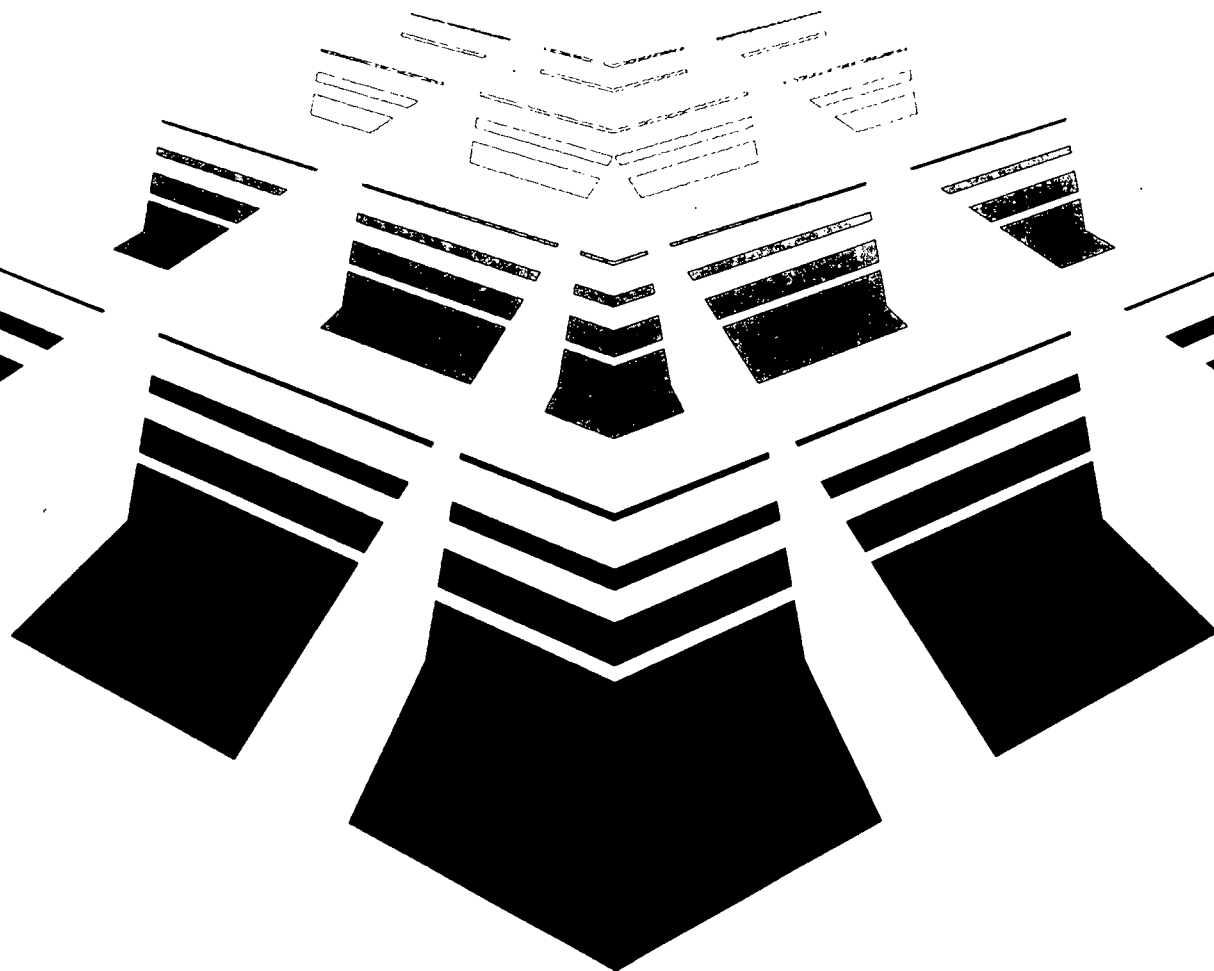


# TEACHING IN A FOURSQUARE SUNDAY SCHOOL



AN APPROVED TRAINING PROGRAM COURSE  
INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF THE FOURSQUARE GOSPEL  
National Department of Christian Education

# TEACHING IN A FOURSQUARE SUNDAY SCHOOL

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This book is a part of the Approved Training Program for Foursquare Churches. It has as its goal the equipping of teachers for a vital task. It does not contain all a worker should know but it can be a beginning.

When taken as a course of study under the Approved Training Program the following procedures are necessary for receiving credit:

1. There is a requirement of six 45-minute class sessions, or their equivalent. The student must attend a minimum of five of the six classes.
2. An approved instructor must teach the class. Instructor approval is granted to qualified persons through the National Department of Christian Education.
3. Students must be at least fifteen years of age.
4. Reading the complete textbook is also required.
5. The student must do the work required by the instructor and the assignments in the *Guidelines for Learning* at the end of each chapter.
6. When a final examination is given, the student must receive a grade of 70% or more.
7. Students should keep a notebook of their work, which is to be turned in to the instructor at the completion of this course.
8. When used as a home study course, complete the assignments at the end of each chapter as your home study supervisor directs.

For further information regarding the Approved Training Program, contact:

The National Department of Christian Education  
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# 1

## The Teacher

*"He the Great Example is,  
and pattern for me."*

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In an interview, the great Jascha Heifetz once said, "We need good music teachers more than performers today. Nobody's playing; everybody's talking . . . A student naturally challenges his teacher, saying, 'Show me.' A teacher must be able to show him. Too many just tell him that's the trouble with music education." He further stated, "I know of no short cuts to playing the violin I wish I knew some. You have to work hard to play the fiddle."

The same is true of the work of the Sunday school teacher. There are no short cuts to good teaching. Sunday school students are crying, "Show me." They challenge the teacher not only to be able to show and to tell, but to help them to understand. In teaching the Scriptures, the Sunday school teacher becomes a central figure. There could be no teaching through this arm of the church without these dedicated persons.

To accomplish the work of the school there must be sound administration and good organization with clearly defined objectives. These goals dictate how each unit of the church will realize its part in the overall task. The church can not rely on its previous success in meeting the requirements for good Christian education. Continued effectiveness can only happen as long as there is a staff of teachers able to help the students understand and assimilate the material presented.

### A DIVINE CALLING

The Scriptures teach us that God has set in the church those with the ministry of teaching (1 Corinthians 12:28). You are not a teacher by chance, but by appointment of God for this time. He has ordained that you be here, now, to teach and

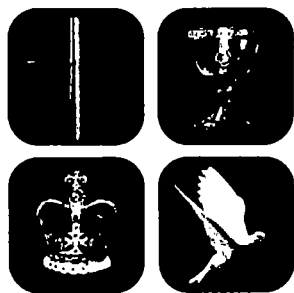
minister to those in your class. You are part of thousands of teachers who teach the Gospel all over the world. You "hold forth the word of life" and point boys and girls, youth, men and women to the Savior. Yours is a divine calling. Cherish it.

### A DENOMINATIONAL GRASP

As a Sunday school worker in the Foursquare church, you are a member of a great force serving throughout the United States and Canada. In addition, thousands more present the Foursquare Gospel in foreign lands. For some, the Scriptures and curriculum are now being written in their own languages and dialects. These schools, with their many languages, use a variety of teaching methods in countless meeting places. This united front presents a message which is sufficient to meet the needs for every culture and ethnic group.

*The Message.* The Foursquare Gospel, a message for all mankind, finds its source in a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. It proclaims Him as: Savior (Acts 4:12; John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10), Baptizer with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:8; Acts 2:4, 38), Healer (Isaiah 53:5; Exodus 15:16; James 5:14, 15), and Soon Coming King (John 14:2, 3; Acts 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). With the Word as its base, this full-gospel message is answering the needs of the total man.

It is the challenge of the Foursquare Sunday school teacher to present this message throughout all teaching. This, of course, means becoming familiar with and experiencing firsthand its doctrines. When the lesson book projects the miraculous power of the Savior when He walked on earth, the teacher can vividly bring this truth to life from a personal realization that this Jesus is the same today; He continues to



**Jesus, the Only Savior**  
**Jesus, the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit**  
**Jesus, the Healer**  
**Jesus, the Soon Coming King**

heal the sick and save men from their sins. When reference is being made to the fullness of the Spirit, the teacher reminds the student that God still infills men with His Spirit and power today. It is a living message for its center is a Living Christ.

*The Organization.* The structure of the Foursquare denomination had its beginning with its founder, Aimee Semple McPherson. What a rich heritage we enjoy. God chose a young woman with a life committed to Himself to spread the story of His love to millions upon millions. Even before the founding of Angelus Temple and the establishment of a Bible college to train ministers, the message had been preached around the world.

Today, throughout the world, Foursquare churches are being established to carry on this evangelistic thrust. Weekly, thousands sit under the influence of the Word taught by Spirit-filled teachers. And God has ordained that you be a part of this army of dedicated workers to teach the full-gospel message.

*The Departments.* The Sunday school is just one part of the program of Christian education in the Foursquare church, but it is the major part. More persons study God's Word in this department than in any of the other departments. Also contributing to the teaching of the church are the children and youth groups, week-day Bible clubs, vacation Bible school, Kids Crusade, and camps. Special courses for adults are also available. Christian schools are established in growing numbers. Each fits together to provide a well-rounded and complete program of teaching and training for all ages.

#### **A DEDICATED EXAMPLE**

You are appointed by God to serve Him in the position as a teacher. We look to the Master Teacher Himself to see the example He set for men as He worked and moved here on earth.

*In touch with the Father.* Throughout the Gospels we have recorded the prayers of Christ in behalf of Himself and others. He often spoke to the Father and gained strength and help from Him. Never did He allow Himself to detour from the real purpose of His earthly ministry. In times of pressing circumstances, He prayed, "not my will but thine be done." He was consecrated to His task. This characteristic is being required today of every Sunday school worker. God requires it Himself and it is vital in the life of each Christian.

*Practiced as taught.* He spoke with humility, and washed His disciples' feet. He taught His followers to pray and John 17 records His own prayer to the Father on their behalf. He told them to love their enemies, and died asking His Father to "forgive them for they know not what they do." He taught them of mercy and went about healing the sick, feeding the 5,000. He became their example.

The Sunday school teacher also influences the lives he touches. This influence causes others either to want to know Jesus, or causes them to reject the Savior.

*Abounded in love.* At times this God-man became physically weary. When He tried to avert the crowds they continued to seek Him out. Never did He turn from those in need. In spite of the weariness, He laid His hand on them and healed them, or fed them when they hungered, or comforted those in sorrow. His meat was to do not only the necessary, but the abundant work. He always exceeded or reached beyond the necessary.

The love of Christ manifests itself in a willingness to serve others, even in times of weariness. It reflects in a love for the unlovely and the unfortunate. It appears in a helpful and generous spirit and brings glory not to the doer, but to the "Father which is in heaven."

*Gave Himself.* He became personally involved with those to whom He ministered. He gave His life for their redemption. He spared nothing. This is the true picture of the effective teacher: he must give himself. He gives himself first to the Lord in complete and continual dedication, and then to his students. He is a spiritual leader who can point them to the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

He is an educator who instructs not only with his lips, but his life. The greatest, most effective, visual aid a teacher has is his own life. The attitudes and practices of the Savior Himself were reflected in His contact with the people to whom He ministered. And He pointed them to eternal life.

*Mission of evangelism.* When confronted with criticism and harsh remarks, or burdened because those closest were neglectful or apathetic, His goal was always before Him. Jesus had come to seek and to save those who were lost. In all His teaching, Christ pointed men to eternal life. In every ministry, He prepared men to recognize and accept the love the Father had for them. While equipping His disciples to carry on the work He would leave for them, He stressed the eternal values

of their work.

*Faithfulness.* Can any say He was ever less faithful than He instructed His disciples to be? Even when the Father forsook Him on the cross, He was faithful. He faithfully bore the sins of mankind as if they were His own. He did not hesitate to complete His mission. Nor did the Father in His faithfulness, hesitate to receive His Son back again when His earthly ministry was complete.

It is required of stewards, "that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). There is no task so great or small for which the Master does not require this faithfulness. The Father takes note of this faithful service and He rewards all according to it.

### A DIRECTED TASK

God has ordained that our service to Him be through the church. This institution has the prerogative of directing its workers, outlining their duties and responsibilities as they accept positions of service. What things can the church, or more particularly the Sunday school, expect from its workers?

*Salvation — a genuine experience.* Using the most eloquent words, elaborate visuals, or the latest curriculum cannot replace this experience in the teacher's life. The message of salvation is best taught from his experience, not from mere theory. Bare dogma and scriptural doctrine alone do not portray an accurate picture. It must be modeled by the teacher. Truth must be a reality in the life of the teacher. A teacher may teach without much training, or without experience, although both are important. However, he cannot effectively present the Gospel unless he has experienced the new birth himself. This is the basic requirement for each teacher.

Each teacher also needs to understand the Statement of Faith of the Foursquare Church and acknowledge these truths in his own life.

*Spirit-Filled.* When the Holy Spirit was first outpoured on the Day of Pentecost, the harvest was about to be begin. Jesus had told them to tarry, to wait for the promise of the Father. When they did receive the Holy Spirit, they were to be witnesses. He called them and then equipped them. He does the same today.

The Foursquare church teaches a full-gospel message. This includes the work of the Holy Spirit as portrayed in the book of Acts. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all Christians today. The teacher does not carry out this great work alone. He is the instrument through which God works to accomplish His goals. Even in these most difficult days, he has the ability through the empowerment of the Spirit, to accomplish the task.

The fullness of the Holy Spirit is vital to effective teaching. Attempting to teach without the power of the Holy Spirit is indeed unwise and unnecessary.

*Appreciation of total church ministry.* The Sunday school is just one part of the total church program. Where it fits and what it contributes must be understood by the teacher.

The student will appreciate the other ministries of the church as the teacher emphasizes their importance. Consistently attending worship services will enable the student to

understand their value. The same is true of all phases of the church's ministry. As the teacher understands the role of each department, he is then able to assist in the student's spiritual growth.

*Active in visitation.* The pattern of the church in Acts showed that they "continued from house to house." The church was a training center where they were taught how to reach others. They considered the church their "mission station" and the world their mission field. They did not invite others to come to the church for salvation, instead they went out proclaiming the Gospel. Once the people were born again, they were brought into the church so that they could be trained also.

The challenge of the Sunday school today is to pattern its strategy after New Testament methods. Sunday school has often been used as a means to evangelize students. However, the teacher must also remember to be a witness outside the classroom. In assuming responsibility in the Sunday school, part of the teacher's task is to visit.

*Absentees need visits.* If a student is absent more than twice, the teacher should visit him.

*Visitors should be contacted.* They did not come to class by accident, but by divine appointment. The church is responsible before God for reaching them. The visitor can sense the teacher's spiritual concern when he comes to his home.

*Prospects need visits.* Anyone who does not attend another Sunday school is a prospect for your school. God places these people in the paths of Christians and gives them the opportunity to reach them.

*Faithful students enjoy occasional visits.* This shows appreciation for their consistent attendance. The teacher should not pass over the visitation ministry lightly. It helps the teacher to understand the student, encourages the student to remain faithful and assists the teacher in obtaining cooperation from the home. It brings great spiritual results, not only in the life of the student, but often it may become a means of reaching the entire family.

The teacher has several ways to contact a student. However, note the following: a postcard is only 10% effective, a letter is 20% effective, a phone call is 40% effective, and a personal visit is 80% effective.

*Qualification.* The lack of a formal education should not discourage a prospective Sunday school teacher. On the other hand, there dare not exist an excuse for shoddiness in the Lord's work. Effective workers are always updating their training.

The opportunities for the teacher to increase his knowledge and understanding of the student and of teaching are unlimited. Books, periodicals, training courses, conferences and conventions are just a few. The teacher who accepts the responsibility to present the claims of Christ should learn to do this task effectively. He must constantly improve himself and his methods or run the risk of becoming stagnant, dull and uninteresting. He must continue to learn.

*Spiritual concern.* The primary objective of the Sunday school is to win the students to Christ. Unless they come

to know the Savior they are lost. Being a Christian not only assures one of eternal life but helps one to live in this present world. This interest in the spiritual life of the student will manifest itself in the total of all the teacher does with and for his class. He should plan, prepare and pray to meet the individual needs of his students. Only then is he fully able to communicate the truth. We dare not teach with any less understanding.

*Cooperation with the plans and programs of the local church.* The relationship an individual shows with Christ will determine his attitude toward other contemporaries. Therefore, if right attitudes are to be manifest, a right relationship with Christ is essential. The worker may have a difference of opinion or constructive criticism to project. He will always seek the desired change through the proper channels. He dare not let the weaknesses of others bring out his own. He should seek satisfactory solution to any problem in an attitude of love.

A variety of talents further a common cause. If each staff member is a sincere and consecrated servant of the Lord, he will appreciate the other's work. A conscientious teacher will attend meetings, willingly serve individually or with other members in common causes of the Sunday school.

Confidence is placed in the teacher by his appointment to a class. He becomes an official representative of the entire congregation to those class members. He stands before God as responsible for their spiritual welfare and development. He owes His allegiance first to the Savior and then to the church.

### A MODEL PATTERN

*Who Jesus taught.* He taught multitudes as when He fed the 5,000 or ministered the Sermon on the Mount. Yet He worked with the small group as well as the twelve disciples, in the home of Lazarus. And He also took time to teach the one individual. John 4 records His conversation with the woman of Samaria. Jesus also had time when Nicodemus came to Him as seen in John chapter 3.

The size of the group is not all important. In fact, effective teaching cannot take place if the group is too large. However, no group is too small. One individual is one soul which needs spiritual awakening and maturity.

