YRE102 TEACHING YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

A Syllabus for the International Institute for Christian Ministries

By Gary B. Swanson, M.A.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION

TEACHING YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

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Brief Description

       This course seeks to outline some of the most apparent needs for the development of effective Sabbath School teaching. By shifting the focus from teaching to learning, it engages the student-teacher in a variety of activities and exercises that explore the content as well as demonstrate the process. Not only is the student-teacher exposed to the theoretical changes that he or she must implement, but he or she is also immersed in the actual approaches that this course advocates.

General Course Objectives

The student of this course will:

       ●Explore a variety of ways in which to improve learning in the Sabbath School class.

       ●Consider ways in which he or she personally should implement these new approaches to learning.

       ●Resolve to implement the principles of interactive learning in Scripture.

Course Requirements

       1. Punctual, regular attendance.

       2. Participation in all interactive learning projects.

       3. Reading of the textbook as an underlying resource.

Textbook

       Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998).

Note to Teacher:

       This syllabus most likely contains more material than could be used during the IICM course time frame. Chose and adapt what is most useful and appropriate for your situation.

TEACHING NOTES

AN INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING SABBATH SCHOOL

I. Objectives

The student will:

●Explore some ideas about religious education that will expand his or her concepts of God's intention for the learning experience.

●Open his or her heart to some new directions in the teaching of Sabbath School.

●Share his or her responses to these new directions in Sabbath School.

II. Exploring Some Ideas

Distribute a copy of "Ideas" (see Appendix) to each participant. Have them browse through the quotations on this handout and select the one that seems most challenging to today's Sabbath School teacher. Have volunteers share their choices, and discuss them as a group.

A cynical pastor once described the current kind of religious education as "cramming little kids in a small room and teaching them to dislike God."[1] Unfortunately, this is true in too many Sabbath Schools around the world, where children and youth are exposed to the idea that behavior is more important than learning—and that God is only interested in them if they behave.

This course will see to expand your thinking and help you to explore some entirely new directions for Sabbath School teachers. Certainly Sabbath School should be a place where young people encounter God through their exposure to the wonder of His Word and His world.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

I. Objectives

The student will:

●Evaluate the role of a Sabbath School teacher in the learning process.

●Survey the needs of youth by which Sabbath School preparation should be informed.

●Determine to consider consistently the needs of Sabbath School class members as he or she prepares to teach.

II. Active Learning

Distribute a copy of "A Teacher Is Like . . ."(see Appendix) to each class member. Note that there are two copies of this activity on each sheet. Cut the sheets in half before distributing them.

Allow time for each class member to complete the activity. Then have volunteers share and explain their answers. Affirm each answer—all have at least some relevance. Discuss the merits of each.

Almost all of the possible answers in this activity have some relevance to the role of a teacher: (a) teachers are like auto mechanics because they fine tune the thinking of learners in the same way that mechanics fine tune auto engines; (b) teachers are like

gardeners in that they nurture learners in the same way gardeners nurture (i.e., plant, water, feed, prune, etc.) growing plants; teachers recognize the value of learners and mold them in ways similar to those in which sculptors see the potential of their media (e.g., stone, wood, etc.) and mold them into finished sculptures.

Note, however, that in each of these examples, the learner is in a passive role and that what the teacher does is more important than what the learner does. A much better model for learning would be that in which the learner has an active role in the learning process. A tour guide, for example, may know how to get to a certain destination and how to enrich the expedition, but the people on the tour have decided where they want to go and chosen the guide accordingly. Furthermore, they have to expend their own resources and energy to make the trip. An orchestra conductor can prepare rigorously for a concert, can study the music deeply, can wave the baton about vigorously, but unless each instrumentalist participates actively, no music will be made.

In any Sabbath School class, what the learner does is far more important than what the teacher does! The goal is to *learn*—not to teach.

III. Recognizing and Affirming the Needs of Youth

One of the most important goals for teachers is to meet the needs of the age group for which they are teaching. A teacher of a class of 60-year-olds is not going to be meeting their needs by focusing a great deal of class time on the subject of role models and heroes. A teacher of a youth class will not be profitably spending a lot of time on the subject of the stresses of aging.

Researchers in childhood development have identified many of the very specific concerns that youth are facing.

Distribute a copy of "Needs of Youth"[2] (see Appendix) to each class member, project this document by overhead projector, or write this list on a chalkboard of flipchart. Note that there are two copies of this activity on each sheet. Cut the sheets in half if you are going to distribute them in class. Read the list of needs aloud and then discuss the following:

●In what ways do you think topics like these can be made relevant to the study of Scripture?

●How can a teacher strike a balance between focusing on Scripture and on the needs of youth?

●How would you answer someone who claimed that Sabbath School class is for studying Scripture and that needs of youth should be addressed elsewhere?

