

## LESSON SIX

### TOOLS FOR THE TEACHER, cont'd

There is just enough validity to some of these objections (see the list in last week's Lesson Five) to deceive us into believing that we can succeed as a one-tool mechanic or a stethoscope-only doctor.

What then shall we say? It is true that religious libraries can be expensive. Mine has cost thousands of dollars and it is still growing. However, I have learned to keep the cost as low as possible. A number of years ago I learned of *Christian Book Distributors* (CBD). It has great discounts on books. For example, a set of *The Pulpit Commentary* that they claim retails for \$1,000 is priced in the August-September Members Newsletter (Catalog) at \$179.99 (\$169.99 for members. The last time I signed up for membership it was \$5.00 annually. Other examples: *History of the Jewish People in the time of Jesus Christ* (5 vols., 29.99 [27.99]); *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament*, Updated Edition (10 vols., Member price \$69.99). You can also order online at [Christianbook.com](http://Christianbook.com) and by phone, 1-800-CHRISTIAN.

Members of the church wrote none of the books mentioned above. Thus teachers must be on constant alert to be certain that what they use from the books is scriptural. The problem comes when the one using a book does

not have sufficient biblical grounding to recognize error when it appears.

The obvious solution is that inability to recognize error disqualifies one from teaching. Additionally, even books written by members of the Lord's body can contain error. One's guard cannot be let down just because the author is a member of the church of Christ. Many do not know that Alexander Campbell was a post-millennialist. He published a paper called *The Millennial Harbinger*, but one who refuses to read his writings for that reason makes a huge mistake. The only real solution is for teachers to have a fundamental knowledge of the Bible's teaching because one who refuses to use other sources is robbing both himself and the class members. One who thinks he can learn nothing from the writings of others is arrogant beyond belief. The same can be said of those who believe that they can learn nothing from books written by brethren. More than a few who have gone off to theological schools have become so impressed by human wisdom that they have abandoned the wisdom of God. It may be that they were never rooted and grounded either in love or in the Word. It is more likely that they just did not want to appear unintelligent to those who impressed them with worldly wisdom. They made the mistake of thinking that because they did not know the answer (and probably did not search for the answer), that there was no answer.

Time is precious and it must be prioritized since no one has time to do everything. How do you find time to read and absorb all of this material and organize it for class? The temptation is to let someone else do the work. The author of the little book has already read the books and taken the time to write out the lesson. I have time to read it and retype it so that it looks like my work product. You need to ask yourself some questions. 1) Was it prepared with your class in mind so that it could be applied to them and their lives? No. A microwaved frozen dinner can never replace a good homemade meal. 2) Is your class worth the time and trouble that it takes to do it right? If not, do you really think you ought to be teaching? 3) Don't you always have time to do something that you really want to do? Most certainly. If you answered "no," you deceived yourself. You may shout, "That's not true. I went to work when I wanted to play golf." That may be a true statement, but what you are saying is that your job and the support of your family meant more to you than a round of golf. In other words, you prioritized your wants and obligations and golf did not come out at the top of the list. I know that's true. When Millie and I went to Ireland for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary I really wanted to play some of their golf courses. I actually thought about it, but never mentioned it to Millie. Fortunately for me, I married the right girl and one day, without even a hint from me, she said,

“You can take your golf clubs if you want to.” As much as I wanted to and as much as I would have loved it, it didn’t take me long to prioritize. In fact, I had already done so before the offer. This was our time together, and my being on the golf course would not contribute to that purpose. More than playing Ballybunion (one of Ireland’s finest courses), I wanted a 51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary. (By the way, it worked and on September 3<sup>rd</sup> we had our 56<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!!!! You may want to express your sympathy to her.) This is a long way to say that we always have time or make time to do that which we really want to do. This is a good time to remember the qualities of a good teacher. Failure to make the time to properly prepare the lesson is a disqualification.

Finally, access to the church library is good if it has a sufficient number of the right books. Our library has not been sufficiently cared for since Dick Huddleston’s death. Even if that were not the case, a church library can never replace a personal library that is always at hand. Time is lost driving back and forth to the building, not to mention that when you arrive you find that the books you want have already been checked out and somebody failed to fill out the card telling you who it was. The computer program cannot be taken home. Moreover, the nature of the few resources it has are useless for class preparation. While the library has some good

materials, it is not of much use to a teacher who is working and who doesn't have a key to the building, much less to the offices where the library is. Of course, the books can be checked out for only two weeks at a time, although an exception would likely be made for teachers. Of course, that would take the books out of the library if a member of the class wanted to study for class. Bottom line is that there is no substitute for a home library of good resources to use in preparation of lessons.

### **TYPES AND EXAMPLES OF RESOURCES**

#### **1. BIBLES.**

Several versions should be available. They need not be expensive since they are mostly used for home study. The version used in class can be more expensive, but need not be. The version used in class is more useful if it has a wide margin in which to write notes. Suggestions are KJV, NKJV, ASV, RSV, NAS. Many have the NIV, but it is not a dependable translation. It was revised in 2011 and may have been improved, but I have not researched the changes since I do not use it. Of those listed, I believe the ASV to be the most accurate. The RSV suffered from its translation of Isaiah 7:14, but it is overall a good translation. The KJV, followed by the NKJV, is based on a textual background that includes a number of passages rejected by later translations. The ability to review all of them and learn their textual support and accuracy of translation is important. For those who cannot use a critical apparatus, Bruce Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, is a good source from which to learn why those who prepared this Greek New Testament sponsored by the United Bible Societies chose the Greek texts that were included. A good computer program will contain all of the Bible versions that you need along with good tools to learn about the original languages.

**To be cont'd . . .**