



Seminar Leadership Teaching Techniques

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Working with Jesus

The iFollow Discipleship Series

About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

Credits

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Seminar Leadership: Teaching Techniques

This presentation is designed for people who desire to serve Jesus Christ and help lead others to Him.

Learning Objectives

1. To learn the Bible technique of making truth relevant
2. Examine several different teaching techniques
3. To discover how to teach for understanding not just knowledge

Content Outline

1. Teaching techniques in the Bible
2. Promoting Learning
3. Send a Clear Message
4. Teach for Understanding

Background Material for the Presenter

The very first teaching experience took place at the Garden of Eden. Here's Adam, fresh from the dirt, perfumed by the natural oils found on the ground, facing his Teacher. I can imagine in his face the same inquisitive look that I get from my dogs whenever they see that I have something in my hands. What is it? Is it for me? Can I eat it? Now Adam was not asking those types of questions, but I imagine his look full of eagerness. What am I looking at? What is this that I see? And God is next to him showing him, teaching him. In Genesis 1 and 2 we find God first as Adam's teacher and then as teacher of both Adam and Eve. Can you imagine such experience? Can you imagine God showing you around? Look, this is a tree. And let me show you something unique about this tree. This is an apple tree and here you go. This is called apple. Try it. Good, eh? Now let me show you this little beast. This is a dog ...



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Working
with Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Seminar
Leadership
Teaching
Techniques**

1

The school of the prophets was developed during the ministry of the prophet Samuel (1 Sam. 10:5). The prophet had revelations, interceded for the people, taught other prophets, anointed leaders, provided counsel and prophesized the word of God according to what he had received. When several prophets gather together they were referred to as a “company of prophets” (2 Kings 6:1-5). There were two of these schools, one at Ramah, the home of Samuel, and the other at Kirijat-jearim, where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. According to Ellen White “others were established at later times” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 592). Hulda the prophetess is said to have lived at the college at Jerusalem (2 Kings 22:14).

These people were involved in training and teaching. The priests could use oracles and the kings were anointed so they could have some communication with God, but the prophet was not only in contact with God, he/she was also in contact with the people. The bridge between man and God was established through the prophet or prophetess. Their messages weren’t only designed for the kings; their teaching was aimed at the people (Jonah and Jeremiah are perhaps the best examples). The Hebrew word traditionally translated as “prophet” is navi, which means “spokesperson” (Deut. 18:18).

Their teaching was centered mostly on the Pentateuch. Keep in mind that the Old Testament did not exist yet. In part we can argue that Jesus Himself was taught in a similar fashion. Jesus would revolutionize the system and make people marvel.

Jesus was unique in many ways. He wasn’t only the Son of Man he was the Son of God. He not only taught the Word of God, he was the Word of God. All those who listened to Him recognized that there was something different and special about Him. “When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority and not as their teachers of the law.” (Matt. 7:28, 29 NIV) We couldn’t try to compete with Him regarding His teaching techniques because His conditions were different from ours. 1) He had no formal curriculum; 2) His lessons varied according to His audience and the circumstances; 3) He wasn’t constricted by a class period or length of time; 4) He not only knew His students well, He lived with them.

In His teaching and in His relationship with them He showed an understanding of His students. He made himself available to them at any time and in any place. Nicodemus came to Him at night. He waited for the Samaritan woman to come to the well. He motivated

- “Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of facts.” —Henry Brooks Adams

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- “To know how to suggest is the great art of teaching.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson

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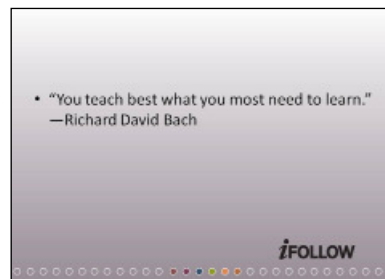
- “Real education should educate us out of self into something far finer; into a selflessness which links us with all humanity.” —Lady Nancy Astor

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His disciples so they could accomplish beyond their expectations. He didn't show impatience of tactlessness. He wasn't insincere. He was consistent with His teachings.

His specialty was to "read" the human heart. He talked to people about things they wanted to hear. He taught them in a language they could understand. While He talked to the crowds about new and old wine, about the sowing and the harvest, about laborers in a vineyard, what would He talk to us about? The water of life? Certainly, but it probably wouldn't be next to a well, but by a vending machine, while we purchase a bottle of Evian. I'm sure He would find a way to talk about the iPhone, Wii and Tivo to bring across a spiritual truth.

