

Training For Service

Everyone here is actively interested in teaching youthful minds the deathless gospel of Christ and inspiring small hearts with the great things bequeathed to our trust by the "Holy men of God." To teach is the greatest call of God; the highest ambition. (Jn. 3:2, Ro. 8:29, I Pe. 2:21). It is a universal Christian duty; privilege. (II Tim. 2:2, I Co. 9:16, Ac. 8:4). The point sometimes missed is that the religion of Christ is a teaching religion, thus to be a Christian, we must teach. MT-28-18
(Jn. 6:44, Jn. 6:45, Ro. 10:17, II Co. 4:7, I Co. 4:1-2)

Much is said about teaching and teachers. Some of it is good and appropriate, but some is "fodder." It is said to be an esoteric "art" and one must have a "talent for it." This we will grant but the "talent" is one of communication and every "art" is acquired by practice. Such sayings discourage and drive away many good teachers (examples). We must realize that God can use the "little." (II Co. 12:9, I Co. 1:27-29). Look at it this way: "I am in His hand." Forget about "art", for as I see it, teaching is simply the impact of one personality upon another, producing change. (Ac. 4:13). The human personality is so constructed that it is modified by those personalities that it touches.

Let us step into a class. The first thing we probably see and hear is the teacher. (Stress importance of attendance here - Make arrangements for absence. Leave a note)

I. The Teacher. What do we see? Is he clean, neat, cheerful, alert? Is this the kind of house one would want to visit? An atmosphere radiates from you. How does the class feel? Like little criminals, or fellow-conspirators on some high adventure?

1. The major factor in the teaching situation - a teacher. A class is good or bad depending on her. The focal point.

2. The thing (secret) that makes a good teacher is desire. Desire to communicate. Reason:

(Jas. 5:20). (Children in the burning house).

3. Visual aids are talked about a great deal today; but the most powerful visual aid is you. (Seeding a Sermon)

a. "What you are speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say." (Murray. P. 80)

b. One reason for Christ's effectiveness was the fact that there was no discrepancy between his preaching and his practice. (Jn. 8:46) Gives weight to words. (Jn. 7:46).

c. Absorption. In the home, children learn to talk when no effort is made to teach them. Pick up parents habits, likes and dislikes. (Environmental influence is stronger than heredity in character formation). (Eg. Orphan,

and afflicted boy.)

d. One who does not serve can hardly train for service.

e. Therefore: Do more than teach in this class and arrange for them to find it out.

f. Occasionally sit with your class or some members of it in worship. Show them by example how to enter heartily and spiritually into the worship. (I Tim. 4:12)

4. Make everything you teach personal. It must "connect up." (Eg. Good Samaritan in reverse.)

5. Love your pupils and do not be afraid to show it; however, do not gush and fondle. (Ep. 4:15)

6. Criticize yourself and profit by mistakes.

7. Be careful of feelings but do not fail to teach the truth plainly for fear of "hurting."

(II Th. 1:8-9)

8. Prepare for each class and eventualities.

9. Aim. Your aim is to equip and motivate productive Christian men and women. Make the foundation solid.

10. Pray. (Ph. 4:13, I Co. 3:9) (Jas. 1:5)

II. The Pupil. This is the other half of the class situation. In these active little bodies there resides the real self, the soul that lives on long after the flesh has been forgotten. Therefore we are dealing with the eternal.

1. Individuality. Each one is an individual.

No two alike. Treat them so. Religion and responsibility is individual.

a. Self discovery and assertion: Desire for competition and victory is stronger than will to cooperate.

b. Thus appeal to the junior to compete, win, triumph.

c. Do not demand conformity, or crush them into a mold of your own making. Foster self development.

d. Behavior problems -

(1) Everyone wants to "do right." Foster this feeling.

(2) Get to know parent.

(3) Generally over-stressed. Those who were supposed to be usually turned out to be some of the liveliest and most interesting in the class. Generally a remark or added responsibility will do the job. If it is a "silly willy", you might redirect it if you treat his humorosity as a talent needing direction.

2. Class personality. Each class has it's own personality. Your job is make the class and yourself compatible (I Co. 9:20)

3. General characteristics. They tend to be undersold rather than oversold - same is true of all ages or groups.

- a. Energetic. Both mentally and physically. Don't mark time. Keep challenging.
- b. Imitates. Make Bible characters real. (cf. Esther) Speak of worthy persons who have qualities worth imitating. Cause him to feel the power of Jesus personality. Jesus is a man of Power, Strength, Action, Decision, Fearlessness. (He was not made of steel.)
- c. Imagination. Can dramatize. Can practice being an adult Christian worker. (eg. Rel. census, tract distri., or invitation to the meeting.) (Nehemiah, Zaccheus, Nicodemus, Samaritan woman etc.) Don't spend too much time on these. (Life situations).
- d. Memory keen. Be sure what he commits is the most profitable. (Names, dates, geography and scripture). Adults can too. (Desire, Concentration) Show value now - not for distant future. Goals near, (loves to triumph). Help them to select goals.
- e. Curiosity. Never sneer or scoff at a question. (Eg. "Why didn't God make us so we couldn't do wrong?") Fan the flame of curiosity. Cause them to wonder. (Eg. "Where is God?" "How does baptism wash away sin?")
- f. Reasoning ability. Draws inferences and makes deductions. (Eg. Nadab & Abihu (Lev.10:1-2) God will destroy those who do not obey the Gospel, x has not obeyed, therefore God will destroy him.) Good at puzzles. (20 questions etc.)
- g. This age is beginning to feel spiritual stirrings and to be conscious of sin. By the end of the Junior period some sensitive ones will be confessing Christ - they must be carefully integrated into the actual work program of the church, received as a brother or sister. Just a little slack here can allow the fire to flicker and cause an eventual flame - out.
- h. Important! They are forming a definite concept of the church at this period. Be careful to:
- (1) Avoid denominationalistic outlook.
 - (2) Do not let them think - from the scarcity of male teachers that it is a place for girls and women.
 - (3) Where possible separate girls from boys. Let a woman teach the girls and a man the boys. However this separation should not continue beyond Jr. High.
- i. Other things often overlooked:
- (1). Should be introduced to "origin of Bible", divisions and over all general outline. (Eg. 1189; 929; 260; 31, 101;
- G.H. O.T. N.T. V.S.

