

Discipleship Studies

Insight for Teaching

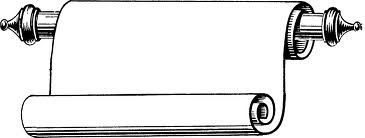
Encouragement and Instructions

for those God has called to teach

His Word to His people



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INSIGHT FOR TEACHING

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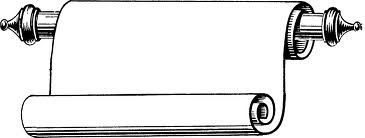
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Why Should I Teach?

Chapter 1

Almighty God has appointed certain individuals in the body of Christ to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; all for the purpose of building up and equipping the body of Christ, His church. (Ephesians 4:11-12)

It is a great honor to be called to be a teacher, and this study is directed to those whom God has appointed to be teachers of His Word to His followers.

*Matthew 5:19 "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Webster’s defines teaching as: communicating to another the knowledge of that of which he was before ignorant; to enlighten the mind of another.

Teachers are to encourage and help implant the Word of God deep into the hearts of other believers. They are to equip their students to be able to study and understand the Bible for themselves; so they can stand on their own, not being tossed here and there by false teachings. The time is getting short, with more and more mixture and lies from the world making their ways into our churches. We as Christians need to know the Word of God and stand on His truths.

*Psalm 1:1-3 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.*

If we long to know God, to have a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ, to walk in the comfort and power of the Holy Spirit; if we want to live the Christian life faithfully and know what God requires of us; we must do more than merely read the Bible. We must interact with God’s Word personally, absorbing its messages, and letting God engrave His truths on our hearts, minds, and lives. As students of God’s Word, we must know God and His Word, so we can give understanding to those we teach. Life and death are in the power of our words, so we must be very careful about all the words that come out of our mouth. This is not a responsibility to take lightly.

*James 3:1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.*

If God has given you the gift of teaching and asked you to teach His Word to His beloved bride, you must obey Him and teach. God has given you the gift of teaching, but if you don’t go out and start to teach:

* you will never improve in being a teacher
* you will never be at ease teaching
* you will never learn to fully rely upon the Holy Spirit

These things come when you step out in faith to what God has called you to do.

This study is designed to equip and enhance your teaching skills, so you can lead an effective Bible study in your home, community, and church.

What keeps people from teaching? We all have questions in our minds: “*What if I make no sense? What if I freeze up? I don’t know enough to teach. I don’t really have that much to say. How can I teach when I am not perfect?”*

We must search our hearts to recognize and deal with these fears and hindrances.

Fear, pride, false humility, and insecurity must go. Humility and confidence must enter.

With the ministry gifts that God has given us, we are in partnership with the Holy Spirit of God that dwells in us. We have our part to do, and the Holy Spirit has His. We are to pray and to research and to speak. He leads us in what to speak on, what verses to use, and what words come out of our mouth.

This is a partnership and we are not the majority partner. He must lead, and we must follow. This is a discipline, especially when we get to the actual teaching. We must be sensitive to His voice, not carried away with our voice. Pausing in the midst of teaching to inquire of the Lord what He wants to speak next is a good thing, but a very hard thing to do at first. We tend to zoom through our notes as fast as our mouths can go (this is usually nervousness). Slowing down our words is a discipline that must be developed by most teachers.

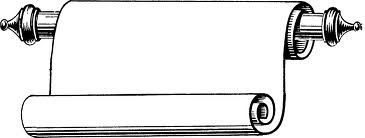
Each one of us is created uniquely by the Lord, and our individual style of teaching will be unique. WE MUST NOT TRY TO PATTERN OURSELF AFTER ANYONE ELSE! God will develop a unique style in us, and it will mature over time. As we rely more and more upon the Holy Spirit, as we trust Him more to lead us in our words; God can work though us to bring His Word, His truth, and His heart to others.

God’s people do not know God. Yes they have come to Him for salvation, and they know bits and pieces of some Bible stories, but they have not come close to God to Know Him. **As teachers, our task is to help God’s people come to KNOW HIM and to TRUST HIM.**

**This is the season for teachers to arise from our study desks and teach God’s people.** No more gathering information for ourselves, we must share this knowledge with God’s people.

*Ezekiel 34:2-3 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? "You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock.*

INSIGHT FOR TEACHING



Preparation for Teaching

Chapter 2

I have learned over the years that there are many ways to write out notes to use in teaching, but the gathering of the research that goes into preparing me to teach is the same. This chapter will give you many tools to help you prepare for the lesson you will be teaching.

The first and most important thing we must do in preparation is to **pray for the Holy Spirit to lead us.** We must always seek His wisdom in every step of our teaching. Remember teaching is a partnership and the Holy Spirit is the leader.

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Selecting a topic

Selecting a topic can sometimes be a daunting task, and sometimes it comes easily. The Holy Spirit uses many ways to give us topics and we must always be alert to the possible subjects He would like us to study and then teach to others. Some of the ways a topic can come to us are:

* From your personal quiet time with the Lord, where some passage or concept is highlighted to you
* From a topic, character trait of God, or a person in the Bible that interests you
* From something said by another in a sermon, Bible study, or prayer that you want to study more
* From a topic someone else asks you to teach
* From something you have struggled with and see others are struggling with now



Study Tools

Once you have the topic to teach on, pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you in the Word to the verses you will use. **Research is vital**!!! You need to look up many verses to get the full council of God’s Word. BUT a WARNING – balance is necessary. Since we as teachers love the Word, we tend to get bogged down with gathering too many verses and going astray onto other topics. When you read verses that really touch your heart, but are not what you are currently preparing to teach, make a list of those verses for another time. You must fight to stay focused. We love the Word and we get excited when we read it.

