

## II. PRACTICE GOOD PRACTICE

### A. Purposeful Teaching

1. Have a purpose.
  - a. One of the biggest mistakes of any teacher or preacher is the failure to have or acknowledge a purpose. Truth is, everything that we do for the Lord should be done with a purpose.
    - (1) Ultimately, our purpose should be to bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 10:31).
    - (2) However, there are other purposes that serve as companions to the greater purpose.
  - b. Before teaching on any subject matter, the teacher needs to ask the question, “Is there a purpose for teaching this lesson?”
    - (1) First and foremost, can the teaching of this lesson bring glory to God?
    - (2) Secondly, does the teaching of this lesson:
      - a) Clarify doctrinal confusion
      - b) Provide practical insights
      - c) Etc.
2. Know the purpose.
  - a. This goes hand in hand with having a purpose. Once you know that you have a purpose for teaching a particular subject, it should immediately follow that you know what the purpose is.
  - b. If the teacher/preacher does not know the purpose of the lesson, how can the hearer be expected to grasp it?
  - c. Consider some scriptural examples of having a purpose and identifying what that purpose might be.
    - (1) The ministry and teaching of Moses (Deuteronomy 4:1-14)
      - a) Moses taught the Israelites statutes and judgments (Deuteronomy 4:1, 5, 14).
      - b) He did so for the purpose of encouraging obedience and securing the well-being and preservation of the people (Deuteronomy 4:1, 5, 14).
      - c) He did so that the teaching would be passed to the next generation (Deuteronomy 4:9, 10).
    - (2) The ministry and teaching of Christ (Matthew 6:1-18)
      - a) Christ taught the audience on the subject matters of:
        - i) Giving (Matthew 6:1-4)
        - ii) Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15)
        - iii) Fasting (Matthew 6:16-18)
      - b) He did so with a multi-pronged purpose.
        - i) He exposed the errors of the religious leaders.
        - ii) He encouraged right practices among His followers.
        - iii) He elevated the potential rewards at the hands of the Lord to the detriment of the prospective rewards available from the praise of man.

3. Accomplish the purpose. Once the teacher determines the purpose of the lesson, every effort should be placed into accomplishing the purpose.
  - a. This starts by considering necessary elements in the teaching to ensure that the purpose is accomplished. Luke 14:28 offers principled teaching concerning building that could be practically applied to the subject of teaching.
    - (1) Based upon the identified purpose, do I need to move around the scripture or stay in the surrounding context?
    - (2) Which points are most crucial and how much time do I have to spend on them?
    - (3) How do I best communicate the main purpose of the lesson? Do I need to lay a foundation or does the audience already have a general understanding of the subject and study? Do I need to illustrate the truth or provide examples to help the audience understand the importance and nature of the subject?
  - b. This continues by evaluating the teaching mid-stream to see if the task at-hand is being accomplished or derailed.
    - (1) Did I spend too much time on the introduction or on the first points putting my desired purpose in danger? If so, where can I spend less time going forward so that the purpose of the lesson is not lost?
    - (2) Does the audience seem confused, distracted, or disinterested? If so, how can I recapture their attention so that they are focused and principled enough to see the purpose?
  - c. This is fulfilled afterwards by assessing whether the lesson was taught according to the directing of the Lord and hopefully according to the purposeful plan.
    - (1) Be patient. It tends to take time (maybe years) to truly see whether one's purpose for teaching on a particular subject was accomplished.
    - (2) Most of the indicators commonly sought out by teachers are, at best, weak, but more likely faulty altogether.
      - a) The faces of the people
      - b) The praise offered from the people
      - c) The immediate actions of the people
    - (3) Consider the better indicators to determine whether your desired purpose was accomplished.
      - a) Was God glorified?
        - i) The scripture was taught soundly.
        - ii) The heart, motive, and actions of the teacher was submitted to the Lord.
      - b) Was there a notable change?
        - i) Did the audience (afterwards) show an increase of obedience and faithfulness to God's commands?
        - ii) Did the audience understand the doctrines taught and strengthen their doctrinal position against heresies and false doctrines?