Dig deeper: In Luke 10:25-37 we find the parable of the Good Samaritan. According to Ellen White this incident actually happened. "This was no imaginary scene, but an actual occurrence, which was known to be exactly as represented," (*Desire of Ages*, p. 499) Would we have used this story to talk about showing interest, concern, and love for others as Jesus did? The story shocked His listeners, why? How could we retell the story in a way that would shock our audience?



Scenario One: You are a 1950s era white Anglo-Saxon Adventist from Georgia. A guest preacher tells the same story with a few changes. A white Georgian is badly beaten up inside a white hotel lobby in Mississippi in 1952. The local preacher was at a hotel at the time of the beating but the people that beat up the Georgian are members of his congregation and belong to prominent families, so he left after the beating. A church deacon was there too. He also left without saying a word. Some of the guys carry the Georgian out of the hotel and dumped him on the street to die. An hour later a black man, coming from work found the Georgian barely alive. He borrows a truck and takes him to the hospital. The guest preacher asked: "Who was the neighbor? The preacher, the deacon or the black man?"

Scenario Two: You are a contributor and participant in the Family Values First movement. You have come to a city to an event sponsored by Family Values First. That weekend at church the same question is raised: "Who is your neighbor?" And a similar story is told with some changes. A member of the Family Values First movement is in town and he got lost. While trying to find his way, something he ate made him ill and fell to the sidewalk, next to a homeless woman. Another homeless person came by and took the man's watch and wallet, his coat and his shoes. An hour later, a preacher, a deacon and some children walked by the man. They are all members of the Family Values First movement. They actually come from a rally sponsored by the movement. They see the man and they took him for another homeless person. They consider his sight disgusting and talk among themselves about how the Family Values First would put an end to that type of thing. They walk away from the man, talking among themselves. A few minutes later a gay couple comes by, arm in arm. They talk to the homeless woman and realize

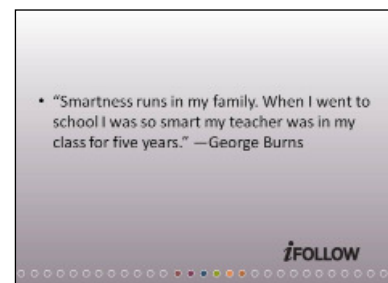
that they had never seen that man before. They call 911, take one of their coats off and cover him to keep him warm. They wait for the ambulance and go with the man to the hospital. The preacher asks the same question: “Who was the neighbor? The preacher, the deacon or the gay couple?”

Scenario Three: After 9/11 you participate in a big evangelistic event. A famous Adventist preacher is sharing the gospel. That weekend you attend church. A guest preacher is speaking. The preacher asks as well: “Who is your neighbor?” The story is told with a few changes. Another Adventist, a big Latino who had also come to the same evangelistic crusade, was attacked while shopping. Some rednecks had mistaken him for someone of Middle Eastern descent. Two other Adventist had witnessed the entire event. They also thought the man was of Arabic descent. One of them was the son of a preacher and the other the son of a deacon. They drove slowly by the man and then drove off. A few minutes later an Iranian—a Muslim—was driving with his family and saw the Latino man on the floor. He stopped by the man and covered him with a blanket. His wife called 911 on her cell phone. They provided the injured man with water. The Iranian family waited until the ambulance arrived and saw the man off to the hospital after they had given him their cell and home phone number in case he needed any help. The preacher asks the question: “Who was the neighbor? The son of the preacher, the son of the deacon or the Islamic family?” (Adapted from *Parables of Jesus*, thebibletexts.com)

The point is, Jesus in his teaching used those things with which His audience was familiar, either an event or an artifact. He came down to their level and raised them to higher truths.

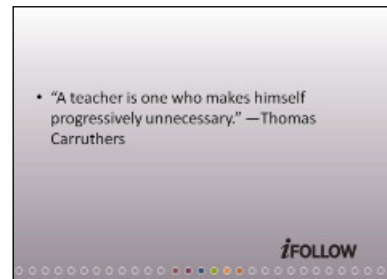
Teaching is part of the Great Commission. Someone has said that “the Great Commission is the end of the Gospel and the beginning of faith in action for all Christians”: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matt. 28:19-20) We have used this text, and rightly so, to emphasize the need to go out and convert non-believers. We have also used it, and there’s nothing wrong with that, to baptize non-believers. The part where we tend to fail is the “teach.” Teaching is part of the Great Commission. *The Message* renders the same passage as: “instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you.”

