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EQUIPPING LAY LEADERSHIP TO TEACH THE BIBLE AT
HOPE BIBLE CHURCH IN OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

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Craig Allan Turnbull
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EQUIPPING LAY LEADERSHIP TO TEACH THE BIBLE AT
HOPE BIBLE CHURCH IN OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

Craig Allan Turnbull

Read and Approved by:

Jamus Edwards (Faculty Supervisor)

Joseph C. Harrod

Date _____

For Catherine, who shares this life with me,
and who, more than anyone, shares the love of Christ with me and our children.

For Serena, Maria, and Abraham—precious gifts, all of you.
May the Lord lead you to a lifetime of deepening love for Him.

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PREFACE

I am so grateful to God for who He is, and how I have been adopted into His family as a son, not because of my own accomplishments or merit, but entirely because of Jesus's love that carried Him to the cross. By faith through grace alone, I am His and He is mine. No one can ever love me like this. He saw and continues to see me at my worst and the comfort I receive from Him is beyond measure. His kind hands lead me through this difficult and joy-filled life, and I hope that this work would serve as one more drop in the river of all things that lead to the ocean of praise and to His great glory. If anything good is found in what follows, it is His. O for a thousand tongues to sing!

Many people encouraged me along in this process, and while I would like to name them all, I especially wish to highlight my 22 students in this inaugural class of teachers. Being guinea pigs is never easy, but then to do it during a pandemic certainly warrants special merit! Thank you for your diligent study, your careful crafting of lessons, your encouragement of one another and me, and your patience with your teacher the whole time. May the Lord multiply these efforts in your lives, and may he give you a deeper love for Him that would lead to a deeper love for His people. Here's to many years of non-pandemic teaching ahead!

My thanks also go to Dr. Jamus Edwards for his help in this long process. Separated by a border, lockdowns, and a fair share of cultural differences, Dr. Edwards continually encouraged me countless times as a true brother in the faith to keep my hand to the plough. His precision, frankness, and availability helped me focus on the priorities and not give up. Bless you brother, for your sincere love.

I would also be remiss if I did not extend my thanks also to those men who served as my expert panel. Though everyone of you would balk at the word "expert," to

describe you, all of you served as deep sources of wisdom, encouragement, and support. I selected you for varied reasons: Earl as my boss, Nathan as my co-laborer, Mark as my one-time protégé now gone on to incredible things, Paul as the big picture guy who thinks nationally and globally, and Chris my colleague and dear brother in heart. Though very different from one another, all of you serve as friends. You are men I can (and have) laughed with, cried with, and rejoiced with. Blessed by God to be immensely good at what you do, I am likewise blessed to call you my friends.

Finally, I especially wish to thank my family: my children, Serena, Maria, and Abraham, and my dear wife, Catherine. Thank you for sacrificing so much, and for cheering me on to shake the rust off and head back to school. Thank you for your love. I could not have done this without you. I love us and love how God has gifted us to be a family together. Nearest to my heart, and precious to me. If I could only pick four people, you know who they would be.

Craig Turnbull

Oakville, Ontario

December 2021

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mission of Hope Bible Church (HBC) is to glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) in the spirit of the Great Commandment (Matt 22:37-39). These biblical commands aim to see the lost come to maturity in Christ and are propelled by a love for God first, and people second. As the clearest and highest calling of any church, this mission is entirely dependent upon the accurate teaching of the Word of God. While HBC has remained faithful to the preaching of the Bible through expository sermons, outside of Sunday mornings this commitment to training and teaching has been largely neglected. A ministry project that directs efforts towards the training of a group of leaders who can teach the Scriptures would greatly benefit the church in which I minister and would impact also the kingdom of God globally.

Context

HBC is located in Oakville, Ontario, positioned in what is known as the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Although once a reasonably affordable option for outside commuters to Toronto, Oakville has grown over the years not only in population density, but in average household income and household price. Boxed in on the southern end by Lake Ontario, Oakville has become a desirable and largely white-collar community. Drawing from this community and others extending well out of the region, HBC sees an average weekly attendance of four thousand adults across three services.

As one of the earliest churches planted by Harvest Bible Chapel in Chicago Illinois (HBCC), HBC shared a denominational affiliation, or as was termed, an

“autonomous relationship” with this founding church for many years even sharing the name of Harvest Bible Chapel for its first fifteen years of existence. From this same founding body, Harvest Bible Chapel Oakville (now called Hope Bible Church) received much of its polity and practices. Just like its namesake in Chicago, HBC is an elder-led church characterized by strong verse-by-verse expositional teaching from the weekend pulpit, a firm belief in the power of prayer, a fervent desire to worship the Lord Jesus, and to share the good news of Jesus with boldness. These four key values of Word, worship, prayer, and evangelism have undergirded all ministries and were called for many years “The Four Pillars.” In recent days this relationship with the founding church has fractured and disintegrated as HBC’s elders chose to break fellowship with HBCC in 2017. Despite the severing of relationship, these core truths of the church’s identity remain fixed even today.

In addition to these four characteristics or pillars, in 2017 HBC adopted the language of its new affiliate body, the Great Commission Collective (GCC), and in so doing has added two further distinctives. In addition to Word, worship, prayer and evangelism values, HBC’s stated purposes now include intentional disciple-making and strategic church planting. For the purpose of this proposal, it is key to note that all six of these core values of HBC are firmly rooted in the faithful exposition and/or teaching of God’s Word. Indeed, none of these distinctives can be accomplished unless there is a strong understanding from Scripture as to what these truths actually mean. As time continues to pass and the memory of the earliest days of our church’s planting diminishes, the absolute need for the Word of God to be faithfully taught increases as these truths are no longer simply adopted out of hand, but must be understood deeply by the new attendees and members of HBC.

Along with this and as implied already, in the fifteen years of its existence, HBC has witnessed drastic growth of its weekly attendance despite having planted six other local churches. The church sees an average weekly attendance of over four

thousand adults across three services, and has gone through three expansion efforts already to increase seating capacity. Given such a large growth trajectory there is an enormous need to shepherd this growing community towards maturity in Christ in part through the faithful teaching of God's Word. As long as the Lord continues to bring the people, the pastoral team continues rightly to feel the weight of responsibility to disciple them. Honest consideration of the volume of attendees however, quickly brings the realization that the work of bringing about maturity in the Word cannot be carried out by the pastors alone.

Taking into account this uninterrupted flow of new, undisciplined, and immature attendees, there is a clear lack of equipped teachers of the Word of God in lay leader positions our church. Although opportunities exist for teaching in our weekly sermons, children's ministry, youth ministry, men's, women's and seniors' ministry, most if not all rely heavily upon video curricula, or the same limited number of trained teachers. When HBC was originally founded, the church relied heavily upon central teaching from its pulpit and supported this teaching with facilitation within small groups. Given the added complexity of accelerated growth, the church installed these small group leaders into under-shepherding positions when they may not yet have been qualified to teach God's Word. The immediate solution to this underqualification has been to provide the small group leaders with precisely what questions to ask while leading their groups. For that matter, the church was so on guard against divergent teaching that it gave qualified descriptions of our leaders as "facilitators" rather than "leaders," or "teachers" and even discouraged those facilitators from taking time to teach. HBC has carried forward this practice of leaning upon teaching delivery via video curriculum built and taught by individuals outside of our church.

In the entire fifteen-year history of the church, HBC has never established an intentional and focused process of teaching our people how to teach God's Word. Most of the current lay leaders, in what limited teaching positions the church has, have never

received much beyond the basics of instruction by way of a general brief and debrief in any given teaching session, and have relied either upon natural giftings, previous training from other churches, or a combination of the two. A clear need exists for more qualified teachers of the Word of God that can disciple this growing church outside of HBC's pulpit ministry.

Rationale

HBC has long held to the commitment that the Word of God is to be central to the discipleship of the people of the church. It is well-understood that if the Bible is not taught with depth and meaning, then the process of maturation within the local assembly will be stunted or arrested altogether. Presently, HBC is not able to train disciples at the depth needed to accommodate the rapid growth of its community. Succinctly stated, there are not enough teachers of the Word to stir this maturity forward. Therefore, the leadership of HBC desires a training program to instruct existing lay leadership in methods to faithfully teach the Bible to disciples within the church community. The training program for this teaching would include an eight-week course open to new and existing lay leadership within HBC comprised of instruction in exegesis and hermeneutics, biblical and systematic theology, lesson planning, and pedagogy. Given the size of the scope of material, course material needs to be chosen well, and a feedback loop assessing live teaching events would be formed to come alongside the curriculum.

The intended product of the course material and concurrent evaluation methods would be a growth not only in the presence of teachers at HBC, but also passion for the gift of teaching. Instrumental in all areas of the church, the proclamation of the Word of God would serve to strengthen many other ministries at HBC. As correct understanding of God's Word it is reasonable to expect an increase in the number of men and women able to teach also.

When taught with clarity and urgency, the Word of God through the Holy Spirit brings about growth and maturity. Hebrews 5:12-6:1 speaks of stunted growth in the believer whenever there is a light diet of the Word of God. Rather than being “teachers” and reaching full maturity, those “unskilled in the word,” remain as children do even resisting growth that comes through the training of the Word. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the church in Colossae states openly that his message of Christ is proclaimed with the aims of “warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ” (Col 1:28). Discipleship growth in Christlikeness, in other words, are dependent upon the teaching of the Word.

As the process of discipleship relies upon the teaching of the Word of God, it is incumbent upon the leadership to encourage this process however possible. In Ephesians 4:11-16 Paul speaks directly to the discipleship responsibility of the leadership of the church, noting that “the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,” are all given by God to His church with the expressed purpose being “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” The four roles mentioned by Paul all center around the practice of instruction from the word of God, with the end goal being, as the apostle sees it, “mature manhood,” and the attaining of “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13). Maturity, in other words, is inseparably anchored to teaching of the Word and severely hindered in its absence.

With this desired end product of Christian discipleship towards maturity and away from childish behaviors and vacillation, the cultivation of teachers of the Word is to be a predominant focus of leadership in any church. Given that the leadership of HBC desires this maturity of their people, it therefore follows that the feeding and care for the members of HBC must occur in part through the teaching of God’s Word. As the Scriptures are the sustenance for the follower of Christ (2 Tim 2:15-17), the training of the leadership of HBC to be excellent teachers of the Word of God would result in greater health for the church in general, as well as the community in which it is found.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to design and implement a course of study to equip the lay leaders of Hope Bible Church in teaching the Bible.

Goals

In order to grow the base of teachers at HBC, I established four goals for this project. These goals progressed from an initial assessment of how the church was currently training its teachers, to the development of a curriculum to increase teacher effectiveness, then to a practical increase in both skill and knowledge, before finally seeing an ultimate goal of increased number of trained teachers of the Bible at HBC.

1. The first goal was to assess the current teaching practices within our ministries at HBC.
2. The second goal was to develop an eight-week curriculum that equipped participants to teach the Bible. The curriculum covered basic teaching skills such as the exegesis of Scripture, biblical and systematic theology, lesson planning, and pedagogy.
3. The third goal was to equip participants in the practice of teaching the Bible.
4. The fourth goal was to deploy these new teachers in increased live teaching occurrences within our church by 25 percent.

The completion of each goal was dependent on a defined means of measurement and a benchmark of success. The research methodology and instruments used to measure the success of each goal are detailed in the following section.

Research Methodology

Successful completion of this project depended upon the completion of these four goals. The first goal was to assess the current teaching practices within our ministries at Hope Bible Church.¹ This goal was measured by administering the Teaching

¹All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in this ministry project.

Practices Inventory (TPI) to twenty-two leaders at HBC (see appendix 1).² The TPI was conducted no less than six months prior to the construction of the curriculum and was delivered to individuals who are currently teaching or have previously taught classes at HBC.³ This goal was considered successfully met when all twenty-two lay leaders completed the TPI and the inventory had been analyzed yielding a clearer picture of the current teaching practices among HBC leadership.

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to equip participants to teach the Bible. The curriculum addressed basic teaching skills such as the correct exegesis of Scripture, biblical and systematic theology, lesson planning, and pedagogy. This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum (see appendix 2). This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level.

The third goal was to equip participants in the practice of teaching the Bible. This goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-survey that measured the participant's level of knowledge, confidence, and passion to teach the Scriptures (see appendix 3). At the conclusion of the eight-week course, team leaders observed the participants' teaching performance during evaluation labs and determined their level of competency utilizing an evaluation rubric (see appendix 4). This goal was considered successfully met when the *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre and post survey scores. Additionally, this goal was successfully met when each participant scores at the sufficient or above level on the evaluation rubric.

² The average Sunday attendance at Hope Bible Church is over 4000 adults. Of these, only 40-50 have taught the Bible in a setting larger than 5 people even once.

³ This would include children's ministry, youth ministry, men's, women's and seniors' ministry.

The fourth goal was to increase the number of live teaching occurrences led by lay leaders within our church by 25 percent. This goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-analysis of current trends of live teachers. The number of active teachers as of September 1, 2020 was utilized as the base number to which the increase was compared. This goal was considered successfully met when the number of live teachers active across all ministries had increased by a minimum of 25 percent.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms will be used in the ministry project:

Teaching. As used in this project, teaching refers the communication of Biblical truth and the transmission of the faith.⁴ Heavily dependent upon the manner in which the interpretation of Scripture is derived, teaching the Bible can only be successful when capturing the original intent of the original author to the original audience. Though it is expected that participants will be strengthened in a variety of teaching contexts including those outside of the larger classroom setting, for the purposes of this project, the narrower sense of teaching will refer only to that teaching taking place within a classroom setting in, but not limited to, our men's, women's, seniors, youth or children's ministries.

Discipleship. At its core, discipleship is an ongoing process in which one grows as a follower of Jesus Christ.⁵ Beginning with the individual's response to the open call of Jesus, "Follow me," the individual is set apart in increasing Christlikeness by the work of the Holy Spirit as the Word of God is brought into the believer's life.⁶ At HBC this process is recognized, encouraged, and measured within a model known to the

⁴ Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 143.

⁵ Allison, *Baker Compact Dictionary*, 43.

⁶ G. Strecker and E. Starke, "Discipleship," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, ed. Erwin Fahlbusch et al., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 1:851.

church as the “5G Life.” These five “G’s” stress the importance of having time every day with the Lord in His word and prayer (God Time), gathering with the community of believers both corporately (Gather Time), as well as on a smaller scale (Group Time), the sharing of talents and resources with others (Give Time), and the active participation in evangelism (Go Time). It should be stressed that within the culture of HBC, this five-fold definition of discipleship is centered around and fed at every step by the Word of God.

Biblical theology. The understanding adopted in this project considers biblical theology as the “discipline that describes the progressive revelation found in Scripture by examining the theology of its various groupings.”⁷ Not limited simply to the study of single words, or images, biblical theology has a decidedly Christocentric bent. As Nick Roark and Robert Cline have observed, “biblical theology is an approach to reading the whole story of the Bible while keeping our focus on the main point of Scripture, Jesus Christ [It] is the scriptural road map that leads us to Jesus.”⁸

Systematic theology. Carrying a similar disciplined approach, systematic theology is that study that seeks to apply the Bible as a whole providing, as Wayne Grudem says, “answers [to] the question, “What does the whole Bible teach us today?” about any given topic.”⁹

Three limitations applied to this project. First, the accuracy of the pre and post-series surveys were dependent upon the willingness of the participants to be honest about their knowledge and understanding of the process of training teachers. To mitigate this limitation, the respondents were promised that their answers will remain nameless. Second, the effectiveness of the training was limited by the constancy of attendance. If

⁷ Allison, *Baker Compact Dictionary*, 23.

⁸ Nick Roark and Robert Cline, *Biblical Theology: How the Church Faithfully Teaches the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 23.

⁹ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1994), 1255.

the participants did not attend all of the training sessions, it was difficult to measure how beneficial the training has been. To mitigate this limitation, each week of the teaching sessions were scheduled during the weekly youth gatherings to better coordinate with family plans. Third, due to a global pandemic and its adverse effects on the region in which HBC is located, it was difficult to measure if, in fact, the expanded measurements of teacher presence made a significant difference.

Two delimitations were placed on the project. First, the project focused upon only those in leadership at HBC. Having gone through the membership process and given assent to the core doctrines and key distinctives, these individuals were pre-qualified to serve in teaching capacities. Second, the project was confined to a twenty-six-week timeframe. This gave adequate time to prepare and teach the eight-week training sessions and conduct the post-series survey after sessions were completed, as well allowed for the class to be brought into the semester approach of HBC.

Conclusion

Hope Bible Church desires to see and cultivate maturity in Christ for every believer in their midst. Though gifted with a number of wonderful Bible teachers, the time has come for an intentional process of training additional teachers of God's Word. God has provided leadership to His church on the local level to teach the Bible and so cultivate the maturity of the believers in their care. Without this constant diet of God's Word taught properly, the body of Christ can expect to suffer from immaturity and ignorance. If the aim of HBC is to call towards and cultivate a maturity in Christ in our people, this cannot take place with faithful and persistent teaching from the Word of God. The following chapters will demonstrate the very nature of discipleship being integrally linked to the teaching of the Word. Chapter two will focus on an exposition of Matthew 28:18-20 and Ephesians 4:11-16, noting the critical role that teaching the Scriptures plays in the cultivation of maturity in Christ, while chapter three will focus on a theoretical,

practical, and historical examination of discipleship that flourishes under the teaching of the Word of God.

CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR
EQUIPPING LAY LEADERSHIP TO
TEACH THE BIBLE

At the very heart of the Christian mission is a call for discipleship, and the training and raising up of devoted followers of Christ. As an essential piece of this training, the truths of Jesus Christ must be presented as articulated in the Scriptures. The faithful teaching of the Bible is therefore essential for the growth, development, and multiplication of the church. Without the teacher of the Word the ministry of the church falls into error, confusion, and worldliness. In the positive, faithful expositional teaching within a local context finds rich soil for ministry, multiplication, stability, unity, and faithfulness to calling of Christ. This chapter is devoted to the examination of Scripture in two particular passages to defend the position that teaching the Bible, and so the cultivation of teachers, is critical for the church's growth.

**Teaching the Bible Is Directly Connected to Jesus's
Command to Make Disciples: Matthew 28:18-20**

An exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20 will support the thesis by showing that cultivating teachers is directly connected to Jesus's charge to make disciples. As Matthew records, this final charge takes place in front of His disciples as the triumphant Jesus begins to make explicit the role and mission His disciples are to engage. Jesus's instructions to His followers in Galilee emphasize that not only is the practice of teaching ultimately rooted in His authority, but also that it is critical to His aims for the church, and is to be sequential in nature, supported by the ever-present aid of Christ. In sum, teaching the Scriptures is a key marker in the mission of discipleship, and without it, true discipleship cannot take place.

Teaching Is Anchored in the Authority of Christ

The conclusion of Matthew's Gospel leads to the hills of Galilee where the Lord's activities began.¹ Moving from South to North, Matthew reverses the progress of his gospel to this ultimate moment. To both believers and doubters, the now resurrected Jesus begins His commissioning with a declaration of the total authority now vested in Him: ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς, "all authority has been given to me in heaven and upon [the] earth."² With the use of ἐδόθη, Donald Hagner observes that the "passive verb assumes God as the acting subject," namely that "God has given Jesus this comprehensive sovereignty over the whole of the created order."³ Not seen as anything newly added to Jesus, this authority as Grant Osborne notes is "linked to the authority Jesus displayed throughout his earthly ministry," and yet represents "a new level of authority, as Jesus receives from His Father His preexistent glory and authority."⁴ Leon Morris further observes that Matthew portrays Christ in His "fullest possible authority, for it is authority in heaven and on earth," and "that the limitations that applied throughout the incarnation no longer apply to him."⁵ With the fourfold use of πᾶς "all" throughout the remainder of the passage, Stuart Weber observes that Matthew underscores "Jesus' divine identity: all authority, all nations, all things."⁶ Jesus, in other

¹ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1107.

² Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the *English Standard Version*.

³ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33B (Dallas: Word International, 1995), 886.

⁴ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 1079.

⁵ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 745-46.

⁶ Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000), 484.

words, is supreme in His authority. This is Jesus in His most authoritative stance the disciples have yet seen, and it is an authority clearly endowed by the Father.

Christ's authority is complete, but so too is the reign and scope of the Risen Lord. Jesus's words in Matthew 28 serve as an intended linkage to the "son of man" depicted in Daniel 7:14 who, entrusted with dominion and authority, holds power over all nations. The son of man in Daniel's account receives no temporal kingdom, but one that is of eternal nature and limitless scope. With Christ's allusion to this passage, the implication is clear to His followers: It is Jesus who now fulfills this prophecy and who possesses complete dominion over all nations. No longer is the message of Messiah confined to the national borders and people of Israel (cf. Matt 10:5-6), but this mission now includes the Gentiles also. As His emissaries, Christ's followers are to reach the entire world with the message salvation found in Jesus.

This unlimited authority possessed by Christ overflows likewise to His followers. David Turner observes that "in Daniel 7 and Matthew alike, the Son of Man's authority passes to his community."⁷ For the followers of Jesus, they too possess a power that is unmatched, but only as it is sourced in Christ. In keeping with the convention of other Old Testament commissionings (i.e., Gen 12:1-4; Exod 3:1-10; Josh 1:1-11; Isa 6:1-13), the source of strength, power, protection, and authority of the emissary of God traveling into pagan lands is none other than God Himself. So also as ministers of the gospel message, Osborne observes that this outsourced "authority is not in the office but in the relationship,"⁸ the believer has with Christ, and it therefore falls to that believer to ensure that he or she is "centered in him and his Word."⁹ Close connection to the Lord, in other words, is vital for the success of this mission.

⁷ David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 689.

⁸ Osborne, *Matthew*, 1085.

⁹ Osborne, *Matthew*, 1085.

It is this complete and total authority over both heaven and earth that is now found in the risen Christ, and it is this authority now in part shared with His disciples that makes possible the dramatic scope of the mission to come. In sum, as Osborne notes that, “the Risen Lord’s universal authority makes possible the universal mission.”¹⁰

Teaching Is Critical to the Aim of Christ

As the activity of teaching roots in the very authority of Christ, it finds even deeper importance as it is rightly understood to be a critical part in accomplishing the aim of Christ for this world. Beginning with the affirmation of the total sovereignty of the Lord Jesus in and over every realm, the Great Commission now turns to indicate the responsibilities of His disciples: πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” Contained within this clause is the single imperative verb, μαθητεύσατε, “make disciples.” Three participles, in verse 19, πορευθέντες “go,” βαπτίζοντες “baptizing,” and in verse 20, διδάσκοντες, “teaching” all link to the principle verb disciple-making. Osborne observes in Matthew’s writings, “the circumstantial participle ‘go’ followed by the main verb μαθητεύσατε, becomes in effect another imperative,” and “in fact, the two participles that follow (“baptizing” and “teaching”) are also circumstantial and are imperatival in force.”¹¹ In other words, the strength of the single imperative μαθητεύσατε, carries force into its adjoining participles.

The content of verses 19 and 20 help to illuminate what manner the process of making disciples is to take. The way that His disciples will make other disciples is through the process of “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.” While “going” is nothing novel (cf. again Matt 10:5-6), what is new is the breadth of field to which the disciples are called. As noted earlier, prior to the cross and resurrection, Jesus’s followers went out

¹⁰ Osborne, *Matthew*, 1079.

¹¹ Osborne, *Matthew*, 1080.

only to the “lost sheep of Israel” (Matt 10:6; 15:24), but now the mission field includes all of mankind, even as Jesus had foretold in Matthew 24:14.¹² The Great Commission pushes down the fences of limitation and makes the dissemination of the gospel a truly global effort.

While predicted by Christ, this is new terrain to say the least. This teaching role, says John Nolland, “marks the emergence of a fresh emphasis,”¹³ in the history of God’s people. Osborne, commenting on the sheer breadth of this newly announced “universal mission,” notes that whereas previously, “missions for Israel to the nations was to be centripetal; that is, Israel was to stay in the Holy Land and witness to the grace of God, so that the nations could come to them to be blessed (the Abrahamic covenant, Gen 12:3; 15:5; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4) [T]he centrifugal mission, taking the message to the nations, would be a messianic act (Isa 11:9-10; 42:6; 49:6).”¹⁴ With such enormity of scope, it is no wonder why Jesus asserts His authority over all creation before giving such a broad charge. Here the conjunction οὖν is crucial for obedience to such a monumental task. Again, without the endowed and entrusted authority of Christ, such a mission would fail entirely. As Turner states, “mission is possible because Jesus is potent.”¹⁵

After “going,” the second charge of disciple-making disciples is βαπτίζοντες, “baptizing.” Up to this point in Matthew’s record of Jesus’s ministry, there has been no added mention of Jesus’s followers and baptism aside from the earliest chapters. Now however, the calling has resurfaced in a significant way. Whereas John’s baptism led towards repentance (cf. John 3:3), Jesus calls His disciples to baptize followers εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, “in the Name of the Father and of

¹² France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1108.

¹³ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1270.

¹⁴ Osborne, *Matthew*, 1079-80.

¹⁵ Turner, *Matthew*, 689.

the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Here again, the early Trinitarian formula of baptism demonstrates the co-equality of the Lord Jesus, and so the very right He has to give such bold words.

Also linked to the imperative verb μαθητεύσατε, “make disciples,” it is the third charge or participle διδάσκοντες, “teaching,” that is most pressing. Previous to this, Jesus taught the disciples. Matthew in fact, goes to great length to communicate that Jesus is the exclusive teacher of the disciples (see 4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; 21:23; 22:16; 26:55). R. T. France underscores this by noting that “the word [*didasko*] has not been used by Matthew of His disciples ministry.”¹⁶ As the risen and authoritative Christ stands before His followers, and as they move out in His authority, it is the disciples who are charged with the faithful instruction of those who would follow Jesus.

This mission of teaching is not simply broad communication however, but rather a focused instruction of specific content. Rather than leading fellow-disciples towards memorization of the Law, Matthew tells us that the instruction the disciples are to call others to is nothing less than the observance of πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν, “all that I have commanded you.” In other words, it is the whole counsel of Jesus’s teachings that are to take priority over any other instruction. The disciples are to share what Jesus has commanded, rather than teaching their own ideas. France observes that the term, “commanded” coming from ἐντέλλω is a term which before this account, “has been especially associated with the “commandments” (the cognate noun *entolē*, cf. 5:19; 15:3; 19:17; 22:36-40) given by God through Moses.¹⁷ Morris observes that “Jesus is not suggesting that his followers should make a selection from his teachings as it pleases

¹⁶ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 421.

¹⁷ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1118.

them and neglect the rest,” but instead, “since the teaching of Jesus is a unified whole, disciples are to observe all that this means.”¹⁸

With this understood, the process of “teaching” takes on an enormous and perpetual nature. Whereas “baptizing,” and even “going” speak to punctiliar events in the disciples’ life insofar as individual recipients are considered, the task of “teaching” speaks to a day to day instruction about Christ. Hagner sees this tone also and notes that, “the emphasis in the commission . . . falls not on the initial proclamation of the gospel but more on the arduous task of nurturing into the experience of discipleship,” for in fact, “to be made a disciple in Matthew means above all to follow after righteousness as articulated in the teaching of Jesus.”¹⁹ This teaching encompasses not simply knowledge for knowledge’s sake, but a profound change of one’s entire life. Jesus is not creating a Kingdom of informational transformation with knowledge alone, but one that leads to ethics based in obedience. Morris goes even further saying, “The Master is not giving a command that will merely secure nominal adherence to a group, but one that will secure wholehearted commitment to a person.”²⁰ Jesus’s aim is disciples who enter into an intentional process of deep and lasting life-change.

Teaching Is Sequential to the Approach of Christ

With the three participles of “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching” connected to the main imperatival verb, Jesus outlines for His disciples not only the essential aims of His commission but also details a sequence of critical events towards accomplishing this mission. As His disciples go out to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, “all the nations” and make other disciples they engage themselves in a process within which teaching holds position as a

¹⁸ Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 749.

¹⁹ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 887.

²⁰ Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 746.

final anchor. Just as baptism represents what France calls the “point of enrollment into a process of learning,”²¹ teaching carries this forward perpetually in the life of every believer.

Keeping emphasis upon the sequence as such prevents the church from straying into courses of action or thought that emphasize only the evangelism of the nations and not the “making disciples” of all nations. Commenting on this, Osborne warns that “a huge error has occurred over the last two hundred years in the missionary movement,” in that “mission organizations have been content to give little more than salvation messages.”²² This produces a manner of shallowness in ministry and leaves the evangelized disciple all but begging for further instruction. The undue emphasis upon going and baptizing only does violence to the language of Matthew 28, neglecting or downplaying the role of teaching, and stressing one (or two) of the three imperatival participles over the other. The Great Commission sequence protects against this perspective, giving equal weight to all three.

A similar mistake occurs if there is an overemphasis upon teaching. In some Christian churches, baptism is only administered after a lengthy period of instruction. What was meant as an introductory step of obedience providing public admittance into the community of faith turns into more of a process of extensive instruction and catechesis leading up to baptism. For that matter, once baptism has occurred within the context of such churches, the process of instruction and learning is often thought to be completed. Here again, misunderstanding the sequential approach of the Great Commission participles, says France, turns baptism into “graduation ceremony than an initiation.”²³

²¹ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1116.

²² Osborne, *Matthew*, 1084.

²³ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1115.

Though vital as a final position and ongoing in its essential nature, all three connected participial imperatives are essential to making disciples. Craig Blomberg cautions that within the local church, “there must be a balance between evangelistic proclamation and relevant exposition of all parts of God’s Word, including the more difficult material best reserved for the mature,” and that “the ministries of the church overall must reflect a healthy balance of ‘outreach’ and ‘inreach.’”²⁴ Though critical in the process of making disciples, teaching must hold its proper position in providing ongoing care towards all believers at all stages of development.

Teaching Is Supported by the Presence of Christ

Not only is teaching anchored to the authority of Christ, critical to His aim, and sequential in nature, but it is also aided by the presence of Christ. Matthew’s gospel closes with words of comfort for the disciple of Christ. Now that the authority of Christ has been given to Him by His Father, and now that the task of making disciples has been given to His followers, Jesus closes with the second imperative phrase of the Great Commission: *καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἔμεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος*, “and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” The word, *ἰδοὺ* (“behold,” or “look”) brings the disciples now tasked with the daunting role of reaching the world with words of support. Matthew’s record of this call to remember a promise completes the picture of His gospel depicting Christ as the God who is with us (cf. 1:23).

