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Team Teaching with Success

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TEAM TEACHING WITH SUCCESS



by Elmer L. Towns

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ELMER L. TOWNS

Illustrated by ROBERT E. HUFFMAN

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Preface

This book took two years of research and writing. During that time I tried to observe as many different kinds of teams as possible at work in the Sunday school. From my observation I concluded that team teaching is better "caught" than "taught." As a result I included the case studies in this manuscript so the teacher could get the "feel" of team teaching.

I observed the Nursery class of North Suburban Evangelical Free Church, Deerfield, Illinois, more than any other class. The lead teacher was Ruth Towns, my wife. I learned many practical techniques from her interaction with other teachers on the team, and with children.

Don't read this book and think team teaching is the cure to all the ills of our Sunday schools. It is only one of the ways of teaching pupils. The only cure-all is the Word of God and the Spirit of God working through the man of God. After reading this book, you may not have the opportunity of teaching with a team, but I hope you do. Remember, however, if you teach in Sunday school, you are already part of a great team. You are teamed with those who teach the Word of God; you are part of the greatest team in the world.

-Elmer L. Towns

SECTION ONE

Gaining a Perspective

The United States is many things: explosive . . . dynamic . . . complex ... people-oriented ... and competitive. But *interdependent* is the term that best describes our country. We depend on one another to build super expressways, launch astronauts into outer space, implant artificial organs in the human body, and feed our massive society.

Our civilization is founded on the ability of each person to work with another. The pioneer who cut his own home and farm out of the forest has passed. Many small self-employed businessmen are being swallowed up by large corporations. The one-room red schoolhouse where a schoolmarm taught grades one to eight is vanishing. Interdependent institutions are taking their place.

As our society becomes more complex, children and adults need more knowledge to make a meaningful contribution and live happy lives. We live today in the age of the specialist. The computer is a familiar and necessary part of our culture. The use of modern teaching tools and techniques is essential to the communication of this wider knowledge. And if knowledge of God's Word is to increase, the new approaches must also be applied to its communication.

In our Sunday schools we can help pupils learn more of God's plan for their lives as we call upon "helpers" with special gifts and knowledge. We can mold these teachers into a *team* to better teach the Word of God. In this book teaching will be described as "guiding the learning activities of children."

At first glance, *team teaching* seems to be a twentieth-century invention. However, the use of teams in teaching is as old as the art of instructing pupils. Whenever two teachers planned a lesson together, or interacted in front of a class, there was team teaching. The recent attention given to team teaching centers around new classroom aids and methods, even though the art is old. In this book team teaching is defined in this way

Team teaching involves two or more persons influencing all of the pupils for the total class time through sharing a common purpose, planning the lesson, guiding the learning activities, and evaluating the classroom experience.

CHAPTER ONE

From Problems to Progress

Teen-age youth can be a problem to teach. The Junior High class at Grace United Church was no different.

“Our kids drop out unless their parents make them come,” Jim Milson, Bible school superintendent, lamented. “But don’t get me wrong. Keeping them in Bible-school is not our aim,” he continued. “Our Bible school wasn’t preparing our young people to assume a leadership role in the church, and they weren’t growing in Christ.” A visit to the Junior High Department showed four classes following the usual approach of the teacher with her pupils, sitting in a semi-circle, holding their Bibles on their laps.

Cathy Lee, a veteran teacher, gave an exasperated sigh. “I was prepared,” she insisted, “but they weren’t ready for learning. Discipline was a problem because the pupils weren’t interested.” Tightening her lips she said, “They tuned me out.”

Jim Phelps, the oldest teacher in the department, concurred. “Some listened and some passed wallets. I felt I didn’t communicate with them. I lectured, but Junior High pupils need more than a talk.” Jim resigned his teaching post and took a seat in the men’s Bible class. “Team teaching was inaugurated not so much to stop discipline problems, as to enrich teaching,” Jim Milson asserted. He accepts the challenge of a team approach. “We’ve got to stretch them,” he said, speaking of the Junior Highs’ need to be broadened in Bible knowledge. First, a team had to be gathered. Henry Lee joined his wife Cathy as teacher on the team. Henry, an engineering consultant, became lead teacher. Kenneth and Sue Uhlinger joined the team in place of Jim Phelps. Kenneth is an assistant principal in the local high school.

“You get more ideas from four,” class leader Henry Lee observed. “Our group study results in the creation of many new ideas.” “Sometimes your mind goes blank,” Cathy continued, “or you may think you have covered the subject. But then another teacher adds more to what you have just said . . . or makes your own point clearer by saying it in a different way.”

How does the quartet avoid overlapping and overlooking in class activities? When the new quarter’s study unit comes out, the team meets to examine the material and map general plans for activities, posters, skits, group discussion, and scrapbooks or other devices that will aid their teaching.

“We avoid confusion by making complete plans before a new quarter begins,” Henry said. “Also, we encourage one another and keep our spirits high. It’s easy to become discouraged teaching young teens.”

The planning session at the beginning of the quarter takes an entire evening. Henry explained, “We map the plans for the entire thirteen or fourteen weeks of the quarter. We’d like to meet every week, but that’s too much time from our busy schedules. We do manage to meet once a month after evening church service. No more special meetings are required during the quarter, unless of course, emergency problems arise.”

“We keep in touch by telephone,” Sue added. “After that first meeting we try to get together for lesson preparation before and after class.”

Henry considers three sheets of carbon paper indispensable for team teaching. This way everyone gets a copy of the triple depth of interpretation of each lesson-especially applications.

“We first eliminated the opening assembly,” Henry stated. “We didn’t want to continue a dead program. The total class hour was used for teaching. Since we had only one hour for teaching, we felt the church service should provide the worship experience. The whole team agreed the pupils weren’t worshipping under the old opening assembly.” “Different arrangements of time were tried. Sometimes we sang in the middle of the hour, sometimes at the beginning, sometimes not at all,” Cathy related. She described how the large class was divided for small group study. On occasions, the pupils went straight into the study groups when entering the class. Four study groups were used most of the time, but occasionally the class was divided in half or kept in one large unit.

The four study groups did not consist of the same individuals every week. Natural groupings of friends or arbitrary numbering off was used to divide the large group. One Sunday the class was divided according to alphabetical order.

“Once we divided them into two equal groups, with boys and girls in both,” Sue recalled, “but it didn’t work. The girls hardly opened their mouths when the boys were in the group.”

“Also, the Junior Highs become more involved when adults are not in the group,” Cathy observed. “When we are with them, the group tends to become a traditional Bible-school class. They want us to talk, but they don’t want to listen. They tune us out.”

The four teachers agreed to let the pupils carry the discussion without adults on occasions. When asked for reasons for the success of this experiment, Sue replied, “Variety is the key.” She continued, “If we can keep Sunday school exciting and challenging, it’s worth all the work.”

The class spends fifteen minutes each Sunday working on special projects such as making posters or scrapbooks, or writing a class play. During these periods, according to the quartet of teachers, personal attention is important. The teachers circulate, watching closely for initial signs of boredom-like yawning or secretive whispering. Before a serious problem develops, a teacher focuses attention on the project.

“When you have four teachers,” Kenneth said, “you are not as frustrated. You are able to work with individual pupils. As a result you are more likely to *guide* than to *dictate*.”

“Our discipline problem has practically vanished,” Henry indicated. “When the pupil has a different teacher each week, he has to play it cool. Also, the change in teachers tends to keep the methodology from becoming monotonous.”

“I’m excited about team teaching,” Jim Milson admitted. “Maybe we can hold some of these pupils and reduce our dropouts from the Sunday school.” In the same conversation Cathy remarked, “I believe we are communicating more Bible facts than before.” Her husband interjected, “They become involved and think more. I hope we are helping them with their everyday problems.”

Progress Begins With Problems

Team teaching has been used in varying degrees for the past three decades in the public school and the church, but to many Sunday-school teachers it may seem to be a new concept. Teaching by a team approach has come to have a variety of meanings depending upon the situation or the person using the term. In this book, the following definition will be used

Team teaching involves two or more persons influencing all of the pupils for the total class time through sharing a common purpose, planning the lesson, guiding the learning activities, and evaluating the classroom experience.

Churches have different reasons for using team teaching. Some adopt the method because it is the fad, the thing to do. Other churches adopt it because they are not able to enlist enough teachers to take individual classes. Still other churches are afraid of the dropout problem and adopt team teaching in an effort to hold their pupils. A further motivation for using team teaching is represented by the church whose teachers say, "We can't do a thing with our pupils. We ought to try team teaching. After all, what do we have to lose?" Finally, a church may adopt a team approach because they have a space problem. They put two or three classes together because they do not have enough classrooms.

There are some questions that we must honestly face. Why do we use team teaching in Christian education? What are the values of this method? Does it have intrinsic qualities that make it superior to the self-contained classroom? Will it help teachers achieve their objectives in Christian education? Only as we answer these questions can we determine the validity of team teaching in our Sunday schools.

Progress begins with problems. The church that has no problems is usually the dead church, the church that is going nowhere. Problems are usually a sign of progress. Let us analyze some of the contemporary problems of the Bible school. Then we can honestly consider the question, "Can team teaching meet the problems facing the Bible school?"

Problems Lead to Progress

Many people analyze and criticize the Bible school, but few people build. Team teaching is an attempt to build better Bible schools. However, we must first analyze the problems so that we may better solve them. The following list of reasons for the failure of the Bible school is based on careful observation. This list is not intended to be the usual exposé. However, through an analysis of the Bible school's problems we will get a better understanding of what can be done to teach, reach, win, and develop pupils for Jesus Christ.

Some teachers forget to wind the clock. The world about us, like time, ticks on. The Bible school must keep its clock *wound tight*, ready to meet the challenge of tomorrow. Many Bible schools follow programs that are geared to the experience of adults in the church. When these adults were children, everything was different. The church established a "self-contained class" for each age level—beginners through adults. Each class had one teacher, and most of these classes met in the church basement or other uneducational areas such as a choir loft, balcony, or minister's study. The adults met in the sanctuary. Many times these classes did not have individual classrooms. Instead, several groups of students sat in semicircles about their teachers, all of them meeting in the church basement or other large room.

Bible-school teachers took the attendance and passed an offering envelope for the collection, then led in prayer. Then they either read from their lesson quarterlies or “presented the lesson.”

The Bible schools of the past existed in a homogeneous community. Children from the church attended the same school, went to the same social activities, and played together during the week.

The world of the modern child is shrinking. Modern transportation has given the teenager a radius of one hundred miles for a single date. The mass media bring the riots of the afternoon and the battlefronts of the world to the evening television screen. Closed circuit television is piped into many classrooms. The textbooks in our public schools are as up-to-date as the research libraries of our universities.

When our church leaders were children, they came from small churches, many of which were located in small towns. Today our children live in heterogeneous urban or suburban situations and in many cases travel a considerable distance to the church.

Another vital factor is the crowded schedule on which suburbanites live. The average child of twenty years ago ran from the school to enjoy an afternoon of play. Today’s children have music lessons, football practice, and the organized activities of the park district. The church also has a full schedule of activities for its young people.

One of the largest problems facing the Bible school today is that of continuing with an obsolete pattern inherited from the past. This problem is further complicated by adult leaders who tend to recreate the program, organization, methods, and experiences of a generation ago and try to make them significant to children today. These obsolete patterns do not meet the new needs, circumstances, and cultures of today’s children. Traditionalism robs the Bible school of progress and power.

Let no one be deceived. The battle for the improvement of education is not won. If public school educators feel the challenge they face is staggering, how can we in the church feel otherwise? Petersen and Hayden have noted

Historians of the future might well refer to the present educational era as the “age of contradictions.” We have on the one hand, a growing mound of reputable theory and valid research which points the way to effective teaching ... on the other hand, we have a substantial amount of classroom practice which is rooted in tradition, habit, lack of experience, or lack of knowledge, which is not supported of the high quality of education demanded by our modern democratic culture.¹

The Sunday-school time bomb. Dr. Ed. Haves has stated, “Leadership training is the time bomb of the Sunday school. Unless we can lick the problem of quality training, we’ve had it. The future of the Sunday school is in the hands of its leaders.”

Teacher training has been too narrowly concerned in the past with the so-called practical aspect of classroom operation. We have been emphasizing “methods of teaching” while many teachers have not understood the basic concepts dealing either with the teaching or learning process. Teacher training has been viewed as only a simple matter of mastering lesson content and a few methods of presenting that content, but it is actually the entire process of equipping the total man for the ministry of the Word of God.

The effort to prepare teachers by giving them a mastery of “how to’s” is futile. The master of devices usually can *manage* a classroom rather well, but he may not be a good teacher. The concept of teaching and learning must be understood. Of course, when we speak of concepts of basic theory, some will parrot the well-worn statement, “That may be good theory, but it is not practical.” These people feel that theory is always wrong and the practical is always right. But this is false. Everyone operates according to theory—either good theory or bad theory. If something is true in theory, then it must be true in practice.

In this book we must take a trip into the real but unseen world of childhood. Just as you must understand the Bible before you can teach it, so you must understand childhood before you can teach the child. Many people think they understand the concepts of “learning” simply because they learned in their public school experience. This is not so! The world of knowledge is exploding about us. Since World War II the amount of knowledge available to man has doubled. Computers have revolutionized our thinking. Our young people are studying philosophy in their sophomore year of high school, whereas their parents probably received their first introductory course in philosophy in their third year of college. The spiraling increase of knowledge in our world demands that Bible-school teachers follow the new formulas of learning to keep up with the times. Yet, they must teach the Word of God—anchored on the Rock of Ages.

Teaching is an exciting intellectual adventure. The Bible-school teacher should have the ability to adapt boldly the revelation of God to the changing times. He should be able to invent and create procedures to meet the ever-changing demands of the learning situation. This means he must have an imaginative anticipation of the continuous potential of the class. He must keep on the track towards desirable educational goals without manipulating or coercing the pupil by devices and tricks of the trade.

The Bible and life have come unglued. The Bible was written to meet the needs of children, youth, and adults. Remember, the Bible-school teacher works with people, not programs; with lives, not lines. The teacher who becomes pupil-centered in his interest and application, will surely become Bible-centered in his approach. Otherwise, if the leader is only Bible-centered the pupils are forgotten, manipulated, and treated as objects. When this happens, the teacher’s approach is neither Bible-centered nor Christ-centered.

This book will reflect an unashamed acceptance of the Word of God as the final authority for belief and practice. However, you will not find here an emphasis on “sitting in a circle and listening to the Bible.” In contrast, you will find an emphasis on activity and *involvement* with the Word of God. The thrust of this book will be to get pupils into the Bible, and the Bible into the pupils. Twentieth-century youth seek answers to life, and these are found only in God’s inspired revelation, the Bible.

Too often our young people are walking Bible encyclopedias, knowing the facts but living hypocritical lives. Team teaching will help to bridge the communication gap. The activity of the classroom will apply the Word of God during the actual teaching situation.

The milk of the word, not religious soda pop, is needed. Many Bible schools insult the intelligence of children by showing Christianity as a grandmother’s religion. Christ is presented in such a way as to give the impression that it is easier to become a Christian than it is

to join the hobby club. Has Christianity lost its challenge? Communism is challenging and conquering the minds of youth around the world because it offers something worthy (in the opinion of its hearers), for which a person may dedicate his life. American young people *commit* themselves to a college education, sports, and personality improvement. Why do we seem unable to challenge them with the person of Jesus Christ and His challenge for the twentieth century?

Many Bible schools have been sound in fundamental theology, steadfast in their conservative stand, and strong in doctrine, but these churches did not radiate the Christian life and were dead in their witness. As a result, other Bible schools have reacted to this dead orthodoxy and have shifted to experience-centered programs. This new breed feels Christianity must be made “real.” *Relevance* becomes the guideline. As a result, many of these churches have watered-down programs. Their pupils do not know the Word of God.

It is vital that churches find the middle ground between these two extremes. Our Bible schools must search for methods that will nail together meaningful Christian living and purposeful Bible content. These are not opposites, but they are interdependent essentials to a vital Bible school.

Who pulled the plug out of the tub? Some teachers feel the spiritual level of the Bible school is like the receding tide. They are ready to throw in the sponge. Several years ago Wesley Shrader made the remark, “Sunday school is the most wasted hour of the week.” More recently a leading theological magazine carried an article that stated, “The Sunday school, long a symbol of American Protestant education, is struggling for survival . . . the chill winds of cheapness permeate much of evangelical Sunday-school education.”

The board chairman of one of the largest evangelical Sunday-school supply houses in the country wrote in 1965 that he was “becoming increasingly alarmed by the developing irregularity of the pulse beat of the Sunday school, as well as the general decrease in its vibrancy.”

Dulled vision has caused some to give up on Sunday school and search for other methods. Such a lack of vision indicates a shortage of faith in the Word of God, hope in the future, and confidence in the Lord. Dr. Clate Risley, former Executive Secretary of the National Sunday School Association, said, “Our greatest need is vision . . . we need vision on the part of a few to challenge and motivate the Sunday school.”

On the other hand, some Bible-school teachers have been visionary. “The Bible school is the hope of the future,” they affirm. But they have lived so much in tomorrow that today has been neglected. Those who always work for tomorrow may shortchange the present. The church could then be described as “always striving and never arriving.” However, Bible schools should minister to people today. The youth of today are leaders today-among their peers. The young people of today are grappling the problems of the world and of their own culture. As one man of God said, “Each generation must solve its own theological problems.” Our Bible-school scholars are finding it increasingly complex to live in their own lifetime. Their struggles are brought into the church. If the Bible school can meet these struggles head-on, revival and renewal can be brought to the Bible school; if neglected, the challenge can become its “Waterloo.” Young people demand to

be the Bible school of today. They are not content to sit, learn, and get ready for the future (tomorrow). Young people want answers to problems now.

When Problems Are Not Solved

For the most part, the teen-age period is known as the dropout period. It has been described as “the age when many are flocking away from religious instruction.” A speaker at a recent Bible-school convention indicated that dropouts were like young children who, when the game fails to go their way, “take their toys and go home.” Whatever reason teen-age pupils have for dropping out of Bible school, they are a problem to us.

According to a National Sunday School Association survey, “One out of six teen-agers in evangelical churches quit.” But J. Edgar Hoover has reportedly stated that seven out of eight teen-agers in America leave the churches—including evangelical, liberal, Catholic, and Jewish congregations. Helen Spalding in *Youth Look at the Church* (Bureau of Research and Survey, Department of Youth Work, National Council of Churches), states that nearly half of 1311 youth and adults who were interviewed had dropped out.’

Teen-agers drop out of Bible school for many reasons. Dr. Roy Zuck in the booklet *Why Teens Quit the Church* gives the following reasons:

1. The inadequacy of Christian training and encouragement in many homes.
2. The failure of many churches to interest youth adequately and to relate the Bible to their needs.
3. The inconsistency of adults and their lack of interest in church work.
4. Conflicting interests.
5. Secularizing influences in colleges and universities.
6. The nature of adolescence.³

Who is responsible for the dropouts? What can be done to keep them in the church? Is keeping them in the church the answer? How can we win them to Christ, build them up in the gospel, and send them out as witnesses? What changes does the church need to make to meet the dropout problem? Can team teaching help us meet this problem?

Foundation Stones for Successful Teaching

There are certain principles that apply to the Sunday school whether team teaching is used or not. These principles are not limited to time, geographical location, room size, or classroom organization. They make up the timeless formula for successful teaching. Apply them to the inner-city mission or the rural church, but by all means, apply them.

1. Be contemporary to the pupil's needs, yet geared to eternity. God always meets a man where he is, but never leaves him there. He lifts a man to a higher sphere of life—if the man is willing. In similar fashion, you should meet your pupil where he is and lead him to where he should be.

“Encounter” describes Christianity. God encounters man in his sinful state and raises him to a higher state. He does not leave the sinner where He finds him, nor does He demand that the sinner raise himself. Instead, through the encounter He gives man the ability to raise himself.

Teaching is encounter. But before you can encounter your pupils, you must be contemporary. You must understand their longings, desires, and language. You cannot stand in the Bible-school entrance and invite them in. You must enter into their subculture and understand their world. You must encounter them at their level, but not be content to leave them there. God has a better life for them. When you encounter your pupil, you must accept him as he is, present Christ as the one who can help, and lead him to a higher level of life.

2. Become the teacher God intends you to be. Most teachers, when they enter their classroom, have a clear picture of the “ideal teacher” in their mind. They judge and evaluate all teaching by this ideal teacher. They conceive of a basic personality structure that makes one a teacher. This inhibiting presupposition forces a person to mold him-self to a stereotyped personality.

Remember, no two teachers are alike, just as no two persons are alike. The role of Bible-school teacher does not call for any single personality. Each person has his own contribution to make to pupils. What a dead Bible school it would be if all teachers were alike! Actually, pupils profit from experiences with teachers who are different. If you can achieve a balanced personality you will have a greater ministry to your pupils. As a result, you will not have to worry about competing with other teachers. Your contribution, matched with others, will make an impact on pupils for eternity.

3. Establish a “basic trust” relationship with your pupils. God has spoken to most Bible-school teachers through preaching. The Bible-school teacher wants his pupils to experience the same spiritual life as he has. Therefore, teachers preach at pupils. Much of Bible-school teaching is preaching, watered down. Even if we “put the cookies on the lower level,” it’s still preaching. Teaching is not preaching.

Bible school is a place for loving. The little boy who traveled across Chicago to attend Dwight L. Moody’s Bible school said, “They sure know how to love a fellow over there.” Our pupils need a teacher with whom they can have a meaningful relationship of trust, love, and understanding.

An acceptive relationship with your pupils is the basis for successful teaching. Some teachers feel sufficient to meet all the needs of their pupils. Usually, this type of teacher has many talents, can speak well, and has a good knowledge of the Bible, as well as a good knowledge of young people. When this teacher was young he perhaps had athletic ability, could carry on conversation well, and understood life. He feels perhaps he can help all pupils since he has adjusted well to life.

However, all pupils are not the same. We live in changing times. More than twenty percent of Americans move every year, and our society is constantly upgrading itself. These factors and

many others change our pupils. There is no one teacher who can minister to all pupils. Adequate teaching requires a team of workers with different personalities and experiences. Some will be strong in music, others will excel in handcraft, and some will serve best as teachers of content. Finally, someone is needed with the gift of discernment and understanding, just to listen to the problems of pupils and be able to counsel them.

But all Bible-school teachers will have to establish a basic relationship with all pupils. This relationship involves accepting the pupil as a person. Too many Bible-school teachers manipulate their pupils, thinking small ones are there to be “taken care of.” Inwardly, the younger children feel secure, while the older ones rebel. Every pupil is a person. A person’s best qualities can be brought out in meaningful relationship with other persons.

4. Build independent-dependency in pupils. The goal of Sunday school teaching is to bring every pupil to Christ and then guide each one to full spiritual maturity. The pupil must be able to stand before God as an individual capable of spiritually feeding himself, serving the Lord, and growing in grace. The spiritual apron strings of our teenagers must be cut from their Bible-school teacher. Then each youth should fasten his “loose ends” to Jesus Christ. With a degree of independence from others, but totally dependent upon God—this is spiritual maturity.

5. Live before pupils an exemplary life. Elementary children will choose teachers as “models.” Such teachers must reflect the phrase, “My most effective lesson is myself.” Older youth have passed the stage in which they will “do as you say but not as you do.” Advocating any Christian principle that is not evident in your life is useless and probably more detrimental than helpful.

At the same time, don’t be hypocritical. You are not perfect. Your pupils will see your spirituality as well as your faults. They must know that you are human with trials and temptations as they are. The faults of men of God were not hidden in the Scriptures. Men who met God had strivings and temptations. The sins of Abraham and David are mentioned, as well as the sins of the disciples. Seeing the shortcomings of these men of God, the readers of the Bible are encouraged. Just so, pupils will identify with you when they see your human side as well as your spiritual side. We want our pupils always to be striving against sin, running the race, and growing in grace.

6. Depend on the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Lewis S. Chafer said, “This school has one teacher—the Holy Spirit.” His basis for this remark was John 14:26: “. . . the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things. “ Remember, such things as audio-visuals, panels, debates, flannel graph, and other methods of communication are means to an end, not ends in themselves. Methods can never accomplish maturity. Spirituality comes by the working of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

You will follow the Bible-school quarterlies as most teachers do. These were written by godly men and developed by research and successful experience in past years. But methods, materials, and lesson guides are only instruments to be used by the Spirit of God. Spiritual growth must come through the time-honored means. You must pray. The Word of God must be applied to the heart. The people of God must dedicate themselves, and the Holy Spirit must do the work.

Conclusion

Bible-school teaching is a great opportunity, but with opportunity comes responsibility. As a member of a team, you have a responsibility toward every pupil in your class, to invest your life in him. You must work, lead, and pray that every student comes to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, grows in grace, and brings praise to the Savior. But with responsibility God also gives accountability. One day you must give an account of your teaching to God. Determine now that by the grace of God you will do your best. Determine that when the Lord returns, He will find you faithful to your important calling, that of teaching the Word of God to the pupils in your Bible-school class.

FOOTNOTES

¹Dorothy G. Petersen and Velma D. Hayden, *Teaching the Elementary School Curriculum* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts 1961).

²Roy B. Zuck, "Preventing Spiritual Dropouts," *Christianity Today*, X (1966), p. 555. ³Roy B. Zuck, *Why Teens Quit the Church* (Wheaton, Ill.: Scripture Press Foundation, 1963) DD. 3 ff.

CHAPTER TWO

What Is Team Teaching?

"Team teaching is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard of," snapped Mabel Ellzey, superintendent of the Primary Department. "These Christian education experts live in a glass tower. I imagine none of them has taught a Primary class in years." Mrs. Ellzey has been in the Primary Department for the past eighteen years.

"If they had the problem of my juveniles, they would never suggest a team," commented Hazel Maryan, a young mother and teacher of the second grade boys. "Can you imagine our thirty-two Primaries in one class?"

"They'd climb the walls," replied Mabel, "and we'd never be able to teach them anything. We have difficulty now getting them to sit still and listen."

"Team teaching is a nice trinket to include in a book on teaching, but it would never work in our church," Hazel observed.

"I like our department the way it is now," replied the superintendent. "We have three classes of boys and two classes of girls. The opening assembly lasts twenty-five minutes, and the teachers have forty-five minutes to teach the Bible. With team teaching the children would spend more time playing and less time in Bible study." Hazel replied, "I don't think we ought to change. Our children won't learn the Bible."

You have just observed a typical conversation between teachers in a conventional Bible school when asked to consider team teaching. Hazel and Mabel are wrong on two accounts. First,

they are wrong in their attitude. They have closed their minds to improving their teaching. Second, they are wrong about team teaching. It can promote the goals they are seeking in their Bible-school teaching.

No one person can or should be responsible for the spiritual life of a pupil. The one-teacher-to-a-classroom approach places all the responsibility on one person for praying, teaching, guiding, encouraging, and counseling a given group of children. This total responsibility is too much for one person. Every pupil is different, every class is unique, and every church varies. Needs differ from pupil to pupil and from age to age. No one teacher can meet all the needs of one child, nor the needs of all pupils. Therefore, several teachers should pray, teach, visit, guide, and direct each pupil. The several teachers form a team that can invest their combined talents and time through the Bible school.

Team teaching is not entirely new or untried in Bible schools. For many years the church Nursery and Kindergarten classes have had one or more teachers. Also, the Vacation Bible School has used the team-teaching approach in the Beginner and Primary classes. Some of the older denominations have been using the team-teaching approach in these classes on a regular basis. The public schools began experimenting with a team approach in the 1930's. But the great impetus for team teaching came after World War II¹. However, "Team teaching is still in the twilight zone of American education and perhaps time will present us with a more accurate and sharpened image."²

1. Definition of Team Teaching. One Christian educator has defined team teaching as follows

Group teaching is a plan whereby the teaching responsibility in a unit with children is divided among two or more adults who, for the sake of maximum learning and growth, seek to involve the children also in planning, carrying out, and evaluating the learning experience.

This definition notes the importance of including the pupils in planning and evaluating lessons. Since everyone learns through his own experiences, the teacher can expect children also to be involved as part of the team. This definition is broader than most teachers are willing to consider. Some church educators are willing to go farther than secular educators.

Judson T. Shaplin, a pioneer in the development of team teaching for public schools, has given the following definition:

Team teaching is an effort to improve instruction by the reorganization of personnel in teaching. Two teachers are given responsibility, working together for all, or a significant part, of the instruction of the same group of students.³

Just because two teachers share a room and the same time slot doesn't make them a team. There should be a unity of aims both verbal and nonverbal. The following definition used in this book attempts to cover this aspect

Team teaching involves two or more persons influencing all of the pupils for the total class time through sharing a common purpose, planning the lesson, guiding the learning activities, and evaluating the classroom experience.

Although only one teacher may be talking at a time, the combined planning gives a combined influence. Therefore, sharing of responsibility is vital to the team approach.

Team teaching is the term referring to the personnel and organization of activities in a teaching situation. *Open session* is the term used in this book to refer to the facilities and arrangement of the room for teaching. These terms are actually synonymous, referring to a large classroom containing a large group of pupils in which more than one teacher can be responsible for any and all pupils, and can be responsible for any and all learning activities.

2. *Characteristics of Team Teaching.* Observation of a classroom in session does not reveal whether it is a team effort or not. Even if more than one teacher is talking at the same time, the class still may not be a team situation. By contrast, only one teacher may be up front leading, and yet close examination will reveal the class is controlled by a team of teachers. One statement to summarize team teaching for public schools given by Dean and Witherspoon of the United States Office of Education has wide acceptance

The heart of the concept of team teaching lies not in details of structure and organization but more in the essential spirit of cooperative planning, constant collaboration, close unity, unrestrained communication, and sincere sharing. It is reflected not in a group of individuals articulating together, but rather in a group which is a single unified team. Inherent in the plan is an increased degree of flexibility for teacher responsibility, grouping policies and practices, and size of groups, and an invigorating spirit of freedom and opportunity to revamp programs to meet educational needs of children.⁴

Bair and Woodward list several points in characterizing team teaching:⁵

1. A teaching team consists of from three to seven or more teachers jointly responsible for instruction.
2. Teams may have teachers assigned to different levels of responsibility, depending on their ability and experience.
3. Most team-teaching programs permit supervision of the junior members of a team by the senior or leadership personnel. The schedule also permits less experienced personnel to observe the outstanding teacher.
4. Team-teaching programs emphasize the team, rather than the individual teacher, in the planning, teaching, and evaluating cycle.
5. Team teaching protects the professional autonomy of each teacher and stresses the use of his unique abilities in the instruction of children.
6. Each member of the team specializes in a different curriculum area and helps all members of the team plan, teach, and evaluate in the areas of their specialty.
7. All team-teaching programs emphasize the effective utilization of the strength of each member of the staff.
8. Team-teaching programs emphasize varying class sizes and class lengths based upon instructional objectives, context, techniques, and pupil needs.
9. Most team teachers make effective use of teaching aids (mechanical and electrical).