*Where Jesus taught.* We are prone at times to think that unless we are in a formal classroom, at an appointed time and are presenting a previously prepared study, that we are not teaching. This is not true. Jesus used every available opportunity and time to teach. Not only did His life bear witness of His message, but everywhere He went He affected lives. The Temple was His classroom. He met men on the seashore, pointed them to the way of life and said, "Follow me." He held class in the homes of some and showed to them the way of life. Wherever He met people, sitting upon a mountain, in a boat, walking on a road or in an upper chamber, He taught.

A Spirit-directed teacher will find just such an opportunity as well. The completing love of Christ will drive him out of the classroom into the home of his students. He will not hesitate to reach out to them in visitation and

manifest a spiritual concern for them and their families. He will provide opportunity for social involvement and will observe his students in this environment. A teacher realizes he cannot really know his students from just a weekly meeting in the Sunday school. He will show he cares by using every means possible to apply the message of the way of life through Christ Jesus to their lives.

*How Jesus taught.* Jesus knew men. He lived with them and observed them. His lessons were never beyond their grasp as He led them into new experiences. He began with what they understood. In speaking of the harvest of souls, He pointed to the grain, ripe and ready to harvest.

He knew the individual needs of all He met. Even the press of the multitude did not deter Him from healing the woman that touched His garment. He ministered to the physical, as well as, spiritual needs of men.

He employed various methods to meet various needs. In the Sermon on the Mount, He lectured; through the parables He taught by story and illustration. He stimulated the thinking of the rich by employing questions and answers. This method He often used with the scribes and the disciples. He took a child as an object lesson of humility. He chose a coin and the fig tree to add illustration and meaning to a truth. He pointed to the lilies and birds to show the Father's care. Often He quoted or read the Scriptures to substantiate or recall a lesson. And always He taught by example. The disciples would not wash His feet, He washed theirs. He showed them how to put the truth to work in their lives.

### A DEFINED RESPONSIBILITY

What exactly are the functions of a teacher? Many persons have accepted positions of responsibility without first investigating to find out the scope of the task they undertake. No matter how qualified a person is, a position is not adequately filled until that man or woman understands the duties which are his. The same holds true in respect to the Sunday school teacher. What actually are his responsibilities?

*Directs the learning activity.* Learning involves both a teacher and a student. The teacher cannot do the learning for the student. He is responsible to present a lesson so learning can take place. Learning is activity of both the mind and of the body. This involves the use of the thinking process, the eyes, ears, mouth and hands. Learning takes place as all of these are engaged.

The center of the Sunday school is the teacher-student relationship. The teacher is responsible to establish this relationship and to inspire the pupil to learn.

*Teaches the Word.* The teaching of the Holy Scriptures is the chief function of the Sunday school. Decisions are made for Christ and converts are nurtured and brought to maturity as a result of this teaching. This school has only one subject, the Bible. While the teacher may refer to history or geography, the subject matter is the Word. Activities, drawing and coloring for the little child, a discussion of current events in the adult class, cannot take the place of the Word. It is through the teaching of the Scriptures that students learn the great realities, and that lives take shape.



Again, we have the example of the Savior. When on earth He engaged in teaching men. The more we study the life of Christ and use it as a pattern for our living, the more effective we will in our teaching.

*Guides personal development.* A dedicated teacher is not satisfied with merely giving his students information and acquainting them with great truths revealed in God's Word. His interest is in the impressions his teaching is having upon the students and the effects which are becoming apparent in their lives. He wants them to worship God, love God, and act in love toward one another. These are people that he teaches and each has needs. A proper understanding of the Savior meets their need. What his students learn will affect their personalities. Real learning brings about a change in the life of the student.

### A DIVERSIFIED ROLE

In the role as teacher, the Sunday school worker plays many parts. Each part is interwoven to make him an effective worker.

*A person.* He is an example in attitude and action. He manifests love toward all. All persons need to feel welcome and that they belong. The teacher must be fair, having no favorites and encouraging all. What a person is, shows in the appearance he presents. How he dresses, his manner of speaking and the friendly countenance he manifests tells of an inner peace which the circumstances of life do not affect. People enjoy an individual with a sense of humor and seek out his company. For the teacher this many times is the "saving sense" which helps him smooth over the rough place. It helps him accept his own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others. The teacher needs to be a "growing person." His mental, social, physical and spiritual self must continually be maturing. This kind of growth comes through vision, consecration, prayer and disciplined activity. When these elements are present, he finds himself an "alive" and vital person.

*A friend.* Do you like your students? We enjoy being with those we like, and show an interest and concern for them and their welfare. Regularly teenagers say, "What we want from a teacher is a friend who we can talk to."

*A counselor.* You may not have "all of the answers" but God does. Your students need a sympathetic listener and confidant who will point them to Christ and show them that He has the solution to all problems. The teacher must grow in this role.

*A student.* When we cease to learn, we cease to teach. To be alert and conscious of the current events in your area and in the world is a must for the teacher. Also being aware of the interests of your students is a constant challenge.

*An educator.* This would be an impossible task if it were not for the indwelling, empowering Holy Spirit who "searches all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:10). He is present and abides within to open the Word and guide the teacher in the best approach to truths of the lessons. "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit . . ." (ibid). Depending daily upon the Spirit, the teacher uses the abilities and keenness of mind which God

gives to prepare himself for teaching. He needs to become aware of the means whereby his students learn and he must keep learning himself.

*A seeker.* The teacher will visit his students and strive to understand their attitudes, habits, influences and responses. When seen in the light of the home, the student is more easily understood and the teacher is better able to minister to the individual.

*A Discippler.* Jesus said, ". . . Go and make disciples of all nations . . ." (Matthew 28:19). Paul said he would be "all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22). To Paul, evangelism (making disciples) headed his list of priorities. He treated persons as individuals, not groups, and won them to the One he loved. Whether the Sunday school teacher is reaching, teaching, training, or leading the student to a decision for Christ, he is being an evangelist. A large percentage of the converts to the church come from the Sunday school. The teacher must try to win his students to the Savior. The work of the Sunday school is not complete if this is not happening. Teach to win. There are several things a teacher can do right in the classroom which will pave the way to leading his students to Christ:

1. Know your students. Study them; know their individual spiritual status.
2. Use the Bible. Make your methods "Bible" learning activities by making them dependent upon the Word. Keep it before them and enlist their use of it.
3. In preparation, pray until God gives you wisdom to present your lesson in a way that will lead your students to salvation.
4. Pray for each student. Put them on your prayer list. Write each name and burden on your heart.
5. In the class, be conscious of each opportunity to lead them to Christ. Allow them to stay after class, or ask them to assist you then so you can speak with them individually.
6. Believe God for the salvation of each student in your class.

The teacher "wears many hats." The task is great; the responsibility may seem staggering; and if one tried to do these things himself, he would utterly and completely fail. However, when God asks for a job to be done, He sees that the ability is given to perform it well. He guides Christians into positions and gives gifts that makes each one capable of doing the work. Although the teacher may feel inadequate to perform the task, God has given him gifts, that when developed, will enable him to accomplish the work.

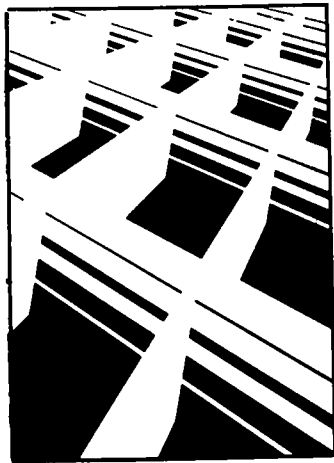
Energized, empowered and filled by His Spirit, each Sunday school teacher is able to say with Paul, "I am ready for anything and equal to anything though Him Who infuses inner strength to me" (Philippians 4:13, Amplified).

# GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING

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## WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?

1. List an event with a Scripture reference which shows each of the following in the life of the Master Teacher.
  - a. Teaching to crowds.
  - b. Teaching individuals.
  - c. Using illustrations.
  - d. Talking in the language of those He taught.
  - e. Commission received from God.
  - f. Communion with the Father.
  - g. Living out a truth He taught.
2. The Sunday school is just one part of the total church program. List other areas of your church's program and tell how each contributes to the ministry of the total church.
3. Read Exodus 4:6-17. What excuses did Moses give for not fulfilling what God wanted of him? What was the result? What excuses do Christians give today for not being actively involved in Christian service?
4. In your view, what is the greatest single contribution that a Sunday school teacher can make to his students?
5. In light of this chapter, list the areas of your own life which you feel need improvement. Then beside each write the means whereby you intend to accomplish this progress.
6. Write a short paragraph, defining what a "called teaching ministry" means to you and its importance.
7. Interview someone you consider an outstanding teacher. Learn all you can about his training, his means of lesson preparation, personal study, and his contact with the students he teaches. List the reason why you feel he is outstanding. List traits that made him outstanding.



# 2

## The Student

“... Everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher.”  
—Luke 6:40

**T**he difference between the trained teacher and the novice is apparent as he begins his class. The novice looks first at the lesson; the trained teacher looks first at his students.

All learning involves these two persons, the teacher and the student. We have viewed the teacher, now let us look at the student and discover his part in the Sunday school.

There can be no learning without students. Because we are teaching people not lessons, there must be a thorough understanding on the part of the teacher of those being taught. As a result of each lesson the teacher wants the student to: know certain thoughts, feel certain things, and do something about what he knows and feels. When behavior and attitude change it is evident that learning has taken place. Before he can plan for these things to happen the teacher must have some knowledge of his students' present feelings, thoughts, and actions.

### UNDERSTANDING THE STUDENT

The late Dr. Henrietta Mears used the parable of the sower in Matthew to illustrate the teacher-student relationship. She pointed out that the Seed, the Word of God, was unchanging. It was good seed, of good quality. The difference was in the soils and it was this difference that brought a variety in harvest yield. This soil is the Sunday school student; the seed remains the Word of God. The question we must ask is, “Do we know the soil that we are planting in each Sunday?”

A successful farmer must know which machinery to use, when to cultivate and how much effort is necessary to guarantee a good harvest. The successful Sunday school teacher will

study his pupils to determine which methods are best to use in “planting the seed.” Then real learning can take place and blossom into a rich harvest.

What are your students like? What are their needs? What are their potentials? Unless he knows this, the teacher cannot possibly understand which methods are most appropriate. He will not know which equipment will be of the greatest assistance and which approaches will capture the attention.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL STUDENTS

There are certain basic facts a teacher should remember about all students.

Children imitate. They imitate their parents, their teachers, and their peers. They become like the persons with whom they associate and defend what these people do. This characteristic is true also, to a lesser degree, with adults. We all tend to emulate those with whom we associate and particularly those we admire. Often couples, after many years of marriage begin to almost look alike. In reality they have merely acquired like traits, attitudes and the conduct of their mate.

*Interest and attention span varies with age.* The challenge of the teacher is to be aware of the attention span for the age with which he works. With this in mind he is able to better understand the restlessness of inattention when this span is reaching the exhaustion period. Following is a guide to the attention span of each age group.

AGE	ATTENTION SPAN
2 years	2-5 minutes
3 years	4-5 minutes
4,5 years	4-6 minutes
6-8 years	7-15 minutes
9-11 years	20 minutes
12-15 years	30-40 minutes
Adults	40 minutes

The attention span within these groupings may also vary with the student. Atmosphere, teaching tools and methods lengthen the attention span. Also emotional disturbances, physical discomfort and many such items may cause a student not to give attention. The teacher needs to be aware of this and vary the class time so as never to exhaust this span. Discipline problems are prevented in this manner.

*Everyone enjoys a story that is well told.* Even adults. This cannot make up the entire teaching method for a teacher. It is well to remember, however, since story telling is a very effective means of portrayal.

*Students need opportunity to participate and express themselves.* The more student involvement with the lesson, the more they learn and retain. The interest which is manifest is a clue for the teacher as to what is being learned.

*Everyone desires approval.* While children make this more clear than adults, the recognition of the accomplishments of all ages is important. Let people know you appreciate them.

*Each student is a special person in his own right.* Each has qualities which make him different from others. God made him that way. Each person receives special recognition in the sight of God. Each one should be "special" in the sight of his teacher.

*Always call a student by his name.* This shows you care enough to remember him as an individual. All are flattered when they are remembered and called by their names.

*The normal person is not perfect.* The "perfect" person would be out of place in our world. Recognize the strengths and weaknesses in your students. See them for what they can become, rather than what they are now.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF AGE GROUPS

Each age group has certain characteristics which are apparent in that stage of their lives. Small children cannot react as a junior high. No child can or will act like an adult. Just because a person has reached adulthood, we cannot expect that his interests and motivations will remain the same for the rest of his life.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to present an extensive look at the characteristics of each age. However, it is necessary to point out that the teacher must grasp an understanding of the characteristics of those he teaches.

There are various levels or periods of development in a person's life. When viewed in the light of the work of the Sunday school these are valuable to the general knowledge of the teacher. When applied to the Sunday school and its work, these levels help the teacher grasp the development of a regular Sunday school attendant. Let us look at these age categories to see how the church can have a ministry at each level.

*Pre-School — Birth to 5 years of age.* During these years the child grows fastest and learns more than at any other period in his life. His ability to understand and relate usually reaches 50% of its development by the time he is four years old. His basic personality characteristics form and will probably never change.

The stages of development follow a recognizable pattern. The infant is totally dependent upon those who care for him. He needs to feel love and gentle concern from his teacher who stands near the beginning of his life at its foundation.

The creeper stage begins at the second half of the child's first year. He has now left the crib and exerts his independence by crawling away. He will progress to pulling himself up while holding on to furniture. And by the time he is approaching 1 year old, may take his first step.

The toddler (one year to two years old), can now explore his environment by walking about. He is constantly on the go so that he can discover, on his own, as much as possible.

Those who work in the pre-school department have a two-fold responsibility. For the most part, the "world" of the young child is his home. Therefore, teachers must provide help for parents to guide their children in their spiritual opment. Those who teach these little ones must understand their behavior traits. They must lovingly provide for their physical and spiritual needs by making their first associations with the "church" positive ones. Teaching within the understanding of this child will mean informal times. The use of songs, toys, books, games, pictures and nature objects are most important.

While two, three, four and five year olds are similar in characteristic, definite growth patterns show two year olds to be much different from five year olds. Their growing bodies demand exercise and therefore young children are very active. The two year old's muscles are not well developed and he topples over easily. The five year old is more skillful in the use of his body, arms, and legs. Many varied activities must be provided because of their limited attention span. They are curious and eager to learn. The four year old is especially noted for his use of many "questions." Teach young self-centered children concepts of loving one another, kindness, and sharing. The two year old is happy to play alone. However, he will show a desire for involvement with other children by the time he is five.

These children learn by playing, exploring, repetition and the use of their senses. The church must provide the proper environment for this type of learning to take place.

Those who teach young children must provide many experiences for learning. Songs, stories and the teachers' guided conversation at the Bible learning activities can teach them about Jesus and His love for them.

*Children Ages 6-11/grades 1-6.* The level of childhood covers a wide area of development. The six year old is entering a world outside his own home. At the same time the twelve year old is approaching pre-teen independence.

Physically children are rapidly growing both taller and in their coordination. "Activity" therefore, is a key to their learning, and many teaching methods are employed.

Provide group activities for each level. Six and seven year olds are becoming more aware of their peers and beginning to think in terms of "we" rather than always "I." Teachers will need to help them take turns and respect the rights of others. Eight and nine year olds are growing in their desire to "belong" to a group. They are developing better cooperation with their peers, and learning from one another. Clubs and other group functions are necessary. Ten and eleven year olds find the group important too. The ten year old is not a competitor. The eleven year old competes to gain approval among his peers. He enjoys contests, competition games, etc.

Children are enthusiastic about learning. As their reading, vocabulary, and communication skills improve, teachers can encourage these skills for Bible learning. Eight year olds are especially creative and can become involved with art and drama projects. As their power to reason develops (10-11) they can also participate in writing creative stories, songs and poetry.

Childhood is traditionally known as the "time of conversion." The Primary (ages 6-7/grades 1-2) has a tender conscience and takes seriously what he is learning about right and wrong. He can learn to pray and worship and to use the Bible independently. According to the spiritual training he has received, he may be ready to accept Jesus as his Savior. When he makes this decision teachers will need to carefully nurture him and help him to relate this decision to his everyday life. The Middler (ages 8-9/grades 3-4) provides the possibility of more spiritual depth. Older children can understand their need for salvation. They can begin a pattern for personal devotions. Pre-Teen (Juniors-ages 10-11/grades 5-6) can share their faith with their peers and become active in service. They can understand Christian concepts and doctrines. These children need to understand that God has a plan for their lives. Those who teach them will guide them most by their example. This age child will model after the adult whom he admires. The enthusiastic, consistent teacher relates best.

*Youth — ages 12-17/grades 7-12.* On his path from childhood to adulthood the young person goes through many changes. These changes can produce baffling behavior that may be misunderstood by the adult. It is therefore, important that leaders of youth have knowledge of these cycles of development and understanding hearts. That will cause them to guide, communicate, and to wait for the growth-changes to take place, resulting in maturity for the young person.

While there is no set age nor grade, descriptions tracing general patterns of characteristic growth are seen. During adolescence (ages 12-14/grades 7-8-9) growing is preparation for independence. Important physical change urges him toward adulthood in every aspect of his person. This rapid, uneven growth affects his emotions, causing them to fluctuate. He has many questions relating to his identity and is learning self-acceptance. Spiritually he wants a religion that

works. Reality is more important than forms because now he is searching for "meanings" rather than blindly accepting what he is told. He needs the truth of the Word for doubts about his faith. This will become the basis for his adult convictions.