Teaching is part of the growth process. What we are dealing with here is reproduction, growth, multiplication: “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Tim. 2:2) Paul’s instruction to Timothy is to transmit the faith through trustworthy people. The labor of that people is to “teach.” The Greek word is *didaskai*, from the Greek *didasko*, where we also get the word *didaskalos*, an instructor, doctor, master, and teacher. From



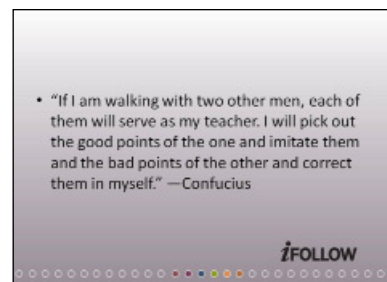
this word we get our modern “didactic”: designed or intended to teach. The rest of the passage (2 Tim. 2:1-7) compares the Christian to the soldier’s detachment, the athlete’s sportsmanship, and the farmer’s work as the price of recompense. The emphasis is stressed on the singleness or purpose (*New American Bible* notes on 2 Tim. 2): to teach, in this case.

Teaching is part of our own life. How do we measure our spirituality? How do we ascertain mature Christian growth? “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” (Col. 3:16) I like the way *The Message* puts it: “Instruct and direct one another using good common sense.” I find it interesting that the passage starts by saying “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly”. How are we going to teach that which we do not have? How are we going to share that which we do not know? To be able to share we need to possess. We cannot possess that which we haven’t acquired. Teaching, I think, gives us the opportunity—the excuse, perhaps—to acquire that which we need in order to be able to share. As we become more and more familiar with the Word of God, the Word dwells more deeply in us.

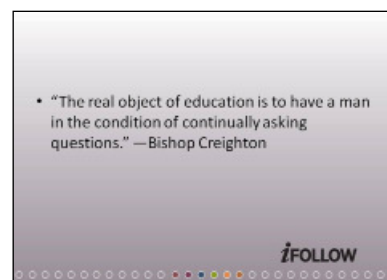


Promoting Learning

How do you teach? Do you have a system? Have you ever considered your teaching style? Most of us are surprised when we hear ourselves on a recording. Do I really sound like that? This is especially tragic when we hear ourselves singing. It’s doubly tragic when we consider ourselves “good” singers. The recording doesn’t lie, does it? So, back to the original questions, have you taken time to consider what you talked about last time you had to teach the Sabbath school lesson? Does it make you proud? What was the reaction of your students? Were they into your presentation? Did they seem interested or did they seem annoyed?



If your answers were positive to all the questions above, congratulations! If some or all of the questions were negative, don’t take it to heart, it only means that there is room for improvement. If there’s one thing I’m sure is that there’s always room for improvement. None of us was born knowing. And even the experts have a bad day from time to time. I had a homiletics teacher that prided himself in always finishing on time and always covering his theme



completely. That was his mantra: finish on time, don't leave anything out. One Sabbath it was 11:55 and you could tell he wasn't anywhere near the end of this theme. He stopped preaching and he asked the congregation for ten more minutes. "Ten more minutes, please, and I'll finish my theme." Fifteen minutes later he was still in the middle of his sermon. "Brethren," he began sheepishly, "give me ten more minutes and I promise we'll be on our way home to lunch." After ten minutes, while he was still talking and it seemed like he was nowhere close to finishing his sermon, the first elder got up and said to him: "Brother, go ahead and take another 15 minutes. But please, finish already." He stopped bragging about his timeliness.

But even if your answers were all positive, I think you'll find a few things that will help you next time you have to teach. We are going to start by indicating some attitudes and values that limit the learning experience.