Team teaching involves a new approach to changing lives. The church that introduces this method of teaching will have to make a reappraisal of the following areas

1. Educational objectives
2. Teacher's role
3. School's schedule
4. Class size
5. Curriculum development
6. Staff morale
7. Designer facilities
8. Staffing patterns
9. Teacher training
10. Pupil to pupil relationship

This reevaluation does not imply a new content, for the Word of God remains the core of our message. Team teaching is a live approach to involving pupils in lessons. The old concept of giving Bible facts and having children parrot them back does not change lives. The Bible is a living book (Hebrews 4:12) and should be treated as such. When pupils are involved with the Word of God, their lives are changed.

3. *Who is on the team?* Everyone associated with the class is on the team. This includes pianists, class secretary, and others with specialized responsibility. Of course, the teachers are not to be overlooked. However, all on the team are thought of as teachers.

Some have also thought of the pupils as members of the team. The teachers are responsible for initial planning and preparation for the learning situation, but the pupils can join in and help plan a classroom situation. They can suggest things they want to learn. When the pupils are youth and adults they are particularly capable of sharing responsibility for what is happening in the classroom. Team teaching means that everyone in a group is teaching!

One person on the team should be designated lead teacher. He assumes whatever administrative responsibility is necessary for the function of the group-scheduling of the planning meeting, administering the planning, ordering of supplies, carrying out some of the details. The lead teacher may serve as chairman of the planning sessions. However, other teachers may also serve in this capacity. Some teams rotate the chairmanship of planning, with each teacher in the group taking a turn as chairman for one or more units in the year.

What Kinds of Teams Can Be Used?

There are different kinds of teams in the Sunday school. Many factors determine the kind of team to use in a church. Some of these factors are the internal organization, the curriculum, the amount of time, the level of teacher ability, and the facilities and equipment at hand.

1. *The teaching unit team.* The teachers in a department who usually function together as a team leading students in learning experiences might be called a *teaching unit team*. Usually, the roles of the teachers are interchangeable. The lead teacher may tell the story one week, while the secretary may do so next week. A third teacher may lead in singing one week and the following week be responsible for the visual lesson. At times the entire class should be together for learning, and at other times the class should be broken into small learning groups. Each member of the teaching unit team should be responsible for an assigned portion of instruction duties with a small group during the time for small group work.

The teaching unit team emphasizes the *role* of each team member. The type of leadership for the team is not the primary consideration. The team may use a *democratic* method to plan its functions or follow the *hierarchical* approach to the lead teacher.

2. *Differential role teams.* In the *differential role team*, each teacher will concentrate on an area of emphasis. One teacher may be responsible for singing, while another may be the audio-visual resource guide. The lead teacher may be responsible for the group activities, while each member of the team is assigned to small groups for class time. The teachers usually remain in the role because of their abilities or training.

3. *Informal team units.* When teachers bring pupils together on a temporary or one-time basis, this is called an *informal team unit*. This occurs when a teacher takes her pupils into another classroom, or two or more classes meet together in a neutral location such as a library, or take a field trip. Usually, when teachers join together on such occasions they share ideas and class responsibilities. Sometimes one teacher will take over both classes—but this is not team teaching.

What Kinds of Leadership Should a Team Have?

Just as there are different kinds of teams, so there are different kinds of leaders. A leader can be like an army sergeant or like an elected chairman of a meeting. The environment of the Bible school will contribute to the type of leadership. The army may demand the “hard-nosed disciplinarian.” The sergeant can’t have much concern for the feelings of his men, for he must produce. In contrast, an elected official must work with his clientele, since he can be voted out of leadership. Here feelings are important, sometimes paramount.

Problems arise when sensitive people are placed in leadership roles demanding “hewing” to the line, or when a calloused leader assumes a position that depends on tact.

When choosing a lead teacher for your team, make sure the right type of leader is chosen for the appropriate type of team. The two types of leaders are *hierarchical leaders* and *democratic leaders*.

1. *Hierarchical leadership.* Observation of a group of teachers indicates that a “natural leader” usually emerges to guide the team. The natural leader usually arises because of

experience in teaching, longevity in the department, superior managerial ability, or a better knowledge of the Word of God. Sometimes the sheer force of the personality or the degree of spiritual insight qualifies the person as a natural leader. The grouping of teachers together implies a natural tendency to, and need for, leadership.

One author has indicated, “We can liken the hierarchic team to a pyramid with the lead teacher at the apex.”⁶ The hierarchical team should provide leadership with the lead teacher doing what is needed leading and not controlling or dominating. Most schools beginning a team approach establish a hierarchical approach to organization. Some-times a person is asked to lead because of personal qualities; other times a person becomes lead teacher because of the professional abilities he possesses.

a. *The master teacher* type of hierarchical structure is chosen when there is a need to train the inexperienced teachers. Usually the master teacher leads in developing the lesson plan, and supervises the choosing and gathering of instructional materials. His experience should qualify him for knowing and evaluating resource material to broaden and enrich the lesson. Usually the master teacher accepts the responsibility for large group instruction, but delegates the actual presentation to the inexperienced teacher. The new teacher gains experience through teaching the lesson. Usually, an evaluation session follows. As a result the master teacher must be able to teach pupils as well as guide other teachers.

b. *The lead teacher* is an elected leader. A team of teachers can be pictured as a miniature Bible-school staff. The lead teacher relates to the team as the superintendent relates to the Bible school. The lead teacher is the leader of the educational program of a Bible-school class. In a sense, he is the person who coordinates the teaching aims, team relationships, demands of the curriculum, and classroom strategy. He has the major responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating the results of the class. This responsibility is, or should be, delegated among the team hierarchy. The lead teacher is at the apex of the team hierarchy. He should have served as an effective teacher, and should have displayed the ability to coordinate, administer, and supervise all the activities of a team.

Flexibility is a key word for the lead teacher. He must know where the class is going, but at the same time listen to the team and allow it to direct the class activities.

Decisions can be made by the lead teacher in keeping with the policy established by the group. Usually the duties are well defined in the hierarchical team. Each teacher knows exactly what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. (Alost team teaching is of a hierarchical type rather than a true democratic team.)

2. *Democratic leadership.* The cooperative or democratic team usually has no designated lead teacher. (If there is a lead teacher, he is only designated for a short duration of time.) Decisions concerning activities for the class come through discussion or the consensus of the group. Each member of the team shares the total responsibility for the results and evaluation of the learning activities. Davis calls this a “synergetic team.” He goes on to stress, “All it takes is leadership, perseverance, and perspiration-the stress is on working *with*, not *for* colleagues.”“

1. *Not apprenticeship.* Team teaching is not a seasoned teacher “showing the ropes” to a new teacher. Team teaching involves mutual sharing and dependence, while apprenticeship has one on top, “the master teacher,” and one on the bottom, “the novice.” Apprenticeship is, however, an excellent way to prepare new teachers for the job. An apprenticeship class can work into a team approach when the lead teacher “shares” rather than “shows.”

2. *Not “leapfrog” teaching.* When one teacher sits down, the other jumps up and talks. This is not team teaching. However, some team teaching may look like a “leapfrog” approach because one teacher follows another in leading activities. But it isn’t. The razor-edge distinction centers around

- Sharing of aims
- Sharing of attitudes
- Sharing of activities
- Sharing of concern
- Sharing of vision

3. *Not holding several classes in the same room.* Some churches have space problems, and several classes will meet in one large room. The small classes may or may not use partitions. Because more than one teacher is using the same room, some may call this team teaching. Lack of sharing among teachers and classes eliminates this approach from a team-teaching classification.

Conclusion

Team teaching is a new, exciting way to guide students in learning activities. Those who introduce a team approach into their churches will have to reevaluate their curriculum, teaching methods, room arrangements, teacher-administration relationships, and attitudes toward environment. Indeed, the total concept of how pupils learn will have to be rethought.

Those who introduce team teaching into their program should realize we live in a changing world. Education changes with the times. No Bible school should be prematurely—or permanently wedded to the team approach. Education is as old as man, but team teaching in its technical sense is less than fifty years old. Perhaps a new approach will be discovered next year. Good! Then we’ll adopt it into our Sunday school. But today we should use the team approach because of its present effectiveness and potential.

FOOTNOTES

¹Medill Bair and Richard G. Woodward, *Team Teaching in Action* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1964), pp. v, vi.

²Nicholas C. Polos, *The Dynamics of Team Teaching* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 135 S. Locust St., 1960), p. v.

³Paul Woodring and John Scanlon, (eds), *American Education Today* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963), pp. 211, 212.

⁴Stuart E. Dean and Clinette F. Witherspoon, *Team Teaching in the Elementary School*, Education Briefs, No. 38 (Washington: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, January, 1962), p. 4.

⁵Bair and Woodward, *op. cit.*, pp. 2S-34. Sections not applicable to church situation omitted in summary.

⁶Harold S. Davis, *How to Organize an Effective Team Teaching Program* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 13.

⁷*bid.*

CHAPTER THREE

Why Use Team Teaching?

“Why should I use team teaching with my class?” This is a natural question. Will team teaching accomplish greater results with pupils? Why change?

The church should not be merely a fad seeker. When a new idea dawns upon the scene, many rush to try it out just because it's new. The church has an educational mandate: “Go ye therefore, and teach . . . them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded” (Matthew 28:19, 20). The New Testament gives aims, motives, and content for our ministry of teaching. Are we to experiment with each new educational trinket? Paul commanded Timothy, “The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). The Scriptures speak clearly about the necessity of teaching, but they offer few restrictions on the methods to be employed in fulfilling this command.

Actually team teaching is not a new idea. Where two or more teachers have discussed a lesson together and led pupils in a learning experience—there has been team teaching. The New Catholic Encyclopedia states,

Although historically team teaching is not a new idea, the climate for accepting it has become increasingly favorable since 1956, when a report was submitted by a sub-committee of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) which stressed teacher shortage as a threat to quality of education.¹

Out of this report a number of studies arose, and several foundations made financial grants for experimentation with team teaching. The encyclopedia article continues

Team teaching is based on a theory that the pooling and maximum utilization of several teachers' special competence and skills serve to stimulate better teaching-learning situations and are more conducive to intellectual growth than that which any one teacher, responsible for total curriculum, could achieve in a self-contained classroom.²

Listed below are four reasons why you should use team teaching. Each of these has a list of sub points which we shall consider.

- I. Enriched learning for the pupil.
- II. Increased efficiency for the teacher.
- III. Maximum advantage from classroom facilities.
- IV. Reflection of the Word of God.

Advantages to the Pupils

1. The nature of learning demands team teaching. The church has come a long way in understanding how learning takes place. Once knowledge was considered to reside in the adult teacher. The average dictionary gives the classical definition of *teach* as “to show how to do;

make to understand; give instruction to.” The teacher did the telling. Knowledge was thought to have passed from the adult to the child as apples are passed from one basket to another.

Today there is general recognition that the pupil does his own learning. The teacher can’t cram learning or knowledge into the head of a pupil. The teacher directs the pupil into truth; the pupil does his own learning. And there is more to the learning experience than that which the teacher provides. We know that boys and girls teach one another in the classroom by sharing mutual experiences. Pupil interaction can have as great an influence on the total learning as the adult teacher’s influence. Thus, team teaching places an emphasis on the group and recognizes the way children learn.

2. *Team teaching makes richer learning possibilities.* In a team-teaching approach, a larger class is possible because two or more teachers share in the leadership. Larger classes mean more pupils and more possibilities for rich learning experience. More activities are possible. Teachers find themselves leading fewer activities in the classroom, while being able to give more time to the preparation of their activities.

3. *Team teaching gives the children the influence of more than one teacher.* Every teacher has different gifts, attitudes, and abilities. Also, every teacher has a different way of expressing love. If a child has only one teacher, and there is an obstacle between teacher and pupil, that child may become a Sunday-school dropout. In an open session class more than one teacher has an opportunity to influence the child; thus a life may be kept under the influence of the gospel. A child can be growing rapidly when he is influenced by more than one teacher. The following statement from the encyclopedia article previously cited supports this argument

Since attention to individual differences is the prime concern in team teaching, particular care is exercised in forming strength to their fullest measure and to ensure stimulating presentation and motivation in keeping with student interest.³

4. *Team teaching gives the pupils an unbroken learning experience.* Under the departmental system, movement from assembly room to classroom and return is noisy and confusing. Usually the movement is regulated with military routine. Also, discipline problems may arise while the children wait for the teacher to “get started.” Team teaching keeps the pupil in one classroom, making every moment of the hour contribute to the aim of the day. There is no “gap” between precession, worship, teaching, and the activity period.

5. *Discipline problems are fewer in team teaching.* The problems are not fewer because the team has more “eyes” to watch out for trouble, nor because the team has more “mouths” to give directions. Team teaching is a way of life that works *with pupils*, not *on pupils*.

Pupils are more interested when they take part in activities (essential to team teaching) than when they listen to words. Also, when pupils are given some “say” in how they learn, they are not likely to “climb the walls.”

Advantages to the Teachers

On the surface, team teaching sounds difficult. However, the team approach could be used by most average Bible-school teachers. There are many advantages to the teacher when the team approach is used. Nicholas Polos has suggested some of these

The accent on team teaching in recent years is due to the concern over teacher short-age and proper teacher utilization and the advancement of methods of instruction. The basic concept of team teaching is not new, but its present application now tends to embrace new ideas on scheduling, curriculum, facilities, and diverse groupings of students.⁴

1. Team teaching makes teacher recruitment easier. A new teacher is more likely to respond if he knows he will have help with his responsibility. In a team-teaching approach the new teacher is not on his own. The beginning teacher enters into group planning, sharing, and evaluation. He learns from the older and more experienced teachers in the classroom. No matter what method is used, teaching must be “caught” rather than “taught.” New teachers best learn their task by actually sharing the teaching responsibility in a classroom situation.

2. Team teaching offers more possibilities for teachers’ personal growth. In a team-teaching approach several teachers work together in a group. They help one another grow and learn. They share insights from the Scriptures, and they encourage one another to try out new ideas.

In a team situation one teacher experiences support in attempting new adventures, new methods, and new materials. Each teacher knows his time will come to be up in front while other teachers watch. So, they help one another.

When one teacher is isolated in a classroom, outside evaluation is limited. Usually the pupils are the sole judges of the quality of teaching. Mistakes are perpetuated when no experienced person gives significant evaluation. If a poor teacher is a member of a team, the other teachers feel the responsibility to help and encourage him. Team teaching helps minimize mistakes and enriches teaching.

3. More specialized skills can be utilized. If more teachers are present in a group, more skills are likely to be available for class enrichment. A Bible-school teacher with a specialized skill may join a class for a short duration. For instance, a team may feel the need for help in audio-visuals or in organizing a children’s choir. A teacher with special skills in audio-visuals or music may be brought in to work with the team. The new teacher would participate in the planning, help lead the class activities, and share in the evaluation. Thus the new teacher’s special skill contributes not only to the pupils’ experience, but also helps train other teachers who observe his work. In this way, every Bible-school classroom becomes a laboratory training experience for teachers. Teachers continue to grow through the team-teaching approach.

The arrangement (team teaching) is designed to give teachers greater opportunity to use professional skills, to afford them more time for individual work with students and consequent deeper insight into their needs, and to foster personal growth.⁵

4. Team teaching makes better use of educational materials. If a small class goes to the library of the Bible-school department during class period, the other classes can’t use it. But the library can be used by all sections of the class using the team approach. Nature shelves and art materials can be used and shared by all, so that it will not be necessary to provide one for each small class. In a team-teaching approach with children, each room would have a reading center, art shelves, files, and activity centers. Hence, during a Sunday morning hour, all children in that class would have access to all resources.

Youth and adult rooms would not have the activity centers. But the educational resources would be available to larger groups of adults.

5. *Supervision of teachers is possible.* The average Bible-school teacher has little if any guidance from supervisors. The teachers are much like the people in the book of Judges: “They did that which was right in their own eyes.” Public schools have supervisors attending classes of teachers, and we need similar supervision in the Bible school. An open session room with a team approach makes better supervision possible.

6. *Team teaching relieves the problem of teacher absenteeism.* When a teacher is unexpectedly absent, finding a substitute is a problem. In a team approach, the group simply goes ahead with the day’s plans. The rest of the team picks up the extra load. No time is lost.

7. *Team teaching stimulates teachers to better preparation.* A teacher working by herself has difficulty being properly motivated week after week. However, a teacher in a team approach will make better preparation because of the reciprocal sharing in a group planning session. Also, the presence of peer teachers in the same classroom will stimulate a teacher to better preparation, just to avoid embarrassment.

Advantages Resulting From Better Facilities

A Bible school using a team approach will require different facilities than the Bible school employing a departmental approach. The method of teaching is determined by the facilities. Team teaching as a method provides advantages to the pupil and teacher, but furthermore, it demands better educational facilities.

1. *The emphasis is on open space, not cubicle classrooms.* Team teaching functions best in open space, not in small Bible-school rooms. The small classroom tends to be *teacher-* and talk-centered. But, the attention span of children is short. They lose interest if they are taught mostly with words. Children like to make things happen, not just hear about things happening. Learning results when they have an opportunity to put into practice Christ-like attitudes. They need space to move about. A little boy once said he needed “room to think.” We may laugh, yet we realize that “little boys think with their feet, hands, head, and elbows.” Space, or the lack of it, influences a child’s behavior, learning, and physical growth.

2. *An open session room is usually more cheerful and attractive.* Small cubicles are not usually appealing to small children nor adults. An open room will be airy and perhaps brighter, making church a more appealing place for boys and girls. Even adults respond better to appropriate educational facilities.

3. *Extra groups or activities may be added more easily to open session classes.* A group of children in a class may be gifted, so that the teacher desires to give them extra work. An extra group is more easily formed to meet their needs in an open session room. Slow learners also may be dealt with as a group. As the class expands in attendance, a new teacher can be added in an open session situation more easily than building a new room. Money or space may prohibit the addition of a new room. But there may be space in the large open session room to add a new teacher and a new teaching center.

Also, new activities, such as a nature center, library, reading center, or worship center can be added without the expense of an extra room.

4. *In an open session room all space can be used all of the time.* In the average Bible school half of the departmental space is allocated to classroom and the assembly room is used for the other half. Space is not interchanged. An open session classroom can use all of the space, all of the time.

5. *Open session rooms may be exchanged to accommodate shifting population:* A Bible school had fifteen in the third grade and had a room of four hundred square feet. There was no space problem. But the following year twenty-five children were promoted, into grade three. Obviously four hundred square feet was not enough space. When rooms are divided into small cubicles, classroom assignments cannot be as easily changed to meet existing needs.

6. *Open session, rooms are multipurpose.* A small classroom ten feet square can be used for only one hour on Sunday morning. Maybe the small cubicle can be used again for club work, but it is useless for other church activities. Can the church justify its investment in a small cubicle classroom for a maximum of two hours a week? Large open session rooms may be used for congregational gatherings, ladies' meetings, parochial school classrooms, kindergarten, or other community needs.

7. *Open session rooms are less expensive.* The small, divided class-room or cubicle will cost more for heating, ventilation, lighting, janitor service, maintenance, and original construction. The cost per pupil is less for open session teaching and the returns are greater.

Team Teaching Reflects the Nature of the Church

The church is more than a church building on the corner. It is a group of people joined together to reflect the body of Christ. David Moberg notes some of the different concepts of the church.'

1. A building used for religious purposes.
2. The invisible, incorrupt, "true" catholic church or *universal church*, consisting of all believers in Christ, past, present, and future.
3. A congregation, association, community, or organization of persons with Christian beliefs.

Paul refers to that which Moberg defined as the *universal church* in these words: "The church, which is his body . . ." (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Later Paul states, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Ephesians 5:30). This body should express unity and cooperation: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Romans 12:5). A teaching team should reflect unity and cooperation. In the true sense of the term they should be "members one of another." When pupils learn together in a team they are (1) reflecting the body of Christ, and (2) being prepared to live in the body of Christ.

Learning to work together is important for pupils. If the New Testament church is a body or organism reflecting unity, a spiritual cooperation ought to be reflected in lives, even in the

lives of the small children in the church. Community should be more than big people's talk. Children need to learn cooperation so they may reflect it when they become adults. When children learn together, work together, play together, sing together, and worship together they are learning to become good citizens in the household of faith. Open session or team teaching will perhaps teach pupils the art of living together as Christians, hence preparing them to take their places in the adult church.

Dangers of Team Teaching

Team teaching doesn't solve all the problems in the Sunday school. As a matter of fact, there could be many dangers inherent in this system. There is always the possibility of jealousy. When two or more teachers work together, one usually has more gifts and abilities than the other, and this difference may lead to jealousy, bitterness, or quarreling. In this case, the team that should reflect the unity of the body of Christ would then directly hinder the truths it attempts to impart. Another problem centering on personal relationships is the shy teacher. He may withdraw and not make his contribution to the group. Especially in group planning, he may feel his contribution is not worthy of the group's time. The presence of a timid teacher in the group may hinder its chances of actually becoming a team. The shy teacher usually expresses personal reticence. "I wouldn't want to tell the story with Mrs. Hesselgrave in the room" may be the excuse some would give for not wanting to join the team. As members of the team support one another, they may overcome this fear.

Another possible problem in team teaching is the loss of personal contact with the pupil. "If you have thirty-seven children in the room, won't you lose the personal touch?" some have legitimately asked. Past experience with team teaching has proved this need not be the case. Teachers who view their class from the framework of the team are usually more conscious of, and have deeper insight into, individual pupils because of shared observations. When one teacher operates in the classroom he may overlook Sally because of personal reasons. However, when the team evaluates Sally, three or more other teachers can share their observations on her progress. "In the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Proverbs 11:14). Also, when more than one teacher is in the room, different ones can observe Sally in a variety of activities and relationships, thus getting a better overall understanding of her.

Also, there is the danger of "freezing" a teacher into a specific role. Because one lady is efficient with records, she is always the class secretary. If given the chance, this lady may be an excellent lead teacher or a good resource person. This danger is manifest in immature teams in which pressures of time force a sacrifice of good team planning.

Another danger of team teaching is cultivating an attitude of excessive self-criticism. When two or more people work together they may be concerned with helping one another. In their constant evaluation, they may become overly critical. On the other hand, a teacher who leads pupils with another teacher in the room may be oversensitive concerning his own abilities. Either case leads to an excess of self-criticism. Anxieties, frustrations, and/or self distrust result from this critical attitude.

Team teaching emphasizes activity learning with small children. There is a distinct danger that content may be overlooked, especially in the case of inexperienced teachers stressing activity for the sake of activity. There is a difference between busy work and educational activity.

Lack of time may be a problem. Especially is time a factor in team planning. Time is needed for all members of the team to make their suggestions. One or two talkative members may dominate the conversation, then under the mandate of “business” the group moves on. Time is needed to draw out points from all members of the group. Progress may be slow. However, the team that is willing to move slowly at first in order to be a “team,” may later move more rapidly.

Another problem with team teaching is the lack of resources for the library. The average self-contained Bible-school classroom is based on the “talk” approach. The activity approach in which a library resource center is used in each classroom is relatively new. But there are only a few resource books available to use with children during class time. Little if anything has been done for the poor learner or gifted student. Then again, even if the resources were available, the average teacher wouldn’t know how to use them in a classroom.

Another apparent problem with the team approach is teacher recruitment. The usual excuse is heard, “Team teaching is so difficult, how could we get anyone to serve?” Once again, experience proves that recruiting teachers is easier when the candidate will receive in-service training and help in the classroom. The one-teacher-in-a-class method places all the responsibility on a single teacher. Many teachers are not willing to assume this burden. However, the learn-as-you-work approach takes away the threatening aspect of teaching. When a teacher is able to learn skills by watching other teachers at work, he is given reassurance in his teaching role and is more willing to teach. The new teacher feels that he “belongs” to the team and will not feel the embarrassment of taking over a new class.

Conclusion

Why is team teaching capturing the attention of educators? What are some of the forces that have fostered its development? We are living in a time of social, technological, and educational change. Educators and laymen are looking closely at our Bible schools. Although there has been criticism in the past, people are becoming more critical than ever of traditional approaches, which they say do not take into account individual pupil differences or the need for recruitment and training of new teachers. This chapter has listed reasons for using a team approach, but lack of teaching personnel was not one of them. Those reasons are best summed up by The New Catholic Encyclopedia

In the final analysis, team teaching seems to present an opportunity to utilize staff specialists; make available to students and staff resources of communication, stimulation, planning, and knowledge beyond the scope of one teacher alone; relieve the teacher of clerical and nonteaching assignments, thus providing time for faculty conferences and personnel preparation; strengthen student motivation for learning; and by small group discussion make possible individual attention, helping slow learners over hurdles and providing enrichment for gifted students.⁷

There are dangers in the team approach to teaching, but there are also dangers in the self-contained classroom. There is danger any time a teacher (a human finite person) assumes responsibility for another person’s growth. The author contends there are *less* dangers with a

team of teachers *sharing* the responsibility for the spiritual growth of a group of children. Also, the dangers listed above do not threaten every team classroom. Most of the listed dangers result from poorly trained teachers, poorly planned class activities, or teachers proceeding on a *false assumption* of team teaching.

A team of teachers is like the members of an orchestra. Each performer must follow the conductor, be on pitch, be able to carry out his assignment, and possess a knowledge of the responsibilities of others. In like manner, each teacher must come to class prepared, able to carry out his assignment, possessing a knowledge of what other teachers are doing, and ready to work in harmony with others. As the orchestra produces the full and complete symphony, so the team of teachers produces well rounded, mature students-to the glory of God.

FOOTNOTES

¹A. W. Cawley, "Team Teaching," *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, XIII, 967.

²*Ibid.*, p. 966.

³*Ibid.*, p. 967.

⁴Nicholas C. Polos, *The Dynamics of Team Teaching* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 135 S. West St., 1960), p. v.

⁵Cawley, op. cit. p. 967.

⁶David O. Moberg, *The Church as a Social Institution* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), pp. 16, 17.

⁷Cawley, op. cit. p. 967.

SECTION TWO

Team Teaching With Children

What do you hear, see, and feel when you walk into a Bible-school classroom? Do you see children standing in line, standing without moving? Do you see boys and girls quietly sitting in a circle, sitting without speaking? Do you see small children standing on tiptoe in order to see an object on a high table or cabinet? Do you see all of the children in the room doing the same thing at the same time?

A Bible-school class is more than a room where children go to listen to a teacher tell a Bible story. It is a world full of activities, a world in which children often form basic concepts of Christianity. If that world is conforming, dreary, militant, or threatening, the concepts thus formed are likely to be false.

No two children are exactly alike. They have different personalities, different needs, different ambitions, different desires. They should not be expected to fit in the same mold, to respond in the same manner, or to perform at the same level. It is unfair to pit one child against another: "Let's see who can be the quietest, or the quickest, or the best . . ." For you see, somebody is always the loser. In helping the quickest child, we may be hurting the slowest. In

other words, our requirements on children should be tailor-made to fit their personal needs. They should be allowed, and helped, to grow according to their own “flight plan.”

A team approach to teaching offers the framework for individualized learning. In the first place, the plan is democratic. The superintendent is not a dictator who gives orders. He is a lead teacher who guides the members of the team in discovering and supervising learning activities that are relevant to the interests and needs of every child. Every member of the team is challenged to contribute that which he is most qualified to give.

In the traditional picture of a public schoolroom, one teacher was responsible for a roomful (twenty or forty) of pupils, and all of the “lessons” for all of the pupils in that room were taught by that teacher. In the traditional picture of a Bible-school room, one teacher was responsible for teaching the lesson to a group of five to fifteen students. His room often consisted of a “corner” of the basement, and the children sat in a circle around him.

While we would not belittle the many fine teachers who have taught, and continue to teach, in this fashion, we are concerned in this book with helping a team of teachers guide the learning of children in the Sunday school. Most educators realize that a team of teachers in a class-room has many advantages. Let me introduce you to team teaching by taking you on a visit into some classrooms in which the team approach is being used.

First, we will visit Mrs. Leila Collins, lead teacher in the Primary Department, First Church, Highville. Next, we will observe the work of Debbie Underwood, lead teacher in the Primary Department, Down town Memorial Church. Finally, we will visit Mrs. Ruth Murphy, third grade teacher, Deer Park Church.

These three classrooms are not meant to represent any particular “types” or “philosophies” of teaching. Nor are they intended to take the place of actual visits to other Bible-school classrooms (for the more classrooms you observe, the better opportunity you have of improving your own teaching). Rather, they are intended to approximate “typical” Bible-school classrooms throughout our country. Picture each situation in your mind, and apply the principles of the succeeding chapters to your own individual teaching programs.

CHAPTER FOUR

What Goes on in Children’s Classrooms?

First Church, Highville

First Church in Highville is over one hundred years old. Located in a small rural town, the Sunday school of approximately one hundred fifty members has done an effective job of producing spiritual growth in its members over the years.

As you approach the white frame church building, you notice the grass is beginning to turn brown in the October air. The paved parking lot and the tall trees surrounding the structure create an impression of stability. Once inside the educational unit, you meet Mrs. Leila Collins,

superintendent of the Primary Department. Mrs. Collins, the mother of three children and the wife of a farmer, is well dressed. Her ten years' incumbency in the Primary Department has given her a rich experience in working with children. The parents of the children are pleased with her care and her ability in working with their children.

As you walk into the Primary Department, you enter a bright, airy room on the first floor. The large assembly room has about forty bright blue chairs. There are six smaller classrooms, three on either side of the assembly room.

Fifteen children are sitting, waiting for opening exercises. You notice that the chairs in the front row are about twelve inches high and those toward the back, fourteen inches high. "Just about the right height for these children," you say to yourself. "The rubber tips will keep the noise down, too."

In each of the six rooms you notice a kidney-shaped table about twenty-four inches high. (This enables all of the pupils to sit facing the teacher.)

Three children enter the assembly room and go to one corner to hang up their wraps. You nod approvingly when you see a steel rod with coat hangers four feet off the floor. The children don't need help to hang up their own wraps.

Over in another corner near the windows, a small group of children are gathered around a record player, listening as a story about the "gospel train" is being told and sung alternatively. Some of the boys are looking out the window, but the children seem interested. As you glance around the room you notice an old piano that has been painted blue, a desk that you assume is for the class secretary, and four open shelves (for work materials) under the windows.