The enthusiastic seventh grader wants to be popular with many friends. He is beginning to think abstractly and wants to know the "whys."

The thirteen-year old is more cautious and reflective. Due to his physical changes he is unsure of himself. He imitates and follows leaders as he searches for his own identity.

Fourteen year olds are outward again. It is a happier time and they are communicative and eager to express themselves.

The church's program for the junior high must meet his social needs and give him solid Bible principles from which to build.

Senior highs (ages 15-17) are characterized by "action". They want to have "many" experiences and need guidance to select "quality" as well. They are cutting the "apron strings" and their peer group influences them the most. They are preparing for life's major responsibilities — occupation, marriage, etc. They are socially at ease and want real friendships. Standards for boy-girl relationships are important as they enjoy the freedom to date. It is a time of acquiring values and learning self-discipline. A personal faith is necessary. They respond to the challenge of "doing" and "being." The adult leadership must not dominate, but allow the young person to take on the responsibility for his own decisions.

The fifteen year old is in an inward "slump" and seems to be indifferent. He is unsure of himself because of the changes taking place within. His interests are changing.

The sixteen year old is self-reliant, self-assured, desiring independence and finding personhood. Better relationships with the opposite sex are being developed.

The seventeen year old is on the threshold of adulthood. He is making decisions concerning the future. He is able to accept positions of leadership.

The structure for this age group must be characterized by action, balance, and purpose. The young person wants training and service assignments. Challenge him to decide to "live" for Christ and to serve Him. The example of the leader who displays a well-balanced life will gain the respect of the young person. "Listening" is often as important as giving guidance, counsel, and instruction.

The young adult (ages 18-34) enjoys good health for this physical powers are at their best. After thirty, physical decline may begin. Mentally he is at full capacity. His learning ability is high. His interests are focused on work and he becomes a specialist. He is family centered socially and faces the adjustments of marriage and beginning a family. He is moving toward emotional stability, but this will depend largely upon his philosophy of life. Spiritually he will re-evaluate his faith and resolve his doubts. Christ can become crowded-out by the necessary activities of vocation and family, and replaced by materialism. This will affect the young children in the home.

Young adults include three groups: college/career (18-23); newly married couples; and adults in their early thirties. For the college age adult responsibilities are broadening. The

working young adult and the college student live in two different worlds. One is work-oriented and the other study-oriented. Young adults (ages 24-34) face: the responsibilities of selecting a mate, learning to live with a marriage partner, starting a family, rearing children, and managing a home. They will become involved with an occupation which may postpone civic responsibilities. They are looking for a social group. Many are searching for a better way of life and are willing to work for changes.

The church who wants to minister to this age-group must provide counsel for the married and for the single. Providing good fellowship is a must. Help with parenting and vocational concerns are vital. The church is the best place for meeting the needs of the young adult.

Middle-aged adults (35-65 years) comprise one-fourth of the people in the United States. They influence what happens to the other three-fourths of the population. They make the basic decisions and earn the most money. They assume the most civic and social responsibility.

This period is similar to adolescence for it is another time of stress and transition. Personal growth and flexibility are necessary to adjust successfully to the changes.

The physical changes can be unsettling. How he feels about physical change is as important as the changes. "Stewardship" of the body is necessary as he experiences less strength and energy. After age 45 the decline is faster, and ailments may cause hospitalization common to aging after 55. Loss of reproduction for women, wrinkles, and gray hair all denote a general "slow down" physically.

It can be a dangerous age for the husband-wife relationship. The divorce rate is high for those in their forties and fifties. Many experience conflicts as they try to guide older teenagers. Couples who find their "nest" empty will need to deepen their relationships.

This adult has reached his maximum earning power, yet faces the greatest demands to maintain economic stability. As he achieves the aspirations of his young adulthood he may face boredom vocationally and make a drastic change. He begins to prepare for retirement.

The middle adult must adjust to his aging parents. Some times he must assume partial or full responsibility for them.

Fixed attitudes may hold back his emotional and mental growth. He is still productive and persistent and is capable of learning. A tendency toward specialization may cause inflexibility in these areas.

He now has more time for leisure activities and should choose less strenuous recreation and hobbies. Socially he is a "belonger" and may be a part of several organizations.

Spiritually, the middle adult is the "burden bearer" for the work of the church. The Christian education program largely depends upon him. The church must direct him into service, but must be careful not to do so at the expense of his home. The middle adult makes up the bulk of the church's membership. He represents varied needs to which a strong Bible basis must be consistently given. He will need this infallible help to face the necessary adjustments.

Later adulthood (over 65) can be a level of integrity or despair. With today's longer life expectancy one can spend one-fourth of his life as an older adult. Because of the availability of time, they can be a very active group. Teach them what they "are" and what they "can do." They know what they have "been" and what they have "accomplished." The church may need to educate the entire congregation with this concept in order for older adults to maintain their self-esteem.

As in each stage of life, older adults face particular adjustments. Outside interests with the ability to live in the present are of great importance. Continued learning will help them to take these adjustments in stride rather than making them a crises.

Physically they meet with limitations. Their powers and attractiveness are declining. It is possible for them to exaggerate their disabilities and therefore, isolate themselves. Proper diet, exercise, and a positive attitude is important. The physical arrangement of the classroom for older adults should take their specific needs into consideration. (Proper light, sound system, no steps, etc.).

They must adjust to retirement and living on a fixed income. This may prompt decisions with regard to their living arrangements. The church can help them determine whether they should continue living in their present home or secure a smaller one. Housing projects, apartments and retirement communities are other options. Some older adults may choose to live with their children.

Retraining at this level of life is possible even when the learning process has slowed. The years of experience can offer wise counsel to younger people. The church must provide Bible study so that older adults can continue to learn. Encourage them to look to the future and to seeing the Lord. This too, will help to alleviate anxiety over death, and loneliness as a result of losing a mate.

The older adult has more time for social life. He enjoys being with his own age group. He does not enjoy isolation with only his peers, however. He needs to be a part of the whole. He needs the youth, and the youth need him. The church can meet his need for companionship by providing a place for friends to meet. Offer service and study projects for them. Plan "with" and not "for" him.

Spiritually, it can be a testing time for older adults. Those who know the Lord can become more Christ-like. Those who do not can become more hardened. It is the church's last chance to reach him. In addition, provide pastoral counsel and care for older adults.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR STUDENTS

It is necessary to know general characteristics about people. It is vital to understand the age-group characteristics of the students with whom you work. It is also imperative to know your students' characteristics, as individuals.

In any group of persons of the same age, preschool through adults, the differences in background, habits, personality and response are as varied as the number in the group. God made everyone unique. He chose to make each of your students differently. We cannot expect them to perform all the same and be identical to each other. Because of these variations,

each responds differently to what he hears and sees. Each will understand and receive the Sunday school lesson according to his own background and ability to comprehend its content. And it is for this very reason that the teacher must come to know his own students.

As adults we forget the habits and way of thinking of other age groups. Therefore we often err in our judgment of those we teach. This results often in misinterpreting their reaction to our teaching and thus does not culminate in better learning situations.

### Reasons for Knowing the Students

Knowing your students as individuals does several things for the teacher:

*Guides in preparation.* The teacher knows the needs of his students. As he prepares he is able to visualize his students' ability to understand and react to the lesson. He is able to suggest how each might "live out the lesson" in his own life.

*Explains why students become inattentive.* Disturbances are an indication to the teacher of the need for change. An understanding of the attention span and characteristics helps him accomplish this. From his knowledge of each one individually, he is able to plan accordingly.

*Reminds that students reflect their environment.* They reflect the environment of the classroom. Plus they mirror the influence of their homes and family life, their school, and their associates.

### Means of Knowing the Student

*By seeing them in their homes.* A visit in the home will tell the teacher much about his students. It shows the environment which has the greatest influence upon them. It portrays the security, or lack of it, that the students constantly feel. It manifests the real interest of the parents in the work of the Sunday school and their understanding of what this institution is striving to do. It opens a door for future contact with the home. It shows the interest and spiritual concern the teacher has for the student and the family. No greater benefits can be derived from any other means of student contact.

The teacher should visit his students at least once quarterly. This does not mean spending an entire evening in the home. It might mean taking the new student's book to the home and explaining its function to the parents. It may merely mean dropping by to leave an invitation or a take-home paper or a gift.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, He spent much time visiting people. He went by the tax collector's table, met persons in their boats and on the beach. He visited in the homes of the rich, the sinners, the religious and at the bedside of the ill. He went where the people were. Visit to learn, not teach. Observe all you can and become acquainted with as many members of the family as possible.

*By keeping a record of each student.* Every teacher, no matter which age he teaches, should keep a record of his students. Could you sit down right now and list two things which interest every student in your class? Do you know the home life of each student? Keep a notebook about your students. Have one page for each and include information such as the following:

- General information (name, address, phone, birthday)
- Social life (friends, activities, interests, hobbies, talents, recreation, leisure)
- Work and/or school life (grades, activities, occupation, training, ambitions)
- Self (disposition, temperament, needs)
- Religious life (background, Christian character and ethics, attendance)
- Attitudes (shy, bold, happy, fearful)

A "Get Acquainted Chart" form has been placed at the close of this chapter which may be reproduced for such use. The form as it appears here should not be given to the student. Many of the items listed are confidential and the student need not be aware that the teacher is noting this about him. Some of these items listed apply to children and others to adults. It is wise to gain just as much information as possible about each student. As a teacher, or friend, do not try to fill in this information yourself; get the reflection of the person.

A record, in writing, of the students you teach provides a source of evaluation for the teacher. He is able to review and make note of progress. He can encourage himself that God has allowed him to be a part in the development of this individual. It can serve as a check list to note needs, a list for personal prayer, and an introduction of the student for the next teacher. It is valuable information and is obtained either by interview with the student or by the student filling the questionnaire.

*By meeting during the week.* Between-Sunday chance meetings with the students enable the teacher to note the needs of the students when they are not at their "Sunday best." Plan an informal meeting with them. It is part of good teaching. It allows the individual to feel the teacher has more than an "academic" interest in him. He feels that concern has driven the teacher beyond the classroom walls into his everyday life.

During this mid-week contact, listen and observe. In this setting the teacher is made aware of the spiritual progress of the student. The change may only be slight. Let us not expect God to do in their lives in one week what it took Him 20 years to accomplish in ours. Recognize spiritual maturity as a series of little steps upward. Rejoice in these evidences and record them in your notebook. At times you may be able to encourage your student by letting him know you have noticed this progress.

The teacher who strives to know his students' habits, tendencies, interests, influences and his mental and physical capabilities will soon understand his students and engage in profitable teaching.

### THE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

The teacher and the student are the two basic elements in learning. Each has something to contribute to the other. By working together these two cultivate a relationship which will build a proper teaching-learning situation. In light of this assumption, let us look at this teacher-student relationship. What do they need from each other? How can these needs be met?

### What the Teacher Needs from the Student

**Attendance.** The teacher cannot teach the student who is not there. In order for there to be a class, there must be those in attendance, and this attendance is necessary for learning. The teacher's presentation and the general circumstance of the class will stimulate or hold back the attendance of the students.

**Attention.** The student must give attention to what the teacher is teaching. The teacher is challenged to teach within the interest of students by providing learning activities which suit his learning ability.

**Alertness.** This speaks to us of response. The teachers responsibility is to stimulate the thinking of the student. When this alert and eager attitude is manifest he can proceed with confidence. The student has already begun to respond and is ready to learn.

**Achievement.** Growth must manifest itself, not always in a great measure, for the teacher to be aware that learning is happening. Recognition of the smallest evidence of achievement often prompts greater feats from the student.

### What the Student Needs from the Teacher

**Interest and love.** Do you pray for each individual in your class every day? When teaching spiritual truths the guidance of the Spirit is necessary. An interest in prayer on behalf of the student will show itself in the attitude toward the student.

The teacher should be interested in each student as an individual and immediately learn each name. They need to know the teacher likes them for what they are, not because of what they have or who their parents are. Send occasional cards and notes through the mail. Encourage them with the next week's lesson. Include a question to look up or the suggestion of a Scripture for them to think on. Or simply tell them that you appreciate their attendance and cooperation. All of these speak of the teacher's interest. An invitation to the student to come to the teacher's home does much to project the teacher's love for his students.

**Example.** "I learned to love my teacher; then I learned to love my teacher's Bible and finally I learned to love my teacher's Savior." A faithful example helps the teacher show Christ's way of life.

Not only does this speak to us of a faithful example in the Christian life and spiritual growth, it also speaks of the teacher's faithfulness in Christian service. When students evaluate the teacher, they notice many things. Among them, *his punctuality* in beginning and closing the class. They note that he prevents unnecessary disturbances during the class. *His regular and faithful attendance* in Sunday school and church service is evident to them. *His calmness* in handling trying situations; that he is patient in dealing with students who need correction. These things the students need from the teacher if the Bible classes are to be relevant and life related.

**Friendship.** Do you really like your students? When you see them outside the classroom, can they always be sure you will greet them and spend a moment with them? The teacher does not play the role of judge, but rather of friend. Planning good recreational activities when you, the teacher, can meet

the class on a social level, does much to cement this friendship. Parties, picnics, field trips, etc. provide wholesome Christian atmosphere outside the classroom and relate the happy Christian life. While this must never become the main interest of the class, it is an important part.

The author is reminded of a teenager's response to the news that a church leader was moving from their city. This man had taken great interest in the social life of the teenagers of that church. He had often entertained them on picnics, boating excursions and various outings. However, when this young lady heard of this one leaving, she said, "I can't really say I am sorry he is leaving. His interest was never really in us. He never attended any of our services." While he had entertained them socially, the group did not feel a real interest manifest for their well being as individuals. Let us not "major in the minors". We must seek to lead them spiritually first and entertain them second.

**A prepared lesson.** Later in this book instruction is given about the teacher's preparation of his lesson. However, interest manifest in lesson preparation reveals the real interest felt for the individuals taught. The teacher's attention to the needs of the student is vital if the real objective of the Sunday school is to be carried out.

**Encouragement and direction.** This is not always possible, each week, but the student who knows of the interest of his teacher often seeks him out for needed guidance. Encouragement does not mean flattery, but honest evaluation and positive commendation. View each student as to his potential, with God's help. In this way the teacher gives spiritual guidance and encouragement to his students.

**Leadership.** The teacher must be more than "one of the gang," he must maintain a position of leadership. His students expect this and will follow one whom they have learned has their interest at heart. It is better to lead people than to drive them.

This does not infer that all of the leading is done by the teacher. When students reach junior age, they desire a limited amount of leadership in the class. The teacher can build class spirit by allowing the class to choose a name, or elect class officers, help plan activities, make class announcements, and help with other class planning. Sitting together in the morning worship or attending a civic or sports activity together adds to class spirit.

**Encouragement in evangelism** is an important part of the teacher's leadership. In order for this class to be a healthy class, it must grow. Encourage students to bring others of their age. The teacher must follow-up these new ones. Both numerical and spiritual growth should be noted and the class commended for its part. Let us ask ourselves, "Are we trying to satisfy the needs of our pupils?"

In the 1930's a child began attending a neighborhood Sunday school. Even at this early age, juvenile authorities had retained him several times. He continued to attend this Sunday school. Parents feared his influence on their own boys. The teacher was pressured into asking the boy not to come again. Of course he did not return. This boy grew to manhood and became "public enemy Number One." We know him as John Dillinger.



To teach is to love. If a teacher is to achieve what he needs from his students, he must satisfy their needs first. His own need is not a proper motivation for assuming an interest in the student. The teacher-student relationship can only really be an outgrowth of the teacher's love for his students. Love manifests itself to cement this relationship in a concern and interest for each one. God has allowed you, the teacher, to guide his spiritual maturity.

### THE ELEMENTS OF LEARNING

Cornelius Jaarsman wrote, "That people learn is a commonly observed fact. When one has learned, he can do something he could not do before. He knows something he did not know before. He feels for or against something he felt differently toward before. He wants something he did not want before. In short, some change has taken place in his behavior. In general that influences him in his relationship to future situations confronting him."

#### The Role of The Teacher

Learning is a phase of human development. In viewing learning in this way, we see the mind not as a "container to be filled," but rather as a "piece of clay to be shaped and molded." This points to accomplishment by the student, and forms his personality. In this light the Christian view of learning is that process of a person seeking reality for meaning. He comes face to face with a truth that shapes him as a son of God.

The teacher who works toward the development of his students finds his responsibility does not end when he has taught the lesson. Rather by this introduction to the truth, he has placed a greater responsibility upon himself and his students. He has become a vehicle through which the lesson is presented. He opens up an avenue whereby the student can step into a new area of life which will make him more conformable to the image of Christ. This makes the teacher not just a lecturer, a disciplinarian or an examiner; he becomes the director of the learning process. He is a resource person who assists, guides, motivates and challenges his students to become learners.

#### Factors that Stimulate

It is true that those events with which we have a happy or pleasant association we desire to repeat or reproduce. Let us examine the factors which make learning favorable, pleasant and desirable.

- *Atmosphere.* The class that suggests order and learning.
- *Teacher/student relationship.* When on a sound basis, it displays affectionate communication.
- *Provision for incentive.* It encourages participation and recognizes achievement.
- *Routine.* Implies order, direction.
- *Review and drill.* Repetition helps establish the lesson.
- *Recognition.* The knowledge that there are spurts and lapses the of learning progress should encourage the teacher. It will also remind him that recognition of achievement is always important.