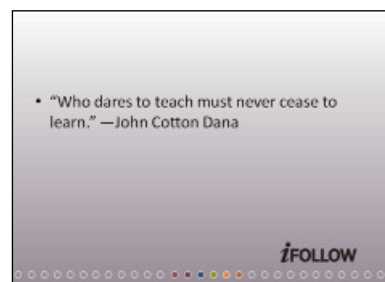
1. "Normal" means being able to learn at the same pace and level as other people: in the same way, at the same time, at the same rate.
2. Faster is better. Doing things faster means that you know your material, because you are smart.
3. There are some things that some people just can't ever learn.
4. The role of the teacher is to teach. The role of the student is to pay attention and study.

As you noticed, all those are negative attitudes and values. What's wrong with them? That some people actually believe that way, that's what's wrong with them!

Now we'll go to the other side of the coin, attitudes that promote learning:

1. There are many different ways to learn. We are all different and the world is a better place because of our differences.
2. What matters is not how quickly but how well the teaching takes place.
3. Every individual can develop a learning capacity. Our role is to consider them individually.
4. Teachers exist because of the students. A student will learn according to the ability of the teacher to teach.

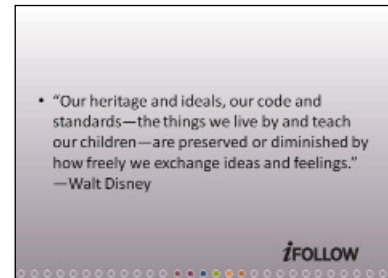
Not exactly the opposite of the limiting attitudes but more of a positive approach, wouldn't you say?



Send a Clear Message

Establish eye contact. Regardless of the theme we are teaching, establishing eye contact is essential. Your class needs to feel that you are talking to each one of them, and not just to a “group of people.” There’s nothing more distracting than having the teacher look out the window when he/she is trying to make a point. I had a teacher like that when I was in High School. He would not look at us. He looked at the ceiling. I never knew why. If he was teaching a new concept, he looked at the ceiling. If he was answering a question, he looked at the ceiling. From time to time he would look at the group, but never to each one of us.

I have the impression that Jesus looked directly to them when He was teaching. In John 8 we find the story of the woman that was caught in adultery. The Pharisees brought her to Jesus and tried to set up a trap for Him. Jesus did not answer their question: “Now what do you say?” He bent down and started to write on the ground with His finger. Well, you may say, He wasn’t looking at them, was He? Or was He? “When they kept on questioning Him, He straightened up and said to them, ‘If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.’” (John 8:7) I’m not sure what picture comes to your mind but I’m sure that Jesus looked at each one of them directly into their eyes. “I’m talking to you, you know,” He must have seemed to be saying. “I’m not saying this to a mixed group of people. I’m telling it to you.” How would you have felt? You brought this woman “caught in adultery.” You are one of many that is trying to catch him with a tricky situation. Sometimes we like to hide behind a “group.” That’s the psychology of a crowd. There’s security in numbers. That’s what moves a group of people to riot. [See “*Understanding Riots*” by David D. Haddock and Daniel D. Polsby, *The Cato Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 1, cato.org/pubs/journal/cj14n1-13.html].



There’s power in numbers! But Jesus is looking directly at you. You’ve noticed He was writing on the ground. You cannot help looking down to what He’s written. But His eyes pull you back to look at Him. And now you hear Him say: “The sinless one among you, go first: Throw the stone.” (*The Message*) What happened to the security, the power in numbers? Are you sinless? Will you throw that first stone? And He continues writing on the ground! Look at what He is writing! He’s writing for you to read! When you, finally, are able to look around you notice that everyone has gone. You don’t waste any time either.

Was Jesus teaching? I’m sure He was. Was He placing His attention on each one of the accusers? You bet! Did they learn something? I’m sure a number of them learned not to try to trap Him again.

Be clear and direct. Avoid using double negatives and unnecessarily complicated language. Being clear and direct doesn’t mean to be simplistic. Say what you mean and mean what you say. We like to hide behind euphemisms that we think everyone “gets”.

There's nothing wrong with using euphemisms, but why not call it like it is?

I was on vacation in Florida when I heard about Princess Diana's death. She died in a car crash in Paris accompanied by her friend Dodi Fayed. I just couldn't believe it. I was glued to the TV. For days there wasn't anything else but the horrible death of Princess Diana. Somebody has said that writers have gotten more lines out of her death than they got out of anything since the assassination of John F. Kennedy. But if you check you'll find that they've used "passed" and "she left us" and they say that "she's gone". We've heard about "her tragedy" and "her spirit remains with us", etc. Very few come right out and say, "She's dead."