Jesus’s promise of aid in the verse gain strength from the emphatic use of the personal pronoun: *ἐγὼ ἔμεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι* (literally, “I, with you, I am”). Morris notes that this construction is not simply “‘I will be with you,’ but ‘I am with you’ and his *I* is

²⁴ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1992), 432.

emphatic, ‘no less than I.’”²⁵ Namely, the One to whom all authority has been given, now promises His eternal presence to His followers in the face of an enormous task. With this astonishing promise, Osborne notes that “the Great Commission is thus framed by the omnipotence (v18) and omnipresence (v20b) of Christ.”²⁶ Indeed the two are related says Blomberg, in that because of the omnipotent authority of Christ, “Jesus has the right to issue his followers their ‘marching orders,’ but he also has the ability to help them carry out those orders.”²⁷ Matthew’s words cannot be overstated enough: Christ is with His followers until the end of the age, and this alone is reason for boldness. Blomberg notes this aim also commenting that, “Matthew wants to end his Gospel centering more on Christ’s attributes than on the disciples’ task.”²⁸ The Great Commission, as much as it is about the mission of making disciples, is so much more about the character and power of God in Christ.

As a vital sub-task in the great process of making disciples, comfort and aid is given to the teacher of God’s Word through the recognition of this final reality. Entrusted in measure not only with the authority of Christ through the Word of God, the teacher the teacher also carries with him or her the very promise of the continual presence of Christ in the ministry of teaching. Emmanuel is with His disciples now and forever.

Matthew 28:18-20 provides biblical and theological evidence for the training up of skilled teachers of the Word of God. The final words of Jesus to His disciples to make other disciples include the call to teaching others all that He has commanded. This charge is not only supported by the very authority of Christ, but it is also a critical and sequential step in the process of disciple-making altogether. Perhaps most astounding, the

²⁵ Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 749.

²⁶ Osborne, *Matthew*, 1082.

²⁷ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

²⁸ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

action of obedience in making disciples', and is so doing teaching them, is conducted in the abiding presence of the Lord Jesus Himself. In sum, what is clear from Matthew's account is that teaching is critical for the process of discipleship, and so the training of skilled teachers is critical also.

Teaching the Bible Leads to the Multiplication of Ministry within the Church: Ephesians 4:11-12

Not only necessary for the growth and development of individual disciples of Jesus, the New Testament carries forth the idea that the skill and practice of teaching is essential to the healthy functioning of the church as a whole. The Apostle Paul writes to the Ephesian believers in what was likely intended for wider distribution, and details in part some of what healthy operation of the local church ought to look like. Covering broad topics such as the mystery and plan of God for salvation, the reconciliation of God and man, the building of the local church, and the message of the gospel of grace and life through faith, Paul extends these truths towards the practical outworking of a unified community of faith. Among these day-to-day topics Paul covers, his words turn in chapter 4 towards the gifts of leaders within the local church. An exegesis of Ephesians 4:11-12 will support the thesis of this project by showing that the teaching of disciples grows ministry within the body of Christ. Examination of this will note that teaching is a ministry given by Christ, that it builds believers into servants with an outward focus on ministry to others, and that it ultimately builds believers into a community of strength.

Teaching Is a Ministry Endowed by Christ

Having established the composition of the church through the foreordained plan of God and sacrifice of Christ, and noting the unified truths of the gospel, Paul turns in chapter 4 of his letter to address the need to strive for unity within the church. He accomplishes this by first calling his audience in 4:1-3 towards a unity founded not on shared resources or even geography but on shared truth in God (4:4-6), and then directs

his hearers to the reality that each member of the church has been given (ἑδόθη) a gift of service (4:7). Verse 8 turns the discussion on a fulcrum by noting that gifts were given (ἔδωκεν) through Christ by way of His sacrifice. The emphasis of Christ as gift-giver then carries into verses 11 and 12 as Paul stresses the idea that teaching itself is a gift of Christ to His church.

As verse 11 opens, Paul states that it is Christ who has also given gifts in the form of people. As in Matthew 28, the relationship to Christ and His gifts is reflexive as F. F. Bruce notes, and hinges upon the completed atoning work of Christ: “it is emphasized that the one who gave the gifts is the one who ascended: it is because he ascended that he has given them.”²⁹ By using the intensifying pronoun καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν (lit., “and He himself gave”), Clinton Arnold observes that the emphasis is placed upon Christ “the one who sovereignly works to raise up and supply gifted leaders to the church.”³⁰ This emphasis is upon the Giver of the gifts and less so upon the gifts themselves. Nonetheless, the gifts are stated and are significant not in the sense that they portray offices or positions,³¹ but more as Frank Thielman calls, “the activities that Christ has equipped certain people to perform.”³² People who can serve in these roles, in other words, are the real gift of Christ that Paul is directing attention towards. Paradoxically, by placing this emphasis upon Christ and not the roles or skillsets described, Paul actually elevates these positions. As Andrew Lincoln notes, the very fact that the “ministers are gifts of the exalted Christ, rather than merely officers created by the church, is clearly

²⁹ F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 2nd ed., New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 345.

³⁰ Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 255.

³¹ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 539.

³² Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 273.

meant to enhance their significance in the eyes of the readers.”³³ Finally, not only do the people to be blessed by these gifted ministers recognize their significance, but so too the ones serving in these roles understand their source. Ernest Best stresses that “it was important for their encouragement that those who were evangelists, shepherds and teachers should know that they had been selected and given to the church by Christ.”³⁴

There are five kinds of people in 4:11 listed as Christ’s gifts to His church: ἀποστόλους “apostles,” προφήτας “prophets,” εὐαγγελιστάς “evangelists,” ποιμένας “shepherds,” and διδασκάλους “teachers.” Common to all activities Arnold notes is that “they are the principal ministers responsible for the proclamation and application of the Word to peoples’ lives.”³⁵ Each of these skills demonstrates abilities with the Word of God towards instructing the people. While similar wording surfaces elsewhere in the New Testament (cf. Rom 12; 1 Cor 12), Lincoln states that “here in Ephesians 4 the focus is narrowed to particular ministers of the word.”³⁶ Of particular importance for this study is the title of διδασκάλους or “teachers.”

In the list of 4:11, the fourth and fifth gifts Christ gives His church are tied together through the single article τοὺς. This has led to some difficulty in delineating whether the apostle has one single role in mind with two facets, or two roles. By dropping the repeated τοὺς δὲ opening and inserting the simple καὶ before “teachers” some commentators strongly believe that one single role is view. As an example, Charles Hodge insists that the noting of “pastors and teachers . . . must be taken as a twofold name for the same officers, who were both the guides and instructors of the people,”

³³ Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word International, 1990), 248-49.

³⁴ Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 394.

³⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 256.

³⁶ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 249.

going even so far as to claim that “modern commentators almost without exception agree with this interpretation.”³⁷ Aside from Hodge’s claim, most modern commentators³⁸ do in fact agree that the construction in Greek lends itself more to an interpretation that holds to two offices or ministries. Weighing in on this confusion, Daniel Wallace notes that “commentators have seen only one gift here . . . primarily because they erroneously thought that the Granville Sharp rule absolutely applied to plural constructions.”³⁹ The Granville Sharp rule occurs in the Greek whenever there is a pattern of article, substantive, καὶ, substantive (or “TSKS”). When this occurs, there is a linkage in identity of the two substantive forms of the same case. At first glance the final clause of Ephesians 4:11 appears to fit: τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους. However, Wallace is quick to note that in qualifying Granville Sharp, this rule can be “applied absolutely *only* with personal, singular, and non-proper nouns,”⁴⁰ as there are “no clear examples of nouns being used in a plural TSKS construction to specify one group.”⁴¹ The conclusion that best fits in answering the asymmetrical ending to Paul’s list in 4:11 seems to be that though not identical, “pastors” and “teachers” share some overlap in responsibility. Francis Foulkes posits that the overlap may have something to do with the locality wherein each role serves. Whereas, he says, “the first three categories are regarded as belonging to the universal church [P]astors and teachers were gifted to be responsible for the day-to-day building up of the church.”⁴² Harold Hoehner suggests that

³⁷ Charles Hodge, *Ephesians*, Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 137.

³⁸ In fairness to Hodge, his commentary was first published in 1832.

³⁹ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1997), 284.

⁴⁰ Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics*, 272.

⁴¹ Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics*, 284.

⁴² Francis Foulkes, *Ephesians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), 126.

in understanding the overlap of the roles, perhaps the best interpretation is to say that “all pastors should be teachers, but not all teachers are pastors.”⁴³ Thielman reaches this same conclusion, and observes that “whatever the reason for the missing τοὺς δέ, the evidence is not clear enough to allow us to consider ‘pastors’ and ‘teachers’ as a single group.”⁴⁴

What is clear for the purpose of this investigation is that the roles or gifts by Christ to His church distinctly includes that of “teacher.” Maintaining an understanding that the position is not simply a man-made office but rather a divine grace given by Jesus Himself to His church not only elevates the role before the people of God, but in so doing also places great encouragement upon those who would serve in this capacity. The importance of identifying, cultivating and continuing to develop this role within the local context of churches becomes all the more important.

Teaching Is a Ministry That Builds the Saints into Servants with an Outward Focus on Ministry

Ephesians 4 outlines the fact that the role of “teacher” is a gift given by Christ, but the texts also carries forward the importance of the ministry by emphasizing the fact that teaching contributes towards the building of believers into servants with an outward focus on ministry to others. In 4:12, Paul lays out a series of successive events that directly flow from faithful ministry by all ministers of the Word, including teachers. There is purpose in Christ’s giving “the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,” and that purpose declares Paul is πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, “to equip the saints.”

What follows from this purpose statement is a second complicated exegetical construction. Three prepositional phrases are listed in 4:12 beginning with πρὸς, εἰς, and

⁴³ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 545. Wallace agrees with this conclusion also; see Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics*, 284.

⁴⁴ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 275.

εἰς, respectively. Each phrase connects back to ἔδωκεν, or Christ's giving of gifts in 4:11. The discussion surrounding these prepositions is the manner in which they relate to one another. Namely, do they sit in parallel to one another, or in sequence? Walter Liefeld puts a fine point on the implications of both interpretations: "either the leaders do all three tasks (the phrases in parallel), or they prepare God's people and thus achieve the goals of service and building through the people themselves."⁴⁵

As to the first view, that the prepositions are in parallel to one another, Thielman observes that the "view is ancient, going back at least as far as Chrysostom (PG 62:85; cf., e.g., John of Damascus, PG 95:841, 843; Calvin 1965: 180-81) and is exegetically well supported."⁴⁶ Understood this way leads to an interpretation that makes the apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers the ones responsible for equipping the saints, performing the work of the ministry, and for edifying the body of Christ. The first view leads to a strong distinction between the work of the saints and the work of the clergy.

There are significant problems with this view however. The principle objection centers around 4:7, in which Paul has previously noted that "grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." The entire church, in other words, has received gifts from Christ, and in so doing Christ has made every believer a contributor towards the building up of the body. If this is true, then those not serving in ministries centered around exposition of the Word of God are just as vital for the growth of the church.

There are additional reasons for the strength of the second view that recognizes the ministry of all believers, not just clergy. According to Arnold, this "view takes better

⁴⁵ Walter L. Liefeld, *Ephesians*, IVP New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 106.

⁴⁶ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 277.

account of the change of prepositions (from πρὸς to εἰς),”⁴⁷ and observes a further distinction in the prepositions in that “the object of the first preposition has the article whereas the objects of the second two prepositions do not.”⁴⁸ Third, he cites Ernest Best, who notes that for Paul to be suggesting that the clergy are the ones to perform all three functions behind the prepositions, it would have made considerable sense to begin not with a charge to equip the saints, but rather to lead with the more general “work of ministry.” Finally, Arnold argues that in holding to the first view of laity and clergy distinction there is by necessity the adoption of “an unlikely meaning for the noun ‘equipping’ (καταρτισμός)”⁴⁹ As Hoehner notes: “the point is that the gifted persons listed in verse 11 serve as the foundational gifts that are used for the immediate purpose of preparing all the saints to minister. Thus, every believer must do the work of the ministry.”⁵⁰ In sum, though an ancient interpretation, the first view incorrectly makes sense of the grammar and context of the passage, and the latter understanding that it is the ministers of the Word who equip the saints to then engage of ministry is to be adopted.

With an understanding of the relationship between the serial prepositional clauses, the five ministries listed earlier in 4:11 receive marching orders. Their role, according to Paul is to πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, “to equip the saints for the work of ministry.” The ἔργον or “work” of ministry therefore is not simply held in the hand of the professional clergy, but entrusted to τῶν ἁγίων “the saints.” Here the unique nature of the five gifts of Christ lend assistance in understanding just how the saints are built up, namely through the faithful instruction of the Word of God. The implication for this study is clear: The more faithful and equipped the teachers of the

⁴⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262.

⁴⁸ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

⁴⁹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

⁵⁰ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 549.

Word of God are, the more the saints will be built into servants with an outward focus on ministry.

Teaching Is a Ministry that Builds the Saints into a Community of Strength

Thus far in Ephesians 4, Paul has made clear that the gift of teaching is just that—a gift by Christ endowed to His church. This gift, like the other four listed in 4:11, is to be utilized to directly fuel the growth of the general body of Christ towards an ongoing work of ministry. In addition to this, teaching also supports the growth of the church and builds strength into the community.

Support for this is evidenced within the first clause of verse 12 where Paul begins his outline of the reasons for the earlier gifts of Christ, namely, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν “to equip the saints.” Here in Ephesians 4 is, as Arnold notes, “the only time that the noun (καταρτισμός) appears in the NT or the LXX,” and so he cautions “one needs to rely on the verbal form (καταρτίζω) to discern the nuances of its usage.”⁵¹ Doing so presents two options of sense through the verb of being either, “to cause to be in a condition to function well, put in order, restore,” or “to prepare for a purpose, prepare, make, create, outfit.”⁵² Both notions inform well the *hapex legomena* noun leading verse 12. Thielman comments that the word is used outside of Scripture in a medical sense to denote “the straightening or setting of a joint or broken bone.”⁵³ Hoehner adds that though the medical sense is known, by the time of the New Testament, extrabiblical sources point the meaning more towards the “furnishing of a room or preparation of a garment.”⁵⁴ All things considered there is sufficient warrant for the more general

⁵¹ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 263.

⁵² Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick William Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 526.

⁵³ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 279.

⁵⁴ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 549.

understanding of *καταρτισμός* pointing towards a general setting in order from a place of disorder. Here again, the gift of teaching for one, brings into the community of believers a strength through truth that moves the corporate body towards a place of order and potency for ministry.

Paul continues his thinking to detail just what will happen when the gift of teaching is deployed into the church, seeing the saints equipped for the work, with the result being that these same saints, participate *εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, in the “building up of the body of Christ.” This third prepositional phrase points back also to the *ἔδωκεν* of Christ in 4:11 and is the outflow of the church’s faithfulness to the previous two clauses. Here the apostle selects the word *οἰκοδομὴν* to describe the “building up,” that the community undergoes a result. Hoehner makes note that the word in this case denotes “not an inanimate structure but a living and growing organism composed of living believers.”⁵⁵ Best agrees and sees the resurfacing of this word (forms of which were used previously by Paul in 2:20-22) in a similar sense. He comments that with the use of *οἰκοδομὴν*, Paul places emphasis on “the process of constructing and not of a finished construction,” and that “the metaphor has another connotation, educational rather than physical.”⁵⁶ Given the immediate context of Christ’s unique gifts of ministers of the Word of God to the church, this nuance of *οἰκοδομὴν* points not only to the building of the strength but also to the means by which this is accomplished—through the faithful instruction of the Scriptures.

Finally, the apostle utilizes imagery in this portion of verse 12, by describing the growth to take place within *τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* “the body of Christ.” Though not the first time Paul describes the church as the “body of Christ” (cf. Rom 12:7; 1 Cor 10:16; 12:27) the construction is used here in a noticeable way. Significantly, Paul has

⁵⁵ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 551.

⁵⁶ Best, *Ephesians*, 396.

moved from the plural *ἀγίων* “saints,” to the singular *σώματος* “body,” in effect carrying forward not only the unity theme of the epistle, but also stressing the idea that the individual well-being serves to strengthen the whole. The individual believer, in other words, needs the corporate body to thrive, and when part of this he or she not only matures, but also contributes to the strength of the whole.

As part of the five-fold gifts given to His church, Christ intends “teachers” to be influential in nurturing the community towards growth in ministry. Lincoln suggests that the role of teacher included in part, the “preserving, transmitting, expounding, interpreting, and applying the apostolic gospel and tradition along with the Jewish Scripture.”⁵⁷ Already present at the time of this writing, teachers played a significant role in the cultivation of maturity in the church through the direct instruction in the Word of God (cf. Rom 12:7; 1 Cor 12:28-29; 14:26). When understood as a gift to the church, the particular role of “teacher” brings with it a value and weight to the ministry, but also builds the saints into servants, thus multiplying both the ministry and strength of the community. These rewards are not all that teaching can accomplish within a local context. In Ephesians 4:13-14, Paul’s encouragement to the church at Ephesus continues to direct attention towards the impact of Word-centered instruction by stressing the additional gains of faithfulness and stability within the church.

**Teaching the Bible Leads to the Multiplication of
Faithfulness and Stability within the Church:
Ephesians 4:13-14**

Having developed the idea that the church needs her teachers for the exponential growth of ministry to the world as well as for the internal strength of the congregation, Paul carries forward the impact of teaching into the very heart of the epistle’s message: unity. Specifically, when the gift of teaching is deployed within the

⁵⁷ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 251.

church, the corporate body of Christ finds rich soil for the cultivation of maturity and stability in the face of false teaching. An Exegesis of Ephesians 4:13-14 will support the thesis that teaching and so the development of teachers is essential to the life of the church by showing that the teaching of disciples grows faithfulness and stability within the body of Christ.

Teaching Is a Ministry That Develops Disciples into Unity and Maturity

Ephesians 4:13 continues the corporate emphasis Paul has laid out in previous verses. Maturity and discipleship are corporate tasks and responsibilities of every believer. Verse 13 begins *μέχρι καταστήσωμεν οἱ πάντες* “until we all attain.” Here, not only is the subjunctive plural of *κατατάω* used, but the trailing adjective *οἱ πάντες* contributes emphasis to the notion that the object of attainment is not simply for the most mature, but rather is a goal to which the entire church must aspire. What follows from this stated aspiration are three additional prepositional phrases, each beginning with *εἰς* and coordinating with the *μέχρι καταστήσωμεν* opening. Best summarizes the majority opinion concerning these phrases, noting that they “do not depend on one another but are in parallel; mutually reflecting on one another, together they serve to build up the total picture; no one of them is more important than any other.”⁵⁸ Unlike the immediately preceding 4:12, Lincoln stresses that “the three prepositional phrases in this verse are all dependent on the verb rather than on each other.”⁵⁹ Hoehner too, agrees, noting that the absence of coordinating conjunctions between the three *εἰς* clauses best supports the parallel understanding over against a serial, or stair-stepped view.⁶⁰ In sum as Darrell

⁵⁸ Best, *Ephesians*, 399.

⁵⁹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 255.

⁶⁰ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 553.

Bock notes, these three phrases show “that the three goals merge onto one target,”⁶¹ that of attaining maturity.

The first of these parallel clauses, εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, “to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,” strikes to the heart of the apostle’s repeated refrain of unity. The believers in Ephesus and elsewhere were to be a community marked by their accord with one another. Specifically, this unity for Paul, is to be founded upon the common knowledge of τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ “the Son of God.” The repeated use of the definite article throughout the phrase speaks to the singular nature of not only the unity of the believers, but also their faith and their knowledge in the Son of God. Over against exclusively academic knowledge concerning the facts of Christ, this knowledge and unity says Bruce is “that personal knowledge of him which comes through experience.”⁶² Foulkes concurs, and comments that this unity of faith is “not just the acceptance of a collection of dogmas” but rather “something deeper and more personal.”⁶³

While recognizing that Paul has in mind a personal and experiential knowledge in part, it cannot be denied that this ἐπιγνώσεως is also facts-based, and dependent upon the Word of God and the message of Christ. Thielman understands Paul’s calls for harmony in “knowledge” here as “the unity of all its parts in a common set of doctrines and in a common experience of knowing the Christ on whom those doctrines are focused.”⁶⁴ For Paul, this ἐπιγνώσεως is clearly a singular knowledge that coincides directly with the singular person and work of Christ.

⁶¹ Darrell L. Bock, *Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (London: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 127.

⁶² Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 350.

⁶³ Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 127-28.

⁶⁴ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 281.

Here also the connection is readily made to the importance of the five-fold ministers of the Word Christ gives to the church previously observed in 4:11. It is therefore the task of the pastors and teachers, who are Christ's gifts to His church, to ensure that there is forward advance toward the goal of fully embracing the one faith and of the one knowledge of Christ. Further, Arnold sees in the use of ἐπιγνώσεως the apostle underscoring the truth that "there is one unified and proper understanding of Christ and the core elements of the faith," and that, "the ministry of the gifted leaders in the church is to help impart this correct knowledge, which is essential to the unity of the church and its growth to maturity."⁶⁵

The second phrase εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, "to mature manhood" is shorter and recalls the aspiration towards full development of believers spoken of elsewhere in the New Testament (cf. 1 Cor 2:6, 14:20; Heb 5:14). The use of τέλειος here conveys not simply a sense of "completion," or of "meeting the highest standard," but also denotes a maturity into full adulthood.⁶⁶ Although pairing this with ἀνὴρ "manhood" to describe the corporate assembly of believers is unique to the writer's form, Arnold speculates that the reason for "this innovation is probably due to the contrast that Paul is setting up with "infants" (νήπιοι) in the following verse."⁶⁷

Also of note is Paul's use of the singular ἀνὴρ "manhood," referring to the collection of believers once again stressing the collective nature of this aspiration towards maturity. Hoehner comments on this 'group project' nature of maturity observing that believers "tend to think of spiritual maturity as only individual growth in the Lord, but in

⁶⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 265.

⁶⁶ Bauer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 995-96.

⁶⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 265.

this passage the emphasis is on the importance of body growth, resulting in unity.”⁶⁸ One sure sign of immaturity, in other words, is disunity within the body.

Unity in the knowledge of Christ and Christian maturity into adulthood leads now to the third prepositional phrase, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” This final phrase could be understood in the light of the church attaining general maturity in Christ, and so further qualifying the previous clause. Against this, the use of ἡλικία here has prompted Thielman to posit that the phrase points us more to physical stature than anything else.⁶⁹ Though the broader understanding of ἡλικία connotes the span of life, or a timeframe sufficient for accomplishing a task,⁷⁰ the combination of the surrounding context of growth in verse 15, the concept of measurement given by the use of μέτρον leads Thielman to conclude that Paul, “intends for his readers to think of the church, which is the body of Christ, as eventually attaining Christ’s full height.”⁷¹

The achievement of this ἡλικίας “stature” for the church is realized in the goal of the “fullness of Christ.” Arnold explains this by concluding that “Paul wants all believers not only to grow, but to attain the size of Christ, that is, to reflect his virtues and likeness in their lives.”⁷² For this to occur, the church must rely upon the gifts given by Christ in the form of the five skilled handlers of the Word of God. As one of these, teaching is just such a ministry that develops disciples into unity and maturity through the full appropriation of truths concerning Christ.

⁶⁸ Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 556.

⁶⁹ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 582.

⁷⁰ Bauer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 435-36.

⁷¹ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 282.

⁷² Arnold, *Ephesians*, 266.

Teaching Is an Integral Part of Developing Disciples into Stability

With the importance of the role of “teachers” already noted in multiple ways in Ephesians 4, Paul adds one more key result of faithful teaching of the Word of God. Within the first-century context of Ephesians the multitudinous errors presenting the church prompts the apostle to exhort the believers to a deeper maturity through the truths of Scripture. Beginning with verse 14, he transitions in content through the conjunction ἵνα marking a second aim in the process of instruction. Apart from unity and maturity, stability in Christ is also at stake.

Paul’s aim in maturity is simple: ἵνα μηκέτι ὦμεν νήπιοι “so that we may no longer be children.” The contrast of ἄνδρα τέλειον “mature manhood” in the previous verse with νήπιοι “children” here is stark. Arnold comments that this term for “children” carries with it not the innocence of First Thessalonians 2:7, but rather an immaturity (cf. 1 Cor 13:11), and in fact, “The young and immature are much more vulnerable and can be easily taken advantage of.”⁷³

Once again Paul utilizes the singular and plural nouns to his advantage. Notes Lincoln: “Not only do silly infants contrast with the mature adult (cf. 1 Cor 2:6; 3:1; Heb 5:13, 14), but the plural of children also contrasts with the singular of the mature person, individualism being a sign of childishness, unity a sign of maturity”⁷⁴ The immature, in other words, consider themselves in isolation from the body, while the mature in Christ embrace a corporate ownership to the discipleship of others.

Deprived of teaching through the Word the νήπιοι fall prey to their own gullibility and easily fall into confusion and instability. Picking up nautical language, Paul warns that these “children” will be, κλυδωνιζόμενοι καὶ περιφερόμενοι παντὶ ἀνέμῳ

⁷³ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 267.

⁷⁴ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 257.

τῆς διδασκαλίας, “tossed and carried about by every wind of doctrine.” Here again the role of teachers of the Word of God are critical in arresting this result. Arnold adds that “without the firmness and stability that comes from growth stimulated by the ministry of the various members of the Christian community, believers are as vulnerable as a boat adrift on a stormy and tempestuous sea.”⁷⁵ Unmoored from the teachings of Christ, these believers are thrown about the waves of random teachings to their peril.

The alternative διδασκαλίας “teaching” presented is one that is decidedly evil in its intent. Three additional prepositional phrases describe the sinister intent of the threatening message. Characterized by κυβεία τῶν ἀνθρώπων “human cunning,” πανουργία “craftiness,” and τὴν μεθοδεῖαν τῆς πλάνης “deceitful schemes,” Paul presents anything but a neutral alternative to the Word of God. According to Lincoln, the sense is plain enough: “behind the threatening teachings, making them so dangerous, are deceitful people, ready to manipulate and take advantage of immature and unstable believers.”⁷⁶ According to Arnold, there is intent to harm the believer underlying the language for, “in Paul’s view, the variant teachings are not innocent errors on the part of their propagators, but are part of a strategy that is designed to lead people astray from the truth of the gospel.”⁷⁷ All through this passage, Paul is conveying the idea that childlike misunderstanding is easily confused by all sorts of false doctrines which are concocted by man. Rather than growth to maturity, these lies end in error and loss.

Once again, the apostle lays bare the importance of orthodox teaching of the Word of God. As a stabilizing force against the tides of the world’s ideologies, the teachings of Christ must be held, protected, and entrusted to the church. Only then can the believer lay hold of unity and maturity and find an anchor for the ever-changing

⁷⁵ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 267.

⁷⁶ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 258.

⁷⁷ Arnold, *Ephesians*, 267.

world about them. With this verse, Thielman concludes: “when the church’s gifted teachers use their gifts to equip all believers for the work of ministry, the church progresses toward maturity [and] moves steadily away from immaturity with its fragmentation and susceptibility to deception by cunning theological cheats.”⁷⁸

The role of teaching is so significant because there is no shortage of errors into which the church can fall if not protected through the truth.

In summary, Ephesians 4:13-14 demonstrates the importance and value of the position of teacher within the context of the local church. Not only does the role, through the instruction in truth produce a unity around which the church gathers, but it also provides her people with a stout anchor to prevent hearts from being shaken by an ever-changing world. Faithfulness to the message of Christ and stability in the face of error results if the teaching of the Word flourishes. If the church is to remain faithful to the calling of making disciples, the role of teacher, therefore, is an essential role for intentional cultivation.

Conclusion

This chapter examined two passages to defend the position that teaching the Bible, and so the cultivation of teachers, is critical for the church’s growth. In Matthew 28, Jesus’s words in the Great Commission statement proved that teaching the Bible is invaluable linked to the creation and cultivation of mature followers of Christ. Not only is it tied to the authority of the Lord Jesus and critical to the aims of His plan to advance His kingdom, but teaching also follows sequentially within the life of a believer, and is supported by the presence of the Lord Jesus Himself. Ephesians 4 further demonstrated that teaching the Bible leads to a multiplication of maturity within the church, and a ministry that, empowered by Christ, feeds the community internally to then function with

⁷⁸ Thielman, *Ephesians*, 284.

external zeal. Finally, teaching the Bible produces faithfulness, unity, and stability within the church producing a support and shield against the shifting, often hostile culture.

In sum, Scripture demonstrates that for *any* church *anywhere*, and at *any* time the need for the active ministration of the teaching of the Bible is essential on many levels. Should it be the case that a church not be advancing and training this gift within, implementing a course of study to equip the lay leaders in teaching the Bible is well-warranted. It is not just the Bible that speaks to the need for this training however, in chapter 3, a brief examination of the church's past, present, and even projected future will further prove the urgency of this fact.

CHAPTER 3

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE: THE URGENT NEED FOR EQUIPPING LAY LEADERSHIP TO TEACH THE BIBLE

The need to equip and train lay leadership in the skill of teaching the Bible is critical for the life of any church. As critical as it is to the health of the local church however, it is also a neglected reality in many churches. In their seminal work, *Effective Bible Teaching*, authors James Wilhoit and Leland Ryken observe that while “Protestantism has committed itself to the tasks of preaching and teaching the Word,” and “[of] the two, preaching has fared better than teaching.” Going even further, they stress: “Bible teaching is a subject of neglect in the contemporary church.”¹ This chapter is devoted to the further examination of how this training of teachers has rich historical precedent throughout the centuries, has a present need in the cultivation of spiritual maturity, and prepares the church to face the future within a rapidly shifting social culture.

