

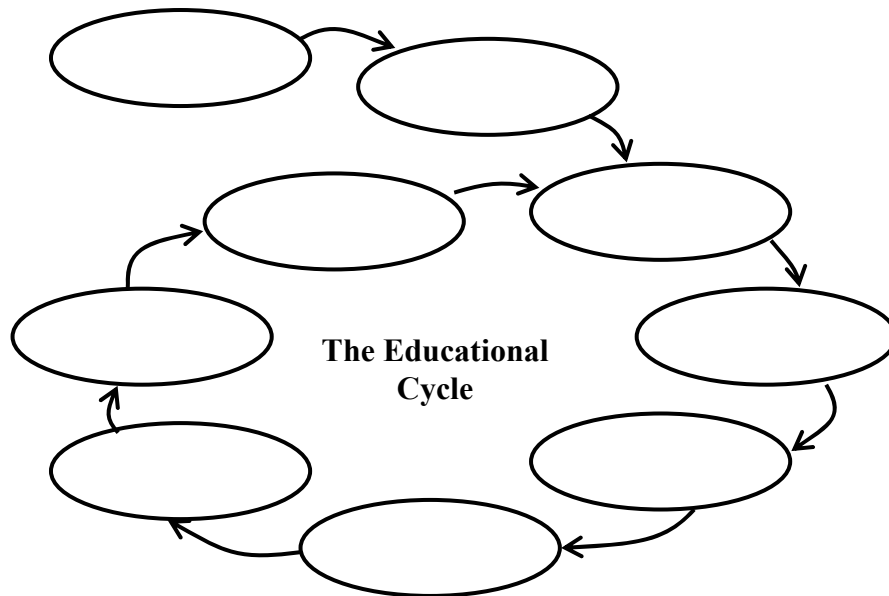
The Art of Teaching **Week 5** Day 1
Lesson Planning I: Hook

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- briefly define what is involved in each of the four phases of effective lessons
- state why “psychological ordering” is a particularly powerful approach to effective lesson preparation and presentation
- briefly explain why the Hook is a crucial element in effective lesson planning
- give the three essential qualities of a good Hook
- give three pitfalls to avoid and four principles to apply in the formulation of effective lesson openings

1. Throughout this course we have returned continually to the Educational Cycle as the essential framework for effective teaching ministry. By way of review, complete the diagram:



(See Week 1 Day 3 frame 3)

2. We began the course by coming to an understanding of the general goal of Christian teaching ministry, which is ...

(to develop mature Christians in mature churches. See Week 1 Day 1 frame 10.)

3. An understanding of current needs emerged from an examination of ...

(the most significant developmental characteristics in the **cognitive, social, emotional, and faith dimensions for each phase across the life-span.** See Week 3.)

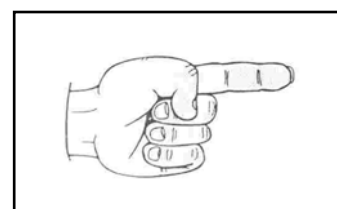
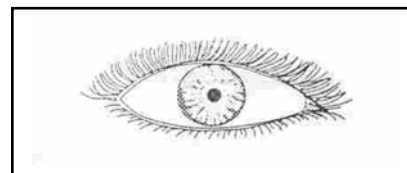
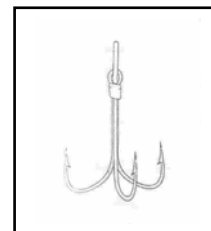
4. Last week you were required to develop a needs-based curriculum. Beginning with significant developmental characteristics, a specific and learner-centred current goal was developed. This goal became the foundation for the meaningful formulation of a program. What are the two main strengths of needs-based curricula?

- (a) _____
- _____
- (b) _____
- _____

(At the immediate level, learners will be enthused about a program if it meets a need that they recognise; at a deeper level, guiding believers to Christian maturity involves a step by step pilgrimage, learning to relate the Christian faith to each new developmental need. See [Week 4 Day 1](#) frame 5.)