The bulletin board on the west wall, which is at your eye level, is filled with colorful fall pictures. "What a pity the pictures are not at the eye level of the children," you think to yourself.

As you stand in the back of the room, children begin to fill the empty chairs. You notice that the thirty or more boys and girls are typically active Primaries. Five teachers, all women, are sitting among the children. Your attention is drawn to an elderly lady who is trying to quiet the children sitting around her. "Why can't the children talk mid move about before opening worship begins?" you ask yourself.

One of the teachers passes out hymn books while another begins playing the piano. After the opening song, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," the group sings some action choruses. Mrs. Westfall, the elderly lady, taps a boy on the head and urges him to sing. Two boys on the back row twine their arms around each other and put their heads together to sing.

As the children stand to sing "Zacchaeus," your heart goes out to the little black headed boy who continues to sit on the end of the row where he can stretch out his stiff leg covered with a metal brace.

At the conclusion of the song service, Mrs. Felt, who has been playing the piano, tells the Bible story. Her vivid gestures and her talking eyes capture the attention of most of the class, but the two boys in the back row are now elbowing each other. So Mrs. Westfall gets up, goes back,

and sits between the boys. Mrs. Felt continues with the story as though she does not see the incident.

After the Bible story, the birthday song is played, and those who have had birthdays in the past week come forward to deposit their pennies in “Happy,” the clown bank. Happy tips his hat for each penny, and the department sings “Happy Birthday to You.” Mrs. Collins gives each of the children with birthdays a pencil with an inscribed Bible verse, then announces the offering.

Mrs. Felt gets up from the piano, goes over to the open shelves, picks up the offering basket, and gives it to one of the boys to pass around the room. She then returns to the piano and plays “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” while the offering is being taken.

Mrs. Bergan, the departmental secretary, sits at her desk and completes the records. You ask, “How many children are enrolled?” She answers, “About fifty, but they don’t all come every Sunday.” As you continue the conversation, you find that Mrs. Bergan considers her work as departmental secretary a real ministry of service.

“I can relieve some of the ladies of bookkeeping tasks so they can teach the Word of God,” she explains.

The children sing “Climb, Climb Up Sunshine Mountain” and “I’ll Be a Sunbeam.” Sammy, the boy with the metal brace, still does not stand or enter into the singing. The two boys sitting on either side of Mrs. Westfall are not misbehaving, nor are they singing with enthusiasm.

After prayer, the children are told to pick up their chairs and go to their classrooms. The immediate wave of noise reminds you that, these are live children. Mrs. Felt goes back and helps Sammy take his chair to his room.

When the children divide up into classes you note that one of the six classrooms is empty.

“Why don’t you use this classroom?” you ask Mrs. Collins.

“We used to use it when Mrs. Forge taught, but when she quit, we combined two classes.”

“Why don’t they get another teacher?” you wonder. “What are their plans for expansion?”

As you look in on some of the classes, you note that they are engaged in various activities. Mrs. Westfall reads the lesson—first the Scripture passage, then the Bible story. Each child in turn repeats the Bible verse for the day. When you later return to the class, you find the boys and girls coloring pictures.

“We consider ourselves a team of teachers,” explains Mrs. Collins. “Each teacher has her own responsibilities and spiritual gifts. When each of us does her job, we feel we make an impression on the children.”

Does the Primary Department of First Church in Highville use team teaching effectively? Was there an evident concern for the children on the part of the teachers? Were the children passive or active in learning activities? What did the children learn from the environment? Is Mrs. Westfall a typical Primary Bible-school teacher?

Downtown Memorial Church

When Debbie Underwood told you last week that she uses a team-teaching approach in her class, you were skeptical. Debbie Underwood is just not the kind of person to work as a member of a team.

Oh, Debbie is a wonderful church worker and has been for years. And there isn't anything Debbie doesn't know about children—at least that's what most people seem to think. Debbie's Bible knowledge is tops too; she seldom has to prepare a lesson.

Debbie, the mother of three children, is in her early thirties. When the board of Christian education asked her to take Joan Swanson into her class and give her some pointers on how to teach, Debbie was delighted.

“We'll make it a team-teaching situation,” she responded. “That's the latest rage.”

So Debbie and Joan began to teach together three months ago. When you enter Debbie and Joan's first-grade room, you see three rows of chairs, two tables pushed against a wall, a single window on the west wall overlooking the parking lot, and a small but adequate chalkboard on the east wall. The room is lighted by a single light bulb, which screws into a fixture in the ceiling. The dark varnished floor is clean and shiny. The artificial flower arrangement on the table is in good taste. An attractive calendar with seasonal pictures hangs on the wall. The back two rows of the fifteen mahogany-painted chairs are filled with children. The two girls on the front row make a total of twelve pupils.

“Just like adults,” you say to yourself. “The back rows are always filled first.”

Debbie Underwood stands in the front of the room and calls the children's names, checking in her roll book the names of those who are absent. By the time the roll is finished, most of the children are fidgeting, but Debbie appears not to notice their restlessness as she takes a manila envelope out of the back of her roll book and hands it to one of the girls in the front row. You assume the envelope is to be passed around for the offering.

“I wonder why someone hasn't taken the offering before now,” you think. “Once the children have given their offering, they are more willing to participate in the activities, and not so likely to lose their money.”

After much difficulty, the manila envelope finally reaches Joan Swanson, who counts the money and reports, “We have eighty-one cents today.”

Debbie writes the amount in the roll book, walks over and places the book outside the door, then begins the class session.

“Class, let’s begin by having prayer, by talking to Jesus. We’ll ask Mrs. Swanson to lead us in prayer.”

Joan Swanson waits until every child bows his head, then prays a short, simple prayer that makes one surmise that here is a lady who understands children.

“Today our story is about some of Jesus’ disciples and how they went fishing,” Debbie begins. Her eyes brighten and her hands move as she tells the exciting story of the disciples’ fishing all night, and catching nothing. But just before she reaches the climax of the story, she digresses to explain the meaning of a couple of big words she has used in telling the story.

“I’m not sure this explanation is getting across to the children,” you tell yourself. “I wish she had told the story in simpler words.” “Jesus will supply your needs,” Debbie concludes the story, “just as He supplied the disciples’ needs.”

“Song time!” announces Joan Swanson as she comes to take over the class. Her radiant smile captures the hearts of the children, and they sing “Heavenly Sunshine” as if they really mean it. Mrs. Swanson has each child look on the back of his quarterly and find the words to the song, “God Cares for Me.”

“I doubt if children in the first grade can read these words,” you think. But they pick up the melody and sing along with Mrs. Swanson. After five or six choruses, Mrs. Underwood returns to the front. “Would you like to hear Kocho?” she asks.

“Yes!”

“Then you must be quiet and listen. Don’t move a muscle,” she whispers as she takes one of the small chairs from the first row and sits down.

Three boys in the back row stand and lean over those in front of them to be sure they don’t miss a word.

“This is a continued story we began last month,” Joan fills you in. “We heard the story over a children’s radio program. We ordered the book, and the children love it. They look forward to the continued sequence each week.”

“Kocho ran down the jungle trail, jumping over vines, logs, and a dead tree that had fallen across the path. The forest fire raging in the background terrified all the forest beasts. The animals, like Kocho, were running for their lives.” As the story develops, it reveals God’s protection over a boy in mission school. When God sent rain to save Kocho from the fire, the children let out a loud sigh of relief.

The closing of the book is Joan Swanson’s signal to get up and teach the memory verse, which she has fully lettered on a large poster board.

Joan begins by reading the verse, then she leads the class in saying it in unison, phrase by phrase. After the class has said the verse in unison, three boys are chosen to recite it before the class.

“That’s fine, class,” she compliments them. “Now remember to say it loudly when we go to closing exercises.”

The two large tables are now pulled away from the wall and chairs arranged around them. Debbie goes to a cabinet, takes out several coloring books, and puts them on the tables. She opens a large candy box, pours half of the broken crayons contained therein in the top of the box, and puts it on one table. The rest of the crayons are placed on the other table.

As you glance at the coloring books, you recognize several popular television personalities.

“I wonder what these books have to do with Bible school,” you ask yourself.

Meanwhile, Debbie and Joan are standing by the door, talking with one another while the children color. It is soon evident that coloring is a weekly activity that the children have learned to expect and the teachers have learned to enjoy.

A bell in the hall rings, and Debbie and Joan begin to go around the tables inspecting each child’s coloring. Both are gracious in their praise for jobs that are well done. And even those who obviously have not tried are commended for their efforts.

“At least they don’t scold the children for getting out of the lines,” you say to yourself as you walk out of the room.

Has Debbie Underwood done a good job of teaching? Would you say that Debbie and Joan are effective as a team? How does Debbie’s personal view of life affect her classroom? Which is more important holding a captive audience or guiding pupils’ activities?

Deer Park Suburban Church

The Deer Park Church is located in an affluent suburban division. The fashionable brick building and the well kept homes surrounding it reflect the *esprit de corps* of the neighborhood. As you enter the spacious glass-enclosed walkway that connects the three-story educational unit with the large sanctuary, you feel more like a visitor to a public school than to a Sunday school.

“Second door to the right,” you say to yourself. The neatly lettered sign, *Grade Three*, above the double-doored entrance invites you to step inside.

“Good morning. Welcome to Primary Three.” The first voice you hear is a smiling voice, and so is the face behind it. The name tag tells you her name—Mrs. Janet Hopeling. Her position behind the desk tells you she is secretary of the department.

“This is Polly, my helper for today,” Mrs. Hopeling says as a pretty little dark-haired girl approaches you. As Polly smiles, you notice that two front teeth are missing. Polly leads you to the reading center and introduces you to Mrs. Ruth Murphy, the lead teacher. Mrs. Murphy is expecting you. She hands you a list of the activities for the day to guide you in your observations and tells you to make yourself at home.

“This is great!” you say to yourself. “At last I’m going to observe a team of teachers in action!”

You head for a corner out of the way and get set to observe everything that is going on.

You begin your observations by exclaiming to yourself, “Wall to wall carpeting! I wonder how they can afford it. And just look at, all the equipment! “

The room is large and bright. There are about thirty small fiber-glass chairs, each about fourteen inches high—just right for Primary children. There are six circular tables about twenty-four inches high. “These must be for small group activities,” you assume.

Along the south wall are two sets of casement windows, low enough to allow the children to see the world about them. Across the room are tack boards and bookshelves. Pictures of Bible stories on the tack board attract your attention. About that time, Mrs. Murphy walks up and asks, “How do you like our room?”

“Beautiful!” you exclaim. “And so well equipped, too. You seem to have thought of everything.”

“Excuse me,” Mrs. Murphy smiles, “Beth needs some help with that large box of clothes.”

Suddenly you become aware that the room is filled with twenty or more active children who have spread out over the room like lively ants at a picnic. In one corner, several children are gathered around a box, pulling out “dress-ups.” You can hardly believe your eyes. They’re playing dress-up with old bathrobes and dresses. Should children play such things in Bible school? Shouldn’t Mrs. Murphy be able to think of a more suitable activity?

Your attention is drawn away from Mrs. Murphy and her group by . the sound of a ukulele. You look around to see Marcie D’Smith sitting in a chair playing her uke for some children who are gathered around her on the floor. It is obvious that the children are caught up in the world of music. As Marcie plays and sings, the children sit wide-eyed and still.

You wonder why the two boys over by the storage shelves do not join one of the groups. But apparently they are too busy playing with some rubber cars, “driving” them back and forth across a table. Did the boys bring the tow cars from home, or do they belong to the Sunday school?

You start across the room in the direction of the boys, but once again your attention is focused on still another activity. Another teacher, Mrs. Olson, is looking through a file cabinet while three girls stand looking on. “That picture looks just like the one in the quarterly,”

comments one of the girls. (You note that the picture is of a Palestinian house.) “Maybe we can find another,” Mrs. Olson says as they continue looking in the file.

“Hi!” Polly’s pleasant voice causes you to look toward the door and see Mrs. Hopeling and Polly greeting a latecomer.

Music from the piano begins and Marcie puts her uke aside. She points to Ruth Murphy, who is sitting on a small stool in the assembly area. As soon as seven or eight children are seated on the rug in front of her, she begins singing, and the children join in. The two boys who have been playing by themselves put aside their cars and come to join in singing, “Wide, Wide as the Ocean.” Some of the children who are playing dress-ups have to be reminded that “It’s time to start Sunday school now,” and they reluctantly leave their dress-ups to join the group.

After the song service a boy named Johnny is introduced by Mrs. Murphy. He reads the Scripture lesson for the day, Mark 2:1-12, and you know without being told that he has practiced reading it before class.

“We couldn’t find a picture of a roof,” one of the boys pipes up as soon as Johnny has finished.

“I have some books here that I’ll let your committee use,” Mrs. Murphy responds. “I think you may be able to find some in them. Now Joseph will lead us in prayer.” You look at Joseph and wonder why Mrs. Murphy didn’t call him Joe. But the sincerity of his prayer makes you want to pray with him, and somehow you believe Joe is really praying from his heart.

Polly is announced as the “secretary-helper” for the day. She comes forward to give the report of attendance, offering, and number of Bibles brought. “Timmy is still absent,” she tells the class, “but his mother said he came home from the hospital this week. Let’s remember to pray for him.”

“Let’s stop right now and pray for Timmy,” Mrs. Murphy suggests-and they do. (You find out from Mrs. Hopeling that Timmy is a member of the class who was involved in an accident several weeks ago.)

After the prayer, Mrs. Murphy dismisses the children and they assemble in small groups called committees.

The committee that immediately catches your attention is a group called the house committee-a very appropriate name inasmuch as the members of the committee are working on a house. (According to Beth Olson, most of the children are allowed to choose the committees on which they serve.)

The house committee is in the process of making a New Testament times Palestinian house out of a large cardboard box. Some are cutting windows, some are painting the roof, and some are making rafters. The children need little supervision, but Mrs. Olson is working with them.

A second committee has found its way to the box of clothes. Marcie D'Smith is helping the children decide what characters and what costumes will be needed. "We want these to look as much like Bible times as possible," Mrs. D'Smith tells the students. One boy puts on a bathrobe and turns around slowly to let the others have a good look at him. "There is no problem with motivation here," you observe to yourself.

Mrs. Hopeling is at the piano with another group of students who are learning the words to the hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains." Mrs. Hopeling uses one finger to play the melody, and the children follow along. They really seem to be enjoying it! The informal atmosphere encourages you to walk around the room observing the different groups.

"We're practicing a play," Mrs. Murphy tells you as you stop to watch her group. "The house committee is preparing the props, and the program committee is preparing the costumes. After everything is ready, the class will put on the play—Just a minute, class, go ahead without me. I'll be back in a moment." Mrs. Murphy withdraws from the group to explain that by acting out the story of Jesus' healing the paralytic, the young people will learn more about the Bible than if the story were merely told to them.

As you stand in the middle of the room and look around at the various committees, you are amazed at the number of activities going on, and even more amazed at the interest being shown by the children.

Over in one corner of the room you notice a lady you have not met reading to three boys. Later you learn that the boys are slow learners, and the lady, Mrs. Lindgrin, is helping them improve their reading comprehension. Mrs. Lindgrin, who teaches remedial English in a local school, comes into the classroom for a short period of time every Sunday morning to work with the boys.

At a given time, all of the boys and girls come back together into the assembly area. They bring their chairs and arrange them in auditorium style. Without an official introduction, Marcie D'Smith begins singing "Jesus Loves the Little Children." All the children join in and seem to be enjoying themselves as they find places for their chairs.

One of the teachers briefly tells the story of Jesus' healing of the paralytic, then begins to direct the children in a "psycho-drama," acting out the story. Mrs. Lindgrin sits in a small chair and reads the words that would be spoken by the Lord Jesus. Mrs. Hopeling whispers to you, "We don't feel it is best to have one of the children portray the Lord Jesus. Reverence for Him cannot be taught in this way. That is the reason Mrs. Lindgrin is reading His words."

Four boys enter the stage area carrying a heavy piece of cloth, stretcher style. Their friendly awkwardness amuses you, but it is apparent that the boys are dead serious. A fifth boy, lying in the cloth, has a bandage around his head. The boys appear to try to penetrate a crowd of children, but the children won't let them in. The boys then pretend to climb some stairs, after which they diligently tear up the roof. Finally, the four carriers place the sick man in front of Jesus, and a lively conversation is carried on between Jesus and six boys who play the role of the Pharisees. The children acting as the crowd give the illusion of being

“amazed” when the paralytic gets up and begins to act. “What a ham!” you say to yourself as he begins dancing around the room.

The entire drama lasts only three minutes. You ask yourself, “Was all of the preparation worthwhile for a short three-minute story play? Even as you ponder the answer, Mrs. Murphy hands you her lesson plan. You are surprised that the aims of the play are well defined and written out

1. To teach the facts of the Bible story found in Mark 2:1-12.
2. To show the young people the compassion and kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. To include Jimmy and Paul in the group activities, thus eliminating their disruptive behavior.
4. To teach the children to share and cooperate in planning and presenting a class activity.

As you leave the church you find yourself saying, “These children enjoy life and the Bible school.” Still, you have a question: “Are they learning the Bible?”

What bearing did the atmosphere of the class have on the attitude of the children? Was there a discipline problem? How actively did the children participate in the learning activities? How did the equipment and facilities of the Deer Park Church differ from that of the Downtown Memorial Church? Can proper equipment change a poor teacher into a good teacher? If a teacher is a good teacher, does she need modern equipment? Will the students learn more with Ruth Murphy or Leila Collins as the lead teacher?

Factors for Evaluating Team Teaching

The effectiveness of team teaching is largely dependent upon the organization of the activities for learning. Good teaching techniques are necessary, of course, but techniques cannot be “isolated”; they are intimately related and merged into one another. As a result, when we observe teaching, we are not looking at many individual processes, but at one process. The effectiveness of this “one process” of teaching depends upon at least six factors

1. The context of learning
2. The focus of learning
3. Interaction in the learning process
4. Individual differences and learning
5. The learning materials
6. Evaluation of the learning process

The following outline is intended to separate these factors of teaching, and provide a framework in which we may observe and evaluate the team-teaching situation in each of the three churches: First Church, Downtown Memorial Church, and Deer Park Suburban Church.

1. The context of learning refers to the setting or background in which learning takes place. The context does not prepare one to teach; rather, it becomes an integral part of the teaching process. In team teaching, the context should center on the learning activities of the pupils. The total environment of the class should “teach.” Environment, or context, is not only preparatory for teaching; it is a vital part of the process itself!

In First Church the context of learning was highly structured. It included listening to stories, coloring in books, and reciting Bible verses. The main assumption for learning was the verbal stimulus. Children were limited in their learning opportunities. They were required to “sit quietly.” They sang songs, but the songs were not even related to the lesson. Team teaching assumes an activity approach, but Leila Collins followed the traditionally inactive approach.

In Downtown Memorial Church, the entire context was extremely interesting to the children. Unfortunately, however, it takes more than interesting lessons to change lives. The story of the disciples’ fishing and Kocho had the children literally sitting on the edges of their chairs. While the teachers stood in the middle of the room as the center of attraction, little attention was given to the pupils’ needs or involvement. Coloring, the pupils’ only involvement, was an unrelated appendage to the teaching.

As far as the teachers at Downtown Memorial Church were concerned, coloring could be done away with, for to them, teaching was talking, and learning was listening.

The context of learning in Deer Park Suburban Church was also verbal, yet it differed from the others in that it was more meaningful to the pupils. The world of the Bible was brought into a definite relationship with Bible-school learning. The teachers had a unified purpose. Their activities were correlated. The focus of the class was on the learning activities of the children, not on the leadership of the adults. The children were actively involved in the learning situation.

2. The focus of the learning process is the center of learning-the part that demands the attention of teacher and pupil.

In the traditional classroom, the focus is upon the teacher and the textbook. In a team-teaching situation, the focus should be upon activities, involvement with life situations, and problem-solving sessions. At First Church, the focus of attention was on the teachers, who considered learning an information-giving process. The children were asked questions. They repeated Bible verses. Still the lessons were wholly subject-centered rather than pupil-centered.

The leaders at Downtown -Memorial Church were successful in gaining the pupils’ undivided attention. No discipline problems developed. But the rapt attention of the pupils was not focused on meaningful learning.

At Deer Park, learning involved facts to be acquired, but it included activities to be experienced and problems to be solved as well. Memorization and good conduct were not the

focal points. Understanding and cooperation were involved. The lesson was centered around experiences rather than facts, but certain facts were related to these experiences.

3. *Interaction in the learning process* concerns itself with the social relationships and influences between teacher and pupil, between pupil and pupil, and between teacher and teacher. The teacher is not the sole source of teaching. Children sometimes learn more from other children than they learn from the teacher. No teacher stands alone; each must depend on other personalities to help teach the lesson. In team teaching, the interaction of all persons in the class (pupils and teachers) becomes the process of education.

In First Church, there was little social interaction among the teachers. Each teacher took her turn talking to the pupils or leading them in large-group activity. The pupils, likewise, had little opportunity for social interaction with one another. Leila Collins was in reality a dictator, and the pupils' social pattern was characterized by submission. The teachers expected (and rewarded) good behavior, and the pupils submitted to the strong leadership the teachers gave. There was a certain amount of freedom in the room, but the teacher was still in positive control.

Social interaction was not evident at Downtown Memorial Church. The children were captured by their teachers. Even though they enjoyed their captivity, there was no opportunity for creativity or mental excitement. When the children's attention is "in the palm of the teacher's hand," she can keep them out of trouble. When, however, she leads them to freely submerge themselves into the lesson, there is not only no time for deviate behavior; there is time and opportunity for forceful, practical application.

At Deer Park Suburban Church, the teacher was seldom at the center of the room. She did not stand as a dictator, giving orders, but rather as one who worked with other teachers and pupils in seeking the truth. Social interaction is characterized by cooperation. Each teacher seems to know what the others are doing. The play, the dress-up clothes, the "house committee"—all are coordinated for learning. Most of the pupils in the room have some relationship to the overall class project. Discipline is not forced in negatives. It is generated by involvement in group projects, by a spirit of cooperation and group morale.

4. *Individual differences and learning.* We cannot expect all pupils to learn the same thing at the same time, nor can we expect all pupils to learn at the same rate. Every student is an individual with an individual family, an individual religious background, an individual psychological makeup, an individual social maturity, an individual spiritual level of achievement, and an individual I.Q.

Most Sunday schools grade as closely as they can according to age or grade in school. But a teacher instructs individuals, not classes. Team teaching provides a natural framework for recognizing individual differences. Some large-group activities can be related to all pupils. Individual needs can be met in small-group activities. In some instances, one teacher may work with one pupil to the best advantage.

In First Church, the class was organized into a homogeneous group. The entire class was expected to attain the same educational goals, regardless of individual differences.

At Downtown Memorial Church, there was no evidence of a teacher's giving any individual attention to a pupil. The class was a structured lesson experience on a rigid schedule.

In the Deer Park class, we had occasion to observe individual effort as well as group effort. The choice of activities (practicing for a play, building a Palestinian house, or preparing props for the play) showed a variety of interests, yet all were related to a common class project. Those students who were having trouble with the lesson were tutored. In the pre-session activities, the children were permitted to participate in whatever activity they desired (dress up in play clothes, listen to a ukulele, play with toy cars, or search for pictures in the file cabinet). Then there was Polly, the class helper for the day. Polly was learning much through her cooperation with teachers. The individuals in Ruth Murphy's class were motivated to activity, insight, and understanding, rather than to the mere accumulation of facts.

5. *Learning materials*, the building blocks of education, include such intangibles as knowledge, skill, and attitudes. The content of the materials is important. So is the sequence. Learning involves much more than the accumulation of facts. Learning includes growth in understanding, change in attitude, perfection of skills, and acquiring of appreciation. Since life is made up of social involvements, education must of necessity give attention to social involvements. Learning materials must become active in order to change skills, understandings, attitudes, and appreciations.

In the Highville church, the teacher attempted to structure the learning materials for the desired results. The children sang choruses; their birthdays were recognized; they listened to stories in preparation for class-time activities. Subject matter was stressed, but the pupils' interest was ignored.

At Downtown Memorial Church the basic aim was the accumulation of knowledge and facts. The order in which the learning material was presented depended on interest of the teachers. Debbie Underwood told the Bible story and read "Kocho." Joan Swan son led the singing and taught the memory verse. Each did what she could do best. To them, teaching was a list of facts held together by the undivided attention of the pupils.

Note the difference in Mrs. Murphy's Deer Park class. The lessons to be learned were considered to be more than mere accumulation of facts. The team planned their projects, thus learning how a Christian community should work together. Subject matter was not ignored, for it was the basis of all of the activities, and it was incorporated into meaningful non-verbal lessons, such as doing one's share of the work in the committee, and collecting information for a group project. The children seemed to enjoy Sunday school, which is, in itself, a good appreciation to learn.

Some Christian educators would contend that the interesting story of Kocho as told by Debbie Underwood would communicate more knowledge than the group activities conducted in Ruth Murphy's class. Others would disagree, arguing that the acting out of the story by the children in Ruth Murphy's class produces more learning. All will have to agree, however, that the children in Ruth Murphy's class will doubt-less have an easier time transferring the lessons into everyday life, and they will also profit from the non-verbal lessons they learned as they acted out the play.

6. *Evaluation of the learning experience* has to do with the way a teacher determines the success or failure of his teaching. In public school, a teacher can give a test to determine his success or failure as a teacher, and the pupil's success or failure as a learner. This evaluation is reflected in the report card. In Bible school, evaluation is less tangible.

In the Highville-type class, good students will listen. They will join in the singing, bring an offering, and be present as often as possible. They will learn their Bible verses and stay in the lines when they color.

In the Downtown Memorial Church, the good child will listen "on the edge of his chair." The good pupil will be quiet but responsive in an appropriate manner.

In the Deer Park Church, life and activity replace the "strait-jacket" of sitting in a chair and being quiet. Pupils are allowed to be both Christians and children. And they are helped to understand them selves as growing children of God. Total development of the pupil becomes the goal of the lesson.

Now, let's talk about "you." Note where "you" were in each room. You were the observer who took the field trip into three different Bible-school rooms. In First Church of Highville and Downtown Memorial Church, you stood in back and observed the group. If either teacher had so chosen, she could have turned the lesson over to you, for the lesson was in her command. In the Deer Park class, you had freedom to walk around the room and become a part of the teaching team. You carried on conversation with individual pupils and groups. Yet you did not interrupt the lesson; you were part of it. Mrs. Murphy did not seem to be in command, but she was in control. Learning centered around each child rather than around the teacher.

As we viewed the three different classrooms, we found ourselves criticizing or praising. Most of us have an "ideal" teacher in mind, and we use this ideal as a standard of good teaching. But is it not possible that some of the teaching techniques we dislike or fear may really be effective? May it not also be true that some of the methods we have always liked are not so effective in changing lives as we would like them to be?

All the teachers we observed claimed to be using a team approach to teaching. All had some commendable traits—traits that may well be of use in *your* team-teaching approach. All had some inconsistencies—inconsistencies that may be harmful in your situation. Watch out for them!

Conclusion

Any one of the teacher-types described in the three churches can be used by God. No two teachers are exactly alike. Good teaching does not require following a certain personality type. It demands instead that you be yourself, that you give of yourself and your God-given abilities to others.

When you are involved in a team situation, you must be especially careful not to mimic another teacher on the team. Mrs. Collins may be a saint of God, respected by teachers and children alike. But if you try to be Mrs. Collins, you're a phony. The thing you want most is

effectiveness, and effectiveness comes from being yourself-your best self. Don't forget the spiritual dynamics of teaching. You must be yielded to the control of God and filled with the Holy Spirit. Prayer can change the lives of students, and your own life too. You must know and love the Word of God, for God's Word is the means of bringing both teacher and pupil to spiritual maturity.

Bring your abilities, your personality, your I.Q. to the team. If all the teachers were ukulele players, who would work with the slow learners? The apostle Paul expressed it this way: "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? ... But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (1 Corinthians 12:17, 18).

What a dull Sunday school it would be if all teachers were alike! Children actually profit from experiences with teachers of different abilities. The teacher who is strong in music knowledge complements the Bible scholar. The teacher who enjoys details complements the teacher who works well with her hands. All teachers working together as a team reflect the body of Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

How Do Teachers Plan for Team Teaching With Children?

Whenever several teachers get together and teach the same group of children, they are using a form of team teaching. But the fact that teachers are involved in team teaching does not insure success. Only as a team of teachers plan together and work together can they expect really satisfying results. Remember Debbie Underwood and Joan Swanson in Downtown Memorial Church? Let's look at them planning a lesson. Then we'll sit in with Ruth Murphy and the teachers of grade three at Deer Park Suburban Church as they plan a class session.

Debbie Underwood and Joan Swanson Plan a Class Period

Debbie Underwood and Joan Swanson are talking on the telephone. "Have you studied your lesson yet, Joan?" Debbie asks.

"No, I haven't. The baby has been running a high temperature and is off schedule. But I'll get it before Sunday."

"The story this week is from John 21:1-4," Debbie explains. "It's the story about Jesus' meeting the disciples who had fished all night. They hadn't caught anything, so He told them to cast the net on the other side of the boat and they would catch some fish. You remember it, don't you? Why don't you read up on the story and tell it?"

"It sounds to me as though you already know it pretty well. Why don't you tell it and I'll lead the singing as I did last week?" Joan pauses for Debbie to answer.

“That sounds good,” answers Debbie. “You do a good job of leading singing. The children really enjoyed singing ‘Heavenly Sun-shine’ last Sunday. Why don’t we try singing that new song on the back of the quarterly again?”

“Who will read Kocho this week?” Joan asks. “I enjoy the story and get almost as much out of it as the children do. You have the book, haven’t you?”

“Yes,” Debbie responds.

“Why don’t you read the story again this week, Debbie? You do such a good job, and the children really listen to You.”

“Well, all right, but that means I will be telling the Bible story and reading Kocho too. I don’t want to take everything away from you.” “Oh, I don’t mind. I just haven’t had time to study this week. I’ll take the memory verse. Do you know what it is?”

“It’s from John 8:12: ‘I am the light of the world.’”

“Didn’t we have that about two months ago?”

“Yes, I thought of that. Maybe we ought to have another one. How about the one the preacher used in the sermon last Sunday night? ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’ That’s Philippians 4:13. That would be a good verse for the children to learn. Why don’t you write it on a piece of poster board and teach it this Sunday? That will give both of us plenty of work to do.”