Organize the class into groups of two or three. Assign each group two or three of the needs listed in "Needs of Youth" and have them use their Bibles to develop an elemental Bible study one of these needs. You may wish to provide concordances.

When enough time has been allowed for completion of this activity, call on several volunteers to share how they would relate Bible study to one of their assigned topics.

Because all Sabbath School materials follow a predetermined curricular outline, the emphasis is often on doctrine. As a teacher develops lesson plans, he or she should always be keeping the needs of the learners in mind, watching for ways in which to make even doctrinal lessons relevant to the needs of youth.

"Jesus used language and arguments which people could and did understand; he met people with their own vocabulary, on their own ground, and with their own ideas. We will be far better teachers of Christianity and far better witnesses for Christ when we learn to do the same."[3]

Have a volunteer read aloud James 1:22. Discuss the following:

●In your own words, what do you think this passage means as it relates to learning in Sabbath School?

●In most Sabbath School classes that you have attended, how much attention is paid to how to apply what is being studied?

"The *logos* must be *acted upon* (James 1:22). The Christian message is not something exclusively for the calm of the study, for the dissection of the lecture room, for the mental acrobatics of the discussion group. It is something which has to be lived out in day-to-day living."[4]

The application portion of a Bible study has a fourfold objective:

A. It should be related to the aim.

B. It should help learners discover the implications of the truths for their own everyday lives.

C. It should lead them to commit themselves to some action.

D. It should bring the Bible study to a fitting conclusion.

TEACHING AS JESUS TAUGHT

I. Objectives

The student will . . .

●Review the life of Jesus as it reflects the Savior's methods of reaching the heads and hearts of learners.

●Contrast Jesus' methods of teaching with those encountered in everyday life.

●Commit himself or herself to the further exploration of Jesus' model of teaching.

II. What Would Jesus Do?

Distribute a copy of "Teaching as Jesus Taught" (see Appendix) to each participant. Allow time for each to find three examples of Jesus' teaching methods. When they have completed this activity, have volunteers cite what they've found, requiring from them both the teaching method from Jesus' life and the scriptural reference(s) upon which it is based. Encourage the class to add to their lists those methods identified by others till their sheets are full.

C. S. Lewis, probably considered to be the world's leading Christian apologist of the last century, had this to say about Jesus' teaching: "We may observe that the teaching of Our Lord Himself, in which there is no imperfection, is not given us in that cut-and-dried, fool-proof, systematic fashion we might have expected or desired. He wrote no book. We have only reported sayings, most of them uttered in answer to questions,

shaped in some degree by their context. And when we have collected them all we cannot reduce them to a system. He preaches but He does not lecture. He uses paradox, proverb, exaggeration, parable, irony; even (I mean no irreverence) the 'wisecrack.' He utters maxims which, like popular proverbs, if rigorously taken, may seem to contradict one another. His teaching therefore cannot be grasped by the intellect alone, cannot be 'got up' as if it were a 'subject.' If we try to do that with it, we shall find Him the most elusive of teachers. He hardly ever gave a straight answer to a straight question. He will not be, in the way we want, 'pinned down'. The attempt is (again I mean no irreverence) like trying to bottle a sunbeam."[5]

Discuss the following:

●In only two or three words, how would you characterize Jesus' methods of teaching?

●How difficult do you think it would be to model your teaching after that of Jesus?

●What one thing do you think you could do next Sabbath to change your teaching style to be more like that of Jesus?

Religious education specialist Perry G. Downs adds this observation: "Effective teaching requires a variety of methods, depending on the content, the student, and the situation. . . . Jesus seemed to stress informal rather than formal teaching. . . . Formal education tends to be less effective than informal education in helping students reach the higher tiers of learning. The steps of application and adoption are generated better by more informal modes of teaching. The personal contact of informal instruction is

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ultimately more powerful than the more restrictive formal modes of teaching. Perhaps this is why our Lord chose to teach in informal modes."[6]

Discuss the following:

●How would you define "formal" and "informal" teaching, as it is portrayed in this quotation?

●What is one thing you could do next Sabbath to make your teaching more informal in mode?

III. Frequently Asked Questions

Write the following questions on a chalkboard, flipchart, or overhead:

●*Why is it so important that the world church participate in a single curriculum?*

●*Why don't we just study about Jesus and leave theology and doctrine to the experts?*

Whenever the enrichment of Sabbath School is discussed, these are two frequently asked questions.

Organize the class into groups of three or four, assign half the groups to the first question and the other half to the second. Provide concordances and have each group use their Bibles to formulate an answer to their assigned question, backing up their answers with biblical references.

When they have had adequate time to complete this exercise, have a volunteer from each group report their observations. List their responses on a chalkboard, flipchart, or overhead.