5. Over the next three weeks we will move to the nitty-gritty of lesson planning, first examining the basics of teaching Bible lessons, then the principles of developing effective topical lessons. Intertwined with these studies will be lessons designed to enhance your creativity in teaching methodology. The basic framework we will be using in lesson planning is the “psychological ordering” of “Hook, Book, Look, Took,” suggested by Lawrence Richards in his now classic book *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody, 1970). Richards suggests that teaching effective lessons involves a continuous, systematic, but exciting process that embraces four phases. In brief these four phases can be summarised as follows:

- The **hook** segment helps students focus on the lesson topic in some interesting and pertinent manner. There are three basic qualities of a good hook: (a) it gets attention; (b) it gives the students a reason to attend to the whole lesson by setting a goal the students themselves want to reach; (c) it leads naturally into the Bible study. When a hook is developed with these three basic characteristics, then you have a good start on a creative class.
- In the **book** section the main subject is investigated and explained. Many methods could be used, but the purpose remains constant: a deepening understanding of the passage.
- Next, application of the subject is broadly explored in the **look** segment. The teacher guides the class to deeper insight into the relationship of the truth to life. The look segment addresses the question, In general terms what are the implications of the text for today?
- Finally, the lesson theme is privately addressed in the **took**. The Scriptures are largely worthless without active response. While response may take place in class, even better is when the took can move out of the classroom into everyday life. Too often we leave



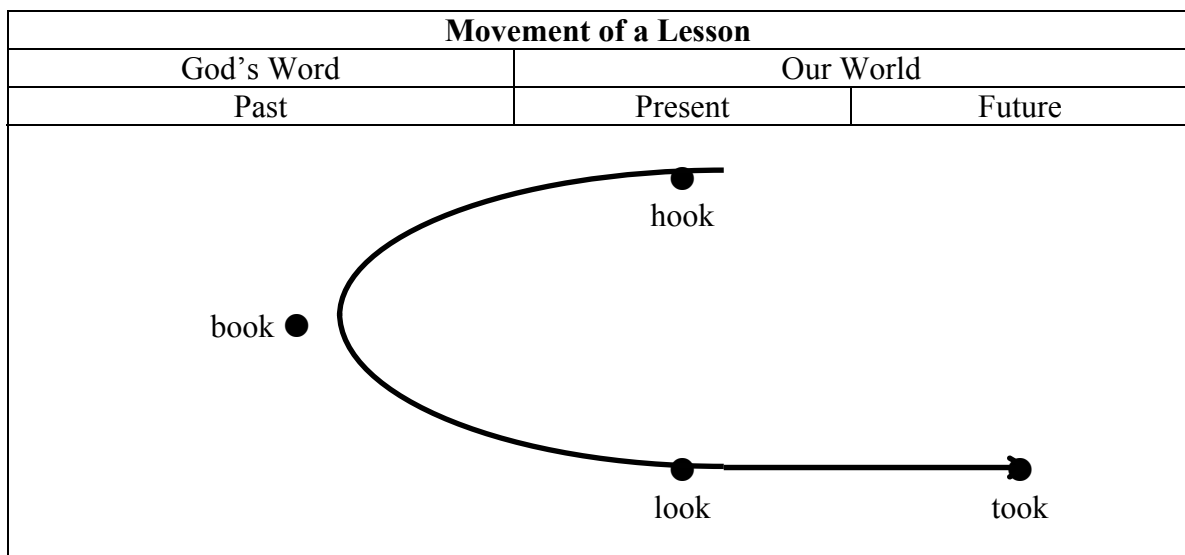
church full of good intentions. We'll be more loving, more dedicated. But because the resolution is vague, because we haven't gone beyond the generalization to plan *how* we'll change, no change takes place. The creative teacher does not simply present a creative lesson, but also leads the students to plan ways in which they will put the lesson into practice.

In your own words, briefly define what is involved in each of the four phases of effective lessons:

- (a) Hook: _____
- _____
- (b) Book: _____
- _____
- (c) Look: _____
- _____
- (d) Took: _____
- _____

(a: The hook segment helps students focus on the lesson topic in some interesting and pertinent manner. b: In the book section the main subject is investigated and explained. c: The look segment addresses the question, In general terms what are the implications of the text for today? d: In the took phase the teacher leads the students to plan ways in which they will put the lesson into practice. Or similar responses.)

