

LESSON 3 Christian Teaching Is Special

In our last lesson we saw in both the Old Testament and the New Testament the importance of teaching. Our guide for a teaching ministry today is the history of teaching in the Bible.

In this lesson we will look at why we teach. Everyone needs learning but not everyone needs to be taught the same thing at the same time. Some need to learn the plan of salvation. Others need to be taught how they may grow as a Christian. And still others need teaching to find their place of service in the church.

I hope you are beginning to understand the importance of teaching in everyone's life. We are all in need of teachers, and we are all commanded to teach. Spiritual truths, both given and received, are included in teaching ministry.

The Plan

- A. Teaching for Salvation
- B. Teaching for Spiritual Growth
- C. Teaching for Service

The Goals

1. State the teaching necessary to find God's answer to our greatest need.
2. List two important elements of spiritual growth.
3. Show areas in the church where we can serve as we are taught.

A. TEACHING FOR SALVATION

Goal 1. State the teaching necessary to find God's answer to our greatest need.

Humanity Without God

Maybe you have heard of someone who got lost while walking through a forest. There was no one to show him the way. After a long time of wandering, he began to fall from hunger and weakness. Some people who have been lost like that have been found. Others have not.

There is something worse than being lost in a forest. It is going through life without ever knowing God. Many people search all their lives to find God. They try different religions, pray to other gods, pay money, and work hard, but they never find peace. Without God people are lost forever.

Christians know they will be with God through all eternity. Eternity starts when our physical life ends. Sin will separate us from God eternally. The Bible tells us that everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence (Romans 3:23). Through one man sin came into the world, bringing death with it. Death, as a result, spread to the whole human race (Romans

5:12). But there is hope! God does not want people to be forever lost. He wants them to receive salvation.

Salvation Through Jesus

Showing lost people how to find God is part of the work of teaching. Asking Jesus to be our Savior is how we ourselves have found God. We now must share this message with the lost men, women, and children around us.

Anyone who comes to Jesus can be saved. This is the message of God to all people. John writes, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

There are only two things a person must do to be saved: Repent of sin and believe in Jesus. To repent means to be so sorry for your sin that you turn away from it. To believe in Jesus means to trust Him to do what He said He would.

A few Bible verses you can use to teach people how to be saved are:

- “Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15).
- “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household” (Acts 16:31).
- “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11–12).

Also, if you have not already done so, you may want to study the Christian Life course *Personal Evangelism*. This will prepare you to teach the way of salvation to those who have not received it.

Application

1 What is humanity’s greatest need?

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2 What is God's answer to this need?

.....

3 Match each definition (left) with the word it best describes (right) by writing the number of the word in front of its definition.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| ... a Sorry enough for sin to turn away | 1) Eternity |
| ... b Period of time that lasts forever | 2) Believe |
| ... c To trust | 3) Repent |

4 Circle the letter below that best completes the following sentence: If a friend of yours did not know God, you would

a) teach him to repent and believe in Jesus.
b) teach her about several religions and let her decide.
c) wait for him to ask you about God.

B. TEACHING FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Goal 2. List two important elements of spiritual growth.

Growing in the Word

After we have been saved, God does not want us to stop growing spiritually. Accepting Jesus as Savior is just the beginning. It is an open door to life with God. The goal of Christian teaching is to help Christians grow into that life. The best way for a Christian to grow is to learn from the Word of God. This is why we teach the Bible in Sunday school and church. The Bible is also our textbook in home Bible studies or in personal teaching.

We should also teach people to read the Bible for themselves. Everyone should have a time every day to read the Bible and pray. If you do this yourself, then you can share the truths you learn with those you are teaching. Teaching people to look to God and to the Bible for life's answers will help them deal with everyday issues.

The Bible is our textbook in teaching for growth. Paul told Timothy how important the Bible is to the Christian.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16–17)

The Holy Spirit will urge us to act on what we have learned as we study God’s Word. The Holy Spirit will gently push us into doing the right things. We can say no to Him, but if we let Him, He will teach us. It may mean asking God to forgive us of sin in our lives. As we obey His urging, we become more like Jesus. Then we can teach others the importance of obedience.