- *Appropriate tools.* Use the curriculum and its teaching resources along with the other tools and information provided for your school.

- *Direction.* It must be firm and supported by discipline.

#### Factors that Influence.

As there are desirable factors which stimulate and accelerate learning, there are also other influences which could hold it back. Three of these are:

*The home.* The influence of the family is great. A child learns one half of all he will know by age three, and three-fourths by age seven. In these formative years, the child's primary influence is the home. Neglecting this spiritual development will slow down his ability to comprehend these truths later.

The home influences an individual through his entire life. It is an effective agency of training for both good and bad. Often it is from here that standards and the way of life are acquired. It is vitally important to discuss spiritual matters in the home. When they are shunned or discouraged, an attitude of unimportance develops. Spiritual growth is hindered as well.

*The school.* The Sunday school has a student in class for approximately one hour each week. The public school influences the student many hours each day, five days a week. Without Christian influence related to this education, tendencies are often acquired which are opposed to the way of life the Scriptures teach. This will influence the thinking and learning of the Sunday school student. He has a tendency, too, to compare the two and evaluate what happens during each.

*The society.* This speaks of the student's environment. In what environment does your student work or play during the week? Are his close friends in the church believers or non-believers? The student spends the majority of his time outside the church. The teacher must help him recognize and guard against this influence. It is true that we become like those with whom we spend our time. We are shaped by the books we read. The Sunday school has the challenge to counteract this secular pressure.

#### Steps to Learning

Findley B. Edge in his book, "Teaching for Results," outlines five steps to learning: exposure, repetition, understanding, conviction and application. How does each build upon the previous one and affect the total?

*Exposure.* No one can learn unless he comes in contact with the material taught. Therefore, we must first reach them before we can teach them. Sunday school students must receive an introduction to the truth before it can be learned. With the "exposure," there must be some follow-through to bring about learning. Our obligation is not fulfilled by merely telling the story.

*Repetition.* Parents train children through constant telling and retelling. All persons have truths impressed into their learning by persistent repetition. Television and radio commercials teach us this. We soon begin singing the "jingle" we have heard several times. This is why the teacher not only tells the truth, but must seek midweek study and activities. These

meetings remind the students of the lesson and impress it again.

This is the objective of assignments, of the students' books and of Bible learning activities. They each teach the same lesson again, although in a different way. Foursquare Sunday school curricula allows for repetition still another way. Each lesson builds upon those previously taught. The student's attention is drawn again to what has gone before.

*Understanding.* It is not just that the student is able to recite information, but that he knows what the repeated words mean. This is the next step to learning. In Christian education, the meanings of truths must become part of the life. This cannot happen unless the student understands the truths. Because of this, it is important for the teacher to deal not only in generalities, but with specifics. What actually does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself?

*Conviction.* Once understanding occurs, then conviction presses the student into action. Realizing the correctness of the truth the student responds properly. Here the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian teaching is so vital. Spiritual truths are impressed by the Spirit. It is the Spirit who brings the understanding which results in the conviction of that truth. Guided by this compulsion and not the desire to please the teacher, conversion and spiritual maturity occurs in the life of the student. The teacher is an instrument and "co-laborer with God."

*Application.* This is more than simply applying a lesson at the end of the class time. This application implies an action —

a result of the Christian principle taught. This is seen in change. Truth given out becomes apparent in the lives of those taught. The well-worn phrase, "a teacher has not taught until a student has learned and a student has not learned until until change takes place" remains true.

Stated again, the student listens and explores in order to discover the truth. When he really understands it he appropriates it to his life. He then assumes the responsibility of this truth and it is evidenced in his life and daily actions.

Christian teachers are guides in this style of learning. Christian education involves experiencing and expressing truth. This calls for more than mental assent. The student hears that Christ died to save sinners. He must accept Christ to really experience this. Having accepted, he expresses it by his life and testimony. When he has really learned, change is evident. The danger lies in the student's acceptance of such a lesson without really experiencing it. Christianity is an experience.

The finest students in the world will deteriorate under a careless teacher. Students are individuals, not groups, or machines. They each have the ability to think, feel and decide. The teacher is able to direct activities which will assist and quicken his students' learning through: an understanding of the age characteristics, a study of teaching methods, and by observation of his own students. When teaching to bring about desired decisions, actions, and change in the life of his students, he can rejoice that God has allowed him to participate in this great work.

## GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING

### WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?

1. From the following Scriptures give evidence that Jesus knew those whom He taught? Tell in each case how this knowledge affected His teaching.  
Matthew 19:16-21; Mark 5:33-34; Luke 15:4, 8; John 4:5, 19
2. What is the attention span of the age group you teach? From a lesson in your Sunday school teacher's manual list all of the ways suggested for varying this time to accomplish real teaching within the attention span.
3. List the group characteristics for the age you teach. (Consult the teacher's manual or other books available to you.)
4. Explain briefly in your own words, a summary of the four age groups and the church's responsibility to each.
5. What are the steps to learning? Explain how each step builds on the previous one and how these steps help in the learning process.
6. List some things that a teacher should know about their students.
7. Examine your newspaper and clip at least two articles which relates to a Sunday school lesson you have taught or will teach soon. Explain how it relates. (If you are not teaching, choose a portion of Scripture to complete this question.)
8. Listen to or watch a radio or TV program you enjoy and list the influences which it reveals. Make two lists, good/bad.

Note: If you are not presently teaching, answer as if you are.

### Get Acquainted Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation or grade in school \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or guardian's name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Number of adults in the home \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school \_\_\_\_\_ Place of business \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENTS:**

Attend \_\_\_\_\_ Do not attend Sunday school \_\_\_\_\_

Saved \_\_\_\_\_ Filled with Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ Baptized \_\_\_\_\_ Church member \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL:**

If I had one day to do just what I wanted, I would:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

My hobbies are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

I play the following instruments: \_\_\_\_\_

The best books I have read are: \_\_\_\_\_

The things I like to do the best are: \_\_\_\_\_

When I grow up I want to be: \_\_\_\_\_

In my leisure time I: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONFIDENTIAL:**

(Check the following in pencil so it can be changed)

**ATTITUDES:**

Shy \_\_\_\_\_

Aggressive \_\_\_\_\_

Cooperative \_\_\_\_\_

Dependent \_\_\_\_\_

Alert \_\_\_\_\_

Active \_\_\_\_\_

Nervous \_\_\_\_\_

Cries Easily \_\_\_\_\_

Gives \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTENDANCE:**

Regular \_\_\_\_\_

Frequent \_\_\_\_\_

Occasional \_\_\_\_\_

**SERVICE:**

Eager \_\_\_\_\_

Shy \_\_\_\_\_

Uninterested \_\_\_\_\_

**SOCIAL:**

Loner \_\_\_\_\_

Seeks friends \_\_\_\_\_

Cooperative \_\_\_\_\_

Leader \_\_\_\_\_

**SPIRITUAL:**

Interested \_\_\_\_\_

Uncertain \_\_\_\_\_

No interest \_\_\_\_\_

**ETHICS:**

Good \_\_\_\_\_

Needs help \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**BACKGROUND:**

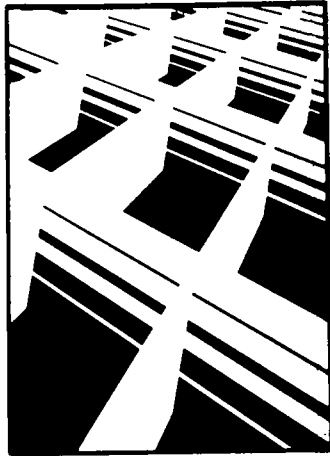
Church \_\_\_\_\_

Bible

Knowledge \_\_\_\_\_

Problems student faces: \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs: \_\_\_\_\_



# 3

## The School

*“Gather all the people together, men and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this Law.”*

*Deuteronomy 31:12*

**T**hus far we have discussed the teacher and the student. We have viewed the high calling of one who assumes the responsibility to teach God's Word and effect changes in the lives of his students. Now let us view the structure which is present for the implementation of this task.

Centuries ago God ordained that Christians should have a place where they could meet together and receive spiritual food. This was a place where they were taught of the Savior and grounded in His Word. From this place they reach others with this same message. The New Testament speaks often of assemblies of Christians and established churches. It speaks of those who were placed in positions of authority to carry out the work of this church.

So today we have a visible church where we teach the Word of God. Here Christians worship and train to go out to reach the world for Christ.

A vital part of this organizational structure is the Sunday school. This Sunday school is often referred to as the “teaching arm of the church.” Its great purpose is to teach the Bible. There are several basics which each school must have if it is to function properly and carry out this set task.

### **FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

Every church which hopes to continue growing and gaining new members must consider its facilities. We all dream of new and completely equipped compounds of buildings. However, each church must use its present structure with an eye to

future expansion. Even the one-room building can serve the school in many ways.

It is not the responsibility of the teacher to make plans for the building of new facilities. It is his responsibility to work together to assure full use of each room and auditorium which is now available. Sometimes a teacher becomes so accustomed to his room and equipment that he is unaware of the improvements which can be made. With an eye to possible improvements take an objective look at your present classroom. Painting, re-doing the bulletin board, or a simple rearrangement of the furniture may help to bring about the “lift” your class needs.

At times, too, teachers can acquire a possessive feeling about their rooms, “It's my room.” In both cases, however, the first priority is the total church program. The facilities belong to all and usually serve many groups. At times a teacher with a smaller class must be willing to move to adequately accommodate a class which needs the larger room. In the gracious spirit of Christ the mature Christian is able to accept these changes for the total good of the school.

The building which houses the Sunday school shapes it. Environment affects the total teaching program. The wise church will want facilities that are flexible, multi-purpose, and functional.

Equipment and supplies for a school are essential. Here again, the average school is unable to obtain at one time all the

things it would want or need. However, it is important that each worker become familiar with the tools which are available. They need to know the policy of the school in regard to purchasing and using supplies. Many schools have "the cupboard" or the "corner" where useful tools are placed. Sunday school funds or money from the church budget is used to purchase these items. As good stewards of the Lord's money we are responsible to use them wisely.

A church can only hope to hold consistently about eighty-five percent of its capacity. This means that if a Sunday school facility has a capacity of one hundred, the average attendance could conceivably be eighty-five. Of course there will be exceptions. Over a long period of time, however, it is difficult to increase this average and maintain it beyond this percentage. This shows us the importance of adequate facilities and utilization of all of the available space.

### THE STAFF

Already we have seen that God places workers in the church. He provides talents enough to complete His work. How these fit into the local church is important. God places the responsibility upon man to accomplish this for His glory.

#### Personnel

In Foursquare Sunday schools the pastor is the leader since he is responsible for the entire church program. Working with him are various officers, teachers, councils and committees composed of members of the church. Depending on the size of the school, churches have one or both, a Christian Education Director and/or a Sunday School Superintendent.

*Director or Minister of Christian Education.* This person has a vital ministry to the church. They work with the pastor in heading all the areas of the church which teach. He or she "lengthens the arm of the pastor." This resource person works with the church members in supplying information and inspiration to help them to minister best in their areas of responsibility. This assures a correlated and smooth-running program. A smaller school may not have a director of Christian education. In that case the pastor and/or other church members handle these duties.

*Sunday School Superintendent.* He is responsible for the administration of the entire Sunday school. He directs all activities of the school and serves as an administrator, organizer, educator and supervisor. "The Foursquare Sunday School Standards," outlines his specific duties and relationship to the other Sunday school personnel. Refer to this resource handbook for specific job descriptions for all Sunday school officers.

*Sunday School Secretary.* The important task of recording and preserving the records for the school belongs to this person. They also handle additional secretarial duties as regards to the school's meeting, files, correspondence and reporting.

*Departmental Sunday School Coordinators or Lead Teachers.* This person serves as Coordinator of a segment of the school, called the "department." He administrates and promotes the work of the department. He coordinates and is responsible for the planning and growth of it.

*Departmental Secretary.* As the Sunday school secretary assists the Sunday school superintendent, the departmental secretary works with the departmental coordinator. They maintain the records of attendance, correspondence, visitation assignments, reporting, and files.

*Teachers.* Here is the heart of the Sunday school. Each teacher works with his Coordinator or Lead teacher and is responsible for the class teaching, visitation, and various activities. He is accountable to the department Coordinator.

Various other positions of the school include the class officers, pianist, activities chairmen, secretaries and appointed workers.

This staff is a team whose mutual understanding and concern is to carry out the purposes of the Sunday school. Some churches appoint a Christian education committee. This group works closely with the pastor and minister of Christian education in executing the program of Christian education in the church.

#### Reaffirmation of School Appointments

Annual evaluation interviews implement this affirmation. If the appointment is not reaffirmed it automatically lapses at the end of the Sunday school year.

This enables the worker to view his ministry and evaluate his effectiveness in the particular position he serves. He may find other areas where he feels more adequate. After counsel with the pastor and/or director of Christian education he may find a change of responsibility to be of mutual agreement to all.

The teacher must constantly keep in mind that he is a member of a team. This is not just of the Sunday school, but of the total church team. He holds a vital position and it is necessary that he apply himself diligently to the fulfillment of this position. The "coach," the pastor, is responsible for the total "team effort" and must make adjustments from time to time. The spiritually mature leader has as his chief concern the spiritual welfare of his students and the school. In the light of this he understands that changes and adjustments take place from time to time.

#### Standards

As with any position, secular or church, there must be a guide which states what standard is acceptable for workers. The standard for our schools is called the "Foursquare Standard for Leaders." It covers the challenge which every worker faces in assuming a position of leadership. This is a goal for each to strive to attain and a pattern which exemplifies a high spiritual calling. This standard is printed at the end of this chapter.

### THE MEMBERSHIP

As any other organized institution, the Sunday school has a membership. Unique to the Sunday school, it is the only department of the church to which an unsaved person may belong. The Sunday school opens its doors to all, regardless of spiritual experience. The only requirement is that they attend at least three consecutive Sundays or request to become a member.

Because of this, the Sunday school becomes not only the "teaching arm" but also an "evangelistic arm." Any person

from the neighborhood may attend a class. The Sunday school has a responsibility before God for this one. Through this contact the visitor and his family are first exposed to Christ.

### Preschool Through Adult

Often people think that Sunday school is just for the children. They fail to realize there are classes for all ages. The adult area of the school should be an active part and a strong department. The church should strive to reach children and even infants, and train them through their entire lives. This should not prevent adults attending the Sunday school as well. This is a ripe evangelistic field which will be past harvest if not immediately reaped. It is from this age group that we draw leadership. These classes teach parents. When the parent attends, the family attends. Much emphasis is being placed upon adult education in today's society. The church must increase this portion of its Sunday school outreach and ministry.

### Membership Records

The membership records of the Sunday school are vital. They are the key to adequate follow-up, regular attendance increase and proper organization. While the secretary is responsible to maintain the total record, each individual teacher must recognize the importance of these.

Often the teacher must be the one to fill in and record the weekly attendance. It is true that this takes time from the class period. It is also true that the maintenance of these records is important enough to warrant the expenditure of time. It is a challenge for the class to employ the most effective means of taking this roll in the least possible time. Without these records the school cannot effectively carry on its ministry of reaching and providing for the needs of its students. The number entered on the roll each week should equal the number of "heads counted" in the class. This in itself is at times a challenge.

Names are not removed from the membership rolls merely because the student has been absent for some time. They may be placed on the "inactive roll" and adequate attention given to secure regular attendance again. They remain a member of the school, however. A good rule to follow is: do not remove a name unless the student requests it, has moved out of the area, joined another school, or because of death. In other words unless he "moves off," "joins off," or "dies off."

### THE CURRICULUM

*The Bible as text.* Every school must have a textbook and the main text of the Sunday school is the Bible. In the class and department it serves as a frequent reference and is always the book taught from. It is the final authority on all matters of discussion. The teacher's continual study of the Word is most important. It is vital to his teaching and to the spiritual growth of his students and his own life.

*Bible based.* While current methods of Bible teaching are important, of utmost importance is the Biblical base of the curriculum. Basic truths are taught in their simplest forms to all ages. This lays a foundation upon which each year can build. The Bible, God's Word, is the basis for sound curriculum. Extra-biblical materials may serve to amplify portions, but dare not serve as the basis for study.

*Christ centered.* The ultimate aim of all Sunday school teaching should be to have students accept Christ as their Savior and Lord and to train them for Christian living and service. Therefore, Christ must be the heart of all such teaching. The aim of each lesson directs the student toward this ultimate goal. Christ is in all the Bible, and He should be the center of all Sunday school curriculum.

*Life related.* The Sunday school class exists for the student, not for the teacher. The interest is for the student's conversion, Christian education, training and fellowship. Ultimately the student's Christian education will affect the church, the teacher, and the community. The primary concern is with the student. Curriculum therefore must relate to the student's life now.

*Educationally sound.* The lessons taught must be in the language of the students. Only then do lessons penetrate their understanding and convert to the every day life of the student. Age-graded lessons adapt to the ability, need, and interest of the students.

### GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING CURRICULUM

Curriculum and all supplemental teaching aids used are carefully chosen. The following guidelines will help in the selection of materials for the Sunday school.

The Sunday school is a school and should use effective teaching techniques. It should compare favorably in its modes with the public schools that the students attend during the week.

Adult courses have the needs of today's adult in mind when they are written. Courses alternate between Bible personalities, events and situations, and topical studies.

*Built-in training.* General principles of good instruction are a part of the curriculum. Each week specific instruction is given for the various age groups. The teachers train in the use of the materials and become proficient as they continue.

