

Implementing the CGD Curriculum in Your Church.

Introduction.

- Background.
- Trialling CGD in the UK.

Vision Setting.

Envisioning the church leadership

Is this to be a whole-church vision?

Envisioning parents

Are they aware of, and equipped for, their God-given responsibilities to nurture their children in the faith?

Envisioning the Children's workers.

What are the goals of the children's work?

How do people see their role in achieving those goals?

- A 'Blank Sheet' exercise
- Teaching from Scripture e.g. Ps. 78, Deut. 6, Eph. 6
- Watching CDG DVD
- Using the CDG Conference 2005 DVD

Envisioning the whole congregation

What is the view of children in the church?

Barriers to overcome.

Managing the Change.

- Will existing structures work in delivering the curriculum?
- What changes in personnel/organisation/thinking need to be made?
- How and when will this be done?
- Which age group will use CDG first? Or will all the age groups begin together?
- Which titles will we be using?
- When will initial and ongoing children's worker training take place?
- How can effective partnering with parents be developed?
- Does a parenting programme need to be developed- covering all age groups?
- When shall we review and refine what we are doing?

Initial and ongoing training.

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Some rocks under the surface

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Presented at the Children Desiring God conference, April 2007.
Presented by Ian & Nina Fry.

THE 'IDEAL' CHILDREN'S WORK.

1. VISION.

- **What is your vision for your work with children/ young people?**
- **What is the biblical basis for your vision?**

2. STRUCTURE (to support your vision).

- **Age Range.**
- **Number of leaders.**
- **Number of group members.**
- **Contact time with fellow leaders.**
- **Contact time with group members.**
- **What would a 'normal' week's activities look like?**
- **What would an annual programme consist of?**
- **Other ideas.**

**What are some of the objections people have raised?
Transcript of a Q&A session with David and Sally Michael: April 2005**

1. This is much too hard for children.

Make sure that they are engaged. Expect them to achieve. Don't underestimate them. Raise their eyes and expand their horizons.

2. The Bible is too difficult for children.

Children often find things easier to accept than adults. It is the adults who need to be trained. The children need to understand the truth, even hard truth is important because from it comes hope eg. Theology of suffering. Truth must be taught in an age appropriate way eg. David stole another man's wife and pretended that she was his.'

3. This will be too hard for teachers to grasp.

Many adults have been badly taught. Our own lack of understanding is not a good reason to hide the truth from children. CDG materials teach theology to adults whilst they are teaching the children. ALL teachers should have a Systematic Theology and use it. Read puritan literature and other good Christian literature.

4. Sunday School must be fun...full of discovery...play. Children will be bored.

Anything can be made boring. Anything can be made interesting. Boredom is in the delivery NOT the material.

It is not our job to merely entertain children. Stimulation comes through learning. They should not be passive learners but active in the process e.g. Answering questions, looking up verses, role play etc

THE BIBLE IS NOT A BORING BOOK.

We must not hide it from our children.

5. Some topics will be too controversial.

Stick to biblical text and be winsome and wise. Pray that hearts will be opened. Keep on regardless of the consequences.

Ways forward:

- **Cultivate an understanding and love for truth. Passion is engaged by knowledge**
- **Ponder biblical text and memorise.**
- **Let your speech reflect knowledge of God's sovereignty. We speak as we think. God's sovereignty is often not in our minds. James 1: 13-16. God should reign in everything.**
- **Marvel at the sovereignty of God in all situations.**
- **Teach children the doctrine of God's sovereignty.**
- **Connect the dots of the big picture for them. Be age appropriate e.g.
Kindergarten: God is the Boss.
Pre-prep: God is in charge of all things.
By 4th Grade: God is in sovereign charge and is all powerful and wise.**
- **Tell stories about the sovereignty of God in life. God's hand is in everything.**
- **Interpret all of history through the lense of God's purposes.**
- **Interpret God in world events Job. 37:11-13.**
- **Let your minds be transformed –not conformed to this world. Delight in the will of God.**

Secular v. Biblical thinking

Secular/ 'Progressive' assumptions	Biblical/ 'traditional' responses
The purest form of human being is the primitive or the child. Their innocence is total.(1800s Romanticism)	Doctrine of original sin.
Teaching 'corrupts' this innocence.	Teaching opens understanding.
The desire to learn is 'natural' and if left to grow will provide all that is needed.	Truth is revealed not 'discovered'. Our natural inclination is away from truth, not towards it. Teaching should be structured and intentional.
Natural learning will be developmentally appropriate. (Developmentally Appropriate Practice). We must not expect too much of children- it will put them off.	We underestimate children and then limit their horizons. They are able to understand complex ideas if taught well. Big truths are for little people. Truth should be broken down not watered down.
Learning is through discovery/ 'doing'. Experience, experiment and understanding are all important. Children do not learn by listening.	Knowledge comes through preaching/ teaching, example and application. Parents, teachers, pastors and other adults pass on knowledge and truth. One generation to another.
Information is the same as knowledge. It is enough to give facts. Children must decide for themselves. We must not pressurise them.	Information appropriated = knowledge. Knowledge applied to the heart and life = wisdom. Truth is for the heart and must control the life.
Learning must be fun and exciting or children will become bored.	Fun is a by- product not an aim. Fun (excitement, fulfilment and interest) are achieved through good teaching and receptive learning.
Curriculum must be child-centred and relevant.	Curriculum must be God-centred and applied.
Knowledge is 'value free'.	Knowledge does not develop in a moral vacuum and it informs choices. Right and wrong are real concepts and have real consequences.
'Only group learning' is interactive, teacher led learning is passive.	Listening to a good teacher is interactive not passive. Stimulating <u>thinking</u> , <u>applying</u> truth to life, <u>challenging</u> thought and actions, <u>repenting</u> , <u>determining</u> to change (act of will) and so on.
Self-esteem is all important.	God-esteem is all important.
Memorization is boring (not fun) and ineffective.	The proper use of memory is essential. It takes time and effort but yields great rewards. Many commands in scripture to remember, remember. Memorisation and meditation enrich the soul. There is no real progress without it.
Word based learning is not appropriate for everyone. (Learning styles and MI)	The Word is for all. God has spoken. Words paint pictures. Reading is for all (reading for yourself or being read to). Learning styles and MI theories are not universally supported.

CMLC Seminar. Ian & Nina Fry.
Friday April 27th 2007.