Guidance of the Holy Spirit

Teaching for spiritual growth is not complete without teaching that all believers may have the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Peter spoke of this on the Day of Pentecost:

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38–39)

When we Christians receive the Holy Spirit, He puts a desire in our hearts to obey God. He helps us live and work for God. This is how we grow in our Christian life.

The Holy Spirit is also our Teacher. We talked about what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit in John 14:26. Read that verse again and think about your answers to the following questions. What name did Jesus give the Holy Spirit? How does that name make you feel towards Him? What two things will the Holy Spirit do for you? How will this help you as you teach others?

The Holy Spirit is our Helper. We can teach others when we have allowed Him to teach us and help us remember Jesus' words. The Holy Spirit calls people into a teaching ministry and also teaches those He calls.

To grow in God, we have to know God. We can never learn all there is to know about God, but the Holy Spirit knows God and will teach us about Him. Paul writes,

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. (1 Corinthians 2:10–12)

To have a teaching ministry that is blessed by God, we must have the teaching of the Holy Spirit in our own lives. Then we can teach others that spiritual growth will come as they allow Jesus to fill them with the Holy Spirit.

Application

Circle the letter in front of the best answer to each question.

- 5** What does God want us to do after we are saved?
- a)** Find the answer to a friend's problem.
 - b)** Read our Bible every day.
- 6** Who can be filled with the Holy Spirit?
- a)** Only pastors and teachers
 - b)** Every Christian
- 7** What does the Holy Spirit do to help us grow?
- a)** He urges us to do what is right.
 - b)** He makes us perfect so we do not sin anymore.

8 How does reading the Bible help Christians to grow spiritually?

- a) It increases our ability to learn.
 - b) It teaches us the truth.
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C. TEACHING FOR SERVICE

Goal 3. Show areas in the church where we can serve as we are taught.

There is no place to stop in our spiritual growth. All of us need to grow in our Christian lives until this life is over. In God's plan for the Christian, one of the purposes for our life is to do good works. These good things we do are not to save us. Salvation comes from God. God's Holy Spirit urges us to work because we are saved.

As we do the things God wants us to do we will continue to grow in Him. Maybe a mother you know is sick, and cannot take care of her family. Taking that family some food for their dinner, or taking care of the baby might be good works. As a Christian you are showing in this that God loves her too.

Growth in our spiritual lives happens when we use our time, effort, and money to help others. We do this in the church, where we live, and on our job. We teach people in the church to support the work of the church with their money. We learn to bring our offerings and tithes to God. A tithe is one tenth of the increase in money God gives us. If He has blessed us, through earnings or gifts, we must return to Him ten percent of those earnings or gifts. God blesses people who give with a willing, happy spirit. As people learn to do this in the church, they grow in their trust in God for His blessings.

We also learn in church how to serve God with our talents. Talents are special abilities God has given us. Some people, for example, can sing well. Others cannot. Singing can be a skill they learn. But sometimes it is a talent God has given to them.

Christians sometimes need to be taught how to use their talents, or that God gives them talents.

Teaching can help keep the church working together. Teachers and workers in the Sunday school need training. Classes can be set up to train them. Other workers need to learn how to serve communion, greet visitors, and do many other important tasks in the church.

Application

- 9** Circle the letter in front of each true statement below.
- a)** Spiritual growth continues for just a short time after salvation.
 - b)** Christians should be taught to give money to God because they have to.
 - c)** We should teach that we grow in God when we show His love to someone.
 - d)** Teachers need to be taught.
 - e)** If someone wants to serve in the church, let him do so even though he is not trained.
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Check Your Answers

1 To find God

9 c) and d) are true.

2 Believe in Jesus Christ.

8 b) It teaches us the truth.

3 3) Repent

1) Eternity

2) Believe

7 a) He urges us to do what is right.

4 a) teach him to repent and believe in Jesus.

6 b) Every Christian

5 b) Read our Bible every day.