“That’s fine with me. By the way, Debbie, that box of crayons is in pretty poor condition. We need some new ones.”

“Yes, let’s bring it up at the next teachers’ meeting.”

“Did you hear about Johnny Green? He’s sick with the mumps and won’t be there this Sunday.”

“That means our attendance will be down again,” Debbie groans. “We haven’t had a good attendance since last spring.”

“You know Johnny can be a real pest sometimes,” Joan continues. “I’ll bet Harriet is climbing the wall with him home all day. Why don’t we get a card to send him and put both our names on it?”

“Say, that’s a good idea. I’ll be going down to the shopping center this afternoon. I’ll get one and put it in the mail.”

This could well have been an actual planning session between a team of teachers. Debbie and Joan are to be commended for their efforts. (Many teachers never attempt to plan together.) But let us note some of the things that did not take place between them

1. There was no sharing together of common problems faced in the teaching situation. Debbie took the initiative in planning, and Joan contributed little.

2. There was no mention of either general or specific aims. Even though the aims are usually written out in the quarterly, the teachers should discuss them. When the aims are clear in the minds of the teachers, they can proceed to work toward them.

3. There was no attempt to correlate the various activities. The fact that a story is a good one does not necessarily make it the best one to tell. Nor does a verse qualify for “the memory verse” because the preacher used it in his sermon.

4. The women seemed to have more concern for Johnny’s mother, who had to put up with him while he was at home with the mumps, than they did for Johnny. Also, they apparently were more concerned with having a good attendance than they were with the individuals in the class.

Lesson Planning in Deer Park Suburban Church

Let’s look in on another group of teachers as they make plans for a class session.

Ruth Murphy, sitting at the head of a conference table, calls the girls to order just as Preacher Anderson looks in the door and smiles. “You girls here again? Every week after prayer meeting the same thing—planning for grade three. This must be the best-planned department in the church!”

The minister goes on his way and the teachers of grade three continue their work.

“I hope all of you have studied your lessons,” Ruth begins. “Marcie, read the Scripture for us.”

As Marcie reads, each of the teachers listens intently. Some follow along in their Bibles. When Marcie finishes reading the passage (Mark 2:1-12), Ruth suggests that the teachers try to apply the Scripture to their own lives.

“I realize these applications will be more meaningful to us than to the children,” Ruth explains. “But if we first make the Scripture meaningful to ourselves, we can better relate it to the lives of the children.”

Janet Hopeling calls attention to the patience of the four men who brought the paralytic to Jesus. Beth Olson points out that Jesus knew the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees even before they spoke.

“I’m glad the Lord knows my heart,” Beth comments. “When I realize that Jesus knows my thoughts, I try to control them.”

“Let us pray now,” Ruth Murphy suggests after several minutes of discussion. “Let’s offer specific requests that God may give us specific answers. “

1. One of the teachers requests that they all pray for Jimmy and Paul, who were causing discipline problems. “Yes,” Mrs. Murphy approves, “but let’s do more than pray about the boys. Let’s see what we can do to get them interested in the Word of God.”

2. Mrs. Olson asks the teachers to pray that the words of the song, “From Greenland’s Icy Mountains,” may become meaningful to the children as they learn it.

3. Marcie D’Smith mentions Timmy, who has been absent for two weeks with a fractured leg. “Let’s not only pray for him here, but let’s have the children pray for him too. This will help to teach them to have compassion for one another.”

4. Mrs. Murphy adds that they should pray for guidance and help in effectively presenting the story of Jesus’ healing the paralytic.

5. Beth Olson confesses a need for patience and asks the girls to pray for her that she may grow in the Lord.

The teachers seem to understand one another’s spiritual struggles as they pray for one another, and no one attempts to convince her fellow teachers that she is more spiritual than she really is.

After prayer time, Mrs. Murphy leads the group in a discussion concerning the aims for the coming lesson. Janet Hopeling writes the aims on the chalkboard.

“Now,” Mrs. Murphy suggests, after the aims have been discussed, “let’s go over each point again. We want to make them as clear as possible.”

1. To teach the facts of the Bible story found in Mark 2:1-12.
2. To help the children learn about the compassion and kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. To include Jimmy and Paul in the group activities.
4. To teach the children to share and cooperate in planning; to help the four sections of the class to feel a unity of purpose.

As the aims are named, each teacher records them in her notebook. The aims are not much different from those stated in the quarterly, yet as the teachers discuss them, they take on a personal touch. Specific ways of carrying them out suggest themselves. And the teachers become a closely knit team.

“This looks like a pretty good set of aims,” Mrs. Murphy comments. “Now let’s do some brainstorming about activities we can plan for this Sunday. Remember, everything anyone suggests in the brain storming session will be written on the board. We will save our discussion until all contributions are listed on the chalkboard.”

Marcie writes the following suggestions on the chalkboard as they are given

1. Play the ukulele with choruses.
2. Watch a filmstrip about Mark 2:1-12.
3. Bring a box of dress-ups to serve as costumes for a skit about the Bible story.
4. Have a true-false test over the Bible story.
5. Bring some guinea pigs for pre-session activities.
6. Ask Mrs. Lindgrin to help with slow learners.
7. Work on junior choir number for missionary play.
8. Do a choral reading of Psalm 91.

Ruth Murphy sticks to her point. No one is allowed to discuss any item on the board until all are listed. A long discussion of the merits of each point follows. (Note that some of the items listed on the board were not used in class.)

Marcie D'Smith points out that when the story of Jesus' healing the man is acted out, no one should play the part of Jesus. Janet Hopeling nods agreement, recalling that this has caused some problems in the past, and that she has heard such remarks as, "Our Jesus is sure 'unJesus-like.'" Everyone agrees.

When the activities have been definitely determined and listed in sequence, Ruth Murphy leads the teachers in choosing the activities for which they will be responsible.

Note some of the strong points in the Deer Park Suburban Church group

1. Activities, not content, were planned. The teachers were expected to study the content and gather their materials at home. They carefully considered the aims, which governed the activities, which taught the content.

2. Everyone on the team had a part in planning the session. All were given an opportunity to contribute ideas. All were free to share in deciding which suggestions should be eliminated. (The guinea pig idea was discarded, but the person who made the suggestion had the freedom to do so without fear of embarrassment.)

3. Planning was centered around relationships. The teachers were obviously concerned with what they did with the children, what the children did with each other, and what they as teachers did with each other. After all, Christianity is a matter of relationships with God, and with other human beings. Teaching offers many opportunities for working out our relationships—opportunities that cannot be accomplished by children who are kept so busy listening that they have no time for practical give-and-take situations.

Procedures for a Planning Session

We have examined two situations in which a team plans for a united venture in teaching. To presume to judge the success or failure of the planning would be foolish on our part, for we do not know the effects of the teaching on the lives of the children involved. We can, however, list certain procedures that should be included in planning

1. Evaluate last Sunday's lesson.
2. Read the Scripture passage to be taught the following Sunday.
3. Pray.
4. Discuss and write out the purpose of the lesson.
5. Share the results of individual home study.
6. Compile a list of learning activities.
7. Consider activities that may be suggested by the children.
8. Practice songs.
9. Fellowship with one another.

All teachers should study the lesson before the planning session. Certainly they should read the teachers' manual and the appropriate pages in the pupils' quarterly. Each member of the team should bring a list of songs, Scripture verses to be used, topics for conversation, possible related activities, handwork to be used, etc.

The team should meet every week, and each lesson should be planned at least two weeks before it is taught. The lead teacher is responsible for scheduling the meetings. The chairman leads the planning session. Each teacher should bring and share his own list of learning materials and activities.

Begin each, planning session by reading the Scripture passage that will be used. Even though the teachers should have read the passage and studied the teachers' manual before coming to the meeting, they need to hear the passage again in order to have it fresh in their minds.

Each teacher should have opportunity to lead out in prayer. The responsibilities for the total growth of the class belong to each teacher; therefore, each one should undergird the class in prayer. Furthermore, every teacher should pray for every other teacher on the team.

Most teachers' manuals state the aim of every lesson. This is an excellent place for a team of teachers to begin. Discuss the purpose of the lesson as you see it. Sharpen, re-define, and crystallize the purpose in your minds as you share ideas and make suggestions.

As each teacher studies his lesson he will discover unique approaches to the lesson. In a time of sharing, a teacher can give insight to, and even teach other teachers. Hence, the whole team becomes stronger.

Team planning is particularly effective in choosing learning activities for the class. Every member of the team should be encouraged to make suggestions-and all suggestions should be seriously evaluated.

In your final planning, try to anticipate and think through questions the pupils may raise from their study. Determine how each teacher can help the pupils find answers.

Decide on, and spell out, the specific responsibilities of each teacher on the team. Write out a lesson plan including the sequence of events, and persons responsible for each leadership task.

Team planning usually results in broad plans. Plans should be definite enough that each teacher will be able to proceed with his continued individual preparation, yet flexible enough to allow the pupils' ideas to be incorporated into the lesson.

Plan to devote part of the activity time on Sunday morning to planning with the children for the Sunday-school lesson. Do not be disappointed if the suggestions made by the pupils are childish, for they are children. The important thing to remember is that a child's suggestions are meaningful to him, and the result is often a true learning experience. Allow some time for their help-but let it be help with your guidance.

Pupils of all ages can share certain responsibilities. Pupils of all ages need some experience in problem solving, decision making, and expressing their own ideas at their own level.

Younger children may suggest activities or experiences they enjoy. The teacher should listen carefully for the child's questions and comments. He should make a note of the children's interests and disinterests as well.

Older pupils are able to assume more direct responsibility in helping to determine their own needs and interests by evaluating their own progress in terms of "How are we doing? "

In an effective team-teaching program, each member of the team gives support to the others. The timid teacher is encouraged to assume leadership when he is ready. Members of the team offer praise and commendation to other teachers for a job well done. Constructive suggestions are given and sought, so that each member helps improve the teaching and learning tasks of the others.

As teachers share in the various activities, they stimulate one another to better teaching. One teacher may have prepared outstanding visuals to use in pre-session activities. Another may have secured a record or tape for use during song time. Still another may have an activity table ready for the children.

Sing the songs and choruses you plan to use. Practice gives confidence to the one leading the singing on Sunday morning. If you plan to use the piano, or sing with the record player,

practice with it in the planning session. But don't forget that young children can usually sing as well without a piano as they can with one.

The person who leads the children's singing does not need to have a trained voice, but he should possess a clear, well-pitched, pleasing voice. The purpose of singing in church is to worship God. This is not the time to teach the principles of music. Rather, it is a time to teach children the joy of singing from the heart.

Sing songs that are interwoven with the other materials and activities of the Sunday-morning lesson. Try to relate the songs to life's experiences and to the lessons found in the Scripture.

If you have a pianist, ask her to play a new song for the children before you ask them to sing it. (Teachers should learn the songs at the weekly planning session, not during the Bible-school hour.) In teaching a new song to the children, play only the melody. Here are a few additional suggestions to help the leader:

1. Sing gospel songs from memory; teach a song to children only after you know it.
2. Learn the words, and teach them correctly.
3. If possible, write the words out before the children for them to see.
4. Use correct pronunciation of all words.
5. Play the music as written without pianistic interpretation.
6. Avoid bass embellishments.
7. Project rhythm in stirring songs.
8. Use proper introductions.
9. Begin at the first stanza of the hymn and end on a tonic cord.

Evaluation should be a continual process. Have the team draw up a series of questions to use in judging the success of class time activities. Honest answers to your questions will disclose weaknesses, and you may need to guard against developing a negative attitude or a tendency toward discouragement. Learn to profit from mistakes by stepping over them to new heights. Growth, progress, and development come as you climb over obstacles.

The lead teacher bears the responsibility of guiding the team in its self-evaluation, but the responsibility of analysis and correction rests with all.

Teachers must know one another well if they are to work together as a team. Knowing one another means helping one another, sharing experiences. Informal fellowship among the team members is as basic to team teaching as is serious planning. This is one reason for regular planning sessions. One busy hour on Sunday morning simply does not provide sufficient time to know one another. Light refreshments make the planning more enjoyable, and they may help to establish an informal atmosphere.

Conclusion

The success of team teaching is in team planning. All teachers share in the planning, and all share in the responsibility for results. All suggestions of all members of the team are given serious consideration. No one dominates; no one sits and listens; all participate. A significant feature of team teaching is the teacher's becoming an intricate part of the group. He functions as part of a team, not as a lone performer.

Team planning cannot be accomplished in a quarterly meeting. Regular, weekly meetings are best, but monthly meetings may be surprisingly effective. Planning should always be done two or three weeks ahead of time.

Team planning takes time. Team preparation takes time. But remember, "It takes time to grow a child."

CHAPTER SIX

What Is Expected of a Lead Teacher?

Can anyone be a lead teacher? What are the duties of a lead teacher? Does a team-teaching situation pose special problems? Is it possible to be an effective classroom teacher, but an ineffective lead teacher? May one be a good member of the team, but a poor lead teacher?

There is no simple answer to any of these questions. One person may be a good lead teacher in one church, but a poor lead teacher in another church. Still another person may not make a good lead teacher in any situation.

The compound responsibilities of team teaching make it necessary for a good lead teacher not only to be a good teacher but also to be able to guide a group of teachers. Some "good" departmental superintendents do not make good lead teachers because they are too busy. But for the most part, those who are able to guide children are also able to guide teachers.

Team teaching carries into the school the old principle of the division of labor, but there is a differentiation of roles. These various types of roles are fulfilled in different ways by different teachers.

Let's look at two lead teachers, Mrs. Ruth Murphy of Deer Park Church, and Mrs. Leila Collins of First Church, Highville, and note how each teacher reflects the different roles played by the typical lead teacher.

As we examine these roles, we will see how a person's outlook on life determines the kind of teacher he will be.

Leila Collins was reared in a Christian home. Her parents spoke Swedish around the home so Leila was fluent in both English and Swedish.

“Leila must have all the advantages we’ve missed,” her mother used to say. Leila got good grades in school because of her mother’s insistence. Leila always wore a clean dress, and before she went out the door, her mother often put a ribbon in her hair.

After graduating from high school, Leila attended a Bible college for a year, and during her year away from the farm, taught Bible school in a large suburban church. Here, for the first time in her life, she saw a departmentalized Bible school. Back home all the children, ages five to twelve, were taught together in the church basement. Small pews just like the one upstairs had been built for the children by Grandpa Collins.

When Leila returned from her year at Bible college, she was asked to help in the children’s class. Within a few months, she was elected superintendent because of her ability with children.

The following year the church built a new educational wing. At Leila’s insistence, departmental rooms were constructed for the Beginner, Primary, and Junior Departments. Each department had a central assembly room with six small rooms on either side of the larger room. Attendance increased. The leaders of the church attributed the increase to Leila. They have had confidence in her leadership ever since.

Now—ten years and three children later—Leila Collins is still doing an efficient job. She spends much time phoning her teachers and visiting absentees. Leila rarely misses the monthly meeting of all Bible school teachers. After coffee time, she meets with her teachers for prayer and discussion of problems.

A visitor to Leila’s home would likely find her with a smudge of flour on her nose, for baking is Leila’s hobby. She usually brings a “snack” for the children in the Primary Department. “This is a good opportunity to teach the children to return thanks before eating,” she comments.

If you were to look around Leila’s home, you would find everything in place. There are clean, starched curtains at the windows and comfortable early American furniture, which reflect her personality. Leila wants her three children to appreciate their Swedish heritage. Last quarter she taught the children in the Primary Department a Swedish melody. The children were brought in to sing for adults, and many of the older folk came up to clutch her hands in appreciation.

Does Leila Collins’ family life influence her role as a teacher? How does Leila see herself in relationship to the First Church in Highville? How does she view learning? How do the things that interest her affect her teaching? Is Leila Collins a good teacher?

Ruth Murphy was adopted when she was only two months old. When she was old enough to understand, her parents told her, “You are ours because we chose you. Other families have to take the children that come, but you are our chosen one.” Ruth Murphy knew she was loved, and she is deeply grateful to her parents for their love. Now, in the role of lead teacher, Ruth is careful to “praise” every child. One of her repeated themes, “God accepts you,” is reflected in her concern for Paul, a discipline problem in her third grade class. Ruth doesn’t like to “scold” any child in her class. She feels the team should try to compliment every child.

After Ruth graduated from high school, she got a job as a telephone operator in a large city, and became active in a large church. There she met and married Fred. Because Fred was a college graduate, on his way up the business ladder, they lived in an exclusive section of town. Ruth is now in her middle forties and her two children are in high school. “Family council is the way to

settle problems,” Ruth insists, and each member of the family has a chance to give his point of view.

Up until three years ago, when Ruth took the Primary Department leadership, she wasn't very active in the church. She believed her main contribution was to work through Fred, who held several major positions in the church. Ruth was Fred's "sounding board." She listened to his ideas and problems, and was always careful to make her influence non-directive.

Lead teacher in the Primary Department is Ruth's first major job. "Everyone in there knows more than I do," was her response when she was asked to take the job. When the true nature of a team approach was explained, Ruth asked for two weeks to pray over the decision. During that time, she read Bible-school quarterlies, a college textbook, and visited the Beginner Department, where a team approach was being used.

"Since you make such a good *follower*, you might make a good *leader*," the minister told her. That settled it. She took the job. Three years ago, in her first year with the grade three class, a discipline problem arose. Ruth tried compliments and "child psychology," but nothing seemed to work. Finally, in exasperation, she marched the boy to the adult class to sit with his mother.

"I didn't sleep a wink that night," remarked Ruth. "All my praying didn't change the situation."

The boy and his mother dropped out of church. Ruth Murphy feels personally responsible for their dropping out.

A visit to Ruth's home would reveal a well-kept household. Contemporary furniture graces the rooms. You will more often find her in a smock than in an apron. "I'm not the kitchen type," Ruth admits. "My hobbies are antiques and wood finishing."

Does the fact that Ruth Murphy was an adopted child affect her teaching? Would you want to see her take a more authoritative attitude toward discipline? How does her experience with her husband and children prepare her for being a lead teacher?

What Are the Duties of the Lead Teacher?

1. *The lead teacher is responsible for group planning sessions.* Sometimes he will lead the group in planning. Sometimes he will delegate leadership to another member of the team. But in the final analysis, a lead teacher will make the greatest contribution to the total class through effective group planning sessions.

2. *The lead teacher may promote harmonious relationships between parents and teachers.* Correlation of home and classroom teaching is important for the spiritual development of children. Some educators view the school as an extension of the home. The good lead teacher works out good parent-teacher relationships.

3. *The lead teacher implements policies made on the organizational level.* He is the key to communication between the team and the Christian education committee. He fills the gap that might otherwise separate the team from the Sunday-school organization.

4. *The lead teacher takes the initiative in securing adequate space, equipment, and supplies.* While the teacher who acts as secretary may actually order and handle the supplies, the lead teacher should be aware of the supplies that are ordered, and see that the budget is respected. When class attendance overcrowds a room, the lead teacher has the responsibility of making the need known to the Christian education committee.

5. *The lead teacher helps recruit new teachers for the team.* The committee may be responsible for finding and enlisting new teachers, but sometimes “the wheels of progress grind slowly.” The lead teacher, because of his position on the team, is best qualified to recruit for his department, and submit his selections to the committee for approval. He should have the courage not only to seek the best teacher available for his team, but to weed out unlikely prospects as well. Not all potential teachers make good members of the team.

6. *The lead teacher guides in teacher enrichment.* He should encourage team members to attend Christian education conventions and church workers’ conferences. Also, he should encourage members of the team to enroll in classes that can help them become more effective teachers. He may plan in-service training experience for the team. In general, the lead teacher should do all within his ability to improve the teaching of everyone on the team.

7. *The lead teacher encourages teacher visitation in the home.* Team responsibility for children must not discourage individual teacher contact with children. Instead, it should encourage a closer relationship. Nevertheless, planning is needed in order to assure that all children are being visited. The team should frankly discuss the visitation ministry, making sure the teacher with the right personality visits the right pupil.

In summary, the lead teacher’s responsibility is exactly what the title suggests—to lead. The team works together, plans together, prays together, and rejoices together. And in the final analysis, the lead teacher is a member of the team. Together, they serve the Lord.

The role of the lead teacher may be better understood if we look at the things he does not do.

1. *The lead teacher does not necessarily direct the opening assembly.* In the ordinary Sunday school, the superintendent is up in front of the children. He leads in the worship period. (This is a better term than “opening assembly.”) During the week he plans the worship service, and if anyone is to help him, he delegates the duty.

In a team approach, the group decides the activities for the “total-hour-teaching.” This includes worship. Members of the team are assigned to lead different activities. No one member leads all of the activities. Neither does the same member lead the same activity every week. The team, not the lead teacher, decides who shall lead the various activities.

The lead teacher will take his fair share of the group guiding activities. You may walk into a team situation and see him “front and center.” But he is there by group agreement, leading activities suggested by the team.

2. *The lead teacher does not “run the teachers’ meetings.”* Usually, he appoints a member of the team to guide the planning session. (Don’t call your planning session a “teachers’ meeting.”) In a team approach, no one assigns duties; each team member has an equal opportunity to make suggestions and volunteer for guiding certain activities.

3. *The lead teacher is not “the expert.”* A departmental superintendent may be appointed to a position because “he is the best with the children.” Such a superintendent may tell stories well. He may be noted for his ability to lead singing or his talent for talking the children’s language. He may have an outgoing personality. Hopefully, he understands and loves children. Despite all this, however, he may make a poor lead teacher. If he “knows everything,” he cannot learn from others on the team; he does not need to listen to their ideas.

A team, by its nature, needs different personalities and capabilities. Marcie D’Sinith sings well. Mrs. Hopeling makes an excellent secretary. Ruth Murphy is a natural leader. A good team member does not have to be “jack-of-all-trades.”

The Lead Teacher and Other Groups in the Church

In cases where team teaching has been tried and abandoned, its failure has been due to (1) inability to secure teachers who are willing and able to cooperate in a team approach, or (2) pressure from other groups in the church.

This section is concerned with the second reason for failure in team teaching—pressure from other groups. Some of the arguments against team teaching that are often heard from other groups are these

- (1) “We’ve never tried it before.”
- (2) “It’s not Scriptural.”
- (3) “The children won’t learn the Bible.”
- (4) “When I was a child we spent our time in Sunday school learning rather than playing.”
- (5) “Like public school, we need reading, writing, and arithmetic.” However, team teaching gives these critics the very things they argue for.

The lead teacher must take the initiative in “selling” church groups on the team approach. When other groups understand team teaching, they will support it wholeheartedly.

1. *The lead teacher and parents.* Parents need to understand how a team-teaching program can provide a larger and richer education for their children. Visits to the homes, parent-teacher meetings, and regular correspondence will help to keep parents informed. Most parents want the best for their children. They need to understand the purpose of teaching in a team approach. They need to know what is expected of their children. When they understand the program, they will support it. The lead teacher must, give continued guidance to the team in order to secure the support of parents, which is so vital to effective, extended teaching.

2. *The lead teacher and the official board.* Older men often constitute a substantial percentage of the membership of the board. If they are men of vision, in tune with the times, they will want to know the progress and results of teaching in the Bible school. These men can be your most valuable supporters. If the board is adverse to change, they may be skeptical of the team-teaching approach. Take time to inform them of the advantages of team teaching. Explain how it works. Illustrate with a specific lesson if necessary. After all, the board is probably equipped to interpret “the world of team teaching” to the church, and don’t forget, some of these men may be the fathers and grandfathers of your students!

3. *The lead teacher and the church clientele.* Adults have a right to know what the church is doing with children. Some of the adults will have children in your class. Others will invite neighborhood children and friends to your class. Still others will pray for your class. The lead teacher will perhaps have his best contact with the congregation on a one-to-one basis. In this way, he can interest others in the program of team teaching. He may even have an opportunity to share the experience of team teaching in a special service. If so, he should rejoice at the opportunity, and make the most of it.

4. *The lead teacher and children.* Most children enjoy learning experiences with a team. There may be some, however, who do not particularly enjoy an experience-centered classroom; they may prefer a listening approach—especially if they have been conditioned to expect a “talk.” The lead teacher can reassure such children by showing them that they will have more time to do the things they like to do together, by actively involving the children themselves in planning how they will learn.

Conclusion

The lead teacher’s responsibility is to lead. He must be sympathetic, patient, and understanding—both to fellow teachers and pupils. The lead teacher must be a teacher: one who guides activities, changes lives, and causes growth. He must be a personal worker, attempting to lead all within the class to a more perfect knowledge of Christ. He must be an administrator, zealously holding to the truth, yet sympathetic to the opinions of others, exhibiting the ability to work through others, practicing selfless giving of himself for the team. The lead teacher will have to work out controversies; he must be both well organized and diplomatic.

The lead teacher must strive to be as courageous as Elijah, as patient as Moses, as wise as Solomon, as loving as John the disciple, and as faithful as Abraham.

FOOTNOTES

¹Nicholas C. Polos, *The Dynamics of Team Teaching* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 135 S. Locust Street, 1960), p. 17.

CHAPTER SEVEN

How Do Children Learn?

Learning is not something a teacher does for pupils, nor is it something a teacher can give to pupils. Learning is personal. It is like touching and smelling a flower: no one else can do it for you. You must “sniff” and you must “feel” for yourself. Children learn from experiences. Worthy experiences lead to growth; bad experiences often result in deterioration. Take, for example, the case of Paul.

Paul

Paul has a definite lack of interest toward Bible school. Mrs. Murphy called him aside last week and talked to him about “quiet, cooperation, and groups,” but Paul didn’t care about quiet, cooperation, or groups.

A few months ago, Paul’s father picked up Paul’s Sunday-school quarterly. “Kid’s stuff!” he muttered. That was all he said, but his expression hit home. Paul didn’t want to be a “kid.”

Paul’s father is a successful plumbing contractor. During his college days he played hockey and represented the United States at the Winter Olympics. Father and son watch the hockey games on television. Paul idolizes the Maple Leafs and Red Wings, just as he idolizes his father.

Paul still remembers an incident that happened last year. One Sun-day when he was sitting and waiting for opening exercises to start, another boy named Frank whispered to him, “Guess what I’ve got in my pocket.”

“What?” Paul asked as he put an arm around his new buddy. Frank opened his pocket. “See?”

“Whew!” Paul whistled. “You must have a million rubber bands. Where’d you get ‘em?”

“In my dad’s desk. Like to have some?”

When two -boys have time on their hands and “a million” rubber bands, the inevitable happens. In no time rubber bands were flying through the classroom.

“Stop that!” ordered a bossy little girl in a white starched dress.

But the boys were having too much fun to stop. “Ouch!” yelled Joe Liefeldt. “Quit it, you guys.”

Miss Kilroy, who was busy preparing flannel graph figures for the worship service, moved quickly to the place of disturbance. “Who’s responsible?” she snapped.

“Paul,” volunteered the bossy little girl, swishing her starched dress. “He’s been shooting us with rubber bands.”

Miss Kilroy didn’t wait for explanations. She grabbed Paul by the arm and marched him out of the room, and up to the sanctuary where Paul’s mother’s class was meeting. Paul’s mother didn’t forget the embarrassment, and he was spanked when they got home. Miss Kilroy didn’t forget the interruption, and Paul sat on the front row for the rest of the year. Paul didn’t forget either.

Ever since Paul was promoted to Ruth Murphy’s department, she has been trying to capture his interest. “He’s a bright boy,” she told the group at planning session. “I believe if we give him an important part in our play, he just may come around.”

“But suppose he cuts up and ruins the play?” Beth Olson objected. “Then we will have worked on these costumes and props for nothing.” The group discussed the problem and decided the activity of getting the play- together was more vital to learning than a successful play presentation. Paul was assigned to be leader of those who brought the paralytic to Jesus. “When he gets on top of the roof, he’ll likely tear a hole to let the stretcher down,” Marcie suggested.

Evaluation

How would you describe Miss Kilroy’s attitude toward discipline How is the atmosphere in her classroom different from Ruth Murphy’s Do you think Ruth Murphy was sacrificing the class to reach one boy Paul? Was Miss Kilroy sacrificing Paul to reach the class? When may a teacher become the cause of discipline problems.

Martha Sue

Now let’s look in on another learner. Martha Sue had a birthday last week. She was seven years old. “You look lovely,” exclaimed Mrs. Collins as Martha Sue entered the Primary-Department. Martha Sue walked proudly to the first row, and sat down very carefully. “Now don’t get dirty,” her mother had cautioned her, “and keep your hair pushed out of your eyes.”

Mrs. Collins was busy talking to the pianist. “Isn’t Martha Sue cute in her birthday dress?” Mrs. Felt remarked. “I don’t see how her mother finds time to make so many cute clothes.”

Just then another girl carne in, smiled at Martha Sue, and sat down beside her. Martha Sue looked at the new girl but didn’t smile at her; she just squirmed on her chair.

Mrs. Westfall walked by and nodded to Martha Sue. "I've got seven pennies," ventured little Martha. "That's nice," replied Mrs. Westfall and went on her way. She was busy getting ready to start teaching.

Martha Sue scratched the tight hair band, then remembered to push the hair out of her eyes. Over on one side of the room she could see Mrs. Collins rearranging the bulletin board. She wanted to go over and have a closer look, but she didn't. She just squirmed a little more.

Mrs. Collins came over to the center of the room and addressed the class, "Children, let's start by singing, 'Happy, Happy, Happy.'" Martha Sue half sang the words from routine, but her thoughts were elsewhere. All she could think about was her new dress.

Mrs. Westfall went over and sat between two boys who were poking one another. Only then did Martha Sue's thoughts come back to the classroom.

She looked around the room and suddenly realized that Mrs. Felt was telling a story. "Zacchaeus scurried up the tree," was about all Martha Sue heard before her mind went wandering again.

Time dragged. It seemed like such a long time since Martha Sue came into the room. The pennies in her hand were getting sweaty. She changed them to the other hand, but in the process, one dropped and rolled across the floor.

Martha Sue could feel every eye looking at her, as she quickly retrieved the coin. She sat down again and neatly arranged her dress. "Martha Sue is such a nice girl," Mrs. Westfall was thinking. "I wish all the children were as well behaved and paid attention as she does. The boys in the back are a problem. But not Martha Sue—she's perfect."

Evaluation

Martha Sue was hungry for attention, but the teachers stood around talking about her rather than talking to her. Mrs. Westfall thinks Martha Sue is perfect. Actually the little girl's thoughts were far away. Time dragged when she was doing nothing but sitting. She kept squirming in her chair because her little body demands movement. Mrs. Collins believes learning begins when she starts teaching the class. She sees no reason for planning pre-session activities. Mrs. Westfall thinks of children as "miniature adults" who should "sit still and listen."

