

# **USING THE VERY WORDS OF GOD WHEN TEACHING CHILDREN**

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### 1. PURPOSE

**PURPOSE** in life always dictates

**PRIORITIES** in life, which leads to making a

**PLAN** which focuses on the priorities, to fulfill the purpose.

Knowing our purpose is extremely important!

#### a. Learning to sit at the feet of Jesus

***Luke 10:38-42** "Now it happened as they went, that He entered a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, 'Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?' Therefore, tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."*

#### b. To sit at Jesus' feet is to fellowship with Him - To have a Personal Relationship with the Lord.

***1 Corinthians 1:9** "God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."*

"Christianity is first and foremost a personal relationship with God. We need to train the children in how this works."

***John 17:3** "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*

***1 John 1:1-3** "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness, and declare to you, that eternal life, which was manifested to us -that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."*

***Hebrews 11:6** "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."*

"It takes two to have fellowship. One speaks and the other responds." **H.A. Ironside**

### c. **This fellowship revolves around God's Word - the very words of God**

**C.H. Spurgeon** "A sentence from the mouth of God will have more permanent power over a Christian man (woman, boy, or girl), than the best composed of human statements. God's Word is living and powerful and has power to enter the heart beyond that of any other word. The words of the Bible strike and stick."

*Isaiah 55:11* "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

#### **We need to use the very words of God.**

**SUM UP** "Fellowship." This is what we call having a personal relationship with God. Oftentimes because we **don't train** children in what it is to have fellowship with God, we will tend to then train the children in information. We often think we go deeper with the Lord by learning more information about the Lord, but this is only an intellectual approach to knowing God, which can lead to being more religious than having a personal relationship with the Lord.

Knowing how to accomplish this, knowing how to personally experience God through using the very words of God is critical!

We want to train the children in responding to God by using the very words of God - the Bible.

## 2. **THE HABIT THAT MUST BE DEVELOPED - FOR LIFE**

The habit of sitting at the feet of Jesus - To read the Bible, on their own for themselves, every day! Then, respond to God about what they just read!

### a. **God's Word is key in the life of a growing Christian - the Bible is life-changing.**

*Hebrews 4:12* "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

### b. **Daily Bible Reading**

The habit of reading and responding to God's Word is an absolute necessity for us to grow in Christ.

This is what a personal relationship with God is all about!

If we really want to grow in our relationship with the Lord, we need to keep coming back to His Word. (Also, train the children to pray)

As we read and mediate on God's Word, we cause His Word to go from our head down into our heart. His Word will become alive to us as we sit at Jesus' feet.

c. "The voices of childhood echo throughout life. The first learned is generally the last forgotten." C. H. Spurgeon

d. **HABITS** - "To sow an act is to reap a tendency,  
To sow a tendency is to reap a habit,  
To sow a habit is to reap a character,  
To sow a character is to reap a destiny."

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." Galatians 6:17

"The habits of the child produce the character of the man, because certain mental habitudes once set up, their nature is to go on forever unless they should be displaced by other habits." Charlotte Mason. (1842 to 1923)

e. We want to teach the children to read their Bible on their own, for themselves, every day. Then talk to God about what they read." When we teach, **we need to think long-range**. This should be the purpose. We need to help create habits for life in the children!

## **WE NEED TO - THINK TO THE FUTURE**

### **SUM UP "HABITS"**

... We want to help the children create the habit of meeting with God through His Word. Habits are extremely important, once they are set, we don't really think much about them. One thing is for sure, it is easier to create a habit, than to change a habit. Although habits can be changed, it will be challenging to do so. That is why it is much better to create a good habit in childhood, than to have to change a habit later in life.

### **3. PROVERBS 22:6 "TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO, AND WHEN HE IS OLD, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT."**

#### **"Children don't come ready made."**

a. **Training** is more than teaching.  
Training is to help develop a skill.

b. Teaching makes a child know and understand what they are to do.  
Teaching is a process of educating a person with theoretical concepts and is a kind of a knowledge transfer between a teacher and a student. **Teaching is to cause to know something. Teaching a child to know and understand what they are to do.**

- c. **Training** influences them and sees that they do it.  
Show the children (by example) the “what” and “how” of what you want them to do.  
Teaching just tells them the “what.”  
Training is acquiring skills - the process of teaching or learning a skill
- d. Teaching **deals with the child’s mind.**
- e. **Training deals with his will.**  
Training focuses on building a skill.