*Non-dated.* Non-dated materials that are available through Foursquare Publications may be reusable. Such materials represent a savings to the Sunday school after the initial investment. Periodically these materials are revised to include the latest teaching methods and information, and to give them a more attractive presentation.

*Adaptable.* Curricula available from Foursquare Publications include a degree of flexibility to fit the local church's schedule, grouping and personnel. With planning, churches can adapt the material to the educational program they feel best fits their ministry.

*Trains in worship.* Lessons should make students aware of God and cause them to worship Him. Instruction is regularly given to help students know God's presence and to encourage them to respond to Him. Foursquare curriculum assists teachers in this area in very practical ways from week to week.

*Inclusive.* If Sunday school students are to have a thorough knowledge of the Bible, the curriculum must cover the whole Bible thoroughly and systematically. This is the task of the curriculum . . . to present the entire Bible at the understanding of the student. As one year builds upon another the students receive a balanced Christian education. Foursquare curriculum accomplishes this through the material design.

## SPECIAL CLASSES

The diversity of classes which many schools offer continues to widen. In addition to the planned curriculum, special emphases are also available.

**Special Education.** Some churches neglect special community groups in their educational program. These groups may include persons with handicaps, learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, the deaf and the blind. These do not always find a place in the regular classes of the Sunday school. The visionary church will consider its ministry to these persons and provide a place for them.

People of minority language groups respond well and are evangelized when a class is available in the school's structure. A survey of the community to determine its needs may open an avenue of extended ministry for workers who desire to meet unusual needs.

**New Converts.** The new Christian needs specific teaching to establish him in the Christian life. The "Bible Study Course" offered by Foursquare Publications is an excellent tool to meet this need.

**Pre-membership.** Courses are available from Foursquare Publications to prepare persons for church membership. These courses include lessons on the basic doctrines of the church, the church sacraments and church stewardship.

**Church Doctrine.** The "Declaration of Faith" can serve as a continually elective class throughout the year. Special needs in the church often prompt the study of specific areas of doctrine. There are several doctrinal courses available which cover specific Foursquare distinctives. They include:

- "Foursquare Declaration of Faith" — four comprehensive units of doctrinal study.
- "We Believe In" — four condensed books of each cardinal doctrine.
- "I Believe" — a study for juniors of basic church doctrines (thirteen lessons).
- "We Believe" — a study for youth and adults of basic church doctrines (thirteen lessons).
- "This We Believe" — a study of the twenty-two tenets of Foursquare Faith.

### Missionary Education.

The Scriptures teach that we are to extend the Gospel to all nations. Part of the Christian education curriculum of the church must be the presentation of a world-wide need and the means for believers to share the gospel all mankind. This is missionary education.

The missionary education program in a Foursquare Church wants to create within the student a feeling of personal concern and responsibility. The desire is his becoming personally involved in the Great Commission of Christ. The goal is:

1. To present the need for every man, woman and child to accept Christ as Savior.
2. To introduce the people of the world as individuals who can find life in Christ, not just as people whose habits and customs differ from ours.

3. To acquaint the people with the means and methods of missionary work and with the missionaries themselves. To let people know how they work, where they serve and the results of their ministry.

4. To motivate the people to become involved in the Foursquare missions program.

## THE SCHEDULE

We have discussed the school's facilities and equipment, staff, membership and the subject matter or curriculum. Now let us look at the actual structure or schedule of the Sunday School.

After we maintain a particular schedule over a long period of time, the purpose and advantage of such a schedule often becomes meaningless. While we may continue to follow such scheduling and routine, its original purpose eludes us. Too often this is true in the Sunday school hour. We have a pattern set before us, but rarely do we understand what contribution one part makes to the other. Let us consider the Sunday morning schedule.

The Sunday school meets regularly at an appointed hour. Out of 168 hours in a week, usually only one hour is allotted to the Sunday school. Therefore, using this hour to its fullest is vitally important. Foursquare churches have various options as to the operation of their sessions.

### Traditional

With this approach the Sunday school divides into two parts. The opening session is a time of fellowship, welcoming visitors, recognizing birthdays, and singing, etc. Then this group separates and each class goes to its own classroom for the Bible lesson and Bible learning activities.

### Modified

The Sunday school opening sessions are just for the children only. The adults go directly to their classes.

### Total Session

There is no general opening assembly. Teachers and students go directly to their classrooms as soon as they arrive. The term "total session" implies that from the moment the students arrive, they become actively involved in learning. They spend the entire hour in the classroom with activities appropriate for the student's age level.

## **GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING**

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### **WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?**

1. What percent of the facilities can a church hope to maintain?
2. How is the Sunday school structured in the church you attend? Who are you accountable to?
3. How important are class membership records to the Sunday school? List three ways they are helpful.
4. In what ways is the Foursquare Sunday school curriculum like public school curriculum?
5. How can the Sunday school staff make the entire congregation aware of the contribution the Sunday school makes to the church? List the steps needed to accomplish this.
6. How can the children's department help the growth of the adult department?
7. Choose one: Make a layout design showing how you can make an attractive worship center. Design a bulletin board for a season or theme.
8. Read the *Foursquare Standard for Leaders*. List the areas where you are not "measuring up." How can you comply to this?
9. Using this manual, chart the "total session teaching" schedule for the age group you are teaching (or want to teach). List the benefits of a total session.



## FOURSQUARE STANDARDS FOR LEADERS

*“ . . . be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation,  
in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*

— 1 Timothy 4:12

The apostle Paul defined one of the responsibilities of Christian leadership when he said to Timothy, “*be an example of the believers . . .*” He listed six qualities in leaders that are looked on by others as models of Christian character and lifestyle.

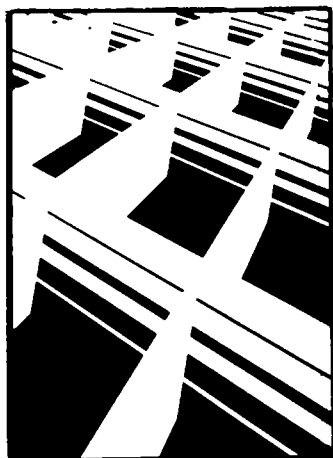
- **The words they speak.** — A leader’s speech expresses the values he holds (Luke 6:45); it reflects the degree of self-discipline he has (James 3:2); it is the instrument that honors and glorifies God; and it instructs and edifies others.
- **Their behavior.** (Old English for conversation) — Actions mirror the motivation that a leader has within him. How a person behaves in all kinds of situations paints a picture of who he really is.
- **Their love for others.** (Old English for charity) — Just as a child senses his parent’s love, so the love of God is sensed in the lives of leaders. God’s love (agape) is a powerful motivating source that urges leaders to reach out to others.
- **Their spirit.** — A leader’s spirit is like the wind: it can’t be seen but its effect is obvious. The traits of a healthy spirit are seen in a positive attitude, a submissive will, a concern for others and the simple ability to be enthused.
- **Their faith.** — The root meaning of “faith” could be defined by the phrase “to be the same.” A leader remains consistent in the belief of God and His Word in the face of any circumstance.
- **Their purity.** — Biblically, to be “pure” means to be “clean” . . . clean in their speech, actions, thoughts and intents of the heart.

Leaders in Foursquare churches are to live as “examples of the believers” in ways that the Scriptures set the standard. The Foursquare Declaration of Faith addresses the foundation of our faith in detail and needs to be ascribed to by each church leader. In some local Foursquare churches, the pastor may simply charge leaders to live up to 1 Timothy 4:12. In other Foursquare churches, the pastor may list specific ways in which the leaders need to live out their Christianity. These specifics may touch areas like: church attendance, submission to leaders, conduct becoming of Christians, abstinence from questionable activities, etc. In both cases, the leaders who agree to serve should do so wholeheartedly, aligning themselves to the standard for leaders set forth.

It is a fact that spiritual leaders reach out as representatives of God to touch people in His name. The life of our Lord Jesus Christ is the model — the standard — that guides Christian leaders in the choices they make, the things they do (or don’t do) and the life they live before those who have been entrusted to them to lead.

All appointments should be for a term not to exceed one year, except as may be provided for in the Foursquare Bylaws.

Each duly appointed leader is to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, or be an earnest seeker and a member of the church.



## 4

# The Lesson ...Prepared

*“Study to shew thyself approved unto God,  
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the Word of Truth.”  
2 Timothy 2:15*

**A**t times each teacher feels his inadequacy to teach a class when eternal issues are being affected. It is at these times that he can have the assurance that the Savior, who called him, will also provide. James says that all a man has to do when he realizes his lack of wisdom is “ask of God, who giveth to all men freely . . .” (James 1:5). The Christian has the promise of guidance by the Holy Spirit himself (John 16:13). It is His work.

However, even understanding that God uses a teacher, does not insure a well-presented lesson. Any less guidance is foolish and inadequate. There is nothing that can take the place of the teacher’s preparation. None question the value and necessity of thorough preparation for teaching. There are those who do flounder at times in the actual doing because of a lack of an appropriate and practical plan. This chapter not only shows the need for preparing, but also provides a workable, practical plan for this.

### EVIDENCES OF PREPARATION

Preparation begins in the heart of the teacher. Martin Luther stated, “diligent prayer is half of one’s preparation.” Preparation is not complete until one has pre-prayed. The conscious and constant communion with the heavenly Father causes the heart of the teacher to be enlarged and challenged. When he opens the Word, after heart preparation in prayer, the Spirit guides his preparation.

#### In the Teacher’s Presentation

The class may not be able to identify clearly the lack in a carelessly prepared lesson. They will sense, however, that something is wrong. There are definite signs of preparation which appear in the teaching of the lesson.

*Lesson supplements.* A well-prepared teacher is able to supplement the lesson. This teacher is able to draw from a full knowledge of his subject by carefully thinking through and becoming thoroughly familiar with the lesson. He has taken time to investigate even the minor issues involved and will not try to present all that he has prepared. He is able to present the basic truths with a wide background and thorough understanding.

*Life related comparisons.* An ill-prepared teacher can only draw from the lesson material he has hurriedly reviewed in the press of other details. The curriculum may provide an excellent outline of the material. However, he is not able to effectively use this material unless he is familiar with it. This, of course, comes only by study and preparation. The well-prepared teacher is not bound by a lack of preparation. He is able to make comparisons which help his students to understand. When the material is thought through, the teacher is able to associate the lesson with the lives of his students and is able to draw parallels from it.

*Participation in discussion.* A well-prepared teacher is ready to answer the students’ questions. How often it has happened that an interested student’s enthusiasm is stifled because he does not receive adequate answers to his questions. The unprepared teacher ignores and skips over portions which are unclear and requires extra study. The interested teacher investigates to find the answers.

*Calmness in attitude.* A well-prepared teacher manifests calmness. Nothing builds confidence and calmness like thorough preparation. You are ready. The class time may not seem long enough. Because of study, you are able to pare away the materials which are not necessary to meet the

lesson aim. You are calm in knowing you will accomplish the lesson aim. The class is unusually unruly, but you are calm in dealing with them because of the spiritual preparedness. When the lesson generates a question from the student you can calmly answer him from a full store of knowledge about the subject.

### PLANS FOR PREPARATION

The necessity is apparent; the teacher must prepare to effectively teach. The results are rewarding when the complexity of teaching dissolves into enjoyment. At that point, teachers are eager to be in class each week. There are proper steps for lesson preparation.

Lesson preparation really falls into two categories: long-range and weekly. The teacher must be concerned with both. A continuity of the lesson materials is necessary if the students are to glean the most from the week's, month's or year's curriculum.

#### Long Range Planning

Often when you buy a new book, you thumb through it, noting the table of contents, chapter headings and illustrations. In this way you obtain an overall view of the book. As the new quarter begins the teacher receives his new teacher's manual. It covers the lessons for the coming thirteen weeks. An "over-view" of the teacher's manual is profitable as well. This manual contains:

*The quarterly theme.* This is usually stated on the cover by the title of the book (for example, "What Christians Believe," "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," and "Stories About Paul."). Every lesson of the quarter will deal with some phase of the overall theme.

How do these divisions affect the teacher's lesson preparation? When the teacher receives his new manual, what can he do to familiarize himself with the coming 13 lessons?

- Read over the introduction. Which suggestions found there will help me teach these lessons?
- Note the table of contents. What are the units of study, and their lesson contents?
- Read the lesson aims. What is the aim of each lesson for this quarter? When the teacher has become acquainted with these, then he is ready to look at the immediate lessons.

*Unit themes.* A unit consists of three to five lessons. Foursquare Sunday school manuals are divided into several units of study. Each deals with a segment of the overall theme. Each contributes a part to the development of this entire 13 lessons series. The number of these may vary with the lesson book. They are noted in the table of contents for each book and are immediately apparent to the teacher.

The student in the class may never become aware of these units, but the teacher needs to be conscious of them. The divisions help the teacher build on truth from lesson to lesson. Though not actually completing the quarter's theme after each unit, they do provide an aid for careful planning. It helps him see the quarter not just as thirteen lessons, but thirteen lessons which carry out, step by step, one theme.

### Weekly Planning

The teacher is immediately concerned each week with the lesson for the next Sunday. In these busy days he must find a way to best use the time available.

*The teacher must have a definite time for study.* He will not "find" this time; he must "make" it. Experience has shown that unless we set aside a specific time for prayer and Bible study, this important work never gets taken care of. When is the best time for study? Each individual must determine this for himself. Perhaps before the rest of the family awakens in the morning, at night just before retiring, or when the children are at school or taking their naps. Whenever it is, he needs to guard it religiously. The conscientious teacher will not always find it easy to set aside a time, but he will do it.

*Adequate materials must be available.* Foursquare Sunday schools provide a manual for each teacher. This not only contains the lesson materials but also includes "built-in" training. The manual has suggestions for how to teach the class and dealing with the age groups, etc.

The manual has as its purpose the guidance of the teacher in developing the lesson. The Bible is always the textbook of the Foursquare Sunday school. These additional ideas, facts and aids assist the teacher in searching the Scriptures.

The teacher often needs other helps while preparing for the lesson. These aids are many and varied. Most of the teacher's manuals for Foursquare Sunday schools contain bibliographies to assist the teacher's research.

The materials from which the teacher studies are more often used if they have a specific place and remain organized. While this is not always possible, it does remain that when the teacher sits down to study he needs to have gathered around him the tools he will use. He needs pencils, paper, Bible lesson manual, and resource materials nearby.

*The teacher must have a plan for study.* Someone has suggested that one secret to success is "plan your work, and work your plan." This is true for the teacher. He needs a plan to accomplish the most effective preparation?

### STEPS TO PREPARATION

Like a cook's delicious homemade soup, the teacher's Sunday school lesson needs a "simmer season." Lesson preparation needs to begin at the first of the week. This allows the conscious and the subconscious a chance to become saturated with the subject. Ten minutes spent each day during the week bring better preparation than one hour spent on Saturday evening. This is true of the superintendent's preparation as well. What practical steps might a teacher consider in this day-by-day "simmering" of the lesson?

#### For the Teacher

*Review.* The first ingredient of lesson preparation for the teacher is a review of the previous lesson. Do this early perhaps even before the Sunday afternoon nap. Then the teacher is able to recall the attitude and response of the students. Were they attentive? Interested in the story? Did the application register? Could it be that the expected results did not come because the teacher used the wrong method? Or could the teacher's lack of familiarity with the lesson have

prevented him from properly presenting it? A review of the previous lesson can act as a guide for the teacher.

*Prayer.* Basic to all preparation is prayer. A part of the teacher's everyday devotion is prayer for his class. He can also rely upon the Spirit of God to open to him the scriptural truths as he studies for his presentation. God will help him to really "get" the heart of the lesson even in the quiet moments he spends studying. Pray that He will help make this an interesting, exciting experience for each class member. The Spirit-filled teacher's prayer serves as more than an ingredient to simmer, but serves as the fuel for the fire. He dare not neglect it.

*The text.* Open the Scriptures and read the Bible passage for next week's lesson. Don't stop with just one reading. Read it again and again. Allow the thoughts which flood your mind while you read to begin "simmering." Again the Spirit will assist in realistic application of these truths to your heart first, and later to the student's heart. Don't hesitate to use modern English translations for gaining the content of these verses. As you read, imagine yourself in this setting and try to see it in the eyes of your students. These are space-age creatures you teach some come to class "in orbit". It is the teacher's challenge to get them back to earth and relate the age-old Bible stories to their daily lives. Only the Spirit of God can really accomplish this, but He needs your thorough study to do it.

Investigate the context of the lesson portion, too. What happened in the verses before and after these? Reading it aloud helps you to grasp its full implications. We cannot become too familiar with God's Word. No one knows its depths. Reading and studying the Scriptures every day make them more real to the teacher. It is the living Word and it needs to penetrate the life.

*The tools.* Now we have the basis for our "soup," but we need to add some more ingredients. The teacher's manual is prepared to serve as a guide and to keep the teacher "on track." Use Bible dictionaries and concordances for definitions of unfamiliar words or ideas. Teach resources (maps, pictures and other visuals) assist the teacher in "getting the point across."

The teacher faces a challenge by the middle of the week which the unprepared teacher never realizes. His challenge is how to convey all of the material in those few short minutes of the Sunday school hour. Of course, this is impossible. Even if time and circumstances permitted it would be foolish to try. Too often the "shot-gun" method of teaching is used instead of aiming "dead center." What one thing do you actually hope to accomplish with this lesson? Determine your lesson aim early.