There are many study toolsavailable to us to prepare. The **Bible is your ultimate research tool**. It is best to use NKJV, NASB, or NIV (most Biblical reference books are based on these versions); but the paraphrased versions are sometimes good to convey a concept in everyday language.

It is important to look to look up **Cross-references** on the topic you have chosen. The Bible is God’s inerrant truth and there is no reference book that will give you more insight and truth than the Word of God. Read a passage of Scripture and then look up other verses that are related to this one. This often times gives us much more insight on the passage we have just read. God has consistent messages interwoven all throughout His Word, and He delights in showing them to us.

* Most study Bibles have cross-references listed in the margin referencing verses that are related to the one you are reading. Looking up these references can add more substance to your study and also lead you into other aspects of your chosen topic.
* Another way to look up verses is with a Concordance in the back of your Bible or an Exhaustive Concordance that has every word from the Bible that you can look up.
* E-sword and other Bible reference software are great tools to use when looking up gathering verses for your study.

The Bible was written mainly in Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament). When the Bible was translated into the language you are reading, sometimes the richness of the meaning of some words or phrases gets diluted; this is because Hebrew and Greek are often more precise that English. I have found that doing **Word Studies** adds great depth to my research and teaching. There are many handy reference materials to help you look up the meanings of the exact Hebrew of Greek word used in the passage of the Bible you are reading, without being a Hebrew or Greek Scholar.

* It is best to useNKJV, NASB, NIV versions of the Bible to study from, because most reference books are in one of these translations, and these translations are more word for word.
* All words (or phrases) used in the Bible have been assigned a number to correspond to the original Hebrew or Greek word. These numbers come from the Strong’s Concordance. You can then look up that number in a Complete Word Study Book of Old or New Testament. You will be given the Hebrew or Greek word and then the meaning of it and any related words. It is sometimes good to look these up to get more clarification.
* E-sword and other Bible reference software are very good to use because they make this process easier and faster (along with a lot less heavy!).
* Bible dictionaries are a good tool to gain more understanding on words, places, people, history, and customs from Biblical times.
* It is good to have a Webster’s dictionary to get more understanding on the meanings of English words from your Bible or from the definitions you get from the Greek or Hebrew. If you study in a language different than English, it is good to have a dictionary in your language.

There are other reference tools that can prove to be useful to give you and your students more insight on what you are teaching.

* Maps from Biblical times
* Books on the history and culture in Biblical times
* Quotes or selections from other Christian teachers have written on this topic

I have left one study tool to the end, and that is commentaries. These are studies that other men have written on various books of the Bible. In my opinion these are used too heavily today. Please use these sparingly, and only after you have researched the topic for yourself. Use them only as confirmation of what you have already studied for yourself. The Holy Spirit wants to impart God’s truth directly into your mind and heart.



Organizing your Research

Now that you have done your research, it must be organized in a way that you can use when you teach. First of all, **pray** for the Holy Spirit to lead you in this step.

* **Select one or two key scriptures** that everything else will build on.
* **Select the verses** you want to use. You will not use every verse you looked up in your research. There must be a good balance between enough Scriptures so it is obvious you are teaching a Bible study, but not too many that it seems like you are just reading the Bible out loud to your class.
* Insert some **definitions** that will truly enhance understanding. Again, do not use every definition you looked up.
* Use **Testimonies** from your life. It is good to share your victories and struggles, to make the study more real and current to your class. But be careful to not make the lesson too much about yourself.
* It is good to use **illustrations with words or visual aids.** Some students learn better visually, so using visual aids can really impact them more than your words. Others like a good story and that gets them into the right frame of mind to receive the rest of the study. Get to know your students learning styles, if possible, to know the best ways to get your message across to them.
* When sharing a story from the Bible, try to **paint a good picture** of what was going on with the people (physically, spiritually, and emotionally), don’t just share a verse. If you were going to teach on abiding in God from John 15, you really need to lay the foundation of what recently took place in the lives of the disciples, the men Jesus was telling to abide.

*Jesus and His disciples were gathered in Jerusalem in the Upper Room to share the Passover meal. The Triumphal entry had just happened. They were riding high in their expectations of the future. Jesus, knowing that His time was short to be on the earth, starts doing some unusual things and saying some difficult words.*

*The questions start flying around the room. Why are you washing my feet? Who is going to betray you? Where are you going and why can’t I go with you? We do not know where you are going, how can we find the way? Show us the Father and that is enough for us. What has changed? What has happened that now You are going to disclose yourself to us and not to the world?*

*Jesus answers their questions with “LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED. ARISE AND LET US GO FROM HERE”; basically He said, let’s take a walk, we need to talk…*

*Sound familiar? We are the same, we see things are not going the way we planned, and our minds get bombarded with fears and questions.*

*As they are leaving the Upper Room in Jerusalem, on their way up to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, they walked down into the Kidron Valley, which was planted with a vineyard. Jesus takes the opportunity to share one last message before His death, the importance of abiding in Him. “I am the true vine and My Father is the Vinedresser…”*

How can you paint a good picture like this? Research, research, research. We must always be students ourselves. You will be amazed how much information you as teachers have amassed over your life, and the Holy Spirit will bring it up to you when it is needed.

