

THE
DISCIPLESHIP
PLACE

Jesus the Master Teacher



SESSION 11

How Do You Teach?
Use a Variety of Methods

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How Do You Teach? Use a Variety of Methods

SESSION OVERVIEW

What Should a Lesson “Look Like”?

What Methods “Might” You Use?

**What Methods did Jesus Use?
An Example**

Application

Exam

Discussion Guide for Mentor and Participant

LEARNER OBJECTIVES

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

- Identify the parts of an effective lesson.
- List and describe at least five methods you might use to teach.
- Analyze the methods and lessons of Jesus as He taught about God’s provision.

How Do You Teach? Use a Variety of Methods

INTRODUCTION

JOURNALING

Think about a lesson (spiritual or otherwise) that you remember. Describe that lesson and tell what you remember about it. What did the teacher do to make it memorable? How did they start the lesson? What went on in the middle? How did it end? As you read through this session, consider each of the methods mentioned. Think about how you might employ some of them. Then, refer to your description of your memorable lesson. Do any of your memories match any of the methods mentioned in this session? Reflect on the possible connections.

TEACHING IN JAKARTA, INDONESIA

Early in my career at the University of Houston, I was given the opportunity to teach in Jakarta for a month during the summer. Many of the teachers or administrators who worked in their schools had been my graduate students, and we had worked on the national curriculum together. Naturally, I was thrilled to be invited to do a series of lectures and presentations for the teachers as well as their students in the primary schools.

My graduate students had assured me that all of the methods I had taught them in their university classes would work in Indonesia and that they had all the technology I would need to make presentations. So I packed up my “stuff” with the appropriate technology and materials. Of course, I knew exactly what I was going to do. After all, I had a doctorate in education, I had given many lectures, AND I knew precisely what each of the presentations should “look like.” I was ready!

Unfortunately, I was totally unprepared! First of all, I didn’t look right. Since it was a climate that was even warmer than Houston, I had packed only skirts (good), light blouses (mostly good IF I had a jacket), and sandals (not good). After I arrived, I found out that wearing sandals made me look too casual for such an occasion. *No problem*, I thought, *I will buy a pair of comfortable shoes at the store*. Oops! I am a giant in Indonesia. I couldn’t find any shoes that were my size so instead, I wore the only pair of heels I had to every teaching assignment. UGH!

Second, although they had all the technology I needed, they normally did not have electricity! My computer, with wonderful graphics, videos, and presentations could not be used at all. Of course, with little or no electricity, lights were unavailable and even poster displays did not show up. So, I taught with just my words and physical actions (although with Franz as my interpreter, I am not sure exactly what was said)

Third, I didn't have enough of the materials that I needed to teach. I never dreamed that more than 100 teachers per presentation would stand and listen to me talk with an interpreter for more than two hours in more than 100 degree temperatures after they had taught all day. So, later I went to the local market and bought some materials that could be adapted for my presentations. I learned so much, and I freely admit that my presentations at the end of the month were much better than those at the beginning of the month.

Why did I tell you this story? Please know that I am not complaining about my experience in Indonesia. In fact, I enjoyed it a great deal. The people were wonderful to me, and they expressed how pleased they were that I visited. Surprisingly, they even said they learned something. I included this story because I wanted you to see how important it is to prepare while keeping your audience in mind. I hadn't asked the right questions. I hadn't prepared alternative methods to my normal ones. I hadn't investigated the cultural habits of the teachers and so on. Rather, I assumed that the approaches I am used to would be acceptable in Indonesia as well.

As you read this session, I hope you think with your group in mind. Some of the suggestions I make will not be new to you; in fact, you will simply skim over a suggestion and hopefully, keep doing what you have been doing. Perhaps other suggestions will be brand new to you. In those cases, I hope you try one of the new methods, adapt it to fit your group, and then reflect on its effectiveness. Whatever you decide, please prepare your lessons and try to vary your methods as you teach the Word of God. If you can't tell by now... I believe that God's Word **DESERVES** your best. They are the most important lessons I teach!