Teach one idea well instead of trying to cram in a lot of small ones inadequately. There must be a reason for saying what is planned during the class time. There is always a temptation to "unload both barrels" and tell everything learned during the week. It is impossible to accomplish the desired goal, with that approach. You want them to learn one truth well so that it can become a part of their lives.

Determine the lesson aim in light of both the long-range goal of the quarter and the week's plan. Always take into consideration the immediate needs of your students. Fours-

quare curriculum suggests an aim for each lesson. The teacher must carefully consider how best to apply this lesson to his individual class. It must meet the needs of the students. The stated aim will apply to your class, on the other hand, it may need some adjustment. Determine this early in the week's study and begin planning to accomplish it on Sunday morning.

*The method.* The study and preparation of a lesson is only part of the actual lesson. These rich truths must be conveyed to the class through an appropriate method. Chapter 5 deals at greater length with this subject. The teacher should determine which methods he will use to teach as part of his preparation. Use those precious class minutes to impart specific Bible truths. Ineffective teaching is done when the students remain uninvolved by simply sitting and listening to the teacher. We learn best by doing. Who ever took a correspondence course in swimming?

When using question or discussion methods the teacher must form these questions and prepare for the direction of the discussion. Or when an assignment for a coming lesson is anticipated, the teacher prepares ahead.

*The visuals.* Visuals used in the lesson need preparation as well. These are aids to help the teacher accomplish the lesson aim. Careful selection is important to allow maximum benefit from these. They must not serve as a "crutch" upon which the unprepared teacher leans. They are an enhancement to the presentation. A wise teacher will practice with his visuals whether it is a picture, filmstrip, flannel story, etc. He should not become discouraged if things do not go exactly as planned on his first try. Rather, he can learn from his mistakes. As with other areas, the use of teaching tools and aids improve with practice. This is part of the growing process of the teacher. Use visuals with all ages and in every lesson.

*The lesson language.* Words are the means by which we convey our thoughts to others. Both the teacher and the student must understand the words used to make ideas and thoughts clear. The teacher must take care to put the lesson in the language of the student. To do this, the teacher must know the vocabulary and level of understanding of the students.

Children below the junior age (9-11) and even some juniors, take literally everything they hear. Therefore, we are unable to use symbolic language with them. We cannot talk of Jesus as the "Light of the World" or the "Door." To these the mind's eye immediately pictures a door or a light. For example, a first-grade teacher explaining Canaan land to his class as a land which "flowed with milk and honey," might cause the six year old to picture milk and honey flowing over mountains and valleys. Too often we sing the little song, "The B-I-B-L-E" which states, "I stand alone on the Word of God . . ." We as adults understand this, but the child cannot grasp that we do not literally stand with our feet on the Bible. It would be better to sing, "It tells me of God's wondrous love . . ." or other phases in the child's understanding.

Adult teachers are often guilty too of talking either below or beyond the understanding and experience of their students. Illustrations often help the teacher convey the meaning. He must be careful to draw the illustration from the life of the student. New truths are always learned in relation to truths

already known. Begin where the student is and progress from there. Thus, part of the teacher's preparation includes thinking and speaking the lesson in the language of the class.

*The lesson outline.* The teacher's manual is prepared to assist the worker in study and in this regard is a valuable tool. However, this aid should not accompany the teacher to class. The well-prepared teacher does not need it; he teaches from the Word. With this in mind, most teachers prepare a lesson outline to insert into the open Bible. From this, he is able to progress from point to point in the lesson.

Near the end of the week the teacher is able to gather his materials and put them into an outline form. This he will take to class with his Bible, visuals, assignments, etc. All of this is done by spending ten to fifteen minutes each day in lesson preparation.

Practicing the lesson outline is often good last minute preparation. This helps the teacher gain confidence, become familiar with and feel enthusiasm for the lesson. The "panic feeling" comes when a teacher neglects studying throughout the week. However, he builds confidence from a week spent in "simmering" truths. He begins to "own" the truth. He is free to add another prayer for his class. He knows that God will direct by His Spirit and honor the conscious preparation.

#### For the Student

Thorough preparation includes student preparedness as well. Part of the week-long preparation is also the student's book and any handwork assignments. When the teacher has already completed these items, he is able to knowledgeably assist the student in these areas. A finished product to show helps guide and encourage the completion by the students.

Some teachers give the students the current lesson only to take home. This insures the teacher that the student's manual will be intact and in the classroom for the following Sunday's lesson.

#### PREPARATION PERSPECTIVE

In the Old Testament, God required many things of His people in their preparation for the Sabbath. Preparation is still of high value to the Sunday school teacher. His study and consideration of the lesson application to life today must be more than a Saturday night routine.

Saturday's are a joy to be anticipated when the teacher has prepared Sunday's lesson well in advance. This releases time for personal visits or phone calls to students not made during the week. Materials are placed in order for use on Sunday, and the simmering of the lesson has actually become a part of the life. Sunday morning awaits without dread.

When the Lord's Day begins, you are ready for any emergency. Should class members arrive early, you have time to chat with them. "On time" for a Sunday school teacher means arriving at least fifteen minutes early. The last-minute "cramming" is unnecessary and the calmness of the teacher is immediately sensed by his students. When class time arrives he teaches the students prayerfully presenting the lesson from a full heart. Your preparation is complete.

Eternal values are in the balance as you present your lesson. Souls may come to a full knowledge of Christ as Savior. The effectiveness with which you present the truths will be in direct relationship to your preparation. A teacher must find time to prepare. The growth of his class spiritually and numerically depend on this.

## GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING

### WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?

1. List five evidences of a teacher's preparation.
2. What are the two categories into which lesson preparation falls?
3. Why is long-range planning important?
4. Name three ways the Foursquare teacher's manual can be used as an aid. Name one way it is never to be used.
5. What are some effective tools for lesson preparation or teacher improvement?
6. When is the best time for lesson preparation? Why?
7. Using your current teacher's manual (or obtain one if you are not teaching) list the quarter and unit themes, and each lesson title.
8. Prepare a lesson outline. Note the visuals you would use.



# 5

## The Lesson ...Presented

*"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." —Psalm 32:8*

In considering each lesson there are several factors involved which should be noted. A wise teacher considers all of these when he teaches the class. He looks at each individual present as a person. Each one has needs and he must convey the divine direction contained in the Scriptures to them. How much meaning will this lesson have for each individual? What will affect their reception of this?

### THE TEACHER

Eighty-five percent of teaching is the teacher. The finest curriculum aids, methods, facilities and the most interested students are always desired. Unless the teacher presents a lesson adapted to the students' life, the class time is not well spent.

The attitudes of the teacher tells the importance he really places on the lesson. When he enters the classroom with an enthusiasm for the lesson, his students and the Word, this attitude is immediately sensed. "Attitudes are caught, not taught." The teacher brings this sense of importance for the lesson into the classroom. This immediately says to his students, "What we are studying is vital and exciting. It is something which you will want to hear because it is practical and important for your well being. You will be a better person for having learned it."

### THE STUDENT

We have already said much about the student. He is the second factor of the lesson. His involvement in the lesson is imperative for learning to be most valuable. The 17th century educator, Comenius said, "Let the main object of this, our didactic (teaching), be as follows: To seek and to find a

method of instruction by which teachers may teach less, but learners may learn more."

Teaching is not merely telling facts. Your students sit at attention, but this does not mean they are listening or learning. A teacher must guard closely the valuable time which the Sunday school hour provides. He must also realize that students learn more quickly and retain much longer, when they are involved in the lesson. Bible learning activities encourage creative thinking. They help in lesson application also. The student discovers for himself the real value of the truth. Let us be careful not to rob the students of this "discovering."

### THE LANGUAGE

One of the basic laws of teaching tells us that the language of the teacher and student must be common between the two. They must be able to understand each other. Communication has been defined as a "commonness" with another person by words and/or symbols. Unless the teacher is able to communicate lessons in a common language the students can never grasp the truths.

Two speakers were presented some years ago at a graduation exercise. The first man gave an easily understood message. Though not always agreed with, he had no difficulty with holding attention. The second speaker faced the "hum" of the audience. This was the result of apparent inattention. His language was far above that of the average person in attendance. His technical terms and uncommon illustrations did not find a "common denominator" in the lives of the majority of those present. He spoke above them.

Some years ago a poem was brought to our attention

which illustrates this truth:

*Scintillate, scintillate, globule vivific,  
Fain would I fathom thy nature specific,  
Loftily poised in the ether capacious,  
Strongly resembling a gem carbonaceous.*

The reader has heard this poem, heard it often and undoubtedly even quoted it over and over. Only he perhaps said it in a very different manner.

*Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are,  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.*

It means the very same thing, but it is said in different words. Almost all understand the second version. Few could immediately grasp the first. Reading or quoting it in a language foreign to the listener would gain the same result.

The Sunday school teacher faces this problem with each lesson presentation. Therefore, it is imperative that he understand and use the language of his student. The illustrations he brings must be those with which the students have some association and which are in keeping with their understanding. Not all people accept what is said with exactly the same meaning. At least two things influence how each hears and sees.

*His emotional tone at the time.* If he is happy, "feeling good" and in good spirits, he will react one way. When he is "in a bad mood," disturbed about a matter or preoccupied, his attitude is different still.

*His background.* All new truth relates to previously learned truth. Everyone understands new truth out of the total background of their past experience.

Evidenced in the Scripture is Jesus' awareness of this very thing. To those who were farmers, He spoke of the seed. To the fisherman He told of making them "fishers of men". To the herdsmen He portrayed Himself as the Good Shepherd. He began where they were, at their present understanding, and proceeded to convey to them the message He came bringing.

Teaching is more than verbalizing. "Verbalizing" implies the ability to say words without really realizing the truth and understanding them. One must understand the words and sense their meaning in the learning process.

Of course vocabulary differs with each age. Children must be taught on their language level. Meanings of words and phrases also differ with persons of different ages. The urban adult, whose life centers in the crowded city, pictures the application of the Bible differently from the farmer. His contact is with the soil and relatively few persons in an average week. How can a teacher communicate with each?

The teacher is able to speak to his class on their level of understanding when his presentation is clear in his own mind. This is the result of thorough preparation. He has thought through his lesson approach. By using an illustration from the life, or lives of his students he is able to communicate fully. He has found the "commonness" necessary and thus his words have meaning. This teaching builds confidence and respect from his students, for the teacher meets their needs.

The language of the student is used when writing Four-square Sunday school curriculum. This serves as a guide for the teacher and helps him place the lesson in the language which his group understands. However, all applications are not made in the teacher's manual — this is the work of the teacher.

## THE METHODS

Often when we think of Bible study we picture a group of people, sitting in straight rows, Bible in hand and a teacher standing in front. And while Bible study may well take this form at times, it is not always the means whereby people learn Scripture. Modern education has brought many and varied types of learning situations. The Sunday school needs to become aware of these means and apply them to its educational program.

Variety in teaching methods is an easy answer to many unpleasant class situations. However, choosing the right method for the right situation is not always an easy task. Students are often able to outline the classroom routine from week to week. They relax into a "humdrum" attitude, when the procedure is always the same. When attention lags, the teacher becomes discouraged and the end result is unpleasant for both. Some lessons, however, adapt themselves better to one style of teaching than do others. Three simple guidelines for choosing a method are available.

### Guidelines

*It must be the desired goal of the lesson.* Your teaching must result in more than factual knowledge. It must become a part of the students. For example, the story of the good Samaritan lends itself to discussion and question and answer. In this presentation the students need to think out and discuss how they can be "good Samaritans" today. What practical application can they make to this?

*Suit the method to the student.* Smaller children cannot enter into the discussion, while adults learn much from this method. The age level of the students will need consideration. It is true that at any age level the method cannot always remain the same. A teacher may use several methods in one class period. Variety adds spice. We all learn through participation and a variety of methods helps provide this.

*The method must suit the teacher.* Teachers differ as individuals. While one may be an outstanding lecturer, another may find it hard to do this. Therefore, it would be foolish for the latter to often use the lecture method of teaching. He must find a method which suits him. Also, the "lecturer" must not always lecture, but rather find a variety of means whereby he can develop as a teacher.

### Groupings

Teaching methods divide nicely into three groupings.

*Methods which involve the students.* These methods draw the student into the subject. They require of him some activity whereby his attention and learning are focused on the subject matter. He becomes a part of the actual process of teaching.

*Methods which inform the student.* These bring the subject to the student. Here the teacher is the focal point of the teaching. He presents the lesson, asking very little response

from the student in this presentation. Visuals may be used, but they are used by the teacher himself.

*Methods which induce the student.* These bring the subject to the student. Here the student is prevailed upon to become a part of the actual teaching. This often serves as an indirect means for stimulating interest and influencing the student to participation.

Found at the close of this chapter is a chart which lists many teaching methods or techniques used with various age groups. Study this chart and apply the methods suggested for the age group you teach. It is wise for the teacher to keep a record of the methods he employs from week to week. In reviewing these, try to vary the methods often. We forget that as teachers we did not learn by listening to someone "tell" the lesson. We studied it for ourselves. We became involved. Surprise your class. Provide enough variety that they will not anticipate what comes next. Review the methods public schools use for teaching various age levels. Experiment to find the ones which best suit you and your class. As you gain in experience and confidence add new methods from time to time.

### VISUAL AIDS

Visual aids are vital to good teaching. A picture is still "worth a thousand words." We are well aware that all learn through the five senses. Of special interest is the percentage of leaning which comes through each. Of total learning, 1% is by smelling, 2% by feeling, 2% through taste, 10% through the ears and 85% through the eyes. It is valuable for the teacher to know this information.

Educators tell us that we remember 10% of what we hear, 50% of what we see, 70% of what we say, and 90% of what we do. In view of these figures, we can readily see the value of teaching aids and methods which engage the student in seeing as well as hearing.

God instructed Israel in the Old Testament to follow Him and teach their children the concepts of their faith. He told them that teaching was to relate to every area of their lives. Note Deuteronomy 11:18-20. In everything they did, they were to remember God's Word and teach their children to fear God. This was their way of life. Someone has said, "if we are to teach Biblically, we must teach visually."

The importance of visual aids applies to the student as well as the teacher. These serve as better teaching tools for the teacher since they appeal to all the senses. The teacher's manual, object, pictures, recording, etc. assist him in teaching the desired truth. For the student, visuals make learning more enjoyable and fun. They stimulate interest, giving the student a feeling of satisfaction and pleasure. This makes Christian education an enjoyed and desirable experience. They aid learning and understanding of the lesson.

Teaching aids divide into two classifications. First, the visual aid: those which teach through the eye gate. They include maps, charts, pictures, the student's book, etc. Second are audio visuals. They appeal both to sight and hearing. Included here are slides or filmstrips (with recording or cassette), motion pictures, overhead, and video.

Foursquare Sunday school curriculum provides a wide variety of teaching aids from both of these groupings. As well,

it provides explicit instructors for their use.

Illustrations from the life of the student are the best teaching aids. On the other hand, the greatest teaching tool the teacher has is his own life. It speaks loudly and vividly illustrates the meaning of a Word-centered pattern of living.

### THE DISCIPLINE

Experience teaches us that in working with people, whether children or adults, circumstances which were not planned do arise. The teacher's alertness to the situation and the guidance of the Spirit enables him to make the most of it. These "unplanned activities" are often an indication of one of several things. Some causes of poor discipline are:

*An unprepared teacher.* Ninety percent of all discipline problems can be attributed to the unprepared teacher. He manifests his interest, or lack of it, in the way he prepares and then passes this attitude on to his students. Their disinterest is a reflection of the teacher, and thus his inability to hold attention. Some years ago, an usher asked his pastor if he should go around and arouse those who were sleeping during the sermon. To this, the pastor replied, "No, come awaken me."

*The classroom.* The appearance of the room in which the Sunday school class meets can lend itself to good or poor discipline. A neat appearance, chairs in order, clean, chalkboard erased, and necessary repairs made all aid the teacher in keeping order. It need not be new to be appealing. While each teacher would enjoy a new Christian education building, this is not always possible. No excuse is acceptable for an untidy room. Orderly classroom arrangement fosters orderly conduct in the class.

*Age grouping.* Since the attention span and the interest vary with the age of the student, grouping in the Sunday school is important. The best teacher cannot hold the attention of all students when the age span is too broad. Teaching in a language of a three year old at the same time you are teaching a nine year old is most difficult. The young adult will lose interest when the teaching appeals directly to the senior adult. Lack of interest results in disturbance and a display of poor self-control. It is not fair to the teacher or the student for this condition to exist for a long period of time.

*Lack of proper teacher-student relationship.* A student who does not feel at ease with his teacher and who senses a teacher's disinterest in him will not give his best attention. The teacher who "demands" attention rather than earning it through love and concern will not obtain the necessary respect to maintain interest. The way the teacher maintains order in his class is vital to his relationship with his students.

A teacher often experiences discouragement when he finds himself unable to effectively cope with discipline problems. He should remember that the attitude with which he handles this tells much about his spiritual life and attitude toward his students. Discipline is "making disciples" and is administered from a heart of love and concern.

Good discipline depends upon the student and teacher concept of God-pleasing conduct. This is the greatest preventive factor for discipline problems in the classroom. The student sees the teacher as a real friend, one interested in him and his happiness. The teacher views the student as a



soul whom God has entrusted to him and privileged him to lead and guide. This mutual understanding should be the goal of each teacher.

**The home.** This is the greatest influence on an individual. In a home where the church is revered and the things of God held with high esteem, the conduct of the child or youth will reflect that same conversation and attitude. Also the home which shows little interest in the church, has "roast preacher" for each Sunday dinner, speaks critically of the program, will find disinterest and disrespect for leadership manifest in the lives of it's children. Teaching in the home is done with love and Christian concern, rather than through criticism.