* Decide if you will be giving a **handout** to your class, for them to follow along. There are pros and cons to this. Handouts are helpful for students who are not used to taking notes and this guides them in the process. Some students will spend the class reading through your handout and not always pay attention to what you are speaking at the time.

You need to know your class to see if a handout will be beneficial to them or not, but always encourage you class to take notes. It is helpful for learning when students write down the notes they just heard. It utilizes more of their brain when they have to listen, write, and see their notes; as compared to just hearing what the teacher says.

* Prepare a few **probing questions** to ask in class, either rhetorically or to illicit a response. This is helpful to see if your class is grasps the information and questions often allow the material to go deeper into their hearts.



Preparing your Notes

Now you are ready to write out your notes you will use to speak from. There are many ways to prepare your notes and the Holy Spirit might not use the same method each time you teach.

The first method of writing out your notes is **word for word.** This is good when you just start out teaching, because new teachers are usually nervous and more likely to forget something. This method is not just for new teachers. I know some very good teachers that read their notes word for word. If you tend to wander in your teaching, this is a good method to keep you on track. The drawback to this way of preparing notes is that you get bogged down in your notes and you will not be as spontaneous as the Holy Spirit might want you to be. You tend to want to only speak what is on the paper, and often the Holy Spirit will lead you to say something or share a short story that was not on your notes.

Another method is to **outline with key points, Scriptures, definitions, and testimonies.** This is basically an outline of the above method. This allows for a more relaxed style of teaching, but it still keeps you on track.

Some teachers just make a **list of the Scriptures** they want to use. This also is a more relaxed style of teaching, but you might leave out important definitions, testimonies, or illustrations. This style also can lend to going astray with stories that pop into your head, but it also allows the Holy Spirit to put them there. You must have discernment to know the difference between your thoughts and His thoughts.

The last method is using **no notes.** You have done your part in prayer and research; now the Holy Spirit will do His part and bring these things to your mind as you speak. This is total reliance on the Holy Spirit and can only be done when you have thoroughly researched and walked out this topic. This is a scary method, but it is necessary for your growth, to get your reliance off of yourself and onto the Holy Spirit.

One method of writing your notes does not make you holier or more mature than another. You must allow the Holy Spirit to develop your style within you. Do not try to pattern yourself after anyone else. You are uniquely made by Almighty God and uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit. Allow the Holy Spirit to work in you as He chooses to work. We tend to want to use the method that is most comfortable to us, but that is not always what the Holy Spirit wants for us. Often what is uncomfortable is what is needed for our growth as a teacher and our deeper reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit.

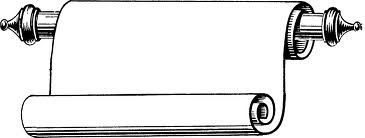


Final Preparation

Before you teach, it is good to **read over your notes** a few times to become more familiar with the flow and the content. Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in how things fit together. He might make some changes in your notes.

I highly recommend you **type your notes**. This makes it easier to make changes when you are reading over your notes. Your notes will be much easier to read if they are typed. When we hand write our notes we are not as organized; and if your handwriting is as bad as mine, you don’t want to be struggling trying to figure out what you wrote. Another benefit to typed notes is handouts can be easily made from your notes. Often times after class I have either e-mailed my notes to individuals in my class who would like to use them for further study, or I have handed my notes to someone to give to a friend. I prefer to type out the Scriptures I plan on using and insert them in my notes. I usually read the Scriptures out of my Bible, but if I am pressed for time, I can read them quicker from my notes.

INSIGHT FOR TEACHING



Ready to

Teach

Chapter 3

Now you are ready to teach. But, before your class starts, take the time to pray, asking the Holy Spirit to come and do His part and for you to submit to His leadership.

Nervousness is natural for humans. A wide range of thoughts and fears go though our minds when we step up to teach: “*I don’t want to look like a fool* , *I don’t want to make a mistake and dishonor God, What if our class realizes I don’t know everything in the Bible* …”

**Nervousness is overcome by understanding that we have done our part and now the Holy Spirit is taking over to do His part.** I often tell others that God spoke through a donkey to get His message across to Balaam in Numbers 22. If He can speak clearly through a donkey, He can surely speak through me. I realize that it is also the responsibility of the Holy Spirit speaking into the hearts of those in my class and their responsibility to listen and understand, not mine! I pray these truths will take the pressure off and help you overcome any fear and nervousness.

At the same time, we must know that teaching is a very serious responsibility. God has entrusted us to share the riches of His Word to those around us and we must rightly prepare for and share that Word.

*2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of truth.*

We also have a stricter judgment on our lives as teachers.

*James 3:1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.*

This is not to frighten you, but to put the proper fear of the Lord in your hearts. When you accurately handle the Word of God, your class will learn more and be more grounded in the whole truth of the topic you are teaching. You have been given the precious gift of teaching. God does not make mistakes. It is up to you to use this gift and to use it responsibly. If you do not, you will be held accountable before Almighty God, our righteous judge.



Helpful Hints

It is very important to **not stray too far off your notes**. This is a discipline you must develop. Be conscious of your notes, but at the same time be open for the spontaneous work of the Holy Spirit. This is a balance you will master over time. The Holy Spirit will bring illustrations to your mind that will greatly enhance your teaching, but don’t get carried away with your own illustrations.

