

A Vision for Encouraging Faith in the Next Generation

Psalm 78:4-7—We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. ⁵He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, ⁶that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, ⁷so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments...

This is the goal of all our teaching, that children should “set their _____ in God.”

1. Interacting with the _____ as a Means to Encourage Faith

One of the God-given means for influencing the _____ and the _____ is to encourage students to be _____ in the learning process.

We often confuse “_____” with “_____ learning.” Active learning involves the children’s _____ in interacting with the _____ matter: discovering, _____, questioning, organizing, _____, evaluating, drawing _____, and _____ the material.

2. Moving from _____ to _____

Creative Bible Teaching by Larry Richards explains the five levels of learning.

1. _____

Children can repeat _____ without thought of _____. Stress _____.

2. _____

Children have the ability to recognize _____ concepts. You could also call this _____ of facts. Stress _____.

3. _____

The child has the ability to _____ or _____ concepts to a Biblical system of thought. This requires the child to do more than just recognize the truth but to _____ the truth to other _____.

4. _____

The child has the ability to relate _____ truths to _____ and see an appropriate _____ to that truth.

5. _____ (or Response)

The children makes a _____ to the truth. He _____ on the Word instead of just _____ it.

We start by asking _____, leading children to draw biblical _____ which are linked in practical _____ to the child's life.

Children need help in bridging between the _____ and the _____. It is our job to make these bridges in our teaching.

We start by asking questions, leading children to draw Biblical conclusions which are linked in practical application to the child's life. The child must then _____ to the truth by a _____ response of embracing the truth and acting on it through the impulse of the _____ Spirit.

Job 42:5—I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you...

2 Timothy 3:15—...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.

Psalms 34:8—Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

❖ We must impart _____ of truth.

❖ We must pray that knowledge of the _____ would lead our children to _____.

3. Parent Partnership

Classroom teaching is very important, but we are _____ as to what experience we can provide in the _____ setting.

It is in a variety of _____ experiences that the Word of God is _____ and _____ and found to be _____.

Parents have the opportunity to bring truth to bear on life _____.

4. Use the _____ in Everyday _____

The Bible is _____ and _____; it is _____ for all of life.

If you love God and His Word, the Word of God should flow naturally out of your heart and be part of everyday _____, _____ to problems, and _____ for your children.

5. _____ Is a Work of _____ in the Heart

One of the dangers to children growing up in the _____ is that they can know the _____ without knowing the _____ of the Bible.

Our prayer is that Paul's Words in *Romans 1:21* not be true of them: "although they _____ God, they did not _____ him as God."

We cannot produce _____ in our children. Only _____ can produce _____ . (*Hebrews 12:2*)

Hebrews 4:12—For the word of God is 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.

1 Corinthians 1:18—For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

The power of _____ is not in _____ words, but in the work of the _____ Spirit through the truth that has been sown through faithful yet imperfect truth _____. The Word of God has converting and _____ power...

- ❖ Because the _____ is powerful
- ❖ Because _____ is powerful
- ❖ Because conversion is the work of the _____

1 Corinthians 3:6-7—I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

6. Teaching to Reach the _____ Involves _____ Preparation

If a _____ has first struggled through a lesson with applying the truth to his own _____, he will be _____ from the _____ and not just the head.

The way you teach _____ is to first live that Scripture for _____. Ask yourself what _____ God is asking you to make. Ask God to make you a _____ of the Word.

7. Three Common Objections to a Word-Saturated Children's Program

Objection 1: "it is _____ much to expect children to study the _____."
"Children _____ sit and listen to a [half hour] Bible lesson."

Response: Children will _____ to your level of _____.

Objection 2: "Many of the truths of the Bible are too _____ for children to understand or too _____ for them to handle. You should stick to the _____ Bible stories."

Response: Children are _____ able to understand _____ truths than we realize—as long as we _____ it in ways they can _____.

Objection 3: "Sunday school should be _____." "Children learn by _____—they need to _____ and do _____—otherwise they will be _____."

Response: There are lots of opportunities in life for children to have "_____"—but few that challenge their _____.

Children should not be bored, _____ listeners, but active _____ in the learning process.

The _____ is not boring! _____ is not boring! But when a person is spiritually _____, he will not find the _____ very interesting or relevant.

The answer to spiritual _____ is not more _____ or _____, but fervent _____.

John 6:64-66, 67-68: "...there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.)⁶⁵ And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him....⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life..."

Conclusion: Psalm 74:8

We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD...

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do your students engage with the Bible during class? Is this a consistent practice in your classrooms? How can you help your teachers to engage students with the Bible?
2. Review the five levels of learning. Are you helping students move from fact to response? Is there a certain step in the process where your classrooms are stalling out instead of progressing? What can teachers do to move students from fact to response?
3. How are you encouraging and equipping parents to be the primary spiritual teachers of their children? List and discuss the ways in which you currently do this. Are there other ways your team can come alongside parents to support them in their God-given role?
4. Do you use the Bible in your everyday life? When do you tend to turn to the Word during the day? How can you use the Word more in your daily interactions? Pray and list some specific steps to turn your mind and heart more toward the Word throughout your day.
5. Do you believe that conversion is the work of God in the heart? Does this discourage you or give you hope? Does your language and classroom practice show that you believe conversion is the work of God? How? Spend time together as a team praying for the salvation of the children in your care. Ask God to grow your trust in Him as you minister to children.
6. For teachers, how do you prepare yourself to teach your children? Are you taking time to challenge your own heart with the truths you are speaking? Are you modeling in your life what it means to be a doer of the Word, not just a hearer of the Word? Pray about this. Ask the Lord to help you grow in this area. If possible, ask a trusted friend to help you assess this area of your life, pray with you about it, and hold you accountable as you seek to grow.
7. Do you hear any of the three common objections from leaders in your own church, from parents, or from your children's ministry volunteers? Discuss this as a team. If necessary, discuss what steps could be taken to address these objections. What can you do to better communicate your vision for children's ministry to your staff, families, and volunteers? Pray together for wisdom and to ask the Lord for help.