Parent-teacher meetings and personal involvement of the family in the church program is desirable. The family should attend Sunday school each week.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." How true this is when the alert, watchful teacher hears all and sees all. He is able to prevent disturbances rather than correct them after they have occurred. The teacher notes signs of disinterest or inattentiveness. He sees those on the verge of causing a disturbance. Then he is able to direct his attention to the student and engage him in the lesson. This lets the student know that what he intended was observed by the teacher.

A teacher cannot teach without discipline. One of the necessary elements for discipline is security. Children, youth and adults, must grow to learn self-discipline. They also need guidelines to help mold their lives. These guidelines help with discipline for they make the student feel secure. Discipline, "making disciples," is part of the work of the Christian teacher.

### THE CLASS TIME

The teacher needs to have clearly defined the class period in his own mind. He must move from one lesson point to another without wasting time as he progresses. He should not manifest a "hurried" attitude in the schedule. Rather, he knows the value of each minute and is able to make the most of it while reflecting a relaxed attitude. This comes from thorough preparation and is cultivated through the experience of the teacher. A well prepared, well organized teacher is at ease and this atmosphere prevails in his class.

#### For Adults

#### ADULT CLASS SESSION PLAN

- FELLOWSHIP 10 minutes
- APPROACH TO THE WORD 10 minutes
- EXPOSITION AND RESPONSE 25-30 minutes
- CONCLUSION AND DECISION 10-15 minutes

This is a flexible guide, based on a 45-minute session, and is easily adjustable to fit specific learning needs.

*Fellowship.* This is an informal time when members can

talk with each other and meet new people. Many schools serve coffee during this time.

**Approach to the Word.** Bible learning activities which provide a way to capture the interest of the class and introduce the study material.

**Exposition and Response.** This is the heart of the class lesson. The teacher may introduce the response activity with a brief lecture. Or he may use the entire time to discover the Bible truth with class response. In this case the teacher serves as a "guide" to their discovery and response.

**Conclusion and Decision.** Bible learning activities help class members apply the truths of Scripture to their lives, and to assume responsibility for them.

#### For Youth

#### ABC SESSION PLAN FOR YOUTH

- APPROACH 5-15 minutes
- BIBLE DEVELOPMENT 25-30 minutes
- CONCLUSION AND DECISION 5-15 minutes

The ABC Session Development plan operates within a forty minute time period.

1. *A= Approach.* Puzzles, questions and other creative activities help to approach the subject, stimulate interest and provoke thought about the session theme.

2. *B= Bible and Life Exploration.* This is the major portion of the class time. This is time for the exploration of the Scriptures and their relevance to the life of the student. Employ methods which help the student dig into the Bible, discover its truth for himself, and apply it to his own life.

3. *C= Conclusion and Decision.* Conclusion methods give the student a means by which he can internalize what he has discovered from the Word. The activity can go past the actual class time as young people take in the truth and make it a part of their own lives.

#### For Children

Dr. Ernest Ligon stated, "When we demand that the elementary child sit still, he is using all of his energy to control himself and there is no energy left for learning." One of the elements that the following plans embrace is "movement." Moving from class group to assembly group to activity group follow group follow the grade school child's physical and intellectual make-up. This will reduce boredom and misbehavior.

There are two schedule plans for the children's Sunday school time: Plan A or Plan B. The school that has more than ten students in a department uses a closely graded curriculum. They have enough space for students to meet in one large group. Several small groups can easily employ plan A.

**CHILDREN'S CLASS SESSION PLAN "A"**

- **BIBLE STUDY 25-30 MINUTES**  
Permanent class grouping.  
Bible readiness. Bible story. Living God's way.
- **BIBLE SHARING ACTIVITIES 20-25 MINUTES**  
Department together in a large group.  
Worship time. Choosing Bible learning activities.
- **BIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES 20-30 MINUTES**  
Non-permanent small groups.  
Creative Bible activities to reinforce Bible truths.

*Bible Study.* When the child arrives, he begins working on an activity that builds readiness for Bible learning. He then listens to the visualized Bible story. He thinks through ways of applying the truths he learned from God's Word to his own life. The teacher meets with a permanent class for this.

*Bible Sharing Activities.* Children share together in worship. The Superintendent leads the songs, offering, prayer and varied activities related to the lesson. Then each child selects the Bible learning activity he wants to work on during the last block of time. The superintendent guides the children in their choices.

*Bible Learning Activities.* The children work on a creative activity that reinforces the Bible story aim. A teacher leads each activity, working with the children who choose the activity he is leading.

Plan B is chosen by Sunday schools who have less than ten students enrolled in the children's department. It is also used by schools with two or more grades in one department. For the smaller school where only one class studies the same lesson, the choosing time is eliminated. In this case, the Bible learning activity is conducted by the individual teacher in his class. Such a schedule may be formed as follows:

**CHILDREN'S CLASS SESSION PLAN "B"**

- **BIBLE STUDY/LEARNING ACTIVITIES 40-45 minutes**  
Permanent class group. The teacher prepares the Readiness Activities. After teaching the Bible Story he helps the children relate the truths to day-by-day experience. He then chooses one Bible Learning Activity for the entire class.
- **BIBLE SHARING 15-20 minutes**  
Department groups. The Department coordinator adapts the worship activities. The music and conversation are an expressed outgrowth of the lesson aim emphasized in class time.

**For Preschool****PRESCHOOL CLASS SESSION PLAN**

- **BIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITY 30 minutes**
- **TOGETHER TIME WORSHIP 15 minutes**
- **BIBLE STORY/ACTIVITY TIME 15 minutes**

*Bible Learning Activity Time.* The teacher greets the child on arrival. The child gives his love gift (offering) before choosing an informal activity. The teacher guides conversation and activity to help children understand the lesson's Scripture truth as it relates to their everyday experiences. At the close of this time, the teachers and children help put learning materials away before all go to Together Time.

*Together Time Worship.* The children and teachers gather in one group to participate in worship which includes songs, prayer and Bible reading. The leader also guides conversation and activity to illustrate lesson's Scripture truth as related to child's day-by-day experiences.

*Bible Story/Activity Time.* When the total group exceeds ten, children are assigned to classes of five to eight children with a Bible story teacher. The teacher presents the Bible story with visuals, and then guides the handwork which reinforces the Scripture truth of the Bible story. When the total group numbers ten or less, the leader tells the Bible story at the close of the Together Time Worship.

# GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING

## WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?

1. Define communication.
2. Choose an age-group and explain the class time schedule.
3. How might each of the following help the teacher determine the teaching method to use with the age-group chosen? The age of the students, the lesson, the classroom, the equipment, and the lesson time.
4. Read the following Scriptures and list from each: whom Jesus taught; the method He used; and the result.

Matthew 21:17-22; Mark 4:35-41; 11:12-14; Luke 3:4-42;  
John 3:1-21; 4:3-42; 6:1-58

5. Define discipline. What does this mean in Christian teaching?
6. How is discipline controlled in teacher preparedness?
7. The teacher spends 45 minutes each week teaching. In a year how much time would he waste if he spent 10 minutes of that time in wasted nonsense?  
How many Sundays does this take from teaching in a year?  
List some ways that class time is wasted.
8. What would be a workable class time schedule?

## METHODS FOR TEACHING

### PRESCHOOL

Block Building	Home Living
God's Wonders	Storytelling
Books	Music
Puzzles	Art Activities

### CHILDREN

<b>DRAMA</b> Playing a story Pantomime Picture posing Tableau Choral speaking Role playing Puppets	<b>COMMUNICATION</b> (Oral) Brainstorming Buzz groups Open-ended questions Speaker and discussion Panel discussion Story telling Sharing Bible character interview Bible readings Conversation	<b>COMMUNICATION</b> (Written) Play, TV or radio script Short stories and poetry Songwriting Diaries Newspaper writing <b>RESEARCH</b> Field trip Interview Listening Center Moving pictures Books Questioning Look and Listen teams Bible reading	<b>ART</b> Drawing Modeling Murals Resists Collage Crayon work Paper bag slide projection Stitchery Puppets <b>AND . . .</b> Models Dioramas Maps Time lines Service projects Bible games
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\*From "Ways to Help Them Learn" — ICL

## YOUTH

### RESEARCH

Inductive Study  
Projects  
Field Trip  
Scripture Search  
Work Teams  
Book Report  
Survey  
Interview

### DRAMA

Play  
Reading  
Puppets  
Games  
Role Play  
Videos/Movies/Slides  
Story  
Tableau  
Pantomime  
Spontaneous Drama  
Mock TV Format  
Playlet

### ART

Collage/Montage  
Mural  
Sketch-A-Verse  
Posters  
Tear-A-Picture  
Newspaper  
Mobile  
Time Line  
Displays & Exhibits  
Friezes  
Maps  
Paintings  
Wire Bending  
Jeremiah Graph

### DISCUSSION

Brainstorming  
Buzz Groups  
Circle Response  
Nudge Your Neighbor  
Debate  
Question/Answer  
Panel  
Film  
Talkback  
Problem Solving  
Agree/Disagree  
Listening Teams  
In-Basket  
Case Study  
Share Personal Experiences  
Open Ended Sentences  
Thinking Together

### PAPER

Questionnaire  
Opinionnaire  
Write a Letter  
Checklist  
Drawings/Doodles  
Open End Stories  
Poetry  
Log, Journal, Diary  
Make a List  
Write a Paragraph  
Newspaper Article  
Outline  
TV Script  
Paraphrase  
True/False Quiz  
Matching Quiz  
Puzzles  
Question Box  
Character Comparison

### PRAYER

Silent Prayer  
Sentence Prayer  
Conversational  
Circle Prayer  
Spontaneous Prayer  
Sing a Prayer  
Write a Prayer

### LECTURE

Demonstration  
Chalkboard  
Flip Chart  
Pull-Off Chart  
Bulletin Board  
Maps  
Charts  
Overhead Projector  
Guest Speaker  
Interview  
Lecture Forum  
Symposium  
Tape Recording  
Film/Filmstrip/Slides  
Record/React  
Object Lesson

### MUSIC

Write a Hymn (familiar tune)  
Add-A-Verse to a Hymn  
Discuss a Song  
Compare Songs  
Answer Questions Posed by  
a Contemporary Song  
Sing a Psalm  
Write Original Songs  
Compose Musical Commercial  
Learn a New Song

## ADULTS

The following methods are lettered according to category of use: (a) to gain information; (b) to solve problems; (c) to gain insight; (d) to stimulate thinking; (e) to express thoughts or opinions; (f) to present an issue; (g) to develop skill.

Assignment - a  
Agree-Disagree - d  
Biographical - a  
Book Report - c  
Brainstorming - b  
Buzz Group - a, b  
Case Study - b, c  
Chain-Reaction forum - f  
Circle Response - e  
Colloquy - a  
Creative Drawing - e, g  
Creative Writing - e, g  
Drama - a, c, d  
Debate Forum - f  
Demonstration Work Group - g  
Depth Bible Encounter - c  
Expanding Panel - c  
Field Trip - a, c  
Film Talk Back - a, e

Games (stimulation) - a, c  
Group Drawing - e  
Group Response team - a, f  
Inductive Bible Study - a, d, c  
Interview Forum - a  
Laboratory Group Analysis - a, g  
Lecture - a, f  
Worship - g  
Work Groups - g  
Lecture Forum - a, c  
Listening Teams - a, c  
Magazine Research - a  
Memory Work - a  
Music (music forum) - c  
Neighbor Nudging - d  
Newspaper Research - a, c  
Oral Reports - a  
Panel - a  
Panel Forum - a, c, d

Practice Teaching - g  
Programmed Learning - a  
Projects - g  
Psychodrama - c  
Questions and Answers - b  
Quiet Meeting - d  
Reaction Panel - a  
Research and Report - a  
Roleplaying - b  
Role Reversal - c  
Screened Speech - a  
Seminar - a  
Sermon-Forum - a  
Symposium - a, c  
Symposium Dialogue - a, c  
Teaching Machine - a  
Testing (quizzes, drills) - d  
Triads - d



# 6

## The Growing Challenge

*“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*  
—Philippians 1:6

In the time of the writing of our Scripture, there were several agencies which contributed to the religious training of the individual. These were the home, the school and the synagogue, or church. In the God-ordained plan for religious education, He instituted that each of these should have its part in the shaping of lives.

From the initial giving of the Law, the Jewish parents were given definite instruction as to their part in the religious training of the child. Even the food they ate and the clothing they wore often had religious significance. School was a major part of the educational program for all Jewish children. Religious training was even included in the nursery schools. And, of course, the Jewish family attended the synagogue consistently, and received additional instruction regarding Jehovah God.

The first schools in the United States were established as church-related institutions. Their texts included the Bible and the McGuffey reader, which contained great portions of the Scriptures. Students studying the texts not only learned to read and write, but were established in the very principles these manuals expressed. They learned that G-O-D spelled God. They also learned who He was and how they were affected by Him.

In past years the family which did not attend the church religiously each Sunday was an exception rather than the norm. Family pews were labeled and regularly filled each week. Children followed the example of their parents in worship. The sermon of Sunday was evidenced in the way of life of the home.

Our present society finds us in quite another circumstance. Religious training is all but gone from our schools. The families who worship together in their church each week are almost the exception. Homes, even among Christians, that maintain consistent family Bible training are rare. This means additional demands are being placed upon the church and Sunday school to shape the religious life of children and youth. Parents and educators have too often left this vital development to a once a week, one-hour segment in the Sunday school.

This is not the way God originally intended it to be. Life no longer centers around the church and God. Each generation is being shaped less and less by a Christian influence from the home, school and church. In the light of this, the responsibility which the church and the Sunday school holds is almost frightening. Can it really fulfill this gigantic task?

### SUCCESS INSURED

*“ . . . he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it . . . ”* God is faithful. This is His work. He has called you to the ministry of teaching and you have begun to use the talents He has placed within you. You can be sure that yours is an important task in this time of growing challenge. Whether you are a substitute teacher, a training teacher, or a teacher who is actively engaged each week in His ministry. He has placed you here, now. Continue to submit to His leading and develop the abilities He has put within you. He will supply daily what you may lack in wisdom and experience.

Be assured, that God desires your success, not your failure. It is His important work and in this great responsibility, you go in His strength. You fail only by your own default. You

only lose His blessing by trusting in yourself. He is more than enough and so are you through Him.

### GROWTH IMPERATIVE

Compassion and concern overwhelm us often when we see individuals who have not grown properly physically or mentally. We realize these individuals are not "whole people" because of some handicap. And at times we meet folk who have not "grown up" emotionally. Even some Christians have not developed spiritually in accordance with the number of years they have named the name of Christ. Are these any more "whole?"

Growth is imperative in the continued work of the church. The growth of the Sunday school and the gospel in the community is contingent on the growth of the workers engaged in this ministry. And the growth of that individual is vital if he is to be, and continue to be a "whole person."

#### Personal Growth

Every Christian should work to improve himself. He should let nothing stunt, warp or hinder this growth. There is no place for bad habits, questionable indulgences, unhealthy influences or improper attitudes. Romans 15 warns us of this danger and the influence it may have upon others. The personality development of the Christian is a continuing process.

This growth as an individual aligns with the spiritual growth of the Christian. Let us view some areas where growth can and should manifest itself in the teacher.

*Discipline for the work.* Review the habits which have attached themselves to your life in relation to your work. Are you on time for Sunday school? Do you attend the training classes and workers' conferences? Have you set a goal for increased attendance in your class and are you realizing this goal? How many home visits have you made in the past four weeks? Do you need to set some new goals in these areas? Self-discipline is not always easy; in fact, it often is very hard. If these things are really important as a Christian teacher, and they are, then they are worthy goals for attainment.

To rephrase an old expression, "if once you don't succeed, try another method." Perhaps you have "turned over a new leaf" before. Do it again, but do it in the strength of the Lord. Analyze why you were unable to do this before and pray definitely, practically, for help in this new challenge. Try again.

*Faithfulness.* "Stick to it." It's not always easy to remain faithful. This is not only true of Sunday school work, but to many other things as well. However, this trait is vital to the Christian walk. Can the Sunday school "count on" you?

*Loyalty.* All individuals desire friends who they know are loyal. Friends declare themselves and are not afraid to stand firm for that thing to which they have committed themselves. It shows strength of character.

*Sense of humor.* Learning accelerates as much as 30 per cent when humor is interjected. There is a difference between humor and hilarity, cutting sarcasm and ridicule. These should not be a part of the Christian or the presentation of the Word. A good sense of humor is not out of place in the life and work of the Sunday school teacher. Tension eases when the teacher is responsible to see that it does not get out of hand.

The good-natured, understanding smile and hearty laugh can often set the stage and open the heart and mind to receive truth.

*Acceptance of a new challenge.* After a teacher has taught for some time, perhaps even just one year, he finds himself searching for a new experience or a greater challenge. There are several reasons why this may occur.

His present position may not be satisfying. This should not bring discouragement. Reevaluate to determine if he may be better suited to teach a different age or assume a different task.

He may not be maturing spiritually as he would like and may feel that he should change positions or quit altogether. The teacher must recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart and be thankful for it. His new commitment to God and diligence in working to mature spiritually is his number one challenge.

He may not be able to adapt and be flexible. At times in the business world, men or women naturally equipped or carefully trained for positions of responsibility, are unable to flex and adapt to change and disturbing situations. In these cases, others often get the promotions and are otherwise honored.