Be aware that you **do not need to go over all your notes** when you teach. Again, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

Be aware that **sometimes the Holy Spirit will change your study** as you are speaking. Know when it is Him and flow with Him. Know that when this happens it is a free flow of teaching, and very effortless.

**Show your students how passionate you are about the Word of God**. As teachers, we all LOVE the Word of God, and that needs to be very evident to all around you. Our passion for His Word will transfer over to our class and they will want to know God and His Word more.

**Be aware if you are talking too loud or too soft**. The Holy Spirit has given you precious treasures to impart to your class; you want them to hear all you have to say. Also, it is good to change your volume and cadence from time to time.

**Be aware of the time** and do not teach too long. Too much information may tend to overload your students. You want them to be able to process what you have taught and then respond to God. It is important to leave time at the end of your teaching for the Holy Spirit to move on your class through prayer.

**Flowing effortlessly from one verse to the next** is a matter of style and also of experience. It is good to share testimonies or to give an illustration between verses to aid in the flow. Again do not compare your delivery to that of other teachers. There is nothing wrong with pauses when you are teaching between thoughts, or when going from one Scripture to another.

**Look your students in the eye**. This will engage them, and allow you to see if they are confused or getting what you are saying.

**Do not judge how your class is receiving your lesson by the looks on their faces.** This can throw you off very easily. Some people when they are in deep thought have scowls on their faces. Some students look like they are staring into space are actually praying to God for insight in how this lesson can change certain behaviors in their own lives or help them in the struggles they are facing. Some people who start flipping through their Bibles when you are still on a verse, have been pricked by the Holy Spirit to remember a verse they had seen at a previous time. And some people get so relaxed in the presence of God they might nod off. Let them rest, that is what they need.

You must be confident in the lesson you and the Holy Spirit have come up with for this specific group of people, and not be moved by their faces and reactions. You cannot worry about how your teaching will change them. This that is the job of the Holy Spirit.

It is good to ask you class questions and have them answer, but beware some people will take this as an opportunity to let their voice be heard. Or sometimes you have a student who interrupts and asks you questions in the midst of your teaching. **You must know how to handle a disruptive student.**  You must be disciplined to see the class is getting out of hand and tell that individual that you would be happy to continue this discussion with them after class.

Relax and have fun when you teach. Teaching is not about being perfect or knowing everything. It is about being willing to partner with the Holy Spirit to impart His wisdom and understanding to others.

INSIGHT FOR TEACHING



The last three chapters of Insight for Teaching give examples of research and preparation for three different types of studies:

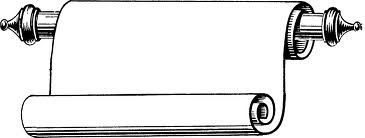
Studying a book of the Bible

Studying a person’s life from the Bible

Studying a topic in the Bible

The format of this section is going to be different. I have designed it to be interactive, as I walk you through doing these kinds of studies by asking you questions you are to answer. This section should aid you in your future studies.

INSIGHT FOR TEACHING



Chapter 4

Developing a

Book Study

Although the Bible is a collection of 66 books written by 40 authors over 1500 years, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is written one book at a time. Each book has its own unique purpose and message, yet with a common thread all throughout. Every detail is given in supernatural detail. An example of this can be found through a word study of the Gates of Jerusalem that Nehemiah had rebuild in Nehemiah 2 and 3. The message of God’s plan of redemption for each of us is very clear.

There are 10 Gates in the wall of Jerusalem mentioned in Nehemiah:

1. Nehemiah 2:13 **VALLEY GATE**- valley means narrow, *the path is narrow that leads to the Lord.*

The valley gate was in the direction of the Dragon’s well (sin and satan). *We can either walk through the narrow gate to Jesus or go in the direction of sin and satan.*

1. Nehemiah 2:13 **REFUSE GATE** – word means heap of rubbish. *This is the true state of our lives without God.*
2. Nehemiah 2:14 **FOUNTAIN GATE** – word means an outer reflection of an inner attitude. *As we go through this gate we begin to see or sinful state.*
3. Nehemiah 3:1 **SHEEP GATE** – word means to collect a flock of sheep. This gate was rebuilt by the high priest and the other priests. *Jesus, our High Priest, is also our good shepherd, gathering us into His fold.*
4. Nehemiah 3:3 **FISH GATE** – word means squirming and flopping around. *As new Christians we are squirming in the battle between our old nature and our new nature.*
5. Nehemiah 3:6 **OLD GATE** – word means to die. W*e must die to our old fleshly nature.*
6. Nehemiah 3:26 **WATER GATE** – word means springs of freshwater. The spring of Gihon flows through this gate bringing fresh water into Jerusalem. *This symbolizes the infilling of the Holy Spirit in our lives.*
7. Nehemiah 3:28 **HORSE GATE** – word means to leap or skip for joy. *When we are filled by the Holy Spirit and have yielded control to him, we have true joy!*
8. Nehemiah 3:20 **EAST GATE** – also called the Golden Gate or Beautiful Gate. This has always been the entrance in to the tabernacle or the temple. *When Jesus returns, this is the Gate through which He will enter Jerusalem.*
9. Nehemiah 3:31 **INSPECTION OR MUSTERING GATE** – this word means appointment or appointed time. *We all have an appointment with Jesus in heaven for all eternity.*

Each book has its own place, value, and purpose in the whole counsel of God. If you want to know your God intimately (to understand His mind, His heart, His ways, and how He wants you to live), it is important to study His Word, book by book.

