

Method in Bible Teaching

Robert A. Traina

Abstract: This seminal article is re-published material of Dr. Traina's that had only recently been published posthumously in 2019.¹ When preparing to teach the Bible, one ought to consider general and specific aims, how best to structure the lessons, what are the sources and types of questions asked and discussed, as well as consider the how to introduce and illustrate materials. Traina methodically discusses such matters in addition to how to design student exercises with a variety of general and specific aims of the Bible teaching.

Keywords: teaching Scripture, methodical Bible study, pedagogy, lesson planning, use of questions, use of illustrations, areas of application, design of exercises, purpose of Bible teaching

I. Introduction to Method in Bible Teaching—Suppositions and Guiding Principles

In Section One, which formed the introduction to the entire manual, there were presented certain general premises which were to undergird both the discussions of methodical study and teaching. It would be well for the reader, therefore, to review that material in preparation for a better understanding of the forthcoming discussion. As a further means of preparing the reader for comprehending what follows, there will be stated additional suppositions and guiding principles which are

¹ Fredrick J. Long and David R. Bauer, *Method in Teaching Inductive Bible Study—A Practitioner's Handbook: Essays in Honor of Robert A. Traina with His Unpublished Material on the Subject*, GlossaHouse Festschrift Series 2, The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies Monograph Series 1 (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2019), 3–56. Omitted in this article is the thorough initial and sectional outlines of the contents of this material.

more specifically concerned with the matter or teaching the English Bible.² These will now be set forth in summary fashion.

- A. Methodical Bible teaching assumes methodical Bible study. In fact, teaching a passage is essentially the re-creation on behalf of the listeners of the steps followed in one's study. Therefore, the first and major step in the orderly, logical, effective procedure which has as its goal the teaching of the English Bible is the inductive study of the English Bible. The consideration of methodical teaching properly follows the consideration of methodical study.
- B. Generally speaking, the teaching of the Scriptures as well as their study should be inductive. This implies that the teaching procedure should be experimental and should therefore utilize primarily the question and answer or the discussion approach.

It should not be inferred, however, that the inductive lesson must always involve active participation on the part of the student. Such participation is certainly salutary, but sometimes it is virtually impossible. For example, the writer has been asked to teach a class of nearly two hundred men who were gathered in an auditorium whose platform was elevated. In such circumstances it is impractical to use the question and answer or discussion method. However, it is possible to proceed inductively, that is, to examine with the group the particulars of a passage and to draw generalizations on the basis of such a study.

Furthermore, these statements do not imply that the formal lecture or other similar approaches have no proper place in the teaching of English Bible. On the contrary, there are certain aspects of Scriptural study which are most adequately and efficiently presented through the use of the formal lecture. However, even the formal lecturer may at times employ induction in his or her presentation, that is, one may begin with particulars and indicate how the conclusions are founded on those particulars.

² Note that the following discussion is primarily concerned with the teaching of the Scriptures in the vernacular. Its statements, however, should not be construed as a negation of the necessity and value of teaching the Bible in the original languages, just as the section on Bible study does not imply that the Scriptures should never be examined except in the vernacular. There is a definite and indispensable place for both the study and teaching of the Bible in the original. And, in fact, the general inductive principles discussed in this manual may well be utilized in such study and teaching to make them more effective.

It should be remembered that, in the last analysis, there is no such thing as pure induction either in study or teaching, but especially in teaching. Therefore, when the term “inductive” is employed, it really means “relatively inductive.” In fact, even if pure induction were possible, it would still be unwise to use it as the sole basis for teaching, since the most proficient pedagogy involves discreet combination of induction and deduction. For it is impractical to proceed as if there had never been any valid generalizations. There are some generalizations that should be presented without tracing exhaustively the precise way in which they were deduced from a study of the particulars. If this is not done, much time is wasted of the already too brief periods which can be devoted to teaching the Scriptures.

- C. We are not here concerned with the general problem of Christian education, namely, the adaptation of Bible teaching to all the various age groups. The suggestions, which will be made will be applicable primarily to the teaching of those with more mature minds, who are capable of reasoning, engaging in discussion, and responding to questions. There is, of course, the possibility of adjusting the questions to make them suitable to the intellectual capacity of particular groups. Utilizing this principle of adaptation, many have found the question and answer and discussion methods beneficial even with younger minds.
- D. There will be no attempt to exhaust the subject being considered. In fact, this section must of necessity be much briefer than the preceding one on Bible study, not because of the paucity of material, but because of the limitations of space. In view of this, we will concentrate on those facts which are not usually discussed in books on pedagogy and which, at the same time, are peculiarly relevant to the experimental approach to Bible teaching. Even these cannot be fully treated, so that only some of the main factors will be presented, and those very briefly. The bibliography will suggest certain books dealing with the more general phases of teaching procedure as well as others which will discuss further some of the elements presented briefly in this manual.
- E. We will be guided by practical considerations in the following presentation. There will be no attempt to engage in academic or theoretical discussions of the problem at hand.

- F. The pattern employed in the investigation of the several aspects of Scriptural teaching is not a rigid formula. It will entail a general order within which there is room for the variations and adaptations which arise due to individual differences or the necessities of the situation. However, broadly speaking, it will reflect the logical procedure to be followed in achieving the goal of effective Bible teaching.
- G. Some of the factors discussed in this section will inevitably overlap those presented in the section on Bible study. For example, the material on the formulation and use of questions and answers in teaching procedure will be concerned with similar concepts and practices as the material on interpretative questions and answers in Bible study. In fact, the former is and must be an outgrowth of the latter. However, we will attempt to avoid too much duplication by assuming a knowledge and understanding of the subject matter already presented.

II. Aims in Bible Teaching

A. General Aims

There are certain common aims which characterize and guide every lesson on a Biblical passage. These objectives concern two main spheres of activity: 1. the realm of mental activity; and 2. the realm of spiritual activity.

1. In the Realm of Mental Activity

- a. Concerning content—It should be the aim of every Bible lesson, insofar as is possible, to enable the student to master the content of the particular Scriptural unit. This involves more than being able to repeat verbatim Biblical language, or to analyze the form of Biblical portions. It ultimately includes a knowledge of the profound meaning and significance and the widespread implications of Scriptural statements. The student should be taken behind the veil of form and language into the sanctuary itself, where he or she will meet face to face the ideas and thoughts of Biblical writers and characters. For only then will she or he truly master the contents of the English Bible.
- b. Concerning method—Edward Thring, Headmaster of the Uppingham School from 1853–1889, once remarked in an

address to teachers: “The swallowing system is all wrong... However good the food, the full belly is not good if the exercise and the strength and the skillful use of the strength is not to be the outcome of feeding. Your business is to train athletes, not to fatten geese.” These incisive statements suggest that the teacher should aim at more than conveying to the listener the content of the Scriptures. He or she has the solemn obligation and duty to instruct students concerning the ways which they themselves may utilize the knowledge gained through study, as well as the means by which they may secure more knowledge. In other words, he or she should train students to be methodical in order that they may know how to employ and obtain knowledge for themselves. In fact, it may be added that students should also be trained to train others to acquire and use knowledge for themselves. To summarize, the teacher of English Bible should not only lead those instructed to a mastery of the content of Scriptures, but he or she should also develop in them methodicalness in Bible study and teaching if he or she is to realize his or her ultimate objective.

There are two excellent ways of accomplishing this final and most important goal. First, the teacher may reveal how he or she arrived at certain conclusions by indicating the exact procedure followed, as well as the discoveries made in following that procedure. When the teacher, who is also methodical, retraces the steps which guided him or her in their study, he or she thereby instructs students in methodical Bible study. Second, he or she can make the students conscious of the techniques being utilized, both in regard to study and teaching. He or she can disclose the “why” of the course being followed in order that, understanding the reasons and purposes for it, the students may more intelligently be able to follow it themselves and instruct others to follow it. Edward Thring closes the address mentioned above with these remarks: “A man is not made a fisherman by buying fish at a fishmonger’s, neither is the fishmonger a dealer in the art of catching fish. Fish ready caught and bought, do not make a fisherman.... Take the bandage off the eyes. Never fly hooded hawks.”

2. In the Realm of Spiritual Activity

a. Personal Improvement

One of the main aims of Bible teaching should be the enhancement of the spiritual life of the listener. Unless the individual emerges from the study of the Scriptures spiritually a better person than when he or she began the study, the Bible lesson has not accomplished one of its most crucial objectives.

b. Social Improvement

The further aim of Bible study is to motivate hearers to become effective witnesses to that which they have discovered. In order to accomplish this, the present-day relevance of the material being studied should be made clear and forceful by the teacher. Further, the lesson should be conducted in such a spirit and manner that students will be anxious to teach it to others. Someone has described the aim of teachers in these words: “To interest and instruct is not enough; we must thrill.” When this objective is realized, students will go forth to sow the seed and, thus, become instrumental in the betterment of their fellow people.

B. Specific Aims

Besides these general goals in Scriptural teaching, there are some concrete factors that must be considered in the formulation and use of specific aims for a particular lesson.

1. The Basis for Specific Aims

It is axiomatic that the aim of an individual lesson should correspond with the aim or theme of the Biblical portion being considered in it. Unless this holds true, the passage will need to be distorted to fit the lesson, or the lesson will need to be changed to suit the passage. It is only as the objective of the Biblical unit and the lesson coincide that harmonious agreement will result.

If this principle is valid, then the goal of a lesson should be adapted to the goal of the passage, rather than the passage to the goal of the lesson. This is a legitimate procedure even if one begins with a topic or a problem which one would like to

consider. For a particular part of the Scriptures should be chosen for study only if its topic or problem corresponds with that in the mind of the teacher; a particular subject or question should not be forced upon a unit of Biblical material.

To put it another way, one of the great temptations in Bible teaching is to make a secondary or incidental idea within a portion the major aim of the lesson. When this occurs, an insurmountable discrepancy will appear between the unit of Scriptural material and the lesson itself. This ought carefully to be avoided by making certain that the primary objective or the lesson accords with the primary objective of the passage.

2. The Main Characteristics of Specific Aims

- a. They should be relevant and suited to the needs, problems, capabilities, and interests of the group being taught.
- b. They should be concrete and precise. It is a wise practice to write them out in full.
- c. They may be and probably will be manifold. If so, a certain objective should predominate, and the others be made subservient. A teacher should not accomplish too many things in one lesson.

3. The Function of Specific Aims

If an aim means anything, it represents the end toward which the lesson should move and for which every individual part of the lesson exists. Thus, the objective becomes the norm, the standard by which the necessity and worth of the particular aspects of the lesson should be judged. The teacher should therefore ask himself regarding each phase of the lesson, "Does this specific part contribute anything to the accomplishment of my goal? If so, what precisely is its contribution and how is it realized?" If the answer to the first question is negative, then the part being considered should be eliminated from the lesson. If the answer is affirmative, it should be conceived of and treated in such a manner that its contribution to the goal of the lesson is actually and effectively accomplished.³

³ What is true of specific aims in regard to their function is also true of general aims.

C. Exercise on Aims

State fully the aims of lessons based on the following passages: Matthew 10, Mark 1:14–45, Mark 13, John 1:1–18, John 4:1–42, John 9–10, John 11, John 14, Acts 2, and Acts 16. In so doing, utilize the principles set forth in the preceding discussion.