Discuss the following:

●In your opinion how important is doctrinal unity in the world church?

●What is the best way of encouraging doctrinal unity in the world church?

FOCUSING ON THE CENTRAL TRUTH

I. Objectives

The student will:

●Understand the reasons that a teacher should not focus on "covering the lesson."

●Write examples of each kind of learning aim (to know, to feel, and to respond).

●Make a commitment to focus more attention on aims that transcend mere knowing.

II. Identifying the Central Truth

Have a volunteer read aloud John 16:12.

In this scriptural passage Jesus explains to His disciples that they are not prepared for some of the things that He could share with them. He also, implicitly, demonstrates the principle that it's important in learning to focus on what is most important, that a teacher should not try to do too much.

"Cramming too much into one session is like running a long movie on fast forward. You may get through the whole thing in a short time, but all impact is lost. . . . *Learning* something is more important than *covering* everything."[7]

How many of you have ever heard a Sabbath School teacher complain that there is never enough time to finish the lesson? This is a very common comment, and it usually

comes from the teacher's idea that he or she has to "cover" the lesson. But think about this for a minute: How could anyone *ever* cover the lesson?

The answer to this problem is to get rid of the idea that the Sabbath School lesson must be exhaustively completed. Ellen White has said that "there is no such thing as getting through with the lesson."[8] By this she probably meant that (a) the study of Scripture is the work of a lifetime; and (b) Sabbath School teachers need to focus on concepts that are manageable given the time they are allotted.

Rather than to try to cover the lesson as it is presented in its entirety in the *Bible Study Guide,* teachers should select what one religious educator has described as the "one big idea" that they think the learners should take away from the Bible study. This one big idea should be based on the scriptural content and the needs of the student. At the very beginning of their preparation, teachers should ask themselves: What do the members of my class need to learn in this Bible study? What should the aim of the lesson be?

A well-drafted aim should consist of three components represented by the acronym "AIM":[9]

A-chievement level of student learning.

I-ndicator of student learning.

M-ain subject being taught.

This is a convenient way to remember the elements of a lesson aim. The "achievement level" is the degree of competency that would be expected of the learner. The "indicator" would be the observable behavior that the learner would be expected to exhibit. And the "main subject," of course, is the general topic that the learner is addressing.

Example: The student will list four ways to "honor your father and your mother."

In this aim the achievement level is "four ways," the indicator would be "list," and the main subject would be honoring parents.

Once the three components of an aim are mastered, there are three kinds of aims that a teacher should always consider: to know (head knowledge); to feel (heart knowledge); to respond (physical action).

To demonstrate the difference between these three kinds of aims, distribute a copy of "Three Kinds of Lesson Aims" (see Appendix) to each class member. Note that there are two copies of this activity on each sheet. Cut the sheets in half before distributing them.

After the class has had time to complete this assignment individually, read each aim aloud and have the class respond. Answers: 1. Feel; 2. Respond; 3. Know; 4. Feel; 5. Know; 6. Respond. In debriefing this activity, most of the class should better understand the difference among these three kinds of aims.

Unfortunately most Sabbath School discussions and Bible studies utilize only the aims that focus on "to know." This is because it is so much easier to evaluate whether the members of the class have fulfilled this kind of aim. But the other kinds of aims are even more important: "to feel" and "to respond."

The study of the Bible is about information *and* transformation. It is for the head and for the heart. If we aren't transformed by what we study in the Bible, then we are just involved in a mere intellectual exercise. So as Sabbath School teachers we should always

be pressing to go beyond mere knowing. We want our class members to be changed by what we're studying.

To give the class some practice in creating aims that transcend "to know," assign them each to select a passage from the Bible (a parable, a psalm, or the account of a single historical incident) and write three possible learning aims for it (to know; to feel; and to respond).

When they have completed this assignment, have volunteers share their work. Discuss their aims as a class, analyzing whether they are categorized correctly and whether they would make good aims for a Sabbath School teacher.

THE *USE* OF SCRIPTURE

I. Objectives

The student will:

- Explore the role of Bible study in life.

- Evaluate the importance of God's Word to him or her personally.

- Determine to make Scripture a more central part of Sabbath School class.

II. Studying God's Word

On a chalkboard, flipchart, or overhead, write a list of modern-day concrete objects (e.g., motorcycle, piano, cell phone, computer modem, lawn mower, forklift, microphone, television, stapler, ATM, thermometer, etc.).

Have participants, working individually, select one of these objects that they think best symbolizes the Bible: "The Bible is like a microphone because . . . "

Give opportunity for as many as possible to identify and explain their choices. Then discuss the following:

- What does the comparison of the Bible with these objects suggest about the way in which the Bible can be studied in a Sabbath School class?

- To what extent does the complexity of the object contribute to or take away from the comparison with the Bible?

