

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Bill Brittenham

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Jon Barry Bryan Garlock
Joseph Barry Cole Meador

Prayers

Rodney Ellis Jerry Schnelle

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Bill Brittenham

Scripture Reading

Bryan Garlock

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Cole Meador Clay Morris

Prayers

Pete Rowland Gerald Eaton

WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Mark Davis

Song Leader

Clay Morris

Prayers

Joseph Barry Cole Meador

Invitation

Bryan Garlock

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16;
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ

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Volume XXIV

August 25, 2019

Issue 34

Teaching an Adult Bible Class: The Most Important Question

Berry Kercheville

Have you ever asked the question, "Why do we have Bible classes in our churches?" You may think that question to be simplistic, but the answer will determine how we go about teaching a class. Is the sole purpose to increase knowledge? If so, there is a danger in taking a "creedal" approach to teaching – we want everyone to fall in line with the "right answers." In other words, is the teacher's purpose to get the "student" to understand the scripture in the way it has typically been taught?

Further, if knowledge of the Bible is the goal, will the class be taught as an academic exercise? In other words, what is to be done with this knowledge? Are we simply to be sponges, or as the scribes, "experts in the law?" In Ephesians 4:15, Paul expressed the goal as "speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head." Paul's goal goes beyond imparting knowledge. Growing up in every way to be like Christ

and personally being able to actually *speak* the truth in love is unique to each person. As a teacher, I cannot dictate that process. I can equip and train, I can lead and show the way, but simply lecturing on a topic or book will not accomplish God's purpose in a disciple.

Lecture in a Bible Class is Counterproductive

Unfortunately, a teacher who lectures creates significant hindrances to discipleship. Consider the following:

1. Teachers who lecture do not equip disciples to "speak the truth in love." In fact, there is no "speaking" except by the teacher. Christians need to be able to practice explaining a text, not just to the satisfaction of the teacher, but in a way that would be understood by an unbeliever.

2. Teachers who lecture offer a negative motivation for class preparation. Why study if I am not given the opportunity to share and test my

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, W.H. McFerrin, and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

The next **Ladies Bible** Class will be Tuesday, **September 10th.**

Rodney Ellis is recovering from his heart procedure last week.

Our next **Gospel Meeting** is scheduled for **Oct. 13-18** with **Mark Roberts.**

Please pick up some invite cards and ask for Bible studies. See Bryan if you need any help with home studies.

Continued from page 1

discoveries? I need encouragement and insights from other Bible students in order to aid my growth. That is the essence of edification.

3. Teachers who lecture leave no room for the pooling of knowledge. Is the teacher able to discover all there is to know about a text? Is there nothing to be added by the study of other class members? Even assuming the teacher is better prepared than the other members, everyone is imperfect in their insights and conclusions. Our shared collective study enriches our understanding of God and protects us against false teaching.

4. Teachers who lecture restrict the ability of the church to “attain to the unity

of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood” (Eph. 4:13). As a church, we are to work through our differences and incomplete knowledge by “reasoning” together (Acts 18:4). How else will we “agree” and “be of the same mind and the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10)?

Teachers Must Be Careful with Their Questions

Typically, in a Bible class without lecture, teachers drive discussion by means of questions. Sometimes those questions are given as a study guide prior to the class and sometimes they are offered orally during the class. Either way, the type of questions are critical to reaching the goal of growing up in all things like Christ and being able to speak the truth in love. As a teacher, I must take care that I am not simply leading the class to give the answer I’m looking for instead of urging the student to take a fresh, unbiased look and discover for himself the truths of the text. There is a major difference between seeking the original intent and message of the Holy Spirit through self-discovery and trying to find the answer to leading questions given by a teacher or lesson book.

Have you ever studied for a Bible class by answering prepared questions and wondered what the author’s question meant or what answer he wanted? We hear members of the class ask, “What was the author looking for in that question?” This highlights three problems with most lesson books:

1. The student’s goal becomes answering questions rather than discovering all that he can see in the text. That process is boring and will never bring us to the words of David, “My soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirst for God, for the living God” (Psalm 42:1).

2. These questions *limit* the student to discovering only what the teacher or author of the lesson book thinks is important or has discovered himself. This promotes lazy Bible study and sometimes false conclusions since the teacher is leading the student to only see what he sees.

3. Since the student is primarily discovering what the teacher has discovered, he is merely studying the Bible through the teacher’s eyes. It is the same as convincing ourselves that we are studying the Bible when we are reading a commentary. We are not studying the Bible, we are studying the observations of someone else’s Bible study. It is prescription for believing error, missing key truths in scripture, and destroying enjoyment in our quest to know God.

What should be most important to me as a teacher is to encourage my fellow students to *discover for themselves* the Bible’s precious truths. First-hand discovery is the key to enjoying Bible study, which motivates further discovery. The last thing I want is for my brothers and sisters to get the majority of their Bible knowledge from me. I want every member of a class to come ready to excitedly share their own discoveries from the text so that we *all* are pooling our knowledge and the body is learning to “speak the truth in love” and “grow so that it builds itself up in love.” (Eph. 4:15-16). By this the church attains unity and excitement for God that will be shared with others.

The Most Important Question a Teacher Can Ask

There should always be an orderly approach to learning about God. The Bible study process includes four steps:

1. It begins with **observation**: what did you see?
2. It follows with **interpretation**: what did it mean to the original reader?
3. It pleads for **application**: how does the interpretation apply today?
4. It concludes with **communication**: how can I explain the text to others?

What then are the most important questions teachers should ask in a Bible class? In order to facilitate first-hand discovery and good Bible study habits, the first question is, “*What did you see?*” The followup question is, “*What else do you see?*” And often a further directive is, “*You still haven’t seen everything. Look again.*” The first emphasis is always observation. The more we are able to see the fullness of the text, the better we can progress to the final three steps.

Equipping Christians to learn that they can discover Bible truths *for themselves* instead of being overly dependent on teachers, commentaries, and “experts” is critical for ourselves and for the continued faithfulness of future generations.

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NEXT WEEK: How the class can help the teacher accomplish these goals and help themselves as well.

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