



Teaching Effectively, part 1 of 2—

# Increase the Effectiveness of Your Teaching

by Verda Rubottom

**W**e have made several moves during our married life. Each time we looked for a good church in the area before we made our move. We realized the important influence the church would have on our family. We knew that if our children were strong spiritually, they could handle the challenges of life and would choose the right path in whatever situation they found themselves.

The story of Daniel and the three Hebrew children is an example of what early training can do in the lives of young people (Daniel 1, 3). Daniel and his three friends remained true despite intense pressure to give in to idol worship and to compromise their faith in the land of their captivity. Their courage has been an example to believers down through history. The importance of Christian education in the lives of children cannot be overemphasized. It is more important than ever as we look to the future. Here are 10 suggestions to help you increase the effectiveness of your teaching ministry.

## 1 Understand the value of the teaching ministry in the church.

Spirit-led teaching is essential for the growth and development of all believers in the local church. This is especially true for children who are in the formative years of their lives. While not everyone has the gift of

opportunity to get the training and education we need and to “stir up the gift” we have by using it (2 Timothy 1:6). Our calling as teachers is both a gift and a responsibility. The effectiveness of our teaching depends on the investment we make in developing our teaching gift and preparing for ministry.

## 3 Teach students what the Bible says and how to apply it to their lives.

Children need to know what they believe and why they believe it. There is growing concern that our young people have little knowledge of Scripture or Bible history and how it applies to their daily lives.

In a recent article in *Christianity Today*, Gary M. Burge, professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, shares his concern over the lack of Bible

knowledge of today's Christian young people. For the last four years the Bible and theology department at Wheaton College has studied the biblical and theological literacy of incoming freshmen. Here is a summary of their findings:

When asked to complete a



teaching, everyone can support teachers as they help build the body of Christ through this ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13).

## 2 Develop your teaching gift (2 Timothy 2:15).

This means studying the Bible for ourselves. It means taking advantage of every





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# Evaluate for Effectiveness

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(Continued from part 1.)

## 4 Get to know your students.

When you know your students and establish a relationship with them, your teaching will be more effective. Learn about their interests, their concerns, and aspirations. Learn all you can about the age group you are teaching and teach them in the way they learn best.

Children go through various stages and growth patterns that will affect their behavior. Their spiritual growth, however, may be less visible and cannot be measured on a chart. A wise teacher will look for ways to guide each student toward a closer relationship with God.

## 5 Teach children at their level of understanding.

Children will enjoy learning more when the lesson is neither over their heads nor seems too simple. Presentations must not seem too repetitive or boring to them. Begin by relating the lesson to something with which they are familiar and help them discover for themselves the treasures in God's Word. Whet their appetite with interesting and challenging Bible lessons

that will draw them back week after week. Break down the more difficult words and concepts into simpler terms a child can understand. And remember to make learning more meaningful to children by inviting their participation in learning activities.

## 6 Use a variety of effective teaching methods.

Use the most effective and developmentally appropriate teaching methods for your age group. Use



materials that will capture the interest of your students and will help explain the concepts you are teaching. Don't rely on a single method, but use a variety of methods that help clarify the message. Puppets, games, drama, object lessons, and exciting visualized stories are

just a few methods to consider.

## 7 Have a plan to cover the key doctrines and themes of the Bible.

Know where you're going, and what your students will be learning in the next several years. Use a curriculum with a scope and sequence that covers the main stories of the Bible and the essential doctrines of the church. This will help ensure that children will have a solid foundation for their faith and won't have gaps in their understanding of what the Bible teaches.

## 8 Evaluate the effectiveness of your teaching.

It's not enough to prepare and present a lesson—you need to know what your students are actually learning. You can do this through discussion, Bible review games, creative writing and art projects, puppet and drama skits performed by the children, and by involving your students in ministry. When children are actively involved, you can see more clearly what they are actually learning.

## 9 Be aware of current events and how they affect children.

Keep informed of community events and national trends that

will affect your students in the future. Your teaching will be more relevant as you understand the kinds of pressures children face in their schools, family life, and communities.



**Commit your work  
to the Lord.**

Ephesians 4:7-16 reminds us our gifts come from the Lord for a special purpose, and the Holy Spirit will accom-

plish His work through us “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God.”

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**Questions For Further Study—**

1. What can you learn about each child to make your teaching more effective?
2. What variety of teaching methods do you use? What improvements can be made?
3. Take some time to evaluate the effectiveness of your own teaching. Are you aware of each child’s level of understanding and do you strive to reach each child at that level? Do you have a plan to cover all the key doctrines and themes of the Bible? Are you aware of how current events are affecting your children?