WHAT SHOULD A LESSON “LOOK LIKE”?

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First of all, your lesson should be “over-prepared.” By that, I mean you need to have done your best to consider every aspect of the lesson. When you are prepared, you can be flexible, focused on the lesson meaning, respond to someone in the group who needs some special attention, or handle situations that may arise. Please know that I believe these are God’s lessons; He is in control. But as His servant, I need to be prepared so I can listen to His direction.

We have talked about preparing to teach in most of the previous sessions (especially the importance of prayer, Session 9). However, in this session, I want to talk specifics in regard to lesson planning. Because I want these specifics to be very clear, I have included my notes (in italics) on my preparation for a recent class session from the 2016 July and August series on the *Message to the Seven Churches, Session 9, The Church in Pergamum (Revelations 2:12-17)* (*Word Action Publishing of The Adult Teacher*). The lesson was written by one of my favorite authors, Roger L. Hahn.

- Know your objective or the session truth of the lesson: This is listed first because when you identify it, you know where to focus in the lesson, and it gives you some possibilities about your presentation. The objectives are normally mentioned in the lesson material. Sometimes I use these, and other times I adapt or rewrite them to match what I know about the students in my group or how the scripture has specifically spoken to me. These objectives need to be achievable and matched to the learners’ personalities and experiences as clearly as possible. Sometimes I have heard statements that are not session truths. For example, the beginning teacher who announces, “I was just asked to teach this lesson and I just want to get through it. I don’t think I can do this!” Or, an unprepared person who says, “Today we will read the lesson word for word because I know you haven’t had time to read it” (and neither did I!). Remember that while these may be true statements, they are not the TRUTH that should be taught in your lessons.

- *Lesson Objective: “We are called to be faithful witnesses for Christ regardless of the cost,” is the stated session truth. After my study and prayer, I decided to focus primarily on the fact that Christ is faithful to us and He “knows” where we live! Many of the students in my Bible study were going through some rough times, issues with children, and situations that are difficult. While I certainly would call them to be “faithful witnesses for Christ,” I wanted to emphasize God’s faithfulness to them and his knowledge of “where we live.”*


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- Review the context of the specific scripture, i.e., when, where, and written to whom: The context of any scripture is very important. We are aware of people who take a verse out of context and use it to support a particular idea or ideology. As teachers, it is important to know and communicate the context of the scripture to be studied. You need to use resources that will help you learn what the context is, when it was written and to whom it was specifically written.
 - *Scripture Context: Pergamum – one of the most difficult places in ancient Asia, center for the worship of a variety of pagan deities, and “I know where you live – where Satan has his throne.” See commentary on page 37 of Bible Life. Also, see map of Turkey in map resources. Review the meaning of the angel of the church as well as the fact that this was an actual church.*

- Word study or vocabulary that needs to be defined or elaborated: There are often many terms in the scripture or ideas that are hard to understand or are not familiar to everyone. I have found that an investigation of words as they are stated in their original language is often necessary before I can understand what the scripture is saying. Since I only speak one language – and I’m not always good at that – I need a variety of resources to understand the biblical vocabulary. In fact, one of the reasons I love the *Word Action Publishing* of *The Adult Teacher* is that there are at least two word studies for every lesson. I find them to be very helpful.
 - *The main vocabulary issue in this lesson is the idea of “the sharp, double-edged sword” (Revelation 2:12). Use the three Jewish meanings (leave out the Greco-Roman literature) of the Sword of My Mouth given in Bible and Life page 36-37 to share. Discuss this as a group*
 - *IMPORTANT – Meaning of the “white” stone: in Jewish courts, communicated a judgment of innocence.*

- Outline the big ideas from the scripture. Before I begin the session, I normally have divided the lesson into three or four big ideas. These are the most important ideas, and I generally have them memorized (not word for word) in my mind. Sometimes these are written, so everyone can see them; at other times, they are in my mind only. It is essential for everyone in the group to know the important ideas, so they will be able to summarize their lesson to anyone who might come across them.