My mother in law recently said to my wife, "If the doctors tell you that there's something terribly wrong with me, do not tell me right away. Break it to me gently." Is there a way to do that? What are we supposed to tell her? The doctor says that you shouldn't worry about dying of old age or something like that? The doctor says you don't have to worry about spending your old age in a nursing home? My wife has no idea how to do what her mother wants.

Be clear and direct. It doesn't mean you have to offend or insult someone. But don't hide behind your words.

Make sure that all your students can hear when someone else speaks. A Sabbath school class came up with a novel idea. Two class members stand behind the rows of chairs with a microphone in hand and ready to hand it as soon as someone raises a hand to answer or ask a question. The teacher himself didn't have a microphone but he could be heard clearly. At first I thought it was overkill, until someone spoke without a mike and I couldn't hear her. That's when I realized that the microphones were not only a good idea, but necessary for that class. The class members shouldn't only be able to listen to you but to each other.

After having faced the priests of Baal and shown who the true God was, Elijah was afraid and ran away. It was while he was hiding in Horeb that "a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper." (I Kings 19:11, 12) Richard E. Friedman translated the last sentence, "And after the fire came the sound of silence." God doesn't have a problem talking to us in a whisper. He talks to you and me in an infinite number of ways, and we can understand Him. But we do not have

- "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge." —Albert Einstein

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- "Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator; individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought..."

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- "...Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen." —Ellen White, *Education*, page 17

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that power. We need to speak clearly and distinctly. In order to be understood, we need to be heard. That also applies to the members of our class.

Teach for Understanding

Organize what you are saying. Even though you are following a lesson that was planned and organized for you by someone else, you still have to be in front of your class and address your students. Think about what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. Consider the entire class period. Will you be able to cover the entire lesson for that day? Have you ever done it in the past? If not, what parts of the lesson you must make sure you cover? Start with an introduction that develops the purpose of the day's lesson, teach that part you want to make sure is presented, and conclude with a summary of what you taught during the class. The formula is: Tell your class what you're going to teach them, teach them what you said you were going to teach them, tell them what you just taught them.

Introduce and explain new vocabulary before you use it. This is especially true if you have new members in your class. Most of us know what we mean by "the Third Angel's Message," "the midnight cry" or "the health message." But some people may have never heard of it. A recent lesson used words like "propitiation" and "expiation." Even if we know what the words mean, when was the last time you heard it on the evening news or read them on the newspaper? When was the last time you used them in a conversation? If you bring a new word like those into your class for the first time, explain them. Use an illustration to make them easier to understand. And bring them back later. Don't use them and discard them.

Sometimes it's not words, but acronyms. And oh boy, do we have a bunch of those! We are so used to them that we don't even think about it. ADRA, AWR, SDA, ACS, NAD, the list just keeps growing. I was at a family dinner one Sabbath afternoon and someone asked who knew what the six top keys on the keyboard were. Without thinking I said, "You mean QWERTY?" Quite a few turned their faces to me and said, "What?" I thought everybody knew what QWERTY was. After I explained what it was, one of my wife's cousins said, "You are a geek, aren't you?" I didn't think I was. But that's the way people feel around us when we talk in jargon and they have no idea what we are saying.

Use multisensory teaching and learning techniques. I came late to my class one Sabbath and I found the group watching a video. I thought that it was a great idea. I congratulated the teacher for his inventiveness. Any material that reinforces or clarifies concepts should be used to teach. It can be music, a short video, a series of pictures, a diagram, perfume, food or whatever.

We like to use the miracle of the feeding of the multitude to show how Christ cared for his followers (Matt. 14:31-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:10-17). But if we stop to think about the

miracle, we find that Jesus did more than just a miracle. Was it possible that the disciples were telling Jesus something He didn't know when they told Him "this is a remote place and it's already getting late." The disciples were concerned because the multitude needed to eat. Jesus gave them an order, "You give them something to eat." Us? Feed five thousand people? "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish." I want to assume that Jesus knew all this before they told Him anything. He could have told them like when Peter found the coins in the fish, "Don't worry. I'll make sure they are fed. I'll multiply the bread and the fish. Everything will be alright." But He didn't. He wanted them to learn a lesson. He used the bread and the fish so His disciples would learn a precious lesson. Actually, Ellen White says, "The simple food passed round by the hands of the disciples contained a whole treasure of lessons." (*Desire of Ages*, pp. 366, 367)

Perhaps this is an area where we fail the most while teaching the Sabbath School class. When was the last time that we tried to stimulate our students to do something different? What have you tried recently other than the traditional lecture, question and answer format?