III. Lesson Structure and Development in Bible Teaching

One of the most crucial steps in lesson preparation and execution involves the decision regarding the general structure and development of the lesson. For if one's judgment in this connection is sound and valid, the remainder of the phases of preparation and execution will be greatly simplified. If, on the other hand, a wrong conclusion is drawn at this point, no matter what else is done, the lesson is liable to fail in its effectiveness.

A. General Determinants of Lesson Structure and Development

There are two primary factors which guide the structure and development of a lesson: 1. the nature and structure of the passage being taught; and 2. principles of sound pedagogy. These two general elements will be described briefly at this point.

1. Nature and Structure of the Passage

The structure of the lesson plan should correspond in a general way with the arrangement of the passage being examined. If, for example, a unit of Biblical material is “so constructed that an understanding of the first part of the unit is essential for a comprehension of the later points, then it is imperative that the lesson plan be so conceived as to allow for a study of the first part preceding a study of the other parts. Romans 1:18–32 is an example of such a passage. If, on the other hand, the converse is true, then the lesson plan should take this fact into account and begin by an examination of the later parts of the unit. The book of Joshua or the Gospel by John affords an illustration of a passage which may be considered as belonging to this latter category. In these and other ways the composition of a portion of Scripture will be an important factor in determining the structure and development of the lesson based upon it.

2. Principles of Sound Pedagogy

The teacher must not only be guided by the arrangement of the unit being examined, but also by sound pedagogical principles if his or her lesson is to be planned properly. That is, he or she should also be concerned with how best to convey to the class or enable the class to discover what a Biblical writer is saying if his or her teaching is to be effective. Although this factor is closely related to the preceding one, it contains a different element. For because of it, a teacher may sometimes, for example, begin in the middle of a book instead of at its beginning, in spite of the fact that its composition does not demand it. In order better to teach Genesis, for instance, one may commence with a study of the Abraham narrative instead of the creation account. This he or she may do not because the structure of the book makes it necessary, but because of sound pedagogical principles, since Genesis 1 raises so many problems in the mind of the modern student that it is difficult to examine it objectively as an integral part of the book of Genesis without first investigating other units of the book. In this and other ways, considering effective teaching procedure determines lesson structure, as well as the arrangement of the passage.⁴

We shall now see how these two general factors operate more specifically, in connection with decisions concerning the framework and development of a lesson.

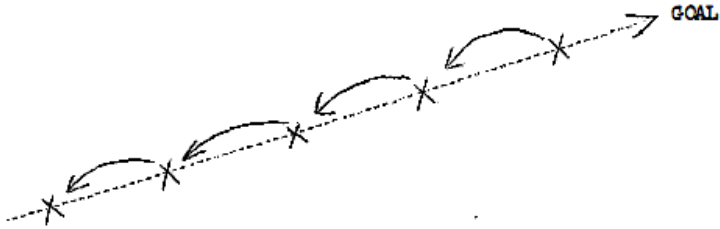
B. Specific Kinds of Lesson Structure and Development

There are two primary ways of classifying the particular types of lesson structure and development: 1. logical or topical, which is the basic category; 2. structural or interpretative, which is more secondary in nature.

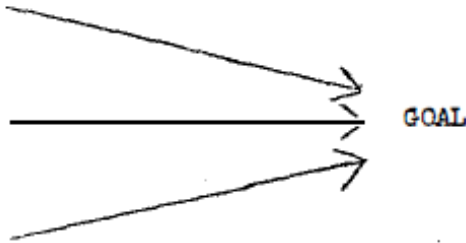
1. Logical or Topical Development

The logical type at structure involves the steady progression of the teaching procedure from beginning to end, with each part successively building upon that which precedes until the goal is finally reached. It may be diagrammed thus:

⁴ Note that the principles of structure and development may involve a series of lessons as well as an individual lesson.



The topical kind of composition entails the consideration of parallel aspects or phases of one idea, the accumulation of which constitutes the realization of the aim of the lesson. It thus involves the approaching of one thing from various directions. It may be pictorialized in this manner:



Which of these types of development is employed depends upon the nature of the passage being taught. If the Scriptural unit is logical in character, such as Romans 6:1–7:6 or Romans 8, then the logical kind of lesson arrangement is most valid. A topical treatment of such a passage would probably be misleading as an initial approach. If, on the other hand, the portion is topical in nature, such as John 3:1–21 or Mark 4:35–5:43, then the topical type of development is more legitimate.⁵

⁵ As a matter of fact, it should be noted that no passage is purely topical, because the various aspects are always logically interrelated to some extent. However, some units of Scripture are more topical than logical. It is these which we are classifying as topical. Incidentally, these facts apply to the structure of lessons as well.

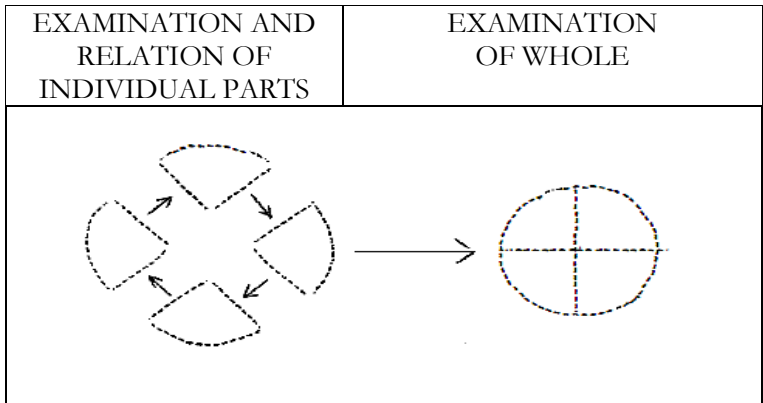
A third type of structure was not mentioned in this material because it is actually a variation of the other two and therefore subordinate to them. It may be called the circular kind of arrangement. This arrangement is a cross between topical and logical framework, although it is usually utilized in conjunction with the logical approach. It involves beginning with the theme or thesis, then following with a substantiation of it, and finally concluding at the same place at which the teaching procedure commenced. The lesson thus returns to the point of its beginning. This type of development is frequently valid in connection with those

2. Interpretative or Structural Development⁶

There is a further and secondary qualification as to the method of developing a Bible lesson. A logical or a topical lesson may be arranged either interpretatively or structurally, although frequently the logical passage lends itself to interpretative development, whereas a topical unit is often conducive to the structural kind of lesson arrangement.

a. Interpretative or Synthetical Development (parts-whole)

This type of lesson organization involves beginning at the beginning or the passage, and moving consecutively from part to part until the whole has been studied. If the passage as-a-whole is conceived as a circle, and each part of the passage as a segment of the circle, this kind of lesson structure may be diagrammed thus:⁷



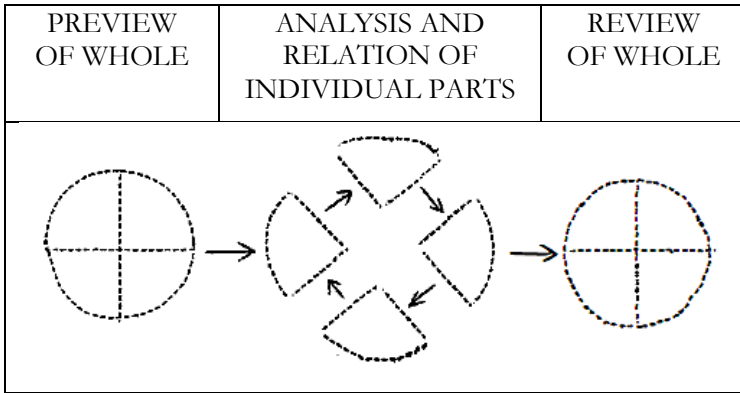
passages whose composition is based primarily on the law of particularization, such as Psalm 23 and Romans 1:18–32. However, the circular approach must not be used in such a way as to make the lesson deductive by dogmatically stating at the outset that which ought to await the conclusion of the lesson.

⁶ These terms are borrowed from M. J. Adler’s *How to Read a Book*, although they are used in a different connection in his discussion. Furthermore, the term “interpretative” is used differently here from the way in which it was employed in the section on Bible study in this manual.

⁷ The image of the circle is not a perfect one, since it does not adequately indicate progression. However, it is utilized because it does represent the idea of wholeness, which is primary in the present discussion. The circle is not employed here to represent solely the circular approach, although it does reflect to some extent such an approach.

b. Structural or Analytical Development (whole-parts-whole)

The structural approach, on the contrary, commences with a survey or preview of the whole, proceeds to an analysis of the parts, and concludes with an examination of the whole.⁸ It may be pictured thus:



In view of these two means of classifying lesson construction, namely, logical or topical and interpretative or structural, there are four major types of organization: the logical interpretative and the logical structural arrangements, and the topical interpretative and the topical structural kinds of composition. To put it another way, a lesson which is so constructed that there is a progressive study of dependent parts until the goal is finally achieved (logical approach) may be conducted by beginning with the first step and moving a step at a time until the whole has been studied (interpretative approach), or it may commence with a preview of the whole, proceed to an analysis of the consecutive parts, and culminate with a re-view of the whole (structural approach). The same two alternatives are possible in connection with the topical lesson. It may start with a detailed examination of each unit or topic or, on the other hand, with a preview of the whole.⁹

⁸ The implication of this analysis of lesson arrangement is that every teaching approach should conclude with a view of the whole, whether the lesson be interpretative or structural.

⁹ The kind of preview of which we have been speaking is limited to the particular unit which is being studied. However, it is sometimes essential to preview the structure of the larger context in which such a unit is found in order to obtain the proper background

c. Concrete Bases for Deciding the Type of Lesson Structure and Development

As was suggested, whether a lesson is arranged topically or logically depends primarily on whether the passage itself is topical or logical in nature. However, the decision as to whether the lesson should be structural or interpretative depends on a number of factors which concern both the nature of the unit and principles of sound pedagogy. They may be summarized in terms of the following three questions: first, “Is a preview of the passage necessary for the understanding or interpretation of its individual parts?”; second, “Is a preview of the Biblical unit essential for purposes of orientation or in order to make the lesson intelligible?”; and third, “Is a preview of the passage possible without detracting substantially from the body of the lesson?” Let us consider each of these questions separately.

The first question involves exegetical factors which in turn are dependent upon the character of the Scriptural unit being examined. Certain passages are so constructed, that is, their elements are so interrelated, that a preview of the whole is virtually indispensable for the exposition of their individual parts. James 1 may well be classified in this category, for the interpretation of the paragraphs in verses 2–15 is contingent upon noting the fact that the term “trials” appears both in verse 2 and in verse 12. In order to observe the recurrence of this term, one needs to preview the whole. Simply to begin at the beginning might not provide the basis for expounding the individual statements and paragraphs.¹⁰⁷

The second question, namely, “Is a preview essential for purposes of orientation or so as to make the lesson

for its study. For example, the effective teaching of John 13:1–35 may well necessitate a preview of the arrangement of the entire book of John.

