

Seeker's Bible Study Teacher's Notes

Standards for Teachers

The teachers are those who are assigned to take someone through the *Seeker's Bible Study*.

Following are the standards our church has for these teachers.

- The teacher must be a faithful church member with a good Christian testimony.
- The teacher must be a Bible student. The teacher must have a daily Bible study habit. He must have read the Bible through at least once and gone through the *Effectual Bible Student* course.
- The teacher must be dependable (1 Co. 4:2). The teacher is responsible to set up the meetings with the seeker, and he must be at each meeting without fail and on time. He must contact the student and remind him of the meeting. There must be no excuses not to be at the meeting and no excuses for being late, except for a major problem such as sickness. The teacher must be fully prepared to present the lesson.
- The teacher must be able to teach the lessons and to control the Bible study.
- The teacher must be the right teacher for the particular student. He must be the right sex, the right age, and, ideally, the right educational level and the right social level.

Miscellaneous Things

The teacher should pray for his student daily. Pray for God to open the student's heart to repentance and faith. Pray for wisdom in how to deal with him/her, how to answer questions, etc.

The teacher should not be in a hurry. The goal is not to rush through the lessons. The goal is to help the student understand the gospel fully and to come to saving faith in Christ. How quickly the material is covered will depend upon the student's ability, background, and his devotion to the task.

The student and teacher should read through the lessons together, slowly, paragraph by paragraph, and the teacher can explain anything that is not understood.

Encourage the student to ask questions, so long as they are sincere questions and the student truly wants to know the Bible's answer. If you do not fully know the answer, don't pretend to know it. Tell him that you will search for the answer and that you will discuss it in the next session.

Even if the student has been learning about salvation for some time, it is best to go over each point of the lessons carefully to make sure that everything is well understood.

The classes can be held as often as the teacher and student decide, but the classes should be held at least once a week if possible. When and where the classes are held are at the discretion of the teacher and student.

Explain to the student that the class will be one hour long, maximum. It will start with prayer and end with prayer. If the student wants to talk longer and if the teacher has time for that, that is fine, of course. But the teacher should close the class after one hour, maximum, and give the student an opportunity to go about other business if he chooses. This way, both student and teacher can plan their other activities around the Bible study and not have to fear that it will run on and on without limit.

We suggest that the teacher use a “real” Bible and not an eBible for the study.

The teacher should try to grow the class by getting other interested seekers to attend. In particular, try to get the friends, relatives, and neighbors of the student to attend. The Bible study is an evangelistic outreach with the goal of obtaining as much fruit as possible for the glory of Christ.

At the same time, the teacher must maintain control of the class. If someone attends who isn't interested in learning but wants to take over by talking too much and expressing his own opinions or by asking insincere questions or otherwise disturbs the class, he should be kindly and wisely disinvited.

Do not put undue pressure on the student and don't try to manipulate him into make a decision. Salvation is a supernatural work of God and it must be received by man's free will. It must be “gladly received” (Ac. 2:41). You cannot force anyone to be saved. It is a choice that each individual must make for himself. He has to count the cost in the sense of repentance. You should tell him that “now is day of salvation” (2 Co. 6:2) and that we have no promise of tomorrow, but salvation cannot be pressured. We do not see any pressure tactics in the New Testament. We don't see it with Christ and the Samaritan woman (Joh. 4:4-29) or with Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch (Ac. 8:26-39) or with Paul and Lydia (Ac. 16:13-15) or with Paul and the Philippian jailer (the Ac. 16:25-33). On the day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted the people to “save yourselves from this untoward generation” which we should imitate, but he did not manipulate them (Ac. 2:40).

Trust the Holy Spirit

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:7-8).

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

“And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul” (Acts 16:14).

Christ sent the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost to empower the believers to do the work of world evangelism. Men preach the gospel, but it is the Holy Spirit who does the supernatural

work in sinners' hearts. The Holy Spirit shows men their sin and convicts their hearts so that they know that they are guilty before God and enlightens them to understand the gospel. He draws sinners to Christ.

The soul winner must trust the Holy Spirit 100% to do this supernatural work. He can rest in the Holy Spirit. He cannot do the work of the Holy Spirit and must not try to do the Spirit's work.

The Holy Spirit is dependable. He is passionate about evangelism and will surely do His work. He is waiting on men and women to do their's.

