bible reading with fun activities. Passages should not be too long, but comprehension is important. Talk about the verses read, and make sure all understand their meaning and purpose.
- Do not make these family times seem like school or church. Thirty minutes is a good length of time.

- If available, use a family devotional book. These come with ideas for every day of the year.
- Incorporate your own cultural traditions into these family times. God’s Word applies to everyday life no matter where we live.

No matter where you live and work, make the training of your children a priority. Be sure your wife knows (and hopefully agrees) with this training. Encourage her participation in whatever activities you choose to use.

“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

It is always a good idea to work “with” your wife. However, you both need the Holy Ghost working in you—that threefold cord—to be successful in your family.

Disobedience to the command “be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” causes serious problems. I Corinthians 6:15-17 tells us why: “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” God cannot join you to become a “threefold cord” in such situations. Be careful when choosing a wife, the one who will become the mother of your children.

MOTHERS

Mothers are important no matter where a child is born. A true mother (not just a female who gives birth) is one of God’s greatest gifts, and more valuable than all the riches of this world. God’s plan for mothers is special. The earthly mother He chose is a great example for us all. Mary was very young, but dedicated totally to obedience to God’s plan for her life (Luke 1:26-38).

Becoming a mother is never easy. Because of Eve’s choice to “know good and evil,” we will never know how God intended the process, because Eve never gave birth until *after* the curse. That curse dealt specifically with the pain of childbearing and submission to her husband: “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3:16).

In our world today, giving birth occurs often, even with children/youths not ready for the responsibility. “Giving birth” and “motherhood” are NOT the same. Sadly, many females give birth but abandon or refuse to take care of, help train, and raise up godly children. Remember a mother’s major responsibility is to help her husband in the spiritual training of their children. “My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother” (Proverbs 6:20). Proverbs 1:7-9 and 4:1-5 give similar instruction that fathers teach first, and mothers support that teaching.

Deuteronomy 11:18-21 gave Israel the original plan for making sure their children knew and followed God’s ways. Fathers were given the responsibility of sharing God’s law with their children. Moses spoke these instructions first in Deuteronomy 4-6. Solomon made it clear that this responsibility was shared with mothers.

Exercise 5 *(May be done in class or at home, depending on time available)*

- Be familiar with John 16:21.
- Using an exhaustive concordance, locate other verses that speak of mothers. What is the repeated theme in these verses? (Take note of the good examples listed in the Lesson Objectives. These will help you get started.)
- On a separate sheet of paper, list references to the mother’s role, writing a short explanation of requirements mentioned in each.
- List requirements and expectations of mothers in your culture. Remember to keep this separate from the position of a wife.
- Compare cultural expectations with biblical requirements.
- Mark those that are the same as Scripture with a check mark. Those that are different should be marked with an X.
- Go over these biblical and cultural requirements together in class.

The prophet Ezekiel spoke of the example of mothers. His dire warnings to Israel should still be remembered today: “Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter” (Ezekiel 16:44). Good or bad, children copy their mother. What example are we giving them to follow?

CHILDREN

Obviously, if we talk about fathers and mothers, there must be children around somewhere. These most tender family members have a serious job to do. It is for training in future adulthood. It is the most valuable lesson anyone can learn about authority: obey. For most of us, this is difficult to do. We have our own ideas, we “think” we know better than those in charge, and we plan ways to prove our right thinking

God’s command to children comes with a promise: “Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. Honor your father and mother. This is the first of the Ten Commandments that ends with a promise. And this is the promise: If you honor your father and mother, you will live a long life, full of blessing” (Ephesians 6:1-3, NLT). Obedience is the key and a blessed long life is the reward.

- **Exercise 6** (*May be done in class or at home, depending on time available*)
- Be familiar with Colossians 3:20.
- Using an exhaustive concordance, locate other verses that speak of this commandment for children. (You may find help in the examples listed in the Lesson Objectives.)
- On a separate sheet of paper, list references to the children’s role, writing a short explanation of requirements mentioned in each.
- List requirements and expectations of children in your culture. What do parents expect? What do other family members expect? What expectations for children are not part of the Bible plan?
- Compare cultural expectations with biblical requirements.
- Mark those that are the same as Scripture with a check mark. Those that are different should be marked with an X.
- Go over these biblical and cultural comparisons together in class.

Besides the reward for obedience, there is another good reason to follow God’s plan. It prepares you for the future. When you are attending school, it is essential to obey teachers and principals/administrators. When you are working in the public, you should obey your boss. No matter what your life involves, obedience to authority is a lesson everyone needs to learn, especially as applied to God’s role for every family member.

CONCLUSION

God has always had a plan. He has a plan for every person. He spoke to His disobedient children (Israel): “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end” (Jeremiah 29:11, KJV). The *New Living Translation* makes this verse clearer: “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.’”

Disaster comes when we do not seek and follow His plan. Just as Adam and Eve decided to know the evil that God wanted to protect them from, so we live our lives following tradition, family norms, and peer pressure that takes us far away from His good plan for us.

Know God’s plan for your family, understand what He wants each member to do, and then follow His plan. Blessing and reward will follow because our God is faithful (Lamentations 3:22). Healing, restoration, and future blessing are all ours as a result. What joy it is to live with a family that follows God’s plan!

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. List three requirements for church leaders (especially those involved in training others to share the gospel) as found in the New Testament with Scripture references.

- A. _____

- B. _____

- C. _____

2. Write in full (with reference) the New Testament verse of Scripture that speaks of the “stricter judgment” of teachers. _____

3. What is one of the greatest ways to deliver a lesson? _____

4. Where does God begin His search for “blameless” men? (Support your answer with Scripture.) _____

5. Give three (3) Old Testament examples of men who failed as family leaders. (Support with Scripture.)

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

6. Write in full (with reference) the verse that agrees with the following statement: “Wrong treatment of a wife creates a barrier between her husband and God.” _____

7. Write in full (with reference) the verse that emphasizes the fact that no matter where you call “home,” God’s plan for the family is the same. _____

8. What does the term “cleaving” mean? _____

What has to happen before the “cleaving” takes place? _____

9. Give a short explanation of how a man becomes “head” of his family. _____

10. List and briefly explain the two words (*found in New Living Translation*) of Ephesians 6:4 that make it clear the father’s responsibility is a consistent, ongoing one. What Old Testament verse supports this command of God? _____

11. Write in full (with reference) the verse that tells us God's command to children comes with a promise. _____

12. In the blanks provided, write True or False to the statements given about family roles.

A. _____ The desire and call to lead must be confirmed by the Word of God and the church, using the qualifications given by God.

B. _____ God has always made it clear that a man whose family leadership follows the biblical plan is required for Kingdom leadership.

C. _____ In Christ, there is true equality among men and women as heirs of God's grace. This equality comes from the order (man as head) and subordination (wife in submission) with respect to authority that is God's plan (Galatians 3:28).

D. _____ The husband's headship is not because of culture (men are not "over" every woman), but because of God's creative activity in making the woman to help her husband (I Timothy 2:13).

E. _____ A wife and a mother are not the same thing.

F. _____ "Husband" and "father" are two family titles that are the same, with the same job description.

G. _____ Spiritual leadership in the home (pastoring their family) is one of God's biggest priorities for husbands.

H. _____ A woman who understands and obeys God's plan for being a wife is definitely the most valuable possession a man can receive from God.

I. _____ God always intended fathers to be the spiritual leaders at home, so He established the covenant with Moses that gave husbands the responsibility to train their children to "keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

J. _____ Mothers are helpers who agree with, support, and uphold the training given first by fathers.

K. _____ The most valuable lesson anyone can learn about authority is to obey.

L. _____ Besides the reward for obedience, another good reason to follow God's plan is that it prepares you for the future.

M. _____ Jeremiah 29:11 supports the statement that God has always had a plan for every person.

N. _____ A mother's major responsibility is to help her husband in the spiritual training of their children.

O. _____ Proverbs 22:6 gives instructions that fathers teach first, and mothers support that teaching.

Personal Study Notes

Chapter 6

THE TEACHER AND HIS RESPONSIBILITY

“Don’t be in any rush to become a teacher, my friends. Teaching is highly responsible work. Teachers are held to the strictest standards” (James 3:1, MSG).

“Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1, NLT)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Reveal what takes place at the judgment seat of Christ.
2. Provide an understanding of what is meant by the *Bema*.
3. Explain how the Word of God will judge us.
4. Recognize the various types of rewards or awards to be given at the judgment seat of Christ.
5. Identify various responsibilities of the Bible school teacher.
6. Explain what James is referring to when he states that teachers will be judged more strictly.
7. Point out three things teachers are to do with truth.
8. Compare how words can lead someone closer to, or further from, Christ.
9. Explain the power involved in each of the illustrations James uses in chapter 3.
10. Reveal James’s main concern (in James 3) when it comes to teachers.

INTRODUCTION

The role of the Bible school teacher encompasses multiple responsibilities.

A Bible school teacher...

1. *Imparts* knowledge and passes truth to the next generation (II Timothy 2:2). Prior to her untimely death in the *Challenger* disaster, Christa McAuliffe expressed, “I touch the future. I teach.”
2. *Prepares* students for effective works of service in Apostolic ministry (Ephesians 4:12).
3. *Assists* in the spiritual formation and transformation of students. Teaching is about changing lives. D. L. Moody said, “The Scriptures were not given for our inspiration but for our transformation.” Teachers are catalysts or agents of change.
4. *Disciples* others to be obedient to the commands of Christ. I’m sure you’ve noticed the first time the word *Christian* was used in God’s Word. “They assembled themselves with the church, and *taught much people*. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26, emphasis mine). That identification was a direct result of teaching.
5. *Fulfills* the Great Commission. Christ’s final message on earth can be narrowed down to two words, “Teach . . . teaching” (Matthew 28:19-20).
6. *Motivates* students to lifelong learning and pressing toward perfection. Alan Redpath said, “The conversion of a soul is the miracle of the moment, the manufacture of a saint is a task of a lifetime.”
7. *Sets* the example: shows the way, and goes the way, so others can imitate and follow (John 13:12, 15; I Corinthians 11:1).

Participants in a recent faculty education program identified a teacher as a man of truth, a man of influence, and a man of example.

Gil Rugh lists at least three things teachers are required to do.

Know the truth	Without knowing the truth you cannot teach others.	II Timothy 2:15; I Timothy 1:3-11
Live the truth	Godliness should characterize all believers; especially leaders. Leaders are to be teachers of the Word.	I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9
Teach the truth	There is a famine of sound Bible teaching today.	Amos 8:11; II Timothy 4:3-4

“Not many [of you] should become teachers (self-constituted censors and reprovers of others), my brethren, for you know that we [teachers] will be judged by a higher standard and with greater severity [than other people; thus we assume the greater accountability and the more condemnation]” (James 3:1, AMP).

Reading James 3:1 one may wonder, “Why is James so hard on teachers? And what’s this about stricter, more severe judgment? How is that possible? Why is it so?” A quest for answers sends us to the Word and supplementary resources.

First of all, let us look at the judgment referred to. All believers will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to be judged according to how each one taught and lived. We will provide an account for our actions. Our lives will be evaluated based on our works and what we have done (Romans 14:10; II Corinthians 5:10). This will be judgment in the sense of receiving or losing a reward (I Corinthians 3:14-15). The Bible will judge what we have done (I Corinthians 3:13); what we have said (Matthew 12:36-37); what we believe (II Timothy 2:15); and how we have spent our time. We should live in faithful obedience to Christ, knowing our works will one day be revealed and tested. Our lives and teaching must please and honor Christ. When we exercise our duties with excellence and faithfulness we have nothing to fear when it comes to God’s greater strictness on teachers of His Word. Our Judge, the Lord Jesus Christ, will bring to light or disclose our walk and works (I Corinthians 4:5). This examination will be stern but also commendatory.

The *Bema* was a raised platform where the Roman magistrate or leader sat, made decisions, and passed a verdict. Among the Greeks in Paul’s day, it was a place where athletes would compete for the prize under the watchful inspection of judges who verified that all rules were followed (II Timothy 2:5). The judge would lead the champion to the podium to receive his reward. For the Christian, our reward(s) are eternal. Our service to God will be reviewed and rewarded. The Word of God speaks of rewards (II John 7-8; Revelation 22:12); crowns (II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; I Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10), treasures (I Timothy 6:19), and commendation (Matthew 25:21). To hear Jesus say “Well done” will be the greatest reward of all. Let’s make it our life’s ambition not to be disqualified in the race (I Corinthians 9:27).