●Would you characterize the Bible as simple or complex? Explain your answer.

●What impact, if any, does your characterization of the Bible as simple or complex have on appropriate teaching methods?

Organize the class into small groups of three or four. Assign each small group one of the following scriptural references to read in as many biblical versions and paraphrases as you can make available. Have them analyze the different aspects that these various versions and paraphrases provide to the understanding of their assigned passage. Then have a volunteer from each group share their observations.

John 5:39; Ephesians 6:17; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:21-23

Discuss the following:

●What effect does reading in several versions have on your understanding of the passage?

●How does hearing a passage read several times illuminate the meaning?

●If you were going to write a message that would be translated into many languages, what kind of words would you use?

●What kinds of teaching techniques does this exercise suggest for the study of God's Word in a Sabbath School class?

III. Getting Learners Into Scripture

Though it may seem a bit odd to say it, the central purpose of a Sabbath School lesson is Bible study, and students should always use their Bibles in the process. *What else could it be for?* We may wonder. Yet too many Sabbath School classes evolve into mere discussion periods in which participants share their thinking without even opening a Bible. A Sabbath School class should never be a "pooling of ignorance," a mere sharing of ideas.

Instead, a Sabbath School class should be a workshop in which participants learn that Scripture has something to say about any topic. Furthermore, they should learn the proper techniques of Bible study so that they will know how to use Scripture to address their everyday problems.

As the old saying goes: "Give me a fish and you feed me for a day. Teach me how to fish, and you will feed me for a lifetime."

Another way of expressing this idea: "All too often we are giving our people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants."[10]

How does this concept work on a Sabbath School class? One important way to implement this kind of learning is for teachers to step back from their role as the mere repository of information and engage learners directly with Scripture through the use of assignments that are carried out during the class time.

Distribute a copy of "Interactive Bible Projects" (see Appendix) to each class member. Read through the examples in this document and then discuss the following:

●If you were to utilize these kinds of assignments in your Sabbath School class, how would it be different from before?

●What would you say are the advantages of this kind of teaching?

●What would you say are the disadvantages?

Organize the class into groups of three or four and have each group design one interactive Bible project that could be used to teach the Sabbath School lesson for the current week. When the small groups have had sufficient time, have volunteers share and explain their interactive Bible project. As a group discuss the merits of these assignments.

INTERACTIVITY

I. Objectives

The student will:

●Contrast passive learning with interactive learning.

●Brainstorm ways in which a Sabbath School teacher could involve his or her

class in interactive learning.

●Consider ways in which fellowship enhances the learning atmosphere in a

Sabbath School class.

II. Learning by Doing

Rapidly read aloud the following instructions:[11]

To join two endpoints:
    1. Choose the Direct Selection tool.
    2. Optional: If you want to combine two endpoints into one, move one endpoint on top of the other manually and marquee them to select them both, or use the Average command (Axis: Both) to align *them (instructions are on the previous page).*
    3. Shift-click on two endpoints, or marquee them.
    4. Choose Object menu > Path> Join. If the endpoints are not on top of each other, the Join command will connect them with a straight line segment. If the endpoints are aligned on top of each other and both are selected (marquee them, if necessary), the Join dialog box will open. In the Join dialog box:
    Click **Corner** to join corner points into one corner point with no direction lines or to connect two curve points (or a corner point and a curve point) into one curve point with independent-moving direction lines. This is the default setting.
    or
    Click **Smooth** to connect two curve points into a curve point with direction lines that move in tandem.
    5. Click OK or press Return/Enter.

I have just read to you a five-step process from the manual for the Adobe Illustrator program. How many of you now feel that you could go to the nearest computer and join two endpoints in an Adobe Illustrator program?

Why or why not?

In most Sabbath School classes—for adults and all other age groups—teachers do 80 or 90 percent of the talking. They may ask questions that sometimes generate some stimulating discussions, but the lecture is the teaching method used most. There are appropriate times and topics that require the lecture, but these should be in the minority.

The most effective learning occurs when the student gets involved interactively with what is being learned. Jesus, the Master Teacher, often used interactive assignments to immerse His disciples in learning by doing. He told His learners to "Fill the jars with water" and "Let down your nets for a catch." He invited Peter to step out of the boat and join Him on the open sea. Note, too, that baptism and the ordinances were learning activities. The learners were actively, physically involved in the process. There are many graphic representations of this process, but a very simple one is pictured in the "Triangle of Learning."

Distribute a copy of "The Triangle of Learning" (see Appendix) to each class member, project it through the use of an overhead, or diagram it on a chalkboard of flipchart.

This triangle depicts the idea that the more immersed in the learning process someone becomes, the more thoroughly he or she learns. The top of the triangle

represents abstract learning: reading printed material or listening to a speaker. This is the least efficient way to learn.

