

## Effective Teaching

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Are you a teacher of a Sunday school class? What a privilege as well as a responsibility! What a challenge to be at ones best in order to create interest in the Word of God! For twenty years I have been teaching classes varying from the ten-year-olds to the oldest group. There certainly is no easy road to success, but perhaps a few lessons I have learned may prove a blessing to someone.

Begin to prepare early in the week. It is helpful to read the lesson through so one can turn it over in his mind for a day or two before doing further research. Thinking over the whole lesson gives one a truer perspective. It takes time to fully grasp even the real theme of a lesson. After this preliminary reading has been digested, one is ready for further investigation. The use of at least one set of comments other than those of one's own church helps to broaden the view and often reveal spiritual nuggets overlooked by others. The value of this milling over in the mind while one is at his other duties can not be over-emphasized. The Holy Spirit often helps one see some special truth in a new way.

SEEK FOR THE CENTRAL THEME OF THE LESSON AS IT APPEARS TO YOU. Pray about it until some portion of the lesson grips you. This is much the same as a minister prepares a sermon. The most helpful sermons are often those where the servant of God has found a new glimpse of an old truth for himself, then reveals it to his audience with true fervor, for it has become his. It is not just a message for others. Only when it has met your need can one present it to others with great sincerity.

DO NOT BE BOUND RIGIDLY BY THE LESSON AS OUTLINED BY OTHERS. Study and pray until one becomes your own. Use the others as guides, sometimes one will follow it closely, but he can't preach the other fellow's sermon until he has made it his. So many teachers make their teaching uninteresting by failing to prepare and seek divine help in making the lesson their own. Then in order to do anything, they must follow an outline which is cold, formal, and lifeless.

STUDY TO FIT THE LESSON TO THE NEEDS OF YOUR CLASS. One should know something of each student's home circumstances, work and school situations. Be practical, straightforward! You want your pastor to draw the plumbline of the Gospel close enough to your life to enable you to see where you can be more like Christ. The same can be done in the Sunday school class. The Word of God has practical applications for every circumstance of life. Let us make use of them. Should we not keep the lessons close to our lives? Perhaps we often generalize too much, making it easy for students to be "pitchfork" hearers. Prayerfully and tactfully one may aim at reaching some special student for whom he is burdened.

PRAY FOR EACH MEMBER OF YOUR CLASS FREQUENTLY BY NAME. Nothing helps one feel the burden of getting a real message across as does this practice. The teacher is the only pastor some of the students ever hear. If they get the Gospel, it is up to him. After interceding at the Throne of Grace

## SIX ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A GOOD SUNDAY SCHOOL

By Rev. M. T. Cockman

1. REPRESENTATIVE. The real test of a Sunday school is found in its relation to the community in which it exists. A good Sunday school is a group of people of a community, which represents every element, both with regard to class and age. The school which is to stand on the roll of honor is one that represents its constituency.

2. ORGANIZATION. An important requirement of a good school is that it be well organized. But there is no organization that makes success within itself. It takes the efforts of men and women with a vision to put the plans into action to bring results.

3. ORDER. A good school is orderly, with everyone in place at the proper time. But it should not be too orderly—to the extent, that all enthusiasm is repressed.

4. SPIRIT. In every successful Sunday school there is always a peculiar and individual atmosphere—a spirit of loyalty and enthusiasm that unites its members together. This kind of a spirit helps to make progressive Sunday schools.

5. EDUCATIONAL. The Sunday school is set up for a definite work—religious education. The teacher must be Spirit-filled in order to inspire, instruct, and guide. The vital aim of the Sunday school teacher is to get the message of truth to hearts in order to develop character and efficiency.

6. BUILDING CHARACTER. The chief aim of a good Sunday school is not only to see people saved from sin, but to build Christian character that will accomplish something for God and humanity.

—Pilgrim Holiness Advocate.

for each personally, one will teach with a warm heart. This cannot be acquired in a last minute glance at the lesson and a hurried request for divine help to make up for lack of preparation.

MAINTAIN AN ENTHUSIASTIC ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LESSON AND YOUR CLASS. Not every time will one sense special divine help which lifts one out of himself; but one can change the whole class attitude by his own approach. How often teachers kill interest by stating at the beginning of a session that the lesson is hard or not very interesting! To one who has prepared as suggested the lesson can not help but have some interest. We need not find God's Word dry. It is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Let's make it live!

An aid in making it live is TO BE A GOOD STORY TELLER. People of all ages love a story well told. Make the Bible characters real. One does not violate gospel truth by using ones imaginations to enliven character. In most cases more details are told about a character than one often realizes until all the references are checked. They can often be given modern setting in order to make the truths more evident.

A lesson thus fully prepared, taught enthusiastically from a heart filled by the Holy Spirit, burning with a desire to see sinners saved, believers sanctified and God's Word honored will not fall by the wayside. It will bring its reward in due season if we faint not.

—Wesleyan Methodist.

## No Depth of Earth

Mark 4:5

How deep are your roots in God? How securely are you anchored? Are you a victim of heart-shalowness? Are you a surface-saint? Look at the lesson Jesus gives us in the fourth chapter of St. Mark. Some of the soil had no depth of earth. Four things are said of seed which fell into it:

1. It sprang up "immediately."
2. It was scorched when the sun came up.
3. It had no root.
4. It withered away.

Why? Because it had no depth of earth.

A young man professed conversion but could not testify before his schoolmates. The sun scorched him. He had no depth of earth. A girl sought the Lord in the revival meeting but the devil "roared like a lion" and she "withered away." She had no depth of earth. Someone was asked to lead the meeting and promised to do so but didn't show up. They had no depth of earth. A lad was overcome by the pull of sinful pleasures and worldly friends because he "had no depth of earth." The group would come to Sunday school but never showed any interest in prayer meeting. They had no depth of earth. Socials were fun but soulwinning was dull business. "No depth of earth."

And so we might go on tracing this sin of shallowness. It affects both old and young. It is one of the pleasures of our day. Shallow hearts shed no tears over the lost; make no sacrifices for Jesus sake; have no vision for the task; no time for prayer; no appetite for spiritual things. They are often fretful and peevish; touchy and selfish. They lack achieving faith. They put no "push" into the work. They are a "zero" at an altar of prayer.

Why this plague of shallowness? Jesus gave the clue. The seed fell on stony ground. A "stony heart" is a heart that has not truly repented of sin. Feeling of need for the Savior has not been desperate and urgent. "Breaking and melting" must precede "molding and making." A work of grace can go no deeper than the soil of the heart has been broken up.

We need faithful warnings of the wretched lostness of the soul without Christ; more plain Bible teaching concerning the realities of Eternity. People are not thinking what it will mean to be forever and eternally lost. Billy Bray, the great soul winner of a generation ago, had much difficulty in finding peace in the Lord. His soul was in fearful distress. He determined either to find victory in Christ or spend the remainder of his life seeking Him. Have you any such desire to have the witness that you are a child of God? Has your "stony heart" been broken?

Some lives are shallow because they are unwilling to fall into the ground and die. They abide alone. They would rather be in the showcase than in the soil. They want to be praised but not to be planted. The words of our Lord, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it," are a hard saying to these. Only those who are planted together in the likeness of His death can be in the likeness of His resurrection. Are you therefore willing to die to self, to pride, to fleshly desires, to an uncontrollable temper; to a craving for place, for money, for

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