What activities were provided for Martha Sue's interest? What was the lesson learned in this class? Did Martha Sue get what she wanted most?

Even a conscientious teacher may inhibit a child's spiritual growth by wrong attitudes and methods of teaching. "You sit still while I instill" is a poor philosophy. Since children find it difficult to sit still, they do little learning when their only activity is listening. The growing body of the child has built-in wiggles. Every few minutes he simply must squirm on his chair. Both hands go over his head, and an ear needs to be scratched. The little fingers point out the window, or both arms go around a knee as the child examines an object on the floor. Rare indeed is the teacher who can keep a group of children spellbound for more than four to five minutes.

1. Children learn through involvement. Most children are eager to learn, but their active, growing bodies need a chance to move. They need lessons that include opportunities for freedom of movement. However, movement in and of itself is not enough. A Bible school must be a learning center for preschoolers as well as for older pupils. It must do more than just keep the children busy. It must provide for meaningful learning.

Children are not good sitters, nor are they good listeners. But they are excellent learners. They learn some things from books and pictures. They learn some things from hearing a teacher talk about them. But they also learn by going on trips and seeing things for themselves, by acting out the Bible story, by helping the teacher present a flannel-graph lesson.

Children learn many things from different people who visit their classrooms. They enjoy having the minister and the superintendent visit with them. They also learn from talking with a policeman, a doctor, or other resource persons. Most of all, children learn by doing: by coloring pictures, pasting, growing a plant, drawing a mural, planning a display, searching the Bible. Such experiences, along with good books and pictures, may help the teacher open spiritual avenues to the heart and lead to better understanding of the Scripture.

Most Bible-school classes are organized into neat little compartments. Time is set aside for music, a story, movement of chairs, hand-work, looking at pictures, working at the sand table, playing Bible games, listening to music, etc. But a child learns “beef-stew” style. His learning comes all mixed up, as in a stew. The child is learning to count while he builds a block tower for his church (arithmetic and co-ordination). The next moment his blocks topple because the base was too narrow (science). But at the same time he says, “My steeple fell” (language). Another child comes to watch and help (social learning). The teacher guides the children in singing, “The wise man built his house upon the rock” (singing and application).

This kind of learning makes some adults uncomfortable. So they try to “organize” the Bible-school class: opening assembly (3 minutes), singing (2 minutes), Bible story (7 minutes), show and tell (10 minutes), handwork (8 minutes), and so on. If you must organize, then organize, but do keep your schedule flexible enough to involve the children in all of the activities.

Give yourself a simple test. Walk into your classroom and ask yourself the following questions: Is there something fresh in the room? Something new? A pretty picture? A display? Something from nature? Something to illustrate Scriptural truths? Are you pleased? If you were a child, would you want to “get involved”?

2. Children learn informally. Children learn in two ways: formally and informally. Formal learning takes place in the classroom under the direction of the teacher. Curriculum, quarterlies, pencils, paper, and memory work comprise formal learning. Informal learning happens without planning and often without the leadership of adults. It happens on the school playground, at the breakfast table, on vacations. Some informal learning is undesirable, negative, and detrimental. Nevertheless, it will usually make a lasting impression on the attitudes and habits of the child. Walt Whitman referred to informal learning when he said he “became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will go forth every day.” Informal learning may be reassuring, for the child learns informally the adult way of life. It may also be frightening, for all that we are in our unguarded moments (our old natures, our unchecked desires) is passed on to our children.

3. *Children learn through activities.* The child is not a passive agent, but an active participant in his own education. He does not bring an empty bucket for the teacher to fill. The child brings a personality to Sunday school. The teacher, along with many other influences, molds this personality for good or for evil—or for some of both. One contemporary educator has indicated, “It simply cannot be true that a child cannot learn . . . the central problem of education is the changing of *original, animal* nature into *human, civilized* nature.”²

Lois Mossman lists the following as activities that change the lives of children. (The learning activities are listed in order of importance.)

a. *Adventuring.* Exploring, trying, finding out, experimenting, investigating, searching, reaching for, inquiring, extending, questioning, proving, asking.

b. *Creating.* Contriving, devising, proposing, constructing, imagining, planning, organizing, initiating.

c. *Cooperating.* Pooling, suggesting, helping, contributing, discussing, refuting, reporting, sharing, participating, communicating.

d. *Judging.* Evaluating, deciding, considering, concluding, forming opinions, summarizing, formulating.

e. *Enjoying.* Consuming, receiving, accepting, intaking, listening.

f. *Recreating.* Renewing, playing, swinging, relaxing, resting.

g. *Recording.* Drawing, writing, expressing, painting, sculpturing.

h. *Repeating.* Reciting, practicing, drilling.

i. *Obeying.* Accepting, following, conforming, submitting.

j. *Dictating.* Controlling, ordering, forcing.³

Note that informal learning is the most effective yet least used method in the traditional authoritarian approach. Team teaching is effective because it utilizes an informal approach in a structured setting to accomplish results through the authoritative Word of God.

4. *Children learn when their needs are met.* Children do many things in the classroom. Their activities may please the teacher, carry-out the directions of the workbook, or just be “busy work.” Learning is most effective when it meets a need in the child’s life. Facts about the Bible, words from the quarterly, and a teacher’s opinions may be forgotten quickly. But when class activities meet a need, the lesson will “stick.”

The purpose of Sunday school is growth-spiritual growth. How do we teach a child to grow in his everyday world? We can’t. We simply guide his growth to desirable aims. Learning how to walk illustrates this point. Do we set a child down and lecture to him on the principles of walking? Do we give him examples of how to walk? No! How does a father teach his child to

walk? He takes the baby by both hands, hold-ing him up and guiding his every action in walking. Sometimes a father will pull the left hand forward hoping to cause the left foot to take a step, then he leads the right foot. The ultimate aim: that the child may walk without help.

The Bible-school teacher should help each student take the next “spiritual” step for which he is ready. This means that teachers can work most effectively with small classes-classes in which they can note the rate at which their students learn, and guide them. A rapid learner may explore areas for which other children are neither ready nor interested. The teacher needs to know what information can be used in the learning process and how it may best be provided: through stories, reading cards, resource persons, pictures, books, field trips, or audio-visuals.

Suppose the father who was teaching the child how to walk did not have a realistic aim in mind. Suppose that when the child took his first step, the father was disappointed because the child didn't hop or skip. “How foolish!” you say. Do all Bible-school teachers have realistic aims in mind for their pupils? When a pupil takes a spiritual step, is not the teacher often disappointed because that pupil does not hop or skip? The teacher must give each child a sense of achievement and a sense of direction.

5. Children learn through their interests. Children are interested in various things. Each age level has its own attractions and fascinations. Animals, nature, gadgets, colors, object lessons, flowers, models, and toys makeup the world of a child. The effective teacher will capitalize on these interests.

Ideas enter our heads and flow out again. We call the “in” process *learning*, and the “out” process *expression*. With a child, the “out” process may be make-believe or play. But it is important. Imaginative activity is the child's way of organizing his ideas, making them a part of himself, then expressing them to others. We adults like to think things out and put them on paper in neat outline form. Children ‘play out’ what they have seen, observed, and felt. Imagination and creativity help the spiritual concepts that travel in one ear and out the other to leave their footprints in the mind.

The world of make-believe belongs to the child. Imagination runs free, six days a week, all over the play room or neighborhood. Imagination explores dress-up clothes, tricycles, doll cribs, and the overturned box. A good class gives children all the ‘props’ and freedom they need “to try on for size” the different characters and principles of the Bible. Children need this same freedom to express themselves in finger painting, music, and bodily movement. The teacher who says to thechild, “Sit still. Be quiet,” is ignoring the fact that God, who made the children, built into them the desire to move, and wiggle, and develop. Give the children opportunities to express themselves by providing such things as finger paint, clay, Play-doh, wooden blocks, play clothes, dolls, trucks, boats, and trains. (Some Bible-school teachers seem married to the crayon and only to the crayon. The class is a great big coloring project, and children have to stay in the lines. If you *must* stick with the crayon, at least have the decency to stand back, and let the children use the crayons in their own innocent way!)

6. Children learn by imitation and identification. The teacher's most important lesson is herself, for in the final analysis, the teacher determines most of the learning in the classroom. The teacher who loves children and is committed to the Lord will work to provide a proper setting for learning. She (or he) will participate in planning meetings, share in preparing the room for the children, and be in the room when the first child arrives on Sunday morning.

Teachers impart more by actions than by words. *Identification is* the key to understanding a child's growth. A boy learns his role in life by identifying with his father. A girl learns her role by identifying with her mother. This identification with parents is natural. It is also natural for a child to identify with his teacher. When that teacher knows and loves the Lord, children who identify with him will learn to know and love his Lord too.

Most of the teachers in children's departments are women. How much easier it would be for boys to identify with a manly religion if they saw more masculine Christianity in action! Perhaps a Christian man would be in a better position to understand the reasons-and to administer the cure-for Paul's mischievousness. Perhaps fewer young people would consider Christianity "sissy stuff." Surely those children who come from broken homes, those who do not know a father, would gain much by having a substitute father. How can children who have never known a Christian father be expected to appreciate the loving care of their heavenly Father?

Conclusion

A teacher must be careful to say *the right things*. He must also watch *how he says them*. Learning is like taking a pill; each person must do it for himself. The wise teacher chooses activities that are in keeping with children's interests and needs as well as with the Bible lesson. The teacher selects realistic goals and creates a climate that is conducive to learning. The teacher works with God, looks to God for strength, and trusts in God to give the increase; for without God, we can do nothing.

FOOTNOTES

¹Walt Whitman, "There Was a Child Went Forth."

²William Burton, *The Guidance of Learning Activity* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1944), p. 172.

³Lois Mossman, *The Activity Concept* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1938), pp. 54, 55.

CHAPTER EIGHT

What Activities Make Up Team Teaching?

How is team teaching different from teaching in a self-contained classroom? Can a casual observer look in on a class and tell that team teaching is taking place? Perhaps not. Can a careful observer who remains throughout the entire class period see the results of team planning? Yes. How? The same way that you can tell when a basketball team has been practicing together. An effective basketball team is not made up of selfish players who hog the ball. It is comprised of men who have learned cooperation, strategy, timing, and mutual trust. Each knows what the other is doing. Each is using his individual talent in a team effort.

An effective teaching team is like a well disciplined basketball team. Each teacher cooperates with the other teachers and pupils. Each teacher knows the overall game strategy, the

lesson plan. Each teacher is involved in a number of “plays,” or activities. Each endeavors to complement the efforts of the others.

Remember the definition for teaching: “Teaching is the guidance of learning activities.” Teaching, then, is not simply “telling the les-son.” Teaching cannot take place unless it is accompanied by learning. Therefore, in this chapter we will examine some activities that form the “brick and mortar” of team teaching. The following activities will be examined in sequence

- Preparing the room.
- Welcoming the child.
- Pre-session activities.
- Large group activities.
- Small group activities.
- Interest centers.
- Clean-up time.

The aims of this chapter are to (1) examine the kinds of activities that may be used in a team approach; (2) determine the value of each activity; and (3) see how the various activities may be used.

Preparing the Room

Bible school begins before the first child arrives. It begins when you, the teacher, arrive at least fifteen minutes before the regular Bible-school time. It is the responsibility of the lead teacher to make sure the room is properly ventilated, lights are on, equipment is in place, and everything is clean.

Remember Mrs. Murphy of Deer Park Community Church? Bible school doesn’t start till 9:45, but as we look in on Mrs. Murphy once again, we see her arriving at 9:22. She turns on the lights, checks to see that the three books that will be used later are in place, and begins to change the tack board.

Marcie D’Smith comes in with two girls. As soon as the girls have their wraps hung up, she takes out her ukulele and begins to sing. It’s 9:27 and Bible school has begun—eighteen minutes before the bell rings.

Remember how Mrs. Collins of Highville was getting ready to teach while the children were idly sitting in neat little rows? Her children were learning long before she was ready to teach. Too bad she misused all that time.

Welcoming the Child

One of the members of the team is the secretary. For the best utilization of personnel, those who serve as secretaries at the beginning of the hour may later participate in teaching-guiding-learning experiences.

As each child arrives, he should be greeted first by the secretary, then by his assigned teacher, and finally by the lead teacher. Remember the friendly “Hi” of Mrs. Hopeling at Deer Park Church? The secretary should be seated at a desk near the entrance to the room. Here the offering may be taken, the roll checked, and other records filled out. The secretary may or may not talk to each child, depending on the circumstances. Some of the records may be gained by observation, without questioning the child. However, a new secretary may need to ask for various kinds of information.

Some Bible-school teachers print each child’s name on a tag and fasten the tag to the child’s clothes. This makes for easier identification by teachers and pupils as well. If the pupils can read, name tags on the teachers may be helpful. In some Bible schools, children are divided into groups for various activities, and all of the children in a particular group wear tags of the same color or shape (such as birds, squirrels, ducks, etc.).

The secretary becomes the first “friendly welcome” of the room. He should be as helpful and as interested in the children as time allows. His conversation with the children may include some of the following ideas

1. The purpose of the offering.
2. Special events in the life of the Sunday school.
3. Exciting experiences in the child’s life.
4. The memory verse for the day.
5. The worship center that will be used for children’s church.
6. Something interesting that will happen during Sunday school.
7. A word of welcome after an absence.
8. Directions for hanging up a wrap, hat, or raincoat.

Pre-session Activities

The lead teacher should see that every child enters into some pre-session activity. Children who come to Bible school early should not have to sit and wait fifteen, or even five minutes before Bible school begins. When teachers properly prepare a room, the environment will invite children to become immediate participants in some activity. Pre-session activities do not have to teach the children new facts in order to make a significant contribution to the Bible school. A simple activity, such as looking at a book or examining a world globe may give a child a feeling of belonging to the class. As a result of the pre-session activity, the way is paved for better teaching of the Word of God. *Each member of the team should be responsible for one activity or one area of the room in the pre-session.*

Pre-session activities are not designed to “prepare” children to learn. All of life is a learning experience, whether good or bad. Pre-session actually teaches. It provides a bridge between the child’s world at home and the world of the church. The activities of pre-session may differ in kind and intensity from the lesson activities, but learning happens before Bible school begins.

Pre-session should be so planned that activities may be curtailed at any point. It should start as soon as the children begin arriving and continue until Bible-school time. Pre-session should be exploratory and introductory in nature. Also, it should motivate to further interest in the morning lesson. The following may be used for pre-session activities

1. Record player and some good records.
2. Musical instrument (ukulele, guitar, zither, etc.).
3. Three-dimensional viewer and picture reels.
4. Story strip display of Bible verses.
5. Bible activities.
6. Bible games.
7. Bible puzzles.
8. Picture puzzles.
9. Display of books on a table.
10. Work on a mural or frieze.
11. Small animal or pet from home.
12. Pictures.
13. Objects from nature.
14. An interesting tack board.
15. Collections of some type.
16. Display of Bible money.
17. Handwork from last Sunday’s lesson.

Only in rare instances should handwork from one children’s class be displayed for another. The benefit of handwork lies in the child’s learning experiences as he actively constructs the project, not in the finished product. Most children are not motivated by

seeing another's handwork. However, children who display their projects to their own class are often motivated to do other things.

Large-Group Activities

Children should arrange their chairs in a circle or semicircle if at all possible. If you must arrange rows of children, never place them more than three rows deep. Notice a street parade, a department store Christmas display, or the good humor man selling ice cream. Each child wants to be as close to the front as possible. A circular seating arrangement helps children feel that they are part of the group, and it combats inattention because no one is behind someone else or back in a corner of the room.

Perhaps tables will have to be moved back against the wall to make room for group seating. In planning your lessons, consider the arrangements of the room and the possibilities of quick and/or effective rearrangement. Avoid having more tables in the room than necessary, for they take up considerable space. Each teacher on the team should sit in the circle with the children.

Most teachers' quarterlies will provide suggestions to use during opening worship. Although the worship activities are usually the lead teacher's responsibility, they may be conducted by the various team members. The group activities need not follow the same order each week, but they should include some of the following

1. Worship experiences, prayer, and, Bible reading. A child *can* worship God. Adults sometimes think of worship as atmosphere, ritual, or a "deep" Bible lesson. Actually, however, worship is simply a person's returning "worth ship" to God who deserves all praise. Worship is God's receiving and man's giving. Children can give praise to God, and He delights to receive praise from them. Sophisticated, earth-bound adults often have difficulty in centering their thoughts on God alone. But a child is single-minded; he can worship God in simplicity.

2. Activities using pictures, the Bible, or other materials. Children need to wiggle every three or four minutes. Do not be afraid to let them move about during group-time activities. During a Bible story a little boy suddenly got up and ran to the window. He was not being disobedient, even though he was told to "sit still." He simply saw a bird out-side the window. Curiosity rules a large section of a little child's mind.

Sometimes the entire group may be taken for a picture walk and told a story in pictures as they travel around the room. The children may be taken to the window to see something God has made, or they may be engaged in some other activity requiring mass movement.

3. Sharing. What you tell the children is not nearly so important as what *they* tell you. When you verbalize a Bible truth to the class, they may or may not learn, but when a child verbalizes a Bible truth, he has learned the truth. Learn to listen to children.

"Show and tell" is not simply a device to take up time; it is a means of satisfying a child's social drive of "belonging." Also, "show and tell" improves communication skills, adds interest to Bible-school lessons, and indicates that the lessons are "getting through."

Sharing may be an informal conversation between the lead teacher and one or more children in the large group. Visitors may be recognized or birthdays remembered. This is “sharing time.” Guard against letting the regular weekly recognition of birthdays de-generate into an unhealthy amount of attention on one child, or simply a ritual.

A good way to remember a birthday is to send a card to the home or to make a birthday visit. Why give a child a “pat on the back” for growing a year older when he had nothing to do with it? Why not remind him of God’s care over him during the past year and challenge him to a closer walk with his Lord during the coming year?

4. Hearing the Bible story for the day. Space will not be taken here to explain how to present a good Bible story to children, since this topic is covered in many other places.

5. Members of the team working together during the class. A teacher may play a more obvious role as he assumes direct leadership in the class; however, each teacher should feel responsible for the entire session. The lead teacher is responsible for coordinating the entire lesson, the pupils working together with the teachers. At times the class will be divided into small groups with each teacher responsible for certain teaching activities. Even though a teacher is not in the obvious role of leadership, he should not sit back and take a mental vacation. The silent teacher may be observing the pupils’ responses, evaluating an activity, and giving support to the guiding teacher. Therefore, the team member is at all times a part of the team.

Small-Group Activities

All of the time spent in Bible school is teaching whether we admit it or not. We are communicating attitudes, appreciations, and values. Some of the most effective teaching, however, is achieved in small-group situations.

Small-group work is important for success in Sunday school. When we saw Debbie Underwood telling a story, the children were spell-bound. But Debbie couldn’t get interaction with the children in a large group. If a child had received a mistaken idea, there was no chance to correct it. If a child had a question, he was given no chance to ask it. A teacher has a better chance to “guide each child” and develop his spiritual maturity in a small group.

Consider the following advantages of small-group instruction

1. Teaching is more meaningful.
2. Mistakes are cut down.
3. Children are made to feel that the Sunday school cares.
4. The number of dropouts and absentees is reduced.
5. Teachers have greater opportunity to know the child.

6. Discipline problems are reduced.
7. Individual needs are met.
8. Teachers can “follow up” each child out of the classroom.
9. Children can make friends with other children at Sunday school.
10. Children feel important, and, most of all, “wanted.”

Every pupil must feel needed in his class at church. His thinking should follow these lines: “This is my group. I really belong here. My teacher really cares about me. The other pupils care about me too. I like my class.”

The following are suggestions for small-group teaching:

1. Begin by introducing the details of the Bible lesson. Relate the Scripture to the activities of the class.
2. Decide what Bible-related materials will be needed by the class, and who will find and bring these materials to the attention of the class.
3. Use informal conversation with the children to determine the things (objects, events, Bible verses, pictures, scenes, people) to be included in the activities presented.
4. Have the children make a list of the things they will need before they can begin work on the Bible material. Also have them list places where they can find information (the Bible, quarterly, pictures, some informed person).
5. Children may look at pictures, flash cards, and books, or listen to music to get ideas about the Bible lessons.
6. Review other Bible passages and stories that will help the children in their work.
7. Help the children decide what method they will use to get the activities done. (Will they make up words to a song, draw Bible pictures, work on handwork projects?)
8. Determine what each child will do.
9. Decide what the children will do to prepare for next week’s lesson.

Teaching is the guiding of learning activities. When we speak of activities, we mean any involvement that will help to accomplish the aims of a Bible-school lesson. There are certain characteristics of learning activities that should be present in every Sunday-school class, large or small, well-equipped or poorly equipped, rural or urban. Some of these are listed below:

1. All activities should be clearly related to the Scriptures. Each Bible-school lesson should have a Scriptural aim that meets the needs of the pupil.

2. Activities should be suited to children's ages, interests, and special needs. A debate, for instance, is not appropriate for Primaries, nor is "walking through the Red Sea" a good activity to use with Juniors.

3. Activities should make the best possible use of time, place, curriculum, and equipment. Activities that overstretch the budget or that cannot be completed in the time allotted for them should be eliminated.

4. Suggestions from the children should be used whenever possible. All questions asked by the children are worthy of consideration. Granted, a few pupils like to "put it over" on the teacher; however, most children sense the spiritual nature of a good Sunday school, and they will cooperate in planning activities that are good for them.

5. Every activity should provide opportunities for learning. Teachers who are on their toes will realize that learning goes on in hundreds of small ways.

6. Activities should provide for involvement. Children are developing when they ask questions, search the Bible, express their feelings, find answers to problems, learn new facts, and recall facts they already know.

Interest Centers

Team teaching allows for a wide variety in levels of learning in large-group activities, in small groupings, and in independent study. Now let us consider the opportunities for multi-level teaching-learning in interest centers.

Team teaching calls for greater mobility among teachers and pupils, newer innovations, and more exciting interest centers than the traditional Sunday school. A wide range of Christian educational media for instruction and technological help is available for use in interest centers. The interest center in the Bible school may be geared to meet various needs: the need for independent study, the need for small-group listening and reading, the need for large-group resources, the need for small-group conferences or conversation, and the need for individual or group instruction.

The interest center, then, is also an activity center and a resource center in which equipment and materials are provided for work, study, and play. The interest centers may be made available to children for self-chosen activities during pre-session time or for guided small-group activities during class time. Learning is enhanced by the provision of interesting, varied activities for listening and learning by doing.

One important point to remember regarding room arrangement is to plan for flexibility and versatility. "Functional" was the word used earlier. Virtually any room may be transformed into a delightful "life laboratory" with proper planning.

Let us take a look at some of the possibilities for resource centers that will give your room an enticing atmosphere for learning. The suggestions given here are by no means exhaustive. A resourceful teacher can always add a personal touch here and there.

1. Library Center

Good books about animals, birds, flowers

Bible stories

Cloth books

Puzzles, pictures

2. Art Center

Easels (with smocks or paint aprons nearby)

Finger paint (and sponges for cleaning up)

Drawing paper

Blunt scissors Paste

Crayons

Construction paper

Plenty of newspaper (for placing under the easels and on tables)

3. Activity Center

Wood blocks (free from splinters)

Stand-up figures

Building blocks

Trucks, cars, airplanes

Rubber balls

4. Listening Center

Record player

Plastic records of songs, stories, poems, animal sounds.

Records of quiet music or mood music for relaxation.

Music for transition to prayer and Bible study.

Records of great hymns, gospel songs, children's songs, stories.

Tape recorder and tapes

5. Nature Center

A box garden of potted plants, or flowering plants

Shell display

Mounted butterflies, etc.

6. Show and Tell Shelf

Articles and objects supplied by the children each week.

These objects may be displayed on a rack, and explained by the children at a given time each Sunday.

7. Worship Center

A table covered with plain white cloth on which is placed an open Bible along with a world globe, a lamp, a candle, or a flower. A picture on an easel may sometimes serve as the worship center. As children help to care for the materials in this section, they can be taught to have a feeling of sensitivity and reverence for worship. As the boy Samuel lighted the candle-sticks and did chores in the temple, so our children can be given meaningful experiences as they help to care for the place of worship.

8. Housekeeping Center

Living room, containing a rocking chair, sofa, tea table, telephone, etc.

Kitchen, with a cupboard, dishes, sink, stove, pots and pans, ironing board, laundry equipment, broom, dust pan, etc.

Bedroom, with dolls, doll bed, doll clothes, etc.

Some people would argue that a “housekeeping center” has no place in a Sunday school, since Sunday-school time is not for play. But a child often learns a lesson best by playing it out. This is his opportunity for application of the lesson truths. If he learns to “play” (live out the lesson) with others in the place where the Word of God is taught, he will be better able to make application of the lesson at home during the week.

The biggest problem facing many Bible-school teachers is lack of space. There just isn't room for interest centers. If this is the case in your classroom, use only one resource center each week, and change the center of interest every two or three weeks. Make one corner in your room a special corner by transforming it into a busy center next week!

Clean-up Time

Look in on any of the children' classrooms in the average Sunday school during the last few minutes of class time, and you will see one or more teachers scurrying around, cleaning up after the morning's activity. Wouldn't it be better if the children learned to clean up and put away the materials they use? Granted, a teacher may be able to clean up after activities twice as fast as the pupils would, but why lose another valuable teaching opportunity? Why not teach that cleaning up is a vital part of the activity? (And it can become a matter of pride.)

Conclusion

Team teaching involves effort and creativity. The major question is not, "*Can* we do it?" but, "*How* shall we begin?"

SECTION THREE

Team Teaching With Youth and Adults

There is a distinction between team teaching with children and team teaching with adults. With children, team teaching takes an activity approach; with youth and adults, it takes an *interaction* approach. The children's activity approach places emphasis on a physical expression of the pupils' total personality. The adults' interaction approach places emphasis on an inner process. Gregory defines interaction from the standpoint of the teacher as "exciting and directing the self-activities of the learner." Clarence Benson approaches interaction from the pupils' point of view: "The pupil must reproduce in his own mind the truth to be learned, then express it in his own words." Facts can not be passed from one mind to another like passing cans from one carton to another. Interaction must take place. The pupil must experience the truth, see its relationship to other truth, and apply truth to his life.

When teams work with children, usually one teacher leads the large-group discussion, and later in the class the full complement of teachers guide the learning in small-group activities.

A new dimension is added to youth and adult team teaching-the interaction of teacher with teacher in front of the class. A dialogue, debate, role play, or discussion by teachers in front of pupils adds new depth to learning. For example, one teacher may present a lecture and the other teachers question the first teacher concerning the content of his presentation.

In the following chapter, you will find descriptions of three situations of team teaching. Read the descriptions to find out what goes on in team teaching. The situations revolve around these persons

1. Mr. Jim Scobie, lead teacher, Adult Department, First Down-town Church.
2. Mr. Fred Dunn, lead teacher, Senior High Department, Faith Suburban Church.

3. Miss Betty Culver, lead teacher, Bethel Community Church. Each teacher has a different size team and varying facilities. Each lead teacher conducts the class in his own way—one more content-centered, another more activity-centered.

CHAPTER NINE

What Goes on in Youth and Adult Team-Taught Classes?

First Downtown Church

First Downtown Church sits at the intersection of Main and Central. Traffic is busy in front of the church. Two weeks ago, the official board of the church hired an off-duty policeman to help the children across the busy intersection.

The wide steps leading off the sidewalk to large Gothic doors re-mind you of a church built about forty years ago. The dark red brick of the building and the deep colors of the stained-glass window impart an aura of wealth and elegance. The church has a large sanctuary, but has never put great emphasis on Christian education.

For forty years, the men's class has met in the balcony, and the women's class has assembled in the front of the sanctuary. Last year the church called a new minister who was concerned about Christian education. He suggested combining the men's and women's Bible classes into a team-teaching situation. There was little opposition to the change. The teachers of the men's and women's classes decided to take a year's leave of absence so the team-teaching experiment might be given a fair trial.

Jim Scobie, lead teacher of the team, graduated from a Christian liberal arts college and is now a stockbroker with a large local firm. Although Jim hadn't taught Bible school for the past fifteen years, he had been active in church work.

"I visited a high school where team teaching is in operation," Jim recalls. "I didn't feel book knowledge about team teaching was enough." Jim also visited the local junior college. He read the text-book used in classes to prepare prospective high school teachers.

Dorothy Strange, the other teacher on the team, has been teaching Bible school for twenty years. She is in her early forties and boasts about being a young grandmother. She has accepted the challenge of teaching the adults in First Downtown Church with the enthusiasm of a new teacher.

"We meet together after prayer meeting every week," Jim Scobie relates.

At present the curriculum is a chapter-by-chapter survey of John's Gospel. Everyone in the class has a quarterly. The church secretary has been giving some help, mimeographing questions for group discussion.

"Exciting things are happening," Dorothy observes. "I don't think the adults would like to return to lecturing."

“When these adults dig into the Bible and find answers for themselves, the Bible becomes real to them,” Jim remarks.

As you walk into the back of the sanctuary, you glance around. The dome in the sanctuary reaches three stories from the pews. The red velvet pads on the dark oak pews don't lend themselves to an educational atmosphere. Neither does the soft glow from the chandeliers nor the sun filtering through heavy stained-glass windows.

Down in front, Jim has placed a conference table, an overhead projector, and a portable screen. Over to the left stands a portable chalkboard. Dorothy is fingering through a pile of papers getting them ready for distribution.

“Good morning,” Josephine Daniels greets you with a nod. “Glad to have you in First Church today.” Josephine, the class secretary, sits at a small table at the back of the sanctuary. She introduces you to one of the ushers, who gives you a friendly handshake. As he greets you, Josephine takes a felt-tip pen and letters your name on a badge. You note that all the other people have their name on a badge, so you willingly pin yours on. Next, Josephine hands you a mimeographed sheet and a copy of the quarterly.

About thirty-five adults of all ages are sitting in the left front section where Jim Scobie is located. Even though the church pews do not make conversation convenient, many of the couples are informally talking.

“Good morning,” Jim begins. “Welcome to our Bible class. Walt Kamin has some announcements to make.”

A tall, lanky man comes to the front of the class and announces a Halloween party. His speech is in a more conversational tone than one ordinarily uses in making an announcement. Walt recognizes the two couples who are visiting by reading the cards handed him by Josephine Daniels.

