

Effective Teaching

by Wayne Goff

EDITOR'S NOTE: Starting a new quarter of Bible study in a brand new year seems to be a good time to emphasize the qualities of effective teaching. These truths are not mine, but have been established by good teachers. God bless those who put much effort into their teaching!

1. Train Teachers

Putting the words “Bible” or “Sunday” in front of the word “School” does not mean that some mystical occurrence will take place making it unnecessary for the teacher to be prepared (Eavey, *Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers*).

The student has a right to expect his teacher to be prepared in such a manner that the lesson is effective and interesting in content and presentation (*ibid.*)

The unprepared teacher is not only at a disadvantage, but reflects discredit not only upon himself, but upon the cause for which he stands.

Children are not blind. How much respect can they have for a Bible class teacher who comes unprepared or ill prepared, when they sit in secular school five days a week for six hours a day with teachers who obviously have put much time into preparation of their lessons? How much value will a child place on Bible study when their spiritual teacher is ill prepared?

2. Use Scriptural Material

All material **must** be Scriptural. The teacher should give book, chapter and verse for their lessons. They should demonstrate the difference between biblical truths and fairy tales.

The material must be suited to the age of the students. The material must be prepared in such a way as to be interesting. Teachers **must** know their material. Good teachers build a good reference library. Books on the Bible, Bible Lands, Manners & Customs of Bible people, etc. do a great deal to facilitate the teacher in preparing a Bible lesson. Some churches provide an adequate library for their teachers, and this should be used by them.

3. Prepare To Teach

The teacher must plan the material in advance. Don't wait until Saturday night to begin studying. Know the material. Know your class — the interests and personalities of your students — and adapt your lesson to them.

Be enthusiastic! Nothing ruins a class more than a disinterested teacher. How can your class get excited about a lesson when you are not excited?!

Develop a system, or routine in your class. Follow some order, and make sure you class can follow your system. In organizing your material, be thorough yet concise. Nothing can ruin a class faster than a teacher whose material is not organized and thus the class cannot follow your train of thought.

4. Learn To Motivate Your Students

Make your class interesting; interest captures attention. Involve your students in class. Participation means they are paying attention.

Praise the students' efforts. They will not always be right, but you can always commend them for trying and for the various abilities of the students. “Good teaching is characterized by the use of the method that is best for the attainment of the specific goal in mind” (*ibid.*)

Some methods of teaching include (1) story-telling, (2) question & answer, (3) lecture, (4) discussion, (5) projects, and (6) dramatization, or “acting out” a Bible story.

5. Review — Review — Review

The teacher must constantly review their material, making adjustments and/or additions/deletions so that each lesson is a reflection of yourself. Each teacher has their own unique personality and effective manner of teaching. “enemies” (Rom. 5:10). We feel God's love and acceptance, and voluntarily change as we repent.

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