“Every time you go into a home, every time you talk to a man on the street car, or in the shops, or factories, you have the absolute assurance that there is another One also witnessing. And that is God Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit! ... Everywhere Barnabas and Saul went the Holy Spirit was there waiting for them. ... The same Divine Spirit that called and separated Barnabas and Saul was by the river and opened the heart of Lydia while Paul witnessed to her--‘whose heart the Lord opened ... that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul’ (Acts 16:14). There you have the whole thing in a nutshell. God's side of the witnessing and man's side. Therefore, every time you go forth on your personal visitation for Jesus Christ, to tell of His salvation, you have the absolute assurance that the Holy Spirit precedes you, goes with you, talks with you, walks with you, and opens the hearts of all you talk to. ... This was the greatest truth that ever came into my life next to my salvation. Do you want a holy boldness in your testimony? then go forth and testify of Christ. Suppose you don't feel like it. Go anyway. The Word does not say that God gives the Holy Spirit to them that feel like it. But He gives the Holy Spirit to them that 'obey Him' (Acts 5:32)” (J. Frank Norris, *The Inside Story of First Baptist Church*).

Trust the power of God's Word

“For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12).

The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to perform the miracle of salvation in sinners' hearts. The Bible, the Word of God, is living and powerful. It cuts into the very depths of men's being. It has been said that “the Word of God can read the fine print on man's soul.”

The man who led me to Christ just kept quoting Bible verses to answer my questions and my arguments. Even though I didn't believe the verses, he kept quoting them and explaining them and applying them. He did that for three days as we traveled together. And the Word of God cut into my heart and convicted me and led me to repentance and faith.

“The Word of God is like a lion. If you have a lion in a cage, all you have to do is let it loose and it will take care of itself. A lion knows how to do a lion's work and is perfectly capable of doing that work.”

Trust the power of the gospel of Christ

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

The word “power” here is *dunamis*, meaning ability. It is the basis of the word *dynamite*. The gospel of Christ is God’s spiritual dynamite to convict and enlighten and soften the sinner’s hard, darkened heart to bring repentance and faith.

The soul winner must trust God’s Spirit, God’s Word, God’s gospel. Don’t trust your teaching ability, your intelligence, your debating skills, your people skills, your great illustrations. Trust 100% in God to do the supernatural work that man is totally unable to do.

The soul winner is like Moses’ rod. It had no power in itself. It was just a stick. It was just God’s chosen instrument by which He performed His miracles. “Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that *is* in mine hand upon the waters which *are* in the river, and they shall be turned to blood” (Exodus 7:17).

Follow the instruction of 2 Timothy 2:23-26

This passage describes the proper approach and attitude for soul winning.

Avoid foolish questions (2 Timothy 2:23).

Foolish questions are questions that are not asked sincerely in order to know the truth but are asked with the objective of hiding and confusing the truth. They are questions that are asked insincerely to create doubt and to stir up strife. They are questions that are asked by people who just love to debate.

One way to tell if a question is sincere is to see if the person is willing to listen carefully to your answer and to consider the possibility that your answer might be correct. If he or she is only interested in spouting his opinions and only interested in debating, there is no profit in the conversation. If a person only wants to argue against the truth, it is a waste of time to deal with him.

We should follow Paul’s example and separate the scorners from the willing listeners and the sincere seekers so that we can deal with the latter properly and so that we can isolate them from the mocking unbelief of the scorners. See Acts 17:32-34.

We must deal with scorners wisely (Proverbs 26:4-5). We must not imitate the way of the fool by getting involved in endless arguments and petty bickering, but we must briefly answer the fool’s arguments so he will not think there are no answers and thus be wise in his own conceits. This requires the wisdom that can come only from the Holy Spirit and experience.

Efforts to deal with willful heretics should be short lived (Titus 3:10-11). The “heretic” is one who makes a willful choice to cleave to error. It is a problem of the will and not of the intellect, therefore, the Bible says he condemns himself. Once I was distributing gospel tracts in a city park, and a man approached me and wanted to debate about baptismal regeneration. I showed him some Scriptures about baptism not being the gospel, but he didn’t accept the truth. After a very short time I told him that I wasn’t there for the purpose of debating about baptism. I was there to help people understand the gospel, and I walked away from him to find someone who was willing to listen.