In order to win the contest, receive the prize, and hear the Lord’s applause, approval, and acclamation, teachers need to discharge their teaching ministry and responsibility with precision. Why?

Teachers fulfill a vital ministry. Teaching is the revival ministry of the church. However, in many areas the role of teaching is downplayed today. Perhaps this is one of the reasons false teachings and/or lack of teaching abounds. In the early church, teaching was essential (Romans 12:7; I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11).

Teachers have a great responsibility. Teachers need to carefully consider the seriousness of responsibility involved. There are rewards to be gained, and consequences to be shunned. The teacher is responsible for *what* and *how* he teaches God's Word. Was our teaching scripturally based, accurate, and truthful? Did we live it? Did we teach truth in love?

“Great gifts mean great responsibilities; greater gifts, greater responsibilities!” (Luke 12:48, MSG).

Teachers carry out a weighty, momentous task. Like marriage, it is not to be entered into lightly. We will all give account. Teachers can and should lead people to truth. However, teachers could—God forbid—just as easily lead them to error.

Teachers are subject to greater accountability. Increased responsibility equals or calls for increased accountability. God holds teachers responsible for the lives and spiritual growth of those under them. Accountability protects. It guards both the teacher and the student. Everyone should be accountable to someone.

Teachers set the example. The teacher should live what he teaches. Some say, “Practice what you preach.” It is better said, “Teach what you practice.” Failure to live according to one's teaching is met with severe consequences. Sammy Stewart once said, “Our doctrine is best preserved when we become practitioners of our doctrine.”

“In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:7-8, NIV).

Teachers have a tremendous influence in the body of Christ. New believers depend on teachers for their spiritual depth and growth. Teachers make a difference.

Teachers should receive God's stamp of approval. It is better to seek the endorsement of God, and be more concerned about pleasing Him, than to seek the approval of men.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (II Timothy 4:3).

Teachers are given great dignity. Teachers accrue great respect and distinction. This, however, is balanced by the potential for condemnation. One African proverb warns that the higher a monkey climbs up the tree, the easier it is to see its backside. (This

means as one progresses in leadership, his or her weaknesses become more noticeable and the leader may receive more criticism.)

Teachers receive immense trust and are subject to enormous expectations. Many times human behavior is such that we first believe in the person before we believe in his teaching. Students are susceptible and have admiration, confidence, and respect for their teachers. We should be careful never to misuse or abuse these kindnesses, for learners have high expectations of their teachers.

Teachers are involved in serious business. It is a matter of life or death. Eternity is in the balance. Mistakes, whether intentional or unintentional, bring destructive consequences. Teachers are guides, not misguides.

A story is told of a terrible storm that raged across the eastern part of the United States, making the progress of the train difficult. Among the passengers was a woman with a child. The mother was concerned she would get off at the wrong station. A gentleman, seeing her anxiety, said: "Do not worry, I know the road well, and I will tell you when you come to your station."

In due course the train stopped at a station just before the one at which the woman wanted to get off. "The next station will be yours," said the gentleman.

They went on, but in a few minutes the train stopped.

"Now is your turn, madam. Get out quickly!"

The woman took up the child and thanking the man, she left the train. At the next stop, the brakeman called out the name of the station where the woman had wished to get off.

"You have already stopped at this station," called the man to the brakeman.

"No, sir," he replied, "something was wrong with the engine, and we stopped for a few moments to repair it!"

"Oh, no" cried the other man, "I put that woman off in the storm when the train stopped between stations."

As they went back they found the lady dead, frozen to death in the storm, with the child lifeless in her arms. It was the mistake of misguided directions.

Teachers utilize a deadly weapon. A chief mark of holiness is the ability to control one's tongue. Teachers must be careful not to misuse this tiny member that wields immense power. Its use has a great bearing on the teacher's condemnation. James was

concerned with the communication of teachers. The *Life Application Commentary* states, “As works reveal the depth of a person’s faith, so words show the depth of a person’s maturity.”

James spoke of a bit, rudder, tongue, and spark, all of which have something in common. They are small but direct something larger than themselves. In *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the New Testament*, Warren Wiersbe said, “The size of a thing does not determine its value or power.” He also said, “We often think that our words are unimportant, but the wrong word can direct the listener into the wrong paths. An idle word, a questionable story, a half-truth, or a deliberate lie could change the course of life and lead it to destruction. On the other hand, the right word, used by the Spirit, could direct a soul out of sin and into salvation. . . . The wrong word at the wrong time could break a heart or lead a person astray.”

Wiersbe offers the following explanation of the illustrations James used.

Power to direct	The bit and rudder	3:3-4
Power to destroy	The fire and animal	3:5-8
Power to delight	The fountain and tree	3:9-12

Teachers acquire knowledge of the Word of God. “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?’” (Mark 12:24, NKJV).

How can we guarantee God’s approval rather than His condemnation? “Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth” (II Timothy 2:15, AMP).

To avoid misinterpretation we must learn how to provide correct interpretation. Stable principles of interpretation must be employed. Of course, it goes without saying, it is not only important to study, but to obey what we’ve learned.

Teachers attract strict standards. Teachers are held to the strictest of requirements by administration, leadership, followers, and last but certainly not least, God. The world enjoys drawing attention to leaders who fail to follow what they teach. It gives them license or an excuse to live as they please. Teachers must be careful of what they say and do.

“And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be

required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more” (Luke 12:47-48, NKJV).

“Do you think you can trap others without bringing destruction on yourselves?” (Ezekiel 13:18, NLT).

Teachers grow roots in our lives. They provide a strong anchor. No one wants to be a tree with weak roots or a house built on the sand. People, churches, and organizations can drift from the truth. One man made a remark to a friend that a Christian college was now teaching all the branches of learning. His young friend responded, “Yes, it now has all of the branches and none of the roots.”

It is possible to teach and preach things that are only branches of the tree—nonessential—but what people like to hear. It is imperative to teach subjects that are the roots and anchors of Christianity.

Teachers handle God’s Word carefully and accurately. We have received an inheritance. “Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (II Corinthians 4:1-2). The phrase “handling deceitfully” originally meant “to catch with bait, to ensnare, to corrupt with error.” I would hope a Bible school teacher would never deliberately ensnare or corrupt his or her students. However, we must still be careful, accurate, and never careless when teaching God’s Word. Knowledge is a prerequisite for teaching any subject.

Teachers touch future generations. The teacher impresses himself (and Christ) on the hearts and minds of others. Teaching touches a single life, an entire generation, and indirectly those that follow. This point has already been made in the first section of this lesson but justifies repeating. The church is always one generation away from extinction. We hold the future in our classrooms. Our students are like wet cement. Impressions made, positive or negative, last for eternity.

Many times when churches move away from truth it is because seminaries, Bible schools, and Bible school teachers fail in training the leaders. Timothy Beougher and Alvin Reid cautioned in *Evangelism for a Changing World*, “When a denomination’s theology changes, that change almost always begins in the seminaries that train its leaders.” This is a sharp warning for all who teach in Bible schools.

Teachers enjoy many rewards and privileges. We pass on truth, securing the future of the church. We impact lives, develop ministries, and prepare men and women for works of service in God’s kingdom. We play a vital role in fulfilling the Great Commission. We remain in the hearts and minds of our students for years to come. When

we get to Heaven, it will be so rewarding to see students we taught, and to know how they have been responsible in reaching others as an extension of our ministries.

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. How many Christians will stand before the judgment seat of Christ? _____

2. What are some of the things God's Word will judge? _____

3. What was traditionally judged at the *Bema* for the Greeks? _____

4. What type of commendation do we want to receive from the Lord? _____

5. What does James 3:1 say concerning teachers? _____

6. At a faculty education program teachers identified a teacher as a man of what three things? _____

7. According to Gill Rugh, what three things should teachers do with truth? _____

8. Prove that teaching was important in the early church. _____

9. According to Sammy Stewart, what is the best way to preserve Apostolic doctrine? _____

10. Explain or identify the deadly weapon utilized by teachers. _____

11. How can one guarantee God's approval rather than His condemnation? _____

12. When a denomination's theology changes, that change almost always begins where? _____

Personal Study Notes

Chapter 7

THE TEACHER AND LESSON PREPARATION

“For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments” (Ezra 7:10, KJV).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Quote Ezra 7:10, with emphasis on each thing Ezra did. Throughout the lesson (at noted intervals) the teacher will pause and give the class (volunteers, selected groups—for example, people wearing a blue shirt, etc.) chances to quote this verse.
2. Know and follow Ezra’s example of personal preparation, *then* teach.
 - Prepare your heart (involves separation from worldly ideas, determination to only follow God—be what He wants you to be).
 - Seek after God’s ways, thoughts, plan (study—involves knowing, understanding, head preparation).
 - Obey God’s law (show Him your love—do what God says is right—put your hands to work for Him).
3. Locate key verses that apply to each of the three points of personal preparation.
4. Prepare lessons following the example of Ezra: Knowing, Being, and Doing.
5. Teach a prepared lesson.

INTRODUCTION

Long ago, a Japanese emperor asked an artist to paint a bird. Months and years passed and the artist still had not brought a painting to the palace. Finally, the emperor became so frustrated that he went to the painter's home and demanded an explanation. The artist quickly placed a blank canvas on the stand. In less than an hour, he completed the painting, which became a treasured masterpiece. When the emperor asked the reason for the long delay, the painter produced lots of drawings of feathers, wings, heads, and feet. He explained that all of his research and study had been necessary to complete his brilliant masterpiece (*Our Daily Bread*).

Great lessons do not quickly happen. They take lots of preparation.

ACTIVITY: Instructor calls out one clue at a time, giving a short interval for students to respond before going to the next clue. The person who guesses correctly first is the winner.

1. His father's name was Seraiah.
2. Bible scholars say he wrote at least four books of the Bible (I and II Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah.)
3. According to tradition, he founded the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem.
4. Tradition says he collected all the Old Testament books together as a unit.
5. He prepared his heart.
6. He sought the law of the Lord.
7. He obeyed God's law.
8. He was a priest . . . descendant of Aaron.
9. He believed Moses' law was from God and obeyed.
10. He was a scribe.

WHAT CAN A TEACHER LEARN FROM EZRA?

Who Was Ezra?

When we meet Ezra, he was getting ready to lead the second group of Jews back to Jerusalem. They had been in exile for seventy long years. Jeremiah had written they would return to Jerusalem years before it happened (Jeremiah 29:10-14), and Ezra was one of the chosen (prepared) ones who helped to fulfill that prophecy.

Ezra prepared his heart to seek God's Word, know God's plan, and obey it. Ezra's determination to follow God gave him distinction and honor to this very day.

Ezra was a man with a mission. He prepared his heart and fulfilled that mission by making sure God's Word was the foundation for the remnant of God's people who survived the Babylonian exile.

Ezra truly believed God's Word was the final authority for everything Israel was supposed to do. He believed it was true, never changing, and for all time. Ezra did not just believe; he acted on what he believed (Ezra 7:6; Nehemiah 8:13).

Quote Ezra 7:10.

What Did He Do?

Ezra 7 outlines Ezra's genealogy all the way back to Aaron, the high priest. Many of the priests failed to lead Israel to obey God's law. That was one reason the nation was in exile in a foreign land. Ezra chose God's plan for his life. That plan included leading the people in three ways:

1. A revival of worship (Ezra 7:11-27)
2. A commitment to God's Word (Nehemiah 8)
3. Repentance for unfaithfulness to God (Ezra 9:1-15; 10:1-17)

God always blesses and helps people who earnestly seek Him, living with loyalty and faithfulness to His Word. This is not some secret formula to God's blessing, but a promise for anyone who wants to follow Ezra's example.

How Did Ezra Prepare?

Step 1: Ezra Prepared His Heart. He determined to do things God's way, making a firm commitment and a solemn promise. This is the first step anyone takes. How is this possible?

ACTIVITY: Begin with the references given in the Introduction, and use a concordance to find at least five verses from the Old and New Testaments that explain how to prepare your heart.

The Book of Nehemiah gives more insight about "heart preparation" for God's people.