Note that the audio-visual combinations (when the teacher incorporates the use of even so elementary a medium as a chalkboard or flipchart) the learning becomes more effective. Through the use of diagrams, photographs, drawings, videos—anything visual—the learning is enhanced.

The most efficient learning is at the base of the triangle. This is where direct learning takes place because learners, using all their senses, are actively engaged. "Writing, drawing, role-playing, or field trips—any kind of direct participation—have excellent learning value. Accordingly, we suggest that teachers of junior and senior youth use a variety of activities."[12]

Have the class brainstorm as exhaustive a list as they can of the different ways in which learners can be involved interactively in the learning process. As they identify different ways, write them on a chalkboard or flipchart. Suggest that they write them on paper so they may take the list with them for ideas as they prepare their teaching plans in the future.

III. Fellowship

The need to involve youth in interactive learning is closely related to the need for fellowship in a Sabbath School class. Fellowship is one of the four most important elements in Sabbath School. The teacher should find ways to develop a positive

relationship with all members of his or her class. As learners enrich their relationships with their teacher and with one another, they grow closer to each other and closer to Jesus.

Discuss the following:

●Define "fellowship" as it relates to Sabbath School.

●Why do you think fellowship is so important to learning?

●What examples from Jesus' ways of teaching indicate the importance of fellowship?

Have all participants stand. Ask them to approach someone who is their opposite (short to tall, young to old, male to female, etc.). Next have each couple join another couple to make a group of four individuals.

Have each small group of four make two lists:

>●The best avenues for building fellowship

>●The greatest hindrances to fellowship

There should be at least seven items in each list. After three minutes have someone from each group report on the contents of both the lists. Write them on a chalkboard or flipchart, but don't record duplicates.

As a group compile an additional list of at least 25 activities that a local group can do to enhance the fellowship quotient of a Sabbath School class. At least 10 of them should be activities that don't typically happen at church or on Sabbath.

Notice that as we close this exercise, the greater portion of the content for this learning activity on fellowship has come from the participants in the class and not from the teacher. This is an excellent example of what is described in our earlier session on the role of the teacher. As a Sabbath School teacher, you should not be expected to assume the role of "the expert" so much as the facilitator of an atmosphere that elicits the fullest possible knowledge for the group.

"It is not the best plan for teachers to do all the talking, but they should draw out the class to tell what they know."[13]

CREATING GOOD DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I. Objectives

The student will:

●Analyze the questioning techniques of Jesus.

●Prepare discussion questions based on an assigned scriptural passage.

●Resolve to improve the discussion questions he or she prepares for Sabbath School teaching.

II. Jesus' Questioning Techniques

For too long Sabbath School teachers have relied almost solely on the lecture as a way of presenting a Sabbath School lesson. One writer has compared the lecture to the game of golf and discussion to the game of tennis. In golf a player hits the ball and then follows it and hits it again—and again and again! Two (or four) players are involved in tennis, hitting the ball back and forth to one another, and there is greater possibility of inter-player dynamic.

Francis Bacon made the interesting comment that "a skillful question is half the answer." One educational researcher has noted that the four gospels include 100 of Jesus' questions.[14] Sometimes Jesus even answered questions with other questions!

Have the class use their Bibles to search the four gospels and have each participant write down five of Jesus' questions.

When they have completed this activity, have volunteers share what they have found and have the class analyze and categorize each question. This discussion should address the following issues: (a) To whom was the question addressed? (b) What was Jesus' purpose in asking the question? (c) What kind of response did Jesus receive?

III. The Importance of Discussion Questions

As has been stated before, the great majority of Sabbath School classes have traditionally been taught in the lecture format. Imagine a gardener with only one gardening implement: a hoe. With this single implement the gardener tries to prepare the soil, plant the seeds, water the plants, and harvest the produce. This is obviously absurd, yet many Sabbath School teachers attempt to do something very like it: they try to teach a class using only one tool, that of the lecture.

Usually Jesus did not explicate His parables, but in He decided to explain the meaning of His parable of the sower. "When anyone hears the message [teaching] about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path" (Matt. 13:19, NIV). Teachers must do more than lecture if they want to assure that the greater number of Sabbath School class members are going to "understand" the message about the kingdom.

One of the ways teachers can do this is to follow Jesus' example of asking intelligent questions. Most authorities suggest that teachers should not talk more than

about 30 percent of the class time. The English word "educate" comes from the Latin word *educare,* which means "to bring out"—not "to pour in"!