Training Lay Teachers and the Witness of History

As already detailed, the early church was positioned by the Lord and commanded as disciple-makers to incorporate the practice of teaching the Scriptures. Not simply reserved as a role for professionals, every mature disciple was taught and then called to teach others. Though the witness of history demonstrates that the church took this mandate more seriously in certain times than others, an examination of several eras

¹ James C. Wilhoit and Leland Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 1. Wilhoit and Ryken delineate between the two in emphasizing that preaching is confined to the pulpit and weekend worship event, while teaching can take place in a number of usually smaller settings.

reveals much about the importance of training lay teachers in the current age also. Considering the emergence of the *catechumenate* in the first centuries of the church, the Brethren of the Common Life in the late middle ages, and the Pietists in the seventeenth century, helps provide helpful windows into understanding the urgent need to develop lay teachers.

The Catechumenate within the Roman Empire

The story of equipping lay teachers within the church has humble origins in history. Shortly after the first generation of disciples arose across the Roman Empire, the need for informal instruction grew. Not confined to the role of pastors or elders this instruction was deployed by all mature followers of Christ. This focus and priority of teaching the Scriptures over an extensive period, all while examining new believers prior to their baptisms produced an informal program known as the *catechumenate*.²

The basic dimensions of the *catechumenate* are hinted at within some of the earliest non-canonical writings of the church. The *Didache*, Justin's *First Apology*, Tertullian, Clement, and Origen all allude to its existence, but it was Hippolytus of Rome (AD 170-235) who transcribed the practices and "advocated them in his church setting."³ Lasting anywhere between one and three years, the admitted catechumen ended his or her time with full admittance and baptism, "with rigorous examination and discipline during Lent."⁴ Summarizing its essence Gerald Sittser describes the *catechumenate*, as a "training program [that] communicated very clearly that conversion implies a

² The word *catechumenate* comes from the Greek root *κατηχέω*, generally meaning "to teach or instruct." It is present in the New Testament in numerous passages (i.e., Gal 6:6; Act 21:21; Acts 18:25; Rom 2:18). It should also be noted that the ancient *catechumenate* differs greatly from the current usage of the term by today's Roman Catholic church.

³ Clinton E. Arnold, "Early Church Catechesis and New Christians' Classes in Contemporary Evangelicalism," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 1 (March 2004): 41.

⁴ Peter Toon, "Catechumen," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 163.

commitment to discipleship and that discipleship is not for the few but for the many, not an option but an expectation, not an addition to conversion but an essential feature of conversion.”⁵ The Christian faith changed the way life must be lived, and the *catechumenate*, as a “training and instruction preparatory to Christian baptism,”⁶ sought to verify these changes.

Further outlining the dimensions of this program, Clinton Arnold observes that not only was the practice widespread, the *catechumenate* served to focus discipleship through providing a rich diet of the Word of God and the core doctrines of the faith. With an aim towards the spiritual and moral formulation of the new believer especially, these foundational truths were taught in confessional formats, and reinforced through the student’s own memorization. To teach such truths would have required dynamic teachers, and so concludes Arnold, “strong teaching and direct admonitions on moral transformation were a very important part of the ancient church *catechumenate*.”⁷ With such important content, in such an important position, and on so a large scale, skilled teachers were more than essential.

That the *catechumenate* was common across Rome’s territory was due to two primary reasons. First, as Justo González observes, with the second generation of Christians, the church entered new terrain and the need to instruct those not coming from Jewish backgrounds grew. Without the written or cultural background of Judaism, “it became necessary,” González notes, “to develop means to make certain that anyone who was baptized understood what was taking place and had already practiced the Christian

⁵ Gerald L. Sittser, “The Catechumenate and the Rise of Christianity,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 6, no. 2 (2013): 181.

⁶ F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., “Catechumens,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 302.

⁷ Arnold, “Early Church Catechesis,” 50.

way of life for a certain time.”⁸ Professing Christ required that former pagans receive some education in the Jewish Scriptures for even a basic understanding of the newfound Christian religion. Important to note, González underscores that this program was not reserved for a select few, but he insists that “in the ancient church there was no difference between the biblical and theological training that the laity received and that which was required for ordination.”⁹ In other words, this was teaching on a universal scale.

In addition to the widening culture-gap, the first few centuries of the church were punctuated with seasons of intense persecution. Under the Roman Empire the fledgling faith of Christianity was at first confused as a sectarian form of Judaism, and then recognized as hostile to the Roman pantheon of gods and way of life. What was briefly tolerated as an unusual faith quickly became persecuted empire wide. The *catechumenate* therefore also allowed for time for the examiner to witness, “the difficulties to be faced in society at large by the mere fact of being a Christian and belonging to the church.”¹⁰ The program allowed for time to count the cost; for the catechumen to consider if this was really a way of life he or she desired.

In sum, the *catechumenate*, as Sittser notes, was “one of the primary institutions that the church developed during the early Christian period that enabled the church to establish meaningful contact with pagans, and yet maintain high standards of commitment to the faith.”¹¹ Broadly deployed across the burgeoning centers of its growth, the church utilized the principles of the *catechumenate* to train believers in a hostile culture that was becoming increasingly different than that of inside the church. It was universal instruction for all, regardless of place, status, or sex, and the

10. ⁸ Justo L. González, *The History of Theological Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015),

⁹ González, *History of Theological Education*, 14.

¹⁰ González, *History of Theological Education*, 10.

¹¹ Sittser, “The Catechumenate and the Rise of Christianity,” 181.

catechumenate would hold sway in the Church under the Roman empire until peaceful times surfaced in the mid-fourth century.

The Brethren of the Common Life within Medieval Catholicism

Moving ahead nearly ten centuries, the then-ensconced Roman Catholic Church enjoyed a period of unopposed growth and eventual decadence. Scholasticism as an academic movement only served to bolster this stability, as it pressed home classical Greek and Roman philosophical frameworks onto the writings of the church fathers, the writings of Scripture, and eventually orthodox theology.¹² Highly logical in its approach, and widely adopted in universities, a growing gap emerged between academic theology, with its perceived moral slackness, and the religious life of the common medieval European. Into this growing tension religious societies rose.

One such society, and perhaps foremost, was the Brethren of the Common Life. Branching out from the low country of the Netherlands and operating in parts of Germany, France, and Italy between the fourteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Brethren traced their roots to a scholastically trained minister Gerhard Groote (1340-84) and heralded a disciplined and pious approach to the Christian life. “Active philanthropy towards the poor and hostels for students,”¹³ also characterized this vow-less and egalitarian society, as did writing¹⁴ and manuscript copying.

Unlike the Latin-based Scholastics however, the writing efforts of the Brethren were directed uniquely towards vernacular languages, including a translation of the Bible into Dutch, and the distribution of printed material to the masses. This public

¹² T. J. German, “Scholasticism,” in Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 781.

¹³ J. D. Douglas, “Brethren of the Common Life,” in Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 142.

¹⁴ Most notably, Thomas à Kempis.

dissemination for the general population was fueled by the newly invented printing press, and according to Gonzalez, by “the end of the fifteenth century they had some sixty presses.”¹⁵ Also instrumental in the process of public education, was the creation of Brethren schools whose principle purpose was the education of every person.

For the Brethren also, the very purpose of education was different from Scholasticism. Unlike the principle aim of logical constructions of thought, it was the devoted heart to the Lord that was most sought after in Brethren schools. This new way of piety, this modern devotion, or *devotio moderna* as it was termed brought together education with transformation.¹⁶ Within late Medieval Europe, this focus upon stirring the heart towards Christ was worked out with the “institutional structures and devotional forms” of the Catholic church and was “consonant with their particular vision and pursuit of Christian perfection.”¹⁷ In other words, while the modern devout would chafe within the Catholic church of its time, sometimes even confronting the same issues the Reformers would later tackle over a hundred years later, the *devotio moderna* was concerned with the right hearts of its adherents while working *within* the church, not *against* it.

A heart fully devoted to God was the principle target of the Brethren of the Common Life, and all educational pursuits must be undertaken under this guiding pole star. Well-known writer and member of the Brethren, Thomas à Kempis (ca. 1379-1471), summarizes well this principle with his words: “Never read any science to the end that you may be called wise. Study, rather, to mortify in yourself, as much as possible, all

¹⁵ González, *History of Theological Education*, 64.

¹⁶ According to P. H. Davids, “Its chief marks included (1) focus on devotion to Christ, including meditation on his passion; (2) emphasis on obeying Christ’s commands and therefore on holiness, simplicity, and community; (3) strong involvement in individual piety and spiritual life; (4) a call to repentance and reform; and (5) elements of nominalism, Christian humanism, and Franciscan asceticism.” P. H. Davids, “*Devotio Moderna*,” in Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 244.

¹⁷ John Van Engen, trans., introduction to *Devotio Moderna: Basic Writings*, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 10.

stirring of sin; that will be more profitable to you than the knowledge of many hard or subtle questions.”¹⁸

In addition to a deep devotion to Christ through the Scriptures, adherents to the *devotio moderna* also encouraged the building up of lay ministry within community. As a precursor to the Protestant Reformation, the Brethren of the Common Life served as a helpful voice in opposition to the what was often a cold, academic Scholasticism, offering a deeply devoted life to Christ in its place. Empowering rich and poor alike, employing common people and common languages, adherents to the *devotion moderna* believed in the equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. Lay teachers of the Bible were produced and as González notes, they “soon left their mark on a new generation of scholars and students who were very different from the scholastics, as well as on a growing number of pastors and church leaders for whom it was impossible to separate study from devotion and the practice of charity.”¹⁹

While the lesson of the *catechumenate* presents us with the need for lay teachers in hostile climates, the lesson of the Brethren of the Common Life underscores that same need, but within the Scholastic academical climate.²⁰ The final vignette of history considered was similarly fueled by populist efforts as a series of movements within the eighteenth century known as “Pietism.”

Pietism within Established Protestant Orthodoxy

Like the Brethren of the Common Life, Pietism may be seen broadly to have arisen out of a widespread dissatisfaction with an established clerical order. As a

¹⁸ Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, ed. Harold C. Gardiner, trans. Richard Whitford (New York: Image Books, 2009), 130.

¹⁹ González, *History of Theological Education*, 68.

²⁰ To be sure, not all Scholastics were the bookish, cold scholars as is sometimes presumed. There can be no denying the deep and affectionate piety of men like Aquinas or Bonaventure, and it was to these exceptions of faith and devotion that the Brethren most resonated.

movement Pietism was far-reaching encompassing the Moravians of Eastern Europe, the Wesleys and Methodism in England, and even the First Great Awakening. Martin Greschat explains that the movement was “aimed at promoting a living personal faith, criticizing the existing state of the church yet also offering proposals for radical reform.”²¹ In their work *Reclaiming Pietism*, Roger Olson and Christian Collins Winn observe that “Pietism was, and at its best is, about inward transformation by God through repentance and faith, which results in renewed affections, or feelings about God and the ‘things of God.’”²²

In a Europe then entering the Enlightenment, philosophical wrangling and rhetoric were commonplace within Protestant pulpits, and any practical application of the Scriptures towards the lives of their people were left to the people. The pastor was to be the scholar, and to be proficient in the academic world of the day.

Over and against this trend, Pietism begins to emerge in Germany in the late seventeenth century advanced notably through the efforts of Protestant mystic Johann Arndt (1555-1621), Lutheran preacher Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) and his successor August Hermann Francke (1663-1727). In 1675 Spener would pen his *Pia Desideria* in which he would plea for the reform of the church. In his work, Spener would outline six specific proposals, two of which are pertinent to this project. The first of his proposals to correct the conditions within the church is to promote “a more extensive use of the Word of God.”²³ He suggests several means of doing so, and notes that the need outside of Sunday services is “to introduce the people to Scripture in still other ways than

²¹ Martin Greschat, “Pietism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, ed. Erwin Fahlbusch et al., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 3:589.

²² Roger E. Olson and Christian T. Collins Winn, *Reclaiming Pietism: Retrieving an Evangelical Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 3.

²³ Philipp Jakob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), 87.

through the customary sermons on the appointed lessons.”²⁴ One of these means included a reintroduction of what Spener understood to be apostolic meetings,²⁵ wherein “several members of a congregation who have a fair knowledge of God or desire to increase their knowledge meet under the leadership of a minister, take up the Holy Scriptures, read aloud from them, and fraternally discuss each verse in order to discover its simple meaning and whatever may be useful for the edification of all.”²⁶ Timothy Maschke clarifies that, for Spener, these meetings would take place in homes and offer “clearer lines of communication for better pastor-people relationships” as well guaranteeing “the lay participants would grow spiritually and so become better teachers in their homes.”²⁷ In other words, for Spener and the pietists, the proclamation of the Word was not reserved for clergy only, but was the shared responsibility of the entire congregation.

Along these lines also, Spener offers as his second proposal for reform, “*the establishment and diligent exercise of the spiritual priesthood.*”²⁸ Understanding that all spiritual functions are open to all Christians—not just clergy—without exception, Spener encourages the active participation of the entire local Body of Christ. It as a special lie of the Enemy, says Spener that congregations believe that the ministry of the Word, among others, is a special task of the clergy, and in appropriating this lie, congregations have fallen into sloth, ignorance, and general disorderliness.²⁹ This “presumptuous monopoly,” as Spener sees it, needs to be overturned and the priesthood of all believers upheld, for it is in their active deployment can the congregation “pay attention to the minister,

²⁴ Spener, *Pia Desideria*, 88.

²⁵ Spener anchors his understanding of the shape of these meetings specifically to 1 Cor 14:26-40.

²⁶ Spener, *Pia Desideria*, 89.

²⁷ Timothy Maschke, “Philipp Spener’s *Pia Desideria*,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1992): 193.

²⁸ Spener, *Pia Desideria*, 92.

²⁹ Spener, *Pia Desideria*, 93.

admonish him fraternally when he neglects something, and in general support him in all his efforts.”³⁰ In short, for Spener and the Pietists, the role of teaching the Bible can greatly multiply the efforts of a church and support the pastor in his efforts.

Mark Noll notes that while resisted by many churches in part because of a fear “that they would lead to rampant subjectivity and anti-intellectualism,”³¹ these two tenants of Pietism served as “a source of powerful renewal in the church,”³² within the seventeenth and eighteenth century. All across Europe and later the Americas, the necessity of Scripture for the Christian life, the encouragement for laypeople in Christian ministry, the stimulated concern for missions, and the passionate pursuit of a personal and vibrant walk with God Himself would be used by God to reshape numerous local congregations of believers. Though largely overtaken in Europe by the growth of Rationalism and the Enlightenment, pietistic tones remain in many churches today, and as Maschke projects, “Pietism will be that ever present potential possibility kept before those who cry for purity of doctrine to the exclusion of a personal, living faith.”³³

In summary, what can be evidenced from these three historical vignettes weighs heavily on the importance of this project. The earliest Church’s establishment of the *catechumenate* affirmed the importance of a diversified teaching ministry under a hostile Roman rule to equip former pagans in the understanding of the Scriptures. Likewise, the Brethren of the Common Life saw the need for laity-based teaching to not only counteract a cold academically based Scholasticism in the pulpits, but also to lead others into a deep devotion to Christ. Finally, the Pietists response to a professionalized Protestantism was the encouragement for every believer to draw close the Lord and

³⁰ Spener, *Pia Desideria*, 94.

³¹ Mark A. Noll, “Pietism,” in Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 668.

³² Noll, “Pietism,” 669.

³³ Maschke, “Philipp Spener’s *Pia Desideria*,” 200.

deploy his or her gifts, be it in teaching or otherwise. Whether in peace or conflict, under Catholicism or Protestantism, the history of the church demonstrates that the development of lay teachers is not only helpful but necessary for the growth of the church and multiplication of ministry. As the past has given us these three brief portraits of developing teachers, we now turn our attention to the present need for maturing disciples.

Training Lay Teachers and the Cultivation of Maturity

As the practice of training lay teachers was witnessed throughout the history of the Church, the need for the cultivation of today's believers is no less urgent. In their article, *Faithful Gestures: Rebooting the Educational Mission of the Church*, authors Mark Lampert and Darrell Yoder observe that there is today a languishing effort towards this end. As the sentiments of pragmatism saturate churches in North America, there is a growing gap in theological education between the professional clergy and laity. As the task of teaching remains in the hands of the clergy, the results they say leads to disconnection between life and Scripture, a startling lack of theological reflection for self, and an isolation from the community of faith. The lack of lay teachers, and Christian education within the church in general, is "the hairy, smelly elephant in the room being conspicuously ignored."³⁴

The Disoriented Self

The first of these conditions Lampert and Yoder point to is the tendency of the believer in the average North American church to have failed the grasp the meaning of Scripture upon his or her life. There is a disorientation, in other words, between what they read in the Bible and what they experience on a day-to-day basis. This lack of synchronicity, to the greater story of Scripture, plays ruin in their lives, stripping meaning

³⁴ Mark A. Lampert and Darrell Yoder, "Faithful Gestures: Rebooting the Educational Mission of the Church," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 1 (2006): 58.

away from believers as they lose sight of their worth, their value, and their purpose. This disorientation wreaks havoc on the Christian and ultimately leads to places of despondency in learning and teaching. Lampert and Yoder summarize the results by underscoring that “without meaning, Christian education is mere history.”³⁵

Finding meaning, however is today likened to the finding of an ephemeral concept. In our widely accessible information-rich culture, philosopher Charles Taylor describes the pathology of the disoriented North American mind, as being caught in a “buffered” loop, wherein people imagine themselves largely insulated from the world, and even more so from the supernatural.³⁶ For most, the universe is a closed system, a physical universe only and one in which every occurrence can be explained naturally. Commenting on this increasing secularism, author Alan Noble notes that the disoriented modern mind carries with it, “the constant background sense that there are any number of possible beliefs, and many of them involve no reference to a transcendent being.”³⁷

In addition to disorientation as surrounded by innumerable choices of meanings and beliefs, personal preference has become a cardinal value of the North American culture and with this, truth has been partitioned into private and public forums. Writing over 40 years ago, Francis Schaeffer described this divided concept of two truths as though residing on two floors of a building. On the bottom floor together with science and reason are the facts or concrete concepts that are universally binding on all, while the top floor holds the private values and personal choices of the individual. According to Schaeffer, “there is no permeation or interchange—there is a complete dichotomy between the upper and lower stories, [and] the line between the upper and lower stories has become a concrete horizontal, ten thousand feet thick, with highly charged barbed

³⁵ Lampert and Yoder, “Faithful Gestures,” 62.

³⁶ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007), 37-45.

³⁷ Alan Noble, *Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in a Distracted Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2018), 50.

wire fixed in the concrete.”³⁸ Under this way of thinking the Western mind can disagree on any number of matters of faith and choice, but agree on perceived concrete naturally explained realities.

It does not take much imagination to understand that a pressing need within the North American church is the education of the Scriptures for the maturity of the believers. The difficulty many believers face in growing in maturity is the filtering out of these disorienting messages. Author Nancy Pearcey observes that for many believers in the West, there is a deep struggle under this artificial partition of truth, and a general resignation to not having a place at the academic table. Believing instead the messages of the culture that have consigned “religion to the value sphere—which takes it out of the realm of true and false altogether.” she says, “Secularists can then assure us that of course they ‘respect’ religion, while at the same time denying that it has any relevance to the public realm.”³⁹

What the modern, disoriented mind most needs, is an all-encompassing story that brings meaning and understanding. Rather than the disorienting messages of the pluralistic culture about us, Scripture presents the reader with a unifying narrative. As author Eugene Peterson has observed, “when we submit our lives to what we read in Scripture, we find that we are not being led to see God in our stories but our stories in God's,” and as such, he concludes, “God is the larger context and plot in which our stories find themselves.”⁴⁰ Believers need to connect their stories to the larger framework of the biblical narrative, they must lift their eyes away from the struggle and turmoil, and mixed messages of this world to hear from the Lord directly. Skilled teachers of the

³⁸ Francis A. Schaeffer, *Escape from Reason*, in *A Francis A. Schaeffer Trilogy: Three Essential Books in One Volume* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1990), 237.

³⁹ Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 21.

⁴⁰ Eugene H. Peterson, *Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), Kindle Loc. 520.

Scriptures, whether professional or lay, are needed to help explain the Scriptures and lay an accurate outline of reality over the hearers so that in turn their meaning, their value, and their purpose can be clearly understood.

The Distracted Self

Lamport and Yoder add a second current struggle, namely that skilled teaching of the Scriptures must also address “a considerable lack of theological reflection and honest searching for God’s ways in the world.”⁴¹ Ours is not only a disorienting world with multiple messages continually bombarding us, but it is also a world that distracts us from deep thought. The onerous task of the church is to break through this noise with the life-changing message of Christ, and yet one of the principle manners of doing so—through the accurate and compelling teaching of the Scriptures through multiple means—remains shelved in many churches, unused.

Distraction, however, is not something unique to the modern culture, but has always been present. Observing the distracted masses of his day, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) noted that if distractions were removed, in some cases the very essence of a person’s existence was also removed. “Take away their diversion,” he says, “and you will see them dried up with weariness,” because unhappiness follows “as soon as we are reduced to thinking of self, and have no diversion.”⁴² Commenting on this, author Tony Reinke adds that “the human appetite for distraction is high in *every* age, because distractions give us easy escape from the silence and solitude whereby we become acquainted with our finitude, our inescapable mortality, and the distance of God from all our desires, hopes, and pleasures.”⁴³

⁴¹ Lamport and Yoder, “Faithful Gestures,” 62.

⁴² Blaise Pascal, *Thoughts, Letter, and Minor Works*, ed. Charles W. Eliot, trans. W. F. Trotter, M. L. Booth, and O. W. Wight (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1910), 62.

⁴³ Tony Reinke, *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 44-45.

Key to *this* distracted age lay in the prevalence of technology that beckons to us to stay “plugged in,” always. Over a decade ago, in his book, *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*, author Nicholas Carr warns of just how technology is changing our minds. He warns that, “calm, focused, undistracted, the linear mind is being pushed aside by a new kind of mind that wants and needs to take in and dole out information in short, disjointed, often overlapping bursts—the faster, the better.”⁴⁴ We can no longer retain thoughts of any extended length, concentration and meditation upon deeper truths that take time are not seen as worthwhile. Instead our minds jerk their way through the day, moving from one post to the next. Citing an article by Jacob Weisberg, Reinke notes that this cultural obsession with cellular phones calls to us to “check our smartphones about 81,500 times each year, or once every 4.3 minutes of our waking lives.”⁴⁵ The result of this shallow thinking in the face of a constancy of distractions, says Noble, is that it “shields us from the kind of deep, honest reflection needed to ask why we exist and what is true.”⁴⁶

Our distracted minds are looking for more than just simple entertainment. The technological deluge in which the North American Church soaks, offers its users something of highest value. Noble explains:

It’s not just that this technology allows us to stay “plugged in” all the time, it’s that it gives us the sense that we are tapped into something greater than ourselves. The narratives of meaning that have always filled our lives with justification and wonder are multiplied endlessly and immediately for us in songs, TV shows, online communities, games, and the news.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), 10.

⁴⁵ Reinke, *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You*, 41, citing Jacob Weisberg, “We Are Hopelessly Hooked,” *New York Review of Books*, February 25, 2016, <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2016/02/25/we-are-hopelessly-hooked/>.

⁴⁶ Noble, *Disruptive Witness*, 6.

⁴⁷ Noble, *Disruptive Witness*, 19-20.

It is *meaning*, in other words, that is sourced from the million different channels, and in such a distracted age, it is not the value of the argument that counts, but the volume of agreement behind that argument that matters most. The new meaning gleaned online changes us even further through the medium with how it is gleaned. In short, our cell phones become divine to us. Writer Tim Challies explains:

Technology presents us with a unique spiritual challenge. Because it is meant to serve us in fulfilling our created purpose, because it makes our lives easier, longer, and more comfortable, we are prone to assign to it something of a godlike status. We easily rely on technology to give our lives meaning, and we trust technology to provide an ultimate answer to the frustration of life in a fallen world. Because of this, technology is uniquely susceptible to becoming an idol, raising itself to the place of God in our lives.⁴⁸

The great challenge facing the North American church is that this “ubiquitous, powerful stream of information and interaction driven by technology,”⁴⁹ leads to inevitable problems in the minds of its people with its ease with which the individual ignores flaws within his or her contrived narrative, and in a total lack of introspection whatsoever beyond online “likes” or accolades. Distraction is reigning, and the Church needs a solution. Reinke presents that the simple corrective “to our hyperkinetic digital world of diversions is the soul-calming sedative of Christ’s splendor, beheld with the mind and enjoyed by the soul,” for, he writes, “the beauty of Christ calms us and roots our deepest longings in eternal hopes that are far beyond what our smartphones can ever hope to deliver.”⁵⁰ Christ is the one who brings stillness and calm into our lives, and it is the meditation upon Christ that quiets the noise of the world around us.

Here again, skilled teachers of the Scriptures, whether professional or lay, are needed to help reveal Christ through the pages of the Bible. The message of the gospel

⁴⁸ Tim Challies, *The Next Story: Life and Faith after the Digital Explosion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 26.

⁴⁹ Noble, *Disruptive Witness*, 33.

⁵⁰ Reinke, *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You*, 50.

and its transformative power is vital to help combat the distracted age in which we live. Therefore, the training of lay teachers who can communicate these truths not just on Sunday is to be a priority within the local church to help in these efforts.

The Distanced Self

The challenge to churches in discipling their people today is fueled not only by the disorienting voices of a flood of authority and the distracting nature of the flood of information, but also by the growing individualism and isolationism in the West. Examining the North American church Lampert and Yoder see “an undying and seemingly incontrovertible tenet that the Christian life is a solitary journey filled with personal decisions to be individually negotiated with a corresponding diminution of the community of faith.”⁵¹ This understanding that the Christian life is more about my singular life before Christ than my life within the church is also in dire need of discipleship and teaching to address.

Individualism is present in every culture, but it has taken Western Greek philosophy and the American experiment to take it to its current-day zenith. In a keynote address, Malaysian pastor Hwa Yung observed that concept of individualism is sourced from ancient Greek metaphysics. According to both Plato and Aristotle he says, “the world is composed of discrete substances and any relation among individual entities composed of discrete substances is merely accidental.”⁵² The idea of substances, with no relation to one another, is picked up also by Descartes famous understanding of self-consciousness, with the emphasis upon ‘I’ in *cogito ergo sum* (‘I think, therefore I am’). With Descartes’s embrace of being in and of itself, says Yung, “was born the autonomous

⁵¹ Lampert and Yoder, “Faithful Gestures,” 63.

⁵² Hwa Yung, “Energising Community: Theological Education’s Relational Mandate,” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 35, no. 1 (January 2011): 63.

self which lies at the heart of modern individualism.”⁵³ The American forum has provided growth opportunities for individualism, with its founding upon largely Judeo-Christian ethics. As Scripture highlights the worth and dignity and value of the individual before Christ, Yung observes that the result of the West’s early embrace of this ethic served to “lay the foundations of the laws on civil rights and liberties, and other principles of modern democracy in the west.”⁵⁴ The result for a time was a heightened and largely Christian-framed individualism, but says Yung, “with the decline of Christianity and the emergence of a modern worldview largely domesticated by the Enlightenment, the commitment to community weakened, leaving the autonomous individual increasingly to reign supreme.”⁵⁵ In other words, without the Christian ethic, the West has been left to follow the sad course of individualism to its inevitable ends.

The bleak horizon that this distanced age has created is manifold. In a 2017 article in the *New York Times*, physician Dhruv Khullar notes, that “social isolation is a growing epidemic—one that’s increasingly recognized as having dire physical, mental and emotional consequences,” noting also that “since the 1980s, the percentage of American adults who say they’re lonely has doubled from 20 percent to 40 percent.”⁵⁶ Former U.S. surgeon general Vivek H. Murthy in a 2017 interview with the *Washington Post* confirmed that in addition to depression, distance from community can affect life expectancy, obesity, heart disease, anxiety, even dementia. Within the workplace are similar, he says, noting that distance and isolation from others is “associated with

⁵³ Yung, “Energising Community,” 63.

⁵⁴ Yung, “Energising Community,” 64.

⁵⁵ Yung, “Energising Community,” 64.

⁵⁶ Dhruv Khullar, “How Social Isolation Is Killing Us,” *New York Times* (The Upshot), December 22, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/22/upshot/how-social-isolation-is-killing-us.html>.

reductions in task performance. It limits creativity. It impairs other aspects of executive function, such as decision-making.”⁵⁷

In addition to the physical and emotional effects of living in the distanced age, there are spiritual consequences also. The individual outside of community is left open to deception and lies of the Enemy. He or she is given to introspection apart from the correctives of a faith community, and left again to define meaning, purpose, and identity apart from the church. Moreover, the distanced person imposes his or her will on the collective. As Alan Noble again observes: “If my foundation for knowing my place, purpose, and end in this world is on the basis of a self-discovered hidden identity that only I can verify and properly know, and that others are obligated to accept by virtue of being outside of me and therefore are unable to judge, there is less space for collective human flourishing.”⁵⁸ The distance I embrace and feel, leads to isolation and toxicity within the whole.

In contrast, the Bible presents an answer to community. We are not individuals in isolation, but persons within a greater whole, as members of the Body of Christ (Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:27; Gal 3:28; Eph 4:25). The believer in Christ is known and loved personally by God, and as much as we are distinct before Him, we were never meant to live in isolation from one another, but instead find our greatest purpose and meaning in community with one another. In this view, other people in my life are not limitations to my being but helps for me to grow in as I help them grow also. In his book *True Community*, author Jerry Bridges notes that, whereas “in our Christian circles, the word fellowship has come to mean little more than Christian social activity,”⁵⁹ what the Bible

⁵⁷ Jena McGregor, “This Former Surgeon General Says There’s a ‘Loneliness Epidemic’ and Work Is Partly to Blame,” *Washington Post*, October 4, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2017/10/04/this-former-surgeon-general-says-theres-a-loneliness-epidemic-and-work-is-partly-to-blame/>.

⁵⁸ Noble, *Disruptive Witness*, 89.