There are some basic principles I want you to keep in mind as you prepare Bible studies:

1. **Keep in mind the context of the book you are reading**. What happened in the book before and the book after? Is my interpretation of the theme of the book I am studying consistent with the theme of the entire Bible or other Scriptures? Am I considering the historical and cultural context of what is being said? Never take scripture out of context to make it say something contrary to the text. Even if it would be a blessing to someone, always handle the Word objectively.
2. **Always seek the full counsel of the Word of God**. Do not base your teaching on one or two isolated verses. The more you study the Word of God you will be able to discern if something is Biblical or not.
3. **Remember Scripture will never contradict Scripture**. All scripture is inspired by God, it can never contradict itself. If you feel it does, your interpretation is the one in err, not the Word of God.
4. **Interpret Scripture literally**. Most of the time we can take His Word at face value. But we do need to know that sometimes God uses literary devices and figurative language (word pictures) to get His message across.

**Simile**: a stated comparison that uses like, as, such as…

**Metaphor**: an implied comparison (sword of Spirit is the Word of God)

**Hyperbole**: exaggeration for emphasis (Matthew 23:24 swallow a camel)

**Irony**: statement that says the opposite of what is meant for effect

**Parables**: story to teach a moral lesson or truth, true to life fiction. Amplify, clarify, or affirm doctrine, rather than to establish it. It has one central point to teach one truth. Every relevant detail reinforces the central theme. The interpretation is usually given after the story is told.

**Allegories**: story with an underlying meaning, which describes one thing by using images of another. It can have more than one central point and can teach a number of truths. The interpretation is found within the story.

**Prophecy**: to speak forth the mind and counsel of God about future events, in order to affect our conduct and to build our faith when they are fulfilled. Prophetic passages do not always indicate intervals of time between events, and they are not always in chronological order. Always take prophecy literally unless figures of speech are used. Prophetic passages do not always use the future tense. Sometimes we or the prophets can’t understand the prophecy until it is fulfilled!



We will do a short study on the book of 3 John. Read through the book a few times to be familiar with what it says.

*1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.*

*2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.*

*3 For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth.*

*4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.*

*5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers;*

*6 and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.*

*7 For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.*

*8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.*

*9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.*

*10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.*

*11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.*

*12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself; and we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.*

*13 I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink;*

*14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face. Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.*



The Bible has many different types of books: law, history, poetry, proverbs (wise sayings), prophecy, gospels, and letters. History gives background and tells of real events and how God dealt with real people. The gospels and letters contain doctrine and encouragement for the church. Some books are a combination of literature. Knowing what type of literature the book you are studying is gives you insight into the purpose of the book.

1. What type of book is this and why do you think it was written?
2. It is important to look at the main people mentioned in a book.

Who wrote 3 John?

After John received a report from the brethren, who were traveling evangelists, he writes a letter to commend two men in a church for doing good, and to condemn another man in the church for doing evil. It is good to ask yourself question to discover what is happening in the book.

1. What two men are commended?

What are they commended for?

1. Who is condemned?

What is he condemned for?

1. Look for key words. These are words or phrases that are repeated. When God repeats something in His Word it is good to take note of it, because it is important to God. The more a word is repeated, the more obvious it becomes that the word represents a theme for the passage or book.

What words are repeated in 3 John?

1. What is said about these key words?Using a concordance and expository dictionary, do a detailed word study of the following key words. It takes self-discipline to only look up the key words. You can get off-track if you look up every word. There are three different Greek words for love in this passage, so you will need to look each one up.

Love: (in verse 1) Agapaho *- love in a moral or social sense; personal attachment; judge to be worthy to be loved.*

Love: (in verse 6) Agape

Love: (in verse 9) Philoproteno

Truth: Aletheia

Testify:

Good:

Evil:

1. What is said about these key words?

Love:

Truth:

Testimony:

Good:

Evil:

1. It is good to look when things are either compared or contrasted. A contrast is an evaluation of things that are different or opposite in the context viewed. It may be a contrast of actual words or just thoughts. The words “but”, “however”, or “nevertheless” show a contrast. A comparison refers to things that are similar or alike. The words “like” or “as” often show a comparison.

What contrasts do you see?

What comparisons do you see?

What truth is being revealed through the contrast or comparison?

1. What is the purpose of this book? Is there a key verse that sums up the book or chapter?

Let’s look up some cross-references that can enhance this study.

1. What does the Word tell us about love?

Matthew 22:36-39

John 13:34-35

God’s love goes against all we are as fleshly men. Our selfish flesh wants its own way all the time. As we walk in the truth, as we learn more about what God expects from us, and how we are to act; as we yield more to His control and let the Holy Spirit lead us into this love, only then can we love others the way God has commanded us.

1 Peter 1:22

This is a hard thing: Luke 6: 27-35

God is the source of love: 1 Thessalonians 3:12

God teaches us how to love one another: 1 Thessalonians 4:9

The process to love others: 2 Peter 1: 4-8

1. What does the Word tell us about truth?

John 8:31-32

How can we know the truth? John 14:23-24,26-27

1 Corinthians 4:14-17

1. What does the Word tell us about good vs. evil?

Galatians 5:19-26

Which of these good deeds (deeds of the Spirit) do we see evident in 3 John?