¹⁰ In a real sense the explanation of every part of a passage depends upon that of every other part of the passage. This is especially true in terms of full interpretation. It is for this reason, for example, that the suggestion is made to close each Bible lesson with a review of the whole. However, in certain instances it is possible to engage in the basic exposition of a part of a Biblical unit without first exegeting the other parts, whereas in other cases this is not possible. It is such a distinction which forms one of the grounds for determining whether a lesson should be interpretative or structural.

intelligible?” involves principles of sound pedagogy. At times a preview of the passage as-a-whole will make a substantial contribution toward orienting the class to the lesson or clarifying the arrangement or the lesson, thus making its structure understandable to the students. Such a procedure may supply, for example, an insight into the reason why the lesson is constructed as it is, an insight which might otherwise be absent, thus resulting in a failure to comprehend its development. For instance, John 3:1–21 may be taught from the standpoint of the various characteristics set forth there regarding the new birth. But unless there is a preview of the whole which establishes the fact that the new birth is the Principle theme of that unit, students may not discern why such an idea was chosen as the organizing center of the lesson. Students may well conclude that the choice was an arbitrary one on the part of the teacher, and thus miss in a sense the main point of the lesson. A preview of the whole may therefore afford the listener with the necessary data in order to grasp the grounds for the particular teaching procedure which is being followed.

If the answer to both of these questions is “no,” then the approach to the lesson should be interpretative. If, on the other hand, the answer to either of these two queries is “yes,” then the third question should be seriously considered, namely, “Is a preview possible without detracting appreciably from the body of the lesson?”¹¹ If the answer to this question is “yes,” then the structural arrangement should be employed. This may occur in relation to a passage which has only surface structure or which has surface structure as well as underlying structure. However, it may be that a particular passage has only an underlying structure, which is so complex that to preview it would necessitate the minute examination of one or more of its parts, thus detracting from the core of the lesson. What may happen in the treatment of such a unit is that by the time its composition is discovered, a substantial part of it will have been studied, thus leaving little to be done in the rest of the lesson. In such an instance one must decide which is the lesser of two evils, that is, whether it is least detrimental

¹¹ Incidentally, if the answer to the first question is “yes,” the answer to the second question will also usually be “yes.”

to survey the whole in order to make possible the interpretation of individual parts or the better understanding of the lesson development, or to forego these in order to avoid teaching the lesson proper, so to speak, before it begins. This decision must be determined on the basis of the character of the particular passage being studied and the nature of the group being taught.¹² No general principle may determine the answer, unless it be that it is usually disastrous to a lesson to detract too much from its body in order to introduce it.

It should be noted that it is especially helpful to preview the composition of the passage as-a-whole when a large body of material is being studied. And fortunately, few problems arise in surveying the arrangement of a long passage if it is done properly. Therefore, it is usually safe to assume that if a lengthy unit is being taught, the lesson should have a structural development.

All of this discussion emphasizes one outstanding idea: The teacher should not use a certain kind of structure in a particular lesson simply because he or she has seen others use that type of arrangement or because he or she has used it in other connections. Such a decision should not be made cursorily or out of habit, but rather on the basis of careful thought and evaluation in connection with each individual lesson. Even if the aforementioned criteria are not used by teachers, they should develop their own standards and employ them diligently. At times the teacher will unquestionably find it difficult to choose between the logical and topical or the structural and interpretive approaches because of the lack of decisive evidence; however, this should not deter him or her from the obligation and task to pass judgment regarding these matters.

D. Means of Previewing the Composition of a Passage in Lesson Structure and Development

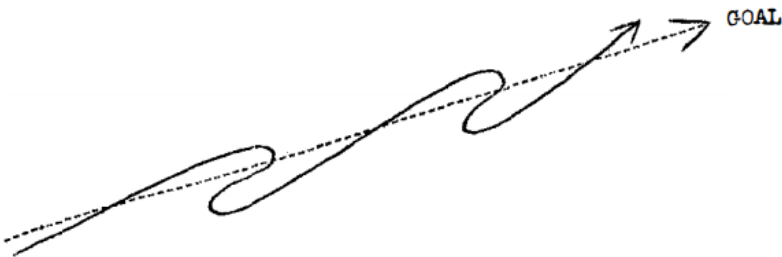
¹² It has been previously stated that there are two kinds of structure, namely, surface structure and underlying structure. The first is readily observed because it lies near the surface, and it therefore lends itself to the preview or survey approach. On the other hand, underlying structure lies beneath the surface and is not so readily detected. It therefore is not too susceptible to a preview or survey.

If one decides that the lesson should be arranged structurally, there are two basic means which one may employ in order to preview a passage. First, the teacher himself may point out the structural elements of the unit and suggest how these elements indicate its composition. Second, the instructor may ask the students certain structural questions whose answers will result in the discovery of the arrangement of the passage. Both of these approaches are legitimate and which of them is employed depends on such factors as the time element, since the first is usually the shorter procedure. In no case, however, should the teacher dogmatically and arbitrarily disclose the composition of a Scriptural unit without substantiating his or her statements by reference to the particulars of the passage.¹³

E. Some Common Errors in Lesson Structure and Development

In order to indicate clearly some of the frequent fallacies which occur in the arrangement of Bible lessons, diagrams will be used to pictorialize them. In these diagrams the ideal lesson structure will be represented by the logical type of approach and will be indicated by a broken line. However, those same errors are relevant to the topical kind of arrangement. The reader may draw comparable diagrams showing how these fallacies are applicable to topical lesson structure.

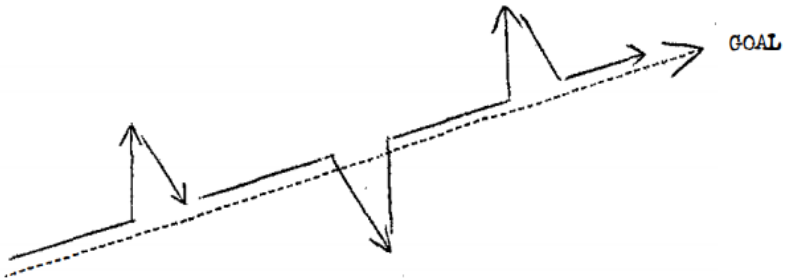
1. The Backtrack Approach—the repetition of that which has already been treated.



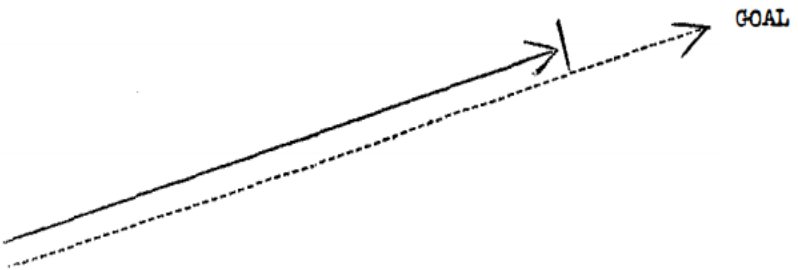
2. The Detour Approach—the taking of periodic excursions from the main road of the lesson.

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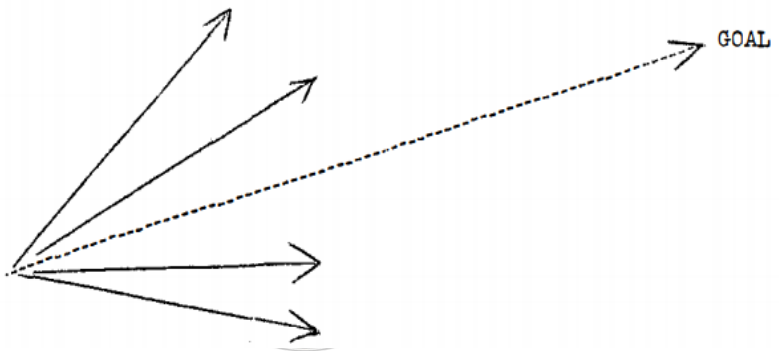
¹³ In certain instances the teacher will find it necessary to preview the structure of certain parts of a passage. Such a preview does not come under the category of structural development. Furthermore, a preview of a passage is not to be considered as an introduction, at least generally speaking. The preview, when it is done, is therefore an integral part of the body of the lesson.



3. The Unfinished Approach—the failure to bring the lesson to its proper and natural conclusion.

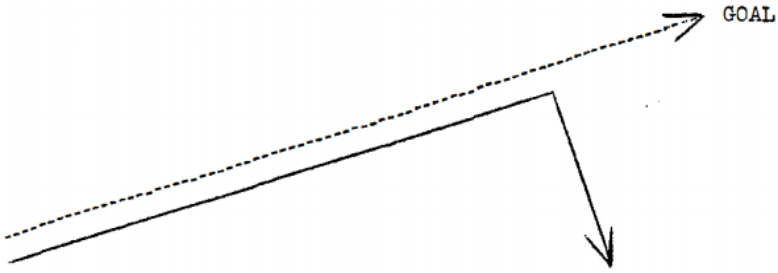


4. The Buckshot Approach—the approach to a passage which is not guided by one unifying idea but rather takes various courses in various directions.

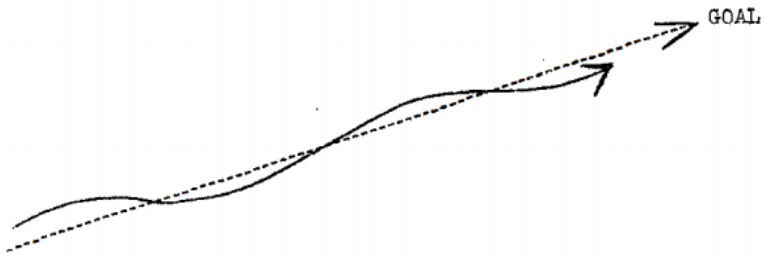


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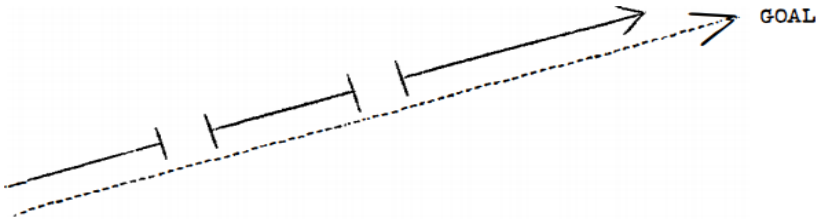
5. The Deviating Approach—the sudden and permanent digression from the course of the lesson.



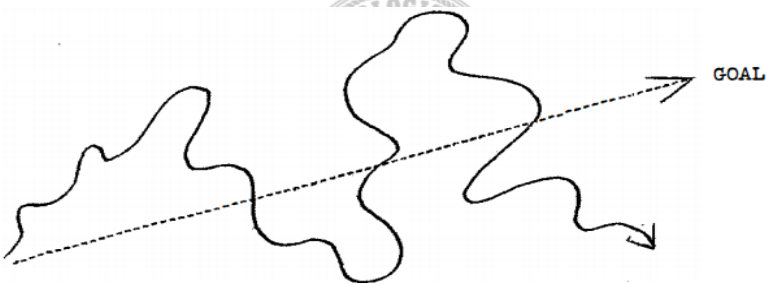
6. The Swerving Approach—the sort of development which is near the main path of the lesson without quite being on it.



7. The Non-Transitional Approach—the failure to connect or relate the various parts of the lesson.



8. The Wandering Approach—the aimless rambling from place to place.



These are merely some of the common errors in lesson development. Readers may be able to add to this list others which they may have observed.