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- *Idea ONE: Compliment: You are my faithful witnesses and I know where you live.*
 - *Idea TWO: Condemnation: The church at Pergamum was tolerant of false teachers.*
 - *Idea THREE: Reward: If the church repents, they will be given hidden manna, a white stone with a new name written on it.*
- Separate your lesson into sections so that you can check for understanding periodically: One of the most effective methods of teaching is to periodically check for understanding. In most instances, IF a teacher does this, he or she will say, “Do you understand?” or “Does that make sense?” or “Got it?” Most students will simply say, “Yes” or nod their heads in agreement. Students need to see the scripture in bite-size sections, and as the teacher, you need to assess if they have processed the information. SO, after each section, you need to ask questions, make statements that facilitate discussion, or apply the scripture in some way to their lives. In this way, you can “check for understanding” before you go on to the next section.

In this lesson, the three sections will be around the big ideas listed above. I checked for understanding by asking an application question after Idea One. I asked an opinion question after Idea Two. Finally, after Idea Three, we used hymnals and found and sang songs that addressed the specific rewards mentioned in Idea Three.

- Write specific questions that you want to ask participants (Session 12 will be helpful with this part.)

Used some of the questions from the Teachers Book . . . those are underlined. Also, used some of my own. (See Session 12 for a list of these possibilities as well as question types.)

Now that we have talked about the lesson preparation and you have had a chance to see my notes about a lesson, I want to show you how I organize all the ideas into a cohesive lesson. Before I do, I need to admit to being biased about the material published by the Word Action Publishing Company. The four steps listed at the beginning of each *Adult Teacher* book matches current educational research for effective teaching. I have used that outline for many years, and it works well. The steps are as follows along with the suggested time frames. As I did in the previous section, I will use the same lesson in Revelation about the Church in Pergamum to show how I organized the lesson. My lesson notes will be in italics.


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- **Engage Interest: Why is this important?** (5-10 minutes) Often, this is part of the focus that I talked about in Session 10. As you may remember, the focus must connect to the lesson in some way, and more importantly, it needs to answer the “why” question for participants. For example, *Why is this lesson about faithfulness and tolerance so important to me in 2016?*

To engage students in this lesson, we described some nearby cities and their reputation. Students were asked to tell why we thought as we did and if the reputation of the city had been earned or if it was truthful in any way. NOTE: I did not ask about the reputation of another church in our area or our church. That would go where I didn't want to go at this time. (I know my audience!)

I then introduced a brief lecture about the context of the city of Pergamum and its reputation. I intentionally did NOT ask students to tell me this information, because in most groups we would be sharing our ignorance. Much of the information was new to me, and it was not in the student quarterly.

- **Explore the Word: What Does God's Word Say?** and **Examine Life: How Does This Apply to Us?** (30-45 minutes) These two parts can be done separately so that the entire scripture is read and discussed and then the entire scripture is applied to the students' lives. I normally do this by sections, i.e., we read the scripture and explore the word for one section, then apply that section to our lives and then we do the next section and repeat both steps, and so on. I make that decision after studying the specific lesson. Whatever you decide, these two parts are necessary, i.e., first you study what God's Word says and then you apply it to students in your group.

In this lesson, I decided to use the three sections around the big ideas. After studying what the Word states, I then asked some questions or did an activity that helped me check for their understanding as suggested in the section above.

- **Exercise Faith: What Should I Do About This?** (5 minutes) This is the closing of the lesson, and it is a way of asking participants to reflect on what they have learned and what God has taught them through this lesson. Generally, you are asking them for action as a result of studying God's Word. WOW! Please don't leave it out. (NOTE: Session 14 presents many suggestions for closing lessons.)

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After singing a few songs about the third big idea, I asked participants to sing the first verse of "Victory in Jesus." I then asked students to think about the victories in their lives as they remember that God "knows where they live" and He is faithful. We then close the session with prayers of thanksgiving and requests for strength in our faithfulness and repentance for any tolerance we have for false teachers.