After the announcements, Jim Scobie stands and says, “Let's have about a minute of silent prayer. During this time each will ask God's guidance for our study of the Bible.” Jim goes on to say, “Many times we run into God's house and our heart is not prepared to receive His Word. As a result, when prayer is made from the platform, you may not join in with your hearts and mind.” Jim bows his head and concludes, “Let's all pray silently for the next one minute.”

After the prayer, Jim begins his lesson. “Today we would like to discuss backsliding. We are studying John 21:1-14. This tells of the occasion when the seven disciples went fishing in the Sea of Galilee. First, let's describe backsliding.”

Dorothy Strange flips the switch on the overhead projector. Three definitions of backsliding flash onto the screen. She spends the next few minutes explaining each definition.

“Now we'd like to give each person in the room a few minutes to write his own definition of backsliding,” Dorothy announces. With this she sits down and begins writing her own definition.

You look around the room to observe audience reaction. Most of the heads tilt forward and pencils begin scratching across paper. “Silence doesn’t threaten these people,” you say to yourself. “Learning is going on when no one is talking.”

“Let’s have your definitions of backsliding,” Dorothy speaks as she walks to the chalkboard. “Jim, will you lead the discussion while I write the definitions on the board?” Two definitions are offered and are written on the board. Jim then suggests, “Let’s see if Peter was backsliding when he said, ‘I go a fishing’ and the other disciples said, ‘We also go with thee.’”

“I don’t think Peter and the other disciples were backsliding,” Walt Kamin interrupts. “I think they were going fishing just to get food.”

“Good insight!” Jim applauds. At this point several hands go up and a discussion follows between Jim and the pupils. After each person has been given an opportunity to speak, Jim turns to Dorothy and asks, “Do you think Peter and the other disciples were backsliding?” She gives three reasons why she feels Peter was backsliding. A short dialogue then takes place between the two teachers in front of the group.

“All right,” Jim announces, “I think you are motivated enough. Let’s go to small-group study and answer the questions on the mimeographed sheet. You will find your name listed with a group on the sheet.” He turns to Dorothy. “Do you have anything you want to add?”

Dorothy answers in the negative, and Jim turns back to the group. “See you in fifteen minutes,” he concludes. At this point the thirty-five pupils divide into seven small study groups throughout the sanctuary. In each study group, the persons on the forward pews have to turn awkwardly to carry on a conversation with those behind. Even though the sanctuary is not ideal for discussion, each group adapts to its setting.

After fifteen minutes, the small groups assemble back in the front of the sanctuary. They find nine chairs placed around the conference table. Jim asks the group leaders from each discussion group to join Dorothy and him around the table. Dorothy asks questions that help each group leader to share the findings of his group. Both teachers on the team have done their homework and are able to assist the group leaders. Jim asks some clarifying statements: “Do you mean that . . . ?” “Do I hear you saying . . . ?”

“We have six minutes left in the class,” Jim finally announces. “Let us each reread the Scripture passage, John 21:1-14. Then we will each share with the larger group what we believe God would have us do this week because we studied this portion of Scripture.”

Dorothy Strange and Jim Scobie are a team of two. Do they put more emphasis on class interaction or on mastery of Bible content? Have they made the best use of their facilities? Would their class be more effective if they began with pupil needs rather than beginning with a Scripture text? Let’s look at a team situation in which the focus of teaching is the pupils’ needs.

Faith Suburban Church

Fred Dunn has a deep sense of satisfaction-he is being used by God to teach high school students. A plumber during the week, he is on Sunday morning the lead teacher in Faith Church's Senior High Department. Because he was only a high school graduate, Fred recognizes his educational limitations, but his spiritual zeal and keen interest in teen-agers has made the other teachers in the department respect him.

In his mid-forties, Fred has that human look of being bald, wrinkled around the eyes, and honestly uncomfortable in a shirt and tie. Joe Krieger, the second member of the team, is a barber, even though he had three years' university training in engineering. Joe likes the human relationships in the barbering business. He also likes being his own boss.

Young Mac Jamison has been in the church only one year. He was married last spring when he graduated from State University and started as a salesman in a local insurance firm. Mac wanted to work with young people, but felt he was not a teacher. "I wish I knew the Bible as well as Fred Dunn," Mac indicated at the last meeting.

The three men sat around the kitchen table in the Krieger home. Joe and Mac were sipping coffee. Fred was recording figures on a chart for next Sunday's auditorium presentation, "Legalism, Grace, and Sunday Observance." He explained, "It's a dialogue between you two men."

"Why don't you join us?" Joe asked.

"No, I'd rather stay out of it unless there's some point I want to make."

"It will be more of a dialogue than a debate between the two of us," Mac said. "Sort of Tinker to Evers and then . . ." he pointed to Fred, ". . . we'll leave it to Chance."

"I speak for tough Sunday observance, right?" Mac continued, turning back to Joe, "and you'll take the grace position. I'll defend the blue laws and Sunday observance, and I'll be the bad guy. The kids don't expect this stand from me."

"I'll say we can go to a professional football game, play golf, or go to the beach," Joe replied. "I'll let you win. Otherwise, the kids would be on my side without thinking through the issue."

Fred volunteered a chart he had prepared on principles of Sunday observance and suggested that Mac consult a book from the library in the youth room. "We may encourage them to do research on their own if we use our library."

The trio continued their plans for the next Sunday's presentation. Thoughts moved fast and they decided that after the large-group meeting they would divide the teenagers into three smaller groups for the purpose of follow-up. Fred would work on a case study of a high school girl who actually had some good reasons to go to the beach on Sunday. Of course, the girl would attend church Sunday morning and Sunday night.

"Case studies are about the most effective things I've used to apply the truth," Fred said.

“They don’t work for me,” Mac confessed. “I just can’t seem to get discussion off the ground. I’m going to throw the problem out and let the gang tear it apart. Then I’ll make my comments. “

“I’m not too much at discussions,” Joe replied as he looked over to Fred. “I hate to leave them up in the air so long.”

“Don’t worry,” Fred replied. “They never stay up in the air for long. “

“Well, I don’t think you should stand up in front of the class and lecture,” Mac said. “Just your presence in front of the class tells the kids you are traditional and authoritarian.”

“I think I’ll write some questions on the chalkboard and let the kids solve the problem,” Joe suggested.

“That’s a good idea,” Fred replied, “but it’ll be a discussion with guidance. “

“What are we going to do to tie the small-group discussions together? “ asked Mac.

“How about a student panel?” Joe offered. “We could use one student from each of the small groups.”

“We could get each one to summarize the small-group discussions,” Mac suggested.

The three men were silent. Fred rested his forehead on the palms of his hands. By consensus, they didn’t like the idea that they had agreed on.

Mac finally broke the silence. “You know what would be fun? Ask each member of the panel to state his beliefs. Then out of each person’s conviction, make general rules or principles for Sunday observance. If we could make them state the appropriate facts or Bible verses before drawing conclusions-that’s trite, but you know what I mean.”

“I don’t think they could do it,” said Joe. “Maybe later, when they show more maturity, but not now.”

Sunday morning you walk into Faith Church. The absence of large trees and the smallness of the hedges tells you the neighborhood is new. The houses are all lower middle class and well kept.

“The church reflects the neighborhood,” you think to yourself, noting the church’s well landscaped lawn.

The Senior High Department meets in the Fireside Room. The large bay windows, colonial fireplace, and built-in bookcase tell you that this room must be used also for social gatherings. However, the room appears to be suitable for Sunday-school usage. Two portable chalkboards are situated in front of the room. A large football-shaped poster on the bulletin board expresses creativity.

“Man, we’re all go . . . go . . . go . . .” exclaims one smiling co-ed to a group of three finale admirers.

“Homecoming was great!” you hear one girl greet a group around the Coke machine. No one spots you. “That’s good. This way I’ll see what the kids are really like.” You stroll over to the bookshelf labeled “Youth Library.” Three girls are sitting around a table with two open Bible encyclopedias in front of them. “No, no,” one girl insists in an authoritarian voice, “Samaria is one of the twelve tribes.” You smile to yourself, “These kids are typical.”

Mac Jamison, the insurance salesman, is surrounded by high school boys. He has one foot in a chair, and is making three points vivid by counting off three fingers. “There are three reasons why the Baltimore Colts are the team to beat this year. . . .” Pro football captures the attention of the youthful admirers. “Do you fellows think a Christian ought to go to a professional football game on Sunday?” Mac asks. For a few moments no one answers. Then Doug Amidon, a large six-footer with shoulders like a football player, stuffs his hands in his pockets and shrugs his shoulders. Sheepishly he replies, “I don’t know, but I go.”

“That’s our discussion for Bible school this morning,” Mac responds.

An atmosphere of informality, interest, and wholesomeness pervades the room. You look at your watch. It’s one minute before Sundayschool begins. Some Sunday schools can’t get their kids to attend on time. You wonder how this class does it.

Leon Jones, known to the kids as “Zippy,” leads the singing. His honest awkwardness shows potential of leadership. “I like his authenticity—no spiritual mask here,” you say to Fred. He responds, “Ditto.”

A petite high school girl plays the piano. Later you learn her name is Linda. You are pleased to note that she is not having much difficulty with the songs. “She must have practiced them during the week,” you say to yourself.

Lippy turns the leadership of the program over to a stocky girl whom you discover later is the class president—Shirley. She makes the announcements, but you feel she is more like a superintendent giving orders. Yet, the high school kids listen and apparently take it. “How did she get to be class president?” you ask Fred. “The kids voted her in,” he replies with a shrug of the shoulders. “She has natural leader-ship ability and can defeat any boy in the class in debate.” Thirty-five students in attendance tell you that her leadership is better than one might expect.

The lectern is moved from the platform, and two armchairs from the minister’s study are placed there. Mac Jamison and Joe Krieger take their places and begin their dialogue.

“I think it’s proper for a Christian to go to a football game on Sunday,” Joe begins.

“Negative,” replies Mac. “We have to have some standards.” With that introduction, every eye in the room focuses on the dialogue to follow.

Twelve minutes later, Fred walks to the platform with a large chart. On one side of the chart he has listed reasons why Sunday is a day of grace. On the other side are reasons why Sunday should be strictly observed.

For the next few minutes Fred explains the chart, giving Scripture verses to back up each point. The kids are involved. Linda, the young pianist, and Doug Amidon, who sheepishly admitted going to football games on Sunday afternoon, are “with it.”

When the room is divided into three discussion groups, everyone picks up a plastic-seated chair and goes to the assigned group. Laughter and shuffling of feet indicate freedom. Quick movement to the designated areas indicates order.

Case Study Method

Fred gathers his group around the library table and begins speaking: “First, I’d like to tell about a high school girl. She attends Sunday morning worship service, Bible school, and evening service. On Sunday afternoons she goes to the beach with a gang from high school. The only way she knows she can reach this gang for Christ is to show them Christians are not prudish. The very fact the gang is at the beach when she arrives tells everyone that she has put her church obligation first. ‘I feel I’m a silent witness in coming late,’ the girl says. ‘Everyone knows my principles. When I leave early and go back home for evening church service, this also witnesses for Christ.’”

“Yes, but . . .” one of the group interrupts and a conversation ensues. Fred backs off and lets the kids answer one another. “If they see the implications, it’s better than my lecturing about them,” he indicates.

Discussion

Mac goes over by one of the bay windows. The fellows sit on the built-in cushions around the window. The girls pull over chairs. “Mac,” one of the boys asks, “do you really think it’s wrong to go to a football game on Sunday?”

Mac doesn’t answer this question but throws it back to the kids. The very fact you asked that question shows your concern. Now let’s start from the beginning.” Mac, who doesn’t like to stand up in front and lecture, gets the kids into the discussion. He is wise enough to withhold his convictions until the very end. “Otherwise, I plug their creativity. Also, if I tell the kids what I believe, some of the shy ones won’t disagree with me.”

Problem Solving

Joe pushes two tables together in front of the chalkboard. Each of the students pulls up a chair and sits around the table in conference style. Joe has eight questions written on the chalkboard. After each question is a Scripture verse.

“All right, here are eight questions that should prod us into further Bible study on Sunday observance. We don’t have to follow the order of these eight questions. We can take them in any order that you choose. Who wants to tackle one of the questions?”

Three men teaching a high school class . . . are they effective? Would they be more effective with a mature woman on the team? Mac lets the kids discuss before he gives his view. Since teen-agers often embrace the first opinion given, and close their minds to later views, shouldn’t he give his opinion first? Would the three small groups be more effective if the high school kids were given opportunity to choose the discussion topic instead of being assigned one?

Is this team of teachers communicating Bible content? Are the teachers talking about real problems? Does the class need less involvement or more?

Now let's look at the Bethel Community Church, which has the ultimate in involvement. In this church the team of teachers lets the pupils help determine the direction of learning.

Bethel Community Church

The educational building looks quite modern to you as you approach it. So do the houses for blocks around in the new subdivision. You arrive just prior to the beginning of Bible school along with the children. As you pass through the halls, you note that most of the teachers are in their classes or departments talking with pupils or working out last-minute details before the bell rings. As you go into the Junior High Department, the departmental superintendent, Betty Culver, expresses pleasure at your interest in observing team teaching.

The open session seats about one hundred teen-agers. In the back-ground Christian music is playing. You note that in one classroom to the left of the large auditorium three pupils are talking with a teacher who you later learn is Ruth Reimer. In the center of the auditorium before Bible school begins, Robert Thompson and Mike Sawatsky, members of the team, are talking with a group of five teenagers. You look over the schedule that has been handed to you

BETHEL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Junior High Department
Opening Assembly
Fifteen Minutes

Leader John Fisher
Song Service Mary Frank
Special Music
Ensemble Gordon Stevens High School
Theme The Name of Christ
Announcements Jim Peters, Youth Fellowship President
Devotional His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful"
Song Mary Reese

After the opening assembly, you are dismissed to a large, well-lighted classroom. You note the freedom of the pupils as they come into the classroom. Only pupils from the seventh grade come into Betty Culver's room. The eighth and ninth grades go to other rooms.

You quickly examine the seventh-grade classroom. Three big bulletin boards illustrate current projects of the class. The corner book-shelves hold many books on a variety of subjects, including both Christian fiction and reference materials. Shelves on the opposite side of the room contain materials you assume are used for handwork, re-search, and teaching aids. There are four large tables in the room and you note that the boys and girls begin rearranging their chairs around the tables to suit themselves. Others go for supplies to the cupboards lining one wall. You are surprised to see a large, half-finished scale map of Palestine on one of the tables.

When the bell rings, the young people begin coming to attention by facing the lead teacher, Betty Culver. The offering basket goes around the room and one of the Junior Highs finishes the secretarial work and goes out to report to the departmental secretary. You count twenty-one pupils and notice that most of them are neatly and attractively dressed. A boy goes to the front of the room, leads in prayer, and reads the Scripture for the day. You later learn he is Harry Anderson, class chairman, elected for a three-week period. He asks for a report from two committee chairmen, one dealing with plans for a class Thanksgiving party, the other dealing with plans for a youth gospel team.

Sue Urban interrupts to ask about a problem concerning the un-completed map on the table. Harry indicates it would be a waste of time for the whole class to discuss this committee's problem, and Sue agrees with his decision. Betty explains that this matter will be covered later in the lesson, and pupils who have assignments should begin thinking in terms of their different reports for the day. Harry asks for a report on the research projects given to the teen-agers. One girl tells about a phone conversation with a professor in a nearby Christian college. You are impressed with her easy manner in speaking to the class. This seems to be normal.

The class leadership is turned over to Betty, who talks briefly about last Sunday's lesson. Some of the youth make comments on what was covered last Sunday. A list of the most pressing things that need to be done in the class today is placed on the board. Next to the list are written the names of teachers, committees, and pupils primarily responsible for each activity.

Research Group

One girl indicates her Bible resources committee is having trouble finding the names of the most important places in the Bible, as well as locating them on the map. Ruth Reimer indicates that she thought they would have trouble in this area. The committee goes immediately to a table and begins to look for their answers. "I have a resource book for our research," Ruth answers.

Project Group

Robert Thompson comes over from the table where the map of Palestine is located. "Let's go, gang," he announces. The construction committee goes to the table and begins working on the map, painting in the different sections of the country, as well as filling in the names of places supplied by the Bible resources committee.

You turn to a boy at the table. "Do you plan to show a relationship between the Bible and everyday life?"

"Not in this group," the boy answers. "This map is our job. It was our idea, too, so we get to make it. The group over in the corner is trying to fit the Bible to life."

You go to Betty Culver with your problem about practical application. She laughs. "The young people in this church are so conscientious about living out the Bible that they suggested

something should be done. So they wanted a committee to make it practical. I knew this was not the way to do it; however, I wanted them to find out this frustration for themselves.”

“Well, how do you make the Bible live in their everyday life?” you ask.

“After we have done our work in committees,” she replies, “we discuss it in the whole class. In this discussion we point out Scriptural principles that I believe will form their values and ultimately change their lives.”

You walk over to the committee working on practical application. “How do you like it?” you ask one of the boys.

“Well,” he says cautiously, “the committee is all right, I guess, but I got on this committee because no one else would serve. I can paint ships, water, and people better than any kid in the class—maybe better than an in the whole church. Miss Culver says we should all serve on one committee and not necessarily do what we “do best. Maybe next time I’ll get on the committee I like.”

Research and Project Group

You move on to the group working in a far corner of the room. Mike Sawatsky, the fourth member of the teaching team, is with this group. “We’re writing a play to use in presenting our map to the rest of the Junior High Department,” one member of the group informs you. You ask if they have learned much about life in Bible times. “Oh, quite a lot, I think. As we act out life in Bible times, it has become more meaningful to us. We had to do a lot of reading and find a lot of pictures showing just how life was.”

You walk by Ruth Reimer’s group doing the research. “How are you coming?” you ask, but you can see that things seem to be going great.

This is the group that complained earlier of difficulties, but the book Ruth gave them seems to be answering a lot of their questions, for they are working smoothly. Apparently they have talked over their difficulties and have gained a new sense of direction. Betty Culver moves from group to group, stopping here to watch a particular activity, pausing there to make a comment or to ask a question.

Toward the end of the class period, the whole group is called together. The map committee shows its progress and receives suggestions from other members of the class. The chairman of the research committee announces that his group has completed its report for the whole class and the map can now be finished. The committee on the play indicates some of the problems it has. The members don’t want to be childish in their presentation, but they have problems in practicing and in arranging for props and costumes.

Betty Culver puts more emphasis on social relationships and committee involvement than on learning Bible content. Do you feel the pupils learned as many facts as they would have if Jim Scobie had been teaching? Did their learning have meaning for them? Will they have an easier

time applying the lesson than the pupils in Jim Scobie's class? Should youth enjoy their Bible-school experience?

Factors for Evaluating Team Teaching

As we did in chapter 4 (see page 45), let us again examine our team-teaching situations in the light of the following six factors:

1. The context of learning.
2. The focus of the learning process.
3. Interaction in the learning process.
4. Individual differences and learning.
5. The learning materials.
6. Evaluation of the learning experience.

1. The context of learning. In First Downtown Church, the context of learning was highly structured: lecture, use of the overhead projector, brainstorming, buzz groups, and panel discussions. The context of learning was the prepared lesson plan. The adults' experiences and explorations were predetermined before the class began. Questions could be discussed, but only within the limitations of the teacher's quarterly. The lesson possessed a quality of concreteness.

In Faith Suburban Church, the context was life-related with appeal and motivation for the high school students. However, since football is a man's interest, we might ask if the girls were properly motivated. Note the variety of approaches and how each correlated with the teacher's personality. Fred Dunn used a case study, while Joe Krieger was comfortable discussing questions listed on the chalkboard. Mac Jamison let his personality become the context upon which the kids could discuss the problem of Sunday observance.

The context of learning in Betty Culver's class, while still verbal, differed both in content and dynamics from that of Fred Dunn and Jim Scobie. The lesson was not content-centered, but was activity-centered. The groups were centered on projects (building a map, writing a play) and exploration. If we were to examine Betty Culver's lesson plan, we would find that her aim was not to get across Bible facts, even though she communicated much content. There seemed to be no evidence of a curriculum. An exploration of materials came from the interest and questions of the pupils. The group seemed to be enjoying their learning experiences and we might call it meaningful learning. The world of the Bible was brought concretely and impressively into relationship with Bible-school learning.

2. The focus of the learning process. The focus of attention in Jim Scobie's class was content—the Bible. The kinds of questions that guided the class were "What does the Bible say?" "What are the facts of the Bible?" "What are the reasons for certain acts performed

by Biblical characters?" The adults were to cover the material, and Jim was there to guide the coverage.

Remember Fred Dunn? His class was concerned about proper observance of Sunday. The focus was on the activities and needs of the pupils. The pupils were given opportunity to interact with Mac Jami son; however, Joe Krieger felt at home answering questions from the chalkboard.

Betty Culver has an interesting class. Some might charge her with not being interested with content. Her Junior High pupils were making a map, writing a play, working on practical applications, and doing re search. Pupils' needs and interests were the focal point of this class. Togetherness in committee work is important to Betty.

3. *Interaction in the learning process.* Jim Scobie had poor surroundings—the church sanctuary. Yet he did his best to promote socialized interaction. Small discussion groups were used in which those in the forward pew turned to discuss with those behind. The questions discussed by the group did not arise from the needs of the adults, but rather, were those planned by Jim Scobie and Dorothy Strange. How-ever, there was a spirit of cooperation between team teachers and adults in the class.

Fred Dunn's Senior High class had good interaction. There was little if any discipline problem, and the learning process was coordinated. Note that Fred Dunn, Mac Jamison, and Joe Krieger all *planned* for interaction. They wanted their pupils to discuss and learn for themselves.

Betty Culver believes interaction is the main result of teaching. The setting for learning was compelling for her pupils. One pupil interrupted during the opening assembly with questions about his project. The Junior High pupils seemed to be involved in concrete learning rather than mere verbalizations. The class was organized for individual effort (small committees that contributed to the joint undertaking of the class-play and map). Instead of engaging in mere mental interaction with the content, they were (1) contributing ideas, (2) collecting in-formation, (3) seeking consensus, (4) contributing skills, (5) doing their share of the work, (6) evaluating educational progress, and (7) helping others. There seemed to be a good mixture of class interest and individual interest in the projects.

4. *Individual differences and learning.* In Jim Scobie's class, the individual was treated with respect. However, the task (discussing, making practical applications, listening) was on a uniform schedule. All pupils did the same thing at the same time. We are not sure why the teacher placed individuals as he did in small groups for discussion. Those who sat at the conference table in the front of the sanctuary after the small group discussions were not there to meet individual needs. Although individual needs were probably met in small group discussions, Jim Scobie did not plan it that way.

Fred Dunn was interested in his Senior High class's properly ob-serving the Lord's Day. However, the planning session of his team did not account for individual differences. The large group discussion as well as the small group interaction, had the same goal. The

differences in the small group discussion reflected the personality of the teachers more than the needs of the pupils.

Betty Culver was concerned about individuals. Remember the boy who felt he could paint maps better than any other student in the department? But still he worked on the practical application committee. Betty Culver had given individual attention to properly motivate that boy. There seemed to be some latitude of choice each pupil could make within the class, yet stay within the common core of the curriculum.

5. Learning materials. In Jim Scobie's class, learning materials was content held together by discussions. His basic approach was to lead his pupils in gaining Bible knowledge through discussions. The lecture in the large group was the foundation for discussion in the small group. The sequence of learning materials was (1) introduction of Biblical facts, (2) discussion of Biblical facts, and (3) application of Biblical facts.

Fred Dunn had a problem: "How to properly observe the Lord's Day." "Reasons to observe Sunday," and "attitudes toward Sunday observance" were the building stones of education in Fred Dunn's class. Bible facts were not evident in his class. The sequence was important. Mac Jamison wanted the kids to state their convictions first: "If I tell the kids what I believe, I plug their creativity."

Betty Culver followed a broad, coordinated plan that was flexible enough to allow for problem solving and project building by individual pupils and groups. As the kids wrote the play, there was no predetermined climax to the plot. She trusted their creativity. Specific learnings did not deal with content organization, but with challenging and concrete problems. The lessons to be learned were more than facts. The pupils learned give and take through committee work. As they contributed ideas and collected information they became prepared to serve the church and work on church committees. Also, there were nonverbal lessons, such as the importance of doing one's share of work, respect for individual rights, and listening to other people. The most important lesson of all—the pupils enjoyed Bible school. Too often, teachers think that pupils get more out of Bible school if, like medicine, it has a bad taste.

Some may think Jim Scobie's interaction with the Word of God will communicate more Bible knowledge than Betty Culver's projects. Others may disagree and say that the acting out of the play and research into the Scripture and its historic background will cause the pupil to grasp more Bible content. Whichever of these is true, we will have to agree that the pupils in Betty Culver's class learned positive nonverbal lessons as they interacted with one another.

6. Evaluation of the learning experience. Jim Scobie's basis of evaluation was the adults' insight into, or discussion of the Word of God. The good pupil understands and interacts with the Bible. Therefore, we might say, the poor pupil is the one who has little understanding of the Bible and is quiet. He does not interact in class with other pupils. However, is this always fair?

Fred Dunn's class was need-centered; therefore, if the needs are met, he has a good class. If they are not met, the class has not been successful. We might say that those pupils

who come away from class with a proper attitude toward Sunday observance are good pupils; those who do not are poor pupils. Of course, we can raise still another question: What is the proper attitude toward Sunday observance?

It's more difficult to evaluate Betty Culver. Her class was not quiet and pupils were not sitting glued to their chairs. Betty Culver wanted the pupils to understand themselves as growing children of God. The all-around development of the pupil became the aim. Remember, she was willing to let the pupils fail: "I knew this committee would fail; how-ever, I wanted them to find out this frustration for themselves." We might ask how many teachers are willing to let their pupils fail?

All three teachers, Jim Scobie, Fred Dunn, and Betty Culver, are using a team approach to teaching. Which was best? Best for what? we might ask. This is an impossible decision. Life is too complex, pupils are too different, and class aims are too divergent to make this kind of comparison. Fred Dunn may best motivate one high school pupil, while Jim Scobie may be best with another.

Teaching is an extension of our personality. Our psychological adjustment, social interaction, and personal maturity will determine the type of teacher we will be in the classroom. Therefore, don't try to imitate a Betty Culver or a Fred Dunn. Bring to class your own strengths and weaknesses. God has given you certain experiences he hasn't given a Mac Jamison. Your total personality is different from that of anyone else. Therefore, when you join a team, be yourself. Remember, the secret of success for a teaching team is that it be made up of honest individuals who will recognize their strengths and weaknesses and will work together with others to lead every pupil to know Christ and to grow in Him.

CHAPTER TEN

How Do Youth and Adults Learn?

Sue Bronson has just finished the teacher-training class that met during the Bible-school hour. She wrote an acceptable assignment paper and read the textbook. If she were graded as in a professional school, she would have received an A. Yet, she can't teach. Did she learn anything? What did she learn—theory?

Jack Wenstrom soaked up the lessons in the adult Bible-school class. The teacher lectured on the doctrine of God-omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. Jack was fascinated with the theological language and the mental challenge. But his knowledge of God didn't seem to affect his everyday life. Jack constantly used profanity. When asked, "Is God a partner in your trucking firm?" he replied, "No! Do you think I'm a mystic?" What was Jack learning? If his life was not changed, did he actually learn anything?

Centuries ago, John Calvin stated that "Doctrine is not an affair of the tongue, but of the life . . . (it) is received only when it possesses the whole soul, and finds its seat and habitation in the inmost recesses of the heart."¹ What Christianity has historically believed—that learning affects the total man—has become an accepted fact in our public schools. Therefore, for our

discussion in this chapter, the following definition of learning will be used: “Learning is a change in life that comes from experience, drawn from the curriculum, reflecting a continuous pattern in the life.”²

There are four aspects of this definition that need explanation:

(1) *Learning involves a change in life.* Jack Wenstrom can master the facts presented in class, but if those facts haven’t changed his life, he hasn’t learned. Many adults sit in our Bible-school classes and claim to master the facts of Scripture. Yet if their lives are not changed, they haven’t learned—they have only absorbed facts. Listening to lessons is not learning.

(2) *Learning comes through experience.* Experience is more than feelings and emotions. It is a total life process, involving intellect, emotions, and will. Experience is personal—like having your appendix removed or eating spaghetti. Every individual must gain his own experience, and consciously integrate it into his thinking and patterns of behavior. Any experience that contributes to learning must involve consciousness and response. Joe Swick sleeps through church each Sunday. His experience is restful, but because it is unconscious, it is not educational. But even if Joe attends Bible class and hears the Bible interpreted, but fails to respond to the teaching of the Bible, we still must say, “Joe hasn’t learned.” Response is acting out or reacting to the lesson. Response may involve asking a question for clarification, discussing a controversial point, or listening carefully to integrate new truths into one’s entire experience.

(3) *Learning arises from the curriculum.* A bored adult may sit in the adult class and count the bricks on the wall or draw mental plans for his new recreation room. He knows how many bricks are on the wall or how he will build his recreation room, but has he learned according to the strict meaning of the term “education”? No! We learn in the educational sense of the word when the lessons come from the curriculum. Therefore, learning must arise from the aims of the curriculum, which involves more than the quarterlies or lesson book. Curriculum may be defined as “a planned-out, guided pattern of objectives, experiences, and content through which God may act and confront persons.”

Therefore, the curriculum is broad, including all activities that are planned for the classroom. Curriculum aims for the goals of the lesson include skills learned, feelings communicated, or new attitudes acquired.

(4) *Learning has a continuous effect in the life.* True learning changes the life in a permanent way. Jim Lyons, a teen-ager, committed twenty Bible verses to memory for a contest, yet he had forgotten them six months later. Had he really learned? If the Scripture became a part of his thinking, feelings, and acting, he had learned because he was changed. Even if Jim did forget the vehicle (the Bible verse), he may have arrived at the destination (better understanding of God’s plan for his life). In that case Jim would have learned, because his life would have been permanently changed.

Pupils Are Dynamic

Too often we look at adult Bible-school pupils as purposeless and listless. We believe they walk into our Bible-school class just waiting to come alive under our captive teaching. But this view of adults is wrong. They are not unspiritual manikins to be turned on. Neither are they buckets waiting for our outpouring of human knowledge.

Our Bible schools and other teaching situations should place emphasis on *growing people* in a growing world. Adults are dynamic. They are thinking . . . yearning . . . maturing . . . growing . . . dreaming people.

Three Block-Headed Attitudes

1. *“The adult has learned.”* Too often we think of Frank Anderson or Jane Murphy in our adult class as a finished product. We assume that an adult has quit learning mentally because he or she has quit growing physically. However, the adult has not stopped learning. Adults are dynamic—they continue to learn; they are learning every day. They will learn whether they attend your class or not. Learning is not controlled by a switch that is turned on when one enters the classroom. Your job as teacher is not to press the magical button but to guide your pupils’ continual process of learning.