⁵⁹ Jerry Bridges, *True Community* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2018), 2.

presents us with is active participation in one another lives. “If we are to regain the New Testament concept of fellowship within the community,” Bridges continues, “we must learn to get beyond the temporal issues of the day and begin to share with each other on a level that will enhance our spiritual relationships with one another and with God.”⁶⁰ Despite what the world around teaches about being “social” the emphasis in Scripture is so much more expectant and gainful. Here again, when there is an increased presence of teachers of the Bible, lay or professional, a commensurate increase in social awareness and the importance of the community in discipleship can be taught and flourish.

To summarize, not only is there an historical precedent for the equipping of lay teachers, there is also a great and urgent need for their role in discipling a current church culture. While many outside and within the North American community of faith struggle with innumerable claims of authority, the teacher of God’s Word can communicate clearly the singular and overriding authority of the Scriptures. While many face distractions from technology and media outlets preventing stillness of thought or meditation upon truth, the teacher of God’s Word can articulate the need for deep reflection upon the person of Christ through the Scriptures. While most in the West struggle with identity and individualism seeking to find meaning and value in activities, hobbies, or an online presence, the teacher of God’s Word can direct truth to communicate the believer’s greater design to live as a cherished and protected person within the community of the church. In short, the church is looking to answer the disoriented, distracted, and distanced believer with truth, and teachers of the Bible are necessary for discipleship today.

⁶⁰ Bridges, *True Community*, 5-6.

Training Lay Teachers and the Preparation for the Future

Having considered the need for the church's practice of training lay teachers through both the witness of history as well as the present conditions today, consideration is also warranted as the church looks to its future. As the social shifts in the West become more drastic, the pressing need to train men and women who can diagnose, understand, and communicate to the times through a biblical lens also becomes more urgent. In specific, a rising tide of contrary opinions on the value of human life, the understanding of gender and sexuality, and a correct orientation to race and racism will be briefly considered.

The Immanent Challenge of the Value of Human Life

The historic U.S. Supreme Court ruling of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 began a series of increasingly permissive actions related to the termination of life within pregnancy. In Canada a similar ruling, *the Criminal Law Amendment Act*, introduced in 1967 and ratified a year later under then justice minister Pierre Trudeau, affirmed limited hospital supervised abortions and agreed with the minister that, "the state has no business in the bedrooms of the nation."⁶¹ Since that time, and countless abortions later, both countries have seen progressive increases in abortion legislation, with very little setbacks.

In 2016, a new ruling was made in Canada as it relates to the rights of those who wish to die at a time of their own choosing. "Medical assistance in dying" (MAID) as articulated in the bill, was amended to the Canadian Criminal Code and legalized both physician-assisted suicide (PAS) and physician-administered euthanasia (PAE).⁶² Within

⁶¹ Alan Young, "The State Is Still in the Bedrooms of the Nation: The Control and Regulation of Sexuality in Canadian Criminal Law," *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 17, no. 4 (September 2008): 203-20.

⁶² Government of Canada, Department of Justice, "Proposed Changes to Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying Legislation," February 24, 2020, <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pl/ad-am/index.html>.

the first three years of its passing 6,749 Canadians chose to end their lives through MAID with over 60 percent of these being cancer-related.⁶³ In recent years efforts have been made to loosen restrictions amending the legislation to remove the requirement for “reasonable foreseeability of natural death,” thus opening the door to a broader category of those wishing to end their lives at a time of their choosing.

At the center of this storm for death on either side lies a debate over personhood. In her book, *Love Thy Body*, Nancy Pearcey articulates that a general denigration of the human body is widely accepted in our culture. Following Plato, the West has embraced an underlying and pragmatic ideology that the body is material and therefore corrupted while the soul or person is the true essence of a person. This rejection of the goodness of the human body is devastating on many levels, and as Pearcey states, this “personhood theory entails a two-level dualism that sets the body against the person, as though they were two separate things merely stuck together . . . [and] demeans the body as extrinsic to the person—something inferior that can be used for purely pragmatic purposes.”⁶⁴ Bodily, therefore one can belong to the human race, but individuals must *earn* personhood by meeting additional criteria like, “the ability to make decisions, exercise self-awareness, plan for the future, and so on.”⁶⁵ A body is something everyone has, but personhood must be earned. Who then, can define what a person is? Without objective criteria, Pearcey says, “the concept will be defined by raw power [W]hoever has the most power—namely, the state—will decide who qualifies as a person.”⁶⁶

⁶³ Health Canada, “Fourth Interim Report on Medical Assistance in Dying in Canada,” April 25, 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/health-system-services/medical-assistance-dying-interim-report-april-2019.html>.

⁶⁴ Nancy R. Pearcey, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018), 21.

⁶⁵ Pearcey, *Love Thy Body*, 27.

⁶⁶ Pearcey, *Love Thy Body*, 59.

With the persistent specter of abortion and the broadening practice of euthanasia looming not just in Canada but the world, the need for a biblical perspective on human life will be essential in the coming days. As Albert Mohler underscores, “it is incumbent upon Christians to defend the sanctity of human life and confront the arguments demanding unfettered access to abortions,”⁶⁷ with the same being said for euthanasia. As pressures continue to mount and the personhood debate remove factual evidence from the discussion, the increasingly subjective debate needs to be answered by Christians who know the truth. The response to the denigration and destruction of human life through either abortion or euthanasia, must be met with a greater story of God’s image upon all humanity, and the value of every human life, regardless of perceived contribution. The Bible asserts a creation that was carried out personally by God, who made us in His image, by His hands, and with His breath, and as Mohler encourages, “Christians must equip themselves with the Word of God to preach and proclaim the glory of humanity enshrined in God’s creative mandate.”⁶⁸ Further, Christians carry the story of the incarnation of Christ, in which the eternal Son of God became man, enduring the pain of this life, suffered on a Roman cross, died, and was raised in body, in order to redeem our fallen bodies. Our bodies are important to the Lord, and every life is of immeasurable worth. For the church to hold a clear understanding of the Word of God so arms it with an answer to the reasons for the brokenness around us, and provides the solution found in Jesus Christ. As the West sinks into pre-Christian practices of devaluing life, as the population ages, as personhood is increasingly determined by the state, the need for the church’s growth in literacy of the Scriptures will be indispensable to its relevancy. Equally essential in the days ahead will be teachers of the Word of God who

⁶⁷ R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Gathering Storm: Secularism, Culture, and the Church* (Nashville: Nelson, 2020), 55.

⁶⁸ Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 55.

can equip the church to meet the world that is fast approaching; to meet it, and to provide it with hope.

The Immanent Challenge of Gender and Sexuality

On a similar front, long-held cultural values of gender, sexuality, and even marriage are quickly being redrawn in North America. Increasingly rejected is any notion of an “assigned” sexuality at birth, as the culture leans in celebrating gender and sexuality as be fluid concepts within the individual. One gay activist group, The Human Rights Campaign writes that gender is “one’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves.”⁶⁹ In the West, the sentiment is rising that gender is no longer a concrete answerable question, and what is more, those who insist upon making it an objective category are bigoted and intolerant. How the church prepares itself to answer these opinions and share the gospel with those in such a context is vital to the next decades of its mission.

Like abortion and euthanasia, the West is increasingly arriving at a shared intrinsic thought that undergirds how it considers gender identity and expression. In the world’s eyes, the mind is preeminent, over and against the body, and when the body contradicts the mind, the body is always wrong. Pearcey writes, “when a person senses a dissonance between body and mind, the mind wins. The body is dismissed as irrelevant.”⁷⁰ Irrelevant, and essentially a “meat skeleton” for the sovereign mind of the individual, the preeminence of choice reigns supreme. According this swelling opinion, “We do not discover our gender identity, as though it were an objective fact. Instead we

⁶⁹ Human Rights Campaign, “Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Definitions,” accessed July 30, 2020, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-terminology-and-definitions/>.

⁷⁰ Pearcey, *Love Thy Body*, 195.

declare our identity. We speak ourselves into existence. Language takes priority over biology. It is whatever word we choose. The flesh has been made word.”⁷¹ At the crux of the challenge of gender expression and identity is that argument that the individual has the autonomous, self-governing right, to replace any given identity with the identity of an individual’s choosing. As Mohler summarizes, “the questions surrounding gender and sexuality gravitate around our very identity as human beings and our view of the character of God.”⁷²

The church’s response to a growing cultural acceptance of such thinking is critical. Ignoring and failing to prepare for a coming storm is not an option. In his book, *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?* author and pastor Kevin DeYoung observes, “when it comes to the cultural flash points of our day, it hardly seems wise to avoid talking about what everyone else is talking about.”⁷³ Not only have the matters of gender expression and identity surfaced in many churches’ neighborhoods and doorsteps, but some have even gone so far as acceptance, and even celebration, of this new sexual ethic. The results of embracing such an ethic, while it promises so much, fails to meet the satisfaction that only the gospel can deliver. Instead of love, and peace, Mohler warns, “when societies reject the natural, creational order that God put in place, chaos and confusion follow.”⁷⁴ This coming swell threatens to devastate lives both in and out of the church, with those who struggle within the lifestyle as well as those who would interact with those who do. Preparing the church to face these challenges through the Word of God is therefore a vital task for today and the future.

⁷¹ Pearcey, *Love Thy Body*, 214.

⁷² Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 116.

⁷³ Kevin DeYoung, *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 72.

⁷⁴ Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 104.

There is a need for teachers of the Bible who can articulate the beauty of the created order and recapture the wonder of God’s story. Scripture has the answer for both gender identity and expression. It teaches of a God who has planned our lives to the smallest detail including the sex of His creation. It teaches of this same God ordaining sex from the first moments of creation as complementary in nature and both shaped in the very image of God. It teaches that not only are male and female concrete ideas, they also allow fulfillment of the procreative roles in marriage, and as a divine symbol marriage between the complementary sexes best make sense of the redemptive-historical significance of marriage.

The challenge falls to the church to be biblically faithful, pastorally sensitive, and culturally conversant in the issues it faces. Says DeYoung, “Our feelings matter. Our stories matter. Our friends matter. But ultimately, we must search the Scriptures to see what matters most.”⁷⁵ The church must be people who lean upon the understanding that is found only in the Bible, and uncertainty where the Bible speaks clearly, is not humility. DeYoung writes, “Silence in the face of such clarity is not prudence, and hesitation in light of such frequency is not patience. The Bible says more than enough about homosexual practice for us to say something too.”⁷⁶ It is incumbent upon the church to teach what the Bible actually says, and to train teachers who will be able to do so also. We must, says Mohler, “meet revolution with revelation—knowing that God has not left us to figure all this out on our own . . . , [for] we are given God’s Word, without which we would have nothing to say on these issues. But God has spoken, and so must we.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵ DeYoung, *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?*, 18.

⁷⁶ DeYoung, *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?*, 78.

⁷⁷ Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 121.

The Immanent Challenge of Secularism to the Church

In the most general sense, secularism refers to the “affirmation of immanent, this-worldly realities, along with denial of transcendent, otherworldly realities.”⁷⁸ Less a formalized movement than a general tidal shift in Western culture, secularism is a moving away from the understanding of God as central to all areas of life, to an atomistic mindset wherein God is removed from the center of daily life. Boosted by humanism, rationalism, and a rise in the power of scientific authority, secularism is producing a complex culture increasingly distant from consideration of the Divine. Norman Geisler describes the central tenets of the age as nontheistic in understanding of the supernatural, naturalistic in perception of reality, evolutionary in explanation of the original man, relativistic in the consideration of absolutes, and self-sufficient in the expectations upon humanity.⁷⁹

This does not necessarily mean that the Divine has been tossed to the side in some re-vamped form of atheism, however. According to secularism just because He is no longer central, does not mean that God cannot be of great personal benefit. In a 2005, University of North Carolina study researcher Christian Smith and his team coined the term “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism” (MTD) to describe their analysis of the religious beliefs of over three thousand American teenagers. Mohler describes the central beliefs of MTD as follows:

A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth; that god wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about one’s self, and God does not need to be particularly involved in one’s life except when needed to resolve a problem. Finally, good people go to heaven when they die.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ D. W. Gill, “Secularism, Secular Humanism,” in Treier and Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 796.

⁷⁹ Norman L. Geisler, “Humanism, Secular,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 342.

⁸⁰ Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 123-24.

These characteristics of commonly shared beliefs allow for the possibility of God to exist, but He exists only in a supporting role, to help the individual reach his or her actualization. God, in other words, exists to bring therapeutic benefit to the lives of humanity.

MTD has been embraced by the youth and young adult populations to drastic effect. Although the concept of an emerging adulthood resists neat characterization, the least that can be said is that individualism is more than prevalent. This marriage of MTD with individualism produces a selfish understanding of adulthood, and results in a welcomed extended phase of adolescence. There is no need to grow up and embrace responsibility. Now markers like, full-time work, marriage, and parenthood are being delayed indefinitely as the individual preferences and rights move the individual far away from these traditional sacrificial steps.

In addition to these qualities, Mohler generally observes that as well as individualism, the secularized youth of today carry a “reflexive non-judgmentalism and a reluctance to suggest that anyone might actually be wrong in matters of faith and belief.”⁸¹ Laid on the altar of self-determined pathways of life, any concept of truth is now subject to the individual’s preferences. “As long as your life does not impede mine, go ahead and live any way you like,” becomes the echoing cry about us. God has been removed from the center in the secular mind, and in the vacuum the individual sits on his throne now.

In his work, *A Secular Age*, Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor observes of the age we live in that, “belief in God is no longer axiomatic. There are alternatives. And this will also likely mean that at least in certain milieux, it may be hard to sustain one's faith.”⁸² The church must be sobered to the reality that the youth within its confines are

⁸¹ Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 125.

⁸² Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 3.

hearing alternatives to the gospel message at a deafening rate. So much so in fact, that it is proving difficult to retain them. If it is not proactive, a generation will hemorrhage out of its walls without it even knowing.

How can the church convince its youth that a monogamous, self-sacrificial life is a blessing not a curse? This life, wherein there are absolute truths that govern reality, and where the family is valued and cherished, and where there is so much more than social media, needs to be seen with clearer perspective. Here again, the Bible as the central authority for truth must be taught within its walls. While the compelling promises of secularism are given especially to the youth of the West, Scripture offers a greater narrative, a greater story, a greater joy. It is therefore of utmost importance that the message of Christ be taught with accuracy and clarity from our churches. Training more men and women to teach the Word of God—effective only to the degree with which they rely upon the Holy Spirit—will provide answers for which the hearts of many people are looking. It falls to the church to enter the culture, to challenge the culture, and then change it through the proclamation of the Word of God. The need is urgent and will only increase in years to come. The cost of not doing so is too great, for as Mohler candidly notes, “the obvious truth is that a church that loses its own young people has no future.”⁸³

Conclusion

The principle effort of this project seeks to train lay teachers of the Bible at Hope Bible Church in Ontario Canada. As has been briefly outlined, the witnesses of history, in the earliest church’s establishment of the *catechumenate* to give universal training in a hostile culture, in the efforts of the Brethren of the Common Life to provide education that spoke to people, and in the pietist reforms to expand the roles of lay teacher, have all given historical precedent as to the need to raise lay teachers. In

⁸³ Mohler, *The Gathering Storm*, 142.

addition, consideration was given to the current Western culture has also proven warrant for this training. The people of the West are disoriented with countless claims of authority, they are distracted by constant streams of information through media and their phones, and they are distanced from one another, lost alone in “social” streams and lonelier than ever. Finally, in forecasting the future, with the coming storm of threat against life—whether at the beginning or end, with the coming storm of gender expression and identity, and the continuing and amplifying battle with secularism, the need increases all the more for teachers of the Bible.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to train lay leaders of Hope Bible Church (HBC) to teach the Bible. To that end, four goals guided this project. The first goal was to assess the current teaching practices within our ministries at HBC and was measured by administering the Teaching Practices Inventory (TPI) to twenty-two leaders at HBC (see appendix 1). The second goal was to develop a curriculum to equip participants to teach the Bible. Addressing basic teaching skills such as the correct exegesis of Scripture, biblical and systematic theology, lesson planning, and pedagogy, this goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum (see appendix 2). The third goal was to equip participants in the practice of teaching the Bible, and was measured by administering a pre- and post-survey that measured the participant's level of knowledge, confidence, and passion to teach the Scriptures (see appendix 3). The fourth goal was to increase the number of live teaching occurrences led by lay leaders within our church by 25 percent, and was measured by administering a pre- and post-analysis of current trends of live teachers against September 1, 2020 as the base number to which the increase was compared.

In chapter 2 it was evidenced from Scripture that the act of teaching the Bible is essential for the growth of the believer, the health of the church—local, and at large—and the ministry of reaching the world for Christ. Rather than being a peripheral activity, or even lost as a sub-category of preaching, the ministry of teaching in the Church produces unity, faithfulness, and support for one another. In chapter 3 it was proven that the witnesses of history, the current Western culture, and even a conservative forecasting

of the future all emphasize the continued training teachers of the Bible. It cannot be ignored that the church has placed an historical priority upon this training and the need for teachers today is becoming more and more an urgent need.

What follows is a detailed description of the course of action that this project underwent across the twelve weeks in which it was conducted. This description is broken into three parts examining the preparation period (consisting of weeks 1-4), the implementation period (weeks 5-12) wherein the class itself was held, and the follow-up period (week 13-15). The aim in what follows is to provide the reader with all the necessary tools to replicate this class on his or her own.

The Preparation Period: Weeks 1-4

Recruitment began for class participants beginning in late July of 2020. This was primarily conducted through direct email and personal invitation. Although I had individuals in mind, I also solicited the advice of the pastoral staff at HBC to expand my purview and range of participants. After sending out invitations to 20 names at the beginning of the first class, I was able to acquire 23 students encompassing a wide range of demographical diversity. In preparation for the class each confirmed participant received the TPI questions designed to find deficiencies in understanding, skill, and comfort in teaching the Bible.

Teaching Practices Inventory Input

The TPI brought some results that were compelling in favor of advancement of the project. When surveyed with the item “I have been trained by HBC to teach the Bible,” no lay teachers agreed strongly, but instead landed closer to the middle or back end of the Likert scale.

Table 1. "I have been trained by HBC to teach the Bible."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
22.7%	18.2%	22.7%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%

While the responses were heavier on the side of disagreement, it is revealing that 0 percent expressed unequivocal assent to any training whatsoever by HBC. Equally telling, table 2 shows that the act of teaching the Bible within the varied contexts of our church is not only unsupported in initial training, but also in continued feedback and input.

Table 2. "When I teach at HBC I receive constructive feedback from leadership."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
18.2%	45.5%	13.6%	9.1%	9.1%	4.3%

The number of teachers that strongly agreed to the presence of leadership input and critique was surprisingly low. The need for the creation of a program to train teachers and provide feedback in "live" occasions is clearly demonstrated in the number of teachers who felt that feedback is lacking from their teaching being over 75 percent. Not surprising given the previous two results, a final and notable contribution came from the last question reflected in table 3.

Table 3. "I would welcome additional training in teaching the Bible."

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.7%	77.3%

Understanding that the sample of results was fielded from existing lay teachers who are passionate about their task, it is nonetheless a striking note that 100 percent of respondents desired to grow in training. As preparations continued for this class, this was both affirming and encouraging in that not only was the need great, the desire also was equally high.

Curriculum Development

During these preparation weeks, development began on the teaching curriculum for each class (see appendix 5). This curriculum was based largely upon two presenting factors, namely the needs of the students and the mechanics of faithful, orthodox teaching. First, as based upon some of the information which had surfaced in the TPI questionnaire, the needs of the students helped to delineate the flow of the course. As noted, many of the students had experienced little to no constructive input in their development as teachers. Most had come pre-trained to our church and were eager for additional training. Also of note in this consideration was the fact that nearly sixty percent of the participants were women. As HBC defines itself as a complementarian church, wherein women do not teach in authority over men or carry the office of elder/pastor, there were some hesitations expressed by these participants as to within what context their teaching would occur. These and other factors further influenced the creation of the content for the course.

Second as it relates to the mechanics of teaching, review began on existing materials for the development of the course. In general, there was a dearth of options as very few resources addressed the entire process of teaching the Bible. As most accessible all-in-one books covered preaching and homiletics on a weekend service by a pastor, the decision to bifurcate the resources to look at exegesis and speaking in separate categories made the most sense. As will be noted later, it was the aim of this curriculum to integrate these resources and present a synthesis of understanding for the student.

When considering exegetical resources, several specific works proved helpful. By far the most assistance was gleaned from J. Scott Duval and J. Daniel Hays's work, *Grasping God's Word*. In addition to presenting a hands-on approach, it also exhaustively describes the process of deriving meaning from a given text along the process of what the authors term, "principlizing."¹ Duval and Hays incorporate the practice and the theory, and their stepped-down use of everyday language in communication proved essential.

Another exegetical resource leaned heavily upon was Andrew Naselli's *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*. Not as verbose as Hays, this resource gives a helpful process of doing exegesis and theology along a twelve-step process.² Of particular use was Naselli's argument diagramming discussion in chapter 5, and though his emphasis is upon the original Greek language, even English-only exegetes in this course found this helpful in tracing the logical flow of argumentation.

A final invaluable resource in preparation for the exegetical instruction was Grant Osborne's *The Hermeneutical Spiral*. Much more technical than the previous two resources, Osborne nuances the understanding of hermeneutics to include both exegesis and contextualization as specific subsets of that one task,³ and leads the student through the process of spiraling back and forth between the text and the context. In building out the first half of the course, Osborne's careful delineation of context was exceptionally helpful in consideration of the broader historical and literary context.

As it related to the speaking and presentation side of teaching, Bryan Chapell's *Christ-Centered Preaching* was invaluable. Though aimed at the senior preaching pastor, his work proved invaluable on several fronts. Chief of these being his description of what

¹ J. Scott Duval and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020), 26.

² Andrew David Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 3.

³ Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 21.

he calls the “fallen-condition focus,” that is, “the mutual human condition that contemporary believers share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God’s people to glorify and enjoy him.”⁴ It falls to the exegete, says Chapell to understand what shared struggle is present in the text, and anchor upon it. This approach to application would serve to be eye-opening for many of the students.

Also pertaining to presentation, Haddon Robinson’s seminal work, *Biblical Preaching* was essential in the formulation of the big idea. Again, though aimed at the weekly preacher, Robinson’s thoughts fit well with the aims of this course to train the lay teacher to teach the Bible. His emphasis upon the “explanation, interpretation, or application of a single dominant idea supported by other ideas,”⁵ carried over into the training of teachers also.

A final resource of note was Karen Lee-Thorp’s work, *How to Ask Great Questions*. After an explanation of the importance and role of questions, Thorpe presents a “top ten” list of principles for asking great questions.⁶ The rest of the work categorizes questions moving from simple observation and shared experiences, on to more technical application and theology questions. Designed as a resource for group leaders, Thorp’s careful breakdown of styles of questions served well the training teachers looking to maximize their lessons with thoughtful follow-up questions.

⁴ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 50.

⁵ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 17.

⁶ Karen Lee-Thorp, *How to Ask Great Questions: Guide Discussion, Build Relationships, Deepen Faith* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998).

The Implementation Period: Weeks 5-12

The course consisted of eight sessions approximately ninety minutes in length and were held between the dates of October 7 and November 25, 2020. In addition to these sessions, smaller teaching labs also occurred following these formal class settings. Due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the province of Ontario's response which closed counties with higher reports, class structure changed several times over the course of the class. At the onset, all students but two were in attendance, but during the midway point of the class, several students were limited to at-home learning through a recorded video option. At the time of the labs, even more students were restricted in their movements and so could not fully take part in the final assignment. In addition to this, during the class several in-person students were forced into quarantine for various reasons.

At the outset of the first session, students were pre-assigned an individual student that my assistant provided. This allowed me to remain blind to the source of the feedback as the students remained anonymous. This student number was required to complete the pre- and post-project surveys (see appendix 3). In addition to this student number, students were also provided with a course syllabus digitally, which was again distributed at the beginning of the first class.

Class 1: Introduction and Theological Foundations

In addition to laying out the immediate goals, schedule, and assignments to the course, the first class addressed the theological foundations of teaching the Bible within the context of the local church. This class functioned as a distillation of the truths gleaned in chapters 2 and 3 of this work, and delivered to the students in an accessible format. The purpose of this first class was to define the act of teaching the Bible, and to recognize the importance of cultivating this gift within the local church.

To accomplish this aim, the class structure formed three specific parts. In the first, we discussed the distinction between the almost synonymous acts of teaching and preaching in the church. In sum, the class learned that while preaching is specifically tied to the worship gathering and was often direct in its singular application, teaching has a more general application and is focused on the long-term and gradual development. After making this distinction, the class examined the blessings of teaching the Bible in detail.

The second portion of the lesson consisted of a general overview of the doctrine of Scripture, again with the aim being to stress the importance of teaching the Scriptures. Here, we defined terms like the inerrancy, inspiration, authority, sufficiency, clarity and necessity of Scripture. Tied in with this brief theology was an equally brief survey of competing worldviews that have served to erode the attitude of relying upon the instruction from Scripture.

In the final section of this first class, we considered the practical matters of teaching first by way of an overview of teacher errors and teacher excellence. This would pave the way for future classes as the students were exposed to potential pitfalls within their own existing teaching ministry, as well as excellent behaviors to which to aspire. A summary statement was next crafted that distilled the act of teaching the Bible into a short summary: “Getting it right, and saying it well.” This summary statement served as a basic outline for the remaining weeks of the curriculum. Finally, the class ended with what was described as the *sine quo non* of teaching. This non-negotiable reality would echo across every week we would meet together as a class: “I cannot teach the Bible unless I teach Christ, and I cannot teach Christ unless He is most excellent to me.” This served to underscore that unless our love for Jesus is great and growing, we will never be as effective as a teacher as we desire to be.

At the conclusion of this study, the students reflected upon their current teaching practices, and began the process of studying the Bible by considering 2 Timothy 2:15, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no

need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” In addition to memorizing this verse for the class, the participants were asked to record twenty observations on this one verse and to craft a summary statement of no more than eight words.

Class 2: Genre, Words, and Arguments

The purpose of this second class was to begin walking the students through the process of correct exegesis to arrive at the meaning of the passage. After discussing the homework assigned from the previous week, this class began by defining the terms, “hermeneutics,” “exegesis,” and “eisegesis.” In an effort to get to the meaning of the text, the class examined the task of the interpreter. His or her job is to move from the text to the meaning to the original audience, to an understanding through the lens of biblical and systematic theology, before arriving finally at the meaning to us today.⁷ This process of interpretation and arriving at the meaning of the text, constituted the first half of the process of teaching, namely, “Getting it right.”

To complete this overall task the first essential step in understanding the Scriptures is in a humble seeking of the Lord. Drawing from John Piper’s I.O.U.S.⁸ framework, the students were encouraged to prayer to seek the Lord for the meaning of the text to His people. Ultimately this first step encourages us to affirm that the Bible is a supernatural book with a supernatural Author, who supernaturally offers His help to both understand and apply His truths to my life.

The second step in understanding the meaning of a passage is found in answering the question, “What kind of writing is this?” Special attention to twin accounts of Sisera and Jael in Judges 4 and 5 proved helpful in illustrating the difference between

⁷ For this discussion I was greatly assisted by the terminology and teaching of the *Simeon’s Trust* organization.

⁸ John Piper, *When I Don’t Desire God: How to Fight for Joy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2013), 151. The acronym itself refers to humble heart that in seeking the Lord through his Word asks that God would “incline my heart,” “open my eyes,” “unite my heart to fear your name,” and “satisfy us.”

poetry and prose. What followed was a quick survey of the genres of Scripture and a reminder that there are certain rules which apply to each.

The third step for the class was to emphasize that not only does the form of writing matter, but so too do the words themselves, particularly in how they are being used. A brief English grammar refresher next took place as the participants were reminded of terms like, verbs, nouns, participles, and adjectives, and others. The class heard about importance of word studies, yet balanced that with a recognition that meaning is ultimately found not in the word, but in the sentence, and even the paragraph.

The final topic of discussion for this class brought forward a consideration of how the words themselves fit together. Emphasizing the fact that good readers will strive to make sense of the flow of an argument, the skill of phrasing was introduced and practiced. The class then practiced scanning the parameters of their passages, and dividing their passages into propositions and phrases.

At the conclusion of this class, I assigned their specific teaching passages.⁹ In addition to this, I also introduced a class passage, Ephesians 6:1-9 for which the class would work through the steps of preparing to teach together. For both passages the students were encouraged to mark down observations of the text, to compare their passage in at least two other translations¹⁰ and to make some attempts at word studies and phrasing.

⁹ The individual student passages assigned were all selected from epistles, and care was given to ensure that no two students were teaching from the same passage in the same lab. The passages selected were as follows: 2 Cor 1:3-7, 8-11; 4:7-12; Gal 2:15-21; 6:1-10; Eph 5:15-21; Phil 1:12-18; 4:4-9; 1 Tim 2:1-7; 6:17-21; Titus 2:11-15.

¹⁰ I suggested the NASB, CSB, NIV, and KJV.

Class 3: Historical and Literary Context

The purpose of this class was to introduce and, in some cases, further refine the student's skills at discerning the context of their passage.¹¹ To accomplish this task, the students discussed two additional steps in the process of preparing to teach, and in seeking to understand what a given text means. As such, this class focused on both the historical and literary contexts.

Beginning with a brief discussion on the perspicuity of Scripture and its ability to be understood, though not all at once, not without effort, and never completely,¹² the teaching stressed that we can take great confidence in our ability to know true things as God has revealed them. The students next observed both the hazards and helps of historical context was outlined. Before detailing some tools which assist in accomplishing the task of historical theological analysis, the students were reminded that secondary sources should inform our reading of Scripture but not change our basic understanding.

The second discussion of the class took place around the determination of the literary context of a passage of Scripture. Here also, the hazards and helps of a study for the literary context were mentioned, as well as the goal of placing sense upon a passage within its context. Skills of study were also detailed, and specific time was placed upon the practice of noticing the "seams" of Scripture.¹³ To finish the instruction the students were encouraged to see the comparison between the two disciplines of study of both literary and historical context and note the role and importance of each in the faithful study and teaching of Scripture.

¹¹ It is worth reminding readers that the class consisted of existing teachers who have demonstrated skills in Bible exegesis. The pacing of content with new exegetes or new teachers in general would, I think, need to undergo an extended timeline. I will discuss this more in chapter 5.

