

THE  
DISCIPLESHIP  
PLACE

Jesus the Master Teacher



**SESSION 1**

Jesus, a Master Teacher

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# Jesus, a Master Teacher

## SESSION OVERVIEW

**What is Quality Teaching?**

**Why Is Jesus a Master Teacher?**

**Why Is Jesus a Master Teacher?  
A Teaching Example**

**Application**

**Exam**

**Discussion Guide for Mentor and Participant**

## LEARNER OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you should be able to:

- define and explain the major teaching quality indicators and relate them to Jesus' teaching
- view the big picture of this course and review your "teachable spirit"

# Jesus, a Master Teacher

## INTRODUCTION

### JOURNALING

Throughout this module, it is suggested you keep a journal. This is an important tool in the study of teaching. You are welcomed and encouraged to make photos or videos of your teaching or video another teacher with his/her permission. Journaling (either written or recorded in some way) is an excellent method to analyze your teaching and your reflections on the content of this course. Journaling is a device to help you slowdown in your studies and listen to your heart, soul, mind, and most importantly to God. There are journal prompt(s) provided for each session.

### DR. MOODY JOHNSON AND HIS “EGGED TIE”

Dr. Moody Johnson was my Bible teacher at Olivet Nazarene College in 1969. He taught a required class that was an overview of both the Old and New Testaments, and the class began at 7 a.m. Monday through Friday. As a very arrogant freshman, I thought this class was simply a review of Sunday school material. I attended church my whole life, had been part of Bible quizzing, and listened to my father’s sermons both Sunday morning and evening and through the week. My dad was an outstanding pastor and evangelist in the Church of the Nazarene, so there were many opportunities to hear his preaching!

In addition, I had a full schedule as well as a part-time job. To top it off, I had been a good friend of Dr. Johnson’s daughter. For all of these reasons, I believed this course was going to be filled with information I already knew, a course I could coast through, and most important to me, a simple way to make an “A” grade. I was wrong.

Dr. Johnson entered the class each day at least five minutes late. He always looked like he had just finished breakfast; in fact, most days he had egg or something that appeared to be egg, all over his tie. His hair was disheveled, and he often dropped all of his papers from a rather messy file that he had under his arm. I remember analyzing his clothes when he entered the class and thinking, “Didn’t he wear that yesterday . . . and maybe the day before?” He sporadically took attendance, and I quickly calculated that I could miss as many classes as I wished and still get a good grade.

Things changed dramatically when he prayed. There was no doubt in my mind that Moody Johnson had a relationship with God. He prayed for us, for himself, and for clarity of the Word of God. When he finished, he began teaching the Word of God with passion and truth, as well as a servant's heart. Dr. Johnson (egged tie or not) was a gifted and talented teacher who gave me an impetus for the study and teaching of God's Word. He initiated in me a passion to study the Bible and apply what I learned. He is a teacher I will never forget!

Why did we start with this example? This course is a course on how to teach the Bible to adults. We will be analyzing the indicators that represent quality teaching. Most importantly and specifically, we will be discussing how to teach the Bible, the Word of God. Dr. Johnson was a teacher that modeled many, but not all, of the quality teaching indicators that we will study in this course. Without doubt, he exhibited the most important indicator. His student (the author of this course) **LEARNED** the importance of God's Word and **ACTED** on that learning by teaching the Word of God for more than 40 years!

## WHAT IS QUALITY TEACHING?

### NOTES

Education research abounds with lists of indicators for quality teaching along with methods to assess if and when good teaching has occurred. As these indicators are identified, there is one important idea that must be understood. Simply “covering the content” or “doing all the teaching indicators” does not mean teaching has happened. For teaching to occur, the student must learn and demonstrate what has been learned by doing things differently. In other words, student learning must be considered. For the purposes of this class, the 14 additional sessions are organized around the following questions and the corresponding indicators of quality teaching.