F. Miscellaneous Principles for Proper Lesson Structure and Development

From these fallacious kinds of lesson arrangement, we may learn certain principles which one should follow in order to achieve the proper arrangement of Biblical lessons. To these we shall add other principles which come to mind and which have not yet been stated.

1. The lesson should move steadily toward its objective. Once a certain phase of the lesson has been completed, it should not be repeated. The only exceptions to this principle are those factors which demand repetition for the sake of emphasis.
2. Only that which will contribute to the progress of the lesson should be included in it. All irrelevant parts should be excluded from the teaching procedure. Further, the students should be made conscious of the exact means in which each part or the lesson contributes to its development.
3. The lesson should not be left in mid-air, but should be carried to its logical culmination.
4. If at all possible, the teaching plan should be organized and unified around one main idea, and nothing should be allowed to cause one to veer away from that one idea. This does not imply that there will be no elasticity or flexibility to the lesson, for if it were rigid it would be deductive rather than experimental. However, the character of that which is elastic is that it returns to its initial shape. This should be true of the teaching procedure. The lesson should give the impression of wholeness, oneness, integrality.
5. The teacher should be certain that he or she is squarely on the main road of the lesson and not just missing it. There is the constant danger of being so near and yet so far in relation to the main course of the lesson.
6. It is of supreme importance to develop adequate, clear, and smooth transitions between the different parts of the lesson. Transitions often make or break a lesson. It is therefore wise to prepare them carefully beforehand.
7. The lesson should move steadily toward a climax, a high point which stands out above all others. If the passage being studied is

climactic, the climax of the lesson ought to coincide with the climax or the unit.

8. The plan for developing the lesson together with its basis and significance should be made clear to the class wherever possible and necessary.
9. The latter part of a lesson should be in harmony with the former part, and their agreement should be made clear to the class. For example, if the teaching plan begins with the statement of a problem, it should close with reference to the solution of that problem. In a word, a lesson should have unity in its development.
10. The conclusion should be the natural and logical outgrowth of the rest of the lesson and not something which is an afterthought and superimposed on the rest of the material.
11. Avoid being anti-climactic in the development of a lesson.
12. A teaching plan should have a definite terminus, which is approached gradually but when reached brings the lesson to a precise and prompt close. Rambling on when the lesson should have ended may be disastrous to its overall impression.
13. The progress of a lesson should be as steady as possible. It should not be extremely slow at certain times and extremely rapid at others.

G. Exercise on Lesson Structure and Development

Study the following passages: Mark 2:1–3:6, Mark 4:35–5:43, John 6, John 13:1–35, John 15, Romans 3:21–31, Romans 5, Romans 9–11, 1 Corinthians 12:31–14:1, Hebrews 11, James 1, James 3:1–4:12, 1 John 1:5–26. Would you develop a lesson on each of these particular passages topically or logically, structurally or interpretatively? In answering this question, consider the principles and suggestions found in the preceding pages. Give the exact reasons for your answers. If there is doubt in any case, state the pros and cons for the various possibilities, weigh the evidence, and make your decision.

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IV. Formulation and Use of Questions and Answers in Bible Teaching

A. Sources of Questions

1. General Source

Broadly speaking, the source of the questions used in Scriptural teaching is the group of questions which are raised in connection with the study of a Biblical unit and which have already been discussed. This fact is of supreme importance and indicates the great dependence of effective teaching upon thorough and efficient study. For unless one is able in the first place to suggest those questions whose answers result in valid and adequate interpretation, evaluation, application, and correlation, one will not be capable of asking those questions in the teaching process whose replies will enable the class to receive an insight into the meaning, significance, and value of a portion of Scripture.

2. Specific Sources

Having said this, it may be helpful to examine more particularly the sources of questions to be used in Bible teaching. The questions employed in a lesson originate from two primary areas.

a. Objective Sources

Objectively, the questions used in Bible teaching are based on two main factors, namely, the character of the unit being taught and the character of the group being taught.

(1) The Nature of the Passage

The questions to be utilized in the lesson derive from the nature and content of the passage itself, that is, its terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere. This fact has been stressed in other connections. What is even more important to note in this regard is that the questions for teaching must originate from those aspects or a particular unit which are the most significant for its proper understanding. For it is obvious, for example, that the teacher cannot employ in toto the list of interpretive questions which were framed during the process of study. He or she must therefore select those questions which are most crucial and strategic to use in the teaching procedure. And what these questions will be is dependent upon that which is central and determinative in the passage. Thus, in more ways than

one the character of the portion being taught dictates the questions which should be asked in its teaching.

(2) The Nature of the Class

There is, however, another objective factor which forms the basis for the questions used in the Bible lesson, namely, the needs, problems, interests, and capabilities of the group being taught. There should be no doubt as to the importance of this factor. It not only determines the phrasing of particular questions, but it also accounts in a real way for the kind and content of the questions employed. The teacher should, therefore, be alert to the nature of the group being led if the questions he or she utilizes are to be as effective as possible.

b. Subjective Source—The Nature of the Mind

Subjectively, the questions employed in the teaching procedure spring from the inquisitive, curious, wondering mind. Although this fact has already been stated in the discussion of interpretative questions in methodical study, it is well worth iterating. The prerequisite of teaching others is the kind of mentality which is not satisfied with words or appearances or mechanics or commonplace explanations or trite clichés, but which, on the contrary, pries under the surface of things and raises insistent queries regarding their profound and underlying meaning and significance. This type of mind is in the first place essential for incisive Bible study; it is even more indispensable for Bible teaching, since the teacher takes upon himself the responsibility of leading others to an understanding of the Scriptures. Not only must the mind be inquisitive regarding the passage being studied, but also, in a legitimate way, regarding the nature of the class being taught. Teachers should be concerned with discovering the needs, problems, interests, and abilities of their classes; and they should be concerned as to the bearing of those discoveries upon the construction of their lessons and especially the questions employed. For unless there exists such an interest on the part of teachers, their lessons and questions may have serious deficiencies.

B. General Purpose of Questions

1. In Regard to the Students

- a. To enable students to learn how much or how little they have discovered concerning passages of Scripture.
- b. To show students the great potentialities inherent in Bible study.
- c. To improve the students' knowledge of the content, meaning, and implications of Scriptural units, which may sometimes entail the correction of misconceptions or the emphasizing of certain essentials.
- d. To develop initiative in students by enabling them to discover the latent capacities which reside in their own minds and indicating the ways in which they may employ them.
- e. To foster in students the power of clear thinking and self-expression.
- f. To aid students in seeing the interrelatedness of truth.
- g. To give students the opportunity to contribute to the lesson.
- h. All of this to enable each student to develop into an independent and effective Bible scholar and teacher, with all the implications attached to these activities.

2. In Regard to the Teacher

- a. To make possible vital contact between teacher and student.
- b. To show the teacher how much students have learned and how far they have developed, that he or she may begin where the students are and lead them to where they ought to be.

3. In Regard to the Passage—to bring the mind into contact with the thought and aim of the biblical author(s) and the meaning and contemporary significance of their words.

4. In Regard to Lesson Development—to make a substantial contribution to the on-going movement of the lesson so that it may attain its goal.

C. Kinds of Questions

There are several ways of classifying the various types of questions. We shall organize them in four categories: 1. in terms of their

importance; 2. in terms of their scope and concreteness; 3. in terms of the effectiveness and order; and 4. in terms of their precise aims.¹⁴

1. In Terms of Their Importance—Key and Subsidiary

The questions of any one lesson are not all of equal significance. Some will be more important and others will be less important. The questioner should make it a point to determine in connection with the whole lesson what the key question or questions should be, and what supporting or subsidiary questions should be employed in order to realize the answers to the key questions. If at all possible, the lesson should be organized around one or a few crucial questions whose replies constitute the substance of the lesson. All other queries should serve to uphold and fulfil those strategic questions.

The key question or questions should be based upon the principle elements of the passage being studied. For example, Hebrews 11 consists primarily of an opening description of faith followed by the particular outworkings and results of such faith in the lives of specific persons, together with the reasons for the organic relation between faith and its effects. In view of this, a lesson built on Hebrews 11 might embody these key questions: “What is meant by faith, what were its results in each instance, and wherein or why did such faith have such results?” Similarly, Isaiah 55 is essentially a description of God’s merciful offer of pardon to Israel. The strategic question may therefore be stated thus: “What are the major characteristics of God’s mercy, and what are their meaning and implications?” All other questions employed in the lessons on those passages may well have as their function the answering of those crucial questions.

It is not to be inferred, however, that the key question or questions are to be stated explicitly at the outset of every lesson, for this is not the case. In some instances, it will undoubtedly be helpful to express the central problem at the beginning, but in others it would be impractical to do so. When a lesson is developed structurally, the former approach will probably be valid; if it is arranged interpretatively, the latter procedure will probably be suitable. However, the main point is that the teacher should have in his or

¹⁴ To be sure, these classifications are interrelated.

her own mind a certain crucial question or questions which will form the core of the lesson and serve to make it a unified whole.

2. In Terms of Their Scope and Concreteness— General and Specific

The distinction between general and specific questions may involve either of the two following factors: a. scope, and b. concreteness. In the first instance, a question may be general because it is broad, or it may be specific because it is narrow and deals with one or more particulars. For example, the question “What attributes of God are set forth in the Abraham narrative?” is general because of its breadth, whereas the question “What Divine attributes are set forth in Genesis 12:1–3?” is specific because it narrows the area to a certain few verses. On the other hand, a question may be general because it lacks concreteness. For instance, the general question “What is the atmosphere of Romans 9–11?” may be made specific by asking, “What is the controlling attitude of Paul as found in Romans 9:1–5?”

It should be remembered that “general” and “specific” are often relative terms, and that therefore there are degrees of generality and specification. Some questions may be more specific than others on the one hand, and more general than others on the other hand.

The teacher should make it a point to ask both general and specific questions; for the more general questions develop initiative on the part of the student, whereas the more specific questions enable the teacher to provide direction to the student and to the lesson, as well as help to conserve time.¹⁵

3. In Terms of Their Effectiveness and Order—Primary and Secondary or Auxiliary

It is difficult to find a descriptive title suitable for this category because it involves an admixture of several factors. However, it is an essential classification, since it is made necessary by important practical considerations. For every teacher who has employed questions knows that many questions are never answered in their initial or primary form. This may be due to one or more of several

¹⁵ Key questions are usually the most general, whereas subsidiary questions frequently move toward specification.

reasons: a. students may lack insight into the meaning or significance of the question; b. they may have failed to follow the necessary steps of logic leading to the question; and c. they may have neglected to study the lesson. Other reasons may make certain questions ineffective; but, whatever the cause, the teacher finds it necessary to use auxiliary or secondary questions in order to lead the student to discover the answer to the first or primary questions.