6. One of the great strengths of Richards' framework is that it recognises the imperative of connecting the Bible with the world of our learners, and the reality that our learners' primary concern is the present and the future – the past only having relevance when it speaks to the present and gives tools for the future. This connectedness can be represented diagrammatically as follows:



Why is Richards' "psychological ordering" a particularly powerful approach to effective lesson preparation and presentation?

(It recognises the imperative of connecting the Bible with the world of our learners, and the reality that our learners’ primary concern is with the present and the future.)

7. The “Hook, Book, Look, Took” approach takes seriously the need to connect the Bible with the world of our learners – issues of cognitive and behavioural learning. But it equally takes seriously the internal motivations of our students to learn – an issue of affective learning. Although they rarely articulate their feelings, students come to class with three foundational questions:

- (1) Why should I bother to pay attention to this lesson?
- (2) Why should I continue to pay attention to this lesson?
- (3) What relevance does this lesson have when I leave here?

How does Richards’ psychological ordering address:

- (a) Question (1)? _____

- (b) Question (2)? _____

- (c) Question (3)? _____

(a: The Hook segment seeks to draw the student into the lesson in some interesting and pertinent way. b: Creative methodology used in the Book and Look segments helps to keep the student engaged in the lesson. c: The Look and Took phases seek to connect the Bible to today’s world, and give specific and tangible ways that the Biblical message works out in practice.)

8. One of the great tragedies of far too much Christian educational ministry is the teacher-orientation of the lessons: the teacher does virtually all the thinking, most of the talking, and is often the only member of the class who learns much from the lesson. Such teacher-centeredness emerges from attitudes such as the following: “If I as a teacher have spent many hours studying and preparing, I clearly know more than my students and they have much to benefit from my wisdom and knowledge.” The unfortunate reality is that very few people actually learn much this way. The more passive the learning, the less content is learned, and the probability of applying the lesson in a meaningful way is next to nil. Our goal as Christian educators is not simply the transmission of information, but facilitating Christian maturation among those we are teaching. Consequently, a fundamental perspectival change needs to occur: lessons need to become learner-centred and learning-focussed.

How would you respond to the following teacher comments:

- (a) “I have done a theological degree, and the congregation need to be deepened theologically. The most systematic way to present theology is in organised lectures, so I am planning to do a lecture series on the Doctrine of God.”

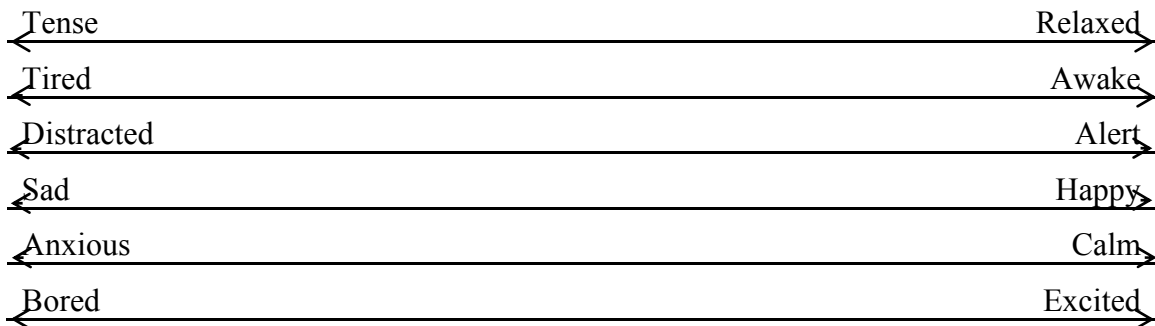
- (b) “My primary job as pastor is to teach the Bible to the congregation. So I have a program of systematic Bible studies for which I spend hours in preparation. I prefer to lecture as I know my people don’t have the time to study or prepare. I must admit, however, that I get tired of their superficial and often absurd questions. I wonder

whether they even bother to listen.”

(c) “My class of 10-12 year olds is excellent. I’m very strict with them, and they know that even the slightest misdemeanour will be severely punished. They always listen very carefully to my lesson – although I wish they would ask more questions.”

