

Foundations for God-Centered Ministry, Part 2

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A Vision for Biblical Literacy in the Next Generation

What about the Bible?

If we are serious about...

_____ the Bible to children

_____ the God of the Bible to our children

_____ our children a _____ vision of God, a _____ view of the world and culture, and a _____ view of themselves...

...then we need to consider the _____ the Bible has in our homes, in the church, and in children's ministries of the church.

Bible-Saturation

2 Timothy 3:15—...from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Romans 10:17—So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

_____ -saturated people drip _____.

❖ _____ we observe, are taught, consider, decide, and conclude is _____ and _____ by the Word of God.

❖ If we are saturated by the Word, we have an ever-present and infinitely wise _____, _____, and _____ to guide us and others through us.

The Whole Counsel of God

2 Timothy 3:15-17—...from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

1. Children should have a basic introduction to the entire Bible through a _____ - _____ chronological approach.

Through careful presentation of key Bible stories in a _____ -centered way, the children will start committing to memory important truths about _____.

- A chronological approach helps children to see and understand that the Bible has a certain _____, _____, and _____.
- A chronological approach reveals the order of events and the “_____ and _____” progression of those events.

2. Children need a _____ that focuses on the main “_____” of the Bible.

It is important that children learn that the Bible has a “meta-narrative” or _____ that is unfolding in individual stories.

Biblical theology is important for children as it helps them see the Bible as _____ complete, _____ story that _____ reveals God’s redemptive _____, which come to their complete _____ in the Person and work of _____.

Luke 24:27—And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Colossians 1:15-20—He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

3. Children need a _____ that teaches foundational _____.

*“Systematic theology is any study that answers the question, ‘What does the Bible teach us today?’ about any given topic. This definition indicates that systematic theology involves collecting and understanding all relevant passages in the Bible on various topics and then summarizing their teachings clearly so that we know what to believe about each topic.”—Dr. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology**

Systematic theology answers the question, “What is _____ like?” and then uses the _____ Bible to collect and understand relevant passages, and then _____ what these passages teach us about God’s _____.

a) Systematic theology provides a _____ by which foundational doctrines of the Christian _____ can be learned.

You are creating _____ that are biblically-informed and lead to doctrinal conclusions.

b) Systematic theology provides _____ that serve to guard against wrong _____ of topics and specific texts.

c) Systematic theology also provides a _____ for rightly understanding _____ theology.

Systematic theology gives the necessary _____ of God's character for interpreting the _____.

4. Children need to be taught the whole counsel of God as exposure to the _____ of Scripture.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-3—Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. ²For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality...

Romans 7:12—So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13—“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?”

a) _____ **Use**

The law _____ us. It shows us our _____ and drives us to seek God's _____ in Christ. (*James 2:10, Romans 3:20*)

b) _____ **Foundation**

The _____ law is a _____ foundation for civil government in restraining evil. God has put His moral law in the _____ of man.

c) _____ **Worthy of the Calling**

1 Peter 1:14-16—As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

Psalms 119:129—Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.

God's ways are wonderful because...

- ❖ They _____ to life
- ❖ They _____ us from _____
- ❖ They give us _____ and counsel
- ❖ They _____ us how to _____

Recommended Book: *Teach Them Diligently* by Lou Priolo

(*Psalm 119:10, Psalm 86:11, Psalm 119:32*)

5. Children need an explicit _____ of the _____.

Simply tacking on an invitation to trust Jesus at the end of a lesson may not do justice to the richness of the _____.

Ten Gospel Truths from *Helping Children to Understand the Gospel*:

Truth 1: God is the sovereign Creator of all things.

Truth 2: God created people for His glory.

Truth 3: God is holy and righteous.

Truth 4: Man is sinful.

Truth 5: God is just and is right to punish sin.

Truth 6: God is merciful. He is kind to undeserving sinners.

Truth 7: Jesus is God's holy and righteous Son.

Truth 8: God put the punishment of sinners on Jesus.