To reach our students through their senses, we need to plan ahead. We cannot wait until Friday or Thursday night to start thinking about how we are going to teach that Sabbath? The best day to start planning is Sabbath at least a week before. Right after lunch, what could we do?

Use analogies, real life examples, practical applications and personal experiences to promote understanding. It is when we talk out of our own life's experience that the teaching becomes real. I was teaching at Takoma Academy a few years ago and the teenagers were not interested in how to conjugate the verb "to love" in Spanish, they wanted to know how my wife—she was substitute teaching there at the time—and I got to know each other. How did you know it was love? When did you first kiss? How many girlfriends did you have? They wanted to know about life, not about books. That is true every time we teach, no matter what the subject is.

Where do we get real life stories? The newspapers are filled with stories about the country and about the community. The same is true for all those weekly magazines. Some of them may not be known by everybody but there are some stories that everybody has heard about. Timeliness is a key. A few weeks ago I was talking with a media relations person at one of the Adventist medical institutions and I made reference to Baby Fae [show of hands, how many remember Baby Fae?]. She looked at me in a way that told me that she had no idea what I was talking about. I said to her, well maybe you could ask your parents about Baby Fae. Her story was all over the news in 1984. I was born in 1983, she told me. Then I went on and told her the story of Baby Fae. Keep in mind the age and interest of your class. I'm sure that if I had told her about American Idol or Hanna Montana I would have had a better chance to connect to her with my story.

Real life stories are everywhere. The Internet is a great source. But nothing compares to your story, the story of someone you know, or even the story of your class members.

We are going to do an individual activity and then we are going to share it with everybody. Keep in mind that there is no right or wrong in this activity. On the left column you have three parables of Jesus. You may pick only one parable if you wish and enter on the second column a few words to describe a real life story. If the story is about you it would be better, but it doesn't have to be. In the third column I want you to tell us what is it that you wanted to teach about that parable with your story.

Here's an example. **Parable:** the lost coin. **Story:** when we were kids—four or five years old—my younger brother and I went to the back of our grandparents farm house and began to cut some palms so our grandmother would make us a palm hat. My brother lost his knife in the process and was very concerned. I told him, I tell you what, I'm going to throw my knife and, since we are brothers, it's going to land next to yours. So I threw my knife. Luckily it landed right next to my brother's knife. We hadn't been able to see it because the blade blended with the color of the rocks underneath it. **Teaching:** You should always trust your older brother. No, that's not it, but it sounds good. When we work together, when we put our heads together, when we do not give up on our quest, we get our reward. **Moral:** Actually the reward is not actually getting to the end of your quest, finding the lost treasure, but the journey itself. The journey, the experience, the activity, is its own reward.

Don't make assumptions. One of the most common mistakes we make is to think that everybody knows exactly not only what we mean but what we are talking about. We are very good at playing "guess what I'm thinking about". I'm sure you have done it. We take a quote from Ellen White, a passage from Scripture and we make statements such as: "And this clearly teaches that..." and we look at the class expecting an answer. What does it teach? We may repeat. An answer is given that gets our automatic response, "yes, but that's not it." Until someone "guesses" what we are looking for.

This reminds me of a Sabbath school teacher. All the children knew she loved to ask those types of questions. One day she starts describing an object. "It's white," she says. "It has long front teeth, it hops on its hind legs, and it loves to eat carrots! What is it?" After a few seconds that seemed to be an eternity to most of the children in her class, little Timmy raises his hand and says: "I know that the answer should be Jesus, but it sounds like a rabbit to me..."

Keep in mind that your class may have recently baptized members as well as some that haven't come to church for some time. Don't just say, "Well you all have my number, call me at home to plan for next Sunday's activity." Even if I've been a regular class participant, it doesn't necessarily mean that I have your phone number. The same applies to the subject that we may be teaching. A common statement is to say things like: "We all know what Ellen White says about this ..." What does she say? Where? When? To whom?