Secondary questions may often involve framing the primary questions in different words. However, at times it is necessary to make the secondary or auxiliary question more concrete. For example, one may ask, “What is the structure of Romans 1:18–32?” If the student fails to answer this primary question, which is general in nature, one may inquire, “What is the significance of the ‘therefore’ of verse 24 for discovering the arrangement of this segment?” In other instances, when the primary question assumes several logical deductions, it is necessary to formulate a series of secondary questions whose intent is to trace those steps in order that the student may understand the initial question. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of secondary questions in inductive Bible teaching. More often than not the effectiveness of a lesson will depend upon them. It is therefore helpful for the teacher to prepare himself for secondary questions by practicing formulating them, as well as by having such a thorough knowledge of the subject matter that he or she can approach it from various directions.¹⁶

4. In Terms of Their Precise Aims

The key and subsidiary, general and specific, as well as primary and secondary questions used in the teaching procedure may be profitably classified in terms of their specific purposes. The various types of questions in this regard will now be enumerated, described, and illustrated. The close relationship between questions in study and teaching will be noted.¹⁷

¹⁶ It may be helpful to note that both key and subsidiary questions are primary in the sense in which we are using the term here, since they may be planned beforehand.

¹⁷ Although some of the questions listed in this connection are identical to those found in the section on study, different names will frequently be used for them, not only for the sake of variety, but also because of a slightly different emphasis due to their relation to teaching procedure.

a. The Factual Question

This kind of question is sometimes called “informational.” It corresponds to the observational question utilized in methodical study, namely, “What is here?” This, of course, is a general question which may and should be adapted in view of the specific portion being taught. For example, in connection with the study of John 17, the factual question may be expressed thus: “What are the petitions made by Jesus and what bases does He give for them? “The answers to such questions frequently stop short of profound interpretation. Factual questions thus have the function of laying the foundation for succeeding and more significant questions by calling attention to the actual facts or statements of the passage.

b. The Elucidative Question

After a fact has been noted, one may ask the type of question which attempts to render intelligible its meaning. This question therefore corresponds to the definitive or explanatory question in study. For example, when the aforementioned factual question is answered by noting Jesus’s petition that His disciples be consecrated in the truth (John 17:17), the following question may be asked: “What exactly is meant by this petition?”

c. The Analytical Question

Webster defines analysis in this way: “To decompose or resolve into elements or constituent parts; to separate mentally the parts of a whole so as to reveal their relation to it and to one another.”¹⁸ In view of this definition, it is apparent that the analytical question is a structural question and, in a real sense, an observational question. However, it is the type of inquiry which usually presupposes a certain amount of interpretation. This fact was called to the reader’s attention in the section on interpretative questions, where the analytical question was previously mentioned. This kind of query has as its intent the discovery as to whether a particular part involves basis, motivation, reason, purpose, etc.

¹⁸ Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth Edition.

d. The Heuristic Question

This type of inquiry follows logically on the heels of the elucidative and analytical questions. The term “heuristic” is derived from the Greek word *heuriskō*, which means “to search or to find by careful scrutiny.” The heuristic question is therefore a search question and is commonly called a “thought question.” Its purpose is to transcend and penetrate literal statement in order to find the purpose of statements as well as their signification and implications. In fact, it includes the rational and implicational types of inquiry, as well as identifying, methodical, temporal, and local questions when they cannot be answered by simply noting the factual statements of a portion.

e. The Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical question demands no explicit reply by the members of the class either because its answer is obvious or because it is answered by the questioner himself. In the first instance, its function is to focus attention on a particular point by engaging the mind and interest of the listener through the medium of inquiry. Jesus’s questions recorded in Mark 8:36–37 are of this type. When a rhetorical question is employed in this way, it should not be used in connection with a controversial subject. Its reply should be self-evident. In the second case, it involves the questioner’s bringing to the listener’s attention a certain subject which he or she wishes to discuss. He or she therefore states the topic in question form, and the ensuing presentation becomes an answer to the question. The function of this kind of rhetorical question is to make possible literary or oral composition. Paul, for example, frequently uses this literary means in Romans.

f. The Choice Question

Such a question gives its recipient two or more alternatives from which to select an answer. It thus may be in the form of a “yes” or “no” question. It serves to delimit the field being examined by calling special attention to certain possibilities. However, it is not self-sufficient, since in order to be

beneficial it must be followed by the supporting question, namely, “What are the reasons for your choice?”

g. The Summary Question

The summary question corresponds to integrative questions presented previously in the section on “Integration and Summarization.” Therefore, its aim is to lead the student to state in succinct form the essence of the thought and purpose of a passage. For example, one might summarize the idea of John 17 in terms of this general question, “What is the unifying thought or John 17?” Incidentally, every lesson should be summarized and focalized at its conclusion, whether a summary question is used in doing so or not.

h. The Review Question

The review question may be used in two ways.

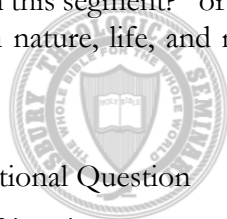
(1) It may be employed to impress something upon the mind by repetition or to re-learn something which may have been forgotten. Someone has said that we do not really learn a thing until we have learned it, partially forgotten it, and learned it again.

(2) It may be utilized to re-view the material already covered, to approach it from another standpoint in order to gain further perspective and insight or to organize what has already been noted. After studying John 17 in terms of Jesus’s prayer, it may be re-viewed by the use of either of the following questions: “What characteristics of effective prayer are exemplified in this segment?” or “What concept did Jesus have of His own nature, life, and mission according to this segment?”

i. The Examinational Question

This kind of inquiry attempts to test how much the student has learned as well as how much he or she has developed. Its answer frequently forms the background for further questioning.

j. The Value Question



Such a question corresponds to those previously presented in the section on evaluation. Its purpose is to lead the student to appraise Scriptural statements from the standpoint of their validity or their exact worth and relevance in a given situation. Often this kind of inquiry will result in a deeper insight into the meaning and signification of a Biblical truth as well as in a value-judgment regarding it.¹⁹

k. The Applicatory Question

It is sometimes advisable to ask the members of a class questions which will enable them to apply for themselves the passage being studied. However, teachers should be careful to avoid monotony in this regard. They should seldom ask the general question, “How does this apply to you or to us?” They should attempt to use variety and to adapt this general question to the specific unit being taught. For example, in connection with a study of John 17, one may inquire, “What can we do to help answer Jesus’s prayer?”²⁰

l. The Correlative Question

Just as the preceding inquiry parallels that of application in methodical study, so this one coincides with correlation in methodical study. Its concern is to integrate the truths of various parts of the Scripture so that the outcome of inductive study is a Biblical theology which forms a basis for a Christian philosophy of life. For example, after the members of a group have studied the decalogue as it is set forth in Exodus 19–20, they may profitably be asked to consider the function and place of the law in the life of the believer in view of the statements of Jesus and Paul.

m. The Adjustment Question

This type of question is important because it helps to ensure that the leader of a group is teaching rather than merely speaking. It makes possible the interplay between the minds of the group and that of the teacher which is so indispensable to

¹⁹ Illustrations of questions of evaluation were given in the section on “Evaluation and Application in Bible Study.”

²⁰ A further discussion on application will follow later.

effective pedagogy. The question of adjustment may be asked in various ways. Here are two examples: “Do you have any questions on anything that has been said thus far? Is what I’ve said clear to you?” It is important to remember that it is possible so to employ such inquiries that the student does not feel free to take advantage of them. If they are to be beneficial, the teacher must give the members of the class enough time to reply and must also be willing to consider the questions which are raised. Hurriedly to ask a question of adjustment simply as a matter of form is more detrimental than beneficial.

D. Content and Form of Questions

The following should characterize the content and form of questions.

1. Practicality—They should make a real difference and should serve some useful purpose.
2. Clarity—They should be lucid and cogent.
3. Brevity, Directness—They should state the problem in the fewest possible words.
4. Definiteness—They should have a specific purpose and goal.
5. Variety—They should not always be stated in the same language, nor should they always be factual. There should be variation in both the terms employed and the kind of questions used.
6. Suitableness—They should benefit the material being examined and the capacities of the students to whom they are asked.
7. Adaptability—They should be flexible enough so as to be capable of re-statement when the occasion arises.
8. Stimulation—They should not give away the answer but should, on the other hand, quicken thought and concentration on the part of the student.
9. Sincerity—They should not be so phrased as to attempt to fool the student. If they involve a “catch,” the class should be warned beforehand.

10. Inductivity—They should be so stated as to direct the student to an examination of the particulars and to prevent him or her from becoming speculative, abstract, and deductive.
11. Forcefulness—They should be compelling and substantial.
12. Imaginativeness—They should capture the imagination of the student whenever possible. Stereotyped, prosaic questions should be avoided.
13. Singleness—They should approach the problem from one angle only.
14. Relevancy—Their content and formulation should be pertinent to the discussion.
15. Suggestiveness—They should indicate a line of thought which the student may profitably follow.

E. Order of Questions

It is of supreme importance that questioning be methodical if it is to be effective. There is a certain orderly arrangement of questions which, if violated, will result in disorder and confusion. Generally speaking, each question should form a link in a chain, attaching itself to what precedes and preparing for what follows. For example, a question of evaluation presupposes one of elucidation and in turn is the basis for a question of application. For to evaluate before one interprets or to apply before one evaluates is disastrous in questioning just as it is in study. It is therefore important to give careful consideration to the precise order of the questions in a particular lesson.

In planning questions, teachers should therefore think in terms of a series or sequence of queries rather than a list of questions. They should be certain that their questions are interrelated and that their interrelatedness is made real and clear by their order, contents, and form. It is often helpful to utilize transitions between questions to indicate their connections.

F. Manner of Asking Questions

Dr. H. H. Horne described the general attitude of the teacher toward the student when asking questions in the following words: “With great sympathy, with confidence in his ability to answer,

with expectation that he will answer, with surprise when he does not answer, with interest in his answer, and with particular attention to his answer.”²¹

Other principles and suggestions should be kept in mind by teachers as they ask questions. These will now be enumerated.

1. A question should initially be asked of the whole class instead of an individual member of the group. After the question has been stated, the teacher should then call upon the particular person whom he wants to answer. If the name of the individual is called first, the remainder of the class is invited to inattention and the person himself may be so frightened that he or she will not be able to concentrate on the question. For these same reasons, the leader should avoid following a predictable order.
2. The teacher should sometimes ask for volunteers, and especially in connection with those questions which the members of the class were not asked to consider beforehand. The general suggestion is made because at times those who might otherwise be reluctant to speak will respond in regard to questions in which they are particularly interested. The main danger in this procedure is that certain students will tend to dominate the class. The more specific aspect of the suggestion is made in order to promote fairness, since it is hardly right to expect a particular person to answer a question for which he or she was not expected to prepare.
3. The leader should not ask thought questions and expect a reply before the students have time to think. Members of a group need time to reflect on questions, especially if the questions are profound or if there was no prior preparation for them. It is a fallacy for the teacher to consider a lull after the stating of an inquiry as something to be avoided at all costs. In fact, unless there is a legitimate period of silence after questions, the replies to them will probably be superficial. It is a good practice for the

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²¹ This statement, which is loaded with significance, may be found in the section on questioning in Dr. Horne’s book entitled “Story-telling, Questioning, and Studying.” The writer of this manual has found this section very helpful, as well as the material on pages 42–44 of another of Dr. Horne’s books, “The Leadership of Bible Study Groups.”

leader to think of the correct answer himself while the members of the group are formulating their replies.