"It is a wise educator who seeks to call out the ability and powers of the student, instead of constantly endeavoring to impart instruction."[15]

Religious educator Marlene LeFever has outlined the benefits that learners enjoy through the utilization of discussion:[16]

1. Discussion stimulates interest and thinking and helps students develop skills of observation, analysis, and logic.

2. Discussion helps students clarify and review what they have learned.

3. Students can sometimes solve their own problems through discussion.

4. Discussion allows students to hear opinions that are more mature and perhaps more Christlike than their own.

5. Discussion stimulates creativity and aids students in applying what they have learned to everyday situations.

6. When students verbalize what they believe and are forced to explain or defend what they say, (a) their convictions are strengthened; (b) their ability to share what they believe with others is increased.

Distribute a copy of "Creating Good Discussion Questions" (see Appendix) to each class member. Read through and discuss these guidelines.

Then, select a scriptural passage (a parable, a psalm, or the account of a single historical incident) and assign each participant to: (a) read the assigned passage; (b) write five questions based on the assigned passage and informed by the guidelines in "Creating Good Discussion Questions."

When the class has had sufficient time to complete this assignment, have volunteers share their questions and, as a group, analyze the ways in which they reflect (or don't reflect) the guidelines outlined in "Creating Good Discussion Questions."

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APPENDIX

Ideas

"Teaching is designed to produce both information and transformation" (Gangel and Hendricks).[17]

"The goal of theological thinking is not simply an accurate and comprehensive knowledge of scripture, but ultimately a responsive and transforming knowledge of the character and activity of God" (Guy).[18]

"Rationalist fallacy: if only we can get our thinking right, all else will fall into place. Even those who wrote the most about 'practice' in the 1970s and 1980s seemed seduced by this modern delusion that right thinking leads to right living" (Sweet).[19]

"The *logos* must be *taught* (Acts 18:11). The Christian message begins with proclamation, but it must go on to explanation. One of the gravest weaknesses of the Church is that so many people do not know what Christianity really means and believes and stands for; and one of the gravest faults in preaching is that it so often exhorts a man to be a Christian without teaching him what Christianity is. Teaching is an essential part of the Christian message" (Barclay).[20]

"No teacher should strive to make others think as he thinks, but to lead them to the living Truth, to the Master himself, of whom alone they can learn anything, who will make them in themselves know what is true by the very seeing of it" (MacDonald).[21]

"In practice, despite rhetoric to the contrary, much religious education tends to stubbornly retain its ancient authoritarian (oral) structure even while asserting its compatibility with the mass-media (democratic) environment. Much of this type of traditional teaching remains fundamentally ineffective with contemporary learners because it does not truly allow them an active role. Experience demonstrates that instruction coupled with personal involvement facilitates the learning of personal and social behaviors. . . . Much of what passes for religious education today is the use of outmoded communication forms" (Sarno).[22]

"There is a vast difference between 'learning' and 'instruction.' In 'instruction,' you are trained by rote in what to think and do and be. In 'learning,' you are trained contextually in how to think and do and be" (Sweet).[23]

"We learn nothing from those who say: 'Do as I do.' Our only teachers are those who tell us to 'do it with me' " (Deleuze).[24]

A Teacher Is Like . . .

What other kind of career, job, or profession would you compare a teacher to?
Check only the best one of the following:

☐auto mechanic	☐plumber	☐tour guide
☐gardener	☐carpenter	☐tailor
☐sculptor	☐nurse	☐truck driver
☐physician	☐news reporter	☐orchestra conductor
☐police officer	☐house painter	☐sanitary engineer
☐politician	☐auditor	☐janitor
☐banker	☐firefighter	☐other:
☐attorney	☐sales clerk	_____

Explain your answer:

_____

A Teacher Is Like . . .

What other kind of career, job, or profession would you compare a teacher to?
Check only the best one of the following:

☐auto mechanic	☐plumber	☐tour guide
☐gardener	☐carpenter	☐tailor
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☐police officer	☐house painter	☐sanitary engineer
☐politician	☐auditor	☐janitor
☐banker	☐firefighter	☐other:
☐attorney	☐sales clerk	_____

Explain your answer:

_____

The Needs of Youth

Acceptance
Achievement
Activity, participation, involvement
Adventure
Approval
Belonging
Choose a philosophy and lifestyle
Discipline, rules
Eye contact
Focused attention
Feel needed
Goals, ideals, challenges
Identity
Know current issues:
     Creation/evolution
     Drugs
     Humanism, etc.
Personal relationship with Jesus
Relationships, Christian friends

Rewards—recognition
Role models, "heroes"
Security
Self-acceptance
Self-control, self expression
Self-worth
Sexuality, Christian view of
Socialization
Spiritual nurture:
     SDA beliefs
     Conversion
     Baptism
     Involvement in mission
     Devotional life
Touching, appropriate
Trust
Unconditional love
Valuing, moral judgments

Teaching as Jesus Taught

In the Gospels, Jesus is referred to as "teacher" more than 40 times. The ways in which He approached people can serve as models for the way in which Sabbath School teachers can approach the members of their classes today. In the table below, list three of Jesus' teaching techniques. Be prepared to combine your answers with those of others.

