

Developing Teaching Tools for the Spiritual Development of Believing Children

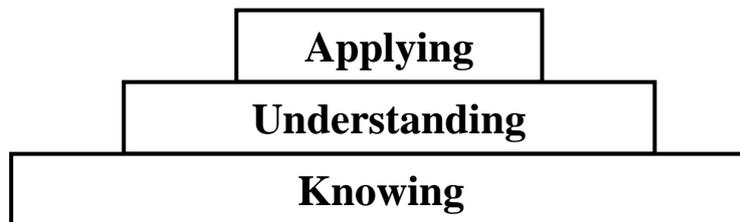
2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

I. Emphasize One Main Spiritual Truth throughout the Class Hour

Believing children have been commanded by the Lord Himself to grow in the knowledge of Christ and in the grace needed to live out that knowledge. You can best help these children grow by emphasizing one central truth for growth in each class hour. Talking about several different truths for growth in each class does not put enough focus on any one truth so that the children grasp it or remember to apply it outside the class. Research shows that emphasis on the same truth at different parts of the class hour more firmly establishes it in their memory. Each time it is mentioned during class, whether in a song, the verse, the Bible lesson, or in the special segment, some new aspect of that truth can be revealed. This makes learning much more effective. Thus, you should find at least one other place to mention or explain some aspect of the selected topic for that day.



II. Teach Your Selected Truth at all Three Basic Levels of Learning



A. Teaching at the Knowing Level

Select a few essential truths to teach each class period on important topics related to spiritual development in believing children. Find an appropriate place in the class hour to give out these truths (i.e., the memory verse, Bible lesson, a song, or the special segment). Find other places to repeat these basic facts or ask questions about what you said previously. Remember, it is better to choose fewer facts to teach in each session so that you can teach them more thoroughly.

B. Teaching at the Understanding Level

To reach the understanding level, you should always give a simple definition of the spiritual concept you are teaching that day (i.e., what is prayer . . . the Bible . . . consecration, etc.). You should also explain the key words in the verses that you give your teaching from. Giving examples and illustrations from the lives of Bible characters or from your personal experiences also increases understanding, along with giving major benefits or consequences for doing or not doing it.

C. Teaching at the Application Level

Somewhere in the class hour, you need to give specific applications of how they can start thinking, being, or doing the truth you are presenting for their spiritual development. Make sure they have specific step-by-step instructions for getting started in applying that truth, along with specific ways to live it out in the home, church, school, with friends, or when they are alone. Get them started applying the truth in that very class hour when at all possible. It is this level of learning where change actually begins. Be sure to give opportunities for them to think of ways to apply the concepts because this trains their thinking process. Also let them share in future weeks how they are applying and developing in this spiritual discipline or attitude.

III. Prepare Visual Aids for Teaching Essential Concepts for Spiritual Development

A. Study and List the Most Important Truths

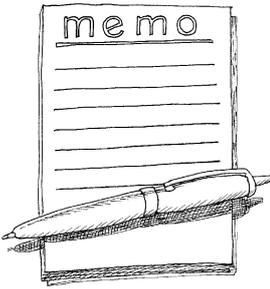
1. Select one topic or concept at a time.
2. Find and study verses on that topic.

- √ Use a concordance
- √ Use a systematic theology book
- √ Use a topical concordance

Study these verses until you have a balanced understanding of that topic of spiritual growth.



3. Make a list of all the truths you learned about that topic from your study. Be sure you can answer such questions as:



- **Who** can do it? Who cannot do it?
- **Why** should it be done or why should it not be done?
- **What** is a simple definition of the concept and what are the essential truths to know about this topic?
- **When** can it be done?
- **Where** can it be done?
- **How** can it be done? Give step-by-step instruction.
- Are there **prerequisite truths** that must be known or applied before you teach this topic?

B. Briefly Outline the Most Important Truths to Teach on this Topic

1. Select the most essential teachings on this topic that believing children need to know in order to develop spiritually.
2. Organize these selected truths in the order they should be taught.
3. Think through and list some examples and applications that you can use when teaching these truths.

C. Make a Visual Aid for Teaching Each Topic

1. Make a drawing of the visual you will make
 - a. Think about the size you want it to be.

Will it be small enough for you to carry with you and use with individual children or small groups? Or will it be big enough to use in front of a larger class? Be sure to consider how you will store it when it is not being used.



- b. Make a practice layout of your visual aid
 - ◆ Make it the actual size you want (or to scale)
 - ◆ Write the exact words where you want them (be concise in what you write in order to save space; expand the idea as you teach)
 - ◆ Label spaces where you want pictures to go
 - ◆ Be sure there is plenty of empty space (not too crowded)

2. Gather the desired materials

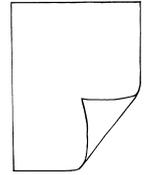


- ◆ Use a font for lettering that is easy for children to read (size, style, and any necessary vowel markings).
- ◆ Use the same style of pictures throughout (computer clip art programs allow you to print the pictures the exact size you want)



3. Assemble the teaching tool

- ◆ Make a "master copy" of each page
- ◆ Have someone check it for any errors
- ◆ Make photocopies of each "master" to use in putting the teaching tool together
- ◆ Assemble the teaching tool



D. Use the Tool to Teach for Spiritual Development

1. Practice using this tool before using it in class
2. Write out a list of questions, examples, or applications for each section for use when you explain the main points
3. Teach the truths of each topic at the rate your student will learn best, not too fast or too slow. Divide the truths up into sections that can be taught over several sessions (weeks) and not given all at one time.



You will need to visualize teaching for at least ___ topics for spiritual development. The following pages illustrate the concepts presented on this handout. Essential truths on each topic have already been selected and outlined. You can add additional truths if you wish. Samples of visualized tools will also be provided for you to copy or adapt.