"They swore a curse on themselves if they failed to obey the Law of God as issued by his servant Moses. They solemnly promised to carefully follow all the commands, regulations, and decrees of the LORD our LORD" (Nehemiah 10:29, NLT).

According to the *Full Life Study Bible-KJV* notes on Nehemiah 10:29 (735), the people made a firm commitment to obey God’s will by dedicating themselves to

- serve the Lord in faithfulness to His commandments (v. 29);
- keep themselves separated from the world (vv. 30-31);
- support the work of God with their time, money, and possessions (vv. 32-39).

All this heart preparation was a direct result of the revival brought about by Ezra’s commitment to helping the people hear and understand God’s Word. This type of commitment is what David meant in Psalm 57:7: “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise” (NLT).

What did Ezra do next? Since heart preparation means getting rid of anything that keeps you from following what God declares is right, the next step is simple:

Step 2: Ezra Sought God’s Ways. This literally means he sought God’s thoughts and plans for all of life. We do not read of all Ezra did before he left Babylon, but when King Cyrus gave the edict for those to return to Jerusalem who wanted to go, Ezra was ready. He already had his mind made up, and a list of things he needed to take with him. He already knew what was required. He had spent his time wisely in captivity, studying God’s law and seeking God’s plan.

ACTIVITY:

- Begin with Introduction references, and use a concordance to find at least five verses from the Old and New Testaments that explain how to study (literally “seek”) God’s ways.
- Give students five minutes to find more references.
- Call a representative from each group to present their verses to the whole class.
- As verses are called out, put a check beside the ones already found in your group.
- Each group has a chance to mention any verse not yet called out.
- Volunteer will write the list of verses on the board as students copy them down.
- Play “catch” with the verses listed on the board/chart by throwing a ball (can use a wadded-up paper, small block, or other light-weight toy) into the audience.
- Whoever catches the ball will read the first verse called out.
- That student will throw the ball to someone else, who will read the next verse, and so on.
- Do not spend more than ten more minutes on these verses, but encourage students to write down any verses not listed in their group and look them up outside of class time.

Knowing God’s ways, thoughts, and plans is essential. What is next?

Step 3: Ezra Obeyed God’s Law. The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah give many examples of obedience to what Ezra discovered in God’s law.

It is sad that some of the things Ezra read to the people were things they had never heard before. This was, after all, the Law God had given His people when He chose them out of every tribe, nation, kindred, and tongue. Somewhere, the ones responsible for making sure the Law was obeyed had stopped reading the Law themselves. They did not know it, had not heard it, and did not practice it.

ACTIVITY: Begin with the references listed in the Introduction, and use a concordance to find at least five (5) verses from the Old and New Testaments that explain how to obey God’s law.

Ezra’s mission was much like ours today—a re-commitment to God’s Word as the guide for all of life. As Bible school instructors, we have a grave task, but God’s Word supplies everything we need to see the job finished.

Now that you are separated and determined (heart is fixed) with all the knowledge of God’s plan (head understands), it is time to live the things you know. This involves obedience and becoming the character of God (hands do what God’s Word says is right).

Quote Ezra 7:10.

Why Did Ezra Do It? There was a reason why Ezra “prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it.” Ezra was not bored, looking for something to occupy his time. He was not job hunting, trying to find work that would pay his bills. He was born into a family with God’s call on His life. Even so, there was a special purpose in Ezra’s personal preparation. He prepared his heart, found out what God’s law said, and obeyed it—all so he would be qualified to “teach in Israel statutes and judgments.”

Why all of this preparation just to teach? Because teaching God’s Word will preserve the truth, show people what is right, and keep God’s Word alive in future generations.

HOW DO TEACHERS PREPARE?

- A. Prepare your heart (I Samuel 7:3; II Timothy 2:21).
- B. Prepare your mind by seeking and studying (Psalm 119:9-11; Luke 11:9).
- C. Prepare through obedience/actions. Do not merely practice what you teach. Teach what you practice (Jeremiah 42:6; Luke 11:28; James 1:22).
- D. Prepare through example (Nehemiah 8-10; Ezra 7:6-28; 8:15-36).
- E. Prepare the lesson (II Timothy 2:2, 15).

Prepare Your Heart. All teachers should begin lesson preparation with personal preparation. This requires personal discipline, and involves time. The best source of every lesson is extensive Bible reading. Who has the time to sit down and read the whole Bible without stopping or getting up? Few have ever done that.

As with every other large task, the best way to do it is one step at a time. Heart preparation begins with the first step of Bible study—observation. What do you see when you read God’s Word? How much time do you have to spend just reading your Bible every day? Do you have minutes: ten, fifteen, thirty, or sixty? Or do you only read your Bible in preparation for a particular message, to answer a question, or to complete an assignment? How much time do you think it would take every day for you to be able to read your Bible through—from Genesis through Revelation—in one year? (Give time for responses, but the correct answer is fifteen minutes a day, following a schedule of chapters and verses.)

Bibles are available that have already divided God’s Word into portions (segments that take a certain amount of time). These “Daily Bibles” have dated all the chapters and verses of the Bible so that within one year, you will read every chapter and verse in God’s Word.

Bible reading charts are also available that do the same thing. Some Bibles have these in the back. Other Bible reading charts are available from the Sunday School Division, United Pentecostal Church International, Hazelwood, Missouri 63042, USA.

As teachers of the Word of God, we have to “make time” for listening to God’s voice. God’s Word is straight from His mouth to my ears.

We cannot teach—no matter how skilled or how many resources we have—unless we spend lots of time with God. It is like “investing” in a bank. Every minute listening to Him is a valuable deposit. When someone unexpectedly asks you to speak, testify, or give input in a discussion, you can draw from your bank of deposits, and God will bless. However, if you have no deposits invested, you will have little to share.

Make time with God the number one priority in your life. This means read your Bible just to listen to God and pray—just to talk to Him and hear His voice. Without this personal discipline, your teaching will never be what God meant it to be. When you read something that convicts your heart, talk to God right then and there, and make sure you correct your mistake. This heart preparation is for all time, every day of your life.

Quote Ezra 7:10.

Prepare Your Mind (Head). Reading your Bible (listening to God’s voice) is not the same thing as studying God’s Word (seeking His will). The foundation of all Bible

study is observation. Observation is about *how you read*. If you read well, you have conquered the most difficult part of Bible study.

As with most anything else you study, one of the best ways to learn is *repetition*. So read your Bible repeatedly. That can mean different things. Here are a few suggestions:

- Read your Bible aloud.
- Have someone read the Bible aloud to you.
- Listen to audio recordings of someone reading the Bible.
- Read the Bible in different translations.
- Read the Bible in a different setting. If you normally read your Bible sitting in your room, go outside and walk around the compound (on familiar ground) as you read.

This is only one of the many ways to read your Bible. However you do it, be sure you read daily (consistently), and with a desire to hear what God is saying.

What version/translation of the Bible should you read? There are many Bible translations available today. Most are designed for easy reading, but be careful. These can change the meaning of what the original author intended when writing what God spoke.

Here are some categories for Bible translations (bring as many examples as possible for students to look at):

- **Literal**—as close as possible to the original: King James Version is the example.
- **Free**—eliminates historical and cultural “barriers” by putting verses in modern terms (sometimes called “paraphrase”): *The Message* and *The Living Bible* are examples.
- **Dynamic Equivalence**—translates words, cultural phrases, and grammatical construction of the original language into “precise equivalents” or thought for thought in modern language: *New International Version* and *New Living Translation* are examples.

Interpreting comes by understanding the Scriptures and is the second step in Bible study. As you endeavor to understand God’s Word, you are interpreting the Scripture. You are trying to understand what the author was saying, who he was saying it to, and what God wants you to get from His original message. Ask God to help you understand what He meant when He inspired that author to write those words.

You should use the King James Version—or its linguistic equivalent—to teach Bible doctrine. The other modern translations help teach issues of practical, everyday

Christian living. Always go back to the version you have that is closest to the original to make sure the doctrine did not change with the newer translation.

Begin with whatever version you have, and build yourself a library. A library is not necessarily a large collection of books. A library is a few good books that will help you learn as you study, and understand as you read. Begin today looking for books that will help you make studying God's Word a priority in your life. Begin with these (if possible show students an example):

- A good reading Bible—without notes, maps, or charts, but with room to write as ideas and inspiration come
- A good study Bible—with maps, notes, study helps, charts, etc.
- Alternate Bible translations—parallel Bibles are good
- A Bible dictionary—to define unfamiliar words in a Bible setting
- A good concordance—one that matches your Bible version (for example, the King James Bible needs a King James concordance)

What do you notice about this library? (Most of the books are Bibles, or closely related.) The Bible is your greatest and most-used source for lesson preparation. Make all your Bibles your friend by using them. As time and money allow, you can add other books to your personal library. Remember: add books for needs, not just to increase the number of books in your library.

After your heart is prepared and your head understands, your hands need to be involved. What should you do?

Prepare to Practice (Hands). The final part of Bible study is application. Every lesson needs to be about life, not just facts. Knowledge is good, but must be something you can use for making life better, if it is of any value. God wants teachers to be bridge builders. His eternal truths never change, but how do you apply these truths to an always-changing world?

Quote Ezra 7:10.

(The following information was taken from *Research & Resources* by Raymond Woodward):

- THEN—Bible text
- BRIDGE—universal principle
- NOW—practical application
 - Every time you read from God's Word, be sure you know who was writing, to whom they were writing, and why the passage was written: was

it an answer to a question, instructions for daily living, or to help solve some problem?

- The time period is also important, because it helps to understand a bit about lifestyles and culture of the day.
- Where was the writing done, and was it sent?

Discovering these things makes the application simpler, because it helps you understand what these things mean to you here and now. This is the universal principle—the bridge between the writings of the Bible and life today. How do you discover these things? We call it “bridge building.”

Begin with the Word of God (Bible text). What is the eternal truth (universal principle that applies anywhere and always) in this passage? What message was the author trying to give? After you have discovered the truth (God’s message), decide how you should use that truth in your own life.

Once you have built your bridge, you can begin to use the lesson. It does not matter what part of the Bible is being studied. Remember that all Scripture is given for a reason.

Building an application uses these four questions: (Ask for a student volunteer to stand and quote II Timothy 3:16-17): “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16-17, KJV).

Now read these verses in a different translation, such as the *New Living Translation*. “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God’s way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.”

What are the four areas that Scripture deals with?

- Doctrine: what should I believe?
- Correction: what should I not believe?
- Instruction in righteousness: how should I behave?
- Reproof: how should I not behave?

When we have answered these questions about the passage studied, we can put the wisdom found to use in our daily lives, and we can share this wisdom with others too, by teaching them what to do and what not to do. Jesus said profound things in simple

ways—we often say simple things in profound ways. Let us be careful to teach others as simply as possible the ways we have learned.

WHY DO TEACHERS PREPARE?

Why do we want to teach? There are too many people in the world who do not know, have not heard, and therefore have no hope. Just as Ezra prepared to teach, so do we.

“And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not” (Ezra 7:25, KJV).

Everyone who does not know needs to hear. One of the last commands Jesus gave before He went back to Heaven was: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

“All nations” covers *where* we go, and “every creature” tells us *who* needs to hear. When we obey, we must be prepared. What did Jesus want us to teach?

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:27-28, KJV).

Thank God, someone prepared themselves, and taught me. Thank God, because I have “Christ in me, the hope of glory!”

Quote Ezra 7:10.

CONCLUSION

Consider what Solomon said about the prepared teacher:

“In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly. The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of these collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd” (Ecclesiastes 12:9-11, *New American Standard Bible*)

A “wise teacher” gets two results:

- The “goad” spurs learners to action, motivating them to do something.
- The “well-driven nail” causes learners to remember what has been taught.

When we prepare properly (heart, head, and hands) and obey completely, God will help us teach wisely.

LESSON PREPARATION EXERCISE: (This exercise should be done during time allotted for discussion or class interaction.)