Teaching Technique	Scriptural Reference

Three Kinds of Lesson Aims

Each of the scriptural passages listed below is followed by three aims that would be appropriate to present in a Sabbath School class. Classify each aim as K(now), F(eel), or R(espond) by checking the appropriate box at the right.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-31)

	K	F	R
1. The student will consider ways in which he or she has behaved like the older brother.			
2. The student will adopt a more accepting attitude toward "prodigal sons" in the church.			
3. The student will explain why the older brother's behavior was wrong.			

The Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-45)

	K	F	R
4. The student will realize his or her need for spiritual resurrection.			
5. The student will compare Mary and Martha's roles in the story of Lazarus' resurrection.			
6. The student will accept God's timetable in requests for His intervention in life.			

Interactive Bible Projects

There are a variety of ways to involve a Sabbath School class in interactive learning. The following are examples of several approaches that will lead groups or individuals through an interactive learning exercise that will assure the use of Scripture in the class. Any subject can be addressed through this assignment-style approach to teaching.

Scripture Search: You have found yourself in the center of a strong disagreement between two of your closest friends. Because of the aggressive way Carlos plays basketball, he has permanently injured one of Glenn's eyes. Carlos has asked forgiveness, but Glenn refuses even to speak to him. What scriptural references would help you in trying to persuade Glenn to forgive Carlos?

Bible Paraphrase: In a news story of 300 words or more, write a full report of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea.

Critical Thinking: Using scriptural references, account for the seeming contradiction in the definition of the word *believe* in John 3:16 and James 2:19—"everyone who *believes*" vs. "even the demons *believe.*

Compare and/or Contrast: If everyone in your school—students, teachers, and administrators— guided their lives by the principles outlined in Luke 6:27-36, how would life be different there? List six differences.
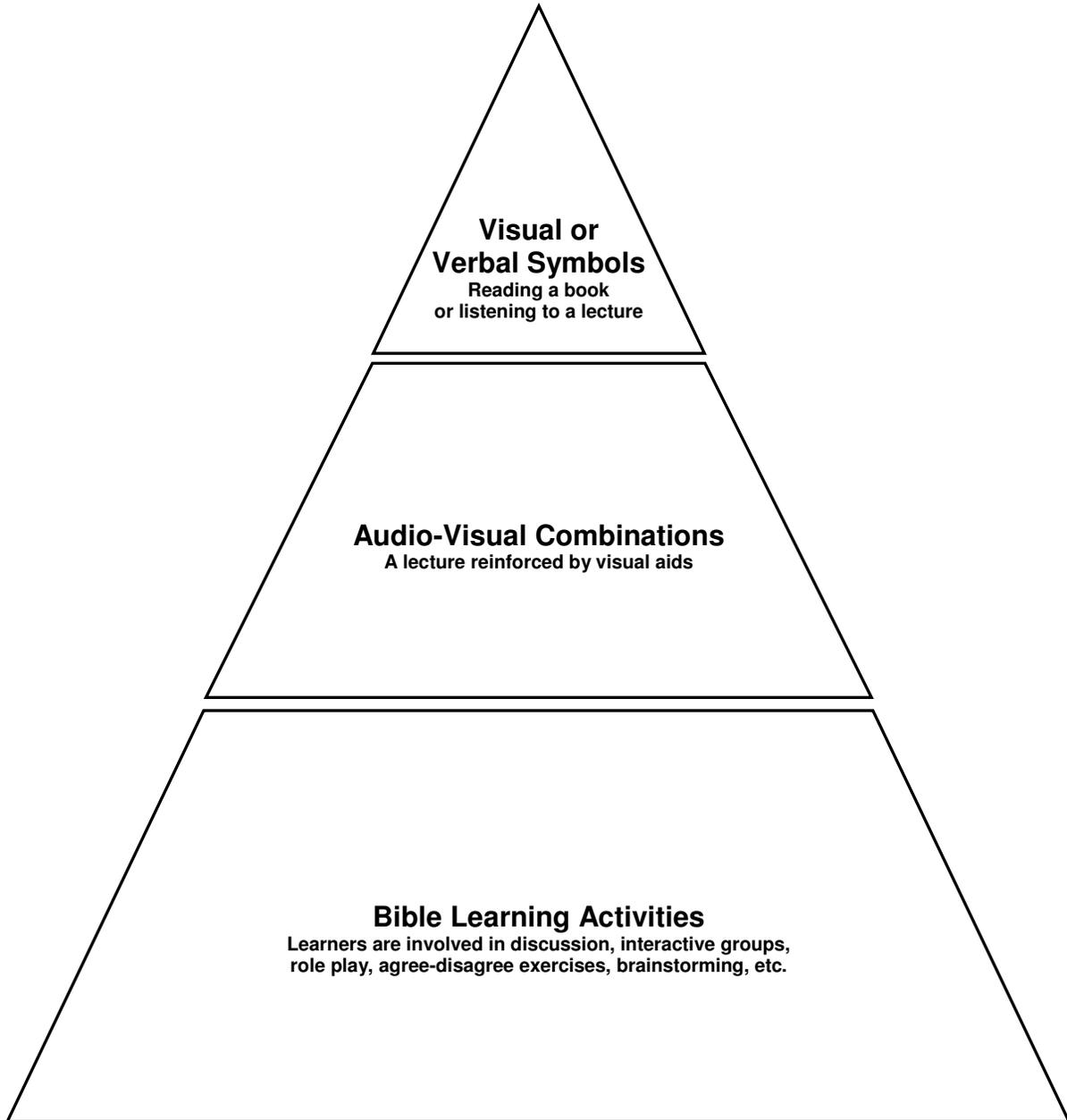
Research and Report: Based on this week's lesson, trace Paul's first missionary journey on this map of the Mediterranean area.