(Your responses. In each case the most important question I would ask is, What are your students actually learning? This is an issue of both quantity and quality. If our students are passive, then it is improbable that much quantity is being received. If our focus is on transmission of information, then it is improbable that our people will be learning much about what it means to be mature Christians in mature churches. Unfortunately, the results of such approaches are seen everywhere: too much ignorance, or even where there is knowledge of content, too little application of that content in meaningful ways.)

9. As you sat down to begin working on today’s lesson, how did you feel? Mark where you would have placed yourself on each of the following parameters.



(Your responses)

10. Your feelings as you approached the study of this lesson will have had a huge bearing on your readiness to learn the material I am presenting. Why is this so?

(Our feelings affect our learning – the Affective domain impacts the Cognitive domain. Or similar responses. Compare with Week 3 Days 1-2 frame 5.)

11. As a committed teacher, you enter the class prepared and enthusiastic. You’ve been gripped by the truth you want to teach. You’ve seen it work in your life. When you come to class, you’re excited about the lesson. But your students aren’t. They haven’t had your experiences, and they aren’t thinking about your lesson. They have their own interests and concerns. Some are happy, some are sad. Some have grave anxieties that are preoccupying their minds – the sickness of a loved one, an argument at work, financial problems. Many have come more to meet with friends than to listen to what you have spent hours preparing. In reality very few students ever arrive at class fully

prepared to learn. Their minds are dominated by the affective domain – feelings and attitudes that generally are not well-focussed on learning. You have to make them want to leave their thoughts and share yours. And so the hook. Fishermen use it to get the fish out of the lake into the boat. You use it to bring your students into the Word of life. The Hook seeks to address the feelings and attitudes of our learners and turn their attention from that which is preoccupying their minds to a new phase of potential growth through the lesson at hand.

(a) Upon which of the learning domains you studied in Week 2 does the Hook focus? Explain.

(b) Why is the Hook a crucial element in effective lesson planning?

(Your answers. I would respond as follows. a: The Hook focuses on the affective domain. The main purpose of the Hook is to motivate students to turn from their own affective concerns – the feelings and attitudes with which they come to the class – and pay attention to the lesson. b: The Hook is crucial because most of our learners do not enter the class ready to learn; their emotions and attitudes are elsewhere. The Hook seeks to engage distracted learners into the lesson.)

12. The first quality of a good hook is that it gets attention. And the best way to get attention is to involve your learners physically or verbally. The moment a learner is doing something which you asked him to do he is hooked in the class. The moment a learner has expressed her opinion in response to a controversial question or issue she is hooked into the class. Involvement is the key to getting attention. Consider each of the following openings to classes. Give each a grade out of 10, from 0 being deadly and uninspiring to 10 being an excellent way to gain the attention of the class:

	grade
• “Well, I think we should get started now. I’d like to begin by reading to you Philippians 2:1-11.”	
• “I think everyone is here now. Let’s call the roll before we get into the lesson.”	
• The teacher writes on the board: “The Sermon on the Mount: Unreachable Ideal or Reachable Instructions for Christian Living.” The class is divided in two and the teacher conducts a debate on the topic written on the board.	
• The teacher opens the class by reading a short extract from the week’s newspaper which talks about the rising divorce rates in the Middle East, and then asks the students to say how they feel in response.	
• The teacher opens by reading a case study, and the class is divided into groups of 3-4 to discuss the case study.	

What factors made you favour certain openings over others?

(Your responses. Discuss in class. I would favour the third and fifth openings in that the learners are more intensely involved from the beginning. The fourth has the strength of relating to the affective domain, but many learners would remain passive. The first and second are deadly openings all too often used in our classes.)

13. Getting attention isn't the only task of a good hook. The second quality of a good hook is that it sets a goal – it gives the learners an answer to the foundational question, “Why should I listen to this?” From the students’ perspective this is a fair question: “If I am to pay attention then this lesson needs to be about something important to me. Why should I pay attention to an irrelevant recounting of dusty data?” When your students have no reason for pay attention – that is no reason that is important to them – then you’ll find it hard to hold them. But if you set a goal *they* want to reach, then they will come with you. Consider again the class openings given in frame 12. Which of these five openings presents a goal – a reason to engage in the lesson? Why?