2. *“The adult has matured.”* Because adults have reached a certain birthday, we feel that they have matured. Although they have completed their physical growth (except perhaps in the waist), adults should continue to grow emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Susie Nelson, who sits in your Bible-school class, may be the mother of three children, but this does not mean that she is fully mature. She has room to grow—and probably wants to grow. Your job is to guide her growth to maturity in Christ.

3. *“The adult has no problems.”* A lot of church leaders view one another as children view adulthood. Children tend to think, “When I become an adult, I’ll be happy and have no problems.” Any honest adult will tell you differently. Adults have problems. The task of teachers is to guide adults through their problems to well-adjusted lives. Problem solving is the path to maturity.

Teaching is not a matter of preparing for life away out in the future. Teaching is guiding the learning, growing adult to the next goal in his progress toward spiritual maturity.

The Process of Teaching-Learning

The learning process is dynamic. (Dynamic means life-giving or producing energy or motion.) Learning is not simply hearing facts out of a quarterly or the teacher’s notebook. The total life of the pupil (the pupil’s life space) must interact with the total educational environment of the teacher (teaching focus). In the chart below, teaching is considered talking, and learning is considered listening. Some learning does take place, but notice how many positive qualities of the teacher and pupil are omitted in the teaching-learning process.

When the lesson is mere verbalization, the teacher is like the western sheriff who faces the duel with both hands tied behind his back. Certainly he can talk, but how much good will it do? A teacher should take advantage of every learning avenue for best results.

1. *The teaching focus.* When a teacher instructs the class, the specific aims of the lesson plan should guide the learning experiences of the class. However, the teacher should also be controlled by his total life preparation. This is called the *teaching focus*, which includes the entire professional attitude of the teacher. The teaching focus includes (1) the teacher's knowledge of the subject, (2) the teacher's past educational experiences, (3) the present educational environment, (4) the teacher's ability to deal with interpersonal relationships, (5) the communication skills possessed by the teacher, (6) the power of the teacher's personality, (7) the teacher's understanding of age characteristics, (8) the teacher's desire to meet individual differences, (9) the teacher's personal adjustment to life.

A teacher's total gifts are more important than the methods used in a classroom. The old cliché remains true: "What you are speaking so loudly, I can't hear what you say." Therefore, character education for teachers is more important than technique instruction. Even with adults, the informal learnings that pupils have caught are more significant than formal instruction that is taught.

Jim Krause has a self-image of being a learned Bible scholar even though he is not a preacher. He can manage a class with ease. He studies well and his lesson plan is carefully written out. He spends time looking up illustrations and has some good ones in the fields of sports and current events. Jim spends time in prayer. During the lesson he expresses himself well. He covers the material and uses several teaching aids. Yet he is disappointed with his teaching.

A man and wife sat in the sanctuary before the morning worship began and discussed the Sunday-school class they had just attended. "I thought it was going to be a wonderful class," the man observed, "but something happened. Jim Krause asked for questions, but I couldn't think of a thing to say. He even said, 'Everybody should enter the discussion.'"

The wife responded, "I was never sure what to say."

Perhaps Jim relies more on his preparation than on other abilities he has. If he were honest and used many of his resources, he might have a different lesson. He has an attractive personality and mixes well with others. Also, his Christianity is practical: he is able to solve problems in his own life. Jim has served in many capacities in the church and has a rich background of Christian experience.

Part of Jim's problem may be that he is more concerned about what people think of him than he is with what is really happening to the pupils. If he were to have a proper spiritual and psychological adjustment, he might be a better teacher.

Teachers often ask people to participate instead of creating situations in which they can participate. Jim was guilty of this. Sara Little has commented

The leader who is needed is a redeemed Christian, willing to make all the resources of his life available to the group, whom he sees as persons of worth and dignity in their own right. Because this person is a Christian, his motives are not self-seeking. He sees himself as the servant of the group, not its master. He is willing to accept criticism, to absorb hostility, even to fail and try again. Because his is the ministry of reconciliation, he ... identifies himself with those in the group.³

2. *The pupil's life space.* The pupil is more than a mind to memorize facts, and hands to write out notes. He is a dynamic, growing person with many forces operating within his personality. The interdependence of these forces is called the "life space." The life space is made up of (1) the subconscious (id) motives of life, (2) physical needs and desires, (3) hereditary physical characteristics, (4) the pain-pleasure needs and desires of the pupil, (5) the conditioning of former education, (6) the social interaction with other pupils, (7) mental ability, (8) accumulated knowledge of factual background, (9) the motivation for the lesson at hand.

Therefore, many forces are present in the learning situation, all of which must be accounted for if the pupil is to learn. An adult Bible-school teacher may complain, "Frank Jones apparently didn't learn the doctrine of God, because he failed to respond verbally to the lesson." Actually the real problem may be that Frank Jones doesn't socially relate to others very readily and felt threatened by the class. We might ask, "What personal needs motivate Frank Jones?" Frank doesn't care about the doctrine of God, but he would like to have a more pleasant personality. He feels he is alienating his family. (Perhaps a proper understanding of God would change his personality.)

The learner must be viewed as a totality. You can't separate the pupil from his home background, nor the educational background (classroom). All are important. Lawrence Little has stated: "Both individual and environment constitute a dynamic whole which must be understood as an operational entity."⁴ Therefore, we would say the pupil's life space is a totality of his personality, environment, and behavior.

As a result, the educational environment is important to learning. Educational environment may be defined as the world as it exists for the pupil, and as it is perceived by the pupil. Your classroom environment may be warm and acceptable to one pupil, while at the same time another pupil may feel it is naive and childish.

At the center of the life space is a growing person. Too often Christians feel that memorizing of a doctrinal formula or refraining from poor habits is the goal of Christian education. The goal of Christian teaching is much more than this—it is the lifelong growth to Christian maturity.

So we see that the teacher is not a galvanized pipe to pour out the educational flow of facts. The teacher is a living, growing, learning person. Nor is the pupil an empty receptacle, eager to receive knowledge. The pupil is a living, growing, learning person. The interaction between these two dynamic personalities (pupil and teacher) is the teaching-learning process.

The teaching process can lay stress on any or all of the teaching skills in the above diagram. At times the teacher is *explaining* facts to the pupil; later the teacher is *guiding activities*. Both are part of the teaching process.

The lecture method has been made the whipping boy of the Christian education movement. Teachers who advocate the lecture method are belittled, when in actuality, all teachers lecture at one time or another. Lecturing is a part of teaching but not the whole, just as relating, clarifying, and illustrating are parts of the teaching process.

The learning process lays stress on any or all of the teaching skills in the above diagram. Some educators would have us swing to the extreme of content-centered lessons. To them learning is memorization. But when a pupil commits a lesson to memory, he is receiving a very limited learning experience. Other educators urge the opposite extreme of experience-centered learning. These educators believe that only what becomes real in life is worth learning, and they advocate learning by doing.

Learning is a many-sided process. A pupil may be memorizing at one time; later he may be gaining appreciation through listening. Pupils may learn by an activity-centered process, and still later, pupils learn by physical conditioning. Sara Little has concluded

Educators believe that real learning occurs when persons are caught up in the dynamic currents of group thinking. They have found, for example, that persons learn best when they work at it-when they are encouraged to think, to question, to verbalize their understanding of a fact or situation.⁵

3. *The classroom field.* The field is the educational environment in which teaching takes place. Lewin borrows the term *field* from modern physics. A field is a region or space traversed by lines of electromagnetic force. The boundaries of a field are not sharply delimited since they change continually because of varying currents. So Lewin uses the term *psychological field* to denote the totality of coexisting and interdependent psychological events.' The term "field" is here expanded be-yond Lewin's concept to include man's spiritual qualities for the teaching-learning process.

The educational field could be compared to a supermarket, with the teacher being likened to the manager. A capable manager sets out his products, advertises properly, makes his store appealing, and plays background music to increase sales. He instructs his clerks to become efficient and operates as effectively as possible in order to attract the customer.

The pupil is like the customer. He chooses the market that will give him the products he needs and desires. His past knowledge helps him to select some products. His pain-pleasure principle causes him to leave other products on the shelf. He buys some products because his parents bought them (heredity or tradition). While the customer stands in front of the merchandise counters, his subconscious mind guides his selection (the effect of television commercials).

Every supermarket is different because of the personality of the manager, the economic standing of the neighborhood, and the demands of the customer. Just so, every classroom (field) is different. The personality of the teacher, the needs of the pupils, and the neighborhood from which the pupils come dictate the classroom field.

"The total psychological field consists of *regions* whose 'boundaries' vary in their degrees of remoteness, rigidity, and permeability."⁷

The field is limited by its very design. Just as the supermarket manager cannot stock all his products on the shelves, cannot carry every product line, and cannot permit all customers to come in at the same time; so every teaching situation is limited. A teacher does not know everything about the subject, nor does he know all of the inner motivations, past experiences, and subject mastery of his pupils. When the teacher lectures (teaching the large group), he may not realize that three or four pupils are confused; therefore, the field (educational environment) becomes like the oil filter of the car or the air filter on a house furnace. The aim is to filter out the bad and permit the good to flow through. However, in the filtering process the flow is slowed down and sometimes clogged. Thus, the educational flow in a classroom may be slowed and at times clogged.

Good teaching permits a two-way educational flow. The teacher must guide, clarify, and instruct. The pupil must be able to question if the flow is clogged, or to talk so the teacher can evaluate the effectiveness of the learning process.

The two-way flow process takes place best in small groups. Here the pupil is treated as an individual. In small groups all have a chance to talk—even shy Alice can speak. The face-to-face dialogue permits non verbal communication, which can be love, acceptance, or mutual respect. Concerning small group communication, Sara Little states

Knowing himself to be loved, he loves; knowing himself to be understood, he understands. There is an inner integrity, a courageous honesty about him. Realizing his own sinfulness, he opens himself to change, and disciplines himself to learn from others and to make himself available to them. Thus he becomes himself.⁸

We must understand that pupils react and behave as whole persons. We can't expect their academic nature to respond to a lecture while socially they feel isolated from the rest of the class. In team teaching, students are encouraged to interact socially, mentally, and emotionally. They interact with more than one teacher, and with other pupils.

Pupils also react to situations in class as they see them, not necessarily as they are. This is why discussion is necessary. Adults agree or disagree because of their perception. When they are given a chance to analyze, discuss, and draw conclusions, their perception may be clarified so that they view the situation more nearly as it is rather than as they had previously seen it.

Conclusion

What can we conclude about learning? It is not an easy process to understand. The complexity of human beings and their involvement in the teaching-learning process make learning difficult to understand. And just as the process is difficult to understand, so it is difficult to put into operation. We don't put in the ingredients, turn the handle, and watch learning come out like so much stuffed sausage. Teaching-learning is a face-to-face involvement of teacher and pupil.

The following twelve points summarize the teaching-learning process:

1. Teaching must be person-centered (personalized and individualized).
2. Methods of teaching must be chosen to meet the needs of pupils.
3. We must recognize that factors at the subconscious level determine learning as much as factors at the conscious level.
4. Learning is effective when done in groups.
5. The level of learning depends on the level of personal involvement and experiences of the pupil.
6. Educational experience must be related to the whole person, not to only a small segment of his life.

7. The pupil is responsible for his own learning, changing, and response. Teachers are there to guide or help in the learning relationship. Teachers cannot learn lessons for pupils.

8. Effective learning may include many methods such as rote learning, conditioning, reinforcement, trial and error, insight, and problem solving. These methods are not mutually exclusive but are interrelated.

9. Teaching is guiding pupils to gain experiences. It is not simply dispensing facts.

10. Teaching welcomes real questions and feelings.

11. Teaching encourages pupils to educate each other.

12. Teaching centers on pupils first and materials second. But it must center on both, for Biblical content is necessary to produce a Biblical experience. Becoming pupil-centered without being Bible-centered is humanism. Becoming Bible-centered without remaining pupil-centered is dead orthodoxy. When the teacher centers his emphasis on Scripture and pupils, his teaching is Christ-centered.

FOOTNOTES

¹John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (2 vols.; London: James Clarke & Co., 1949), Bk. 111, Chapter vi, para. 4.

²Elmer L. Towns, *Successful Youth Work* (Glendale, Calif.: Regal Press, 1966), p. 176.

³Sara Little, *Learning Together in the Christian Fellowship* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1956), pp. 79, 80.

⁴Lawrence Little, *Foundations for a Philosophy of Christian Education* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 93.

⁵Sara Little, op. cit., p. 15.

⁶Lawrence Little, op. cit., p. 92.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁸Sara Little, op. cit., p. 24.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

How to Group Youth and Adults for Team Teaching

Youth and adults are members of many kinds of groups, some formal, some informal . . . P.T.A. . . . Kiwanis . . . Labor Union #1410 . . . garden club . . . after church get-together for coffee . . . bowling team. Some groups mean more to us than others. The old cliché is true: “We get out of a group what we put in.”

Groups have varying significance to members. A high school girl finds security in identifying with a clique. A businessman relaxes by joining his usual group-golf buddies for eighteen holes. A socialite needs the status she receives from helping a group with a

humanitarian project. Most Christians are members of a Sunday-school class, which can have deep meaning for its members.

The class is a group. Sometimes it consists only of persons of one sex—the ladies' circle. At other times the membership is mixed—the homebuilders Sunday-school class. Team teaching brings to the group exciting possibilities for growth in knowledge, growth in number, new enthusiasm, deeper insights into Christian responsibility, and improved communication with friends.

Team teaching welds a group of people into a closer unity. When more than one teacher ministers to the class, individuals are less likely to be neglected. Team teaching allows pupils to minister to other pupils, solidifying the group. The team approach makes possible more techniques of teaching, increasing the enjoyment and learning of a class. These "spin off" effects come primarily through improved interpersonal relationships within the group. Remember our definition

Team teaching involves two or more persons influencing all of the pupils for the total class time through sharing a common purpose, planning the lesson, guiding the learning activities, and evaluating the classroom experiences.

The presence of two or more teachers means the class will be divided into smaller groups for learning purposes. This chapter deals with grouping for teaching, and three divisions will be discussed (1) small groups, (2) large groups, (3) independent study. These three divisions are usually treated in textbooks for secular education.

Small Groups

The term *small* has a relative meaning. But for the purposes of the present discussion "small group" means two or three to ten. Lives most likely are to be changed in an atmosphere where interaction takes place. The smaller the group, the more give and take in the clarification and explanation of ideas.

Martha Leypoldt has suggested the following activities for the small group: "Case study, circle response, expanding panel, field trip, group discussion, inductive Bible study, music forum, and seminar. " To these we would add brainstorming, buzz group, neighbor nudge, demonstrations, interview forum, listening teams, play reading, question and answer research, role-playing, symposium, and work group.

When the small groups are formally organized, they perform a unique and vital function in relation to the total classroom experience. The small group provides for individual differences. In the small group, the teacher is

1. A counselor;
2. A member of the group;
3. An observer of moods and needs of each pupil;

4. A source of communication between the teacher of the large group and the pupil;
5. A source of individual motivation;
6. A leader of small group learning.²

The pupil has certain functions in the small group. These include the following:

1. Ask questions on subject matter;
2. Seek aid and encouragement;
3. Develop individual ability;
4. Share interpretations;
5. Strengthen communicative skills;
6. Be an active participant in group activities;
7. Develop the skills of critical thinking and personal communication;
8. Discuss ideas from content material.

Usually the teacher of the small group is responsible for helping the pupils understand concepts and master the content introduced in the large group. In the small group the teacher guides through conversational discussion. The small group is not the place for the lecture. The teacher does not dominate the small group, but allows for and guides class discussion.

The teacher in the small group could be compared to a committee chairman. The atmosphere in the small group permits the pupil to speak freely. Therefore, the instructor must keep on the learner's level. Each person in the small group should be as involved as possible in the activities.

If the small group instructor is effective, he will work with the pupil, questioning points, pointing to answers, suggesting projects, asking for opinions and giving them. The teacher is the resource person for pupils in the small group. The small group teacher is responsible for knowing as much about each pupil as necessary—his interests and abilities, his instructional blind spots, his achievements, and his spiritual desires.

The small group teacher will have to be a leader of group processes. This means that he will have the role of a resource person rather than that of an authority figure, or the so-called "fountain of knowledge." Becoming a resource person may be an unfamiliar role for most Bible-school teachers and thus it will offer a challenge, or even a threat. The teacher will have to get information where necessary, but he must have the insight to throw the pupil onto his own resources and guide him to the library center.

Sharing is the keynote to the small group. What is learned in the large group can be shared in the small group. Opinions, insights, understanding, appreciations, or special skills or knowledge can be shared in the small group.

Linking Small-Group and Large-Group Discussion

There seems to be little point in providing more large group stimuli than pupils can effectively respond to. On the other hand, there is little point in encouraging among pupils discussion that is based on insufficient stimulation and facts. The large group discussion should provide enough facts, content, and motivation to stimulate each pupil to find answers, solve problems, and think through problems at the small group level.

If the pupil senses the small group discussion is merely another setting in which the lecture of the large group is continued, he may rebel at being manipulated and become indifferent to an extended lecture. Teacher presentation should not carry over into the small group discussion. If the small group teacher will trust the results accomplished by the teacher in the large group, and not try to reteach the lessons, the pupils can be motivated to interact and to discuss. The pupils' interaction with content, teacher, and other pupils is the key to effective team teaching.

The teacher of a team will have to answer the following questions: How much responsibility should be left to the pupil in discussing his ideas at the small group level? Is the small group discussion an extension of the large group? Is the small group teacher responsible for retelling the lesson or for guiding the learning activities?

Note some of the following pupil reactions in a public high school to small group interaction as it followed the large group instruction "Being able to have more than one teacher broadens the interpretation and lets the pupil be more creative." "It was a little disturbing when what the first teacher said in the large group differed from what the second teacher said in the small group." "The large group tended to be too showy, thus detouring from the original intent." "I felt a definite lack of mutual teamwork between the teachers, despite the overall enjoyment of the subject."⁴

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REACTION TO GROUP EXPERIENCES⁵

Student comments on large groups

1. "It is impossible for one teacher to be a specialist in everything, so I think that team teaching has the advantage of hearing from other teachers."
2. "Interesting because the teachers picked their favorite subjects and talked about them with enthusiasm that soon filled the students."
3. "Gives an opportunity to see many different viewpoints and get used to several approaches to teaching."

Student comments on small groups

1. "Best place to let out emotions, ideas, and arguments to ideas that were studied in large groups."
2. "I admire the way students' discussion was encouraged, and benefited from theirs as well as my own mistakes."
3. "Discussions are good because they force the student to think deeply."

4. "Subjects are made interesting through lectures from different teachers and various visual aids."

4. "Good because if a student has something to say, he will eventually be able to say it."

5. "Gives the student a chance to ask questions and discuss them with his fellow classmates."

Large Groups

Learning is an individualized process. For some instructional activities, the individual can benefit equally well in any size group, large or small. Listening, writing, viewing, and testing activities can be as effective for the individual no-matter what the size of the group. Then, too, the teacher has some advantages in the activities of the large group. In the large group, the teacher is

- a proficient presenter
- a motivator to group action
- a director of learning
- a source of ideas, facts, and explanations.⁶

The pupil has his place in the large group. Granted, pupils can duck responsibilities and let "Henry do it," but there are many advantages to the pupil. In the large group the pupil will

- take notes
- see films, transparencies, flannelgraph, and other visual presentations
- do test work
- listen to the lecturer
- get content background to use in small groups.⁷

In the large group the teacher has the main responsibility of presenting content and setting the pace for lesson development. This may involve giving a factual skeleton or a framework of principles. The meat and muscles can be added in the small group work.

In the large group, one teacher is given the opportunity to present a dynamic, vital lecture once-rather than having four or five teachers lecturing throughout the class session. As a result, quality can be pre served and improved. One good lecture is better than four mediocre ones. Time in the small group can then be used to discuss the implementation of the lecture. Each of the teachers in the team acts as a resource person with an assigned small group. Needless to say, large group activities are largely teacher-centered, while small group activities are primarily pupil-centered. This is a generalization, but nevertheless indicates the emphasis of the large group.

In the large group, the pupils operate under the teacher's direction. Their main job is taking notes, completing work sheets, listening, forming generalizations, or solving problems. Idea presentation (Scripture content) is the essential concern of the teacher in the large group. Facts are presented and supported with ideas, generalizations, and illustrations. The small group is the place for activity and inter-action with other pupils.

Martha Leypoldt has recommended for large groups: "It is obvious that the ways most appropriate for large groups would be those where only one-way communication takes place." She goes on to list techniques most effective with large groups: "chain-reaction forum, colloquy, group response team, reaction panel, sermon forum, and workshop."

The lecture method of teaching is criticized by many Christian educators. There are some abuses in lecturing that should be corrected, but the lecture method of teaching is the core around which other methods are gathered. It is one of the main techniques in large group educational activities. Note the following advantages of the lecture:

1. The lecture covers more ground in a limited amount of time.
2. The lecture is useful for communicating information.
3. The spoken word has power to impress and makes more effective the influence of the personality of the teacher.
4. The spoken word makes possible the operation of the written Word in the human heart.
5. The lecture is an effective tool with which to stimulate and guide the thinking of pupils.
6. The lecture is an effective tool with which to motivate pupils to action.
7. The lecture provides an adequate framework for the use of supplementary materials.
8. The lecture gives the pupils a proper (more complete) perspective.

Independent Study

Small group and large group activities are vital and necessary for team teaching. However, a third prong of team teaching is independent study by the pupil. Independent study is done privately by the pupil, either during the class period or apart from it. It usually involves a teacher-centered project, in which the teacher motivates the pupil to study that which should be studied. But in the Bible school, the built-in motivation of a spiritual dynamic provides pupil motivation. However, in the final analysis, independent study falls to the pupil if learning is to take place. Thelon, in his book, *Education and the Human Quest*, points out "that life is a continually natural inquiry into ways of resolving the conflict in each of its confrontations." He

goes on to suggest that “the task of education is to supervise this *natural inquiry*.” Independent study then is identified by Thelen as the most crucial phase of the learning process.⁹

Why have independent study in the school? When the class time is so short, some may feel that it is wrong to take away valuable time reserved for the teacher’s lecture. The following reasons are given for independent study

1. Independent study is not wasted time but is time actually invested in teaching.
2. Independent study is an excellent way to individualize instruction.
3. Individual study is causing pupils to take responsibility and to become “independently-dependent” (a term used by Howard Hendricks, meaning maturity).
4. Independent study increases the teacher’s ability to work effectively with small groups.
5. Some pupils function best in unstructured situations and learn more from independent research.

For many years the Bible school has considered homework as its independent study. The pupil was expected to “fill out the quarterly at home.” The success of this program depended upon the ability and motivation of the pupil. The home factor played a large part in the success or failure of homework. The high school in Decatur, Illinois, indicates four levels of independent study as used with team teaching.”

Level 1-Structured Independent Study

1. The work is teacher-assigned.
2. The work is teacher-evaluated.
3. The pupil has some choice as to the time and place of his study. This type of independent study usually includes drill, memorization, problem solving, reading assignments, etc. The teacher creates the assignments, defines the goal, determines the amount of work that is necessary for the normal pupil, and makes the assignment. Motivation is a high factor. This could be called a form of directed study. The pupil has two decisions: (1) whether or not he will do the work and, (2) where he will do the study.

In Bible school this level of independent study may involve re-search into Bible facts, reading a book and using questions for re-search, studying a Bible passage or a doctrinal problem in the Scripture, or making practical application.

Level 2-Subject Oriented Independent Study

1. The work is teacher-assigned.
2. The work is teacher-evaluated.
3. The pupil chooses where to study and the topic to be studied. This type of independent study arises from the regular large group or small group discussion. The

assignments might be termed open-ended, giving the pupil the opportunity to go as far as he desires even though he is working within the framework of a topic. Usually he is under the guidance of the teacher.

Some illustrations of this approach for Bible-school use are the preparation of a theme or term paper growing out of the Bible lesson, or the creation of a poem to relate to the Scripture of the day. Other assignments might be writing a story to apply the Bible truth, or creating art (painting, sculpturing, or collage) to reflect the lesson of the day.

Level 3-Subject Oriented Research

1. The work is teacher-assigned.
2. The work is cooperatively evaluated by the teacher and pupil.
3. The pupil arranges his own time schedule and chooses a topic for study.

At this level, the pupil may choose to do independent work related to, but not included in the regular lesson. The pupil does his own re-search and the teacher is a consultant or resource person. The pupil branches out into his own area of concern.

Consider these examples of independent study at level 3: research into the Babylonian civilization during the period of Daniel, the construction of a time chart of Old Testament history, a study of the topography of Palestine, or a study of the Greek civilization as a background to the epistles of Paul.

At level 3 the pupil chooses when and where to study as well as what general area to study. Since the pupil has perhaps studied further than the teacher, he has some responsibility in evaluating his own work. However, the teacher because of his position should retain his role as evaluator so that he may make a definite contribution to the maturity of the pupil.

Level 4-Independent Study

1. The work is self-assumed by the pupil.
2. The work is self-evaluated by the pupil.
3. The pupil has complete freedom in structuring his time.

This level is education at its true depth, for what is self-taught is truly learned. Every believer under the motivation and illumination of the Holy Spirit should be at level 4. However, pupils often are not motivated at such a high level; therefore, we place them in a context (classroom) where external forces will motivate them to study. Other pupils may not have the background or they may lack knowledge. These pupils place themselves under the supervision of the master teacher, who in turn can guide them.

Level 1 is necessary; level 4 is the most desirable. But to be practical, the continuous goal of all teaching is to raise the level of study and motivation of each pupil. When we have reduced the number of pupils in supervised study, pushing them to independent study, we are in essence making teachers out of them. Teachers should be self-motivated. Perhaps this is the idea

expressed in 2 Timothy 2:2. Paul wanted Timothy to instruct faithful men so they might “teach others also.”

The teacher assumes a different role in the independent study program. His role in the large group is that of teacher-lecturer, and his role in independent study is that of a guide. He is guiding the pupil through materials, resources, experiences, and problem-solving tasks.

Conclusion

In the Bible school, team teaching is such a new innovation that there has been little, if any, testing to validate the success or lack of success. But in the public schools it has been tested and the findings are available for study. The Claremont Team Teaching Plan in California involves some eight school districts. Seven thousand teen-age pupils and approximately 250 team teachers are involved in it. The majority of the pupils in the team-teaching program (64%) wish to continue, while 19% indicated they did not wish to continue in the teams, and 17% were uncertain. The reasons most often cited for wishing to continue fell into the following categories

1. Enriched activities, variety, flexibility, outside speakers, good discussion.
2. More achievement, learning; better courses, teachers, or grades.
3. Just like it; more enjoyable, interesting.¹¹

Each high school pupil was asked to react to seventeen qualities that a team should have to be successful. Understand that in the Claremont Team Teaching plan the pupils were part of the team just as much as the faculty. The following qualities were felt to be important by the pupils, and must be possessed by a team in operation

1. Getting good preparation for more advanced work.
2. Being challenged to think about more subjects.
3. Having many interesting discussions.
4. Knowing my classmates well.
5. Having teachers who are enthusiastic about their work.
6. Having teachers who plan together on the amount of homework and tests.
7. Having outside speakers in our team classes.
8. Feeling satisfied with my team classes.
9. Feeling as if I am trying out new ideas.
10. Having a chance to pursue my own interests in class.

11. Being enthusiastic about classes.

Some accuse the Bible school of being dead. Perhaps it is just tired. When Robert Raikes formed the first Sunday school, he pumped new life into a listless church through new arrangements of teachers and a different grouping of pupils to reach and win the street waifs of his day. The strength of team teaching is in new arrangements of teachers and different grouping of pupils to make learning more effective. Just as God has used this method in the past, He can repeat it for our day. But caution should be exercised. Renewal doesn't come through new techniques. Revival is brought about by a teacher, possessed by the Holy Spirit, prepared to teach the Word of God, who is brought face to face with pupils who want to learn the ways of the Lord.

FOOTNOTES

¹Martha Levpoldt, *40 Ways to Teach in Groups* (Valley Forge, Penna.: The Judson Press, 1967), p. 29.

²"An Operational Positional Statement" (mimeographed), Lakeview Senior High School, Decatur, Illinois, Dr. Rolland W. Jones, Superintendent, p. 5.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Annual Report: Claremont Teaching Team Program, Roland Mitchell (ed.), Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California, 1962, 63, p. 34ff.

⁵Team Teaching Survey, Evanston Township, High School, May 1966 (mimeographed), p. 2.

⁶Lakeview, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Leypoldt, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁹Herbert A. Tbelen, *Education and the Human Quest* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 52.

¹⁰Lakeview, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9. The four levels of independent research are taken from this source, as well as the specification of teacher and pupil responsibilities.

¹¹Claremont Report, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

CHAPTER TWELVE

What Rooms Are Needed for Team Teaching?

What happens when you allow thirty to fifty children to talk and work on half a dozen activities at the same time? Isn't this an invitation to chaos? Isn't it noisy?

Perhaps these and other similar objections may be partially answered by taking a look at the business world. Walk into any modern bank building and you will find an officer at a desk transacting confidential business with a customer. All around him are other officers at their desks. Some are talking with customers. Some are frowning at stacks of papers. Some are murmuring into Dictaphones. Typewriters clatter. Telephones ring. People come and go. But the noise is not particularly disturbing. Why? Because the noises are an accepted (and expected) part of the activities at hand.

It was the relative privacy found in a crowded restaurant that inspired the development of team teaching in open sessions. Dr. Robert M. Finley, superintendent of schools at Chagrin Falls, Ohio, tells the story

“The idea for [team teaching] came about at dinner one evening. Dalton and Dalton, the architects, had invited the board members and me to a restaurant in Cleveland in order to make some plans. As we sat at a long table in a rather crowded, candle lit dining room, we discussed the many facets and details pertaining to the ultimate erection of the new building.

“Suddenly a thought hit me. I noticed that even though we were in a large dining area, with many other groups eating and chatting away, we had not (at least I had not) heard the other noises of chatting in the room. Nor did anyone else at our table seem bothered by the other sounds. I stopped and listened for a moment and heard other people talking, dishes rattling, and music in the background. I asked the others at the table if they had noticed that we weren’t bothered in our discussion. . . .