Are you surprised at the amount of planning that is necessary for good teaching? I simply do not believe that God's Word should be shared with little preparation. After more than 50 years, I am simply amazed at how much I learn from God's Word. It is always new, even if I have read it many times. AND, most importantly, if I am asked to serve as a teacher, it is an honor to teach the Good News.

WHAT METHODS “MIGHT” YOU USE?



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When I received my first teacher training at Olivet Nazarene College (ONC in 1969, not ONU), I had a class on “Visual Arts.” That class taught me how to make bulletin boards, create visual displays, use a film projector, and use photos to communicate content. Although I was a computer “lab assistant” who was learning Fortran, I primarily put student cards in a computer station to grade tests for instructors. There was no thought of using technology as a method for teaching. Now, I scheduled all of the classes in the Curriculum and Instruction Department in the College of Education at the University of Houston. All of our teacher candidates had several instructional technology classes, and every class a teacher took for teaching preparation was required to have a strong technology focus. We used an amazing amount of technology and no matter how hard I try, even now, I am about 10 years behind in using technology for teaching purposes.

So, how can you use technology effectively in facilitating or teaching Bible studies? Or should you? This is a question that only you can answer. When I first taught a class of older youth (most were 60+), they did not want to see a PowerPoint presentation or a short video clip. It seemed that the projection screen was always too difficult to see or technology “just didn’t work!” The use of even simple technology resulted in conversations about why the words to the songs in the church services always had to be shown on the screen, why we couldn’t just use the hymnal, and what happened to the way we used to worship and so on and so on. For them, I decided using technology for a lesson presentation just wasn’t worth it! Then, after a few years, almost everyone in the group was on Facebook or had an email account, so we used it to communicate lesson topics, prayer requests, or praises. Unfortunately, I also got continuous emails that requested me to forward a message “If I loved Jesus” or hundreds of pictures of their family and friends who I didn’t know. As the years passed, technology just became a necessary part of any lesson. Class members looked up meaning for words on their smartphones, almost everyone read the scripture in class on their Bible app, we listened to music from my laptop, and I used my iPad (tablet) to present the lesson outline for all to see.

So, how do you decide when and for what purposes do you use technology? My simple suggestion is use technology ONLY IF it helps communicate the Word of God. If it detracts from the Word or the message and invites students “to be impressed with the technology,” do not use it! I only want Bible study students to be impressed with the power, love, grace, mercy, and providence of an amazing God! That’s my view of technology. I realize that I am now old, so perhaps someone younger needs to write this section!


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What are some other methods or materials that may be appropriate and helpful to communicate God's Word? Let's look at a few. Again, I will use some possible examples from the Revelation lesson; they will be written in italics.

- Illustrations or Stories: This method is particularly important to students of the Bible. A story about real people in real situations that directly relate to the lesson is often quite helpful for understanding the meaning of the scripture. Often, written lessons include illustrations, but they can also be found in a variety of other resources. *The story of Antipas, a "faithful witness" was actually part of the scripture in the Pergamum lesson. Although very little is known about Antipas, Roger Hahn shares a story about a Christian pastor he knew who died for our Christian faith. He included the story in his written lesson, and I shared it when I presented the lesson.*
- Humor: Bible studies by their very nature are serious. I have found that when a bit of humor is used or when there is a way that can lighten up a tough topic, it is a good thing. Sometimes these humorous moments are planned; other times, they just occur. We need to be able to laugh at ourselves and when we do, it helps us open our minds to new information. *In the 55+ class that I taught, I often began with a joke about age, "You know you are old when . . ." In this particular lesson, I began with a listing of cities that had a bad reputation. After we listed them, I asked if any of us had ever been in these cities. We all had a good laugh when we realized that none of us had lived or even been in the cities we thought had the worse reputations! "You know you are old when . . ."*
- PowerPoint Screen, Posters, or other Visual Displays: This tool can be used to visually project a phrase, a verse, or a short sentence that you want participants to remember and possibly repeat. Participants also appreciate the scripture references written on some sort of display. I normally place them on a board within an outline of the session. *The main truth, "God says, 'You are my faithful witnesses and I know where you live' " was shown on a PowerPoint slide for all to see throughout the lesson. Then, the teacher repeated phrases like, "The world is a mess; sin abounds." or "Life is so busy and no one is a Christian where I work." or "It feels like everyone around me is either ill or making poor decisions." or "We need to move; our neighborhood is not a good place to raise children." or "Everyone wants me to be tolerant . . . tolerant . . . tolerant . . . and I just can't be!"*
- Role Plays: This method can be one of the most powerful tools of all; however, it needs quite a bit of preparation. I have used it most often when someone has memorized scripture or can share a specific situation