1. Choose a method of lesson preparation.
2. Use the outline below with Luke 15 (the “lost” chapter).
3. Prepare sample lesson given (No. 2), following steps as provided by instructor.
 - Divide class into four (4) groups.
 - Discuss the three (3) obvious “lost” things in Luke 15.
 - Find another less obvious “lost” thing.
 - Have four lost things (coin, sheep, prodigal son, and brother at home) written on small pieces of paper.
 - Allow someone from each team to choose one paper, and students work on that “lost” thing together.
 - Follow the steps/procedure given on chart to prepare each lesson about the four different “lost things” in Luke 15.
 - Read the lesson text: (give students limited amount of time to do this—possibly 10 minutes) Allow students opportunity to read text in various versions (as available).
 - Luke 15:1-7 Story of the Lost Sheep
 - Luke 15:8-10 Story of the Lost Coin
 - Luke 15:11-24 Story of the Lost Son (Prodigal Son)
 - Luke 15:25-32 Story of the Lost Brother
 - Pay attention to your audience—age, spiritual experience, needs—to help with insights, experiences, illustrations, and stories used.
 - List major points in your assigned story (limit time according to time available). Major points become a skeleton outline for the lesson.
 - Locate and study any other Bible verses that relate to your assigned story. A concordance will come in handy here. (Work within time limits—possibly 5-7 minutes.)
 - Write any insights, ideas gained from the story, or related texts. (Limit to 5-7 minutes.)
 - Add any personal experiences, related stories, or illustrations to make the lesson personal (5 minutes maximum).
 - Add any personal experiences to personal insights to make your assigned story become a relevant lesson for your students (5 minutes maximum).
 - Prepare to present your lesson by method chosen at beginning of this exercise.
4. Present prepared lesson to class. If time allows only one team to present their lesson, choose the team by drawing number from small slips of paper with team numbers written on them, or by choosing first team to finish lesson preparation.

Personal Study Notes

Chapter 8

THE TEACHER AND MENTORING

“Behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus . . . Which was well reported of by the brethren . . . Him would Paul have to go forth with him” (Acts 16:1-3).

“Come to the edge,” he said.
They said, “We are afraid.”
“Come to the edge,” he said.
They came. He pushed . . . and they flew.
(Guillaume Apollinaire)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, the student will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Define mentor, mentoring, mentoring relationships, reverse mentoring, situation mentoring, and e-mentoring.
2. Explain the difference between mentoring and discipleship.
3. Recall five steps in equipping anyone to do anything.
4. Describe four types (or settings) of mentoring found in the Bible school context.
5. State and briefly explain the four stages of development in a mentoring relationship.
6. Identify five barriers to mentoring and suggest ways to overcome each.
7. Determine five activities found in a senior-junior faculty mentoring relationship.
8. Describe how mentoring is beneficial to Bible school students.
9. Point out five benefits the mentoring relationship brings to the mentor.
10. Develop a productive mentoring relationship (as a mentor, or a protégé, or both).

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring is more than a one-shot-hits-all approach to the classroom. It is moving away from the forest to focus on the tree. The mentoring teacher looks at the classroom but concentrates on the student. There were many disciples in Derbe and Lystra but Paul focused on a *certain* disciple, Timothy. Apostolic history records the depth of their mentoring rendezvous: “Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith” (I Timothy 1:2).

WHERE DID MENTORING ORIGINATE?

Mentoring has its origin in the Word of God. It dates back to Moses being mentored by his father-in-law, Jethro (Exodus 18). It shows itself when a father was commanded to mentor his sons, passing the truth from one generation to the next (Deuteronomy 6:1-2). Mentoring relationships are scattered throughout the Bible. However, a Greek story is credited with the term *mentor* and the concept we now know as “mentoring.”

Long ago, when a Greek warrior named Odysseus went off to war, he left his young son in the hands of a man named Mentor. He possessed admirable qualities: teacher, guide, protector, counselor, advisor, role model, and father figure. When the warrior father returned, his son had grown into a man, thanks to Mentor.

Mentor became adopted in English to refer to a father-like leader, a paternal type relationship. The first modern usage of *mentor* appeared in 1699 and was utilized by a French writer.

Various cultures use different words to describe or portray mentoring. In many places apprentices learn a new trade from their master. The practice of village elders passing on proverbs, skills, and teaching to the younger generation could be considered a form of mentoring. Mentoring exists everywhere, in every culture, but is referred to by different words.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is when someone more experienced is willing to help someone less experienced. This does not necessarily mean that the mentor must be older. Interaction exists between two people, usually one-on-one where one person empowers another. One is guided, taught, influenced by another. It is an effort to assist one in developing God-given potential, and preparing him to function in the same kind of ministry. Fred Childs said, “Mentoring is transferring knowledge, understanding, wisdom, skills, insight, vision, and expertise.”

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

In *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry*, Kenneth Gangel said a mentor is “a teacher and leader who uses his or her experience to show others how best to walk life’s path, to accomplish goals and meet life’s challenges.” Sondra Higgins Matthaie, in “Faith-Mentoring in the Classroom,” likened a mentor to a guide, “a person who journeys through life with another, pointing out landmarks, modeling alternatives, supporting choices, and interpreting life events.” The mentor becomes a guide, a lead learner. He provides—among other things—guidance, accountability, and encouragement. In other words a mentor is a coach, guide, wise/helpful friend, counselor, advisor, teacher, guardian, encourager, and father figure.

Thank God for those who guide us along the road of life, becoming companions in the journey. Mentors have travelled that road before us, know the obstacles, and can provide guidance for development. Like the little Nigerian chorus says, “The road is rough and there are many dangers.”

In *Future Leader*, Viv Thomas wrote, “Leaders are in desperate need of friends and mentors, people who will direct us towards God and show us the way. One good and able mentor is worth a hundred consultants, a thousand motivational ‘how to’ seminars and only God knows how many sermons. Soul drought, which is the experience of many leaders, is often related to a lack of mentoring.”

A touching story surfaced at the Commonwealth Games in Fiji. The crowd waited anxiously for the first of the marathon runners to appear. Finally, they caught a glimpse of the first runner. He was running well and seemed to be full of energy. Surely, he would finish the race and win. The second runner also came into view. He appeared weak and couldn’t keep straight. The crowd stood and shouted, “Go on, you can make it!” He fell. Several spectators ran to the side of the track to verbally urge him on. “The end is in sight. Don’t quit now. You can do it!” The runner mustered his strength and crawled across the finish line. The man had to run his own race, but others could encourage him from the sidelines. Encouragers help keep us going when times are tough and life’s road is rough.

A mentor pours himself into others—intentionally investing in the next generation of leaders—and adapts a supportive, guiding role. So mentoring involves a minimum—and many times, preferably—of two people.



Mentor	More experienced
Mentoree, protégé, or mentee	Less experienced

HOW IS MENTORING DIFFERENT FROM DISCIPLESHIP?

The mentoring relationship is similar to discipleship but noticeably different. Discipleship focuses on ongoing growth of the disciple as a Christian, and is concerned with the commands of Christ. The intent is for the disciple to become like Jesus Christ. Certainly, a mentor hopes for the same to take place, but he focuses specifically on elements pertaining to the development of expert skills and practices. Mentoring and discipleship are interrelated; both are growth oriented and developmental in nature.

WHAT ARE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS?

For our purpose, mentoring exists in four settings. This lesson specifically addresses faculty-to-student and faculty-to-faculty mentoring. However, its principles apply to the other two settings noted, and in many cases to mentoring in general.

Setting	Relationship	Comments
Setting One	Faculty-to student mentoring	This is one-on-one or small group.
Setting Two	Faculty-to-faculty mentoring	Sometimes referred to as “workplace mentoring.”
Setting Three	Student-to-student mentoring	This is “peer mentoring” and usually exists when a returning senior student mentors an entering junior student.
Setting Four	Faculty-to-outside protégé	A faculty member mentors someone, perhaps a pastor, outside of the normal school environment.

WHAT ARE THE BASICS OF MENTORING?

In “Teaching by Coming Alongside,” Donald Bubna provides five steps in equipping anyone to do anything.

Steps	Jesus as Master Mentor	Comments
Step One	Jesus showed them what to do.	Knowledge is important but it is only the first step.
Step Two	Jesus showed them how to do it.	Don’t just tell the way. Show the way.
Step Three	Jesus let them try it.	Practice the principles learned.
Step Four	Jesus sent them out alone.	Try it and provide feedback to mentor.
Step Five	Jesus evaluated what they did.	This includes self-evaluation by the protégé and the mentor.

In *Mentoring in a Seminary Community*, L. Thomas Strong speaks of doctors in rural areas who were taught through the practice and lifestyle of being a doctor through *modeling* and *mentoring*. Often, an older doctor would select a successor and would invest time and effort in training him to continue the practice. Most manual labor skills are taught through mentoring. Long ago pastors were trained in the same way. Those that desired to be pastors would be invited into the home of a senior minister and he would teach them by *lecture* and *lifestyle*.

WHAT ARE THE STAGES OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS?

In “Phases of Mentor Relationship,” Kathy E. Kran provides four stages of development reflected in the table that follows.

Stages of Development	Comments
Initiation Stage	Mentoring relationship begins; discern roles, spend time together, and develop ability to communicate easily. It is here that the “quality of trust is either formed or forfeited.”
Cultivation Stage	Continue to work on communication skills. Strengthen the relationship.
Separation Stage	In the educational setting normally there is a beginning and ending date dictated by the academic calendar.
Redefinition Stage	The protégé moves from being a student or a mentee to being a friend. He moves to the level of being a colleague. The mentoring relationship may continue; only at a new and higher level.

WHAT ARE THE MENTORING BE-ATTITUDES?

Effective mentors possess certain characteristics. Let’s call them the “be-attitudes” of a mentor. Some of these are reflected in the following table.

The Be-Attitude	Comments
Be respectful	Strong relationships are based on mutual respect.
Be committed	Meeting together requires time and a willingness on the mentor’s part to assist in the growth process of the protégé.
Be ethical	Mentoring requires confidentiality much like the relationship between a doctor and his patient.
Be visionary	Possess the ability to readily see the potential in others. Mentors see down the road of the protégé’s life and suggest steps to be taken.

Be tolerant	People make mistakes. A protégé may have opinions quite different from his mentor.
Be a listener	Resist the lure to always be the teller. Most people have two ears and one mouth. Why?
Be an expert	Without expertise mentors have little to offer a protégé.
Be perceptive	This is the unique ability to discern what is happening in a mentee's life and ask the right questions.
Be consistent	Time is valuable. Keep appointments. Meetings should be regular. There should be a consistency in the way the mentor handles things, the viewpoints he has, and with his lifestyle. A mentor's teaching and lifestyle should match.
Be available	A mentor has to have enough time for a protégé and be there when needed.
Be relational	A mentor that does not enjoy being with people should leave mentoring to others.
Be persistent	Don't threaten to give up on your protégé.
Be an example	Integrate theory and practice. Exhibit it.
Be transparent	Demonstrate you are still growing and explain how.
Be real	Honesty and integrity are crucial. Mentors should steer clear of hypocrisy.
Be clear	Clarify your level of expectations.
Be patient	The protégé is a work in progress.

WHAT ARE SOME BARRIERS TO MENTORING?

Why do some choose not to be involved? Here are some possible reasons. Perhaps you can think of more.

Reasons	Comments
Time	Mentoring is an investment. It requires time. Some potential mentors do not feel they have time for the process.
Dependency	Some fear that protégés will become dependent upon them. Mentors need to guard against overdependence but not assume that it is going to be a problem in every case.
Losing Position	Others fear the loss of position, that protégés will take away favor that the mentor presently possesses.
Inferiority	May entertain feelings of inferiority, or even coming to terms with one's own lack of discipline.
Jealousy	Not willing to impart knowledge into the lives of others; the person may become better than the mentor. Missionaries or senior officials need to be careful in mentoring students so that

	special treatment does not encourage jealousy from other students; that they do not provide resources that other mentors cannot provide; and that protégés do not take advantage of the mentor.
Power Struggle	One may be trying to hold on to power. The other may be attempting to take it away.
Not encouraged	Administration must recognize the value of mentoring and encourage involvement. It needs to be a prominent component of faculty education or development. State emphatically that mentoring is a valid, appreciated, and expected part of the teaching ministry.
Apathy	Some mentors and even protégés are not enthusiastic of involvement in the mentoring process.
Disenchantment	An unsuccessful attempt at mentoring or being mentored may cause one to be disappointed or bitter.
Ignorance	Some faculty members assume that casual contact with students is the same as mentoring and is their contribution to the process.
Not teachable	The potential protégé must possess a teachable spirit or attitude.

WHAT ARE THE MENTORING ACTIVITIES IN A BIBLE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?

The following table indicates some activities or ways a senior faculty member can mentor a junior one.