- **Why teach?** Teaching with the purpose that all students should learn involves strong communication skills and assessing student learning so teaching can address student needs.
  - Session 2 *To Communicate Truth (God's Plan) and Grace (God's Gift)*
  - Session 3 *To Share Your Passion for God's Word and Your Servant's Heart*
  
- **What do you teach?** It is essential teachers understand and organize the subject matter they are teaching and present it so it is relevant to students.
  - Session 4 *The Bible, God's Word: Content that is Life-Changing*
  - Session 5 *Content that is Connected and Relevant to the Life of the Adult Learner*
  
- **Who do you teach?** Supporting and engaging all students in learning is listed as a critical outcome of good teaching.
  - Session 6 *Interesting Adults*
  - Session 7 *Difficult Adults*
  - Session 8 *Adults with Joys, Needs, and Hurts*
  
- **How do you teach?** This question probably contains the most indicators and involves planning and designing learning experiences for all students.
  - Session 9 *Covered and Surrounded by Prayer*
  - Session 10 *Focus on Lesson of Truth and Grace*
  - Session 11 *Use a Variety of Methods*
  - Session 12 *Facilitate Discussions and Ask Questions*
  - Session 13 *Listen to Adults and Use Their Responses*
  - Session 14 *Close with Hope, Grace, and a Time of Reflection*

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- **When and where do you teach?** The creation and maintenance of an effective teaching environment is necessary for learning.
  - Session 15 *Acknowledge that Learning Occurs Everywhere, Both In and Outside of a Bible Study Class*

Now, let's look at a Master Teacher, Jesus Christ. Let's see how these questions were answered by His life here on earth.

## WHY IS JESUS A MASTER TEACHER?



### NOTES

In His day, Jesus was well known as a master teacher, a teacher of “authority, and not as their teachers of the law” (Matthew 7:29). In the book of Luke, Jesus is addressed as “Teacher” many times by His committed followers, hypocritical religious leaders, and skeptical individuals from the multitudes. Indeed, Jesus Christ exhibited all of the qualities that are required to be a master teacher. Although it is impossible to specifically list each of these in this introductory session, we will look at general answers to each of the questions and in sessions 2 through 14 discuss them in more detail.

- **Why Teach?** Jesus left His heavenly home and put on human flesh to bring us the good news of the gospel and to show us what God is like (John 1:1-5; Philippians 2:8-11). What a purpose for teaching! Throughout the gospels, we find hundreds of examples of Jesus teaching His disciples as well as those in the crowds. He began His ministry by teaching in the synagogues, “being glorified by all” (Luke 4:15) and communicated the truth even when His teaching was rejected (Luke 4:20-30). Early in His ministry, Jesus was recognized by a man of the Pharisees as “a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him” (John 3:2). His message is one of truth as demonstrated in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7; Luke 6:20-49) and grace as offered throughout His ministry (Luke 7:36-50; John 4:1-36). He passionately addressed the needs of all His students, both those who accepted His teachings (John 8:31-32) and those who did not (Luke 13:34-35), and He acted out those teachings with a servant’s heart (John 13:12-17).
- **What Do You Teach?** Jesus IS the WORD (John 1:1-4) and He taught about Himself by His words, His acts, and His life-changing model of love. He came to teach us who God is; even at a very young age, His listeners “who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers” (Luke 2:47). Jesus never hid the truth and often gave the requirements necessary to be a true follower (Luke 9:23-26). He always connected His content to the life of the learner. His illustrations were always about events the multitudes understood (Luke 21:1-3), settings that were common to people of that day (Luke 10:25-37), and characters that represented His students (Luke 7:31). His teaching was relevant, “God-focused” (John 6:35-40) as well as “others-focused” (Matthew 5, 6, and 7; Luke 6:20-49).




