

Importance and Responsibility of Parents and Teachers
Teacher Training Class – Week 1

- I. There is a problem in the church
 - A. There are many signs of a problem
 - i. Children, even after growing up “in the church,” fall away
 - ii. Many Christians lack basic knowledge of the Scriptures
 - iii. Many Christians lack a faith that truly transforms their lives (Romans 12:2)
 - B. These problems are related; they indicate that something is wrong with the teaching
 - C. Some claim to have “the fix” for Bible classes
 - i. Special arrangements for chairs
 - ii. Expensive, flashy visual aids
 - iii. A unified curriculum
 - D. In reality, there is no “magic bullet;” we must get back to the basics of Bible teaching
 - i. Teach the mighty works of God
 - ii. Teach how God has dealt with man through the ages
 - iii. Teach how God has always kept His promises
 - E. We must strive to instill a love for God in the hearts of our students
 - F. How serious is this problem?
 - i. Consider Israel: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” (Hosea 4:6)
 - ii. Available knowledge was ignored: “Because you have rejected knowledge...”

- II. Problems with our teaching
 - A. The Catechetic Response
 - i. A catechism is a teaching device where questions and answers are memorized
 - ii. We must involve the student in the thinking process, or else our efforts are wasted
 - iii. Consider the story of the man who argued that brushing teeth caused tooth decay
 - iv. The main problem with the catechetic response is it results in an inability to apply old principles and teachings to new problems and situations
 - B. Making it “Relevant”
 - i. It is easy to have the pendulum swing too far in the other direction and not focus at all on knowledge of the scriptures and Bible stories
 - ii. Many people, children especially, understand and remember lessons much more easily when they are taught in the context of a Bible story
 - iii. Examples
 - 1. Ephesians 4:32 – Be kind to one another (Dorcas, Acts 9)
 - 2. Revelation 2:10 – Be faithful until death (Joseph, Genesis 37-50)
 - 3. Genesis 6:22 – Following God’s commands exactly is very important (Noah)
 - C. Irregular and Infrequent Reinforcement
 - i. It is completely unrealistic for children to remember things they have been exposed to only once or twice in their lives (Consider the story of “John” and Samuel)
 - ii. Thirty effective repetitions are needed for a permanent memory to be made

- III. Who is responsible for fixing the situation?
 - A. Let us look at a child’s life “in the balance”
 - i. Parents
 - ii. School
 - iii. Peer Pressure

- iv. Personality
 - v. Society
 - vi. Church Services (1 hour/week = 0.6% of one's time)
 - vii. Bible Class Teacher (45 minutes/week = 0.44% of one's time)
- B. Teachers have a great responsibility
- i. In the Old Testament, the Levites were to read the entire law aloud once every seven years (Deuteronomy 31:9-13)
 - ii. For many of the children here, the only exposure they will have to the Bible and its teachings are in the few minutes of time in Bible classes
 - iii. Teachers are in a unique position to reach children with no other good influences
- C. Parents have a far greater responsibility
- i. The task of teaching the law between the public readings every seven years was given to the parents (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)
 - ii. Your child is your responsibility (Ephesians 6:4)
 - iii. Bible classes at church must be "icing on the cake," not the "main course"
 - iv. Parents have more time and opportunity to teach their children than anyone else
 - v. The teachings of the Bible belong to our children; let us not deprive them of their God-given heritage (Deuteronomy 29:29)
- IV. Home teaching must be effective in order to have the desired effect
- A. What is commonly viewed as "home teaching" is not sufficient
- i. Biblical facts and lists are not enough (catechetical response)
 - ii. Platitudes, truisms, and morals are not enough (making it "relevant")
- B. Consider an example of the Old Testament
- i. Moses told the Israelites to teach their children (Deuteronomy 4:9)
 - ii. They were to teach their children so they could continue to live in the land and reap the blessings of God (Deuteronomy 6:20-25)
 - iii. Remember that the generation to which Moses is speaking was one of the best generations of Israel, as they would take Canaan and continue in faith (Judges 2:7)
 - iv. Yet, despite their faith, after they died, the next generation did not know God nor the great works which He had done (Judges 2:10) – How could this happen?
- C. The likely truth of the matter
- i. While it is easy for us to lambast the Israelites and accuse them of not teaching their children, it is unlikely that a simple lack of teaching was to blame
 - ii. Consider the story contained in Joshua 3-4, especially focus on the memorial stones
 - iii. It is not enough to simply state the facts; we must teach our children vividly enough to impress them, and to allow God to affect their hearts as He has affected ours
 - iv. Another Old Testament example: The Passover (Exodus 12:25-27)
 - v. A practical example for us: The Lord's Supper
 - 1. What do you tell your children when they ask why you take it?
 - 2. Do you take advantage of these opportunities to impress your children with the love of Christ and the mercy of God? Or do you just "state the facts"?
- V. Conclusion
- A. While this class will mostly focus on how to improve our teaching in the classroom, we must never forget that parents at home will either make or break our efforts here
- B. Let us remember that teaching our children is a joint effort, and let us all work hard to ensure that our children love God and know Him and His Word intimately