Activities:
Find resources.
Explain how the school or institution works.
Feedback on professional progress.
Accountability.
Lend a hand in improving skills.
Help learn organizational values.
Senior faculty members nurture junior faculty members.
Stimulate intellectual and spiritual growth.
Aid with research.
Encourage (Hebrews 10:25; Philippians 2:1-2).
Help others contribute more effectively toward achieving goals and vision of the school, while assisting the protégé in realizing personal vision and goals.
Model teaching style and strategies to junior faculty.
Aid in a smooth transition to a new institution.

Boost protégés' level of confidence.
Provide learning opportunities.
Serve as a sounding board, allowing protégé to freely express himself without criticism or correction.

HOW IS MENTORING BENEFICIAL TO BIBLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?

Cutting-edge schools should consider setting up a mentoring program for students. There should be an established curriculum or way of going about mentoring, along with an orientation. Make it clear what you expect from the mentoring process and establish course objectives. Define student outcomes and establish a communication process. The student body can be divided among faculty members. Match the protégé with the mentor according to ministry interests.

Patricia Cross points out that excellence in education “is not so much related to how much is learned or even how well a subject is understood. Rather, excellence is dependent on how learning changes the learner.”

Thomas Strong explains in *Mentoring in a Seminary Environment* that mentoring touches on the need for faculty to go a step further than the classroom in order to impact the lives of students. Theological education aims at assisting students in spiritual and personal formation. Education should shift to focusing on the student rather than focusing on providing information. There needs to be a balance between character development and academics. What a student is actually becoming is seldom—if ever—examined. There is also a wide gap between the textbook (the ideal) and reality (real life challenges in an actual church setting).

Mentoring is a precious gift. The table that follows indicates some of the benefits for the protégé involved in the mentoring process.

Benefit	Comments
Encourages	. . . career development, perseverance, and reaching for dreams and vision. Mentors are friends, like Barnabas, a source of encouragement.
Enhances	. . . confidence in one's ministry and abilities.
Empowers	. . . a speedier adjustment to new role.
Equips	. . . with skills, research.
Establishes	. . . protégé in his ministry or profession.
Exposes	. . . new ideas, suggestions, and people to network with for achievement of goals and effective ministry.
Engages	. . . one in active, progressive, measurable development.
Evaluates	. . . progress made and provides feedback.

Examples	. . . provide a role model for one to follow.
Enthuses	. . . or stirs excitement for both the protégé and the mentor.
Enables	. . . protégé to reach his God-given potential.
Educates	. . . through continuous learning.

Mentoring is a profitable investment. There are also multiple benefits for both the mentor and the institution. For the mentor, the relationship achieves the following.

Excites	. . . or kindles new ideas and stirs one's creativity.
Encourages	. . . renewed interest in one's field of expertise.
Establishes	. . . a model of continuous learning.
Earns	. . . personal satisfaction that you have helped another person to grow. Facilitates the joy of investing in others, and in the next generation of leaders.
Encounters	. . . friendships that may last a lifetime.
Enriches	. . . through serving others. You cannot bless another without receiving a blessing yourself.
Extends	. . . one's own ministry, provides succession, and secures the continual development of ministry leaders. Sometimes the protégé will exceed or go beyond the mentor's ministry. This is a sign of a good mentor.
Enlarges	. . . patience, interpersonal skills, and life skills. Mentoring is widely practiced in the church and business world. It also deepens our insight into various avenues of the teaching/learning experience.

WHAT TYPES OF MENTORING CAN BE FOUND IN THE BIBLE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?

The following table unveils some types of mentoring relationships found within the Bible school environment.

Type	Comments
Workplace mentoring	Accomplished within the workplace. In our case this is the Bible school.
Reverse mentoring	Mentoring is not restricted to age: the older mentors the younger. In a developing society the younger person may be able to provide mentoring in acquisition of new skills. Consider the servant girl in II Kings 5:1-8.
Peer mentoring	The mentor and protégé are about the same age; like student-to-student mentoring.
Informal mentoring	Relaxed, not necessarily deliberate but unstructured and casual.

Formal mentoring	Usually well defined: time, place, content, contract.
Situational Mentoring	Providing the right help at the right time. Usually short-term and addresses a particular situation.
E-mentoring	This is using modern technology of the Internet and email to enhance the role of mentors. Works especially well with distance education. However, it is not limited to that. An electronic mentoring program could utilize a bulletin board for a central meeting place; have chat room, and a discussion forum. E-mentoring in its simplest form would be carried on through emails and attached documents. Several email programs also provide some sort of instant messenger. This permits two-way communications. Services such as Skype provide computer-to-computer voice communication at no charge.

WHAT ARE THE ACTIVITIES IN SENIOR-JUNIOR MENTORING?

Since senior students mentoring juniors may be a new concept to you, let me illustrate some of the activities and benefits in the table that follows. Of course, a student peer mentoring program would have many similarities to a faculty-to-student mentoring program. Both need guidelines and training from administration to achieve program objectives.

Activities
Demonstrate an interest in the development and well-being of others.
Share knowledge, skills, study techniques, and wisdom.
Discuss new ideas, perspectives, concepts, and standards.
Explain school values.
Serve as a guide acquainting the student with the environment: school, area United Pentecostal Churches, and how to get around the city or community.
Encourage. It would be amazing to know how many students feel like quitting and turning back.
Serve as an example to the protégé of what he can become.
Help them determine and achieve goals (Adapted from <i>E-Mentoring: Creating the Connection</i> , Staffordshire University).

Being a good mentor requires character, capabilities, confidence, competence, and commitment. Mentoring is an intentional *investment* into the next generation. It is a God-given opportunity to *influence* others to reach their maximum potential.

Questions for Discussion or Personal Reflection
Who are your mentors?
How formal is the relationship?
What benefits did you gain from the relationship?
What did the other person do to mentor you?
What did you appreciate about your mentor?
What do expect you from the mentoring relationship?
What are you willing to bring into the relationship?

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. What is a mentor? _____

2. What is mentoring? _____

3. Viv Thomas stated one good mentor is worth what? _____

4. How many people are involved in a mentoring relationship? _____

5. What is the difference between mentoring and discipleship? _____

6. What are the five steps in equipping anyone to do anything? _____
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
D. _____
E. _____

7. List and briefly explain the phases of a mentoring relationship. _____

8. List the characteristics of being a mentor that you do especially well. _____

9. List the characteristics of a mentor that you need to work on. _____

10. What are some barriers to mentoring you've encountered in your cultural/
ministerial context? _____

11. How can you (as an experienced teacher) mentor an emerging teacher in the Bible school or the church at large? _____

12. Provide the names of those you are presently mentoring and indicate whether they are a student, emerging teacher, or someone in the church at large. _____

13. How could you better assist in mentoring students? What special skills or wisdom do you have to offer? _____

14. How could e-mentoring be utilized effectively for faculty education with your cultural/ministerial environment? _____

Personal Study Notes

Chapter 9

THE TEACHER AND PRIORITIES

“During this time, as the disciples were increasing in numbers by leaps and bounds, hard feelings developed . . . So the Twelve called a meeting of the disciples. They said, ‘It wouldn’t be right for us to abandon our responsibilities for preaching and teaching the Word of God . . . choose seven men from among you . . . and we’ll assign them this task. Meanwhile, we’ll stick to our assigned tasks of prayer and speaking God’s Word’” (Acts 6:1-4, MSG).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson the student will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Explain the “accomplish more; do less” leadership concept taught in this lesson.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of “main thing.”
3. Identify the characteristics of overload, stress, and burnout.
4. Develop a personal plan of how these can be avoided in one’s life.
5. Organize the work week to facilitate accomplishing one’s “main thing.”
6. List weekly activities and classify them according to the four major groupings advocated by H. Dale Burke.
7. State three blessings of rest.
8. Recall three gauges one needs to routinely check his/her life. Adopt these gauges effectively into one’s lifestyle.
9. Name three characteristics of one’s “main thing.”
10. Outline five things a teacher can do to protect and achieve the “main thing.”

DO THE MAIN THING

The early church experienced success, and a few things that go along with it: the need to reevaluate, simplify, specialize, and delegate as an organization grows. People were griping: “Our needs are not being met.” The Twelve quickly realized they couldn’t do everything required to sustain the church. It was necessary to stop, reflect, and refocus on what God had called them to do. They did and came up with the best solution: “We’ll stick with the main thing.” The church continued to grow. The apostles unveiled an important leadership concept: *to accomplish more, do less*. What an irony. Want to accomplish more? Do less.

Well, that is an interesting story from the archives, but what about the here and now? Today it looks more like this. “I need to balance the checkbook, do the monthly financial report, preach twice this weekend, spend two days at the Bible school teaching, wash the clothes, help my wife with the cooking, and visit the sick. In-laws are coming for a visit, the church is in the midst of a building project, my senior son needs to get off to university, and the list goes on. I’m exhausted just writing out the partial list. Excuse me while I go for a nap!”

Handling weekly ministerial responsibilities is a lot like football. The week is off with a powerful kick, and you spend hours—even days—breathlessly chasing the ball. How can you find time to teach your classes, not to mention the time to prepare for them? It all comes down to *priorities*. What is important? What is your calling? What is your “main thing”? Find that and everything else organizes around it.

If you’re perceptive you probably noticed that it would be nearly impossible to eliminate anything from the list of personal responsibilities provided above. Perhaps you could cancel the in-laws coming? Just joking! That would not be a good idea. Not only do we need to recognize our main thing, but we need to juggle carefully when planning our week. Stagger activities so they don’t all come together. Notice what happens when two or three people sit at one end of the bench, and no one sits on the other end. People splatter on the floor. That’s what occurs when you overload; you fall, and the bench (we’ll call it your workweek) flies up and knocks you in the head.

“Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is the noble art of leaving things undone. The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of nonessentials” (Lin Yutang as quoted in *Ready for Anything* by David Allen).

Many are involved in making “to-do lists” but we also need to make “not-to-do lists.” This is also called “planned neglect.” We plan to neglect certain tasks so we can accomplish important ones. The *Daily Walk Bible* defines *specialization* as “the art of learning more and more about less and less.” If we want to accomplish more in life, we must specialize.

The apostles knew if they focused on their “main thing,” it would make a significant difference in advancing the church. Lesser goals make little difference in the health and growth of the ministry and can be delegated to others. What do you do when faced with the need to do more? Right. Do less. D. L. Moody once said, “The trouble with a great many men is that they spread themselves out over too much ground. They fail in everything. If they would only put their life into one channel, and keep in it, they would accomplish something.” Someone has rightly said that if we try to do a little of everything, we will end up doing a whole lot of nothing.

Jesus often referred to His purpose. Jon Walker explains in “Did Jesus Rush through His Week?”: “It’s not about getting everything done; rather it’s about doing the most important things! . . . Timing is everything. It means saying ‘no’ to the urgent in order to stay focused on the important. Think about Olympic athletes. They have just as many hours in the day as you and me [*sic*], but they sacrifice constantly to press toward their goal. They don’t allow their day to be filled with busy-ness because they have a larger purpose in mind.”

Your “main thing” should be in alignment with your unique gift mix, calling, purpose, mission, and vision. It’s a humbling revelation but one person cannot do everything. In fact, Jesus does not expect any one person to do everything. He wants each to do the right things; and to do them right. God has equipped us with gifts, unique abilities, and a rich reservoir of experiences. There is no one just like you. He expects us to use these resources to advance His kingdom. However, we must understand we have limited resources. To minimize pride and to maximize team ministry, not all perform the same function or possess the same gifts. Working together, operating in our areas of strength, propels the church forward. “Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us” (Romans 12:4-6, NIV).

Matthew 25:14-29 tells a story about investment. Three servants served their Master. Each received a gift to invest based on his unique abilities, and each was delegated responsibilities. Two servants invested their talents. The third one played it safe and did nothing. The Master was not happy with the third servant and threw him out. We are servants. Our assets are limited and need to be invested wisely.

Confused? You thought the Bible said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13). Exactly! We can do everything the Lord wants us to do, but He does not want us to do everything. He has a specific work in mind for us. Besides, the setting of this verse of Scripture refers to how God supplies the financial resources necessary to accomplish ministry. We are limited. He is unlimited.