**SUM UP** “Training” - to teach a skill through practice and instruction over a period of time.

#### 4. THE LEVELS WE LEARN ON:

- a. **Rote:** The ability to repeat something without thought of the meaning. This level is memorizing information. “IT’S ALL GOOD.” The definition of good is: “morally excellent”, “virtuous”, “of high quality.”
- b. **Recognition:** This is where we have can recognize a Biblical idea, a Biblical concept. This is the ability to recognize information.
- c. **Restatement:** This is the ability to restate an idea in your own words. Restating information. This is the ability to express the truth in our own words.  
Most teaching in Children’s Ministries is taught on these first three levels. We spend a lot of time giving children information.
- d. **Relation:** Understanding the information and how it relates to our lives. And then, how we should respond to the information.
- e. **Realization:** The difference between “Relation” level and the Realization level is found in the word - “RESPOND” This level is active in the “will” level. The willingness to respond to the information. **To become a doer of the Word, active in your life, to live it out!**

#### **TWO FORMS OF EDUCATION** (How we are trained to think)

**Greek:** Focuses on the intellect. This approach lends itself more to the memorizing information. **The goal is to train a person in the service of culture. This is about repeating information. Most children are being trained in this approach.**

**Hebrew:** Focuses on the heart. The goal of this approach is not only memorizing the information, but to “live out” the truth. The goal was for the student to be trained in the service of God. Responding to God’s truth and living it out should be the goal of every Christian.

**Religion** resides in the head

**Relationship** resides in the heart

**SUM UP** “Levels of Learning and 2 forms of education”

We often think we are going deeper by learning more, by getting more information, and more knowledge, that this will bring us closer to the Lord. But this is only an intellectual approach to reading the Bible. Without responding to what was read, we can miss the relationship part.

## 5. **WHAT IS CALVARY CURRICULUM BIBLE STUDIES?**

- a. Calvary Curriculum has been designed to be a support for using the Bible as the curriculum itself, not as some curriculums where the Bible is there to support the curriculum. We want to use the very words of God to teach the children.
- b. ***“So, they read distinctly from the book, in the law of God, and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.” Nehemiah 8:8***
- c. It is not about the curriculum page; it is about the Bible! We will talk more about this later.
- d. We believe that children can experience a personal and close relationship with the Lord that will sustain them each and every day of their lives. Experiencing fellowship with our Maker is foundational to the Christian life.
- e. We must train the children in how to read the Bible so they can hear from God and **experience for themselves** that close and personal relationship with God.
- f. We must also train the children in what it is to have a prayer life with God, to talk with God as He desires and invites each of us to do.
- g. **QUESTION:** When are the children taught how to read the Bible. If they aren’t taught now, then when?

“The voices of childhood echo throughout life,  
the first learned is generally the last forgotten.” C. H. Spurgeon

## 6. LONG RANGE TRAINING

~ AGES 5-12 ~

1. **Simply read the portion of Scriptures** you are considering that day and talk about it.

*“So, they read distinctly from the book, in the law of God, and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.” Nehemiah 8:8*

**“So, they read distinctly...** they read word for word, unmistakably, clearly.

**“...from the book...”** the Bible.

**“...in the law of God;”** from the first 5 books of the Bible.

**“...and they gave the sense...”** they made sense of it.

**“...and helped them to understand the reading.”** Explained the meaning. They got it.

We want to teach the children to read their Bible on their own, for themselves, every day. Then talk to God about what they read.” When we teach, we need to think long-range. This is important.

2. **Train** the children to look for a simple truth and a simple life application.  
*Revelation 1:3, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it...”*  
You will be blessed when you read or hear and obey these prophecies from the book of Revelation.  
“Blessed” means “oh how happy”

3. **Train** the children **to pray back God’s Word.**  
*Proverbs 3:5-6. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”*

**You might pray back:** (Reply or respond to what God has said)

- “Lord, help me to trust and depend on You more and not to think I have all the answers. (“Lord, help me to trust you even though I am sad.”) (“Lord, help me to trust You and not to try to figure it out all by myself.”)
- Help me to talk to You about everything in my life. (“Lord, help me to talk to you every day about my family, friends, etc.”) (“Lord, help me to be kind to my brother.”)
- Thank you that you will show me the right ways to go and the right things to do.” (“Lord, thank You that I can trust You to show me what I should do about...”)

4. **Train** the children in the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions. Teaching the children these questions is so important! One of the greatest defenses for our children is to teach them how to critically think. If our children learn to ask these questions in life, it will be a game-changer. This will help expose the lies they will face and teach them to see the truth.

***“For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death.”  
Psalm 48:14***

- **WHO** is this talking about? *God.*
- **WHOSE** God is He? Ours. Who is “our”? Am I a part of the “our”?
- **HOW** long will He be God? *Forever and ever.*
- **NEW/FRESH THOUGHT ABOUT GOD? WHAT** might this tell me about God? *He is different than people and He is greater than people. He understands things differently than I do because He’s lived longer than I have. He knows more than I do.*
- **HOW** long will He be my God?
- **WHAT** will He be to me? My guide.
- **WHAT** is a guide? **WHAT** does a guide do? (Can look in a dictionary. Can discuss this idea with family or others. Can remember a time when you were led by a guide...what did that guide do?)
- **WHAT** might be some things He’ll be my guide in? *To help me know how He thinks about things and what He would like me to say, do, or where to go. To direct me in how to live, think, speak, and react when I go through times of joy, sadness, change, monotony, failure, disappointment, triumph.*
- **HOW** long will He be my guide? He’ll be my guide for my whole life.
- **IS THERE A PROMISE TO CLAIM IN THIS VERSE? WHAT** is it?
- If I really took the words in this verse seriously, would it make a difference in my life? **WHAT** difference would it make? **HOW** might my life look differently?