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- Who Do You Teach?** Jesus taught all learners. Some of them were difficult, others were accepting; some were educated, some were not; some were rich, others were poor; some were men in leadership positions, others were women who had little regard; some were doubtful and discouraged, others were naturally joyful; some had strong personalities who expressed their thoughts loudly and often inappropriately; others had softer personalities and meditated quietly. Regardless of who they were, Jesus knew their thoughts, hurts, and needs and taught them. “But when Jesus perceived their thoughts,” He responded with more questions, some answers, ideas, or stories (Luke 5:22). Jesus met His listener’s physical needs as well as their spiritual needs (Luke 9:10-17). He went to the learner, even those who couldn’t see Him (Luke 19:1-9). He looked at who someone can be rather than who he or she is (John 4:1-26). Even Pilate knew Jesus taught well when he heard at His trial that this Jesus “stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place” (Luke 23:5). Yes, successful teaching leads people (no matter who they are) to do things differently!
- How Do You Teach?** Jesus used many different techniques and strategies that are consistent with good teaching. He listened to His students; asked thought provoking questions; used stories, metaphors, and parables to illustrate important truths; and often followed a lesson outline that helped students focus on the lesson to be learned. Even at an early age, Jesus sat with the teachers and listened to them and asked questions (Luke 2:46). Jesus frequently encouraged His students to truly learn by saying, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear! Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand” (Luke 8:4-18). Often Jesus’ questions were so thought provoking that His critics “could not answer Him regarding these things” (Luke 14:1-6) or they were forced to answer their own questions (Luke 7:36-50). Most importantly, His teachings were always preceded, covered, and reviewed by fervent prayer. “So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed” (Luke 5:16). “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12).
- When and Where Do You Teach?** Jesus taught as He journeyed. He taught “multitudes from the boat” (Luke 5:3), in the synagogue (Luke 6:6-11), “daily in the temple” (Luke 10: 47-48), at a table in the upper room (Luke 20:14-23), on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-25), and at breakfast by the sea (John 21:1-19). He taught by modeling what it meant to be His follower. He was baptized (Luke 3:21-22), He

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empowered His disciples to heal and cast out demons (Luke 9:1-6), He forgave those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34), and He was grateful and gave all glory to His Father (Luke 10:21). He taught His disciples that as a Christ follower, you model your words on a daily basis in many different ways and that the Holy Spirit will teach them (Luke 12:12). The writer of Acts of the Apostles understands that real disciples of Jesus Christ must live the WORD as he explains in Acts 1:1, that he will tell “all that Jesus began both to do and teach” before he tells of the disciples’ acts.

## WHY IS JESUS A MASTER TEACHER? A TEACHING EXAMPLE



### NOTES

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a popular story that both believers and non-believers know. Let's look at the context and the content of the event in the life of Jesus (Luke 10:25-37) and analyze it using the five questions and the indicators for quality teaching.

- **Why teach?** This teaching of Jesus illustrates His purpose of showing His disciples that God is a God of mercy and love and that His disciples should “go and do likewise” to everyone they encounter. Jesus communicated the truth and the grace of God by this story of those who demonstrated love as well as those who did not. He also taught those who were listening to His exchange with the lawyer the true meaning of the law, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” What an important truth!
- **What do you teach?** Jesus was teaching a most important concept, “Who is my neighbor?” The lawyer could easily quote the law, but he did not fully understand the law of love. To teach the lawyer, Jesus used a parable about four people who traveled “down from Jerusalem to Jericho.” This was a trip His listeners probably would know occurred after they had been to the synagogue. He first taught the concept of loving your neighbor by illustrating what it would NOT look like when He included the reactions of the priest and the Levite. He then told the story of real love demonstrated by an undesirable Samaritan, a person He knew His listeners would not easily recognize as a neighbor. The parable was relevant and had the potential to be life-changing if the listener would “go and do likewise.”
- **Who do you teach?** This parable was prompted by a question from “a certain lawyer” who stood up and “tested” Jesus. Jesus understood the lawyer knew the law and was testing Him, so Jesus responded to his questions WITH more questions. He answered His question by turning the lawyer’s response into an action, “Go and do likewise.” Jesus also realized He was teaching more than just this one lawyer. In the verses preceding this event, Jesus was speaking to His disciples, who were probably still with Him when the lawyer approached. Jesus also knew they had much to learn about their relationships with neighbors and their beliefs about Samaritans.