H. Dale Burke’s excellent book *Less Is More Leadership* proved to be a priceless resource in the groundwork of this lesson. He said, “You have only a certain amount of time, energy, giftedness, resources, and money. You’ve got only so much to give, and when it’s gone, it’s gone.” He went on to say, “Leaders, as limited resources, must learn to simplify, reduce, and in fact ‘do less’ in order to accomplish more.” When Burke asked leaders to describe their feelings about their lives, they used three words: I am busy, buried, and behind.

Okay! It’s time for a few word-building exercises. Three new words:

- Overload
- Burnout
- Stress

Avoid these three culprits. They will rob joy, creativity, and productivity if given half a chance. Overload may be easier to describe than to define. Steve and Mary Farrar explain in *Overcoming Overload*, “Overload reminds us of the weight of everyday life. We are overwhelmed, overworked, overcommitted, overanxious, overmatched, and overextended. Our tanks are on empty and we are running on fumes.”

Burke feels we need to make choices to pursue our dreams. It is necessary to off-load (responsibilities not in line with our “main thing”) before we can reload (responsibilities in line with our main thing). Otherwise, we risk overloading. Do you know what happens when you overload electrical circuits? The lights go out, and power failure is experienced.

Burnout comes from unrealistic expectations. According to Robert Trapani, “It occurs when well-intentioned people try to reach unrealistic goals.” We cannot accomplish everything and need to focus on what God would have us accomplish.

Stress occurs when there are strong emotional demands made on the nervous system. It is when you have more problems than you can handle. Stress is a close cousin to “overload.”

How do we prevent overload, burnout, and uncontrollable stress in our lives? Find the main thing, the one thing you do best in life, and stick with it. Once you have found it, stay focused. “But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what

is ahead, I press on toward the goal . . . All of us who are mature should take such a view of things” (Philippians 3:13-15, NIV).

FINDING YOUR MAIN THING

Your “main thing” is your area of specialization, your unique God-given ability. Jesus said, “This is what I came for.” (See Mark 1:38.)

In “How to Overcome Overload,” H. Dale Burke says that our “main thing” includes three characteristics.

1. My main thing is “mission critical” essential to the growth of the ministry. Done well, it moves the organization forward.
2. My main thing is “top priority.”
3. My main thing grows out of my unique abilities.

ORGANIZING THE WORKWEEK

In *Less Is More Leadership*, H. Dale Burke groups activities into four major categories, and sets time aside for each in order to keep your work balanced. This requires planning your week in large blocks of time, either full or half days. Focus on one objective at a time.



Rest time—focus on your health, spirituality, and marriage. “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates” (Exodus 20:8-10, NIV).

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly” (Matthew 11:28, MSG).

“Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest’” (Mark 6:31, NIV).

In “How to Deal with Stress,” Mary Southerland tells the story of a tourist taking a safari in the jungles of Africa. He hired locals to carry his supplies and to serve as guides. On the first day they walked rapidly and went far. Thrilled with the progress, the tourist rose the second day, eager to get on the journey again. The locals refused to budge. They insisted that they needed to sit and rest. They explained to the tourist that they had gone too fast the first day. Now they were waiting for their souls to catch up. Southerland concludes, “The more responsibility we carry and the busier we are, the more we need regular solitude!” A Greek proverb says, “You will break the bow if you keep it always bent.”

God is willing to help us if we will obey His Word, rest, and spend time in His presence. Rest accomplishes three things:

It Renews: “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).


It Restores: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Psalm 23:1-3).

It Refreshes: “The times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).


In *Live Ten Years Longer*, Cecil Murphey encourages ministers to do three things.


1. Find a regular exercise you will enjoy.
2. Change the way you eat and drink. He doesn’t recommend a diet (which implies taking things away) but suggests a balanced diet. He also urges us to drink more water. During the night bodies lose the equivalent of two glasses of water in moisture.
3. Get more rest. Getting plenty of sleep is essential to the body. The body repairs the wear and tear of the day through sleeping. When you don’t take time to sleep your immune system suffers. He also encourages ministers to rest their mind by laying aside the stress they carry within.

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body” (I Corinthians 6:19-20, NIV).

 **Results time**—focus on the “main things” that advance the mission. Time needs to be spent focusing on the unique role God has for you personally. Use the portion of the day or week when you do your best work. Structure your schedule around the “main things.” Tackle priorities one at a time and in order of their importance. It may help to break a project down into chunks and approach the work one chunk at a time.

Burke finds that when he tries to fit more than one of these needs into a block of time, he experiences frustration and defeat rather than fulfillment.

 **Response time**—focus on things that result from your “results time” or “main thing.” These are things not critical to the mission but still important. This is usually focused on others, processing things that flow out of your “main thing,” including administration and follow-up.


 **Refocus time**—focus on how you adjust and how you undertake projects. This is when you work on the mission, reflect, assess, adjust, and innovate for the future. Retreat to refocus. Refocus weekly, monthly, and yearly. An ancient Chinese proverb says, “Muddy water let stand will clear.”


Rick Warren says in “Seven Secrets of Stress Management” that “preparation prevents pressure but procrastination produces it. You work by either priorities or pressures.” The old cliché “don’t put off until tomorrow what can be done today” goes a long way to prevent overload.

When involved in emotionally draining activities, take time to prepare and then to recover. Richard A. Swenson said, “Calendar congestion and time urgency have robbed us of the pleasure of anticipation. Without warning, the activity is upon us. We rush to meet it; then we rush to the next; and the next.” He advises that when the activity is over take time to reflect, evaluate, and remember. I think we should also celebrate our victories.

READING THE GAUGES

In a *Leadership Journal* article titled “Reading Your Gauges,” Bill Hybels talks of three gauges that we need to routinely check in our lives.

 **Spiritual Gauge**—How am I doing spiritually? The spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, Bible reading, meditation, sacrifice, and others pump high-octane fuel into our lives providing strength for ministry.

 **Physical Gauge**—How am I doing physically? Exercise, proper diet, and rest are important.



Emotional Gauge—How am I doing emotionally? Certain activities drain our emotional petrol tank. Bill Hybels calls these “Intensive Ministry Activities,” which include confrontations, counseling sessions, exhausting ministry sessions, board meetings (to name a few). Refilling your emotional tank takes time. To maintain emotional resources use your spiritual gifts or unique abilities. Many times you will feel more energized after using them. Serving outside your gift areas tends to drain you. Remember Jesus at the well talking to the Samaritan woman? When His disciples returned bringing food, Jesus said, “My food . . . is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work” (John 4:34, NIV). Doing what He was called to do was fulfilling and energizing, rather than draining. You will receive strength from doing your main thing, and the church will be thrust forward.

APPLYING THE MAIN THING TO TEACHING

Let’s get a little more specific. Here are a few pointers in helping you do your main thing—passing the truth on to the next generation.

1. Plan in advance. Ask your Bible school administrator what courses you will be teaching next semester and begin preparing now.
2. Specialize. Try to teach according to your interests and gifting. Rev. Joseph Asare recommends teaching according to blocks of courses. For example: Hebrews and Tabernacle go together; Evangelism, Missions, Church Growth, and Church Planting are all interrelated.
3. Work carefully within deadlines. Turn your work into the administrative office on time. Why not surprise everyone and turn it in before the due date? When late, you cause others to be delayed in getting their work done.
4. Allow ample allowance to make sure you’ll be in class on time. Excuses like “I was stuck in traffic” do not get your teaching time fulfilled. Leave early from home. Arrive early to school.
5. Block off times for preparation. John Milton Gregory said, “Many teachers go to their work either partly prepared or wholly unprepared. They are like messengers without a message.” “Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?” (II Samuel 18:22).
6. Do not overload on the number of courses you agree to teach (or on other activities for that matter). You might need to adopt the “Just Say No” policy when the proposed activity does not align with the main thing or is not the best use of your time.
7. Taking on new responsibilities usually means giving up some of the old ones. Delegate. Let go. The world will still go on. Remember to off-load before you reload.

Christmas Evans, a British evangelist, once commented, “I’d rather burn out than rust out in the service of the Lord.” I recently saw a taxi with the words “Rust in God” sprawled across the back windshield. The letter “T” would have made it “Trust in God.” The letter had long been lost. It humored me. Many ministers operate on a similar principle. When they should trust in God they would rather rust in God. James Berkeley gives this alternative: “I admire the bravado. It sounds dedicated, bold, and stirring. However, when I view the burn-outs and the almost burn-outs who lie by the ecclesiastical road, the glory fails to reach me. I see pain and waste and unfinished service. Is there not a third alternative to either burning out or rusting out? In Acts 20:24, Paul stated, ‘I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me.’ Herein lies the model I choose to follow. I want neither to burn out or rust out. I want to finish out the race” (Taken from *Going the Distance: How to Stay Fit for a Lifetime of Ministry* by Peter Brain).

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. What did the apostles do when they realized they couldn’t do everything to sustain the church? _____

2. What is meant by “planned neglect”? _____

3. How do athletes accomplish their quest for achievement? _____

4. What is meant by the “accomplish more, do less” leadership concept? _____

5. What is overload? _____

6. How can one prevent overload? _____

7. What is meant by one's "main thing"? _____

8. List Burke's four major categories used in organizing the workweek.
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
D. _____

9. State three things rest accomplishes.
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

10. Why is getting plenty of sleep essential to the body? _____

11. What is the significance of results time? _____

12. Bill Hybels talks of three gauges we need to routinely check our lives. What are they?
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

13. What are four things you can do to help achieve your main thing (referring to your teaching)?
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
D. _____

Personal Study Notes

Chapter 10

THE TEACHER AND THE BIG PICTURE

“And the [instructions] which you have heard from me, along with many witnesses, transmit and entrust [as a deposit] to reliable and faithful men who will be competent and qualified to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2, AMP).

“Go . . . teach all nations. . . . Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).

LESSON OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this lesson, the student will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Recite and explain the purpose or vision of the Global Association of Theological Studies.
2. Demonstrate through personal, administrative, and instructional example the motto of GATS, which is “Pursuing Ministerial Excellence.”
3. Implement the four objectives of GATS in your Bible school.
4. Develop ministerial experience and expertise in one’s subject matter.
5. Set an example worthy of emulation by students.
6. Establish a personal growth plan and ministry action plan for one’s life.
7. Comment on the type of students needed in the Bible school. Recruit the same.
8. Express how GATS intends to develop the faculty.
9. Relate how students are like seeds and wet cement.
10. Explain the benefits of a well-planned curriculum.

11. List the four primary academic programs in GATS curriculum, and recall the required classroom hours for each.
12. Outline the curriculum standards or requirements requested by GATS in order to be successfully involved in one of the academic programs.

INTRODUCTION

Finding the big picture reminds one of the old story of the six blind men and the elephant depicted in a poem by John Godfrey Saxe.

Once upon a time there lived six blind men in a village. One day they were told, “An elephant is in the village today!”

They had no idea what an elephant was. Even though they could not see it, they decided to feel it. Each blind man touched a different part.

“An elephant is like a wall,” said the first man that touched the elephant’s side.

“On no, the elephant is like a rope,” said the second man that touched the tail.

“No, the elephant is like a snake,” said the third man that touched the long, wiggly trunk.

“It is like a tree,” said the fourth man that touched the elephant’s rough, hard legs.

“Excuse me. But, the elephant is like a big fan,” said the fifth man that touched the elephant’s ears.

“Oh, you are all wrong. The elephant is like a spear,” said the sixth man who touched the smooth, sharp tusks.

The six blind men started to argue. It’s like a wall. It’s like a spear. It’s like a rope. They did not agree. The king had been watching and listening. He said, “You only touched part of the elephant. You did not feel the whole animal.”

The men continued disputing. A little girl heard them and said, “Each of you is right, but all of you are wrong” (Adapted from “The Blind Men and the Elephant” by John Godfrey Saxe).

There are various versions of this story. However, the point remains the same. Each one touched a different part, but only one part. The elephant did have all of the features that each of the blind men said. Each was right, but all were wrong! None were looking at the big picture. In this lesson, our focus is looking at the overall purpose of our Bible schools, our objectives, and how to build a great Bible school program.

The Global Association of Theological Studies and its member schools develop and equip men and women to reach their maximum potential in apostolic ministry. Our

motto is “Pursuing Ministerial Excellence.” Our comprehensive objectives and statement of purpose (expected results) include:

Preserving the Message. Nurture a faith community and a center of lifelong learning to preserve apostolic doctrine for generations to come (II Timothy 2:2; Philippians 3:1; II John 1-2). Equip ministers to continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 2:1); and to defend it within their cultural context (Jude 3; I Peter 3:15).