¹² For this discussion, I drew from Wayne Grudem, "The Perspicuity of Scripture," *Themelios* 34, no. 3 (November 2009): 288-308.

¹³ These were adapted from Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 71-72.

At the conclusion of this class, and in preparation for the next, students were encouraged to investigate the setting, author, general theme purpose of the book in which their specific passage is found. As well, they were encouraged to make note of any historical threads in their passage that would warrant further investigation. Finally, they were also encouraged to make an effort to skim, seam, and summarize the entire book wherein their passage was located.

Class 4: Theological Considerations

The purpose of this fourth class was to continue explaining the process of deriving sense from a passage in order to teach it. This week, specific attention was given towards the investigation of historical, systematic, and biblical theology. Each discipline would as such form a portion of the class.

This class began with a recap of the previous weeks, and we investigated the literary and historical context of the class passage, Ephesians 6:1-9. After this, questions were answered and we began to define the key terms for the night: biblical theology, systematic theology, and historical theology. The class learned that the filtering of a passage through the disciplines of theology guards us against novel, self-directed exegesis and ties us to the entire teaching and storyline of the Bible, as well as links us to the historical witness of the Church.

From here the class examined the nature of doctrines, and what makes a doctrine an absolute of the faith, and what makes it questionable. Having laid this foundation the teaching focused in on the benefits and practices of systematic theology, biblical theology, and historical theology. As all of these students have had some exposure and training in these disciplines, at times, resources were suggested for further

study, and the general practice of these disciplines were described. Finally, this process of theological consideration simplified with an illustration of a leaky pipe.¹⁴

This class concluded with an encouragement to the students to keep working through their assigned passages and to ask if there any theological concerns that require their attention. Specifically, were there big topics that need a fuller description (systematic theology)? Where does this fall in the storyline of the Bible (biblical theology)? Would they be helped by investigating some scholars from the past (historical theology)?

Class 5: Meaning

The aim of this class was to transition the student from investigation into the sense of the passage (“Getting it right”), towards now being able to teach the passage (“Saying it well”). To that, attention turned to the derivation of a single sentence of meaning, then a directed big idea for contemporary hearers. To accomplish this aim, the class divided into first summarizing what the passage is stating, then to determining what the timeless principle is, before stating the current message for their audience is.

The class began with a review of previous weeks, and reminder that the aim in teaching the Bible is to teach Christ, and that this cannot be done unless Christ is most glorious to me, the teacher. Key terms for this class, “meaning,” “principle,” and “message” were defined, and next delineated between the importance of authorial intent over reader response. Directing the students away from personal meanings to the text in front of them, the class considered, as J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays note, that “if you, the reader, see the text as a communication between the author and yourself, then

¹⁴ Moving from the text, and our theological presuppositions, we begin to first examine the flow of water (biblical theology, which traces the developing storyline of a given topic within Scripture), then the pool of water (systematic theology, which considers all that Scripture has to say on a given topic), and then the counsel of the plumber (historical theology, which considers how figures in church history have interpreted the topic).

you should search for the meaning the *author intended*.”¹⁵ Authorial intent, specifically God’s, is the focus of the meaning.

Week five continued into an examination of the principle behind a passage. This timeless truth can be difficult to determine, and is best sought through a careful examination of not only the presenting fallen condition of the passage, but also the redemptive focus. As every passage in the Bible presents Christ both as the remedy for human fallenness and as the end point of God’s plan of salvation, and every passage of the Bible touches on some aspect of the fallen human condition and presents some part of God’s remedy in Christ, then every Christian lesson should, in its own way, present Jesus as Redeemer and Lord.¹⁶ As it is the Holy Spirit who alone brings the meaning of the Bible to bear on the reader, surrender to Him should be the highest priority of the teacher.

The final portion of this class dealt with taking the contextualized meaning, and now the timeless principle of a passage, into the world of the hearer. This act of creating a single central idea, which in this class was termed as the creation of the “message,” was in response to the truth presented that all effective teaching centers on one specific thing, a central idea. In landing on this message, it is critical for us as teachers to be memorable, concrete, direct, and clear. Equally essential, the class saw that in order to do so, they needed to utilize brevity, and know not only the passage but also those whom they would teach.

This class concluded with a homework assignment for the students to determine the meaning of their passages. In addition, they were to identify the underlying timeless principle centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ by considering both the fallen-condition of humanity as well as the redemptive-historical foci within their

¹⁵ Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God’s Word*, 197.

¹⁶ Daniel M. Doriani, *Getting the Message: A Plan for Interpreting and Applying the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1996), 171-74. Doriani describes these foci as the “fallen-condition focus” and the “redemptive-historical focus.” The former is not new to Doriani—only the latter. He is expanding on Chapell’s fallen-condition focus first described in *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 48.

texts. Finally, the class was encouraged to work through three or four message statements that would describe accurately what they would teach.

Class 6: The Outline and Beyond

The aim of this class was to begin formulating the structure of the lesson. Beginning first with an outline, then moving on to filling in content, the students were directed to build a frame that was simple, clear, and most of all true to the text. Though there are many ways to teach a text of Scripture, for the students they must settle in on one that would fit their audience best.

Already in possession of a single memorable directive sentence, the message statement for their audience, the students were instructed on the means by which an outline is built for teaching Scripture. Here again, key terms like “outline,” “main points,” and “content” were defined, a comparison between good and bad outlines followed. The class saw that without clarity at this point, no matter how good the content of the lesson, a student will not be able to follow an argument, will not feel like the lesson is moving in a direction, will feel overwhelmed by a series of disconnected facts, and will eventually drift in attention. In addition, they as teachers will fail to demonstrate a grasp of the text, will likely focus on minor points of the text, and spend their time poorly.

Here, discussion turned to the mechanics of outlining beginning from one of two directions: synthesis or reiteration. In synthesis, the teacher is responsible for creating the order through a broad understanding of diverse topics from all of Scripture, while reiteration, requires establishing order from the existing established order. As it pertains to Scripture, the students saw that since meaning was communicated to us, and in so doing the Communicator has condescended His language by means of an ordered form for us to comprehend, then it falls to the teacher to recognize, not reinvent the order. In short, the outline is usually present through the study of the existing order of Scripture.

The discussion on mechanics moved forward in description and practice of the act of blocking Scripture by marking transitions. From there, summary statements of each block led to “sermonizing,” wherein the teacher moves from describing what is there, to putting imperatival words around the descriptions. At this point the class participated in a group discussion over the class passage, Ephesians 6:1-9. Class continued in highlighting several types of outlines for Bible teaching,¹⁷ before ending on final words surrounding the “organization sentence.”¹⁸

This class concluded with directive for students to now work on building an outline that is, from the text, accurate, related to their message, clear and simple, and direct to their audience. In addition to this, they were called to also create an organizational sentence and to begin the process of putting content into their lessons by explaining and proving their main points. At this point in the course, the class passage had served its purpose and the students began working on their passages exclusively.

Class 7: Illustrating and Applying

The aim of this class was to focus attention upon the need for teachers to consider the learning styles of students. To accomplish this goal, the class considered these learning modes, and then moved into a teaching on the importance of illustrating the Bible teaching well. As a close, the importance of applying the message was also noted, and the class examined the tools that make this possible.

This class began with a warning for the teacher to not make the mistakes of running a monologue over a dialogue as a result of not considering the student composition in which they would teach. Other dangers noted included the warning to not assume that our students think the same way that we do, or even assuming that the

¹⁷ An extensive discussion on this can be found in Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 77-95.

¹⁸ By this I mean a single sentence which describes how the main points of the lesson will develop the message from the text.

application of a given passage is so obvious we do not spend time on it. The key for illustrating and applying the lesson was to be a student of their students. A general investigation of learning styles concluded this time¹⁹ in an effort to underscore what Howard Hendricks has well observed, namely that “the way people learn determines how you teach.”²⁰

Discussion next turned to examining the importance and practice of illustrating a lesson. Luke 8:5-8, Matthew 13:44, and Matthew 23:27 served as examples of how Jesus deployed illustrations in order to bring the abstract into the concrete, and to utilize the power of story to captivate listeners. Illustrations when used well, should be clear, true, guard-dropping, purposeful and common, in that the more people can relate the better.

The final portion of this class focused on application of the Bible teaching. Articulating both the relevance and practice of the message of a lesson, application answers both the “So What?” and “Now What?” of the text. Before moving to essential practices, the class was exposed to dangerous and lazy applications. Seeking to apply the text with phrases like “be like,” “be good,” or “be disciplined,” resulted in driving believers away from the power of Christ. Instead of responses of obedience based upon love, these lazy applications point our students in directions of legalism and effort only because of comparison.²¹ Against these approaches, the creation of valid applications narrowed in on three healthy “Be-s,” namely beholding Him differently, behaving differently, or believing differently and trusting Him more deeply. Closing this portion of

¹⁹ I chose what is understood as four of the most common: auditory (learning by listening), visual (learning by seeing or observation), intrapersonal (learning by self-study), and kinesthetic (learning by doing or practice). For more on this, see Alan Pritchard, *Ways of Learning: Learning Theories and Learning Styles in the Classroom* (London: Fulton, 2005).

²⁰ Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives: Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive* (New York: Multnomah Books, 2003), 39.

²¹ These were adapted from Bryan Chapell’s descriptions and his “Deadly Be’s” of application. An extensive discussion on the nature and danger of these can be found in Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 289-93.

the teaching, the class saw that if life-change can only happen with God's power, and if a teacher truly desires this life-change among his or her students, then it follows that a teacher is entirely dependent upon the Lord and His power to produce this life-change.

After smaller concluding remarks on the use of humor, transition statements, and the building of introductions and conclusions, the students received homework to revisit their lessons and add the appropriate elements. They were instructed to diligently strive for applications and illustrations, and further prepare for the teaching labs.

Class 8: Final Words

The purpose of this final class was to remind the students of the importance of cultivating an active learning environment and to provide a biblical encouragement to these newly minted teachers. The class broke into two sections of discussion to accomplish these goals. Careful attention was also paid in answering any lingering questions.

To begin, a discussion took place on the importance of cultivating active learning environments for adult learners. This term, "active learning" was first defined as "instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing."²² Given that memory declines substantially after a surprisingly short period of time, it falls to the teacher to foster this environment wherein his or her students participate in the learning process. This active element in learning not only reinforces what is taught, but also moves the student from passive listener to active learner. As part of this process, the class considered the art of asking great questions,²³ and the need to create settings not only in class but before and after where the students are engaged and own the learning process through the crafting of excellent questions.

²² Charles C. Bonwell and James A. Eison, *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 1 (Washington, DC: School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University, 1991), 1.

²³ For this portion, I leaned heavily upon Lee-Thorp, *How to Ask Great Questions*.

The second half of this class focused on broad truths to which a teacher of the Bible needs constant reminding. From 2 Timothy 4:3-5, the class saw that if we are teaching God's people, God will hold us to account for what you teach. From Romans 2:19-22 the class was called to remember that if God has gifted us for teaching, we have a responsibility to grow in this gift by His power. Other verses followed before a concluding exhortation reminded the class that before the Lord, over and above the fact that they may be teachers, they are His children first, and He loves them. Final instructions on crafting their lessons and creating follow up curriculum questions, as well as updates concerning their labs wrapped this lesson up and brought the formal implementation period to a close.

The Follow-Up Period: Weeks 13-15

The final three weeks of the project focused on the completion of three main tasks. First, the student engaged in active labs wherein their assigned passages were taught, and feedback provided. This feedback carefully followed participant lesson evaluation rubric (see appendix 4). Each participant's lesson was evaluated not only by the instructor, but also by a small gathering of peers taking to account the exegetical merit of biblical faithfulness to both biblical and systematic theology, as well as appropriateness of pedagogical method. At this point in the year, the COVID-19 rates in the region increased and greater limitations were placed upon individual movements. As a result of this, although only 4 labs took place, nearly 18 students were eventually evaluated.

The second focus of this period was to analyze the pre- and post-class surveys utilizing a *t*-test for dependent variables. The objective in this step was to evaluate the effectiveness of the class in training lay leaders within HBC to teach the Bible. An analysis of those results is provided in chapter 5. In short, the survey results demonstrate that the curriculum taught in this project brought about a statistically significant result.

Third, I asked an expert panel to evaluate the class curriculum using the ministry plan evaluation rubric (see appendix 2). This panel consisted of five people in total including the pastor of training at Hope Bible Church, who has had numerous years in training pastors and assisting church plants both in Canada and the United States and Europe. The second panelist was the lead pastor of biblical counseling at Hope Bible Church and board member of the Canadian Biblical Counseling Coalition. The third panelist was the interim pastor of group life at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC. The fourth panelist was the Canadian regional director for the Great Commission Collective, and the fifth panelist was the associate pastor at Hope Bible Church in Mississauga, Ontario.

This expert panel was asked to assess the ministry plan based on the following criterion: (1) the degree to which the classes are biblically accurate and faithful to the theology of Scripture, (2) the degree to which the scope of the classes sufficiently covers each issue and maintains a biblical pedagogical methodology, (3) the degree to which each class contains clearly articulated big ideas as well as opportunities for student interaction, and (4) the degree to which the classes are practical in that they detail how to build lessons that accurately teach the Bible. The feedback given in these assessments will be considered in greater depth in the next chapter, but it is noted here that 100 percent of the evaluation indicators were scored sufficient or higher.²⁴ Thus, the goal for the ministry plan was successfully met.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed how this project addressed the four goals of the project, which were (1) to assess the current teaching practices within our ministries at HBC, (2) the development of the curriculum and review by an expert panel, (3) the survey used to

²⁴ For their individual assessments, see appendix 7.

equip participants in the practice of teaching the Bible, and (4) to deploy these new teachers in increased live teaching occurrences within our church by 25 percent. Although due to circumstances beyond my control it remains to be seen whether the fourth goal will be met, in the final chapter of this project assessment of the overall value of the effort will be considered.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Just how successful was this project? In many respects the answer to this question lay more remotely in the future as the participants in the program deploy and continue to refine their skills in teaching the Bible. I hope that many of the students will have renewed their love not only for the Word of God and teaching, but also for the Lord Jesus himself, and that that love will result in passionate, urgent teaching in our church and beyond. As this refinement takes time and experience, it seems reasonable to present that the evaluation of this project has a longer gestation than some might. While immediate results can be seen, I must trust that the Lord will in His grace and kindness use this class to, in part, build up His people.

To see the church strengthened through the faithful teaching of lay leaders while being the highest goal, is nonetheless something that time can only tell, but while waiting, some things can be said by way of assessment in the midterm. In this chapter I will evaluate the project along seven specific immediately measurable lines. First, I will provide an overall evaluation of the worth and merit of the purpose of the project in training lay leaders to teach the Bible. Second, I will reexamine the value of the stated goals of the project and whether or not the project was able to meet them. Third, I will broadly consider what went well with project and highlight some strengths, and then fourthly do likewise for some weaknesses. As a fifth consideration, I will propose what I would do differently if given the chance to repeat the project. Sixth, I will tackle some theological reflections that have impacted me as I have studied, built, and conducted this project. Finally, I will consider how this process has impacted me personally both as a pastor and follower of Christ.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to design and implement a course of study to equip the lay leaders of Hope Bible Church in teaching the Bible. As this purpose would shape the setting of goals, the implementation, and measurements of the project it is worthwhile to stop and consider if in fact this project's purpose was worth pursuing. Is the practice of equipping lay leaders to teach the Bible of any value?

As was evidenced in chapter 2, even a brief consideration of Scripture yields the inescapable conclusion that the training of teachers of the Bible is essential. Linked to the creation and cultivation of mature followers of Christ, without teachers, instruction in the Word cannot happen and so true discipleship cannot be reached. Supported by the authoritative presence of the Lord himself, teaching follows sequentially within the life of a believer and is essential for growth in Him (Matt 28:19-20). Further it was demonstrated that teaching the Bible leads to a multiplication of maturity within the church, which moves inwards into the care of the church, and then outward in reaching the lost for Christ. The task of teaching the Bible, and so the importance of training teachers was also evidenced by the faithfulness, unity, and stability produced within the church. This manner of stability yields a support and shield against the shifting, often hostile culture (Eph 4:11-14). Even from these two passages alone, the Bible demonstrates that for *any* church *anywhere*, and at *any* time the need for the active ministration of the teaching of the Bible is essential on many levels. In fact, the Scriptural evidence for the value of training teachers of the Bible is so overwhelming that we may ask a corollary question: under what circumstances would the training of teachers of the Bible *not* be regarded as an essential practice of the church?

If the purpose of this project were merely supported by Scripture it would carry enough warrant to proceed, but in chapter 3, a brief examination of the church's past, present, and even projected future further proved the urgency of this training. Whether in the *catechumenate* program that yielded a diversified teaching ministry under a hostile

Roman rule, the Brethren of the Common Life and its training to counteract a cold medieval Scholasticism, or the Pietists leading up to the Great Awakening, Church history has repeatedly demonstrated that the development of lay teachers is not only helpful but necessary for the growth of the church and multiplication of ministry.

Current struggles within the church today only underscore this need for training teachers as many Western Christians struggle under an increasing social secularization and moral relativism. More than ever our churches languish under the intrusive and distracting measures of technology and distance from one another. Further still, conservative glances into the future foresee increasing challenges to once accepted Judeo-Christian perspectives on value of human life, gender, and sexuality. In other words, a return to the authoritative voice of truth found only in the Word of God is more pressing than ever. If this is the case, it would follow that the aim of training teachers of the Bible is just as critical.

Finally, any evaluation of this project's purpose must consider the immediate context of Hope Bible Church. As noted in chapter 4, the assessment survey from the lay teachers at HBC yielded results that stressed the importance of a formalized training for building and supporting teachers of the Bible. Given the fact that the church has never had such a program, class, or even short training in this regard, the purpose to train teachers remains more than worthwhile.

In sum, the worthiness of this project's purpose is well attested. Scripture overwhelmingly speaks of the value and fruit of teaching the Bible, and so the training of lay teachers to accomplish this detrimental piece of discipleship. Church history also gives several examples of the ministry of teaching the Bible released to the laity and the benefits that can result, and the present and anticipated future of the Western church only highlights this need even more. When these reasons are taken together and considered within the context of HBC, this value of this project's purpose in recognizing the need to

design and implement a course of study to equip the lay leaders in teaching the Bible is a foregone conclusion.

Evaluation of the Project’s Goals

Successful implementation of this purpose and so, completion of this project, depended upon the completion of four goals. The first goal of assessing current teaching practices was measured by administering the Teaching Practices Inventory (TPI) to twenty-two leaders at HBC.¹ The TPI was conducted no less than six months prior to the construction of the curriculum and was delivered to the participants of the class. The TPI was instrumental in proving additional warrant for the creation of the class. The total results of the test are listed in table 4.

Table 4. Teaching practices inventory results

Item #	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	18.2%	4.5%	0.0%	31.8%	22.7%	22.7%
2	22.7%	18.2%	22.7%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%
3	22.7%	22.7%	18.2%	22.7%	13.6%	0.0%
4	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%	31.8%	27.3%	4.5%
5	18.2%	36.4%	13.6%	27.3%	0.0%	4.5%
6	22.7%	31.8%	27.3%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
7	18.2%	45.5%	13.6%	9.1%	9.1%	4.3%
8	13.6%	36.4%	13.6%	27.3%	4.5%	4.5%
9	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.7%	77.3%

As mentioned in chapter 4, existing lay leaders surveyed stated no strong assent to their being trained by HBC to teach the Bible as indicated by items #2 and #3. Equally revealing, according to the students the act of teaching the Bible within the varied contexts of our church is not only unsupported in initial training, but also in

¹ See appendix 1 for a complete list of items surveyed.

continued feedback and input (item #7). Apart from noting the lack of existing training and support from leadership, the TPI also revealed an alarming result of this negligence. Without input or refining influence, most lay teachers at HBC saw their growth as teachers of the Bible stemming from trial and error (item #4).

In sum, the TPI was instrumental in advancing the need for this class. Unsupported lay teachers were lacking needed training and encouragement with HBC, and the TPI only served to highlight this fact. As such, it was influential in the design and implementation of a course of study to equip the lay leaders of Hope Bible Church in teaching the Bible.

The second goal was to develop a curriculum to equip participants to teach the Bible. The curriculum addressed basic teaching skills such as the correct exegesis of Scripture, biblical and systematic theology, lesson planning, and pedagogy. The results of this development were outlined in chapter 4.² This goal was measured by an expert panel who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum (see appendix 2). This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. Based upon the feedback from the expert panel, revisions were made to the first draft of the curriculum. As over 100 percent of evaluations met or exceeded the sufficient level, with 35 out of 40 categories scored as “exemplary,” and 5 out of 40 scored as “sufficient,” this goal was considered reached.³

The third goal was to equip participants in the practice of teaching the Bible. This goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-survey that measured the participant’s level of knowledge, confidence, and passion to teach the Scriptures (see appendix 3). Additionally, at the conclusion of the eight-week course, the participants’

² See appendix 5 for the curriculum.

³ See appendix 7 for the completed expert panel evaluations.

teaching performance was evaluated during labs utilizing an evaluation rubric, where each scored at the sufficient or above level (see appendix 4). During the implementation period, 23 students participated in the course, and 19 sets of pre- and post-surveys were included in the assessment. A *t*-test for dependent samples showed a positive statistically significant difference in the pre and post survey scores: $t_{(18)} = -8.006$, $p < .0001$.⁴

The fourth goal was to increase the number of live teaching occurrences led by lay leaders within our church by 25 percent. This goal was measured by administering a pre- and post-analysis of current trends of live teachers. The number of active teachers as of September 1, 2020, was to have been utilized as the base number to which the increase was compared. At the time of this writing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Province of Ontario's controls and restrictions, it remains to be seen if this goal was successfully met. Since the time of the class almost all the students have participated in teaching within our church, yet none has done so in front of a live audience. In many respects the true effectiveness of this project will play out over time, and nowhere is this truer than in the consideration of this final goal.

Strengths of the Project

In evaluating the strengths of the project, I believe there were several. First, as confirmed from my panel of evaluators, the curriculum successfully centered around the person, work, and worth of the Lord Jesus Christ. From the beginning, the aspiration to create a class that both trained teachers and honored the Lord was the highest priority. Distilled into the summary statement for the course, on a weekly basis I strove to impress upon the lay teachers they cannot teach the Bible unless they teach Christ. Further, this act of making much of Jesus cannot happen unless the Lord Jesus was most glorious to them.

⁴ See appendix 8 for a summary of the survey data and *t*-test results.

It is this personal connectedness to Jesus that remains the single greatest deciding factor in the efficacy of any teaching event. Where the teacher is devoted and dependent upon Christ and is seeking His Spirit to transform not only his or her life, but also the lives of his or her students, true transformation can occur. Where this attitude is missing or corrupted, the teacher cannot be surprised when life-change is not happening. As the class sought to make clear, any teacher looking to grow in the skill of teaching would be wise to first examine their own heart. Has their love grown cold for Christ, and can they truly teach that which disinterests them?

On a practical level, I believe the project helped to bring clarity to the objective of teaching by way of a word picture. In the fifth class I introduced an illustration of a ring to demonstrate what teachers of the Bible ought to pursue in study. First, the students were asked to consider a ring in an antique ring box. This old ring box was termed as the “meaning” of the text, that is the directing sense of a given passage to its original audience. From this, the students were asked to remove the “principle” of the passage represented by the ring itself. This universal principle was drawn from the meaning of a passage that applies timelessly to all audiences regardless of culture. With ring in hand, the students were to now place their passage within the context of their classes and deliver a “message,” so represented by the new ring box. This message is to accurately reflect both the meaning in the Bible and enculturate the principle to the intended audience. As an illustration, this ring analogy worked well. Students readily grasped what may otherwise have been a dense topic and adopted the language throughout the remainder of the class. Several times, I heard students relate to me the “ring” of their passages.

A third strength of this project was its training in breaking out the paragraph structure of Scripture. Considering arcing, bracketing, and phrasing, the class was led in

how to analyze the argument structure of epistolary writing.⁵ Although this was a technical discussion, most students found this topic not only fascinating but helpful for their study of their passages. In addition to demonstrating this practice in class with the collaborative passage of Ephesians 6:1-9, I also produced “phrasing labs” that were published in online videos in which I phrased out 2 Timothy 2:22-26, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, and 2 Corinthians 4:1-2. Given the positive and surprising feedback from learning this skill, I also made it a requirement for the student to submit a phrasing of their passage for my review. More than any other technical skill covered, this act of phrasing stood out for the students.

A final strength of the project was in its consideration of both understanding and communicating God’s Word. As the curriculum led the students, it was proven that the aim of the teacher centers around not only understanding what the text actually says (“getting it right,” so to speak), but also in articulating these truths well (“saying it well”). The decision to create the class content along this 1 to 1 ratio and paying as much attention to both, was well served. Without exception, each student could look to one or the other and sense an area of strength as well as one of weakness. Typically, a student who was an excellent communicator was often not as excellent an exegete, and vice versa. Choosing to spend time in the mechanics of exegesis as well as pedagogy was beneficial for my students, and it was a joy to see growth in many areas.

Weaknesses of the Project

In detailing the weaknesses of the project, consideration falls first to the ambitious scope of the project. Although the focus group concerned those lay teachers who *already* possessed a baseline knowledge of exegesis and were *already* engaged in

⁵ For this discussion I adapted work from Andrew David Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 136-43. In this, Naselli encourages work within the original Greek, but as the scope of this project did not necessarily students with a prior knowledge of the original languages, I modified his notes to fit English-only lay teachers.

the practice of teaching throughout the church, the quality of both were overestimated. Time and again in the project, as the students stopped me in the lectures, I found myself desiring more time to go over important topics with which I assumed the class was already familiar. Hope Bible Church teaches another course on how to study the Bible and in many respects this would suit well as a primer for the teaching the Bible course, of which was the product of this project. There was just too much content to work through in the time provided.

The aggressive scope also limited time that could have been well spent in practical learning. As was the case with the topic of phrasing detailed earlier, the students asked for and would have benefited further from more live examples to work through as a class. In some respects, I anticipated and attempted to mitigate this concern by working through the Ephesians 6 passage as a class, the students still longed for more examples, and I longed for more time in which to go through them.

A correlating weakness to this would be my failure to assign a great deal of homework out of class. Although I did commend them to work throughout the weeks and directed them to the specific elements they should be working on, the ultimate outcome in terms of their coursework was their final lesson they taught. As would be the case in every class, some students left their work until the final week, negating some of the practical benefit of working through the content after it was recently taught. It was not required that they submit their work as they went, but this would have had a positive effect in keeping the students on target and more in line with the broad scope of the class.

A third weakness would be the size of the class. Operating the project with 22 students meant that my time was divided considerably. Although I offered times to meet with students and encouraged their emails and communication should the need arise, I could not be as proactive as I would have liked. Some students felt mired in details and lost in the scope of the course and did not feel as though I was approachable for help. The

size of the class proved too large to meaningfully engage with the students in coaching and support in the way that I would have liked.

Further, though precluded from this again due to COVID restrictions, there would have been great benefit in grouping together the students to collaborate not only on their projects, but also on their experiences as they worked through the class. When moments of class transparency surfaced, with one student voicing confusion, frustration, or even encouragement, the class came alive as the students shared in this experience. One of the great gifts that the students could have had was in working together, and the loss or prevention from this was certainly a weakness.

Two final weaknesses bear mention as it relates to the content of the course and feedback from students and the expert panel. At times, the clarity in detailing the purpose of each lesson could have been clearer. Though each lesson was titled to the purpose and there was discussion on that purpose, at times, there was drift from the main point. One possible reason for this could be due in large part once again to the breadth of the content covered. Contributing to this feeling of being adrift in the sea of content was that the student notes provided had a number of blanks to fill in on a weekly basis. Students were missing the main points because there was so much coming at them.

What I Would Do Differently

In light of these weaknesses there are several changes to the project that I would make if given the opportunity to repeat the process. First, and perhaps most pressing, adding class time to the course would serve both the students and teacher. Providing two or three additional weeks would benefit the students on a number of levels. In addition to providing necessary breathing room between the topics, the class could also consider more intently the actual practice and application of teaching. Extra classes would afford the students more opportunities to discuss with one another the various topics and even allow them to share what they have produced thus far for feedback and

refining. More classes could also open additional options for shorter ‘lab-style’ settings wherein the students would be required to present more frequently with smaller presentations before their final assessment. In sum, rather than adding content, the greatest gain of more time together would be in that it would allow more time for processing the information.

As a second change to the project, the role of a coach to walk alongside of the students in their classwork would be a valuable addition. Although the sizeable class of lay teachers was helpful both for its diversity of opinion and discussion as well as its large group cohesion,⁶ the numbers were untenable at times. As mentioned above, the large class was difficult for a single teacher to manage the students well specifically when it came to feedback, input, and accessibility for support. With that in mind, a coaching role would help to alleviate some of this difficulty and could provide students with readily available assistance for questions and could track with students to help keep them apace of the coursework. Coaches could be groomed from previous class attendees and serve as small group leaders for discussion and prayer, as well as acting as sounding boards on many levels including exegesis and pedagogy.

A final change to the project that would prove beneficial would be the addition of frequent homework assignments. Although adding work to the course may prompt some students to be discouraged, the assignments would provide the students with tangible measurement of their success before a final class presentation. For instance, if a student were struggling with the exegesis of his or her passage, the mid-class homework assignment as graded by the teacher or coach would help him or her to make the necessary corrections before moving too far along in the process of his or her lesson development. Additionally, homework assignments that contribute towards the final

⁶ In retrospect, my draw to the larger body may be related to the pandemic restrictions in Ontario limiting my ability to be around larger crowds. This grouping that met every week constituted the most people I would be in the same room with for several months.

project would prevent the student from “cramming” at the last minute and would force them to work slowly and methodically through his or her lesson preparation.

Theological Reflections

By way of theological reflections, two specific truths were deeply impressed upon me throughout the creation and implementation of this project. The first of these was the inescapable fact that it is the Holy Spirit who gifts the church for supernatural ministry. As the Apostle Paul notes in Romans 12:4-8, and 1 Corinthians 12-14, the church is diverse in its gifts and this specific plan of God not only highlights our differences but also points to our need for one another. As followers of Christ, we not only belong to Him, but also necessarily belong to one another, and these gifts we have received from Him are meant to build up the church to glorify God. As one of these gifts (Rom 12:7; 1 Cor 12:28), teaching builds the church in its own specific way.

