

4 Everyone Needs Teaching

Have you ever watched a mother bird when her babies are ready to fly? She pushes them out of the nest. The process of teaching has started. This will continue until the baby bird is able to care for itself. The same principle is applied to our children. From their earliest years, we teach them how to live in this world.

We have seen the three purposes of Christian teaching: (1) to help people learn of their need for salvation, (2) to help them grow in their Christian life, and (3) to lead them into Christian service. Everyone needs teaching, for the Creator wants everyone to know and love Him.

We will be better Christian teachers the more we learn about Christian teaching. Our desire should be to teach so the lives of children, teenagers, and adults will be changed. Pray that the Lord will help you understand the needs of each person you know. This is the first step to becoming a teacher for the Lord.

The Plan

- A. All-Inclusive Teaching
- B. Everyone Is Different

The Goals

1. State Jesus's model for teaching.
2. Identify spiritual learning differences of various age groups.

A. ALL-INCLUSIVE TEACHING

Jesus's Example

Goal 1. State Jesus's model for teaching.

In Lesson 1 we examined Jesus's command to teach for us to teach: "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). How can we obey it? Few of us will ever go around the world. And even those who can go to many places will not be able to teach everyone.

Christians must be willing to be taught, and then must teach others. This way you can obey the command. Some of the people the Lord wants you to teach may be in the church. Others may be in your neighborhood or on the job. However, the most important audience to whom you will teach God's truths is in your own home. It would not be long until everyone has heard God's message.

Jesus is our example. His message was the good news of God's love. The message was for everyone. Jesus never left the area of Palestine where the people of Israel lived. He taught all the people around Him. Mark notes that "Jesus called the crowd to him and said, 'Listen to me, everyone, and understand this'" (Mark 7:14).

He taught those who came to Him. John says, "At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them"

(John 8:2). Jesus did not refuse anyone. He took care of their needs and taught all who came to Him.

It is easy to think someone is not important enough for us to teach. We do not want to waste our time on some, thinking that they would never accept the gospel. We may even be afraid to teach people we deem of greater importance. But we should not allow our perceptions of others to deter us from teaching them. Jesus's example is inclusive of all people of all cultures and social status.

Application

1 Explain how you can obey Christ's command to teach all people everywhere.

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2 Circle the letter in front of the true sentences.

- a)** God's command to teach is not for everyone.
- b)** We need to teach the people who live in our own homes.
- c)** Our command to teach is found in Matthew 28:19.
- d)** Jesus turned away people He was afraid to teach.
- e)** Jesus taught only leaders.



Everyone's Need

Paul taught that the message of God's love was for everyone. In Athens, he taught the people about Jesus and the resurrection. He told them how God had made the world and everything in it and that God now "commands all people everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).

Paul's letter to the church at Rome explained,

"As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.' For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the

same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”
(Romans 10:11–13)

It is not enough just to say everyone needs to be taught. We must examine why everyone needs teaching. People who are not Christians need teaching to learn how to become Christians. They must learn there is no other way to have peace in their hearts but through Jesus Christ.

What about those who are Christians; do they still need teaching? Yes, we all need to be taught. None of us is perfect, nor will we be until we reach heaven. Paul taught the Christians:

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.
(Colossians 1:28)

Read 1 Timothy 4:1–6 and answer the following questions. What are the two wrong teachings? What did Paul say was the correct teaching on these two things? What was Timothy supposed to do for his Christian brothers? What was he to do for himself?

False teaching may spread. In this case to think it was wrong to marry or to eat certain foods was false teaching. False teaching will keep us from growing spiritually. Paul told Timothy to teach what God’s truth is. If we do not know the truth, how will we recognize lies?

Application

Choose the best answer for the following questions.

- 3** You could be a modern-day Paul by teaching
- a)** the people in Rome.
 - b)** those who know Jesus.
 - c)** everyone who needs Jesus.
 - d)** the people in Athens.

- 4 Everyone needs teaching to have
 - a) a lot of knowledge about God.
 - b) wisdom.
 - c) eternal life through Jesus Christ.
 - 5 To overcome lies we need to learn
 - a) God's truths.
 - b) world history.
 - c) honesty.
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B. EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT

Goal 2. Identify spiritual learning differences of various age groups.

We are all different—not only in our spiritual growth, but also in our level of understanding. Everyone needs to be taught God's truths, but we cannot teach a child in the same way that we teach an adult. Now we will see how it is best to teach various age groups.

Children

Children are important to Jesus. When His disciples argued about who among them would be greatest in heaven, Jesus showed them a child and said:

“Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest.”
(Luke 9:48)

How early should we start teaching children? A mother and father should begin to teach their children at home at a very early age. They should take their children to Sunday school programs that give children the teaching they need.