“If we had a money problem (which we did), why couldn’t we save money by eliminating the interior partitions, and substituting movable furniture? The architect assured me that we could ... but could we work it educationally? Food for thought, and I couldn’t wait to get to the office the next morning to work it out.”¹

Some teachers who have worked in open settings report that in the beginning, children who are used to a self-contained classroom may tend to watch what nearby groups are doing. But this habit soon wears off unless the competing activity is particularly attractive (or distracting)—in which instance the temptation may be removed by changing locations or activities.

To generalize a statement James A. Garfield once made in reference to the famous educator, Mark Hopkins, we may say, “A school is a teacher at one end of the log and the pupil on the other.” The log is the classroom. The classroom is important because it is the environment in which teaching and learning take place.

Some Sunday schools have modern, well equipped, well lighted rooms. Other schools meet in poorly equipped, poorly lighted, small basement rooms with low ceilings, tiny windows, and dark woodwork.

Team teaching is a different approach to education, and the class-room should reflect this approach. The first section of this chapter is a consideration of ideal facilities for team teaching. The second section gives suggestions for adapting inadequate facilities.

The Classroom Should Reflect the Method of Teaching

“We shape our buildings, thereafter they shape us “-Winston Churchill. Mr. Churchill’s appraisal of buildings is applicable to Bible-school buildings. When a building committee decides to build a certain type of plant, they are *molding* their building.

Architect John Lyon Reid has made the following observation “Education is a fluid activity. A fluid might be said to take the shape of its container. If that is true, I think we might say that the container should change its shape when required.”²

Most building committees are in a hurry to get extra space. After a few quick exploratory conferences, the architect prepares a preliminary drawing, which the building committee submits to the board or the congregation for approval. Little educational planning is done. Rarely is a Christian education consultant given opportunity to examine the drawings before they are submitted for approval. Ordinarily the drawings provide for classrooms that are adapted to the

current attendance and departmental pattern. No survey is made to determine the potential enrollment for the next five years. No consideration is given to more effective Christian educational organization and methods. The author sincerely believes that *the Christian education building should reflect the philosophy of education of a local church*. The traditional approach to teaching Bible school (one teacher to a class) suggests a type of classroom that is inappropriate for a team-teaching approach. The Christian education building should be designed to reflect the desired educational program. Application of this principle requires a careful analysis of the educational program in order to determine the necessary physical facilities. The ideal situation is to make an educational survey, and place it at the disposal of the building committee. Usually, however, such a survey is not available, so the building committee is forced to form a subcommittee to work with the Christian education committee to determine the present nature and future plans for the Christian education of the church.

The following questions are given as a guide to help in developing a philosophy of education that will determine the type of facilities needed for the most effective instruction of your children.

1. What is the purpose of Sunday school?

Those who plan Bible-school buildings should ask themselves, “What groups of persons will be meeting here? What types of activities will best instruct these persons? What skills need to be developed in children in order to help them grow to spiritual maturity? How can the building be utilized to impart these skills? Will the training program of the Bible school provide for various sources of knowledge, skill, habits, understanding, and attitudes? Will the Bible school need facilities for a lecture program?”

2. How do children learn?

The blueprint of the Christian education plant should reflect the nature of the Christian learner. Do children become better Christians, for example, by learning facts about the Bible, or by involving them selves in activities based on the facts of the Bible? Can doctrine be taught best by drill and recitation, or by having children engage in a variety of properly guided, interesting activities? Do children learn more by listening to talk, or by being involved in handwork, activities, and interaction with teachers and other pupils? If the emphasis is on indoctrination of Bible facts, a small room where pupils can sit and listen to teachers is desirable. If the emphasis is on living the lesson, a large activity room should be provided.

3. How will the Sunday school be organized?

There are three basic types of Bible-school organization: (1) single unit Bible schools, (2) departmentally graded schools, and (3) multiple department schools.

A single unit school has one or two opening assemblies. If the school has two opening assemblies, young people and adults may meet in the church sanctuary for ten to twenty minutes of preliminary activities before going to class, while the children gather in another part of the building for an opening assembly consisting of such activities as stories, object lessons, singing of choruses, announcements, recognition of birthdays, and devotions. The single unit school

faces the dilemma of building a plant for the present organization while planning for expansion to the departmentally graded school.

The departmentally graded school ordinarily provides space for seven or more opening assemblies: for the Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary, Junior, Junior High, Youth, and Adult Departments. At least seven rooms are necessary for opening worship and perhaps several times as many for individual class sessions. If teaching centers are used for classrooms, temporary dividers may take the place of permanent walls.

The multiple department school is more complex, because a separate department is provided for every age level. In fact, very large Sunday schools often have more than one department for each age level.

Planning Rooms for Team Teaching

When a church is convinced that its program will be more effective in a team atmosphere, the architect should be instructed to design the building for maximum flexibility and resource learning.

1. *Classrooms should be expandable.* Provision should be made for increased floor footage when it is necessitated by growth in attendance. This could be provided by additional classrooms, by expansion of present classrooms, or by additional acreage.

2. *Classrooms should be versatile.* They should be purposely de-signed to accomplish a variety of functions. The same room may well serve as an "opening assembly" area and as a team-teaching class room. It may also be used for club activities during the week, or for kindergarten and/or Christian day school. To apply the concept of versatility to other areas of the church program, a multi-purpose room may be constructed to serve as a gymnasium, an auditorium, or a large dining room.

A word of warning should be inserted here: Do not make any room so versatile that it is unfit for its primary function-being a classroom!

3. *Classrooms should be convertible.* Rooms should be designed for easy and economical change to meet new program needs. A room may need immediate change to reduce or increase space size. *Expandability* is accomplished by labor and materials outside the school. *Convertibility* may be performed by pupils, teachers, or school custodians. The use of partitions and dividers will be examined in detail:

The folding door is a very popular divider for several reasons. Floor tracks are not required. The "door" usually folds completely out of the way against the wall or into a compartment specially pre-pared for its enclosure.

In special instances measures of flexibility may involve manually operated doors or plastic, cloth, or metal dividers. These units have advantages such as facilitating separation of activity areas from those where attention must be centered on reading or study activities.³

Folding doors are utilitarian in nature. Even a child can quickly close off an area. They are low in cost as compared with automatic-type partitions.

There are, however, certain disadvantages to folding doors. The greatest of these disadvantages seems to be sound penetration. Most folding doors are not soundproof. Also, they are temporary. That is, they do not look or operate well after continued use.

Movable space dividers are often used to partition off one section of a class from another. They may also be used to divide one class from another before a building is completed.

One of the most popular dividers is a free standing plywood board on wheels, four feet by eight feet in size. Such a divider may also serve as a bulletin board. Chalkboards and/or tack boards may be attached to the sides of the board. The dividers are of sufficient height to provide visual separation between seated pupils in different classes. Plywood or chalkboard dividers are not sound barriers, but sound-proofing is not their purpose.

The use of furniture and class equipment as partitions has become popular in many areas. Bookcases may be arranged to form an alcove around a library table. They may even lend atmosphere to library work. Movable storage units with suitable tops designed for work areas make ideal work centers.

Office buildings are modified to suit incoming tenants. This can be done in Bible-school buildings as well. A Primary Department may have forty-five in attendance one year, and thirty or sixty the next. If rooms can be converted to meet shifting population, there may be economical advantages as well as improved teaching. Semi-permanent wall partitions are usually made of fireproof material (metal, asbestos, fiberglass, etc.), and designed in color patterns that won't chip or wear off. They are usually light in weight, rugged, and sturdy. Some of their advantages are as follows: (1) They can be erected in one-third the time of masonry walls. (2) Only one sub-contractor needs to be involved in the construction. (This does away with masonry workmen, plasterers, painters, etc.) (3) Whereas about ninety-eight percent of a masonry wall is wasted when it is dismantled, there is no waste in changing a wall or partition or space station. (4) Maintenance expense is low. (5) Bible-school rooms may be easily re-apportioned. (The janitor can take all the walls out to form a large banquet room for a church supper during the week, then replace the walls to make rooms for Sunday-morning teaching. (6) The control of sound is maintained. Demountable panels can be slid into place and locked or fastened in position as one means of securing inter-room flexibility. Panels of this type may be constructed of various materials to provide the desired amount of sound control.⁴

4. *Classrooms should allow for frequent change of group size with minimum loss of time.* Proper grouping is one of the keys to successful team teaching. Frequent changes between large groups and small activity centers are a necessary part of the team-teaching approach. The time factor involved in moving children and rearranging the room should be considered in planning the physical layout of the room.

5. *Classrooms should become "identity-security" centers for the pupils.* When a pupil is moved several times, he sometimes loses his sense of identity and security. He

may even think of church as a place to visit and observe. For this reason, he needs a spot that is uniquely his. In one Bible school, for instance, each child “belongs” to a certain table (each painted a different color). The child should also think of the classroom as “his” classroom. He needs to have a place to hang his wraps, store his books and supplies, and find his friends and his teachers.

6. *Each teacher needs a “home base”-much as the pupil needs an identity-security center.* In a team-teaching situation, it is not likely that the teacher will have a private classroom or office. He will probably be teaching in a large room with other teachers. Still, he needs a place where he can confer with pupils, prepare activity materials, and work with small groups of children. Most teachers make their activity tables “home base.” In a few weeks’ time, most pupils identify certain tables as belonging to certain teachers.

7. *The classroom should make teaching-learning aids available to as many pupils as possible.* Some teaching aids (chalkboards, tack boards, storage shelves, worship centers, etc.) are used frequently by all groups. These should be permanently located where they are easily accessible to all. Teaching aids that are used less frequently-record players, tape recorders, filmstrip projectors, overhead projectors, projection screens, maps, globes, pictures, etc.-will, of course, be movable, and easily obtainable at all times by all groups. The room should have a sufficient number of electrical outlets, darkening facilities, microphone inputs, amplifiers and speakers, and a sink.

8. *Every classroom should have an instructional resource center, a library, to supply pupils and teachers with materials and activities for learning.* Since team teaching follows an activity concept rather than a lecture method of teaching, the resource center should contain more than just books. Some of the materials that should be available in a resource center are books, periodicals, pamphlets, pictures, slides, records, tapes, maps, charts, a record player, filmstrip and slide projector, puppets, missionary curios, materials for object lessons, flannel-graph boards and materials, parallel readers (several copies of the same book for reading groups), globes, and music.

The purpose of the resource center is to provide space and materials for both individual and group study. It should not replace the church library; instead, it should supplement it. The church library serves the entire church family. The resource center expands this service by supplying extra materials that are particularly useful for a specific group.

9. *Classrooms should allow for acoustical solutions to the problems of sound distribution.* In a team-teaching situation, more than one teacher may be talking in a room at the same time. Pupils will be speaking, asking questions, or reporting to each other in various groups within the room. While one group is reading silently in the re-source center, a second group may be practicing a play. A third group may be working at a table.

Because of the frequent movement of groups, the varying sizes of the groups, and the multiple function of many areas in the room, the sound problem may at times become complex.

Wall to wall carpeting is being used in some places throughout the Christian education unit and hallways as well as in the sanctuary. Research has proved that wall to wall carpeting is actually a rather in expensive addition. "The higher initial cost of carpeting can be cancelled out in four and a half years by reducing maintenance costs . . . in ten years savings will have accrued sufficiently to replace the carpeting. "5

Carpeting has many educational advantages.

Floor covered with carpets can drastically reduce the amount of sound created in the first place as a dividend for using the less expensive floor. There is a far better climate in the school ... students feel at home, are quieter, better behaved, and more re-spectful.⁶

A third approach to the problem of noise is to ignore it. This approach is not really new. Nor is it altogether wrong, for "a busy working sound surrounding a person may actually help create a better learning atmosphere."⁷ Some educators feel that children who regularly work alongside of other working children do not disturb one another.

The traditional departmentally-graded room is not ideal for a team-teaching situation. The self-contained classrooms give privacy to teachers, uninterrupted class time, a sense of belonging to both teacher and pupils, and a quiet setting in which the teacher may instruct the pupils. There are, however, certain limitations. Children are somewhat hindered in social interaction, movement of groups is limited, the re-source center and the teaching-learning aids may not be readily avail-able to all, certain types of learning activities are prohibited, sizes of groups are limited, and several small rooms are more expensive to construct and to maintain than one large room would be.

Bible schools that maintain a "lecture approach" to teaching seem to be happy with the traditional departmentally graded rooms. Such Bible schools might not be happy with a team approach, or activity type learning. Every church should construct a building that reflects its philosophy of education.

Sunday-School Rooms

Some teachers are assigned to beautiful rooms with adequate facilities. They should rejoice in the opportunity for exciting teaching experiences. Other teachers are given less adequate facilities. But all rooms can be improved with a little creativity and effort on the part of the teacher. There are certain attitudes that all teachers ought to have toward their assigned rooms. They should be concerned about such things as atmosphere, comfort, cleanliness, and the general appeal of their rooms.

1. Atmosphere. The appearance of the children's classroom is more important than we often realize. For the informal learning that takes place in the life of a child does more to mold spiritual concepts and ideas than does teaching. The room to which a child comes from week to week to learn of God's Word may have as much influence on his life as the teacher's lesson plan has.

First impressions are lasting impressions. Children deserve the best space that is available in the Bible school. The Bible-school room does not have to be up-to-date, but it should be light

and cheerful, and the windows should be low enough for the children to look out. When we stick children in a church basement that is dark and dreary; when we seat them in adult folding chairs that are so high that their feet never touch the floor; when we use second-hand discards for tables; we may be telling children that “anything is good enough for God.” Children should be led to think of church as a happy place. If they like church, and love their teachers, they will more than likely love God also, for Bible-school environment has a tremendous effect upon the learning of children.

Plants to water, fish to feed, and flowers to smell bring life into the room. Appropriate pictures placed at the child’s eye level and changed often, add to the room’s appearance and also aid in the total teaching effect.

Is your room as attractive as you can make it? Do you need new furnishings? Are there some visual aids you should have? What changes could be made in the atmosphere of the room to make the children happier and your teaching more effective?

2. *Comfort.* Even when space and facilities are limited, teachers should be concerned about a comfortable place for learning. Rooms should be evenly heated. Floors should be carpeted. Windows should be designed to let in as much light as possible, and so that they may be opened and closed easily. Ventilation is as important as temperature. A hard-to-ventilate classroom may be thoroughly aired before the class members arrive. Be careful to avoid either uncomfortable drafts or stuffy rooms. Take into consideration the body heat that is generated by teachers and pupils in an overcrowded room. It is quite possible for teachers who enter an airy, comfortable room to become so gradually conditioned to the rising temperature that they are unaware of the discomfort their pupils may be experiencing. Obviously, an uncomfortable child is not likely to be in the best attitude for learning.

Good lighting is important. If sufficient light is not provided by windows, as is often the case in basement classrooms, be sure to have adequate lighting fixtures installed in the ceiling. Window shades or tinted glass should be provided for those rooms that may be affected by the glaring light of the sun.

3. *Cleanliness.* The children’s department in your Bible school should be as clean and neat as you like your rooms at home. Give the walls a new coat of paint as often as needed. Store supplies neatly on shelves. (You may want to make a bright curtain door for the shelves.) Keep small pictures, paper, and such articles as crayons, pencils, bottles of glue, and scissors in labeled boxes on the shelves. Discard any materials that are not needed. Bulletin boards should be placed at the children’s eye level, and the displays changed frequently.

Boys and girls should be given some responsibility in keeping their room clean. The teacher who allows children to leave the room with overturned chairs, paper scraps on the floor, open bottles of glue on the table, quarterlies spread out on a shelf, or mud tracked on the floor is missing a valuable opportunity to teach order and discipline to her children. A good rule is to have a place for everything, and everything in its place.

The children’s Bible-school classroom should be a room in which they feel at home. Never, never should it be permitted to become either a “storeroom” or a showplace. Everything in the room should serve a useful purpose. If it does not, it should be removed. Remember, you need at

least twenty-five square feet of floor space per child—and that usually leaves no room for storage or “show” furniture.

4. *An inviting appearance:* A Bible-school room should say, “Come in. This is a room where you can talk to your friends, and your teachers, talk *about* God, and even talk *to* God.” A Bible-school room should provide space for working, interest centers for stimulating curiosity, and “room to grow in.” Discipline problems often result from crowded rooms. Rooms that provide twenty-five to thirty square feet per child are desirable. When rooms are small (less than twenty square feet per child), activity is often limited to a “talk and listen” situation. Children learn best through firsthand experiences—investigating, exploring, planning, consulting, handling, creating, talking, working, pasting, asking, and moving. Make sure your rooms make such experiences possible.

Overcoming Inadequate Space and Equipment

Adequate space and equipment are not always obtainable. What can you do then? Use your ingenuity and creativity to overcome the problems. As one minister told an energetic Bible-school superintendent, “You have to do the best you can with what you have.” Some of the following principles may help:

1. *Discuss problems as a team.* The process of “brainstorming” should suggest several ideas to help solve the problem of inadequate room space. When a team of teachers seriously brainstorm, more than one answer to a problem is usually suggested. Thoughts may “piggy-back” on other ideas; that is, one suggestion by one teacher may bring on a new idea or solution from another teacher. In the midst of this exchange of ideas, someone will almost always come up with a helpful, practical way to solve the problem.

2. *Clear the room of nonessential furniture.* As we have already repeatedly stated, children need space in which to grow and learn. The piano may be too large for the room. Since a piano is not really necessary for good singing, why not give it to an adult class? (They usually need the help of a piano more than children do anyway.) Keep only enough chairs for each enrolled pupil and teacher. Do not allow broken furniture, discarded paper, or storage materials to accumulate in the corners of closets of the rooms. Use the space for good teaching and helpful equipment.

3. *Consider the use of movable screens for additional privacy.* Sheets of plywood, brightly painted and mounted on rollers, provide excellent screens. Tack boards and chalkboards can be quite easily and inexpensively attached to such screens. Some teachers feel that breaking the sight line is helpful in small-group teaching.

When two teachers conduct class in the same room, the distinct voice and words of one teacher may interrupt the second teacher. However, when more than two teachers use the same room, a class usually hears noise (diffusion of two or more teachers talking) rather than distinct words and sentences. It is well for all teachers to remember that lessons in the same room tend to distract the teachers far more than the pupils. A teacher in a team situation should work toward the development of such a positive mental attitude toward her class that neither she nor the class will be distracted by the movements or voices of others in the room. Movable partitions may be

used to help provide a feeling of “separateness” for the various groups in a classroom. This is especially vital when activity teaching is taking place. Children will carry on their activities more freely when they know that others are not watching.

4. *Use storage space outside of the small classroom.* Small class-rooms should not be needlessly limited by taking away vital teaching space for storage. Instead, look for a place outside the classroom where learning materials can be stored. Or make a set of shelves on rollers and roll them into a place of storage after class.

5. *Use folding chairs and tables.* One small church shortened the legs of a folding game table to a length of fifteen inches and used it with Primaries. During the activity period the table was folded and laid against the wall. Folding chairs may also be used when extra space is needed for activities.

6. *Seating mats save space.* Some churches have made seating mats out of squares of carpeting samples obtained from local interior decorating stores. These mats are placed on the floor and used by children when listening to a story, singing a song, or participating in large group activities. Other churches use wall to wall carpeting in the Primary Department. One such church painted three-foot squares on a rug in one corner of the room to arrange for the children’s seating. “We used to have the children sit on the floor,” a teacher explained, “but the boys were tempted to wrestle and roll all over the girls. When we painted the squares and assigned each child to a square, the children were better disciplined and kept their places more readily.”

7. *Church pews may be turned to face each other.* Some churches do not have any classrooms available for children’s classes. When this is the situation, two pews can be turned to face each other at the back of the auditorium or on a side next to the wall. Movable screens may be used to block off the view from other classes. A small table placed between the pews will focus attention on’ the learning activities at the center of the class. In such a situation, team teaching is difficult. Nevertheless, with a little ingenuity, a teacher or teachers can provide varied, interesting learning activities.

8. *Lapboards may be used in cramped quarters.* In classrooms where space is so limited that there is no room for a worktable, portable lapboards may be used. The lapboard should be from twelve to four teen inches square and about three-fourths of an inch thick. Some churches use chair seats (minus the backs and legs) for lapboards. The lapboards may be brightly painted to add color and interest. If each pupil has his name painted on the lapboard, he may feel a keener sense of “belonging.” If you must use boards on church pews for small children, you may need footstools (boxes, cans, or cartons) also.

9. *Make use of available space for displaying pictures, posters, etc.* The insides of doors and movable screens provide excellent areas for displaying pictures, friezes, and murals. Burlap bags or other inexpensive materials may be hung on the walls to serve as tack boards.

Conclusion

Walk through your Sunday-school room and watch for certain items. Do you see . . .

- . . . choir music stacked on top of an old piano?
- . . . a room overcrowded with chairs
- . . . an exposed light bulb on the ceiling?
- . . . pictures hanging crooked or too high for children to see?
- . . . a bulletin board that hasn't been changed in a month?
- . . . an attendance-contest poster left over from last quarter?
- . . . broken crayons in a dirty box?
- . . . an open supply-cabinet with ugly bottles of glue, stacks of used handwork, a pile of scissors, unsharpened pencils, and stacks of old take-home papers
- . . . tables with old dark paint that are either too high or too low?
- . . . a vase of dusty plastic flowers?
- . . . dog-eared books piled on top of something rather than arranged in a bookcase
- . . . faded, dusty curtains at the window?
- . . . a coat rack too high or having bent, worn-out coat hangers
- . . . unmatched chairs of different sizes and different colors, and in need of repair

A cluttered room makes the child feel that life is cluttered. A disorderly room makes the child feel uneasy and disturbed. An uncared for room makes the child feel uncared for.

There is no excuse for dirt, disorder, or lack of care. One attractive picture designed to teach children and hung at their eye level is better than a half dozen cheap pictures that carry no meaning. Religious mottoes may be effective, but remember, they are usually phrased in concepts-and children do not think in concepts.

One chair per pupil for the maximum attendance is sufficient. Children need space, not extra chairs. If chairs must be varied in design or size, at least paint them all the same color, and arrange them in an orderly, attractive manner.

Walk around your department and look for some of the following things. Do you see . . .

- . . . clean windows and bright curtains?
- . . . bright lights in a fixture hanging from the ceiling?
- . . . matching chairs placed neatly about the study tables?

- . . . low shelves and interesting looking books?
- . . . inviting art materials that are easily accessible to the pupils?
- . . . a good picture hung at the eye level of pupils
- . . . neatly-arranged supply cabinets with doors?
- . . . something growing-flowers, vines, goldfish?
- . . . enough crayons in good condition for each child?
- . . . storage space for each teacher
- . . . windows low enough for children to look out?
- . . . a spotless floor-clean enough for children to play on without getting dirty?
- . . . a bulletin board at eye level with materials changed at least every other week?
- . . . a picture file for the teacher?
- . . . a desk for the departmental secretary?
- . . . a record player?
- . . . a well-tuned piano that is painted or finished to complement the room?
- . . . a bookrack with interesting, colorful books?

A room for children should be designed and arranged to make learning about God interesting, enjoyable, important, and lasting.

FOOTNOTES

¹Robert 31. Finley, *Profiles of Significant Schools: Schools Without T4⁷alls* (New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, Inc., 1966), pp. 10-12.

²Nledill Bair and Richard Woodward, *Team Teaching in Action* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964), p. 36.

³Merle R. Sumption and Jack L. Landers, *Planning Functional School Buildings* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957), p. 443.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 214.

⁵Harold B. Gorges, "What Principals Should Know About New Developments in School Design." Speech before the National Association of Secondary School Principals in Pittsburgh, 47th Annual Convention, February 17, 1963.

⁶Bair and Woodward, op. cit., p. 45.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 44.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Introducing a Program of Team Teaching in a Sunday School

“All right,” you say, “you’ve sold me on team teaching. How do I get started?”

This section is written to guide you in establishing a team approach to teaching in your Bible school. Don’t forget, team teaching can’t be tacked on to the traditional departmental approach to Bible school. Team teaching is a new educational way of organizing learning activities. Be ready to change. Your department may need to add, expand, start again, take away, rethink, or redo. Most important, correct mental attitudes toward team teaching are necessary.

Attitudes Toward Team Teaching

Plans and ideas are transported in the minds of people. Your ideas about team teaching will form the eventual activities carried on in your classrooms. Ideas are dangerous, for an idea is the trigger that fires the gun. Even more important than ideas, however, are your plans for beginning team teaching. If you plan wrongly, team teaching may never become a reality.

1. The need, not the present educational organization, is the starting point. Someone has aptly stated, “You can’t build a skyscraper on a foundation for a chicken coop.” Before planning for team teaching, the Bible school should survey its present organization. Why do you do what you do the way- you do it? Perhaps your church isn’t ready for team teaching. Some churches have instituted team teaching for the sole purpose of saving space. Space-saving as a motive will accomplish little unless the true contribution of a carefully-designed program of team teaching is realized.

Your present Bible-school organization may not be adequate for team teaching. But don’t give up. Don’t let present limitations hold you back. Team teaching will usually call for an enlarged organization, the recruitment of lead teachers, expanded use of facilities, and more attention to the interaction of pupil with pupil.

2. Space and equipment must be provided for more effective teaching. Attitudes toward the Bible-school classroom are changing. In the past, Bible schools were often considered places where children would come to sit and listen to a lesson. As a result, small ten-feet by ten-feet Bible-school rooms were built for children and youth. Classes of approximately ten pupils each were placed in these small rooms and were *told* their lessons.

Team teaching requires more space than the formal method of “telling.” Ten square feet per child was needed for the lecture approach. Leaders in the field of elementary education today are recommending from twenty-five to thirty-five square feet per child. Experience has demonstrated this ratio to be practical and productive. Adults have traditionally been taught in the church sanctuary while teens have had a space designated “youth room.” Both age groups need facilities that encourage “educational stimulation.” Just as the sanctuary says, “Shhh ... quiet . . . worship God,” the class-rooms for youth and adults should say *think!* Their rooms should have chalkboards, conference tables, maps, visual aids, tack board, and book-shelves.

3. Educational organization must be reflected in team teaching. Team teaching is possible whenever educational provision is made for pupils to be grouped as closely as possible in age, needs, and characteristics. A Sunday school may have a department of eighty pupils and ten teachers. (This means eighty pupils probably attend the same opening assembly and are then divided into ten small classes for instruction.) Such a department could well be organized for team

teaching by dividing the eighty into three groups of from twenty-five to twenty-eight pupils each. Each group would meet with five or six teachers in an open space room. As a result, three separate rooms for team teaching would be established. If each group can be confined to one age level or grade (age six or grade one, for instance), it is better to do so, especially in the lower grades.

Educators have learned that little children are easily overstimulated in large groups, and they learn less. When Debbie Underwood told the story of Kocho, she had the children “eating out of her hand.” It is doubtful, however, that the lives of the children were changed because the children were not given a chance to interact with the lesson. Learning is usually more effective when the class is small and the number of teachers is increased.

In the Nursery Department, it is best to confine the number of children to ten or fifteen children for an open session with team teaching. With Preschoolers, twenty-five children is a maximum. With Primaries, the number of children may be increased to thirty. In smaller groups with more teachers children are happier; they maintain interest longer; and they learn more readily.

Growth in attendance will result when adequate provisions are made for teachers, space, and facilities. Also, there will be an increase in the quality of work done with and by the pupils. Adequate space and teaching equipment create the finest atmosphere for improved, individualized learning. Pupils usually respond enthusiastically to open session teaching.

A Blueprint for Beginning Team Teaching

Some superintendents return from an educational convention and try to initiate a program of team teaching in one of the Bible-school departments. The new project often fails because it lacks the support of parents, pupils, and church officials. The following points are offered as sequential steps for introducing team teaching into a Bible school. Local conditions will dictate whether the steps may be followed completely or modified in some details.

1. Study available material and literature about team teaching.
2. Evaluate your Sunday school to determine whether or not team teaching will help you become more effective.
 - a. Is there adequate room space for team teaching?
 - b. What extra equipment is needed?
 - c. Will changes be needed in the organization of the Sunday school to accommodate a team approach?
 - d. Is leadership available and trained to introduce and establish a successful team-teaching approach in your Sunday school?
 - e. Will the present curriculum be adaptable to a team approach?
3. Agree on the objectives to be accomplished by the team approach.

4. Study the kinds of team organizations (hierarchical, democratic, etc.) and choose the one that will best suit your needs.

5. Don't introduce team teaching until there is a full set of teachers for one team. (lead teacher, regular teachers, resource teacher, clerical aid, etc.).

6. Begin with one level at a time. If your Sunday school is departmentally graded, begin with a department. If the departments are crowded, choose one grade of the department to begin with. For example, choose the first grade if the Primary Department is crowded.

7. Choose the team personnel on the basis of their qualifications and training.

8. Choose the lead teacher at the beginning. He should have both good leadership ability and the ability to train others to teach children. (Some would recommend the choosing of a leader *before* the choosing of team personnel.)

9. Give the team inservice training with the age with which they will be working. If possible, have them observe a neighboring church or public-school classroom where good team teaching is being carried on.

10. Plan, organize, and coordinate the curriculum for team teaching.

11. If you are planning for children, divide the assigned Sunday-school room into activity sections (not content sections). This should be done by the team. Space should be provided for a worship center, a resource center, an activity center, a nature center, and of course, places for small group work.

12. Prior to the inauguration of team teaching, the following items should be considered for good public relations

a. A time of orientation for parents.

b. A time of orientation for pupils involved in the program.

c. A time of orientation for the rest of the staff to the nature and aims of team teaching.

13. Secure the materials needed for the resource centers.

14. Determine the criteria by which the pupils will be grouped into small units for instruction.

15. Establish a time for a weekly teachers' planning session.

16. Design a flexible schedule, creating blocks of time for large-group activities (worship, stories, singing, etc.), blocks of time for small group activities (group instruction, handwork activities, work book projects, etc.), and blocks of time for individual pupil activities apart from the groups (library time, pre-session activities, playing, etc.).

17. Begin.

Beginning team teaching is like any other adventure in the church. It requires faith, vision, and boldness. *Faith* is needed to trust God to work through the new activity approach to teaching in the lives of teachers and pupils. Vision is needed to see the advantages such a program can provide to the pupils and to your church. Finally, *boldness is* needed. You can't please everyone. As a result of team teaching, some mother or deacon may come to you with criticism. Your first week with the team approach may fail because of the new procedure for teachers—they still may be one-act performers. Be bold. Plan to continue team teaching for one year. Be ready, however, to thoroughly and honestly evaluate after the first quarter. Don't think all beginning teams start with failure. Some teams have such a positive reaction at first that their evaluation becomes too subjective. They feel team teaching will "save the church." Such claims should be moderated with cautious and realistic objectivity.