As it is the Holy Spirit who decides what gifts are given and to whom (1 Cor 12:7), it was powerful to witness those who have been gifted in such a way and to watch them exercise this gift. Several times I was surprised in the project by my students who demonstrated remarkable spiritual giftings and took quickly to the process of cultivating this gift. It was so encouraging to be reminded again that the Lord cares much more deeply for the condition of His flock than I do, and the Lord alone has the power to raise up teachers. Although I may assist in the refining of this gift, it will never be the place of any man or woman to put into someone that which only the Holy Spirit can do. Surrendering to this fact was not only freeing for me as a teacher of teachers, but also sobering in that I was a part of a process in growing the Lord’s dearly loved people. He already had His hand upon their lives, and he had already gifted them. It was, and continues to be my role to merely encourage, coach, and deploy. In sum, I was not the one equipping His people with the skill of teaching; this is always the Holy Spirit’s delight.

The second theological reflection I would have concerns the power of the Word of God to shape hearts. As the writer of Hebrews reminds us, the Scriptures are “living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb 4:12). The Bible transforms the heart like no other book can.

Believing that the Bible is a supernatural book well before this class began, it was wonderful to see firsthand how students were transformed by the Holy Spirit in their convictions also. Many of the students had been Christians for a long time and factually assented to the Scriptures being inerrant, inspired, necessary, sufficient, and most of all authoritative. They understood these truths, some could even communicate them, but when it came time to rely upon them, things changed dramatically. The students began to lean heavily upon the need for the Lord and His Word to give them the meaning of the passages, to provide them with the specific message for their audience, to help them in crafting the lesson, and then to rely upon the words of Scripture alone. They began to understand that they must look for Christ in His Word and must always seek to lift Him high in their efforts. The Bible was not an informational book with dry facts to be related, but a living and active book, which calls its readers to come and meet Jesus. To see my students become renewed and then transformed by these convictions was wonderful to watch and resulted in their teaching which in return blessed me.

Personal Reflections

On a personal level, there are two reflections that also bear mention. The first is an honest gratitude to the Lord. To consider that I was tasked by my church and the Lord to build a program in which to train teachers, and that these teachers would then be used in many levels across our church and beyond was something that never ceased to amaze me. The Lord had been so good to not only call me to this task, but also to equip me in building and communicating the project. I was present for the whole process. I was

there when the students understood concepts for the first time, and the lightbulbs went on, so to speak. I was there when the students were frustrated in their study and saw also when the Lord gave them wisdom and grace to continue. I was there to see old and young refine a gift that God had given them. I was there to see this all, and I am so thankful. God did a wonderful thing in front of me and through this project, and though it is certainly far from perfect, it was what He wanted to have happen, and I got to be there.

Related to the first, this perspective also brought about a healthy sense of humility. I would have agreed at the onset that I was not fit for so large a task, or even qualified by either character or competency. If this were going to happen, I would need the Lord. While I would have agreed to this, it was not until that first week, whereupon seeing the students for the first time that it was really driven home. The Lord was using me to train people He loved to train more people He loved. Just as Paul charged Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2, I was training His people to train others also. I was humbled to stand at the front of that line of discipleship and share what God was laying on my heart.

Many weeks throughout the project it would feel like I was not doing enough, or wasn't clear enough, or was missing something, and yet even still the Lord allowed clarity to flow and the students to be encouraged in the process. Learning advanced despite me. My weaknesses in the process could not have been more prominent, but the Lord in His grace and strength overflowed kindness to me and my students, helping us all. In the end, what happened, what was produced, and the good that is to come as a result, can only be attributed to Him. May the Lord continue to take the twigs and build something great.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
Blessed be His glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with His glory!
Amen and Amen! (Ps 72:18-19)

Conclusion

Assessment within so close a range is limited but not without merit. Despite the relatively short length of time that has passed some evaluations are easily made. As it relates to the project's purpose, the aim of training lay teachers is always a worthwhile and timeless endeavor for any local church. The goals likewise, although hindered by a pandemic, were equally valuable both as objectives and measurables for success. A closer examination also reveals that the project had several strengths including the focal emphasis upon Christ and His glory in teaching the Bible, the practical encouragement to not only get the meaning of the text, but also to convey it skillfully, and the exegetical practice of phrasing the Scriptures. While there were certainly weaknesses as it relates to volume of content, the breadth of scope, and the length of class, in future iterations many weaknesses could be addressed and solved with additional classes, the formation of coaches to help support the students, and even added homework to better maintain pacing. In the end, the realization that God is building His church, deploying His people, and impacting them through His Word, humbled me and fills me with gratitude to be a small part in His great plan.

APPENDIX 1

TEACHING PRACTICES INVENTORY

The following instrument is the Teaching Practices Inventory (TPI). Some general questions are followed by a nine-question survey with a six-point Likert scale. The purpose of this instrument was to assess the degree to which each participant was prepared to carry out the teaching associated with their current ministry.

TEACHING PRACTICES INVENTORY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding and practices of teaching the Bible of the participant. This research is being conducted by Craig Turnbull at Hope Bible Church in Oakville, Ontario for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. *Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.* By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Part 1

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing an 'X' next to your answer.

1. To what age group do you belong?
 A. 20-30
 B. 31-40
 C. 41-50
 D. 51-60
 E. 61-70
 F. 75+
2. What is your gender?
 A. Male
 B. Female
3. How long have you been a Christian?
 A. 1-5 years
 B. 6-10 years
 C. 11-20 years
 D. 21+ years
4. How long have you been teaching God's Word in either a corporate or classroom setting?
 A. 1-5 years
 B. 6-10 years
 C. 11-20 years
 D. 21+ years
5. How long have you been attending Hope Bible Church Oakville (and formerly Harvest Bible Chapel Oakville)?
 A. 1-5 years

- B. 6-10 years
- C. 11-17 years

6. To what age do you primarily teach?

- A. 0-11 years
- B. 12-18 years
- C. 19-30 years
- D. 30-64 years
- E. 65+ years

Part 2

Directions: These questions ask for your opinion using the following scale:

SD strongly disagree
D disagree
DS disagree somewhat
AS agree somewhat
A agree
SA strongly agree

Please circle the appropriate answer in the chart below:

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. | I have received some training in teaching the Bible. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 2. | I have been trained by HBC to teach the Bible. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 3. | I have received training or retraining in how to teach the Bible within the past 5 years. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 4. | My teaching has grown primarily through trial and error. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 5. | The training I have received at HBC has prepared me to <i>develop</i> a lesson from the Bible. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 6. | The training I have received at HBC has prepared me to <i>deliver</i> a lesson from the Bible. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 7. | When I teach at HBC I receive constructive feedback from leadership. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 8. | Based on this constructive feedback, I have grown as a teacher. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 9. | I would welcome additional training in teaching the Bible. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

APPENDIX 2

TEACHING THE BIBLE CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

The curriculum evaluation rubric assessed the exegetical merit of the proposed pedagogical principles, biblical faithfulness to both biblical and systematic theology, appropriateness of pedagogical method, and contextual fit for the teaching model advanced within Hope Bible Church.

Name of Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.					
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.					
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.					
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.					
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.					
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.					
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.					
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.					

Other Comments:

APPENDIX 3

PRE-PROJECT AND POST-PROJECT PARTICIPANT SURVEY

The following instrument is a survey assigned to the students both before and after the course and is designed to measure the participant's level of knowledge, confidence, and passion to teach the Scriptures, both before and after training. A sixteen-question survey, this tool is assessed by means of a six-point Likert scale. The purpose of this instrument was to assess the degree to which each participant was prepared to carry out the teaching associated with their current ministry.

PRE-PROJECT AND POST-PROJECT PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your knowledge and confidence in teaching the Bible. This research is being conducted by Craig Turnbull at Hope Bible Church in Oakville, Ontario for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. *Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.* By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Directions: These questions ask for your opinion using the following scale:

SD strongly disagree
D disagree
DS disagree somewhat
AS agree somewhat
A agree
SA strongly agree

Please circle the appropriate answer in the chart below:

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. | I feel confident that I could articulate the gospel to someone. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 2. | I feel I have a good understanding of the Scriptures. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 3. | I feel that I have a good grasp of the basic storyline of the Bible. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 4. | I understand how the Old Testament and New Testament fit together and inform one another. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 5. | I am comfortable teaching from either the Old Testament or the New Testament. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

6.	I am comfortable applying the text to myself and to my hearers in my teaching.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
7.	I feel confident in my ability to teach others how a passage points to Christ.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
8.	I understand the process of how to arrive at the meaning of a text.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
9.	I feel confident I understand how a specific genre of Scripture will direct my teaching.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
10.	I feel confident in what tools to use to derive the meaning of a passage.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
11.	I am confident in crafting a teaching lesson that meets different learning styles.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
12.	I understand the value and cautions of using word studies to inform my teaching.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
13.	I understand how to ensure that my teaching of a passage theologically coheres with the whole Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
14.	I understand how the literary context of a passage informs my teaching.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
15.	I understand how to trace a logical argument through a text making use of arcing, bracketing or phrasing.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
16.	I feel capable of creating a teaching lesson from a passage of Scripture.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

APPENDIX 4

TEACHING THE BIBLE PARTICIPANT LESSON EVALUATION RUBRIC

The lesson evaluation rubric assessed each participant's lesson, taking to account the exegetical merit of biblical faithfulness to both biblical and systematic theology, as well as appropriateness of pedagogical method.

TEACHING THE BIBLE PARTICIPANT LESSON
EVALUATION RUBRIC

Name of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Teaching the Bible Participant Lesson Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
The lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.					
The lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.					
The lesson took into consideration the entire message of Scripture.					
The lesson made reference to the person and work of Jesus Christ.					
Pedagogical Skill					
The lesson was covered in its entirety in the time allowed.					
The lesson was clear and concise.					
The lesson was delivered in an engaging manner.					
It was clear that the lesson had been personalized before being taught.					

Other Comments:

APPENDIX 5

TEACHING THE BIBLE CURRICULUM NOTES

The following pages consist of detailed class notes for each of the Teaching the Bible class sessions taught during weeks 5-12 of this project.

Week #1 – Introduction and Theological foundations

Course Description

This eight-week course is designed to grow students in their ability to communicate the Word of God with urgency and clarity. Students will be refreshed in their understanding of the mechanics of hermeneutics and will grow both in comprehension and practice in their public delivery of Bible content.

Goals

At the completion of this course students should be able:

- To understand the mechanics of exegesis and the interpretation of Scripture more clearly.
- To clearly define application from a passage for a specific audience.
- To understand how difference genres and contexts affect the interpretation of a given passage.
- To adapt teaching styles in consideration of their audience(s).
- To understand how personal worship is tied to impactful teaching in his or her own life towards a self-discipline in truth.
- To progress in growth towards the articulation of Christ and His message through any passage of Scripture.

Resources

Textbooks:

Krol, Peter. *Knowable Word: Helping Ordinary People Learn to Study the Bible*. Adelphi, MD: Cruciform Press, 2014.

Wilhoit, James C., and Leland Ryken. *Effective Bible Teaching*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

In addition to the textbooks and the podcast, students will be provided with additional resources that may or may not be required consumption for the course.

Assignments

Students are expected to complete class assignments before the start of class including all reading and quizzes. To fully engage with the learning, students are also expected to attend all classes and participate in relevant discussions.

In addition to weekly assignments to both encourage growth and discussion within the class, each student will be asked to prepare and teach a 20-minute Bible lesson at the conclusion of this course to a group of their peers for evaluation and comment. These passages will be assigned by the instructor within the first two weeks of the course.

Class Schedule

Week 1	<i>Theological Foundations</i>
Week 2	<i>Genre, Words, and Clauses</i>
Week 3	<i>Literary and Historical Context</i>
Week 4	<i>Unity and Biblical Theology</i>
Week 5	<i>Arriving at Meaning</i>
Week 6	<i>From Sense to Outline</i>
Week 7	<i>Application that Matters</i>
Week 8	<i>Practical Issues</i> <i>Teaching Labs Begin</i>

Introduction

“Protestantism has committed itself to the tasks of preaching and teaching the Word. Of the two, preaching has fared better than teaching. Bible teaching is a subject of neglect in the contemporary church. Seminaries have required courses in homiletics, and nearly every month brings the publication of a new book on preaching. But where are the books and courses on teaching the Bible?”¹

Wilhoit and Ryken

A Quick Distinction

Preaching “Declaration of the truth of Scripture to an audience.”²

Teaching: “In the New Testament, the ability to explain Scripture and apply it to people’s lives.”³

But is there a difference?

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.⁴

2 Timothy 4:1-5

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...

Ephesians 4:11-12

¹ James C. Wilhoit and Leland Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), “Introduction.”

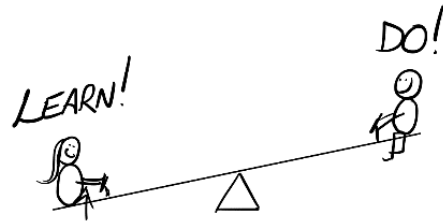
² Millard J. Erickson, *The Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 159.

³ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1995), 1255.

⁴ Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

3 Main Differences:⁵

1. Preaching is uniquely tied to the worship gathering, while teaching has a more general application.
2. Second, preaching is energized by the Spirit for the ecclesial moment, while teaching is focused on more gradual training and development.
3. Third, preaching is highly vulnerable and personal, while teaching is more objective and methodical.



- Teaching seems to be second skillset under a preacher.
- Teaching is identified as a role, distinct from that of shepherd, prophet, apostle, evangelist.
- Teaching in our context, has come to mean any formal instruction from the Word that does not take place in the Sunday pulpit.
- Teaching is more concerned with information conveyance, preaching is more concerned with action and change.
- Good teachers will preach at times, good preachers will teach at times.

Why is Teaching The Bible So Important?

It is an expectation of all disciples

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

It leads towards deeper understanding of salvation and sanctification

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.²² But be doers of

⁵ Zach J. Hoag, "A Few Differences between Preaching and Teaching," ChristianWeek, February 2, 2017, <https://www.christianweek.org/differences-preaching-teaching/>.

the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

James 1:19-25

It opens pathways of blessing

"And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God."

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

It serves as the means to equip believers for service

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

It guards the flock against assaults within and without

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

Ephesians 6:10-17

Bibliology, in Brief

Inerrancy - The book I have been given is without error

The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.

Psalm 12:6

Inspiration - The book I have been given is delivered by God

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Authority - The book I have been given is commanding

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21

Sufficiency - The book I have been given is enough

Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD!

Psalm 119:1

Clarity - The book I have been given is understandable

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Necessity - The book I have been given is essential

But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4:4

If It's So Important, What Happened to The Teachers?

1. An Overaccentuated Minority and An Undervalued Majority

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² **preach** the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

2 Timothy 4:1-3

“As recently as two decades ago, most young people growing up in evangelical churches would identify the small-group, inductive Bible study as a major ingredient of their high school experience. Today only a handful of Christian young people would make that claim; the chief input into teenagers’ church experience now is a charismatic speaker with a microphone in hand or (more likely) a worship leader or praise band with an amplifying system behind them.”⁶

Wilhoit and Ryken

2. A Lost Authority and A Found Autonomy

MTD - Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

Cartesian Dualism⁷

Upper Floor / Lower Floor Francis Schaeffer⁸

3. A Devaluing of Transformation and a Valuing of Topics

4. A Distracted Audience and a Distanced Audience

“If my foundation for knowing my place, purpose, and end in this world is on the basis of a self-discovered hidden identity that only I can verify and properly know, and that others are obligated to accept by virtue of being outside of me and therefore are unable to judge, there is less space for collective human flourishing.”⁹

Alan Noble

⁶ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 4.

⁷ Nancy R. Pearcey, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018), 21-27.

⁸ Francis A. Schaeffer, *Escape from Reason*, in *A Francis A. Schaeffer Trilogy: Three Essential Books in One Volume* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1990), 237.

⁹ Alan Noble, *Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in a Distracted Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2018), 89.

5. A Preference for Tools and Avoidance of Time

“If God spare my life, ere many years pass, I will cause a boy that driveth the plow shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost.”

William Tyndale

“Charismatic teachers can seduce students into thinking they have learned when in reality they have only been entertained.”¹⁰

Wilhoit and Ryken

“Ineffective teaching must be viewed at two levels: the presentation level and the strategy/planning level. The presentation level is actual classroom teaching. The strategy/planning level encompasses the teacher’s planning and general approach to teaching, as well as decisions about the content and organization of a lesson.”¹¹

Wilhoit and Ryken

The 7 Deadly Sins of Teachers

1. They Cannot Come to Grips with a Biblical Text

“The problem is that there’s been almost no instruction in the teaching of the Bible. People who think themselves prepared to teach the Bible are often teaching about the Bible. In other words, they’re teaching doctrinal persuasions or outlines of systematic theology.”¹²

Bruce Lockerbie

2. They Placed Excessive Confidence in Published materials

3. They present too many facts and not enough meaning

“It is our use of Bible knowledge, not the mere possession of Bible facts, that produces growth toward godliness.”¹³

Wilhoit and Ryken

4. They hold to misconceptions about the Bible

5. They overload their students

6. They try to do too much in a session

7. They cannot bridge the gap

¹⁰ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 15.

¹¹ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 16.

¹² Bruce Lockerbie, “Interview,” *Eternity: The Evangelical Monthly* 33, no. 6 (June 1982): 26.

¹³ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 20.

“Good biblical interpretation must ask and answer the questions of what a passage meant to the original audience and what it means to us today.”¹⁴

Wilhoit and Ryken

The 7 Vital Skills of Teachers

1. They Focus on the Bible itself
2. They Understand and Teach the Big Idea(s)

The biggest cause of failure in Bible teaching is lack of focus.
Teach what is important, not just what you like.

Perhaps the most basic thing that can be said about human memory, after a century of intensive research, is that unless a detail is placed into a structured pattern, it is rapidly forgotten. Detailed material is conserved in memory by the use of simplified ways of representing it.¹⁵

3. They Bridge the Gap

In much Bible teaching today, the biblical text and the world in which we live are both mentioned, but they rarely touch each other, except perhaps at the beginning and end of the lesson.¹⁶

4. They Aim for Clarity and Simplicity

Clarity – your lesson is overtly moving towards a goal

Urgency – your lesson is not something about which your students shouldn't care

Simplicity – your lesson is simple enough to be understood

Be willing to streamline

Be willing to walk slowly

You teach more by teaching less

Exploit the moments of confusion

No 10 cent words

Think visually

Think repetition

Think reentry points (how does this relate, breathe, pause, commercial)

¹⁴ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 22.

¹⁵ Jerome S. Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 24.

¹⁶ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 25.

5. They Motivate Students

unless people are excited to learn something, their learning will be superficial and short-lived.¹⁷

Teachers who do a good job of motivation also convey the impression that they believe what they are teaching is of momentous importance. They communicate this belief nonverbally by preparing well and by showing excitement for the material.¹⁸

All education is ultimately self-education.

6. They Foster Active Learning

Stimulate them to think deeply

Unsettle them, then settle them

Case studies

Pithy quotes, or ask them to headline the content with their own words

Active learning describes educational experiences that engage students and prompt them to wrestle with information, test its validity, find ways of using what is learned, and relate or adapt it to previously learned material.¹⁹

7. They Make the Truth Personal

How we teach is as important as what we teach

Theology is living to God

Teachers need to show their students who they are, not simply deliver content

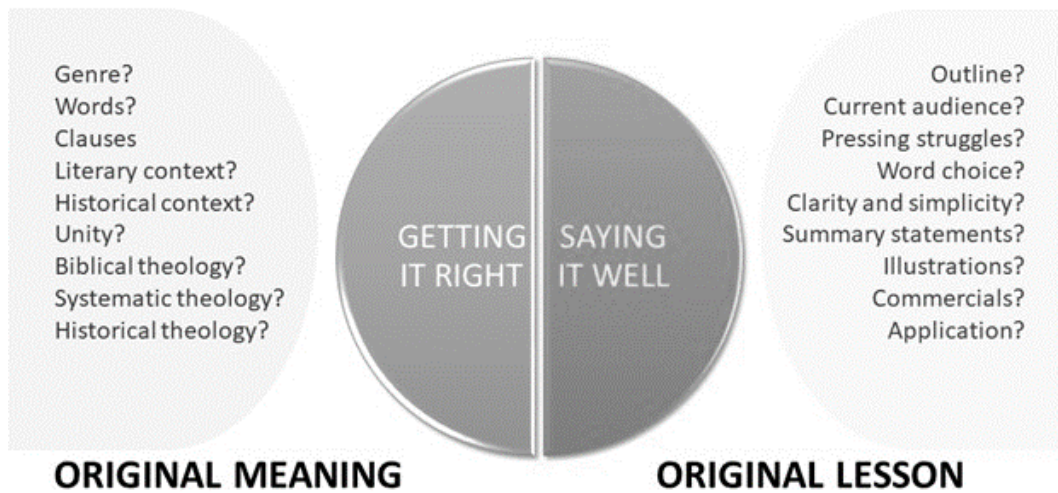
After completing a lesson's preparation, ponder what you can share from your own life regarding the topic. By "your own life" we mean your life, not the life of a family member or friend.

¹⁷ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 30.

¹⁸ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 31.

¹⁹ Wilhoit and Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching*, 30.

A Summary of Teaching



The Sine Qua Non Of Teaching

I am not teaching the Bible unless I teach Christ, and I cannot teach Christ unless he is glorious to me.

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶ But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

1 Timothy 1:15-16

“No amount of activity in the King’s service will make up for the neglect of the King Himself.”

Robert Murray M’Cheyne

Week #1 - Homework

Study 2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

- Provide 20 observations about this verse.
- Provide a headline for what this verse says. Keep the headline to under 8 words.
- Memorize the verse.
- Read Ephesians.

Week #2 - Genre, Words, and Arguments

Introduction and Review

“Texts convey meaning; they do not produce it.”²⁰

Jason DeRouchie

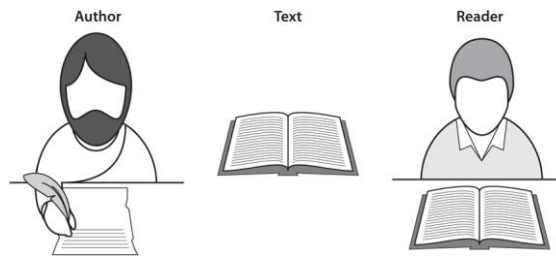
Defining Our Terms

Exegesis “The process of careful, analytical study of biblical passages undertaken in order to produce useful interpretations of those passages.”²¹

Hermeneutics “In the most general terms...the “art of understanding.” Used in its narrower sense, [it] can refer to the method and techniques used to interpret written texts.”²²

Eisogesis “putting in a meaning that was never intended.”²³

Three Essential Components Involved in Hermeneutics²⁴



²⁰ Jason Shane DeRouchie, *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 2.

²¹ Douglas Stuart, “Exegesis,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman et al. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2:682.

²² Bernard C. Lategan, “Hermeneutics,” in Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 3:149.

²³ R. T. Kendall, *Understanding Theology*, vol. 1 (Ross-Shire, UK: Christian Focus, 1998), 26.

²⁴ Robert H. Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 6.

Getting It Right: The General Next Steps

The Inductive Pathway to Understanding: OIA

<u>Observation</u> :	What is Being Said?
<u>Interpretation</u> :	What does it mean?
<u>Application</u> :	So What Does it Mean to Me?

Step 1 – How Do I Start?

I.O.U.S.²⁵

Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!
Psalm 119:36

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.
Psalm 119:18

Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.
Psalm 86:11

Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Psalm 90:14

Key Point: I must believe that the Bible is a supernatural book, with a supernatural Author, who supernaturally offers His help to both understand and apply its truths in my life.

²⁵ John Piper, *When I Don't Desire God: How to Fight for Joy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2013), 151.

Step 2 – What Kind of Writing is This?

“All understanding of verbal meaning is genre-bound.”²⁶

Eric Hirsch

Genre refers to an identifiable category of literary composition that usually demands its own exegetical rules.²⁷

2 General Categories of genre: Poetry and Prose

Take Judges, for example...

Judges 4:19-21

¹⁹ And he said to her, “Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.” So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. ²⁰ And he said to her, “Stand at the opening of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, ‘Is anyone here?’ say, ‘No.’ ” ²¹ But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died.

Judges 5:24-27

²⁴ “Most blessed of women be Jael,
the wife of Heber the Kenite,
of tent-dwelling women most
blessed.
²⁵ He asked for water and she gave him
milk;
she brought him curds in a noble’s
bowl.
²⁶ She sent her hand to the tent peg
and her right hand to the workmen’s
mallet;
she struck Sisera;
she crushed his head;
she shattered and pierced his
temple.
²⁷ Between her feet
he sank, he fell, he lay still;
between her feet
he sank, he fell;
where he sank,
there he fell—dead.

76.

²⁶ Eric D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979),

²⁷ DeRouchie, *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament*, 22.

8 Specific Categories

Unless we understand the rules under which the game is played, what is taking place is bound to be misinterpreted.²⁸

1. Narrative
2. History
3. Gospels
4. Epistles
5. Prophetic
6. Poetic
7. Wisdom
8. Apocalyptic

Step 3 – How Are the Words Being Used?

Words are among the preacher’s primary tools—both the words he studies and the words with which he explains his studies.²⁹

A Quick English Lesson

Noun A person, place, or thing.
“In the beginning was the Word...”

Pronoun Replaces the name of a person, place, or thing, or the idea of the sentence.
“...He was with God in the beginning...”

Adjective A word that describes a noun or pronoun.
“...the true light...”

Verb A word or group of words that describes an action or state of being.
“...the Word was God...”

Participle An action word used to describe the verb.
“...There was a man sent from God, whose name was John...”

²⁸ Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible*, 71.

²⁹ D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 27.

Adverb A word that describes the verb, and often tells how often, how, when or where the action occurs.

“...Truly, truly, I say to you...”

Preposition A word that is used before a nominative (aka, noun) to show relation to another word.

“All things were made through him...”

Conjunction A word that joins words or groups of words in a sentence.

“In him was life, and the life was the light of men...”

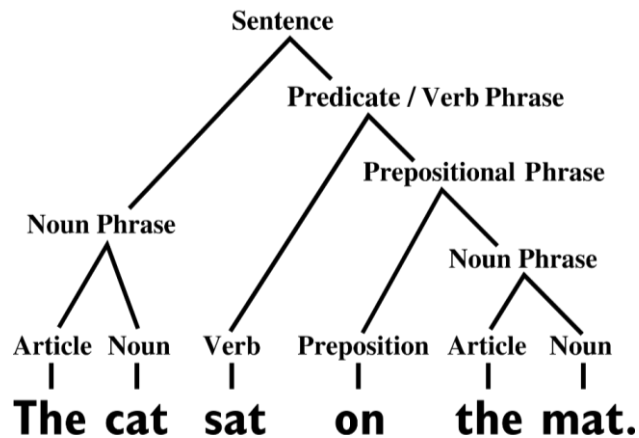
Three Other Important Terms

Subject Is the person or thing that is doing the action, or the person or thing about whom the sentence is describing. That part of the sentence that contains the nouny parts.

Predicate That part of the sentence that contains the verby parts.

Phrase A construction containing a subject and predicate and forming part of a sentence or constituting a whole simple sentence.

Basic Sentence Structure



Quick Exercise:

¹ On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

² Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

³ When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

John 2:1-3

A Word About Word Studies³⁰

1. Choose a word to study

Quick Exercise: *If you could study only one word in each verse, which would you choose?*

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (Jn. 3:16)

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:1)

one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (Eph. 4:6)

Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? (Gal. 3:2)

2. Discover the Word's Range of Meanings in the New Testament
3. Compare How the Word Functions in the LXX and elsewhere
4. Land on What the Word Most Likely Means in Key New Testament Passages

³⁰ Adapted from Andrew David Naselli, "How to Do Word Studies," *Frontline Magazine* (June 2004).

Four Common Dangers to Avoid When Doing Word Studies

1. “Carrot Picking” – aka, the “The Root Fallacy”³¹

One of the most enduring of errors, the root fallacy presupposes that every word actually *has* a meaning bound up with its shape or its components. In this view, meaning is determined by etymology; that is, by the root or roots of a word.³²

The way in which people use a word in context—not a word’s etymology—determines what it means.³³

2. “Time-Travelling” – aka, “Semantic Anachronism”³⁴

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Rom. 1:16)

3. “Dictionary Making” – aka, “Appeal to Unknown or Unlikely Meanings”³⁵
4. “Thesaurus Beating” – aka, “Problems Surrounding Synonyms/Componential Analysis”

Key Point: The single greatest factor for determining the meaning of a word is its context.

³¹ Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 28-33.

³² Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 28.

³³ Andrew David Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 212.

³⁴ Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 33-35.

³⁵ Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 37-41.

Step 4 – How Do the Words Fit Together?

It is essential to develop literary sensitivity—or, to put it another way, to become a good reader... Above all, good reading goes with the flow. Although it is always worth meditating on individual words and phrases (especially in discourse), even so the meaning of those words is shaped by their context. *Good readers will diligently strive to make sense of the flow of the argument.*³⁶

Argument Diagram “A figure that graphically discerns and displays the text’s logical flow of thought by dividing up the text into propositions and phrases and then noting logical relationships between them.”³⁷

The Goal in Argument Diagramming

To follow the line of thinking of the writer and determine the priorities and focus of the writing

The Limitations of Argument Diagramming



³⁶ Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 121.

³⁷ Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 343.

Ways to Trace the Argument (some options)

1. Arcing
2. Bracketing
3. Phrasing

Eight Steps in Phrasing³⁸

1. Establish the fences of your passage
2. Create a new line for each verse
3. Divide the passage into propositions and phrases
4. Identify the main clauses
5. Indent subordinate clauses
6. Line up or stack parallel words on parallel lines
7. Add notes and labels to help you understand
8. Explain in regular words what's happening

Quick Exercise: Let's trace the argument of a passage together

³⁸ Adapted from Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 136-43.

Week #2 - Homework

Class passage: **Ephesians 6:1-9**

My passage:

For both passages...