## **Hebrews 11:6**

***“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”***

**You could teach a complete Bible lesson from this one verse.**

- What is faith?
- What pleases God?
- What does it mean “to please”?
- Might this tell us something about God? (that faith pleases Him?)
- Is there a warning to heed? (We can’t please God without faith)
- Is there a promise to claim? (It is possible to please God - if we have faith)
- Is it possible to please God?
- What element is necessary to please God?
- How does that element play out? When is it impossible to please God?
- Does faith require action?
- Is there a fresh insight into Satan’s subtle devices?
- What must we believe when we come to God?
- How should we seek God?
- What does it mean to seek God?
- What does it mean to be diligent?
- What will God do for those who diligently seek Him? (Give a reward)
- What is the reward? (Gen. 15:1)
- Is it possible to come to God?
- Is there a promise to claim? (He will reward those who diligently seek Him)
- Is there a new thought about God the Father? (He wants us to come to Him)
- How do we come to Him?
- What does the word “believe” mean?
- What are we to believe? (That He is)
- What does “that He is” mean?
- Which God are we to seek?

***“If you teach the child wrongly, he believes you, if you teach him heresies, he will receive them. What you teach him now, he will never forget.”***

**~C.H. Spurgeon**

5. **Train** the children to ask the questions such as: ***Is there a...***

- a. **Promise to claim?**
- b. **Sin to avoid?**
- c. **Warning to heed?**
- d. **Command to obey?**
- e. **Good example to follow?**
- f. **Bad example to shun?**
- g. **New/fresh thought about God the Father**
- h. **New/fresh thought about God the Son**
- i. **New/fresh thought about God the Holy Spirit**
- j. **Fresh insight into the person of Satan**
- k. **Fresh insight into Satan's cruel goals**
- l. **Fresh insight into Satan's subtle devices**

We need to teach/train the children in these questions. They will become tools for life as the children read their Bible.

*Mark 10:10-13*

*v.10 "Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them, but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.*

*v. 11 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them; 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.*

*v. 12 "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."*

*v. 13 And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them."*

6. **Train** the children **to ask the question:** "What choices were made," and "What happened as a result of the choices made?"

7. **Train the children to Respond** to God through His Word. They need to know how to respond in a personal and correct way, having a two-way conversation.

RESPOND - meaning to "send back" or "say something in reply."

PERSONALLY - personalize our response back to the Lord.

CORRECTLY - using the very words of God. Not changing anything He said.

EXAMPLE: Forgive "me" of "my" sin, not forgive "us" of "our" sin.

### **TRAIN THE CHILDREN:**

1. First, to simply read their Bible verse by verse to set in their minds how one would simply talk.
2. The idea behind communicating with someone, having a 2-way conversation.
3. The children will grow into this with training and practice.
4. The teacher will hold the key to this, by demonstrating to the children how it works to respond to God through His Word.
5. Also, when teaching this to younger children, such as 5-7 years of age, you will simply teach them by showing them what it is to say back in response. (Thinking long-range)

8. **Train** the children **to ask**: "If someone took the teaching of Jesus in this passage seriously, what difference would it make in their life?"
9. Children lack vocabulary and life experience. Words need to be explained.
  - a. Defining the words is extremely important!

## **SUM UP - REASONS WHY THIS MIGHT NOT BE DONE**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **SOME GUIDELINES - TO HELP YOU TO THINK LONG-RANGE**

### **1ST - 2ND GRADES:**

- Simple truth and simple life application
- Introducing of the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How questions (At this age, just use them).
- Teacher start giving examples of responding back to what God has said in the Bible (show students what responding looks like).
- Narration (to tell back). Have the children narrate (tell back) the Bible story.
- Younger ages: very simple; talk about and explain the lesson.

### **3RD - 4TH GRADES: *continue with the (above)***

- Introduce the questions, such as: "Is there a promise to claim?" or "a warning to heed?" What do these questions mean?
- Introduce the concept of "praying back" the Scriptures.
- Slowly move into responding to what God has said in His Word.

### **5TH - 6TH GRADES: *continue with the (above)***

- Fully develop the concept of "how to respond personally and correctly to God through His Word." How to have a two-way conversation with God. Responding to God as they read the Bible.

By age 12, the goal should be they know how to do all that they've been taught (1-6) and that they can (will) read their Bible daily, for themselves, asking questions that they've learned and responding to what God has said in His Word.