Case Study: Judging from Gideon's experiences, how should a person go about discerning God's leading in his or her life?

Resolving Conflict: What does the following list of references suggest about the Christian's use of alcohol: Ps. 104:15; Prov. 20:1; Eccles. 10:19; Matt. 11:19; John 2:3; 1 Tim. 5:23?

Support and Opinion or Belief: Outline five specific ways this week's lesson affirms the idea of the trinity.

THE TRIANGLE OF LEARNING

**Visual or
Verbal Symbols**
Reading a book
or listening to a lecture

Audio-Visual Combinations
A lecture reinforced by visual aids

Bible Learning Activities
Learners are involved in discussion, interactive groups,
role play, agree-disagree exercises, brainstorming, etc.

Questioning Guidelines

●Use questions to move the class toward the learning goal.

●Avoid yes/no questions.

●Go beyond recall questions ("How many sons did Noah have?").

●Use clarifying questions ("Explain . . .").

●Ask "how" or "why" questions.

●Use life-application questions.

●Break up complex questions into smaller, clearer questions.

●Use questions that require students to refer to Scripture.

●Prepare 12 to 15 questions for one hour's discussion.

●Avoid answering your own questions.

●Don't settle for only one answer.

●Don't expect students to guess what is on your mind.

●Help a student modify an inaccurate answer till it becomes acceptable.

●Ask only one question at a time.

●Develop a tolerance for silence.

●If a question is overly obvious, it's better simply to state the material outright. Although inductive studies rely on questions, they need not consist *only* of questions.

●Patterns of repetition are especially important in the Bible. Asking a group to find patterns or lists of things in a passage is often a productive observation activity.

●It's better to ask two short questions rather than one long one made up of several parts. Avoid connectives like *and* or *but* in observation questions.

●Be sure that questions relate to the main point of the passage.

●If possible, ask questions that will give several group members opportunity to answer. "What do we learn about the character of Abraham in this event?" will probably yield multiple answers and perspectives.

●Avoid excessive use of the interrogatives *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where*.

●Although interpretation questions may have more than one good answer, they should ask for an interpretation of something *in the text* and should not simply ask for the opinions of members of the group.

●Avoid opinion-poll questions. Your task is to seek the meaning of the passage, not group members' opinions about a subject.

●Do not let application questions become a detached discussion of ethical principles. Use projects, questions, and exercises to help the group members wrestle with the text's meaning for daily life.

ENDNOTES

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[7] Thom and Joani Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: And How to Fix It* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1993), p. 54.

[8] *Counsels on Sabbath School Work,* p. 116.

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[11] Elaine Weinmann and Peter Lourekas, *Illustrator for Macintosh and Windows* (Berkeley, Calif.: Peachpit Press, 1997), p. 85.

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[13] *Counsels on Sabbath School Work,* p. 115.

[14] Charles H. Betz, *Teaching Techniques for the Adult Sabbath School* (Westlake Village, Calif.: Pacific Union Sabbath School Department, 1980), p. 78.

[15] *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 166.

[16] Marlene LeFever, *Creative Teaching Methods* (Elgin, Ill.: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1985), pp. 224, 225.

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[20] William Barclay, *New Testament Words,* ibid., p. 182.

[21] George MacDonald, *Discovering the Character of God* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1989), p. 5.

[22] Ronald A. Sarno, *Using the Media in Religious Education* (Birmingham, Ala.: Religious Education Press, 1987), pp. 12, 13.

[23] Leonard Sweet, *Aqua Church* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1999), p. 21.

[24] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 23.