

Preparing Our Lessons
Teacher Training Class – Week 4

- I. Introduction
 - A. Review of previous lessons
 - B. In this lesson, we will discuss the methodology for preparing for classes from the highest level (the curriculum) to the lowest level (individual classes)
 - C. Next lesson, we will look at how to effectively present the prepared class material

- II. Preparing the curriculum
 - A. Suppose a surprise quiz were handed out next Sunday to everyone above the age of 12, containing 100 fact questions that spanned the entire Bible story
 - i. How many in the audience would pass the test, let alone score an A? Would you?
 - ii. Most congregations would not do well on this test – why not?
 - 1. We are not teaching effectively
 - 2. We are ignoring huge portions of the Bible in our classes
 - B. Certain books are often emphasized routinely while others are hardly ever taught
 - C. We must plan together, as a group, in order to address deficiencies in Bible knowledge and ensure that the entire Bible story is presented to our children
 - D. Our curriculum takes us through the entire Bible story in 3½ years (*The Story of the Bible*)

- III. Preparing for the quarter
 - A. The single most important thing that a teacher can do to prepare to teach: *study hard*
 - i. Teaching a Bible class is not easy – it takes diligent effort
 - ii. You have not prepared sufficiently for your class if you have only read the teacher’s manual, or done a few questions in a workbook, or read a chapter of the Bible
 - iii. There is no substitute for knowledge
 - iv. You should know 40 times as much about the subject as you will have time to teach
 - v. When you accept responsibility to teach a class, you are accepting partial responsibility for the souls of your students; have something to teach
 - B. Total time spent studying is not the only criteria for preparedness
 - i. Consider the story of the “Diligent Bible Student”
 - ii. Bible “helps” are not sinful (lexicons, commentaries, etc.), but we must be careful to allot the proper ratio of time between these helps and the primary source: the Bible
 - iii. 75% of the Bible is understood relatively easily; only look up what you do not know
 - iv. The Bible is its own best commentary if we learn to study in context
 - C. Take advantage of the ongoing teacher-training class which will be one quarter ahead
 - D. Plan to teach at least one quarter ahead so that you can adequately prepare
 - E. How do I prepare?
 - i. Is it History?
 - 1. Understand where the material fits in the overall outline of Bible history
 - 2. Identify the beginning and ending points in the Bible; read and reread
 - 3. Try to see the structure of the whole unit of study: What is happening in the whole unit? How does it fit into the structure of the Bible?
 - 4. Consider details: Who are the people in the unit? Learn to say their names. Do we know anything about them from earlier history? Why did each act as he did? How should each one have responded? What changes could have been made if their attitudes and responses had been different?

5. Practice telling the story in large chunks, learning to add as many details as possible as you go along – this will prepare you to tell the story in class
 6. Write a broad outline for the events that transpire in your unit of history
- ii. Is it an Epistle?
 1. Read and reread the epistle several times from different translations
 2. Questions for study: To whom was the letter written? What is the overall message of the epistle? Why did the writer think it was necessary to write?
 3. Outline the main points in the whole book (main points, sub-points)
 4. The main difference in outlining an epistle rather than history is that you will be outlining arguments to prove doctrinal points instead of events
 5. Watch for punctuation; study the material in whole sentences/paragraphs
 - iii. Is it a topical study?
 1. Look in a concordance/index to find as many passages as possible that deal with the subject you are to teach; read and reread those passages
 2. While you will almost certainly not use every passage, you must study all of them in order to teach the topic completely (e.g. John 3:16 and salvation)
 3. Organize the information into a few logical, easily understood points
 4. Use only two or three plain verses to prove each point – remember the goal is to have the listeners understand and (importantly) remember the study
- F. Considerations to make when organizing the material for the class
- i. Mark portions of your outline that your students are ready to learn, considering their ages, etc. (remember that they are probably ready for more than you think)
 1. The youngest children are only ready for the most basic Bible history stories
 2. Children four or five can begin putting (easy) stories into chronological order
 3. If you are teaching 1st-3rd graders, most material (even sermons, etc.) can be simplified enough such that they can get at least the main point from it
 4. Over 4th grade, you can skip this step: include everything; there will still be portions that need simplification/explanation, but helping them to understand in those ways is what you are there to do
 - ii. Work hard to study and understand your material; the better you know it, the easier it will be to simplify and explain it to the children on their level
 - iii. Consider what types of activities would be helpful to teach particular points
 1. What thought will be emphasized throughout the unit? (Bulletin board)
 2. Consider written or visual aids, depending on the level/age of the students
 3. Worksheets, etc. must be age appropriate (mostly pictures for the younger children, mostly words for the older children)

IV. Preparing today's lesson

- A. Read and re-read all of your preparations for the specific lesson
- B. Practice telling the story aloud; try recording/listening to yourself (are you interesting?)
- C. Now is the time to consult a commentary for additional information about difficult passages
- D. Remember that the goal of your class is to simplify the material enough that your students can easily digest it and remember it (history, sermons, thoughts, words, etc.)
- E. If the students do not understand something, they will certainly not remember it
- F. What is teaching?
 - i. Learn the divine lesson that is in the passage under consideration
 - ii. Present that divine lesson so that every student in the class can understand it
 - iii. In your presentation, persuade students to apply the lesson(s) to their lives