- Take some time to pray IOUS.
- Mark down your observations of the text. Try and do this in at least three separate sittings.
- Compare your passage in at least two other translations (suggested: NASB, CSB, NIV, or KJV).
- Highlight words that seem deeper than face value. Take a stab at a word study on your passage only.
- Make a first attempt at phrasing out both passages.

Week #3 - Historical and Literary Context

Introduction and Review

“A text outside its context is a pretext”³⁹

G. Campbell Morgan

“There is no meaning apart from context, only several possible meanings”⁴⁰

Grant Osborne

The Perspicuity of Scripture

“Historical background information can certainly enrich our understanding of individual passages of Scripture, making it more precise and more vivid. But I am unwilling to affirm that background information can ever be properly used to nullify or overturn something the text actually says.”⁴¹

Wayne Grudem

The Bible itself testifies that we can understand it, but:

- Not all at once;
- Not without effort;
- Not without ordinary means;
- Not without the reader’s willingness to obey it;
- Not without the help of the Holy Spirit;
- Not without human misunderstanding;
- Never completely.⁴²

³⁹ Kendall, *Understanding Theology*, 1:26.

⁴⁰ Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 37.

⁴¹ Wayne Grudem, “The Perspicuity of Scripture,” *Themelios* 34, no. 3 (November 2009): 297.

⁴² Grudem, “The Perspicuity of Scripture,” 294-301.

Defining Our Terms

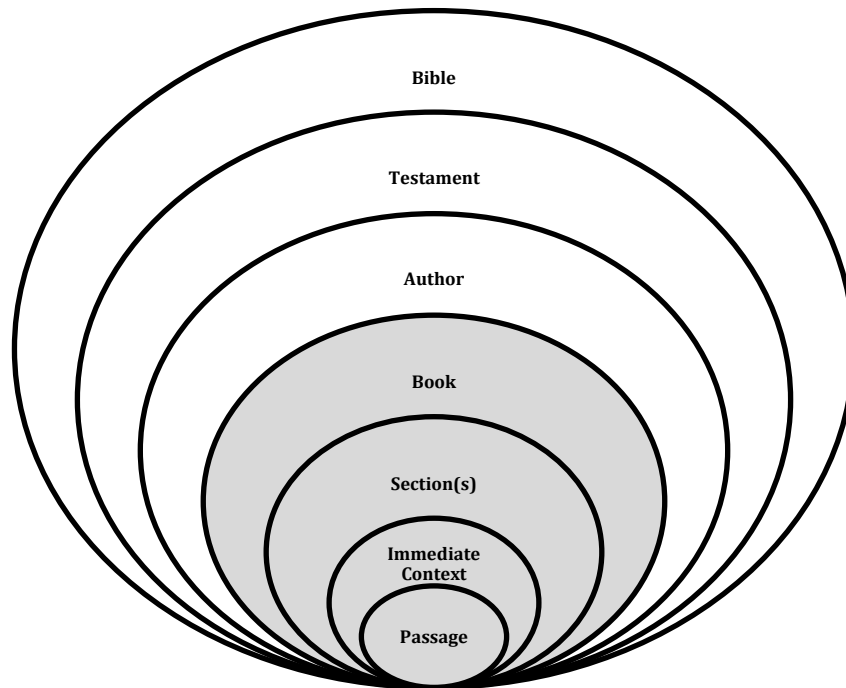
Context “That which goes before, and that which follows after.”⁴³

Historical Context “The situation in which the author composed the literature and any historical-cultural details that the author mentions or probably assumes.”⁴⁴

“just about anything outside the text that will help you understand the text itself”⁴⁵

Literary Context “The role that a passage plays in its whole book.”⁴⁶

Consider it This Way...



⁴³ Howard G. Hendricks and William Hendricks, *Living by the Book* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 225.

⁴⁴ Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 346.

⁴⁵ J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020), 113.

⁴⁶ Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 346.

Step 5 – What Is the Historical Context of this Passage?

We should not study any passage without a basic knowledge of the problems and situation addressed in the book and the themes with which the writer addressed those problems.⁴⁷

Grant Osborne

The Helps of Historical Context

Historical Context can help answer some key questions:

1. WHO? The authorship, audience, and major figures and powers of the passage.
2. WHEN? The original date of the message in relation to major periods and powers, including assessment of what events precede and follow.
3. WHERE? The physical location and geography pointed to in the text.
4. WHAT? The background of the author, the audience, the events described the relationship between author and audience. The nature of the author's ministry.
5. WHY? The cause and purpose of the message.
6. HOW? The relationship to God that is described.

“One major goal of Bible study is to discern the goals of the authors and determine the needs of the first readers. If we can do that, we go from peeking in windows of the Bible to touring its spacious rooms. When we study historical contexts, we discover the Bible's historical character. It sprang from the heart of an author and touched the souls of listeners—whether frightened or confident, stubborn or eager—who lived long ago.”⁴⁸

Dan Doriani

The Hazards of Historical Context

1. You may entirely miss the point

⁴⁷ Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 38.

⁴⁸ Daniel M. Doriani, *Getting the Message: A Plan for Interpreting and Applying the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1996), 44.

2. You may diminish or drown the text
3. You may zero in on similarities, and forget the differences
4. You may become a walking factoid

The Tools of Historical Context

1. Study Bibles
2. Introductions to commentaries
3. Old or New Testament general introductions
4. Bible dictionaries
5. Bible encyclopedias

Using the Sources well⁴⁹

1. Use them precisely
2. Use them carefully
3. Use them coherently
4. Use them sparingly
5. Use them submissively

These secondary sources should inform my reading, not change my basic understanding.

“At this stage we are using secondary sources to learn preliminary data for interpreting a text ... The information we gather from them is not final truth but rather becomes a blueprint, a basic plan that we can alter later when the edifice of interpretation is actually being erected.”⁵⁰

Grant Osborne

Two Ultimate Goals in Studying Historical Context

1. Determine the context of the book
2. Determine the meaning of any historical notes mentioned

⁴⁹ Adapted from DeRouchie, *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament*, 307-9.

⁵⁰ Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 38.

Principles of Studying Historical Context

“The more we know about the world of the Bible, the better we understand the Bible itself.”⁵¹

Historical resources are weighed, they are not collected nor counted.

Investigating the historical context can be helpful, but is not essential to understanding the meaning of a passage.

Step 6 – What Is the Literary Context of this Passage?

“We should never depend on verse divisions for meaning. The paragraph is the key to the thought development of biblical books.”⁵²

Grant Osborne

The Helps of Literary Context

1. It gives us the flow of the ‘conversation.’
2. It forces us to read the original attentively.
3. It allows us to read apart from occasion and audience.

The Hazards in Avoiding the Literary Context

1. You may entirely miss the point
2. You may become a topical teacher

⁵¹ Doriani, *Getting the Message*, 47.

⁵² Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 41.

The Tools of Literary Context

1. HARD WORK!
2. Study Bibles
3. Introductions to commentaries
4. Old or New Testament general introductions
5. Bible dictionaries
6. Bible encyclopedias

The Skills of Studying Literary Context

1. The Skill of Skimming
2. The Skill of “Seaming”⁵³

Eight “clues” for discovering such “seams” between units of thought

- A “Let me say that again” seam.
A repeated term, phrase, clause or sentence may act as the heading to introduce each part
- A “Transitional word” seam.
Often there may be grammatical clues such as transitional conjunctions or adverbs; for example, “then, therefore, wherefore, but, nevertheless, meanwhile.”
- A “Here’s a question for you” seam.
A rhetorical question could signal a switch to a new theme and section. It may be that there also will be a series of such questions which carries forward the argument or plan of a whole section.
- A “And, we’re moving” seam.
A change in the time, location or setting is a frequent device, especially in narrative contexts, to indicate a new theme and section.
- A “HEY YOU!” seam.
A vocative form of address deliberately showing a shift of attention from one group to another constitutes one of the most important devices. It is often used in the epistolary type of literature.
- A “Tense-shift” seam.
A change in the tense, mood or aspect of the verb, perhaps even with a change in the subject or object, may be another clue that a new section is beginning.

⁵³ These are adapted from Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 71-72.

- A “Bookend” seam.
Repetition of the same key word, proposition or concept might also indicate the boundaries of a section.
- A “Theme” seam.

3. The Skill of Summarizing

Three Ultimate Goals in Studying Literary Context

The other passages help us to determine the semantic range (the different things the word might mean), but only the immediate context can narrow the possibilities to the actual meaning.⁵⁴

Grant Osborne

1. Discern how the book is divided
2. Summarize each section
3. Understand how your particular passage relates to the surrounding sections

Principles of Studying Literary Context ⁵⁵

- Interpret single verses in light of their immediate context.
- Interpret paragraphs and episodes in light of the paragraphs or events around them.
- Try to determine why your text belongs precisely where it is, and nowhere else.
- Look for the seams introduce or interpret an entire section.
- Locate your text in the purpose of its section and the whole book.

⁵⁴ Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 40.

⁵⁵ Adapted from Doriani, *Getting the Message*, 34-38.

Summary and Conclusion⁵⁶

Literary context	Historical context
Studies the written text	Studies the people and culture receiving a text
Can ignore identity of author and audience	Stresses identity of author and audience
Can study words in themselves	Stresses author's intent as he uses words
Considers what any competent reader hears	Considers what the original audience heard
Is accessible to any attentive reader	Is accessible to readers who know background
Rewards intensive study of one text	Rewards cumulative study of many texts

Week #3 - Homework

For your passage:

- Investigate the setting, author, general theme purpose of the book in which your passage is found.
- Make note of any historical notes in your passage you need to consider further.
- Make an effort to skim, seam, and summarize your book.

⁵⁶ Doriani, *Getting the Message*, 44.

Week #4 - Theological Considerations

Introduction and Review

Defining Our Terms

Theology The study of God.

Systematic Theology Any study that answers the question, “*What does the whole Bible teach us today?*” about any given topic.⁵⁷

Biblical Theology Studies how the whole Bible progresses, integrates, and climaxes in Christ.

A way of analyzing and synthesizing the Bible that makes organic, salvation-historical connections with the whole canon on its own terms, especially regarding how the Old and New Testaments integrate and climax in Christ.⁵⁸

Historical Theology The study of the interpretation of Scripture and the formulation of doctrine by the church of the past.⁵⁹

Key Point: The filtering of a passage through the disciplines of theology guards us against novel, self-directed exegesis and ties us to the entire teaching and storyline of the Bible, as well as links us to the historical witness of the Church.

Systematic Theology anchors us to the teaching of Scripture

Biblical Theology anchors us to the storyline of Scripture

Historical Theology anchors us to the tradition of the Church

⁵⁷ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 21.

⁵⁸ Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 231.

⁵⁹ Gregg Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 23.

The Theology We Carry

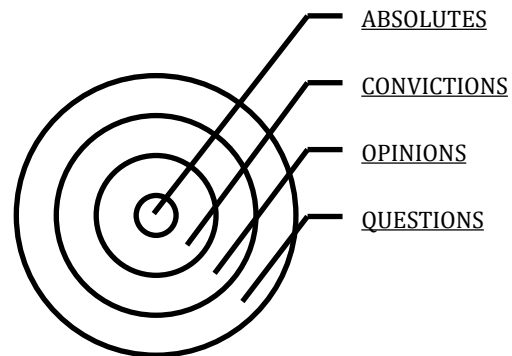
This type of objectivity has to do with preventing *our* preunderstanding, *our* culture, *our* familiarity, or *our* laziness from obscuring the meaning that God has intended for us in the text.⁶⁰

“We must carefully work through our view of Scripture in terms of both the Bible’s authority and our own finite interpretations.”⁶¹

Grant Osborne

If we’re not careful, we can misapply our own theology to the text.

What is Most Important to You?



What makes a topic important?

1. How clear is Scripture on this, both here and elsewhere?
2. How much does it affect the character of God?
3. How relevant is it to the integrity of the gospel?
4. How often in Scripture it is taught, and what is the weight Scripture places upon it?
5. How much does it affect other doctrines?

⁶⁰ Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God’s Word*, 147.

⁶¹ Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 376.

6. Has there been consensus among Christians?
7. What is effect on personal and church life?⁶²

What Am I Carrying into the Text?

What is my church background? Was it positive or negative?

“The ability to rightly discern the difference between core doctrines and legitimately disputable matters will keep the church from either compromising important truth or needlessly dividing over peripheral issues.”⁶³

Step 7 – What Theological Elements need consideration?

1. Systematic Theology

10 Classical Disciplines of Systematic Theology

1. Theology proper (the doctrine of God)
2. Bibliology (the doctrine of the Bible)
3. Angelology (the doctrine of angels and demons)
4. Anthropology (the doctrine of humans)
5. Hamartiology (the doctrine of sin)
6. Christology (the doctrine of Christ)
7. Soteriology (the doctrine of salvation)
8. Pneumatology (the doctrine of the Holy Spirit)
9. Ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church)
10. Eschatology (the doctrine of the end times)

⁶² Adapted from the *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 2507.

⁶³ *ESV Study Bible*, 2507.

How Systematic Theology Helps⁶⁴

1. It can enrich how you exegete a particular text, but it can also distort it.
2. It can give you a theological grid, but it can also substitute for the Bible.
3. It can help identify tensions, but it can also tempt you to too quickly resolve them.
4. It can help you harmonize your text with others, but it can also lead you to develop your own “canon within the canon”
5. It can directly address contemporary issues, but it can also more easily overlook the text because it is further removed from it.
6. It can make logical jumps from texts, but it can also irresponsibly speculate.
7. It can efficiently package, but it can also prooftext the Bible
8. It can help you refute error, but it may be erroneous.

“Systematic theology isn’t concerned with the storyline so much as it’s concerned with the bottom line.”⁶⁵

Michael Lawrence

2. Biblical Theology

How Biblical Theology Helps

1. It makes “organic,” connections.
 - By Developing Themes
 - By Detailing the Continuity or Discontinuity
 - By Describing Type and Antitype
 - By Demonstrating Promise and Fulfillment
 - By Examining the use of the Old Testament in the Old and New Testaments

⁶⁴ Adapted from Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 285-96.

⁶⁵ Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 84.

2. It tells us how the Old and New Testaments integrate.
3. It brings into focus the climax in Jesus Christ.
4. It fills in a robust Christian worldview.
5. It helps us understand our place in the redemptive plans of God.
6. It drives us to worship.

What Kinds of Themes can be Traced?

The glory of God	Creation	Sin	Covenant
Law	Temple	Priest	Sacrifice
Exile and exodus	The kingdom of God	Sonship	The city of God
Prophets and prophecy	Death and resurrection	People of God	Wisdom
Holiness	Justice	Wrath	Love and grace
The gospel	Worship	Mission	Shalom
The Consummation			

The Principal Concern of Biblical Theology

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me...

John 5:39-40

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

Luke 24:27-32

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Hebrews 1:1-2

Key Point: Every single time you teach, the message must be delivered with the understanding that all of human history revolves around Jesus Christ as the central, most glorious figure.

The Question I Always Ask: How does this sense make Jesus look most glorious?

“Christ-centered preaching and teaching is not eisegesis. It’s exegesis that requires biblical theology. It doesn’t creatively make stuff up to imaginatively get to Jesus. It follows themes and trajectories that are right there in the text if God gives you eyes to see them. And when you do see them, you worship God for his wisdom.”⁶⁶

Andy Naselli

“every truly Christian message draws attention to Jesus Christ, Redeemer and Lord. Conversely, no matter how true, how moral, how informative, how stirring, or how practical a sermon may be, it is sub-Christian if it fails to present Jesus to this fallen world.”⁶⁷

Dan Doriani

⁶⁶ Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament*, 238.

⁶⁷ Doriani, *Getting the Message*, 170.

3. Historical Theology

What is it again?

How Historical Theology Helps⁶⁸

1. Helps us distinguish orthodoxy from heresy.
2. Gives us sound biblical interpretations and theological formulations.
3. Presents us with stellar examples of faith, love, courage, hope, obedience, and mercy.
4. Protects us against individualism.
5. Helps us understand the historical development of our beliefs, but enables us to express those beliefs in contemporary form.
6. Encourages us to focus on the essentials.
7. Gives us hope by providing assurance that Jesus is fulfilling His promise to His people.
8. Helps us to think globally about Christianity.
9. Cultivates humility.

Four Broad Periods of Church History

The early church (first century–600)

The Middle Ages (600–1500)

The Reformation and post-Reformation (1500–1750)

The modern period (1750–present)

⁶⁸ Adapted from Allison, *Historical Theology*, 24-29.

Systematic Theology Resources:

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013.

Frame, John M. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013.

Grudem, Wayne A. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1995.

Sproul, R. C. *Everyone's a Theologian: An Introduction to Systematic Theology*. York, PA: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2019.

Biblical Theology Resources:

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Lawrence, Michael. *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

Lloyd-Jones, Sally, and Jago. *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*. Grand Rapids: Zonderkidz, 2007.

Roberts, Vaughan. *God's Big Picture*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2003.

Historical Theology Resources:

Allison, Gregg R. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Beeke, Joel R., and Mark Jones. *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012.

Horton, Michael. *Pilgrim Theology: Core Doctrines for Christian Disciples*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2013.

Week #4 – Homework

For your passage:

- Are there any theological concerns that require your attention?
- Are there big topics that need a fuller description (Systematic Theology)?
- Where does this fall in the storyline of the Bible (Biblical Theology)?
- Would you be helped by investigating some scholars from the past (Historical Theology)?

Week #5 - Meaning

Introduction and Review

Thus far, we have made efforts to see, now we make efforts to communicate.

Remember: I am not teaching the Bible unless I teach Christ, and

I cannot teach Christ unless he is glorious to me.

The Journey Ahead

- Step 1:** Grasp the text in their town. What did the text mean to the original audience?
- Step 2:** Measure the width of the river to cross. What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?
- Step 3:** Cross the principlizing bridge. What is the theological principle in this text?
- Step 4:** Consult the biblical map. How does this theological principle fit with the rest of the Bible?
- Step 5:** Grasp the text in our town. How should individual Christians today live out the theological principles?⁶⁹

Defining Our Terms

Meaning The directing sense of a given passage to its original audience.

Principle The universal principle drawn from the meaning of a passage the applies timelessly to all audiences regardless of culture.

Message The statement of a biblical concept in such a way that it accurately reflects both the meaning in the Bible and enculturates the principle to the intended audience.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 199.

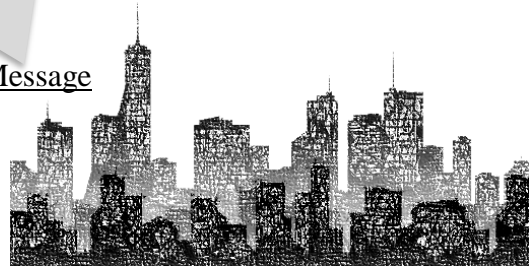
⁷⁰ Adapted from Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 76.



Decipher the Meaning

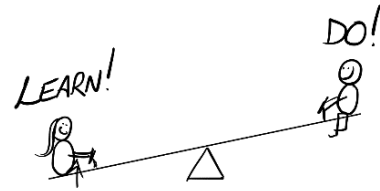
- Determine the Principle

Deliver the Message



Quickly, Back to the Differences Between Preaching and Teaching⁷¹

1. Preaching is uniquely tied to the worship gathering, while teaching has a more general application.
2. Preaching is energized by the Spirit for the ecclesial moment, while teaching is focused on more gradual training and development.
3. Preaching is highly vulnerable and personal, while teaching is more objective and methodical.
4. A preaching event focuses on a single charge for life-change, while a teaching event can contain multiple directives.



⁷¹ Adapted and expanded from Hoag, "A Few Differences between Preaching and Teaching."

Step 8 – What Does it Mean?

Meaning The directing sense of a given passage to its original audience.

Can Texts Mean Different Things?

There's No Place Like Home, or is there?

The writing of the *Wizard of Oz*. Is a child's fable, or an allegory about the proposed abandonment of the gold standard?

Authorial Intent: the position that stresses the author as the determiner of meaning.

Answers the question: What did he/she mean?

A love poem from your boyfriend, or girlfriend.

But what about "With a Little Help from my Friends"
Lakeshore Drive.

Reader Response: the position that stresses the reader as the determiner of meaning.

Answers the question: What does it mean to me?

The Key: "If you, the reader, see the text as a communication between the author and yourself, then you should search for the meaning the author intended. If, however, you as the reader do not care to communicate with the author, then you are free to follow reader response and interpret the text without asking what the author meant."⁷²

We believe that the Bible is a revelation from God to us. God's purpose is to *communicate* with us about himself and his will for us. We can choose to ignore his message and interpret biblical texts according to our feelings and desires, but if we do, we will suffer the consequences of disobedience—traffic fines will appear and the lights will go out. We will also miss out on knowing God in the way he desires.⁷³

⁷² Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 197.

⁷³ Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 197.

This means that the meaning is fixed, and the application is fluid.

We do not create the meaning. Rather, we seek to discover the meaning that has been placed there by the author.⁷⁴

Duvall and Hays

“The issue of cultural relevance is an important one because of the two tasks of the interpreter: to determine what the text meant to its immediate readers in that cultural setting, and to determine what the text means to us now in our context.”⁷⁵

Roy Zuck

How can I communicate what I have learned in a clear way to others?

An Exercise: Easier Said Than Done⁷⁶

Which of the following are Permanent (“P”) and which are Temporary (“T”)?

- Greet one another with a holy kiss (Rom. 16:16).
- Abstain from meat that has been sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:29).
- Be baptized (Acts 2:38).
- Wash one another’s feet (John 13:14).
- Extend the right hand of fellowship (Gal. 2:9).
- Ordain by the “laying on of hands” (Acts 13:3).
- Prohibit women from speaking in a church assembly (1 Cor. 14:34).
- Have fixed hours of prayer (Acts 3:1).
- Sing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16).
- Abstain from eating blood (Acts 15:29).
- Slaves should obey their earthly masters (Eph. 6:5).
- Observe the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:24).
- Do not make any oaths (James 5:12).
- Anoint the sick with oil (James 5:14).
- Permit no woman to teach men (1 Tim. 2:12).
- Preach two by two (Mark 6:7).
- Go into Jewish synagogues to preach (Acts 14:1).
- Eat what is set before you asking no questions of conscience (1 Cor. 10:27).

⁷⁴ Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God’s Word*, 197.

⁷⁵ Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (Colorado Springs: Victor Books, 1991), 90.

⁷⁶ Adapted from Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, 91-92.

Prohibit women from wearing braided hair, gold, or pearls (1 Tim. 2:9).
Abstain from fornication (Acts 15:29).
Do not seek marriage (1 Cor. 7:26).
Women should pray with their heads covered (1 Cor. 11:5).
Drink Communion from a single cup (Mark 14:23).
Take formal religious vows (Acts 18:18).
Avoid praying in public (Matt. 6:5–6).
Speak in tongues and prophesy (1 Cor. 14:5).

Two Bad Leaps for Meaning and One Dicey One

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Luke 15:8-10

1. Spiritualizing
2. Allegorizing
3. What about Typology?

Typology is part of the promise-fulfillment scheme that connects the two testaments, but we rely heavily upon New Testament interpreters.

An Exercise: Spiritualizing 1 Kings 17:1-6

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."² And the word of the LORD came to him:³ "Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan."⁴ You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."⁵ So he went and did according to the word of the LORD. He went and lived by the brook Cherith that is east of the Jordan.⁶ And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

Step 9 – What is the principle?

Principle The universal principle drawn from the meaning of a passage that applies timelessly to all audiences regardless of culture.

But Here's the Problem⁷⁷ Some meaning is Transferable and some Nontransferable.

1. Some meanings are repeatable, continuous, or not revoked, and/or pertain to moral and theological subjects, and/or are repeated elsewhere in Scripture, and therefore are permanent and transferable to us.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,

1 Peter 5:6

2. Some meanings pertain to an individual's specific nonrepeatable circumstances, and/or nonmoral or nontheological subjects, and/or have been revoked, and are therefore not transferable to today.

When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments.

2 Timothy 4:13

If a man lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.

Leviticus 20:11

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife.² And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who

⁷⁷ Adapted from Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, 92-94.

has done this be removed from among you.³ For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing.⁴ When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus,⁵ you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5

3. Some meanings pertain to cultural settings that are only partially like ours and in which only the principles are transferable.

Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

4. Some meanings pertain to cultural settings with no similarities but in which the principles are transferable.

a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste?"

Matthew 26:7-8

Determining the Principle

1. Does the behavior in the biblical culture mean something different in our culture?
2. If yes, determine the timeless principle expressed in that practice.
3. Third, determine how the principle can be expressed in a cultural equivalent.

“Differences in interpretation are fine as long as we keep in mind that the conflict is not in the text, but in our limited understanding of the text. God is not confused about what He has said, even if we are.”⁷⁸

Howard Hendricks

Two Critical Foci of Principizing



FCF – Fallen condition focus

“What aspect of the fallen condition of mankind does this passage address?” Then it shows how Jesus is presented in that text as the remedy for our experience of sin, immaturity, suffering, or brokenness.



RCF – Redemptive historical focus

If the fallen-condition focus is an experiential perspective, the redemptive-historical focus (RHF) is a more theological perspective. The RHF begins by asserting that God has a gracious, sovereign plan to redeem his people. It asks, “What aspect of the divine plan does this passage reveal?” Then it shows how Jesus is presented in that text as the one true Redeemer.⁷⁹

Why do These Help So Much?⁸⁰

Every passage in the Bible presents Christ both as the remedy for human fallenness and as the end point of God’s plan of salvation.

Every passage of the Bible touches on some aspect of the fallen human condition and presents some part of God’s remedy in Christ.

Since Jesus himself says the entire Bible speaks of him, then every Christian lesson should, in its own way, present Jesus as Redeemer and Lord.

⁷⁸ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 211.

⁷⁹ Doriani, *Getting the Message*, 170-71.

⁸⁰ Doriani, *Getting the Message*, 171-74.

The Essential Assistance Of The Holy Spirit⁸¹

1. When it comes to biblical interpretation, having the Holy Spirit does not mean that the Spirit is all you need. The Spirit does not make valid interpretation automatic.
2. The Spirit does expect us to use our minds, proper interpretive methods, and good study helps to interpret the Bible accurately.
3. The Spirit does not create new meaning or provide new information.
4. The Spirit does not change the Bible to suit our purposes or to match our circumstances.
5. The Spirit brings the meaning of the Bible to bear on the reader.

Step 10: What is/are the Big Idea/s For my People?

Message The statement of a biblical concept in such a way that it accurately reflects both the meaning in the Bible and enculturates the principle to the intended audience.⁸²

Key: All effective teaching center on one specific thing, a central idea.

How to State the Idea(s)⁸³

1. Be Memorable! State the idea as simply and as memorably as possible. Make each word count. State it for the ear. Listeners should not have to work to remember it.
2. Be Concrete! State the idea in concrete and familiar words. Study ads in magazines for slogans you remember. If you were given one sentence in which to communicate your idea to someone who didn't know religious jargon and who couldn't write it down, how would you say it?
3. Be Calling! State the idea so that it focuses on response. How do you want your listeners to respond? Instead of "You can rejoice in trials because they lead to maturity," try "Rejoice when hard times come." If you know what your listeners should do, tell them.
4. Be Direct! State the idea so that your listeners sense you are talking to them about them.

⁸¹ Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 231-33.

⁸² Adapted from Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 76.

⁸³ Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 70-71.

Be Clear!

1. Clarity relies on using words you understand, and ones that everyone uses.
2. Clarity relies on brevity.
3. Clarity relies on knowing what you're talking about!

Class #5 - Homework

For your passage:

- Based on your study thus far, what is the meaning to the original audience?
- What is the underlying timeless principle of this passage?
- Consider both the FCF, and RCF to remain Christ-centered
- What is the message for your intended audience?
- Work through 3 or 4 versions of your Big Idea (aka, Message)

Week #6 - The Outline and Beyond

Introduction and Review

While the *content* of biblical revelation is unchanging, the *form* in which it is presented is ever changing.⁸⁴

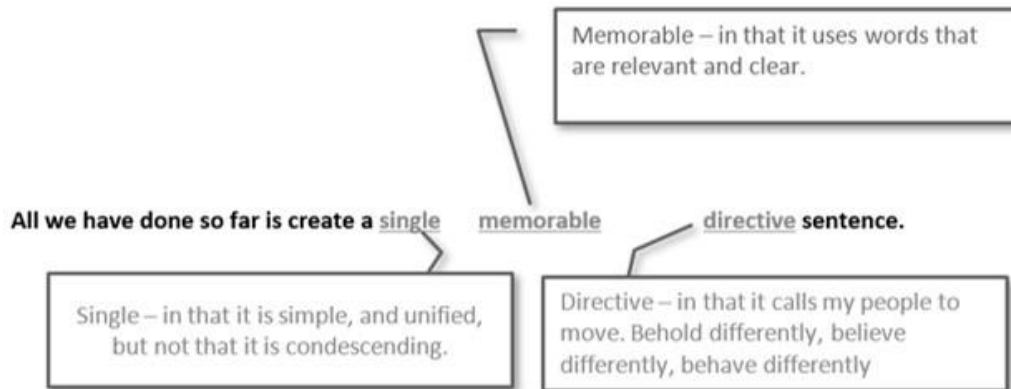
Grant Osborne

It must be emphasized that the expositor does not “make” a message out of a passage. Rather, he interacts with the contextual material until the message of the author emerges.

⁸⁵

Donald MacDougall

Here's What We've Accomplished so far...



⁸⁴ Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 411.

⁸⁵ Donald G. MacDougall, “Central Ideas, Outlines, and Titles,” in *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*, ed. John MacArthur (Dallas: Word, 1992), 227.

Defining Our Terms

- Meaning** The directing sense of a given passage to its original audience.
- Principle** The universal principle drawn from the meaning of a passage the applies timelessly to all audiences regardless of culture.
- Message** The statement of a biblical concept in such a way that it accurately reflects both the meaning in the Bible and enculturates the principle to the intended audience.⁸⁶
- Outline** That framework around which a lesson is developed. Drawn from the passage it will support the main message of the lesson.
- Main Points** A collection of specific, clear, and imperatival statements that comprise the outline and support the main message.
- Content** The body of your lesson wherein you are explaining, proving, illustrating and applying the main message.