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“in character.” I have been a character who walked into church looking very much like a homeless person, complete with a grocery cart and trash to introduce the pastor’s sermon and the following Bible study lesson from James 2. I have also had someone who had memorized the Sermon on the Mount come and say it as Jesus might have done. There are many possibilities for this and the preparation is worth it in most cases. *Before Idea 2 that was presented, I had a friend who others didn’t know come in and begin to distribute pamphlets that described the end of the world and what we need to do that very day if we were to be saved. After he left, we studied the scripture and then answered some opinion questions regarding false prophets.*

- Object Lesson: Often times, an object can convey a message that words only cannot. Scripture abounds with objects that have meaning to Christians. Altars where sacrifices were made (formerly animals) and now a place of prayer where we can offer our own commitments. The cross, the tomb, and the crown of thorns all remind us of Christ’s sacrifice for us and His resurrection. This past year for the first time, I discovered the verses in John 20:6-7 that talk about the linens folded neatly by the empty tomb. Someone I respect told me that Jewish custom suggested that a neatly folded napkin meant that the person was returning. He was not finished yet. What a beautiful meaning! Now, every time I see a folded napkin at a dinner table, I think, Jesus is returning! *The white stone “with a new name written on it” is a beautiful object that certainly can be used to remind everyone about the reward for overcoming. I have used it several times in the closing so that participants can be reminded of God’s promise.*
- Songs: In the Church of the Nazarene, we have a rich heritage of song in hymns AND choruses. If used intentionally, connections can be made between the text in the scripture and those in the song. I have found that music, no matter the age, can often communicate better than my words or even the read message. Even if you can’t sing (and I am one of those people), you need to consider this as one of your tools for teaching. It is important! *I used the song Victory in Jesus at the closing of this lesson. In addition, a commitment song despite “where you live” is the chorus of “I Have Decided!” I used it after Idea 1 because it was familiar and participants could easily sing it and follow up with . . .” Because we are called to be faithful witnesses for Christ and He knows where we live!”*
- White or Blackboard or Flip Chart: This is one tool that is found in almost every teaching situation. How is this different than the PowerPoint and other visual aids mentioned in the beginning of this session? A blackboard, white board, or flip chart can be written on with students’



responses or crossed off for effect or connected with arrows or drawn to show a process. It is useful if you want to remember students' responses or to record a simple outline. Remember that you don't want to spend the time necessary to write everything in complete sentences or to place long, involved sentences that participants can't read on the board. *I listed the "bad reputation" phrases that students used in the Engage Interest section on a large flip chart and when we talked about the issues from "where we live," I then put a large X through them and said that if God knows where we live, He can handle all of these things!*

WHAT METHODS DID JESUS USE? AN EXAMPLE



NOTES

As a master teacher, Jesus used all of the effective methods that could be used in the culture of His day. I have outlined many of His methods in the first session, a session that I frequently review because I always need to consider my teaching in regard to the teaching of the Perfect Mentor, Jesus Christ!

As I close this session, however, I want to emphasize one particular method I intentionally left for last. The metaphor was a method or tool that Jesus used over and over again in a variety of contexts and situations. You probably remember that a metaphor is “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable.” For example, when the scripture says, “The spirit of a man IS the lamp of the Lord,” (Proverbs 20:27), it does not mean that there is a literal lamp inside a man. Rather, it means that spirit of a man has similar characteristics of a lamp in relationship to the Lord. That phrase could then have many different meanings because a lamp has many characteristics.