Which of these evil deeds (deeds of the flesh) do we see evident in 3 John?

1. What should characterize a Christian’s life?

Luke 9:48

Romans 12:9 - 10

Philippians 2:3 - 4

Ephesians 4:2

1. What characteristics should a true leader in the church have?

1 Timothy 3: 1-7

Titus 1: 7-9

1. Did Diotrephes have these characteristics?

Who is Diotrephes like? Mark 12:38-40

Titus 1: 10-16

1. Everyone who knew Demetrius spoke well of him. He walked in the truth and he confirmed the truth that was in him by acts of love and hospitality to the brethren.

John 3:21

As important as studying a book of the Bible is, it is just a study unless we can apply it to our lives and let God’s Word change us more and more into His holy image. Once we know what a passage means, we are responsible for living it out. Asking questions is a good way to examine our hearts and the hearts of our students. How do the truths of this book apply to me? What truths am I to embrace, believe, or order my life by? What changes should I make in my beliefs or in my life?

Each Bible study should teach us (show truths), reprove us (show us where we are wrong), correct us (take steps to change), and train us in righteousness (handbook for living a life that is pleasing to God). 2 Timothy 3:16-17

As we are confronted with the truth, we are to respond in obedience, evidenced by a transformed life. No matter how much we know about God’s Word, if we don’t apply what we learn, the Scriptures will NEVER benefit us.

1. Do you love all people with an agape love? Who is easiest to love this way? Who is hardest to love this way?
2. How can we “walk in the Truth”? What do you need to do differently to walk this way from now on?
3. In 3 John, the good deeds and the evil deeds of a few men in the church are exposed. What good deeds of Galatians 5:19-26 are evident in your life?

What evil deeds of Galatians 5:19-25 are evident in your life?

1. Those who freely make known Christ's gospel should be helped by others to whom God gives the means. We are to be fellow workers with ministries churches, missionaries… Do you support those who spreading God’s truth and love with your tithes and offerings?
2. We should honor and love our ministers, because their business is the welfare of men's souls. Are we like Diotrephes and speak against any of our church leaders?

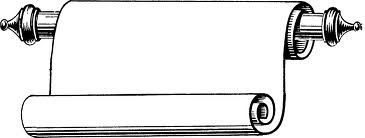
If so, stop and ask God to forgive you and to fill you full of His love for all His leaders.

Write out 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

2 Thessalonians 3:5

INSIGHT FOR TEACHING



Chapter 5

Developing a Character Study

God’s Word is full of stories of men and women who have gone through many triumphs and struggles, joys and sadness. When we study how they handled themselves and how God dealt with them, we gain many insights into God’s holiness, sovereignty, longsuffering, love, and judgment. As we see His patterns of dealing with these men and women, we can see how He might deal with us today.

Let’s study KING JOSIAH.

1. When studying someone in the Bible, it is good to read every passage that mentions that person, if possible. Use an exhaustive concordance and cross-references from your Bible to find these. The main passages recalling the history of King Josiah are in 2 Kings 21-23, and 2 Chronicles 33-35. What do the other references tell you about him?

2 Kings 21-23 – history of King Josiah

2 Chronicles 33-35 – history of King Josiah

1 Kings 13:2 – prophecy about Josiah 300 years before he was born

1 Chronicles 3:14-15

Jeremiah 1:2

Zephaniah 1:1

Matthew 1:10

1. Read 2 Kings 21-23 and 2 Chronicles 33-35 to gather background information on his life.
2. Let’s look into King Josiah’s life. What does his name mean? Sometimes this is very significant, but not always.

What does the meaning of his name possible mean?

1. Research as much as you can about their ancestry: grandparents, parents, spouse, children, tribe, and nation.

Who was his Grandfather?

He ruled 55 years since he was 12. He did evil in God’s sight, rebuilt idol worship, involved his children in being passed through fire, led nation to do evil, and killed Isaiah. God promised calamity – he was captured by Assyrians and taken in chains to Babylon. He cried out to God for help in humility which moved God to help him. God returned him to his throne. He built walls to protect Jerusalem, removed idols, set the temple up again, and ordered Judah to serve God (but they didn’t).

Who was his Father and what can you find out about him?

What Nation (Tribe) was he from?

He had 2 sons. What can you find out about Jehoahaz and Eliakim?

1. Study his upbringing and relationship with God.

Were his father and grandfather following after the Lord?

What caused Josiah to turn towards God?

1. Look for all time references. This will give you a good time line of his life.

Age 8:

Age 16:

Age 20:

Age 26:

How old was he when he died? Look at his age when he became king and add it to how long he ruled.

1. What were his accomplishments?
2. What were his shortcomings?

1. What was his spiritual life like?Read Deuteronomy 6:5
2. Look for cross-references of similar spiritual experiences. Nehemiah 8
3. What effect did his life have on others?
4. How did he die and what impact did his death have on others?



Now that you have studied the Bible about this person, check out other reference books about this person, such as a Bible Dictionary and Josephus’ History of the Jews.

When you make your notes, you can organize you research either chronologically from birth to death, according to major events in their life, or according to principles of their life or ministry.

Here are some notes I complied on King Josiah.