B. Relevant Teaching

1. Introductory thoughts
  - a. Before studying and teaching, one must determine the answer to three questions (order specific).
    - (1) What does the passage say?
    - (2) What does the passage mean?
    - (3) What does the passage mean to me?
  - b. The first two of these questions will be related under the heading *Teach the Bible*. The last of these questions will be related under the heading *Relate the Bible*.
2. Teach the Bible. This means that we are to communicate what a passage SAYS and what it MEANS.
  - a. The why
    - (1) The Bible is the only authority we have (Isaiah 55:11).
    - (2) It is the Spirit's sword.
      - a) The Spirit of God is the Lord's chosen teacher (Nehemiah 9:20; John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:13).
      - b) The Holy Ghost's weapon of choice is a sword, and that sword is the word of God (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).
      - c) To use anything else is akin to sending a soldier to war without an offensive weapon and asking him to accomplish victory.
  - b. The how
    - (1) Help the audience to understand the basic sense of the passage (Nehemiah 8:8).
    - (2) Develop the teaching of the passage in its historical and literal context.
3. Relate the Bible. This means that we are to communicate what a passage MEANS TO ME or what it MEANS TO THE AUDIENCE.
  - a. The why
    - (1) People only truly appreciate what brings known value to their lives.
    - (2) One of the cries of Bible critics is that the word of God is irrelevant in the current age.
    - (3) While much of this is merely an excuse used by men to justify not concerning themselves with the Bible's contents, some of this is a result of poor Bible teaching/preaching.
  - b. The how
    - (1) The beauty of a Bible written by God is that its use is not limited to the past, present, or future, but will in every age be just as useful.
    - (2) In a lecture/teaching style setting, it is the responsibility of the teacher with the help of the Holy Ghost to enlighten the audience as the current and relevant application of the passage at hand to their lives.

4. Consider an example and explanation of these components.
  - a. The following notes are from a message titled *A Song of Renewed Perspective* taken from Psalm 73:1-28.
    - (1) Laying the foundation
      - a) The subtitle of the Psalm—"A Psalm of Asaph"
      - b) The man behind the Psalm
        - i) Asaph's roles
          - (a) He was a leader of the music used in the worship (1 Chronicles 15:17, 19; 1 Chronicles 16:5, 7, 37).
          - (b) He also had some involvement as a seer in the proclamation of God's word (2 Chronicles 29:30).
          - (c) He appears to have served in some capacity as a judge among the people (Psalm 75:2-3).
        - ii) Asaph's character—Based upon statements in the psalms that bear his name, he loved the Lord.
    - (2) The admission of the psalmist (Psalm 73:1-3)
      - a) His admission concerning the Lord (Psalm 73:1)
      - b) His admission concerning himself (Psalm 73:2-3)
    - (3) The false perspective toward the wicked (Psalm 73:4-12)
      - a) The avoidance of the wicked (Psalm 73:4-7)
        - i) Their avoidance in death (Psalm 73:4)
        - ii) Their avoidance in life (Psalm 73:5-7)
      - b) The arrogance of the wicked (Psalm 73:8-9)
        - i) Their condition—"They are corrupt" (Psalm 73:8).
        - ii) Their oppression (Psalm 73:8)
        - iii) Their irreverence (Psalm 73:9)
      - c) The accounting of others (Psalm 73:10-12)
        - i) The true recipients of affliction (Psalm 73:10)
        - ii) The inaction by God (Psalm 73:11)
        - iii) The true beneficiaries in the world (Psalm 73:12)
    - (4) The turning of the psalmist (Psalm 73:13-17)
      - a) A time of doubt (Psalm 73:13-15)
      - b) The time of clarity (Psalm 73:16-17)
    - (5) The true perspective toward the wicked (Psalm 73:18-20)
      - a) The certainty of their demise (Psalm 73:18)
      - b) The details of their demise (Psalm 73:19)
      - c) The feelings of their demise (Psalm 73:20)
    - (6) The admission of the psalmist (Psalm 73:21-28)
      - a) His time of conviction (Psalm 73:21-22)
      - b) His time of praise (Psalm 73:23-26)
      - c) His time of renewal (Psalm 73:27-28)
  - b. Consider how you could teach the passage with purpose and relevance. Note how you could teach the historical and contextual truths of the passage while also applying the practical truths found to the lives of your audience.