Break difficult material into smaller, more manageable "chunks." Sometimes the lesson jumps from one subject to another from day to day, and we feel that we must cover everything. The first question to ask would be, what is the central message of this lesson?

What is its core message? Should I cover every detail or make sure the class understands the core message? I always try to go for the core message.

Once I figure out what the core message is, should I just tell my class? This week's lesson is about the power of God's grace in our life. See you next week. Based on what we have covered. How should I break it into smaller chunks? Here's an example: (1) Share with the class a definition of "grace." (2) Have the students share with the class their understanding of grace. (3) Discuss the difference between grace and God's grace. (4) Share with the class Bible verses related to grace. (5) Bible game using grace related Bible verses. (6) Tell your own "grace story." (7) Explain simply the Christian understanding of grace. (8) Have members share how grace has manifested in their lives.

Chances are that most of the Bible Commentary, Ellen White, Sammuele Bachiochi and Bill Knott quotes will not be used but the class would end up with a "this is what my class learned about grace today" experience.

Be creative. We began by talking about the first teacher: God. Can you think of anyone more creative than God? Look around you. It was all his idea. Even what you and I come up with is, ultimately, God's idea. We have to admit that God is creative. If we are going to be His partners in teaching, I guess we must try to emulate Him.

Being creative does not come naturally to everyone. I have a couple of friends that exude creativity. Every time we start working on a new project we decide first on a deadline to stop coming up with new ideas. But you can try this:

1. Start with the big picture
2. Set the stage for what is next
3. Meet the students needs
4. Establish a relationship
5. Have the students participate
6. Connect students to God

Going back to our previous example. Start with the core message, the big picture. And don't be afraid to state it from the very beginning. This is what we have studied this week and the core message is... And this is how we are going to make it clear in our minds. You don't have to tell them that you are going to do mimes and a Bible game and share stories, just tell them about the fact that they will learn through some activities. If you have done your homework by now you know your students. You know who likes to participate, who likes to read, who is always asking questions. Have something to do for everyone. A period for reading, a question and answer period, etc. Where we fail is in establishing relationships. This has to happen during the class period but also outside of the class period. What are they like? What do they like or dislike? Where are they from? What is their background? What's the best way to connect to them? How can I connect them to God?

Don't be afraid to admit that you don't know. For some of us this is the hardest thing. I'm their teacher. They look at me for advice, direction, correction, and guidance. I'm supposed to know. The truth is that the fact that you are the teacher doesn't mean that you have to know. You are not supposed to know. It would be great if you did. But most of the time I just don't know. And I have to say it. I really don't know. A pastor friend of mine told me once that sometime he would say he didn't know about some Bible passage or doctrine just to appear more human to his congregation and receive their approval. I wouldn't go that far.

This is particularly difficult when it comes to Bible doctrines. If it's one of our doctrines what do you mean you don't know? In most cases I say to my class: Let me tell you how I understand it today. And, after I have presented my view, I stress it again: This is the way I understand it today. Please don't be surprised if next month, or next year, when you ask me the same question I give you a different answer. We are only humans. Only God never changes.



Handouts in this Package

1. Seminar Leadership Techniques
2. Why do we teach?
3. Group Activity
4. Teaching Methods
5. Individual Activities
6. Breaking Difficult Material into Manageable Chunks
7. Generating Creative Ideas

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Additional Resources

Betz, Charles with Jack Calkins (2001). *Leading Adult Sabbath School*. Lincoln, NE: AdventSource.

Dunkin, Steve (1982). *Church Advertising*. Nashville: Abingdon. (This is a practical book on how to prepare direct mail and other publicity for seminars.)

Finley, Mark (1988). *Padded Pews or Open Doors*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association. (This is the best “how-to” book available for leaders conducting seminars for outreach purposes. It carefully presents every aspect of seminar ministry.)

Murphy, Debra Dean (2004). *Teaching that Transforms: Worship as the Heart of Christian Education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.

Palmer, Parker J. (1993). *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey*. New York, NY: HarperSanFrancisco.

Warden, Michael D. (1998). *Extraordinary Results from Ordinary Teachers: Learning to Teach as Jesus Taught*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing.

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Discussion Questions

To discuss: What news items of our days would Jesus talk about? How could we refer to the daily events to bring across spiritual messages? Would Jesus only talk about news reports in relationship to the End Time?