4. Similarly, a person should not ask a number of inquiries because there is no immediate response to the first question or because he or she anticipates that there will be none. One question should be asked of the class. If after a reasonable pause there is no answer, then the teacher may employ one or more auxiliary or secondary questions whose purpose it is to lead the students to discover the meaning and intent of the original or primary question.
5. One should not habitually repeat questions, for to do so encourages inattention.
6. The leader should not give the impression that he or she is “fishing for an answer,” but rather is encouraging students to think for themselves on the basis of the data which accessible to them. A question should not be asked in such a manner as to make the class member feel that he or she must be a mind-reader in order to answer it properly.
7. The teacher should not reveal anxiety in his or her questioning. They should be relaxed at all times if they expect the class to be at ease and do its best. Questioning should be, as much as possible, an enjoyable experience for all concerned.
8. If a question requires introductory remarks for its understanding, such remarks should generally precede rather than follow it. If lengthy explanatory statements are made after the question is stated, chances are that it will be forgotten. If in a particular case remarks are needed after a question is expressed, it is well to repeat the question.

G. Answers to Questions and Their Use

This aspect is closely related to the preceding one and involves both the preparation of the answers on the part of the leader as well as the use of the replies given by the class. We shall now set forth certain principles and recommendations which are concerned with both of these phases.

1. One should have a specific and correct reply to a question before one asks the question. In fact, it is well to write out the answers

beforehand and test their accuracy. It is profitable to write more than just a statement or two. One should elaborate the answer and try to make it vivid, compelling, and sometimes even dramatic. One may use imagery and illustrations when possible and necessary. Teachers should try writing answers of a page or two on each question, using as forceful and clear and fresh terminology as possible. They should attempt to make their replies so lucid that they will stimulate the mind and open up new vistas of thought and experience. One should by all means avoid prosaic, dry, stereotyped, matter-of-fact answers. In a word, teachers ought to discipline themselves to answer their own questions fully and well.

2. One should not insist on a certain formula in an answer and disregard those replies which do not employ a particular terminology. If teachers desire to use certain terms as a basis for organizing the lesson, let them contribute those terms themselves rather than expecting the answers of the students to embody them.
3. Find various ways and means of acknowledging answers courteously yet sincerely. Avoid employing repeatedly a certain expression after the answer to each question, such as “yes” or “all right.”
4. One should not repeat verbatim the correct replies of members of the class. If necessary they may be re-phrased so as to contribute to their forcefulness and clarity, or they may be acknowledged and related to some other aspect of the lesson. In any case, if the reply is correct, it should be recognized as such.
5. Use as much as possible of the answer of the student. Do not ask a question and fail in some way to use the answer given by the individual.
6. In fact, if the reply is not all that it should be, or even if it is totally in error, the teacher should tactfully lead the person by further questions to explore more deeply or to find the correct answer. For the purpose of questions is not merely to elicit the proper reply, but to enable the individual to grow mentally and spiritually.

7. It follows that the leader should not be satisfied with trite, superficial, or insincere answers. One should by further inquiry lead students to elaborate, clarify, and illustrate their replies.
8. Answers to questions should be kept inductive at all times. They should be grounded on the particulars of the text. The teacher will find that students often need to be reminded of this fact. It is wise frequently to ask the individual for the concrete bases for his or her answer. For it is important not only that the correct reply be made, but also that the one answering and the entire class as well be aware of the specific foundation for his or her reply.
9. One should generally avoid answering one's own questions, since the class will soon learn that it pays not to respond. The teacher should be courteously persistent in his or her inquiry.
10. Once a question is asked, it is generally true that it should be pursued to its conclusion. Its answer should not be left indefinite or forgotten altogether.

H. Some “Do’s” and “Don’ts” Regarding Questions and Answers

1. Do:

- a. be self-critical in the examination of your questioning procedure.
- b. develop your ability to ask questions by scrutinizing Jesus's use of questions in the Gospels as well as other Biblical questions, the Socratic questions in the Platonic dialogues, and the questions of outstanding Bible teachers.
- c. make your questions clear and understandable without making them leading.
- d. ask elucidative, heuristic, and value questions as well as the more objective factual ones in order to foster the student's ability to think deeply and evaluate properly; employ questions which will result in vertical knowledge as well as horizontal knowledge.
- e. use questions which will enable the student to see the unity of the Scriptures and of truth.

- f. be selective in your questions, filling in yourself where questions are not profitable, necessary, or efficient.
- g. be informal and spontaneous in your questioning, although you have planned carefully beforehand.
- h. practice stating questions in various ways in order to avoid monotony in the framing of questions.
- i. begin with the concrete and progress to the abstract in your questioning.
- j. conceive of yourself as Socrates conceived of himself, that is, as a mental obstetrician whose incessant questions and proddings delivered human minds and enabled them to give birth to valid ideas.²²
- k. let your questions and answers penetrate words and symbols to the ideas and realities which they represent.
- l. ask the same questions which the author or character of the passage would ask if they were present.
- m. employ summary and synthetical questions as well as analytical ones.
- n. use questions which will develop an independence of the teacher's questions by training the student to ask himself questions.

2. Don't:

- a. ask too many questions and thus inject confusion and monotony into the situation.
- b. let your questions be repetitious; give due regard to continuity.
- c. fail to utilize previous preparation when it has occurred, or plan on it when it is absent.
- d. assume too much in your questions or in the answers given.

²² This image is found in Plato's dialogue entitled "The Theaetetus."

- e. spend too great a period of time on one question.
- f. give the impression that you are the grand inquisitor or an official of the law putting the class through the third degree.
- g. lead the members of the group to think that they must please you rather than find the truth.
- h. let the students feel that their answers are always inaccurate or incomplete.
- i. be unfair in your questioning, expecting more than you have a right to expect.
- j. pretend you know the full answers to every question.
- k. use other people's questions unless they have become your own.
- l. ask questions which are not essential to the lesson.
- m. be doing something which makes impossible your being attentive when a student is answering a question.
- n. encourage hasty, vague, unanalytical answers.
- o. ask questions without being ready also to answer them.
- p. confuse saying a thing with conveying it.
- q. forget that true and profound Biblical knowledge is caught and self-taught rather than transmitted.²³

I. Exercise on Questions and Answers

Consult the exercise on interpretation given in the section on methodical study. Consider the passages in connection with which you raised interpretative questions and framed interpretative answers. Select among those questions the ones which are strategic and which may be used to touch the units on which they are based. Analyze each question as to its source, general development, purpose, and specific kind. Re-phrase the questions and elaborate and clarify the answers if necessary. Plan lessons around these questions,

²³ Editors' Note: Prof. Traina had an endnote marker "10" here but there was no corresponding endnote 10.

keeping before you the principles and suggestions found in the preceding pages.

V. Illustrations in Bible Teaching²⁴

A. The General and Specific Functions of Illustrations

1. General Function

Etymologically and broadly speaking, to “illustrate” means to cast light or luster upon a particular subject.

2. Specific Functions

In view of this general definition, the illustration in Scriptural teaching will have one or more of the following concrete purposes.

a. To Interpret or Clarify

This function may be accomplished in several ways. An example from experience may be given of the case in point, that is, a truth may be illustrated by exemplification. Paul’s reference to Abraham in Romans 4 involves this type of illustration. Or, on the other hand, a truth may be explained by the use of analogy, whether based on real life or on something from the world of imagination. Jesus’s parables are excellent samples of illustration by analogy.

b. To Substantiate

Both of the aforementioned means of explaining truth may also serve to support it. In fact, Paul’s use of the example of Abraham to clarify the meaning of justification by faith also functions to uphold his thesis that justification is by faith alone. Analogy may also be employed to substantiate a Biblical statement, although one must be careful not to misuse it in this regard. This is especially true in connection with analogies of the nature of parables, fables, and allegories, since physical truth is

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²⁴ The writer is greatly indebted to Broadus’s book “The Preparation and Delivery of Sermons” for the material in this section. This serves to emphasize the fact that the illustration of truth in Bible teaching is essentially the same as in other types of presentation. And what is true of illustrations is likewise true of some other aspects of teaching.

never identical with spiritual truth. However, even this type of illustration has corroborative value, as Jesus Himself so forcefully demonstrated.²⁵

c. To Arouse and Hold Attention

Every speaker or teacher has experienced how an audience or a class will sit up and take notice when an illustration begins. This is especially true when the discussion has been rather profound and there has been the tendency to lose interest. Thus, one of the primary and important functions of the illustration is to excite and maintain attention.

d. To Provide Relaxation for the Mind

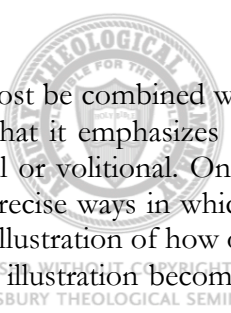
Closely related to the preceding purpose is that of giving rest to the mind when it has been engaging in arduous thought. An illustration will often relax a class and thus prepare it for more work. This function might be conceived as including that of ornamentation as well, that is, the adding of a certain texture or color to the discussion.

e. To Stir the Emotions and Will

Jesus's parables afford an excellent demonstration of this particular aim of illustrations. There is no illustration which rouses the emotions as does the parable of the prodigal son, or none which excites the will as that of the good Samaritan. Illustrations may thus function very effectively to move people to action.

f. To Apply Truth

This goal may almost be combined with the preceding, except for the fact that it emphasizes the intellectual rather than the emotional or volitional. One of the best ways to demonstrate the precise ways in which a truth may be applied is to give an illustration of how others employed it. In this regard a good illustration becomes a good application



²⁵ See Luke 10 for a striking example of this.

and likewise, we may note that a good application may serve as a good illustration.

g. To Aid the Memory

Truths are often remembered by their illustrations. A good illustration is therefore a valuable help to the memory.

B. The Sources of Illustrations

1. Observation of life—nature, human experience, including that of children and especially religious experience, and one's own personal life.
2. Imagination—Plato's myths are striking examples of this source of illustrations. Such illustrations should be presented and utilized as imaginary and not as real occurrences.
3. Science—astronomy, geology, physics, zoology, etc.
4. Great teachers, preachers, thinkers, and expositors—In using these as sources, one should not only note the content of the illustration, but the precise way in which it was used.
5. Anecdotes, proverbs, parables, fables, stories, etc.
6. History, both religious and so-called secular.
7. Great literature and other great art, such as music and painting—poetry, novels, drama, biography, hymns, hymn stories, oratorios, pictures, etc.
8. Scriptures—They provide a good source for illustrations, although they are usually overworked in this regard.
9. Current events and publications.
10. Anywhere—wherever they appear or can be found, since the source of a good illustration is where you find it.

C. Principles and Practices in the Formulation and Use of Illustrations

1. The main point of the illustration should coincide with the essence of the truth being clarified. One should not depend on the incidentals of an illustration to provide the elucidation of the truth under consideration.