Step 11: How Do I Build an Outline?

Illustration: We've all been in places where things just don't make sense.

"A pig is a funny animal, but it has some uses [the uses are not mentioned]. Our dog don't like pigs—our dog's name is Nero. Our teacher read a piece one day about a wicked man called Nero. My daddy is a good man. Men are very useful. Men are different than women, and my mom ain't like my daddy. My mom says that a ring around the sun means that a storm is coming. And that is all I know about pigs."⁸⁷

Without an Outline, Your Class Will Struggle

1. They won't follow your argument.
2. They won't feel like you're going somewhere.
3. They'll feel overwhelmed by a series of facts without any unity.
4. Their attention is going to wander.

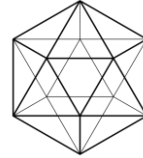


⁸⁶ Adapted from Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 76.

⁸⁷ Donald L. Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 21.

Without an Outline, You Will Struggle

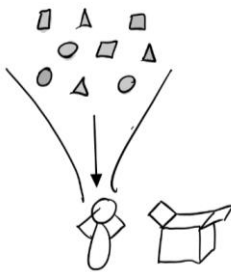
1. You won't fully grasp the text.
2. You'll major on the minors.
3. You'll spend your time poorly.
4. You won't develop a flow to your lesson.



But an Outline Will Help Keep You...

1. Unified. It deals with one subject and only one aspect of that subject.
2. Simple.
3. Ordered. Beginning with an appropriate introduction, moving through necessary parts, points, or movements, and finally reaching a fitting conclusion.
4. Balanced. With the main points usually being about the same length.
5. Targeted. and arrives there climactically.⁸⁸

Synthesis or Reiteration?



Synthesis requires broad understanding of all topics involved.

It requires taking pieces from all over without regard for order.

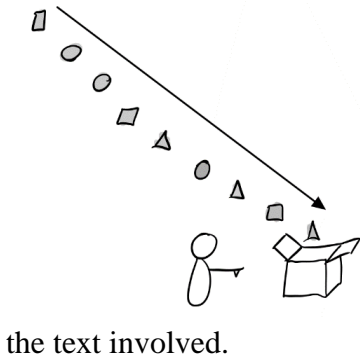
In synthesis, it is the synthesizer who is responsible for order.

e.g.) Exam paper, shopping for a fridge, choose a baby name.

Remember:

The meaning we have garnered has been communicated to us. In so doing the Communicator has condescended His language by means of an ordered form for us to comprehend.

⁸⁸ Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook*, 23.



God is truthful. His words are a direct outgrowth from His character and as such, are truthful!
God is logical. He coheres with sense even if we cannot sometimes understand
God has created wisdom. He understands the best way to do it!
God created communication. He's an expert at it!

Reiteration requires narrow but deep understanding of

the text involved.

It requires establishing the order from the established order.

In reiteration, it is the iterator who is responsible for order.

e.g.) E-mail from your friend, phonecall, love note.

So that means....

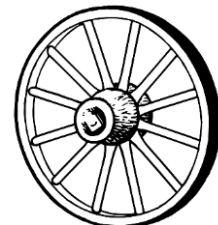
My outline can be anchored in and derived from the actual text!
 God has an order...and you can keep the order!

Wonderful comfort: If this book presents us with God communicating to us...then, all I need to do is restate God's flow of discussion!

The Basic Operation of Outlining

- STEP 1** Blocking In blocking you observe broad transitions wherein the writer moves from one thought to the next.
- STEP 2** Summarizing In summarizing you encapsulate what is being said with reference to the overall message in one descriptive sentence.
- STEP 3** "Sermonizing" In sermonizing you move the summary, in light of the message, from indicative to imperative.

Key Point: Your message should be supported by the outline, as each point feeds the central idea.



An Exercise: Blocking, Summarizing, and Sermonizing Ephesians 6:1-9

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. ⁵ Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. ⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

The Varieties of Outlines⁸⁹

Deductive The message appears in the introduction and then you work through your lesson to explain it.

Inductive the message appears in the conclusion as you build into it.

Inductive – Deductive – the message appears in the middle and you continue to develop it.

Subject-Completed your message for the lesson appears in the introduction in part and is completed through your points.

“God loves us, and he’s proven it...

A. ...when we were sinners

B. ...through the death of his Son”

⁸⁹ An extensive discussion on this can be found in Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 77-95.

The 6 “Musts” to Outlining

1. You must draw it from the text, and usually in the order of the text.
2. You must be accurate to the text. reflect what the text calls for.

Any inclination to aim for alliteration or any other form of rhetorical cleverness, if used at all, should be resisted until you are sure each sentence reflects what the text is actually saying.

3. You must make sure that each main point pushes the message forward.
4. You must keep it clear and keep it simple. If your message is a sentence, then your outline should be said in a breath.
5. You must use language directed to the student. Descriptive works sometimes, but wherever possible directed toward the listener, not a plain recitation of history or fact.
6. You must make sure that each point is unique from the previous. If it isn't it may need to be swallowed by the previous.

The Organizational Sentence

Organizational Sentence Your description of how the main points of the lesson will develop the message from the text.

Basic Format: _____ # _____

- i.e. “The apostle Paul supplies three reasons to obey this command,”
“As we study this passage, we will discover four truths about Christ’s death.”
“There are 19 critical realities we need to observe”

Some Cautions

- Don't be too general. (things, truths, observations)
- Don't violate the text
- Don't replace the message
- Don't force the matter. (here's three values, when they're only one, and a command)

Content

If you have done all your work thus far, the content portion of your lesson will be the easiest part of your writing.

In general, your content will consist of:

- Your explanation of your main point.
- Your proof of your main point.
- Your illustration of your main point.
- Your application of your main point.

Class #6 - Homework

For your passage:

- Build an outline that is...
 - From the text
 - Accurate
 - Related to your Message
 - Clear and simple
 - Direct to your audience
- Create an organizational sentence
- Begin the process of putting meat on the bones
 - By explaining, and
 - By proving your main points

Week #7 - Illustrating and Applying

Introduction and Review

For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

Ezra 7:10

At this stage, we will be tempted to make three critical mistakes:

1. The Monologue v. Dialogue Mistake

We will not consider our class and so, we will not build our lesson around them at all.

2. The Solo v. Group Mistake

We will believe that our class thinks the same way we do, and so we will teach them as we ourselves would like to learn.

3. The Commentator v. Coach Mistake

We will think that the application is very obvious, so we won't teach how to apply the truths to our class.

The non-negotiable key to illustrating and applying your lesson:

YOU MUST KNOW YOUR PEOPLE.

You must exegete the text, *and* your people

What that means is that...

You know your people's history

You know your people's situations

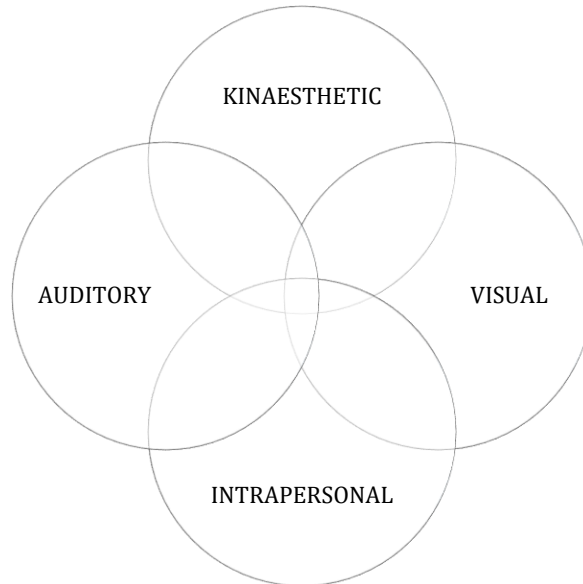
You know your people's struggles

You know your people's styles of learning

The Four General Types of Learners

Auditory learners		<u>Listening</u>
Visual learners	learn by...	<u>Seeing or observing</u>
Intrapersonal learners		<u>Self-teaching</u>
Kinesthetic learners		<u>Doing or practicing</u>

Think of it this way...⁹⁰



“The way people learn determines how you teach.”⁹¹
Howard Hendricks

⁹⁰ Alan Pritchard, *Ways of Learning: Learning Theories and Learning Styles in the Classroom* (London: Fulton, 2005).

⁹¹ Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives: Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive* (New York: Multnomah Books, 2003), 39.

Step 12: How do I illustrate my lesson?

Illustrations “Life-situation” stories within sermons whose details (whether explicitly told or imaginatively elicited) allow listeners to identify with an experience that elaborates, develops, and explains scriptural principles.⁹²

Some Examples of Illustrations from Jesus

“A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold.” As he said these things, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Luke 8:5-8

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Matthew 13:44

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

Matthew 23:27

An Exercise: On the above passages, circle what is illustrative, and then jot down below some common principles of illustrations.

⁹² Bryan Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001), 21.

Four Great Reasons to Deploy Illustrations

1. It utilizes story in powerful ways.
2. It makes concrete what can be abstract.
3. It provides a needed break in the flow of teaching.
4. It captivates visual learners especially.

Characteristics of Great Illustrations

Great Illustrations are...

- clear
- true
- common The more people who can relate, the better
- guard-dropping
- appropriate
- long enough
- purposeful. They advance the message, they don't become the message!

Kinds of Illustrations

- Story
- Pictures
- Diagrams
- Maps
- Actions

Key Point: Illustrations should illustrate!

Step 13: How do I help apply my lesson?

“Christians tend to make one of two errors in applying the Bible. Either they give too little attention to application or they give too much attention to it.”⁹³

Roy Zuck

⁹³ Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, 279.

“When God communicates information, we are obligated to believe it. When he tells us to do something, we are obligated to obey. When he tells us a parable, we are obligated to place ourselves in the narrative and meditate on the implications of that. When he expresses affection, we are obligated to appreciate and reciprocate. When he gives us a promise, we are obligated to trust. Let’s define the *authority* of language as its capacity to create an obligation in the hearer. So the speech of an absolute authority creates absolute obligation.”⁹⁴

John Frame

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

John 14:21

Application The process of articulating both the relevance and practice of the message of your lesson. Application answers both the “So What?” and “Now What?” of the text.

The Deadly Be’s (aka, Lazy Applications)⁹⁵

“Be Like”

Look at this biblical character! Ain’t he grand?

“Simply telling people to imitate godliness in another person without reminding them that true holiness must come from dependence on God will force them either to despair of spiritual transformation or to deny its need.”⁹⁶

Bryan Chapell

“Be Good”

You should do these things and obey.

⁹⁴ John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010), 5.

⁹⁵ Taken from Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 289-93.

⁹⁶ Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 290.

“Applications should readily and vigorously exhort obedience to God’s commands, but such exhortations should be based primarily on responding in love to God’s grace, not on trying to gain or maintain it.”⁹⁷

Bryan Chapell

“Be Disciplined”

The true efficacy of spiritual disciplines is not their power to bribe God but their usefulness in opening hearts to the perception and exercise of his power. Spiritual disciplines enable those made righteous by Christ’s work to breathe more deeply the resources that God freely and lovingly provides for the wisdom, joy, and strength of Christian living.”⁹⁸

Bryan Chapell

Four Questions that Guide Excellent Application⁹⁹

1. WHAT does God require of me?

In general, application will track along one or more of these three lines:

- Behold differently
- Behave differently
- Believe differently

Not to be too blunt, but if you’ve reached this far and don’t know how to apply the passage you are teaching, you have not actually understood your passage correctly.

“Do not try to make the Bible relevant. Its relevance is axiomatic. . . . Do not defend God’s Word, but testify to it. . . . Trust to the Word. It is a ship loaded to the very limits of its capacity!”¹⁰⁰

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

⁹⁷ Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 292.

⁹⁸ Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 293.

⁹⁹ A more extensive discussion of this can be found in Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 214-22.

¹⁰⁰ Eric Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 272.

2. WHERE does He require it of me?

- Building proper relationships (with God, family, friends, coworkers, church people, etc.)
- Reconciling conflicts (in marriage, family, work, church, etc.)
- Handling difficult situations (stress, debt, unemployment, grief, fatigue, etc.)
- Overcoming weakness and sin (dishonesty, anger, addiction, lust, doubt, lack of discipline, etc.)
- Lack or improper use of resources (time, treasures, talents, etc.)
- Meeting challenges and using opportunities (education, work in or out of church, witnessing, missions, etc.)
- Taking responsibility (home, church, work, finances, future, etc.)
- Honoring God (worship, confession, prayer, devotions, not compartmentalizing life, etc.)
- Concern for social/ world problems (poverty, racism, abortion, education, injustice, war, etc.)

3. WHY must I do what he requires?

Three Options for Motivating Change

- Guilt – you’ve disappointed him, me, and others
- Greed – you’ll get what you want
- Grace – look at how much he loves you.

Grace makes true obedience possible because a thankful response to unearned merit is motivated more by love for God than by love for self.¹⁰¹

Bryan Chapell

4. HOW can I do what God requires?

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

Key Point: The corrective always flows through Christ

¹⁰¹ Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 220.

Believe differently – trust him more deeply
Behave differently – follow him more obediently
Behold differently – see him more clearly

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

A Logical Syllogism

Life change can only happen with God's power.

My people must experience life-change.

Therefore, my people are entirely reliant upon God's power to produce life-change.

“The power to do what God requires resides in God.”¹⁰²

Bryan Chapell

Remember that sound explanation requires good scholarship. Solid application requires deep spirituality.¹⁰³

Introductions and Conclusions

Introductions

“Heads are neither open nor hollow. Heads have lids, screwed on tightly, and no amount of pouring can force ideas inside. Minds open only when their owners sense a need to open them.”¹⁰⁴

Haddon Robinson

¹⁰² Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 221.

¹⁰³ Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 228.

¹⁰⁴ Haddon W. Robinson, “Listening to the Listeners,” in *Changing Lives Through Preaching and Worship: 30 Strategies for Powerful Communication*, ed. Marshall Shelley, Library of Christian Leadership (Nashville: Moorings, 1995), 38.

Good Introductions will...

gather attention
uncover needs
be personal (why should I listen?)
link to Scripture
introduce your Message, and Your Outline
lead to prayer

Your first sentences really do matter. Try to memorize them.

O'Neil's Law: "Always grab the reader by the throat in the first paragraph, sink your thumbs into his windpipe in the second, and hold him against the wall until the tag line."¹⁰⁵

"A truly evangelical sermon must be like offering a child a fine red apple or offering a thirsty man a cool glass of water and then saying: Do you want it?"¹⁰⁶

Conclusions

- Conclusions recap
- Conclusions call for action
- Conclusions bring to a climax
- Conclusions stay positive!
- Conclusions end

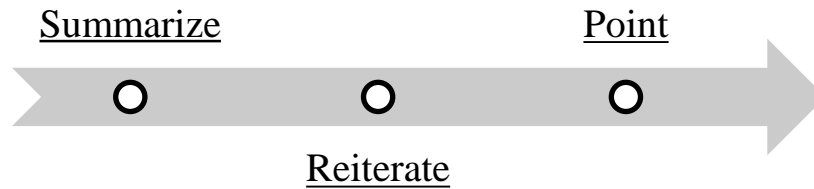
Other Helpful Tactical pieces for Your Lesson

Repetition

¹⁰⁵ Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 122.

¹⁰⁶ Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer*, 272.

Transitions



“Commercials”

Short regathering statements, that recapture the attention of your class

quick slide that arrests thought
“is everyone tracking with me?”
“questions?”
“remember where we are on the map”
“here’s what that could look like...”

Humor

Wisdom, wisdom, and wisdom

- A lesson is not something to entertain
- Humor is helpful when regathering attention, but it can also scatter attention
- What you may find funny, actually isn’t funny for most people.
- Self-deprecating humor works well on many levels

A Final Word

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Class #7 - Homework

For your passage:

- Continue the process of putting meat on the bones by illustrating, and by applying
- Check that your transitions are nice and tidy.
- Watch for opportunities to reiterate big truths.

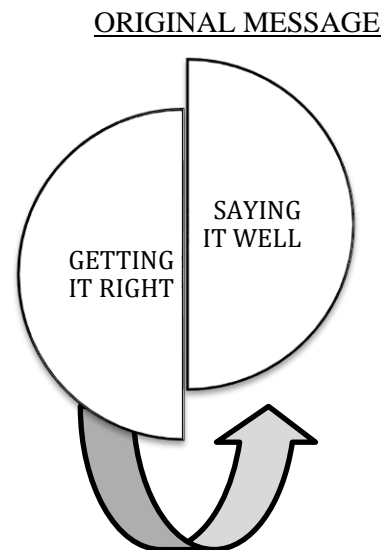
Week #8 - Final Words

Introduction and Review

- Step 1** *How do I start?*
- Step 2** *What kind of writing is this?*
- Step 3** *How are the words being used?*
- Step 4** *How do the words fit together?*
- Step 5** *What is the historical context of this passage?*
- Step 6** *What is the literary context of this passage?*
- Step 7** *What theological elements need consideration?*
- Step 8** *What does it mean?*
- Step 9** *What is the timeless principle?*
- Step 10** *What is the Message for my people?*
- Step 11** *How should I outline my passage?*
- Step 12** *How should I illustrate my lesson?*
- Step 13** *How should I apply my lesson?*
- Step 14** *How should I begin and end my lesson?*

But here's the thing...

Key: The amount of information retained by students declines substantially after ten minutes.¹⁰⁷



¹⁰⁷ E. J. Thomas, "The Variation of Memory with Time for Information Appearing during a Lecture," *Studies in Adult Education* 4, no. 1 (April 1972): 57-62.



Learning in any class is actually accomplished within three spheres:

1. With the teacher and the lesson
2. Among the students
3. With the individual

Key: Adults learn best when they are fully engaged in the process.

Active Learning & Maximizing the Lesson

Active Learning “instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing.”¹⁰⁸

In a nutshell: Get them to do what they are thinking about

Some Benefits of Active Learning¹⁰⁹

- It reinforces what is taught.
- It forces involvement away from passive listening.
- It enables immediate feedback to the students.
- It provides students with an opportunity to think about, talk about, and process course material.
- It cultivates community with the other students and teacher.
- It drives the content into higher order learning.

¹⁰⁸ Charles C. Bonwell and James A. Eison, *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 1 (Washington, DC: School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University, 1991), 1.

¹⁰⁹ Adapted in part from “Active Learning,” Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation, accessed November 24, 2020, <https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/engaging-students/active-learning>.

So Why Don't We Practice It More?

- But, I've got a ton of content to cover
- But, how do you do that?
- But, how does it work with a class my size?
- But what if the students
 - ...don't participate enough?
 - ...learn enough?
 - ...hate it?
- But, what if I
 - ...lose control?
 - ...don't have what it takes?
 - ...am seen as a kook?

The Art of Asking Great Questions¹¹⁰

Karen Lee-Thorp

1. Remember you want discussion, not rapid-fire quiz time
What five key features of the sanctified mind does Paul describe in Romans 8?
2. Don't ask questions that corner your people
Does this passage make you feel angry or glad?
3. Ask one question at a time please!
How does the lack of forgiveness affect the one who has done harm, the one who has been harmed, and each person's relationship with God?
4. Make your questions accessible for everyone
In 1 Corinthians 7, how does Paul apply an eschatological hermeneutic to our process of decision-making about relationships?
5. Say what you mean
What does Pilate say when Jesus starts talking about truth?
6. Be direct
Why does it not make sense to not rely on the Spirit of God rather than on the flesh?

¹¹⁰ These are adapted from Karen Lee-Thorp, *How to Ask Great Questions: Guide Discussion, Build Relationships, Deepen Faith* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998).

7. Don't ask closed questions
Do you identify with the disciples in this passage?
8. Get you class to chat about answers
9. Watch the details
10. Don't lose sight of the big picture

A General Pattern for Questions

“Canary” questions – to bring out everyone to play

- *Have you ever been in a situation like the one we've read about?*
- *Coming into this lesson, how did feel knowing we would look at this passage?*
- *Have you ever had a conversation wherein you were confused by the person you to whom you were talking?*
- *What has been one of the best compliments you have received as an adult?*
- *What does Easter mean to you personally?*
- *Ten years from now, what are three words that you hope people will be able to use to describe you?*

Observation Questions – to see what's actually happening

- *Who are the main characters in this story?*
- *What are the key words and phrases in this passage?*
- *Where does the action take place?*
- *What significant words stuck out to you in this passage?*
- *What word, if any, didn't make sense?*
- *What are the most important words and phrases in the passage?*
- *What are the main events?*
- *What action verbs are used?*

Interpretation Questions – to understand what's being said

- *What do you think is Paul's point in verses 6-10?*
- *In what ways does David act differently than we've seen Saul act?*
- *What does Paul mean by resurrection? How does he explain it in this passage?*
- *What point is Jesus making in the parable of the mustard seed?*
- *What do you like about Zacchaeus? What don't you like?*
- *What aspects of God's personality does this story reveal?*

Feeling Questions – to draw the heart to the text

- *How would you have felt if you had been this woman?*

- What do you feel when you hear Jesus say this?
- How would your life be different if you really believed Jesus' reasons in your gut?
- How do you think Sarah felt when Hagar got pregnant?

Application Questions – to bring forth an opportunity to change

- *What do you think Jesus wanted His audience to do in response to this parable?*
- *In what ways is our situation like that of the disciples in this passage?*
- *How have you changed as a result of studying Ephesians?*
- *What do you want to do about that?*
- *How are Jesus' words relevant to what we do together as a group?*
- *Do you identify with the Galatians in any ways? In what ways are you similar or different?*

Classroom Management

- One of my students is posing a problem...
 - For the talker...
 - For the mute...
 - For the confused...
 - For the dominant...
- Always start and end “on time”
- Provide great follow up
- How often do you need to stop and ask questions?
- Should I manuscript, or bullet, or memorize?
- What if you lose the room?

10 Enormous Truths for Teachers to Consider

1. Remember, if you are teaching God's people, God will hold you to account for what you teach.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.

James 3:1-2

2. Remember, your responsibility is faithfulness, God's work is fruitfulness.

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

2 Timothy 4:3-5

3. Remember, if God has gifted you to teach you have a responsibility to grow in it.

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

1 Timothy 4:13-16

4. Remember, your personal walk must line up with your public exhortations.

and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth--you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

Romans 2:19-22

5. Remember, you are responsible to teach people about Jesus, always.

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

John 5:39-40

6. Remember, you don't need even an ounce of strength or ability; it is God who equips the called.

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing

among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

7. Remember, God gets all the glory.

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

8. Remember, you are forgiven...from all of it.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1

9. Remember, you will never go it alone.

I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

John 17:23

10. Remember, before the Lord, over and above the fact that you are a teacher, you are His child first and he loves you.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are...

1 John 3:1

Class 8 Homework

For your passage:

- Get ready for the labs!
- Write up 8-10 questions that would maximize your lesson with any potential students.

APPENDIX 6

TEACHING PRACTICES INVENTORY (TPI) RESULTS

Table A1. Teaching practices inventory results

Item #	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	18.2%	4.5%	0.0%	31.8%	22.7%	22.7%
2	22.7%	18.2%	22.7%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%
3	22.7%	22.7%	18.2%	22.7%	13.6%	0.0%
4	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%	31.8%	27.3%	4.5%
5	18.2%	36.4%	13.6%	27.3%	0.0%	4.5%
6	22.7%	31.8%	27.3%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
7	18.2%	45.5%	13.6%	9.1%	9.1%	4.3%
8	13.6%	36.4%	13.6%	27.3%	4.5%	4.5%
9	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.7%	77.3%

APPENDIX 7

COMPLETED EXPERT PANEL EVALUATIONS

The following pages consist of the completed expert panel evaluations of the curriculum taught for the Teaching the Bible course at Hope Bible Church.

Name of Evaluator: **Earl Marshall**

Date: **May 27, 2021**

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.				X	Strong focus on this.
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.				X	Done well. Κηρυσσω is not the only term for preaching in NT.
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.				X	Very thorough.
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.				X	Mission accomplished.
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.				X	I was able to know exactly where you were going.
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.				X	There is room in the curriculum for this. Perhaps you could build in more active learning as part of the class experience.
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.				X	Perhaps a summary example would be helpful. I am thinking of a written example of a complete teaching on a text.
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.				X	Great work.

Other Comments:

Thankful for this project and I am looking forward to seeing it fully implemented in the life of our church. I appreciated the clear development in showing the need for

recapturing the emphasis of the teaching gift and teachers within the life of the church. Parts of this curriculum that stood out to me were answering the question, “what is the principle?” (week 5) and the introduction to “active learning” (week 8). I believe it would be helpful to be more clear, if this is possible, in the difference between “preaching” and “teaching.” It is addressed in the curriculum and perhaps it is dealt with in more detail in the thesis-project itself. Overall, I believe this curriculum is a welcome addition to the development of the teaching gift in churches. This is something that is needed.

Name of Evaluator: **Nathan Penny**

Date: **May 18, 2021**

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.				X	
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.				X	
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.				X	
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.				X	
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.			X		Lots of clarity, but not sure I could always point to one big idea in just reading the curriculum vs. hearing it taught.
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.				X	
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.				X	
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.				X	

Other Comments:

This is outstanding! Wow! Great job Craig! Lots of great content for our people! Praying the Lord will use this course as a powerful tool for equipping! One thing I might add is the dangers of substituting prep time for personal study.

Name of Evaluator: **Chris Shipley**

Date: **May 8, 2021**

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.				X	Both in individual examples and the storyline of Scripture.
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.				X	Yes, both systematic, biblical, and historical theology.
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.				X	Covers the genres of Scripture, the horizons of interpretation bridging the principle and the main components of a sermon well.
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.				X	And the addition of “Final Words” section was helpful.
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.				X	It helpfully repeated the previous “big ideas” from the last chapter (practicing what he preached).
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.				X	Homework applicable from the lesson. “Types of Learners” section was helpful.
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.				X	Yes, and models it in its own format and style.
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.				X	Very clear illustrative and practical.

Other Comments:

I hope to use this in my own teaching preparation and share it with others.

Name of Evaluator: **Paul Whittingstall**

Date: **May 17, 2021**

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.				X	
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.				X	
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.			X		
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.				X	
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.				X	
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.			X		
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.			X		
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.				X	

Other Comments:

This material is excellent. I would personally be looking for ways to use it moving forward. Love the clarity between teaching and preaching. Loved “Getting it right – Saying it well.” The focus on teaching Christ when we teach the Bible.

Name of Evaluator: **Mark Feather**

Date: **May 18, 2021**

Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1 = insufficient 2 = requires attention 3 = sufficient 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
Each lesson was sound in its interpretation of Scripture.			X		The use of Scripture was sound, but some proof texts did not readily prove the intended point.
Each lesson was faithful to the theology of the Bible.				X	Strong throughout.
Scope					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.				X	For an introduction aimed at lay Bible teachers, the curriculum should more than suffice.
The curriculum sufficiently covers a biblical pedagogical methodology.				X	The topics covered in the course sufficiently covers a faithful methodology for teaching the Scriptures.
Pedagogy					
Each lesson was clear, containing a big idea.				X	The curriculum's breadth made each class somewhat piecemeal, but each clearly had a big idea.
Each lesson provides opportunities for participant interaction with the material.				X	There seems to be active learning opportunities across the curriculum.
Practicality					
The curriculum clearly details how to develop a lesson to teach the Bible.				X	The how-to of teaching the Bible was clear, helpful, and informative.
At the end of the course, participants will be able to better teach others the Bible.				X	Lord willing!

Other Comments:

APPENDIX 8
SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA AND
T-TEST RESULTS

The following page consists of a summary of the pre- and post-project participant survey that was designed to measure the participant's level of knowledge, confidence, and passion to teach the Scriptures, both before and after training. The sixteen-question survey was assessed by means of a six-point Likert scale.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA AND
T-TEST RESULTS

Table A2. Likert scale questions summary in order of question number

Question #	Pre-Test Average	Post-Test Average	Change
1	5.37	5.58	0.21
2	4.79	5.05	0.26
3	5.11	5.53	0.42
4	4.84	5.26	0.42
5	4.11	4.42	0.32
6	4.53	5.11	0.58
7	3.95	5.11	1.16
8	3.63	5.05	1.42
9	3.53	4.84	1.32
10	3.32	5.05	1.74
11	3.11	4.79	1.68
12	3.32	5.16	1.84
13	3.63	5.11	1.47
14	3.42	5.16	1.74
15	2.53	4.84	2.32
16	3.42	4.95	1.53

Table A3. T-test paired two sample for means

	<i>PRE-TEST TOTAL</i>	<i>POST-TEST-TOTAL</i>
Mean	62.57894737	81
Variance	116.8128655	74.88888889
Observations	19	19
Pearson Correlation	0.48706544	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	18	
<i>t</i> Stat	-8.005942215	
P(T<= <i>t</i>) one-tail	0.000000121247	
<i>t</i> Critical one-tail	1.734063607	
P(T<= <i>t</i>) two-tail	2.42494E-07	
<i>t</i> Critical two-tail	2.10092204	

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ABSTRACT

EQUIPPING LAY LEADERSHIP TO TEACH THE BIBLE AT HOPE BIBLE CHURCH IN OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

Craig Allan Turnbull, DMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Jamus Edwards

Chapter 1 describes the purpose of this project, namely, to equip lay leadership to teach the Bible at Hope Bible Church in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. The context in which the project was conducted is described, along with the rationale and specific goals. Additionally, the research methodology is outlined, and definitions, limitations and delimitations are stated.

Chapter 2 consists of the biblical basis for this project, that equipping of lay teachers not only follows logically from the Great Commission but also yields support and strength to greater community of believers. Chapter 3 proves that the practice of teaching the Bible has warrant from history, current affairs, and an increasingly hostile West.

Chapter 4 is a detailed description of the project, both its design and implementation. Chapter 5 provides an evaluation of the project, including an evaluation of its purpose, goals, strengths, weaknesses, as well as theological and personal reflections.

VITA

CRAIG ALLAN TURNBULL

EDUCATION

BA, Moody Bible Institute, 1998

MDiv, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2007

MINISTERIAL EMPLOYMENT

Pastoral Intern, Harvest Bible Chapel, Chicago, Illinois, 2006-2007.

Associate Pastor, Hope Bible Church, Oakville, Ontario, Canada, 2007-