Josiah became king of Judah (Southern Kingdom) at the age of 8, after his father was killed by his servants after ruling for only 2 years. He knew his grandfather Manasseh in the time of his life when he was following after God. He is the one who probably gave him the name Josiah, which means “foundation is Jehovah”.

At the age of 16, when most teens are self absorbed, he began to diligently seek after God.

*Proverbs 8:17 "I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.*

Happy and wise are those who seek the Lord and prepare for a life of usefulness at an early age, instead of pursuing sinful pleasures. At the age of 20, he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of idols. When he was 26, he ordered the temple be repaired, using the money in the temple treasuries. The High Priest, Hilkiah, found the book of the Law of the Lord given to Moses. He had a scribe read it, and then read it to King Josiah.

Josiah heard the Words he had never heard before and tore his clothes as a sign of repentance, because his forefathers had not listened to these words. God promised He would destroy His people and scatter them all around the world if they did not serve Him with all of their heart, soul, and strength. *(Deut. 4:23-27)* Josiah asks Hilkiah if there is any way to prevent this.

Hilkiah goes to Huldah, a prophetess, to get insight from God. She told him: “All the judgments of God’s wrath will come to Judah, just as they had to Israel” (Northern Kingdom). The land of Israel will become a desolate place. But because Josiah had a tender heart towards God and because he humbled himself, God said He will not let this happen while he was king. Josiah’s reign would have peace.

Josiah gathered all the elders of Judah and went to the temple. All the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the priests and prophets assembled and listened as the Word of God was read. Then Josiah made a covenant before God to: walk after the Lord; keep His commandments, testimonies, and statutes with all of his heart and soul; and to carry out the words of the covenant.

All the people agreed to enter into the covenant with the Lord. Josiah:

* ordered all items used in idol worship to be removed and burned
* He removed all idolatrous priests
* broke down houses of male prostitution
* broke down all places of idol worship
* defiled Topeth (the pagan altar Solomon built) so no man could make his children pass through fire for Molech (the most abhorrent form of idol worship, resulting in tortured or killed children)
* did away with the horses and chariots the king had dedicated to the sun
* broke down and smashed all idol altars
* burned bones on idol altars to defile them before destroying them
* removed all houses of idol worship in Samaria and killed all their priests
* removed all mediums, spiritualists, teraphim (household idols), idols, and abominations

This shows the great extent of idol worship in Judah, in the last 300 years, from the time of Solomon. Josiah did all this to rid Judah of all that the Law had told them to do.

*Exodus 20: 3-6 "You shall have no other gods before Me. "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

Josiah also had the people celebrate Passover again, and this was the greatest celebration since before the time of the Judges and any of the Kings. The king provided 30,000 lambs and 3,000 bulls to be sacrificed for the people; and he gave 7600 lambs and 800 bulls to the priests.

At the age of 39, King Josiah heard Pharaoh Neco, the Egyptian king, was coming through his land to wage war against the Assyrians, because God told him to do this, and quickly. Josiah went out to meet him in battle (He obviously forgot about God’s promise of peace during his reign.) Pharaoh told him he was not here to war against him and to stop interfering with God who was with him. Pharaoh told Josiah God would destroy him if he interfered with Pharaoh. Josiah did not listen and they fought. Josiah was shot in the arm with an arrow, and later died.

His son Jehoahaz was made king. He did evil in the sight of God and reigned only 5 months. Pharaoh Neco imprisoned him and took him to Egypt, where he later died. Pharaoh then put Josiah’s other son, Eliakim, on the throne. He changed his name to Jehoakim. He heavily taxed the land to keep Pharaoh happy. He also did evil in the sight of the Lord. He was later captured by the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, who carried out God’s judgment on the people and land of Israel. It is so sad to see a righteous man have unrighteous sons.



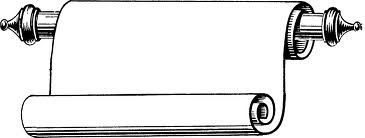
As interesting as it is to study the lives of men and women in the Bible, we must look for and teach the major truths from their lives and apply them to our lives and the lives of our students. How can we imitate that person? How can we avoid their mistakes?

As you ask questions, this is a good place to add testimonies.

1. Obviously Josiah had someone in his life who trained him in the things of God, and instilled godly character in him at an early age. Maybe his grandfather (untill age 4), or his grandmother or mother? Who are you training up in godly character, by your words and lifestyle?
2. Josiah began to diligently seek the Lord at the age of 16. When did you begin to diligently seek the Lord?
3. Josiah was the King of Judah and at the age of 20, he began to purge the land of all things that went against God. Your kingdom is your home. Have you seriously purged it of all the things that are against God? How seriously do you take God’s command to not put any gods before Him? What are some things that need to be purged from most Christian homes in America, including yours?
4. It is no wonder that the people of Judah were so corrupt. They had no standard to live by. They did not know what they were doing was wrong. When the people finally heard the Word read to them, they rejoiced greatly to know the truth! We have an abundance of Bibles, we hear God’s Word preached and taught everywhere; yet, do we display great joy at hearing His Word?
5. God’s Word was missing or lost or neglected for quite some time during the reign of the kings in Israel, and during their exile in Babylon. What is our attitude towards God’s Word? God gave us His Word to expose our sin, to give us a standard to live by, to show us our need for God, and to see the way to God. The Bible is full of words that bring hope and strength. We need to take in these words every day to strengthen us for that day! We all see the advantage of reading God’s Word every day, and most Christians will say they long to have consistent quiet times with the Lord. If we long to get into His Word every day, why don’t we?
6. As much as Josiah followed after God with all of his heart and soul and strength, his sons did not. How many wonderful men and women in ministry have sons and daughters who do not follow after God? *Deuteronomy 6:5-7*. We are told to train up our children in the ways of the Lord. It needs to be our first mission field. We must be sensitive to the needs of our children even more that those we minister to.