When Jesus uses a metaphor to teach, He is normally describing the attributes of God as He connects to us and/or our role as Christians as we connect to the world. Through metaphors, Jesus asks His followers to “become fishers of men” connecting their lives as fishermen to “fishers of men” even though everyone knows that people are not fish. But the action of fishing is one that His disciples can understand, and He is illustrating how that action is similar to the action of sharing the Good News.

There are hundreds of metaphors throughout Scripture, but I have listed only a few that are the most familiar.

- You are the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13).
- You are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).
- The lamp of the body is your eye (Matthew 6:22)
- I am the good shepherd (John 10:11).
- I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7).
- I am the light of the world (John 8:12).
- The bride of the Lamb has come (Revelation 19:7).

**NOTES**

- Give us our daily bread. (Luke 11:3). I am the bread of life (John 6:35).
- I am the resurrection (John 11:25-26).
- I am the vine; you are the branches (John 15:5).

These provide wonderful studies as you look at the similarities between the two objects or people being compared. What does this metaphor mean to you? What did Jesus mean when He used the metaphor? What does He want you to understand? Yes, the use of a metaphor is indeed a powerful method you want to consider in your study of God's Word.

CLOSING THOUGHT

As I have reread this session, I am reminded that what I have written is all about what I believe SHOULD be done as a teacher of God's Word. I know that I am without doubt far from this description. It is easy for me to say what should be done to teach; it is much harder to do it all the time. It is easy for me to say, "be over-prepared;" it is quite another to always be prepared, let alone be "over-prepared." I hope that you have found something in this long list that will help you teach well. Please know that I still believe what I quoted in session one, "Who dares to teach must never cease to learn!"

APPLICATION



NOTES

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

1. Identify a specific Bible lesson that you are planning to teach along with the scripture you will be studying. Outline with notes (similar to the way the Revelation lesson was noted) the four steps in lesson preparation: a) engage interest, b) explore the Word, c) examine life, and d) exercise faith. Consider the session truth, the context information, the new words you will be emphasizing, and the big ideas of the lesson from your perspective. List your lesson resources.
2. Select ONE of the methods or materials listed that you might use. Describe how you will use it.
3. Think about the metaphors that are quoted in this session and/or metaphors used throughout the Bible. What metaphors used to describe God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are most helpful to your spiritual life? Tell why the metaphor you selected is so meaningful.

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 prayer I most want to pray right now is . . .

EXAM

**NOTES**

1. According to the author, what are some of the benefits of being “over-prepared?”
 - A. An ability to focus on the lesson meaning.
 - B. The freedom to be flexible.
 - C. The ability to show why people are wrong when they answer questions about the lesson.
 - D. a and b
 - E. all of the above
2. Knowing the objective or session truth of the lesson is critical for effective teaching.
 - A. True
 - B. False
3. The author suggests that investigating the original language in Scripture is helpful but is most often not necessary.
 - A. True
 - B. False
4. A helpful question to use when pausing to make sure your students are understanding, include the following?
 - A. Does that make sense?
 - B. Most of you understand what I am saying but is anyone unable to comprehend?
 - C. Not everyone is smart enough to understand so just tell me if that is you?
 - D. none of the above
5. Which questions are important to make sure to explore during a lesson?
 - A. Why is this important?
 - B. What does God’s Word say?
 - C. What should I make sure other people do with this?
 - D. a and b
 - E. all of the above

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MENTOR AND PARTICIPANT



NOTES

Be prepared to discuss the following with your mentor:

1. Give your mentor the responses to application activities 2 and 3. Discuss briefly any part of the answers from those questions that you want to share or the answers that most interests your mentor.
2. If possible, before you teach the lesson you describe in application activity one, discuss it with your mentor. Ask her opinion regarding the 1) most effective part, 2) the part that appears to be confusing, and 3) suggestions that could be included. Discuss changes. Then, if possible, teach the lesson and reflect on the plan and the results with your mentor.