Truth 9: God offers the free gift of salvation to those who repent and believe in Jesus.

Truth 10: Those who trust in Jesus will live to please Him and will receive the promise of eternal life—enjoying God forever in heaven.

By presenting the Gospel in a _____ and systematic manner, children will be clearly taught the essence of the _____ with the hope that, through the work of the _____, they might respond to these truths in _____.

Bible Memory

What is memorized in _____ is often retained for a _____.

Memorization makes _____ possible.

Psalm 1:1-2—Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ²but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Meditation on the Word through Bible memory...

- ❖ Brings _____ we would otherwise have missed
- ❖ Provides us with _____ for prayer and worship
- ❖ Is accompanied by the _____ of _____

Rightly Handling the Word of Truth

It is our conviction that children need to discover _____ truth.

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.

Philippians 1:12-13—I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

Hermeneutics for Children

- ❖ Look at the verse in _____. Example: *Romans 8:29*
- ❖ Notice _____ language, Example: *Luke 14:26*
- ❖ _____ Scripture with Scripture. Examples: *Matthew 10:37 and Luke 14:26*

It will be difficult for children to become serious students of the _____ if they are used to a steady diet of _____ - _____ technology.

2 Timothy 2:7—Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

Understanding the Bible comes from

- ❖ Careful _____ of the Bible
- ❖ Prayerful _____ on the _____

Precept Upon Precept

The levels of learning in classical education:

- ❖ The _____ stage: teach information and _____ that provide the building blocks for all learning
- ❖ The _____ stage: teach how to analyze and _____ information and facts
- ❖ The _____ stage: teach how to express conclusions

The child in nursery can _____ audible sounds; he can begin to hear _____. The young child can be give an _____ for God.

In the preschool years, this child's _____ can be expanded. The information can be put in _____.

As the child grows in logical thought, they can _____ individual stories to the _____ (in other words, a _____ theology).

In the last stage of learning, the student begins to make _____ based on the information he has learned.

- ❖ *What is God saying to _____ through His _____?*
- ❖ *How does He call _____ to _____?*
- ❖ *Will I _____ my mind and heart to these _____?*

Conclusion: Do the resources you use accomplish the goals you have for biblical literacy for your children?

Discussion Questions

1. What place does the Bible have in your classrooms and teaching? Does the way you use and interact with the Bible emphasize its importance to your teachers, parents, and students? What are you doing that is working well? How could you improve in this aspect of your ministry?
2. Are you a Bible-saturated person? Are your children's ministry workers Bible-saturated people? How can you work to grow in this area?
3. Are you presenting students with a basic introduction to the Bible through a story-based, chronological approach? When Bible stories are told, who is the main character?
4. Are students learning a biblical theology that teaches the main storyline of the Bible? Are children able to articulate this at an age-appropriate level? Should they?
5. How do you incorporate systematic theology into your teaching?
6. Do you teach the moral instruction of the Bible? How are you using the Bible to show your students the holy and righteous ways of God?
7. In what ways do you explicitly present the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Does your Gospel presentation include the ten truths? Which ones are missing?
8. Is it your goal to teach your children the entire counsel of God? Which of these building blocks (*Bible Memory, Rightly Handling the Word of Truth, Precept upon Precept*) is the strength of your current program? Which areas are weak? Discuss ways you can improve and strengthen your program. List specific steps for areas that need improvement.
9. Do you believe that memorizing Scripture is important? Are you encouraging your staff, volunteers, and students to memorize the Word of God? How do you coordinate and encourage Bible memory? Is it working?
10. Are you teaching your students how to accurately handle the Word of God? What evidence from your classroom shows that you are succeeding in this? How does your current curriculum help you to accomplish this goal? How can you better equip your teachers to teach Bible study skills to your students?
11. Do you have a "big-picture" vision for the children's ministry at your church? Can you articulate the building blocks of your program and what each block accomplishes? Are you engaged in a precept-upon-precept strategy? Discuss as a team what your children's ministry strategy is.