Providing the Methods. Explore the needs of a diverse and ever-changing society, and develop innovative print and non-print training and learning resources that are relevant to our cross-cultural environment.

Producing the Ministry. Prepare Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered, and Spirit-directed students for excellence in apostolic ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12).

Propagating the Mission. Train and motivate students to possess a vision for, and participation in, global evangelism—preaching and teaching the whole gospel to the whole world (Proverbs 29:18; Luke 24:47). Cultivate leadership development to facilitate and sustain the harvest the Lord continues to give His church.

How is the vision of GATS and our member schools achieved? How are objectives met? It is through pursuing ministerial excellence in establishing and maintaining a great Bible school. What are the basics of a great Bible school program? Is it the students? Is it the faculty? Is it the facilities? Or is it the curriculum? Obviously, the best answer (based on our opening story) is that all are needed. We will look briefly at the staff, students, and studies.

STAFF WITH EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

Instructors should be experts in their courses, combining a balance of knowledge of the course content and on-the-field ministerial experience. Pastoral, church planting, and evangelism courses should be taught by those that are actually involved in the field. Instructors should be examples (to be followed) in the courses they represent. Each instructor should develop expertise in his or her specialized area of instruction and a variety of evaluation tools for each course. Specialized talents should be developed. Provide continuous education opportunities for staff including faculty education, books, and courses to develop expertise. Regular staff meetings are needed to promote communication and growth. Instructors should set an example in holiness, faithful participation in regional and national events, and with national financial policies and requirements. The instructors should demonstrate a strong love for the doctrine and the

Word of God. In the unlikely event that a staff member does not show improvement in classroom ministry, that staff member should not be asked to teach in the new semester.

To raise the standard of educational and ministerial excellence, encourage instructors to be engaged in lifelong learning and have a personal growth plan. Instructors should take part in the Ministry Action Plan and project 3-5 growth goals per year. This is an annual listing of personal and ministerial goals.

An outstanding instructor is a growing instructor. One cannot grow others unless he is willing to grow himself. In classes and among staff we must create a “culture of growth.” It’s the way we do things around here. Read, read, read, and study, study, study. No escape. Be determined to be the best instructor possible. Strive to be an expert in your subject. Continuous education opportunities abound. We truly help others reach maximum potential only when we’ve attempted to reach it ourselves.

STUDENTS EAGER TO LEARN AND GROW

Seek out students with aptitude, a genuine call into the ministry, educational qualifications, and a preferred history of active involvement with the United Pentecostal Church International. Every school has poor students, but they should not set the standards for the school. Students should be encouraged to discover answers on their own, and to write, read, research, and communicate. Provide mentors for our students that supply guidance. Respond to lack of discipline quickly. The time a student is in school is the time to work on behavior and attitude problems. Once the student has launched into ministry, it is too late to correct these things. Develop relationships with the students’ families if they are married, and provide opportunities for training their spouses. Take an active part in the placement of students within the church in your nation.

The following is taken from a lesson by Randy Adams (used by permission):

His name may be David, John, Kofi, William, or one from a host of names from anywhere around the globe. He has come to the Bible school looking for help. He steps into the classroom representing great potential. He comes, hopefully, having already experienced the full new birth and likely feeling that God has called him to some area of ministry. He no doubt has aspirations of doing a work for the Lord. He may not know when, where, how or even why, but hopes to find answers to all these questions in Bible school. Can you (Bible school teacher) help him? He is like a seed—complete yet undeveloped, full of untapped and possibly unknown potential.

His dormant and undiscovered talent may be that of a dynamic and effective evangelist, or that of a wise and compassionate pastor. He may become a Sunday school teacher or the dean of the Bible school. He could have the potential of being the future national leader of the church, or become a missionary to some far away land. One thing is certain, he represents the potential of reaching untold multitudes of lost souls.

He has come to Bible school because he needs help—help that only God-called, Spirit-filled, Holy Ghost anointed teachers can give. He needs men and women to come into his life that have given themselves to the purpose of God, and prepared themselves for such a challenge.

In many ways he is like wet cement, waiting for someone to shape his life. He wants to be first of all like Christ, but also wants to preach like Peter, pray like Daniel, prophesy like Isaiah, and win souls like Paul. He needs a teacher to identify his strengths and understand his weaknesses. He needs compassionate counsel; he yearns for a friend; he seeks answers but also wants to express his own ideas.

He is a Bible school student and he is yours for two years. What will you do with him? What changes will you help bring about in his life? Will you make a difference? Or, will you leave him as he is? What will he learn from you? Will the time and money spent for his Bible School education be a waste or a good investment?

He is a seed, and seeds are destined for the field and not to be kept in the barn. He desperately needs to fall in good ground, take root, grow and develop, and bring forth much fruit. His family needs this to happen. There is a town somewhere that needs this to happen. An un-evangelized region is waiting for his ministry. Perhaps an entire nation waits in darkness for him to come with the light of truth. Teacher, can you help him?"

The growth of a tree starts with a seed—a promise. Years ago, an American was travelling through a farming area in Russia. It had experienced brutal famine. People were starving. Piles of seed wheat for the next year's planting stood in the village square. The American asked, "Why don't you eat the seed wheat?" The Russian host answered, "You never steal from the future!" (Dale, *Seeds for the Future*, 2005, Preface xii). Specifically, our students are seeds for the future. Handle them with care. Preserve them for God's desired future.

Students don't arrive in our classrooms as mighty oak trees. They come with willing hearts and pass through a spiritual formation and maturation process. As instructors, we need to be growth oriented. How do the course objectives fit into the

overall curriculum; the route God has planned for this student to reach his maximum potential? The purpose for being here is clear. We're equipping others for works of service in God's kingdom (Ephesians 4:12) and in apostolic ministry. Like Robert Dale once said, we're "sowing seeds of ministry and growing believers toward leadership." That is the sole purpose behind the Global Association of Theological Studies. It is like a sign I saw: "We build Pentecostal leaders to grow Pentecostal churches." Spiritual growth is one of our four core values. We value helping people grow!

As teachers we understand that "the only thing that endures over time is the law of the farm: I must prepare the ground, put in the seed, cultivate it, weed it, water it, then gradually nurture growth and development to full maturity" (Covey, *Principle-Centered Leadership*, 1991, 17). Covey encouraged leaders to "see the oak tree in the acorn and understand the process of helping the acorn become a great oak" (35). We are in the agricultural business; we plant seeds and help others grow to their maximum potential.

We will sow seeds, grow believers, and reap the harvest. The Bible school's primary reason for existence is to train and equip workers for the ripened fields (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 9:4). It stands in the gap for a lost world (Ezekiel 22:30). On one side of the divide are those whom God calls into the ministry. Waiting on the other side is a ready harvest. We (in Bible school ministry) serve as middlemen guiding workers-in-progress as they cross the bridge.

It is a joy and an overwhelming responsibility to be involved in training workers for the harvest. Training the next generation of leadership in God's kingdom is a great privilege. John Maxwell said, "A leader who reproduces followers limits his success to what his direct, personal influence touches. . . . A leader who produces other leaders multiplies his influence, and he and his people have a future. . . . True success comes only when every generation continues to develop the next generation" (*Developing the Leaders Around You*, 1995, 197-198). Not only are we involved in the ministry of multiplication—reaching and teaching others—but in passing on the baton of truth and leadership to future generations. Christa McAuliffe said (and I wholeheartedly agree), "I teach; therefore, I touch the future."

STUDIES GEARED TO CHANGING MINDS AND HEARTS

A carefully planned curriculum ascertains what the school is trying to accomplish and determines: (a) why? (b) when? (c) where? (d) who? and (e) how? It ensures that there is a balance between curriculum, content, and experience; between learning and doing. Truth transforms (John 17:17). D. L. Moody said, "The Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives." A good curriculum and comprehensive objectives require careful planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement. *Curriculum* comes from a Latin word that means "racecourse" and shares

the same root word as *current*—the flow of water moving in the same direction. A well-planned curriculum will enable students to run the race, move in the right direction, and reach their goals.

At GATS we are also involved with the pursuit of quality curriculum. In that race there is no finish line. It is a daily quest for continuous improvement. A school armed with a vision, solid objectives, excellent curriculum, quality academic dean or principal, dedicated faculty, and diligent students that explore academic excellence can one day say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (II Timothy 4:7, KJV). They will hear the Master Teacher respond, “Well done” (Matthew 25:21).

When GATS references curriculum, it is important to understand what is meant. It provides academic programs on four levels:

Certificate	Basic Bible Knowledge	150 Classroom Hours	Total of 150 Classroom Hours
Diploma	Ministerial Development 1	600 Classroom Hours	Total of 750 Classroom Hours
Associate Degree	Ministerial Development 2	750 Classroom Hours	Total of 1500 Classroom Hours
Bachelor Degree	Advanced Ministerial Development	1500 Classroom Hours	Total of 3000 Classroom Hours

GATS academic programs are based upon classroom hours rather than credit hours. Completing the required classroom hours can be done anytime—night, day, weekends, once a month, full time, part-time—whatever fits the local needs.

Member schools in one or more of these programs have agreed to teach the required courses (called core curriculum) for a minimum required number of classroom hours, in adherence to attendance and passing grade policies, and follow a predetermined set of course objectives. The selection of a course textbook is at the discretion of the local school. However, GATS provides an academic database of recommended textbooks for each course on its website(s). Textbooks help build a personal library for each potential preacher. Encourage students to make use of the library. Textbooks should be those written by United Pentecostal Church writers, or those of like precious faith, when such a textbook is superior or equal to any found on the subject by any other writer. No courses should be “just read the textbook” (the text is a reference). No teacher should just stand in the front of the class and read the textbook to the student.

We also provide two additional academic programs: distance education and faculty development. It should be noted that it will be some time before the distance education and bachelor degree programs are functional. All other programs are presently

in use. All certificates, degrees, and diplomas for the six types or levels of studies are issued by the Global University of Theological Studies and are issued from our international office in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. Member schools merely send the transcripts. Once we ensure the GATS standard has been met, the appropriate certificate is released.

The following adapted story, originally written by John Mbiti, and quoted in *Christianity in Africa* by Kwame Bediako, brings an interesting (yet sad) point.

He had learned from all kinds of courses with heavy-duty, Greek names. It was his big day, Bible school graduation. His family and friends excitedly gathered. As his Associate of Arts in Theological Studies degree was being given, you could hear them chanting, “Kofi, Kofi, he’s our man. If anyone can do it, Kofi can!” After graduation, he packed his bags and quickly departed for his village. At home relatives, friends, and neighbors gladly welcomed him, “Kofi, Kofi, he’s our man. If anyone can do it, Kofi can!” Everyone was so thrilled. Jubilation was the order of the day. In the midst of the celebration, a scream was heard. Kofi caught a glimpse of his sister wallowing on the ground and rushed to her. Kofi yelled urgently, “Let’s take her to the hospital.” Those that gathered stared at him in disbelief. No one helped. Finally a schoolboy said, “Sir, the nearest hospital is eighty kilometers away.” Someone screamed, “She is demon possessed. Hospitals will not help her.” The village elder added, “You have been studying theology. Now help your sister. She is troubled by the spirit of her great aunt.” The crowd echoed, “Come on, Kofi! Kofi, Kofi, he’s our man. If anyone can do it, Kofi can!” But Kofi couldn’t. He turned slowly and went for one of his college textbooks on spiritual warfare. He searched the pages, looking for the needed answers. People continued to shout, “Help your sister! Kofi, Kofi, he’s our man. If anyone can do it, Kofi can!” He shouted back, “My sister is not possessed because my textbook says so.”

The moral of the story is that instructors should strive to balance theory with practical application and experience. This begins with carefully planning each course, making sure it is geared to maximum impact in the lives of students, and is related to the overall big picture. That is a topic for another lesson.

CONCLUSION

Our teaching ministry will affect others long after we are gone. A Greek proverb says, “A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.” Be deliberate at leaving a mark on this planet; do something that imparts

seeds of truth to the next generation and impacts eternity for our world. Someone once said, “If your vision is for a year, plant wheat; if your vision is for a decade, plant trees; but if your vision is for a lifetime, plant men.” And that, dear friends, is our big picture!