2. An illustration needs to be adapted to the particular situation in which it is being used. Frequently the same illustration cannot be expressed in identical words to explain different truths.
3. Seek for variety in illustrations both from the standpoint of their sources and their formulation.
4. Avoid controversial illustrations which will divert the interest of the hearers rather than direct it.
5. Avoid utilizing the fantastic to any great degree. Generally speaking, it is best to make illustrations practical and realistic, so as to give the impression that you are dealing with the hard realities of life and not with purely abstract concepts.
6. Illustrations should clarify rather than confuse a point. They should therefore not be used if the illustrations themselves need illustration or explanation.
7. Try testing your illustrations. Practice stating them to someone and then asking him or her to summarize their primary ideas in a sentence.
8. Use enough illustrations on the one hand, and yet be careful not to employ too many on the other. Avoid using no illustrations or making your lesson merely a series of illustrations. Remember that although illustrations are important, yet they are subordinate. They should therefore be included only when they make a specific and significant contribution to the ongoing development of the lesson. A story should never be told for its own sake.
9. Use the kind of illustration and the terminology which befit the group being taught. Appropriate your illustrations to the needs, interests, capacity, and experience of your class.
10. Let your illustrations be brief enough so that the attention of the class is not turned from the truth illustrated to the illustrations themselves. However, do not make them so concise that they do not serve their purpose or leave serious questions in the minds of the listeners.
11. Use illustrations which are relevant and, whenever necessary, make their relevancy abundantly clear. Watch closely the transition between the subject and the illustration and back to the subject again. It is often helpful to insert a summary sentence either before or after an illustration.

12. Let each illustration clarify only one point.
13. State the illustrations as clearly and pointedly as possible, eliminating all excess verbiage.
14. One's illustrations should engage the emotions, imagination, and will as well as the intellect. In a word, they should appeal to the whole person.
15. Keep human interest in illustrations. Avoid too much of the purely conceptual and the technical.
16. Change your tone of voice in illustrating truth. This will serve to relax the group and break the monotony of tone which frequently develops.
17. Be on the lookout for illustrations, and devise some means of filing them for future use.

D. Exercise on Illustrations

Formulate in full some illustrations on the passages utilized in the exercise on questions and answers in Bible teaching, keeping before you the principles and suggestions heretofore made. Analyze them as to their source and precise function.

VI. Summary in Bible Teaching

Each Bible lesson should move to a view of the whole, which should occur prior to the final evaluation and application. In fact, at times such an integration and summarization of the individual parts of the passage and lesson will constitute the conclusion or climax of the lesson, especially if such a procedure implicitly or explicitly includes the aspects of evaluation and application. At any rate, each teaching procedure should have near or as its conclusion a unification of the whole. This may be accomplished through the use of the summary question or by other means.

Such a summary should involve a clear and forceful integration of the lesson as-a-whole. The teacher should be careful to indicate lucidly how the various parts of the Biblical unit are gathered up in the summary. The summary should also be phrased cogently so as to provide either the preparation for the climactic application or the climax itself. Every lesson should progress to a peak or climax, and the final summarization serves an important function in regard to it.

Exercise: Prepare a lesson summary of one or more of the passages you have been utilizing.

VII. Evaluation and Application in Bible Teaching

A. The Importance of Evaluation and Application

The application of Biblical truth is that for which all else exists, whether it be in study or in teaching. Spurgeon once said, “Where application begins, there the sermon begins.” This may be said also of Scriptural teaching. If this is true, then evaluation is important as well, since it is that which prepares for and makes possible valid application.

B. The Place of Evaluation and Application

There are two primary views as to the place of these aspects in the lesson proper. The first is that evaluation and application should occur only at the culmination of the lesson and thus form its climax and conclusion. Various reasons are given in support of this standpoint. It is said that only after thorough observation and interpretation are the clues prepared for the appraisal and application of a Biblical unit. And this is equivalent to saying that application must await the completion of the bulk of the lesson. Further, it is suggested that one main evaluation and application at the end of the lesson leaves one major impression on the mind of the listeners, which is pedagogically sound. The second view is that evaluation and application may occur during the process of the lesson as well as form the conclusion of the lesson. Those who share this opinion maintain that though it is true that judicial criticism and application must follow observation and interpretation, it should be remembered that the leader has already studied the whole, so that whatever he or she does in the way of evaluation and application may take that fact into account. Further, there may be a final integrating evaluation and application at the conclusion which summarizes all the others and thus leaves the listeners with one primary idea. In addition, there is the fact that value-judgments and applications cannot always be avoided during the lesson. As we have already noted, a good illustration will frequently involve the employment of Biblical truth, and applications are sometimes needed to clarify the statements of a passage. Students will in certain cases suggest appraisals

and applications. Moreover, it is best to assess the worth of certain parts and apply them while they are fresh in mind rather than wait until the conclusion of the lesson. In view of these arguments, it seems to the writer that the second view is more valid and practical than the first, although it is true that evaluation and application should primarily occur at the end of the teaching procedure and that, when it does, it should function as the climax of the lesson. The remainder of the discussion is therefore founded on this particular view.

C. The Purposes of Evaluation and Application

1. To discover the validity and relevance of Scriptural statements and subsequently to discover how they may be employed in life. This involves the theoretical application of truth.
2. To provide practical and concrete suggestions which will enable the class to put into action that which it has learned.
3. To motivate and persuade the listeners to action. Thus, application should appeal to the emotions and the will as well as to the intellect. This function may be realized in several ways, one of which is the hortatory approach, used so effectively by Paul in his epistles.
4. To comfort as well as to instruct and stimulate. Applications should not always “harp” on weaknesses; they should, when legitimate, indicate to the listener the great value of that which he or she possesses.

D. Kinds of Evaluation and Application

1. The Direct Kind

This type appraises and applies Scriptural statements in a straightforward manner. It involves saying, in effect, “This is how this passage is relevant to your experience and may be employed in it. “The book of Jude is a forceful example of such a procedure.

2. The Indirect Kind

This involves evaluation and application by example or by analogy. It is, in fact, appraisal and application by illustration. Nathan’s approach to David (2 Samuel 12) was primarily of this type, although he made it direct by the statement “Thou art the man.”

E. Characteristics of Good Evaluation and Application

1. Justifiable—This needs no further explanation, since it was discussed in the section on “Evaluation and Application” in methodical Bible study.
2. Personal—They should make a concrete difference to each individual, even if they be concerned with the truths which have national and universal significance. Each person should leave the lesson with something specific which he or she can and should do as a result of it. The common practice of evaluating and applying Biblical statements for the absent party, such as the so-called “Modernist,” should be diligently avoided.
3. Realistic, Practical—They should be grounded on the hard facts of existence, and not consist of the stuff dreams are made of. For those who in appraising and applying Scriptural truth overlook actual problems and difficulties and pretend that the whole matter is very simple will not be effective in their teaching.
4. Natural, Easy—They should not be forced, extraneous or superimposed on the passage. They should be the logical outgrowth of the statements themselves. It is helpful to make a smooth and clear transition between interpretation and evaluation and application.
5. Compelling—Evaluation and application should be of such a nature and so expressed as to move people to action.
6. Constructive—The aim should be the upbuilding of the listeners rather than their tearing down.
7. Specific, Definite—The members of the group should know exactly where they stand in relation to the truths of a Biblical unit.
8. Up-to-date, Relevant—They should be pertinent to the very day on which the lesson is being taught.
9. Suggestive—Certain concrete lines of action should be indicated which may be followed by the listeners.
10. Varied—Both direct and indirect approaches should be used. Further, there should be variety as to the spheres with which the evaluations and applications are concerned, that is, they should be addressed not only to one’s personal life, but to the

individual as a member of a local church and community, or a nation and a denomination, and of the universal Church and the world.

11. **Integrated**—If evaluations and applications are made during the process of the lesson, they should all have a common goal and purpose; they should contribute to the main stream of the lesson.
12. **Inclusive**—Leaders should include themselves in their evaluations and applications. Further, he or she should direct remarks to the entire class and not to a few individuals in it.²⁶

Exercise on Evaluation and Application: Consider the passages which were evaluated and applied in the section on study. Think in terms of appraising and applying these units in and for a **concrete** class situation. What determinant factors must be given careful thought? Formulate fully your applications. Analyze them from the standpoint of their place in the lesson, their purposes, and their kinds. Attempt to determine whether they exemplify the characteristics of good evaluation and application set forth in the preceding discussion.

VIII. Introductions in Bible Teaching

The reader may wonder why the matter of introductions is treated in this place rather than at the outset of the section on teaching. The reason is that the introduction should be one of the last phases of the lesson to be prepared if the procedure is to be methodical; for a good introduction presupposes a knowledge of the contents and direction of the lesson as-a-whole, just as building a good porch on a house presupposes a knowledge of the nature of the building proper.

A. Functions and Kinds of Introductions

1. General Function

All introductions, no matter what their particular purposes may be, should serve to interest the hearers in that which will follow. This fact should be uppermost in the mind of the teacher as he or she prepares the introduction. For, if the attention of the group is not engaged at the very outset of the lesson, it may be

²⁶ It may be noted that this section is primarily concerned with application rather than evaluation, since evaluation exists for the purpose of application.

permanently lost. It is therefore of supreme importance that the introduction be so designed as to capture the interest of the class.

2. Specific Functions and Kinds

Besides this general function, an introduction may involve one or more particular purposes. As a means of indicating what these may be, we shall now list the main types of introductions. It should be noted that these types of introductions are not mutually exclusive; therefore, two or more of them may actually be combined at times. However, since it is usually true that one particular function dominates over the others, the following names may be validly employed to classify introductions.

a. Atmospheric Introduction—This type has as its function the creating of the atmosphere of the lesson by re-creating the spirit and mood of the passage.

b. Problematical or Applicatory Introduction—The problematical or applicatory introduction attempts to set forth the problem with which the lesson and unit of Scripture will be concerned and to which they will apply. It therefore not only focusses the attention of the group upon a particular issue, but it also serves to indicate the relevance of the lesson.

At times the problematical introduction may be expanded in order to utilize the problem approach to a Scriptural unit. In such instances, a substantial part of the class period is used to discuss the exact nature and ramifications of a particular problem in order to whet the appetite and provide insight into the solution which is found in the passage being studied.

c. Historical Introduction—It is often needful and helpful to depict the historical background of a portion of Scripture in order to make its study more meaningful. The source for such a background may either be Biblical or extra-Biblical.

d. Contextual Introduction—The purpose of this kind of introduction is to set forth the context of the passage being studied in such cases where an awareness of the context is essential to the understanding of the passage.

e. Explanatory or Procedural Introduction—This serves to elucidate the main steps of the lesson by suggesting what they

will be, together with their grounds and purposes. It thus interprets the procedure which is to be followed in order to enhance the comprehension of its aim and integrality.

- f. Thematic Introduction—It is sometimes beneficial to begin a lesson by presenting its major theme. One should be cautious, however, not to make habitual use of this type of introduction, since it tends to make the lesson deductive rather than inductive.
- g. Review or Re-examination Introduction—The review or re-examination introduction is used in connection with a lesson in a series of lessons. Its purpose is either to go back over what has been done in order to re-learn it and to prepare for what follows, or to reconsider from a different point of view that which has already been treated as a means of introducing a particular lesson.

There are other kinds of introductions, but these are the major types. The teacher should attempt to classify his or her introductions in terms of these and related categories in order to be aware of their specific function or functions. For it is important that the teacher know the precise purpose of the introductions he or she employs.

B. Qualities of Effective Introductions

1. They are preparatory in regard to the lesson and do not detract substantially from it.
2. They are simple, involving one idea preferably. It is best, generally speaking, not to use heavy or involved introductions.
3. They are concise and yet not too concise, since too abrupt an introduction fails to prepare the class psychologically for the lesson.
4. They are connected with the body of the lesson by a clear, smooth, and legitimate transition, since the transition often makes or breaks the introduction.
5. They are relevant to the lesson and their relevancy is apparent to the class.
6. They do not raise any serious barriers which may hinder the progress of the lesson.
7. They contain nothing which is foreign to the body of the lesson.
8. They establish a point of contact between teacher and listeners.
9. They are specific rather than vaguely general.