Quick quiz: What does ADRA stand for? Adventist Disaster Relief Agency or Adventist Development and Relief Agency?

Discussion: What does propitiation and expiation mean? Could you use them in a sentence without referring to a religion or God? What other words can you think of that we use as church jargon and are not necessarily understood by everybody?

Question to the group: What have you tried recently other than the traditional lecture, question and answer format? [Wait for show of hands and have the entire group comment on responses].

Group Activities

Group exercise: Divide the group in smaller groups. Ask each group to choose a moderator, a scribe and a presenter. The moderator will guide the discussion. The scribe will write down the responses. The presenter will come in front of the group, at the end of this exercise and share his/her group's responses. The groups have one question:

Can you think of everyday themes, issues, gadgets or news that Jesus could have used to teach a spiritual truth? How?

Group exercise: Present on the screen the PowerPoint slide on limit learning and promote learning and have the group discuss each point. Ask the attendees if they agree or disagree with each point. The responses could be written on a flip chart.

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Group
Activities

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Handout 1

Seminar Leadership Techniques

“Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of facts.” —Henry Brooks Adams

“To know how to suggest is the great art of teaching.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Real education should educate us out of self into something far finer; into a selflessness which links us with all humanity.” —Lady Nancy Astor

“You teach best what you most need to learn.” —Richard David Bach

“You can teach a student a lesson for a day; but if you can teach him to learn by creating curiosity, he will continue the learning process as long as he lives.” —Clay P. Bedford

“Smartness runs in my family. When I went to school I was so smart my teacher was in my class for five years.” —George Burns

“A teacher is one who makes himself progressively unnecessary.”
—Thomas Carruthers

“If I am walking with two other men, each of them will serve as my teacher. I will pick out the good points of the one and imitate them, and the bad points of the other and correct them in myself.” —Confucius

“The real object of education is to have a man in the condition of continually asking questions.” —Bishop Creighton

“Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.” —John Cotton Dana

“Our heritage and ideals, our code and standards—the things we live by and teach our children—are preserved or diminished by how freely we exchange ideas and feelings.” —Walt Disney

“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.” —Albert Einstein

“Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom

this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen." —Ellen White, *Education*, p. 17

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Handout 2

Why do we teach?

Teaching is part of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)

Teaching is part of the growth process (2 Timothy 2:2)

Teaching is part of our own life (Colossians 3:16)

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Handout 3

Group activity: Make copies of the chart below. Divide the group into smaller groups. Have the groups fill up the chart. Have each group choose a presenter that will explain their choices to the whole group. There is no right or wrong answer.

Text	Who is talking	Who is listening	Who is looking at who
Genesis 3:8-19	God Adam Eve		
Exodus 5:1-4			
Genesis 42:6-17			
1 Samuel 17:25-27			

Handout 4

Teaching Methods

Agree/disagree statements

Brainstorming

Case studies

Choral reading

Circle response

Demonstration

Game

Interview

Object lesson

Play

Puppets

Puzzles

Role play

Storytelling

Word association

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Handout 5

Individual activity

Parable	Real life story	Teaching	Moral
The lost coin (Luke 15:8-10)			
The vineyard laborers (Matthew 20:1-16)			
The two debtors (Luke 7:41-43)			

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Handout 6

Break difficult material into smaller, more manageable “chunks.” Sometimes the lesson jumps from one subject to another from day to day, and we feel that we must cover everything. The first question to ask would be, what is the central message of this lesson? What is its core message? Should I cover every detail or make sure the class understands the core message? I always try to go for the core message.

Once I figure out what the core message is, should I just tell my class? This week’s lesson is about the power of God’s grace in our life. See you next week. Based on what we have covered. How should I break it into smaller chunks? Here’s a possibility:

1. Share with the class a definition of “grace.”
2. Have the students share with the class their understanding of grace.
3. Comment/discuss the difference between grace and God’s grace.
4. Share with the class Bible verses related to grace.
5. Bible game using grace related Bible verses
6. Tell your own “grace story.”
7. Explain simply the Christian understanding of grace.
8. Have members share how grace has manifested in their lives.

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Handout 7

Generating Creative Ideas

1. Start with the big picture
2. Set the stage for what is next
3. Meet the students needs
4. Establish a relationship
5. Have the students participate
6. Connect students to God

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