LESSON IN REVIEW

1. What is the purpose of the Global Association of Theological Studies generally and of your Bible school specifically? _____

2. What are the four objectives of GATS?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

3. According to the GATS objectives, how do we go about preserving the message?

4. How can instructors develop expertise? _____

5. Why is it important for instructors to be good examples? _____

6. How does GATS assist in faculty development? _____

7. Comment on the type of students needed in our Bible schools. _____

8. Identify what is meant by a "Ministry Action Plan." _____

9. Relate or explain how a student is like a seed. _____

10. Relate or explain how a student is like wet cement. _____

11. In which ways are we as teachers in the agricultural business? _____

12. What is the Bible school's primary reason for existence? _____

13. Explain the law of the farm. _____

14. According to John Maxwell, when does true success come? _____

15. According to D. L. Moody, why was the Bible given to us? _____

16. What are the benefits of a well-planned curriculum? _____

17. Define or explain *curriculum*. _____

18. What are the four primary academic programs provided by GATS? How many classroom hours are ascribed to each?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

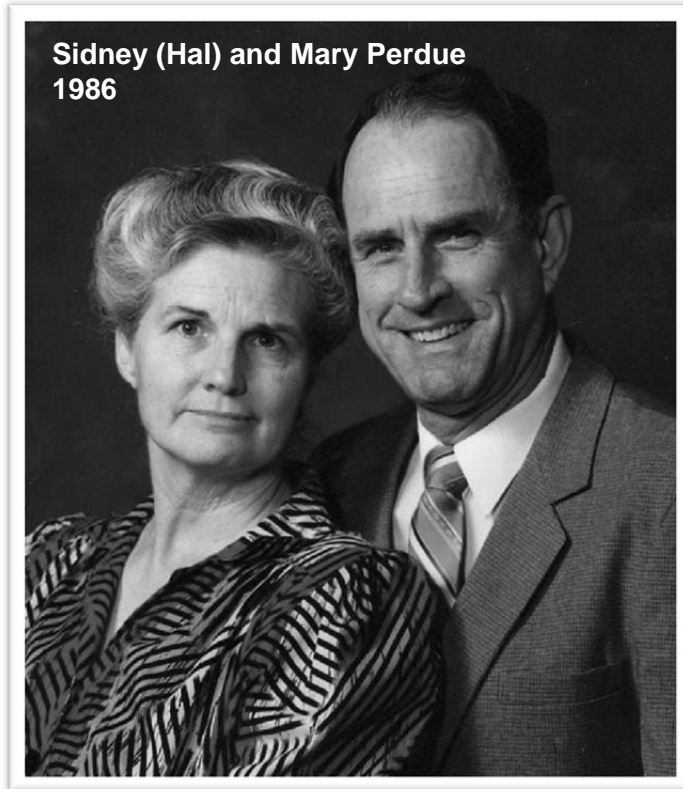
19. What are the GATS requirements or expectations regarding curriculum or academic programs of study? _____

20. Once all requirements are met by students, who issues certificates, diplomas, and degrees? _____

Missionary Spotlight: Rev. and Mrs. Sidney H. Perdue

By **Sidney H. Perdue**

I was born July 26, 1929, on a 40-acre, cotton farm in the northeast Arkansas home of my maternal grandfather. Nothing in my early life was easy. My father abandoned my mother before I was born. My mother moved from place to place with my aunt. The only thing stable in my early life was my grandparents. I went to school at Thorn Grove, Arkansas; Norfolk, Virginia; Coal Dale, West Virginia; Marked Tree, Arkansas; and graduated from Tyronza, Arkansas. I attended Quachita Baptist College in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, for a term and then joined the US Navy.



We attended the Methodist Church in Tyronza, and I knew nothing of Pentecost until I met my future wife, Mary Susie Davis, in San Diego, California, where I was stationed in the Navy. She had been raised in the Pentecostal Church in Bon Wier, Texas. Her mother, Sister Captolia Davis, brought me to the Lord and on June 19, 1958, I was baptized in Jesus' name and received the Holy Ghost.

After receiving the Holy Ghost, I became involved with the youth in the local church and then on the district level. I began to feel that God had things for me to do in His Kingdom. In 1962 I felt His call into the ministry. In 1964 I was called to pastor a church in East Texas. Sister Perdue became involved with Ladies Ministries. With her meeting Sister Mollie Thompson at a ladies meeting, we became involved with foreign missions. Every time we had a visiting missionary, I felt a desire to do more for God. Sister Thompson invited us to visit Colombia, and God provided funds in such a wonderful way that we were able to visit Colombia for first time in 1968.

I feel the most important part of any missionary's life and work is the call. There are many things that happen in our lives as God-called missionaries that could make us wonder and sow doubt, but if we have the assurance of a definite call of God, nothing can overcome us. I have said on various occasions that there are many things that you can take from me—friends, family, financial stability—but you cannot take away the call of God. Many times as a missionary, I faced difficult situations that involved the work, my family, or my ministry, but it was knowing that God called me that helped me overcome and move forward for the Lord and His cause for souls.

Our lives have been forever changed since we visited Colombia, South America, in August 1968. While we traveled the dark streets of Bogota on that first night, the still small voice began tugging at our hearts. The second visit to Colombia during Easter Week 1970 with Brother and Sister Lewis Morley in Cali only confirmed this. It was during a service on the side of Siloe mountain, while I was in prayer looking over the city, that the Lord began to speak to me in earnest. I knew I had to submit myself to that call. It not only involved me but also Sister Perdue and our three children.

I told Sister Perdue that I was going to Colombia for my third and final visit to make the commitment that I felt must be made. It was on this visit in 1971 that I had the opportunity to meet Brother Edwin Judd, the regional field supervisor of South America and later the secretary of Foreign Missions. His wisdom and counsel helped me make the decision to accept the call of God for our life.

Seeking missionary appointment in 1972 was quite a task. It involved a preliminary application, a formal application, and an appointment with the Foreign Missions Board, each taking its own good time. At this time I was working six days a week, having services four nights at my church, preaching staker services for home missions on off nights, being the youth leader for our section, and also having singing and fellowship meetings. But the call was there to help us through each phase of the process. In October 1972, in Miami Beach, Florida, the Foreign Missions Board recommended our appointment as missionaries to Colombia. Every one of those board members looked like giants. During the board interview, Brother Paul Box, then secretary of Foreign Missions, asked Sister Perdue, "What will you do if this board decides not to appoint you all at this time?" Without hesitation she answered, "We will be like the little woman in the Bible; we will just keep coming back."

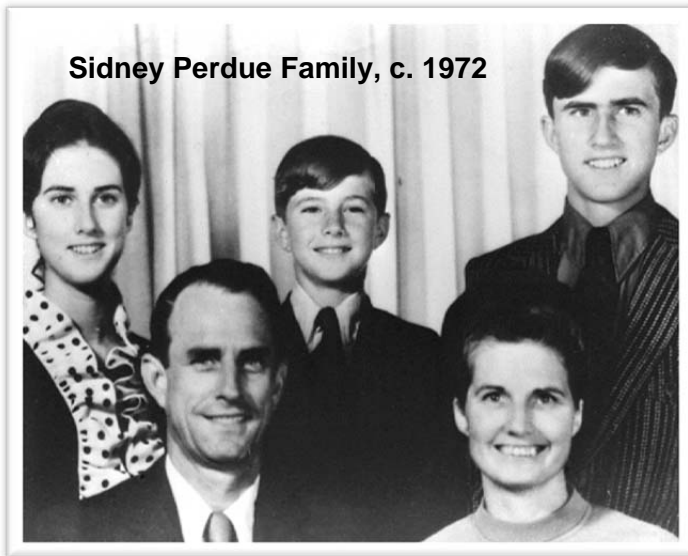
After our meeting with the Foreign Missions Board, another missionary told us that no more missionaries would be appointed to Colombia. What a long night! I ask God why we had been brought this far just to be turned down.

Being early coffee drinkers, we went down to the hotel lobby early the next morning and met Brother Edwin Judd. The first thing he said was, "Brother Perdue, I see no reason why I cannot tell you. The Foreign Mission Board recommended your

appointment and the General Board approved.” So we went off to deputation and preparation for the field. God blessed us greatly on deputation, and we received our partners in record time.

I have said—and firmly believe—the visits to the country of your calling are important to the missionary and his family. However, a visit is one thing and arriving to live in the country is another. When you arrive with a one-way ticket that you just used, you had better be committed to the call!

Culture is greater than distance. Distance can be traveled in hours. Culture is weeks, months, and in some cases years. In Spanish Ministries here in North America, I have been called a Colombian. Not because of the way I look or talk but because of the Latin culture in me that makes me Colombian. The way I think, idiomatic expressions,



Sidney Perdue Family, c. 1972

the way we eat, and how we relate to our fellow Colombians are all result of culture. Sister Perdue became a Colombian mother, a Colombian cook (and a good one), and a Colombian missionary wife. All is a part of culture that helps you fulfill the call.

Arriving on the field before missionaries were sent first to language school, my first and most frustrating experiences were because I could not speak Spanish. I realized my first priority was

to learn the language. Arriving, renting a house, getting things out of customs, and enrolling the boys in school were all challenging, but not being able to communicate was overwhelming. I had a translator to help me when I preached or taught, but something is lost in translation. So I had to learn Spanish. I still feel sorry for the Colombians who had to endure our first weeks and months on location.

The longest journey ever taken starts with that first small step. I immediately saw so many things to do, so many churches to start, so many buildings to build, but you cannot do them all at once. Key in on important aspects of the work and commence to do them one at a time as best you can. Multiply yourself, your abilities, and your energies through preparing others—training, teaching, instructing, and leading.

I never pastored as a missionary. I personally feel that missionaries should not pastor on an organized field. Your ministry and your energy can be better used to help the country if you can keep your life and ministry in a multiplying mode. It might not be easy, but we do not always get to do what we want.

I never kept an account of how many churches we helped to start and in many cases helped to build the buildings. (Manually constructing a building may not be a romantic idea, but it is an important phase of the call of God.) However, since we started the Colombian Bible school, I have kept an account of how many we have helped to prepare to work in churches in Colombia and some other countries. In 1983, we felt to shift most of our efforts to preparation and training of men and women to go into the work of the Lord. Only the Lord knows the impact of the Center for Pentecostal Bible Instruction, located in Cali, Colombia, South America. We established a two-year program with classes five days a week, five hours a day. In 2013 we will celebrate thirty years of continuous classes in which over 700 have graduated to go into the work.

Presently many of the church officials—national, regional, and local—are graduates of the CPBI in Cali. There are now also two more Bible schools in Colombia. In a great way the Bible school has brought about the spiritual success that the United Pentecostal Church International of Colombia has had.

I have seen many types of miracles in Colombia, such as blind eyes being opened and many different diseases being healed. God actually made eyes for a blind man in a service in Bogota, and he saw for the first time in his life. But as I reflect on miracles in Colombia, I realize that the greatest miracles are when souls are born again of the water and Spirit. We have had many altar services with over 1,000 people repenting and receiving the Holy Ghost. That is the greatest miracle of our life and ministry in Colombia.

In two particular miracles God made something out of nothing. One concerned money that was lost but miraculously replaced. The other was a broken part of an IBM typewriter. The concrete ceiling had fallen on the typewriter and broken some keys. God made it like new. If you would like to see it, it sits in the Bible school office in Cali, Colombia, as a silent testimony to the miracle working power of God.

I may have retired from active missionary service and returned to the USA, but that did not terminate the call of God in our lives to Colombia. Taking my own life, ministry, and call to Colombia into perspective, I sometimes wonder if God ever “un-calls” us. It may not be a good word in English, but it expresses how I feel in my spirit. I never dreamed it would or could be so, but I have visited Colombia over thirty times since we retired from fulltime service, one time staying for three months as AIMers.

Here at home we have been involved in Spanish Evangelism Ministries almost since we returned to North America. We have been able to see and be a part of a great ministry as it moves forward.

Someone told me the other day, “You seem to have been able to accomplish so many things you have wanted to do in life.” That is true. I am so blessed in that respect, but an expression of sincere thanks is owed to the United Pentecostal Church International, to Global Missions, and to local church pastors and congregations who have helped us, prayed for us, and supported us as we have tried to fulfill the will and call of God for our lives as missionaries.