10. They introduce the whole lesson instead of the first part of it, and thus may be utilized and capitalized upon throughout the procedure.
11. They have variety as to type and phraseology.
12. They are suited to the nature of the passage and the nature of the class. They are accommodated to the lesson, just as a porch is accommodated to the house, and not vice versa.

C. Exercise on Introductions: Prepare introductions to several of the passages which you have been using in the preceding exercises on methodical teaching. Attempt to formulate two or three kinds of introductions to each Biblical unit, employing the principles heretofore set forth. Write them out in full. Analyze each as to its specific function and type.

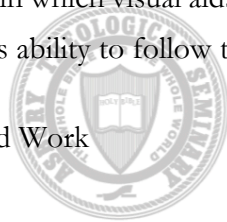
IX. BLACKBOARD WORK IN BIBLE TEACHING

A. General and Specific Functions of Blackboard Work

1. Utilizes the eye-gate in teaching.
2. Helps to provide a unified, overall impression of the whole.
3. Gives students time to take notes.
4. Indicates what the teacher deems to be most important.
5. Provides the basis for talking about the various parts of a passage, especially from the standpoint of their relations to one another, since connections are very often seen with a force that cannot be duplicated by the mere use of words.
6. Demonstrates the way in which visual aids may be used in study.
7. Facilitates the student's ability to follow the progress of the lesson.

B. Some Types of Blackboard Work

1. Charts or diagrams.
2. Outlines.
3. Listings.
4. Pictures and object lessons.



5. Informational notes, such as the spelling of words, references, etc.
6. Maps.

C. Principles and Suggestions for Blackboard Work

1. What is written on the board should be legible from any part of the room. This is a difficult suggestion to carry out and yet it should be followed as closely as possible.
2. Blackboard work should leave an integrated, overall impression. It should clarify rather than confuse the structure of the lesson.
3. It should represent and reflect the lesson by stressing the same idea or ideas as the lesson as-a-whole.
4. It should be planned beforehand, but should be flexible and adaptable as the need arises. There is little chance that blackboard work which results from an experimental or laboratory approach will be neat, precise, and completely in accordance with a predetermined plan.
5. It should show the major relationships between parts and provide the student with perspective.
6. It should reveal definite organization.
7. It should neither include too much nor too little.
8. It should be self-explanatory as much as possible.
9. Generally speaking, blackboard work should not be placed on the board before the class begins, since it distracts the attention of the group. Members of the class will often read or copy what is there while the teacher is presenting his or her introduction. Further, to write things on the board beforehand tends to make the procedure deductive rather than inductive, formal rather than informal.
10. It should represent a combination of the work and thought of the teacher and the members of the study group.

D. Exercise on Blackboard Work

Plan the blackboard work on some of the units you have been treating, utilizing the principles and suggestions in the preceding pages.

X. EXERCISES IN BIBLE TEACHING

A. Definition of “Exercise”

This phase of Bible teaching has commonly been called “assignments.” However, such a name does not accurately describe their underlying purpose and most significant function. For an “assignment,” according to Webster, is “a duty or piece of work allotted as the responsibility of a particular person or group.” The emphasis is therefore on the obligation laid upon the student because the leader has authoritatively commanded that the work be done. On the other hand, Webster defines “exercise” as “exertion for the sake of training and improvement, whether physical, intellectual, or moral.” This comes much closer to the outstanding intent of the phase being discussed, since the stress is upon the benefits and values which may derive from it rather than the responsibility which is attached to it because of external authority. In a word, its compulsion is inward rather than outward; it is not of the law, but of grace. In view of these facts, then, we shall utilize the term “exercise” rather than “assignment.”

B. Purposes of Exercises

The outstanding aim of exercises has already been discussed in a measure in the preceding paragraph. However, it will be beneficial both to elaborate this function and to suggest another. Exercises have two primary purposes.

1. They are the means of training and developing the student in regard to knowledge, skills, insight, and independence.
2. They prepare the student for more effective participation in the class procedure and for a greater understanding of what occurs therein.

The first of these is undoubtedly the most significant of the functions of exercises. In fact, so important is it that the writer has made this startling statement to his classes, namely, that if he were forced to choose between their attending the formal session or doing the exercises outside of class, he would without hesitation choose the latter.

The key term in the description of this purpose is “independence.” Exercises should intend to train the student to swim for

himself or herself so that, when the life belt is removed, he or she will not drown. This implies that exercises should not be so formulated that students are told everything that they must do, but should rather be framed so as to provide them with an opportunity to utilize their own initiative. To change the image, exercises should not serve as crutches, but rather as guides within which there is room for personal expression.

In order to realize this purpose, exercises should involve primarily and first of all the first-hand study of the vernacular. This does not mean that there will be no place for the examination of secondary sources. But the initial approach should involve the first-hand examination of the Scriptures if an independent Bible student is to be developed.

The second and secondary function of exercises is to prepare the member of the class for intelligent participation in and an understanding appreciation of that which is done in the formal session. In regard to this purpose, there are two kinds of exercises: a. the supplementary exercise, and b. the parallel or identical exercise. The former serves to supplement that which is to occur in the class period. It takes a different approach from that to be followed in the formal session, and yet it complements that which occurs there. The latter type involves the exercise which contains the exact questions which will be used in class, the assumption being that because of the aggregate mind of the students and the contribution of the teacher the formal session will not be a mere repetition of individual study but will rather transcend it. Both of these types are valid and which of them is used in a particular instance will depend on the nature of the class and the subject matter being discussed.

C. Structure of Exercises

Exercises may be classified into two main categories in terms of their structure. The first is the purely progressive type, each question or suggestion involving a distinct and further step in the process. All of the individual questions are progressively numbered and none of them is grouped together. The second kind, though progressive, is concentric and topical as well. It includes both general and subordinate specific questions, as well as questions which are repetitious in that they express the same thing in different words or approach the same problem from various angles. In this instance

certain suggestions are grouped together, such as those which are virtually synonymous.

The first of these is simpler to follow, but the second utilizes certain pedagogical principles which may enable the exercise better to accomplish its purpose. For as we have already stated, truth has so many phases and the finite mind is so limited in its ability to grasp and penetrate them that whatever can be used to assist it should by all means be employed. One inevitably finds that others seldom catch the full significance and force of the suggestions one makes. It therefore seems salutary to approach the subject from various standpoints and to state things in different ways so as to goad and stimulate the mind in order that it may function incisively.

D. Miscellaneous Principles and Suggestions for the Formulation and Use of Exercises

1. There are two dangers in the formulation of exercises: a. the lack of clarity, and b. the lack of questions which require insight and develop independence. One should attempt to avoid both of these swamps. The suggestions should be expressed as lucidly as possible, and yet they should include both heuristic and value questions whose answers do not depend on merely reading and copying the words of the text.
2. The nature of the passage being studied should determine the general structure of the exercise. If the passage is so constructed that it should be approached interpretatively, the exercise should be interpretative; if the passage is so arranged that it should be approached structurally, the exercise should be structural. For the specific factors involved here, consult the section on “Lesson Structure and Development.”
3. Exercises should be suited to the capacities of their participants. A six-year-old child is not given a two-hundred-pound weight in order to develop his or her physic.
4. Exercises should always include summary questions.
5. They should be characterized by definite development and progress, and the connections between the successive suggestions should be made as clear as possible. their major units should stand out, if such there be.

6. General questions should be utilized in order to train the student to become independent.
7. The exercise should be prepared after the passage has been thoroughly studied and after the lesson has been planned, and both of these factors should be taken into account in its formulation.
8. Self-reflection is helpful in the framing of exercises. It is often beneficial to retrospect regarding the particular steps one followed in study and to pattern the exercise after those procedures. Of course, such a practice is not always wise and should be followed with discretion. However, it is based on a valid principle, namely, that minds are basically similar and that they function in much the same way.
9. All unnecessary questions should be deleted from the exercise in order to conserve time and avoid confusion.
10. Let your exercises be varied and imaginative.
11. Exercises should at one time or another include all four aspects of methodical study, namely, observation, interpretation, evaluation and application, and correlation. Of course, all of these do not need to be injected into every exercise.
12. It is often helpful to accompany the giving of exercises with explanatory remarks and suggestions as to which questions are most significant, how much time should be spent on each, and the reasons and purposes of the questions. The last of these is especially important, since to know the “why” of things enhances an intelligent doing of them.
13. Exercises should be used whenever possible, even in lay situations. Laymen need to be developed and trained as well as professional workers, and one is surprised how much they too are willing to “exercise” if they are motivated in the proper way.
14. Exercises may be of two types as to the completeness with which they should be done. The first may be called the exhaustive kind, which is meant to be carried out fully. The second is the suggestive type, which indicates lines of study which may be partially completed for a particular class period, but whose possibilities may be altogether beyond realization. Most

exercises are of the latter kind, and students ought to be made aware of that fact.

15. In the class period the teacher should capitalize as much as possible on the exercise given to the students. It is well frequently to call attention to the meaning and signification of its suggestions.
16. The superficial and hasty doing of exercises should be discouraged. The essential need for concentration and meditation should be stressed. Students should be urged to put Biblical statements into their own words and elaborate them. In fact, it would be helpful for the teacher to demonstrate the potentialities of certain suggestions as well as the concrete means of following them.

It should be noted that many of the suggestions made in the discussion on “The Formulation and Use of Questions and Answers,” although applicable in this connection were not repeated. The reader is urged to discover wherein this holds true.

E. Exercise on Exercises

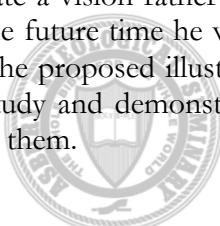
Formulate exercises in connection with the Scriptural units you have been utilizing in the preceding projects. Be guided both in your formulation and in your analysis by the principles and suggestions given in the discussion.

XI. (ILLUSTRATIONS ON METHOD IN BIBLE TEACHING)

Again, the parentheses indicate a vision rather than an actuality. The writer anticipates that at some future time he will be able to take the same passages employed in the proposed illustrations at the close of the section on methodical study and demonstrate how lesson plans may be prepared for teaching them.

XII. CONCLUSION

The reader has probably deduced by this time that one cannot learn methodicalness in Bible study and teaching by merely reading the preceding discussion on the subject. This is true not only because of the limitations of this treatment, among them that of brevity, but primarily because of the nature of the subject itself. Methodicalness cannot be



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taught like geometric theorems or algebraic formulas. The purpose of this manual has therefore been to indicate certain basic principles and concrete procedures whose personal evaluation and adaptation and thoughtful and persistent application will enable the reader to develop methodicalness in study and teaching. This presentation, then, has been merely suggestive. It has set forth some means by which one may teach oneself to become orderly and logical, For, in the last analysis, methodicalness must be self-taught if it is to be realized. If, then, the preceding pages have motivated the reader to think seriously about methodicalness in Bible study and teaching, they have accomplished their purpose.

The writer is acutely aware of the inadequacy of this manual in view of the subjects it purports to treat. Further, he knows that it will need constant revision. However, in spite of its limitations, it is hoped that it will contribute to the accomplishment of the worthwhile goals of effective Bible study and teaching.



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