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- **How do you teach?** This parable illustrates many specific teaching techniques. Jesus used a parable to illustrate His points and answer the question posed by the lawyer. He gave examples and non-examples of “Who is my neighbor?” to clearly answer the question. To force the lawyer to think, Jesus responded to his question by asking questions of His own (i.e., so which of these three do you think was a neighbor?). Jesus realized sometimes people ask questions not so as to learn but to resist His teachings (i.e., “But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’”). When Jesus used the Samaritan as an example of love, He unsettled the expert so much that the lawyer had to answer correctly (i.e., “He who showed mercy on him.”) and thus answer his own question.
- **When and where do you teach?** Jesus modeled loving everyone throughout His ministry. Before this teaching event occurred, His disciples had seen Him offer the Samaritan woman at the well “living water,” heal a demon-possessed man, and forgive a sinful woman who worshiped Jesus by washing His feet with her hair. They knew His teaching was more than words or stories; He truly loved everyone. The lawyer who interrupted Jesus also understood the teaching of Jesus through this parable. His identification of the neighbor who “showed mercy on him” indicates he understood this concept. Hopefully, he went and did likewise!

### CLOSING THOUGHT

Teaching at any level with any content is a daunting and rewarding task. Teaching the Word of God to adults is especially daunting, yet so rewarding. In my teaching experience, I have learned so much by studying God’s Word, praying for my students, listening to their experiences and praises, and most importantly, I am blessed to have been taught by the Master Teacher . . . Jesus Christ.

In the early 1900s, an American librarian, John Cotton Dana said, “Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.” I believe this well-known educational quote is just as true now as it was in the 20th century. This session has long lists of indicators that will be studied in the following sessions. Are you open to learning? Do you still dare to teach? “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40). Oh, to be like our Master Teacher, Jesus!

## APPLICATION



### NOTES

Be prepared to share your three application activities with your mentor.

1. Select one of the teaching events in Jesus' life from the following list: a) The Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-15), b) The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7), c) The Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-31), d) The Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-13), or e) The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers (Luke 20:9-19). Using the five questions and the teaching indicators listed in this session, identify specific teaching indicators from the scripture that answers each question.
2. Everyone has teachers. Some have been good, others have not been good; some have been family members, others have been in school or church locations; some have taught content important to you, others have taught information you did not value. Whatever the case, think about the teachers you have had and select the one you would consider to be the "best." What qualities did he or she possess that made you classify him or her as the "best" teacher? What qualities match the ones outlined in this session?
3. Review the five questions and the titles of sessions 2-14. Identify the session you think you know the most about or the one you think you do the best as an adult Bible teacher. Explain your answer. Then identify the session you think you know the least about or the one you think you will have the most difficulty learning. Again, explain your answer. How open are you to learning? Do you dare to teach?

## JOURNALING

Consider some of the following when journaling:

- One idea, Bible verse, or story that made an impression on me today was . . .
- A new idea I encountered today is . . .
- One thing that made me uncomfortable today was . . .
- The effort I am willing to put into this course and into my own teaching during this module is best described by the word . . .
- The prayer I most want to pray right now is . . .

## EXAM

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**NOTES**

1. Jesus had a message that communicated \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. personal freedom and consequences
  - B. truth and grace
  - C. punishment and rewards
  - D. all of the above
2. Jesus addressed the needs of all those students that accepted His teachings.
  - A. True
  - B. False
3. Jesus' teachings were \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. relevant
  - B. "God-focused"
  - C. "others-focused"
  - D. all of the above
4. Jesus only used stories as a method of teaching.
  - A. True
  - B. False
5. Jesus didn't restrict His responsibility to teach to the times He was in the synagogue.
  - A. True
  - B. False

## DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MENTOR AND PARTICIPANT

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**NOTES**

Be prepared to discuss the following with your mentor:

1. Give a copy of your responses to the first application activity to your mentor before you meet.
2. Share your thoughts about the best teacher and the qualities he or she exhibited.
3. Review the five questions for quality teaching and the titles of the sessions where each question is specifically presented. The mentor should share what his/her answers would be.