Josiah had a tender heart. He sought God at an early age before his heart had become calloused by sin and selfishness. When we are tender-hearted, when we humble ourselves before God, in honor and praise, and give Him the reverence He deserves we will be the least likely to feel His wrath. God honored Josiah’s humble heart by promising to postpone His wrath on Judah until after his death. His entire kingdom enjoyed peace during his entire reign. In the same manner, our attitudes can greatly affect our lives and the lives of those around us.

INSIGHT FOR TEACHING



Chapter 6

Developing a Topical Study

The advantage of a topical study is that itgives the total picture of what the Word of God has to say on a particular subject. Topical studies require an enormous amount of preparation and a commitment to the integrity of accurately handling the Word of God. If more time was given to doing thorough topical studies, there would be less controversy among believers.

*2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*

We will do a topical study on Spiritual Gifts.

1. Look up every passage that relates to your topic, understand and analyze it within its context, and then faithfully integrate it with all other material you gather in your study.

Look up every reference to the topic

Look up the related words, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily

Look for the first time this topic is mentioned. What is said about Samson in Judges 14:16,19; 15:14 and Saul in 1 Samuel 10:6,7,10

Where is the major topical passage that discusses spiritual gifts in the most comprehensive way? This will usually be the center of your Bible study.

Look for contrasting passages. These help keep your theology balanced. Spiritual gifts are a gift to us from God, but we have a responsibility to use them as He intends.

1. Assemble you information

Look at each reference and determine if it is relevant to your study. Note key verses and list the main truths you see from each reference.

1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14

Romans 12

Ephesians 4:8-13

1 Timothy 4:14-15

2 Timothy 1:6

When determining if a passage should be considered for your study:

Look for the author’s intended meaning

Carefully consider the context of each passage

Note if a passage is unclear or obscure. Be careful not to build your study on these passages.

Note how often the topic is mentioned. If it is repeated often, give it much more attention. Put the emphasis where God put the emphasis.

1. Organize your material so you can present the topic in a clear manner to your class. Start with the main passage and then build on it with other passages you have studied. You can do this by asking questions:

**What are spiritual gifts?**

Manifestation of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7)

**Who gives them?**

Holy Spirit distributes them to each just as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11)

**Who receives them?**

The body of Christ - Christians. We are all different parts of the body of Christ. God determines what part we will be and the Holy Spirit gifts us to accomplish this.

(1 Corinthians 12:18)

**Do we all have the same gifts?**

NO. (1 Corinthians 12:29-30, Romans 12:4-6)

**Why are spiritual gifts given?**

For the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7); to speak to God, for edification, exhortation, consolation, and instruction; and as a sign to believers and unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14); reveal secrets of the heart (1 Corinthians 14:25); to equip the saints for the work of service to build up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4: 11-12)

**What are the different spiritual gifts?**

Word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, effecting of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, various kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues, apostles, teaching, helps, giving, revelation, administration, psalms, service, exhortation, leading, mercy, hospitality, prayer, evangelists, pastors.

**What is our responsibility with these gifts?**

**Can they be taken away from us?**

Kindle afresh the gifts you have been given. (1 Timothy 4:14-15, 2 Timothy 1:6)

**Are some gifts greater than others?**

No, all are important. (1 Corinthians 12:14-24, Romans 12:3)

**What is the most important thing when we use our gifts?**

LOVE (1 Corinthians 13)

**How can we effectively use our gifts?**

Romans 12:1-2 Do not be conformed to this world

**What else do you see about spiritual gifts?**

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 There are a variety of gifts, a variety of ministries, a variety of effects; but the same Spirit, Lord, and God who works all things in all persons.

1 Corinthians 14: 3,40 The exercising of our gifts must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

1. Look what a bible dictionary has to say about Spiritual Gifts.

Pneumatika (spiritual) charismata (gifts) are endowments bestowed by the Holy Spirit to the church. An extraordinary faculty which operates for the furtherance of the welfare of the Christian community, which is wrought by the grace if God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in special individuals, in accordance with the measure of their individual capacities, whether it were that the Spirit infused entirely new powers or stimulated those already existing to a higher power and activity.

1. Pray and meditate on revealed truths. Ask God to show you how to put into practice what you have been studying. Ask the class questions:

What gifts do you have?

What gifts do you see others having in this study? It is usually easier to see the gifts in others than in yourself.

You could use a spiritual gifts worksheet to try to determine the spiritual gifts of those in your class.

Does it seem like we get more gifts as we mature in Christ; or does God develop the gifts He gives us, when we are mature enough and when the gifts are needed?



As a teacher I know you love the Word of God. The Holy Spirit has richly gifted you with all spiritual wisdom and discernment. I encourage you to go out into the world and use your gifts to implant the love of God and His Word deeply into the hearts and minds of believers all over the world. My pray for you is:

*You who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. Colossians 3:12-17*