The Sunday school teacher, too, faces these challenges as part of the great force in the "business" of the Sunday school. He must be able to adjust his schedule to meet the demands placed on him. It may mean arranging his social functions to attend workers' conferences or other scheduled staff meetings. It may mean changing classes or following policies and standards which make him "stretch" at bit. Adaptability requires understanding and cooperation.

*Social Contact.* The Christian teacher should work to improve his relationships with people as well. His social maturity is important, for the individual first sees him and then, through him, his Savior. His relationship with his students must grow.

There must be contact to have mutual understanding between people. The Christian teacher should strive to maintain social contact with persons outside his close social circle. In the structure of his busy day, care is taken not to draw in, and in so doing, fail to present a friendly, Christian countenance so that "men may see your good works, and glorify the Father which is in heaven."

Desirable traits in the personality of the Christian should be cultivated and a helpful, friendly spirit generated. These days are too short and too busy for any to settle for any less than the most effective means of influencing people for Christ. The Sunday school teacher stands in a position of leadership, representing the church and Christ. Many will judge Christ and the church by the way the teacher presents himself.

*Emotional stability.* Can emotional stability influence the world for or against Christianity? Definitely! If Christ is sufficient for every need, and He is, then this does include the emotional life of the individual. Christianity has a basis in emotion, the love of God for the world. This love must manifest itself through people who have found a firm foundation and a solid rock upon which they are building their lives.

The pressures of the present world have made their mark on men. The number of emotionally disturbed persons is on the increase. Need the Christian be dominated by his own emotions, his self-centeredness? All Christians continually manifest various emotions—love, excitement, enthusiasm, joy, etc.—this is natural. However, in the life of the Christian worker there must be a stability. The Christian life finds its center not in the individual but in Christ. Pettiness, jealousies, sensitivity, unkind feelings, or an agitating spirit cannot be present in the Christian life. These things sap the vitality of a strong witness for Christ. These attributes oppose Christian character, and are attributable to the enemy and self. Part of the personal maturity of the individual is to cast off these. This is possible through the work of the Spirit in the life, and through the manifestation of the love of Christ.

Have you considered the qualities which exist within you and affect your development and growth as a person? They each have marked effects upon your personality and association with others.

### Spiritual Growth

Because the teacher has interest in the spiritual growth of his students, his own spiritual growth and improvement as a teacher of the Word is a concern. A person develops spiritually as those forces within him respond to the direction, will and plan of God. This plan is revealed through Christ. The Christian's spiritual growth, too, becomes apparent in every area of his life.

First Peter 2:2 speaks to us of this maturity. Milk is for newborn babes, but growing children need more than milk. The child of God cannot forever satisfy his spiritual hunger on milk, but must "go on to perfection" (Hebrews 6:1). The Scripture is the source for real spiritual food. Regular and frequent prayer also brings spiritual strength. Attendance at church services, opportunities for fellowship with other Christians and feasting on the message are imperative. No Christian can hope to carry on a vital spiritual ministry unless he is consistently growing and maturing spiritually himself. He needs divine help for this.

Those interested in their spiritual development will strive to increase their knowledge and spiritual understanding. They will influence others by their good example, and show an active interest in all the work of the church.

The apostle Paul, in Philippians 2:12, speaks of "working out your own salvation . . ." He does not speak of working for salvation, nor of Christian service, but rather of spiritual maturity. He is anxious that those who have begun following Christ continue and progress spiritually. Later, in verse 16 he says they are responsible to "hold forth the word of life," the Christian's service. Saved by the work of the Spirit, each individual matures by the guidance of that same Spirit into a divinely directed life of service. He cannot hope to serve without growing himself.

*Spirit-filled life.* The baptism of the Holy Spirit is imperative for each Sunday school teacher. It is a command from our Lord (Acts 1:8), and a promise to all believers (Acts 2:39). However, as important as this initial experience is to the Christian, it is only a beginning. To have an anointed and effective teaching ministry with spiritual dynamic, the teacher

must have a daily infilling. It is important for spiritual growth and productive ministry.

This work of the Spirit adds a deeper dimension to Christian living and teaching that can be acquired in no other way. It is interesting that the origin of the word "enthusiasm" comes from the Greek words which literally mean "in God." Webster says it is "believing in special revelations of the Holy Spirit." The one who is "in God" has an enthusiasm which the unbeliever is not able to acquire. It is the Spirit's work. This should be evidenced in the teacher's life, and his earnestness and zeal for the Word shall inspire the student to learning.

*Faith.* Faith is another element of spiritual growth. Not just the faith in Christ as Savior from sin, but an ever present confidence in His presence. A knowing that He provides strength and guidance and a sufficiency for every need at times. This is not a natural quality either, but a spiritual trait which comes from a fuller awareness of His Word and Himself. "Faith comes by hearing . . ."

*Example.* Jesus' teaching was strengthened by His example; He taught by the way He lived. Almost without exception, when He presented a truth to His followers, He gave them a practical demonstration of that lesson. An awareness of His example in the demonstration of the Word is constantly before the Christian teacher. He can expect the Word to touch and change his life, and the lives of the students.

There is a tendency in today's society to place material values above spiritual attainments. More and more families find themselves financially and socially involved to the point of almost a complete breakdown in family life. A physical exhaustion prevents them from spending time in Christian service. Family devotions and even visiting and encouraging Christian friends is difficult. The end result can only be a loss in spiritual dedication and Christian living. The teacher's example of spiritual growth shows through his speech, appearance, faithfulness, punctuality and practice of basic Christian ethics. These will not go unnoticed by the class. They know they cannot excuse their own behavior by "Our teacher does it" or "our teacher doesn't do it." A public school teacher may teach mathematics, but cheat on his income tax. The Christian teacher cannot separate teaching from his total being.

*Influence.* Prolonged association with another always influences an individual. Man tends to imitate or repel traits he sees in the individuals close to him. Physical characteristics such as sex and color of eyes and skin have been inherited and therefore are not changeable. Habits, disposition, opinions and understandings are acquired and are constantly changing to a greater or lesser degree. All sincere believers recognize a lack in many spiritual traits. Having a consciousness that these can be acquired should cause each to strive for desired Christian characteristics. Christian growth, or the lack of it, will affect all other developments in life. It is not acquired by intellectual improvement or material gain. It comes from the Word and the Holy Spirit's guidance through prayer and communion with God. Christian literature and fellowship affect it. Resistance to wrong and the desire to choose right portray it. No one can wish himself a certain age. One cannot be 30 years old without living for 30 years. Nor can we wish spiritual growth into being. It is a definite result of

a well-planned and carefully executed program. It takes work, diligence and faithfulness. The Holy Spirit places this desire to grow spiritually within the heart. His will is that the Christian grows to full stature in Christ. Although maturing does not always show — one does not always see the seed begin to grow — keep at it. Study of the Word, time spent in prayer and obedience to God is perfecting the Christian. It is your lifeline.

### Professional Growth

It is interesting to watch when two people begin in a business, profession or other endeavor. Often one remains alert and active while the other seems to fall by the way and lose his effectiveness. The active one has remained aware of change around him and alert to up-to-date methods which affect his profession. The other took the attitude that once trained and equipped he could project himself in this business for a lifetime. One became stagnant; the other remained vital, alive and current. An interested teacher always is aware of the need for constant improvement and training. A poor teacher satisfies himself with things as they are. Interestingly enough, things do not stay as they are in these fast-moving days. None can say he has attained perfection and learned all there is to know. We have just begun on this walk to develop teaching techniques and methods. Constantly new areas for better learning present themselves and the challenge increases to improve and increase our effectiveness for the Savior. The teacher must grow professionally. How might a Christian teacher in the Sunday school continue his growth as a professional?

**Training.** To cease to learn is to cease to teach. The secular field of education provides opportunities for improvement as standards continue to rise. It is natural then, for the church to adequately provide a program whereby its workers are able to improve themselves. Through the National Christian Education Department of Foursquare Churches, a program is available for a worker to continually improve his teaching techniques. Through study he sharpens his educational skills, enriches his Christian life and grasps a fuller understanding of the role he plays. He better understands his part in the furtherance of his denomination and the cause of Christ. This Approved Training Program contains a pattern whereby the worker is able to continually train and receive recognition for his accomplishments. It is evidenced that Foursquare Sunday school teachers are expressing an added interest and concern about being better workers. An increased number have received credit for courses of study completed. Excellent materials are available on a variety of subjects. These enable the teacher to become more conscious of the purpose of the Sunday school and the privilege afforded him to teach. Those who complete courses of study through either the class or home study receive recognition.

The value of regular training classes, Sunday school conferences and institutes and workers' conferences is not to be overlooked. These provide fellowship as well as a means for improvement and growth in the work of the Sunday school. The sharing of experiences and ideas from other teachers make these meetings valuable and interesting. Training classes help the teacher in disciplined study and guide him into a well-rounded educational basis for teaching.

**Current events.** Things are happening in the world today which remind us constantly of the Word of God. Things are portrayed in the Bible which we see evidenced in this decade. The teacher's study and increasing ability to tie these events into a related lesson can be most interesting to his class. Much is being reported today about what is happening in the very land where Jesus walked. Each day we see lessons in forgiveness and sharing. Tragic examples of broken commandments and multiplied evidence of the life without Christian hope fill our newspapers. The teacher asks, "What happened in the world today which I can relate to my Bible lesson?"

**Outside reading.** Excellent Christian periodicals are available which not only deal with methods and techniques, but which contain gems of spiritual truth. An interested teacher will avail himself of such publications and glean additional information, developing himself as a teacher.

Have you read a good book on teaching this year? Check yourself and see if you are aware of what is available in this area and begin pursuing these helps.

It is good for a teacher to set goals for himself to improve professionally as a teacher. Determine to read certain periodicals monthly or quarterly and one book on Christian education each year. Gather preparation helps such as a concordance, encyclopedia, commentary, etc. From time to time consult your pastor for new developments in these fields. They are also available from the shelves of your Christian bookstore.

**Evaluate your leisure time.** Schedule a definite time each day which you can set aside for such reading. Be realistic in the goals you set for yourself but plan to improve your skills, keep current; keep alive.

Your faithfulness in attending the regularly assigned staff meetings and your participation in regular church services is important. These training times unify, equip and inform the worker so he can intelligently participate with a grasp of the over-all program. His church attendance reminds all that he is a part of the total-church program. This way he shows his interest, dedication and cooperation, as well as his interest in his own spiritual development.

### EVALUATION NECESSARY

To evaluate is "to appraise something or to determine its quality." Have you recently "taken stock" to determine the quality present in yourself, your students or the school in which you teach? Evaluation does two things for us. It helps encourage us with the progress noted and reminds us of the goals still ahead.

#### Evaluate Yourself

Self evaluation is not easy. We either are too hard on ourselves or skip over the rough spots which we find the hardest to correct. We must determine the questions to ask ourselves to evaluate the quality of our lives.

First, let us view the progress made in the life. Have my attitudes changed in the past year? Three months? Do my actions, and reactions, reflect a greater application of my knowledge of the Word? Is my faith and my dependency on the Holy Spirit deepened?



Now, let us look at ourselves as teachers. Am I a better teacher than I was six months ago? Do I employ more methods? Is it easier to discipline myself to study of the lesson? Am I able to note favorable change in my students and their insight into the Word?

### Evaluate Your Students

This is an excellent way for the teacher to evaluate his own teaching as well. Have my students accepted Christ? Has their knowledge of the Bible increased? Is there growth in Christian character and living? God has allowed you to have a great part in these areas of progress in the lives of your students.

There may be learning, but is it all good? Are they learning how exciting a class can be? Are they learning how interesting and relevant the Bible is? Are they impressed that this Book really has something to say to them today? In this evaluation, the teacher may feel it is time to change his methods or preparation habits. This is growth on the part of the teacher. He is experiencing change as a result of his evaluation and concern.

### Evaluate Your teaching

How would you like to sit and listen to yourself each week as your students do? Does the arrangement of the classroom need changing? What can you do to stimulate the interest of your students? Are you employing a variety of methods? How is your relationship with your students? Are more fellowship times needed?

Some churches are finding it interesting to test their students as the public schools do. These tests often take the form of essays, true-false, multiple-choice, etc. They use the guide words of who, what, when, where, how and why. Take special care in this. When administered properly, it does help the teacher to evaluate his teaching and the comprehension of the students. Through it students evaluate their own learning in the Sunday school. And it serves as a reminder to apply himself to his lessons.

The growing teacher must be able to accept criticism and evaluation if he is to learn. He must also be honest with himself. When looking at his teaching and finding something which needs correction, he seeks help to improve this area. However, this is not always easy. But when we remember that our teaching involves souls which need the Savior, we grasp afresh the necessity to do our best.

Let us not just talk, but teach. There is a great difference between the two. Teaching is a skill which is learned and developed through experience. Feelings of incompetence wane as the teacher's confidence develops. If students learn by doing, teachers will too.

Occasionally teachers experience discouragement. At those times, seek the Lord in prayer for a fresh vision and renewed strength. Find new ideas to improve teaching times. Look ahead to get a perspective on the situation and make plans to be a better teacher. This is the formula for conquering discouragement.

### OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED

Never in the history of the world has there been the opportunity for the spread of the gospel which this modern age

presents. Communication reaches around the world. More people than ever know how to read and write. Transportation has made the furthest point just hours away. With each opportunity comes added responsibility. The urgency of the hour makes this gospel outreach imperative and almost desperately challenging. In our own neighborhoods, on every hand, we see evidence of the great need. Goldsmith said, "People seldom improve when they have no other model than themselves to pattern after." We were not left without an example. We look unto "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith . . ." (Hebrews 12:2).

This Master Teacher knew only three short years of earthly ministry. At this time He chose twelve men whom He tutored and sent out. They were to carry on the message which He came not only to teach, but to fulfill. He instructed ignorant, impulsive, sinful, unstable men until they began to conform to His very image and fulfill His hope for them. He commissioned them to "go and teach". He admonished them to receive the Holy Spirit Who would "teach them all things". They would qualify in turn, with His help, to teach and transform their culture. In the book of Acts, after they were endued with power, we see they did just that. Within less than 100 years, half of the then known world was Christian.

The Great Commission still remains the same today. People still need the Savior and the Holy Spirit continues to equip and empower men and women for this service.

However, the major portion of this task has fallen to the church. The home and the school have curbed their education to exclude the essentials for eternal life. In fact, at times it appears that the home and society attempt to tear down what is taught in the Sunday school. Let us be confident that "He which hath begun a good work . . . will perform it . . ." The impact the church has on its environment depends upon its workers. The challenge increases each day. When the work is accomplished, we see changed lives, homes and neighborhoods across the entire nation. "Greater is he that is in you, that he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). is accomplished we see changed homes and neighborhoods across an entire nation. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

A young man entered L.I.F.E. Bible College in Los Angeles. At his introduction he related through his own experience the power of the Word of God. As a child in the fourth grade, neighbor family had taken him to a Sunday school for a few short weeks. During this time he decided he was going to be a preacher when he grew up.

Shortly after this, his family moved from the city. Through his "growing up" years he did not attend Sunday school or church. At the age of 25 years he again attended a church. The Spirit reminded him of what he had heard as a child and the decision he made then. He accepted Christ as Savior and was now beginning to prepare himself "to be a preacher." This early training, although short, had remained in his mind and heart and led to his conversion.

Students may only attend Sunday school for a short time. The impressions of that class, its teacher and its message may well tell for eternity. When the Bible, taught under the power of the Holy Spirit and by a carefully prepared and trained

teacher, the seed remains and eventually brings forth fruit.

The influence of his teachers stays with a young person longer than any other. Let us pray that he can remember a spiritually minded teacher. One whose devotion and love to the Savior manifested itself in a rich presentation of Scripture, a person whose very manner expressed Christ, and through whom the Holy Spirit was able to impress spiritual truths to his heart.

Picture a corps of workers, armed with a message to meet the needs of men today. An army equipped with the power of the King of kings and commissioned to reach and teach the world. Each has the appropriate equipment and the necessary strength to continue and win the battle. Place yourself in the corps as a vital member, whose resources are unlimited and whose abilities are adequate. March! Success is assured.

## **GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING**

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### **WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?**

1. Originally, what agencies did God institute to carry on Christian teaching? What agencies have this responsibility today?
2. Is the Christian worker assured of being a success? If not, how can he default?
3. In what area can a teacher grow personally? Why is spiritual growth so important?
4. How can a teacher evaluate himself, his class and his teaching? Why is this important?
5. Of what value to the teacher's professional growth is training? How do current events and outside reading (other than the teacher's manual) associate with Bible lessons?
6. Evaluate the value of this course to you personally by listing the following:
  - a. Things you have learned.
  - b. Changes in your knowledge and attitudes.
  - c. Changes in your vision and desire to teach.
7. In view of your teaching ministry, from where you are now, list some objectives and goals you would like to reach. What requirements are necessary to meet these objectives?
8. Make two home visits on behalf of the Sunday school (visitors or prospects). After each visit, list those things which impressed you the most about that home and the persons you visited. How could you as a teacher help them to grow?

# TEACHING IN A FOURSQUARE SUNDAY SCHOOL

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**TEACHING IN A FOURSQUARE SUNDAY SCHOOL** is prepared not only for the novice teacher, but also for the one who has ministered in this area for several years.

It serves as a refresher course and a guide for the experienced teacher as well as an introduction to the new worker in the Foursquare Sunday school.

It exposes the teacher to the many facets of his work and points out the importance of his own development as a Christian teacher.

This book is part of the Approved Training Program for Foursquare Churches, and is recommended for all who are interested in becoming more effective in their Sunday school.