

LESSON TWO – PART 2

What is Teaching

Christ taught in a variety of situations: *one-on-one* teaching (personal interaction, John 4:1–42); *small group* learning (the disciples alone with Christ, Luke 22:14–38); *large groups* of people (the multitudes heard Him, Matt. 23:1–39). Believers today are responsible to continue the Lord’s teaching ministry in all situations.

The fourth part of the great commission given to the disciples is “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). This is the most unglamorous and the most neglected part of the commission. This part of the commission will not fit into adding machines. It is difficult to put this part of the commission into statistical reports. We can report how many people have been baptized and how many have placed membership, but it is difficult to report the results of Bible Study in terms of statistics. And if a ministry cannot be reported in statistics, many congregations neglect it. It is hard to boast without statistics, leading some to conclude that if you can’t count it, it is “no count.” Furthermore, the disinterest in teaching is also seen in the fact that teaching is generally

a thankless task. It involves a great deal of work and with few people being interested in being taught, not many folk want to get involved in the task of teaching.

What Are the Characteristics of Teaching?

1. Teaching is a science and is therefore governed by laws. E.

L. Thorndike¹ postulated three laws of learning:

1. *The law of readiness*: When one is ready to act to do so is pleasant, and not to do so is annoying.
2. *The law of effect, satisfaction*: When an act is pleasant, we tend to repeat it until it becomes a habit. If unpleasant, we tend to quit.
3. *The law of exercise*: An act once performed tends to be more easily performed again, while neglect makes an act more difficult.

2. Teaching is an art and is therefore governed by technique. (Lessons will follow on the tools of teaching and the technique of presentation.)

3. Teaching is a social act and therefore requires good interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the taught.

1. The teacher's attitude toward his pupils.
 - He is not a dictator issuing decrees, but a guide offering leadership.
 - He is stimulating the growth of pupils by setting them an example.
 - The teacher grows through the self-discipline he expects of the pupils.
 - The learning teacher glows with enthusiasm.

¹ Thorndike was a pioneer in American psychology and education theory. His research into reward and punishment in learning—known as connectionism—led to the widely used stimulus-response theories that followed, and he made many other significant contributions to his field.

- The learning teacher enjoys learning, and so do many of his pupils.
2. The right relationship between teacher and student enables the teacher to:
 - Take his pupil with him because he has learned to talk their language.
 - Bring a personal God to real persons.
 - Bring the Bible to right where the pupils live.
 - Encourage pupils to understand themselves because someone else understands them.
 3. Teaching is a complex activity and therefore must be carried out according to purposeful plans and governed and guided by meaningful aims.
 1. The importance of plans.
 - Anything that is not planned is “planless”; anything that is “planless” will likely fail to accomplish its purpose.
 - Just as any intelligent person demands detailed plans, specifications, and estimates of cost before proceeding to the building of a house, so teaching needs to be planned before it is carried into practice.
 2. The value of purposeful plans.
 - It makes more likely the attainment of the inclusive aims of teaching.
 - A lesson plan helps to clarify objectives and to make them definite.
 - It provides for suitable transition from previous experiences to contemplated ones.
 - It makes for better selection and organization of content, material, procedures, and activities.
 - It tends to use of better methods of teaching.
 - Lesson planning gives confidence to inexperienced teachers and develops in them ability to improve more rapidly.
 - It serves as an incentive to the teacher to make adequate preparation.
 - It enables the teacher to teach with greater freedom.

- It leads to elimination of many difficulties by anticipating them and by planning how to avoid or minimize them.
 - Reflective thinking done beforehand makes for better unity in lesson development than is possible from spontaneous planning done on the spur of the moment.
 - It stimulates the teacher to have ready pivotal questions and appropriate illustrations.
3. The importance and function of aims.
- An aim implies activity directed in an orderly manner toward the accomplishment of some end. A bow shot into the air has a result, but not an end. An end is more than a result.
 - An aim is the major influence in controlling procedure in any great undertaking.
4. The function of aims in teaching.
- Gives direction.
 - Makes for orderly continuity.
 - Provides a basis for selection of materials.
 - Provides a sound basis for measurement.
5. Inclusive aims of the Christian teacher.
- To lead pupils to a knowledge of God's will. Note that this is different from imparting Bible knowledge.
 - To lead the pupil to follow or obey God's will.
 - Develop Christian character expressed through worship, right living, and efficient service.

4. Teaching is a simple act that can and will be accomplished by those who desire to do so. Only one step is required at a time. Anyone who possesses common sense and the love for the work, who studies the Scriptures and prays for wisdom, should have no difficulty.

There is no chance, no destiny, no fate,
Can circumvent, or hinder or control
The firm resolve of a determined soul.
Gifts count for little; will alone is great.
No man can place a limit on thy strength.
All heights are thine, if thou wilt but believe
In thy Creator and thy self. At length
Some feet must tread some heights now unattained.
Why not thine own. Achieve!