23, 144; 7,957)

(2) Diligent readers (rate 100-250).

Need bibles. Will read much; help them in selection of books. Concordance drill.

4. Qualities Juniors admire in their teachers.
- a. Sincerity. Be Godly and be yourself. Juniors are affected by your seriousness and reverence. Do not try to fool them. (See p.81 - Murray). Be natural and at ease.
 - b. Knowledge. "He knows his stuff." He admires proficiency and excellence. He knows when you are not prepared. Do not lean too heavily on a lesson book. He likes men who know and do things.

III. The Textbook: The Bible. Know your textbook. Whole Bible. (Ro. 15:4, I Co. 10:11)

1. Inspired. Not like the painting of Da Vinci, sculpture of Michelangelo, poetry of Tennyson, U.S. constitution, or addresses by Abe Lincoln.
 - a. Not evolutionary production.
 - b. (II Pe. 1:20-21, II Tim. 3:16-17, I Co. 2:13)
 - c. God speaks in scripture. (Ac. 13:27, Re.2:29)
2. Authoritative and restrictive. (De. 12:32, I Co. 4:6, II Jn. 9, Gal. 1:6-9, II Pe. 3:16, Jn. 12:48, Re. 22:18-19)
3. Understandable. (Ep. 3:4, 5:17). Study required. (ex. God's two books; Nature and Revelation)
4. Valuable now. Juniors are not patient. Apply the Bible truths learned to the practice of daily living. Learning the Bible alone is not enough unless translated into action.
5. Interesting. These are real people and incidents, charged with drama. (Raising Jairus' daughter)

IV. The Theme is Christ. (I Co. 2:1-2, II Co. 4:5) Not a milk-sop.

1. Christ the strong: Temple-cleansing, on the sea, before the tomb, on the throne, at the judgment.
2. Christ the controversialist: On the Resurrection, Tax coin, the great Commandment (Mt.22) "The Baptism of John, whence was it?"
3. Christ the gentle: Woman taken in adultery.
4. Christ the Obedient: (Heb. 5:8-9, Ph. 2:5-11). In the garden.
5. Christ the Conqueror of Sin and Death.
 - a. In the wilderness and through life. (He. 2:18, 4:15-16)
 - b. Up from the grave. (He. 2:14-15, I Co. 15:55-57, 20-22)
 - (1) The darkened sun, rent rocks and open graves.
 - (2) With the victors' shout He will return.

6. Christ the savior. (Ac. 4:12). What else could save you?

V. Service is of two kinds. Expression of the two great commands.

1. Practical. (Gal. 6:10, I Jn. 3:17) "Ye did it unto me."

- a. Their age mates at play and at school.
- b. To their parents and family.
- c. To the church per se. (Eg. building, grounds and general beautification.)
- d. To the sick. At homes.
- e. Boxes for orphan homes, and homes for aged.
- f. Sing and etc. for shut ins and old folks - use discretion here.
- g. Read bulletins from mission fields.

Encourage correspondence.

h. Visit or call absentees themselves or with you. You may just take a few at a time.

2. Worship. Teach in depth. (Jn. 4:24)

a. Use your boys for prayer in class. Familiarize them with the prayers of the Bible. Give them a prayer outline. (Address, Praise, Intercession, Supplication, Close.)

b. Show beauty of serving at the table but do not try to initiate this age child.

c. Encourage singing and song leading. Encourage them to get as much of this as they can in school.

d. Scripture reading. Stress meaningful intelligent reading.

e. By all means have them to speak before the class. Teach them simple outlining and public speaking before they learn to be timid.

f. Stir ambition to be teachers, deacons, elders and preachers (even if not full-time)

g. Keep an idea-book.

2. Stress the need for proper equipment. The man with a power-saw, gets more done than the man with a pocket-knife. Needed urgently:

a. Personality - good manners, cheerfulness, easy to get along with.

b. Interest in someone other than self.

c. Willingness to do whatever the Lord wants.

d. Growing Bible knowledge.

e. Confidence. You are not alone. Brag on them.

f. Experience. If at first you do not shake the earth, ~~Keep~~ trying.

VI. Combating doctrinal errors. Be careful about name-calling. (Guy's lack of tact)

1. Make the scriptures that will serve this purpose a part of your regular memorization program. (Mt. 7:21, Ac. 22:16, Lk. 13:3, Ep. 5:19 etc)

2. Pretend you believe some false doctrine and let them convince you.
3. Hold mock debate - Not over 3 min. each. *TO START.*
4. Develop skill with the "sword".
 - (a) Do not misapply scriptures.
 - (b) Teach them to keep context in mind.
 - (c) Indoctrinate!

VII. Social Activities must teach.

1. Make a place for prayer.
2. Learn to change gears easily, *QUICKLY.*

VIII. Don't grow impatient. They're just Juniors.
But someday they may really surprise you.