On the other hand, if a person asks a sincere question, it should be answered from the Bible. The man who led me to Christ took the time to answer questions that came from my involvement in a Hindu meditation society and dabbling in Buddhism, ecology, New Age, Marxism, and Christian Science. He patiently answered my questions with simple Bible truths, but he didn’t debate with me on a philosophical level. He always kept coming back to the fundamental points of the gospel. He just kept quoting the Bible to answer my questions. For example, when I said, “I believe in reincarnation,” he quoted Hebrews 9:27, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” The Bible teaches one death and then judgment, not repeated cycles of life and death. When I said, “I believe a man needs to trust his heart,” he quoted Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it.” When I said, “I believe there are many paths to God,” he quoted John 14:6, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” When I said, “I feel like I am on the right path, he quoted Proverbs 14:12, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

Be gentle, patient, humble (2 Timothy 2:24, 25).

It is difficult to deal with people who are in the snare of the devil. Often they mock the truth and are overbearing, proud, and unreasonable, and we are tempted to respond in kind. But if we deal with unbelievers in the same manner as they deal with us, we only stir them up to anger and create a carnal debate. “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).

It is important to stand one’s ground in the truth of the gospel, but this must be done in a patient, humble spirit without resorting to striving. One can argue and reason and testify calmly and patiently without fighting, and this is what we must do. Paul “reasoned with” the unbelievers from the Scriptures (Acts 17:2; 18:19; 24:25). He expounded and testified and persuaded (Acts 28:23). God invites men to reason together with Him (Isaiah 1:18), and we are the Lord’s ambassadors for this task. If a person only wants to debate and argue, there isn’t anything we can do to help them other than pray for them and wait to see if they have a change in attitude.

One way to keep a discussion from becoming a mere argument is to listen carefully and respectfully to what the person is saying and then give a simple answer from God’s Word. Let

him speak his mind and don't rush to answer him before he is finished. Make sure you understand what he is saying rather than putting words in his mouth. When he sees that you are treating him with respect and are actually listening to what he is saying, it is more likely that the discussion will remain in the realm of a profitable encounter rather than descend into a carnal argument.

Don't get into a philosophical debate. Just give the truth in a kind way and answer the individual's arguments and challenges with the simple teaching of God's Word. If he isn't satisfied with that, then end the conversation, explaining that the only thing you have that will help him is the truth of the Bible and that a religious debate accomplishes nothing.

If you see that a discussion is turning into an argumentative debate, end it in a kind way and pray that the Lord will use what has been said to convict the unbeliever's heart. Try to leave the door open for later.

If you do get involved in striving, apologize to the individual and explain that God's Word forbids us to strive. Explain that you are only trying to help him and that you do not want to force him into a decision. Explain that your passion comes from your love of Christ and His truth. This is a matter that he must decide from his heart of his own free will before God.

It is important to understand that meekness doesn't mean weakness and cowardliness. Moses was a meek man, but he was bold in standing for the truth and dealing with error, such as when Israel worshipped the golden calf. Jesus is meek and lowly in heart, but He is unflinching in reproof and rebuking for truth's sake (e.g., Luke 9:55) and was even severe in His dealings with false teachers (Matthew 23:13-33). There is a time to rebuke unbelievers for their hardness of heart (Acts 13:45-46).

"Let's differentiate here between strife and controversy. Strife grows out of my need to win an argument for the sake of winning. Strife is an ego contest with the opponent. Strife is frequently marked by an attack upon the other person. Controversy on the other hand, is unavoidable in communicating and applying the gospel. Jesus Himself is a source of controversy. He either is or is not God's Son, our Savior" (*Preacher's Commentary*).

Teach and instruct with God's Word ("apt to teach ... instructing," 2 Timothy 2:24, 25).

"Apt to teach" means able to teach. Every believer is to be teacher; every believer is to become skillful in the Bible (Heb. 5:12-14).

If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the student that you will find the answer and talk about it in the next session.

Trust in God (2 Timothy 2:25-26).

Only God can deliver someone who is in the snare of the devil. I must not trust my debating skills or my knowledge or my teaching ability or even my patience and humility; I must trust only in the Lord and His Word and Spirit to bring deliverance.

We must not forget that we are fighting a spiritual battle against a spiritual enemy (2 Timothy 2:26).

No matter how impossible the situation might appear, God is able to give repentance. Many seemingly “hopeless cases” have come to Christ.

We can never be sure that any individual will be saved. The passage does not say that if we follow these instructions God will definitely recover the individual out of the snare of the devil. It says, “if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:25). “Peradventure” means perhaps, maybe.

Repentance is both a gift from God and the responsibility of the sinner. Compare 2 Timothy 2 verse 25 with 26. See also Acts 17:30.