Before they could talk, I read to my children and sang to them about Jesus from the time they were born. They grew up knowing Jesus as a Person who was a friend to our family.

Children grow in understanding of life around them. A parent does not ask a two-year-old to build a house. The child first learns to play with blocks of wood and later learns how to use a hammer, and then a saw. Growth is like this in a child's spiritual life. A two-year-old does not understand Jesus' death and resurrection. Instead, he or she can be taught that Jesus is his or her friend.

The following chart shows differences in learning about spiritual truths for different age groups of children:

Learning Differences				
	2–3 years	4–5 years	6–8 years	9–11 years
God	feels God is real	thinks of God as a Father	sees God as loving and holy	sees God as Great Judge
Jesus	feels Jesus is best friend	feels the presence of Jesus	responds to Jesus and accepts Him as Savior	grows to know Jesus better
Bible	is a special Book	is a special Book	starts reading	makes reading a habit and memorizes verses
Prayer	prays simple prayers	prays simple prayers	has a belief in prayer	is ready for prayer habit
Spiritual Growth		knows about right and wrong	can know God's help	cares about other's spiritual needs

Study this chart whether you are a parent or a teacher of children. It will help you know what to teach your children about spiritual truths.

Application

- 6** Circle the letter before each true statement below.
- a)** Jesus meant that children are too young to be taught about Him.
 - b)** We are to include children in our teaching ministry.
 - c)** Children are ready to hear about the resurrection when they are two years old.
 - d)** It is never too early to teach a child about Jesus and His love.
- 7** Since children cannot be expected to understand difficult things, we should
- a)** wait until they are older to teach them about God.
 - b)** start early to teach them simple truths about Jesus's love for them.
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Teenagers

When children become teenagers, there are even more changes. Teenagers tend to challenge the things they believed as children. There are several things teachers will need to do to help resolve this tension:

1. Answer their questions. No matter what a teenager asks, an answer needs to be received. It may be hard, but with God's help we can look for answers to show that God's way is best.
2. Listen to them talk. Their minds are working hard exploring all of life. They want to share what they have seen and learned. It may be explaining the science test taken in school or describing a friend's car. They want to tell you their ideas, and they need to be listened to.

3. Set an example. The teenager needs to see that Christianity really works. Share your own needs and answered prayers. As they see Jesus working in your life, they will know what you are teaching is true.
4. Apply God's truth to their lives. Pray and work with them so they will learn for themselves the truth of God's promises. They need to see God work in their own lives. This builds their faith.

Application

- 8** Circle the letter before each true statement below.
- a)** Teenagers need to see that God does work in our lives.
 - b)** We must not try to answer all questions of a teenager.
 - c)** It is important to take time out and listen to the teenager.
 - d** An important way to teach a teenager is to be a good example.
- 9** A teenager is different in his spiritual growth because he
- a)** never really understood what he was taught.
 - b)** will not listen to adults.
 - c)** is beginning to question all the things he believed as a child.
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Adults

Adults can understand the Bible in ways that children and teenagers cannot. Adults need to be taught to live the truths they learn, else they will stop growing spiritually. As adults obey God's Word, they continue to learn deeper truths. Teaching the Word of God should bring about changes in their lives.

Adults need to learn that Jesus Christ should be the Lord of their lives and is the head of the church. Jesus can show each one of us how to live for Him even though we are all different. We make Jesus the Lord of our lives when we obey Him.

As adult believers, we can be teachers of the Word and workers with God. Teachers need to learn of God and learn about their students. Teachers are better able to teach what

adults need to learn when the students' needs are known. God wants everyone to learn of Him. Because we learn in different ways, we need not only to study the Bible but also to learn how to reach students on all levels of learning.

Application

Choose the correct answer in parentheses to complete each sentence.

10 Adults can be taught (faster/deeper truths).

11 When an adult does not obey the truths from God's Word, he or she (stops growing spiritually/can still teach).

12 Teachers are (merely adults/workers with God).

13 What will you do when you have a chance to teach someone, now that you know some of the differences between the different age groups?

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Check Your Answers

13 I would get to know the person. First, I would find out if he is a Christian or not. Then I would teach him the things he could understand at his age level.

1 By teaching the people you know

12 workers with God.

2 a) False

b) True

c) True

d) False

e) False

11 stops growing spiritually.

3 c) everyone who needs Jesus.

10 deeper truths.

4 c) eternal life through Jesus Christ.

9 c) is beginning to question all the things he believed as a child.

5 a) God's truths.

8 All but b) are true.

6 a) False

b) True

c) False

d) True

7 b) start early to teach them simple truths about Jesus's love for them.