(Your response. My observation is that the first and second openings provide no reason whatsoever for the students to pay attention. The third and fourth may only be of interest to learners for whom the respective issues of the Sermon on the Mount or divorce are already an issue. The fifth has the greatest potential: a well-written case study will draw the learners to identify with the story and give a very immediate answer to the question, “Why should I listen to this?”)

14. A good hook should gain attention. It should also set a goal, giving the learners an answer to the question, “Why should I listen to this?” But if this is all the hook accomplished, it would be little more than entertainment. A good hook should also lead naturally into the Bible study. Consider again the five class openings given in frame 12. Which of these would easily and naturally lead into the Bible study? How and why?

(Your responses. My observations are as follows. The fact that it leads naturally into the Bible study is perhaps the only redeeming feature of the first opening. The second opening is again useless. The third opening clearly leads into the Bible study. The fourth and fifth may or may not, depending on the nature of the article and case study.)

15. David Edwards (“Designing Biblical Instruction,” in Gangel and Hendricks, eds., *The Christian Educator’s Handbook on Teaching*, 55-56) comments that “a group’s readiness to learn is frequently determined within the first few minutes of a class session. During that time a “psychological set” is established that often persists through the entire period. Happily, that set may be positive as well as negative. Some common

pitfalls you do well to avoid include:

- Consuming too much time with “administrivia” [administrative trivia] (taking roll, making announcements)
- Offering “dead time” with no expected activity (gathering materials, waiting for others to arrive)
- Stifling interest with a hackneyed introduction (“Please open your Bibles to ...”)

Look for techniques that offer currency (a recent news article), reality (case studies, interesting physical objects linked to the lesson), drama (role play, audio tape) or vividness (pictures, slides) as a stimulus for attention.” Some of these methods will be discussed later in this course.

Briefly state in your own words why great attention needs to be given to the first few minutes of a lesson – to the Hook of the lesson.

(Because the group’s readiness to learn largely emerges out of the psychological mood established during the first few minutes of a lesson.)

16. By way of review, briefly define what is involved in each of the four phases of effective lessons:

(a) Hook: _____

(b) Book: _____

(c) Look: _____

(d) Took: _____

(See frame 5.)

17. Why is the “psychological ordering” of Hook, Book, Look, Took a particularly powerful approach to effective lesson preparation and presentation?

(See frame 6.)

18. Upon which of the learning domains does the Hook focus? And why is the Hook a crucial element in effective lesson planning?

(See frame 11.)

19. What are the three essential qualities of a good Hook?

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(It gets attention; it sets a goal; it leads naturally into the Bible study. See frames 12-14.)

20. Name three common pitfalls which should be avoided when opening your lesson:
- (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____

(Administrivia, dead time, hackneyed introduction. See frame 15)

21. What four principles enhance lesson openings:
- (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
 - (d) _____

(Currency, reality, drama, vividness. See frame 15.)

The Art of Teaching **Week 5 Day 2**
Lesson Planning II: Book [کتاب]

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- briefly explain the most important purpose behind the Book phase of the lesson
- give the four major stages of effective lesson planning
- state the five key characteristics of a good main point, and for five different passages of Scripture develop main points incorporating these characteristics

1. In yesterday’s lesson you were introduced to a “psychological ordering” approach to lesson planning. By way of review, briefly state why this is a particularly powerful approach to effective lesson preparation and presentation?

(See **Week 5 Day 1** frame 6.)

2. The “psychological ordering” approach involves four phases. Briefly define what is involved in each of these phases:

(a) Hook: _____

(b) Book: _____

(c) Look: _____

(d) Took: _____

(See **Week 5 Day 1** frame 5.)

3. In yesterday’s lesson, we focused on the Hook.

(a) Upon which of the learning dimensions does the Hook focus?

(b) Why is the Hook essential to effective lesson planning?

(See **Week 5 Day 1** frame 10.)

4. In today’s lesson we will turn our attention to the Book phase of the lesson, about which Richards makes the following comments:

“During the Book part of the lesson, the teacher tries to clarify the meaning of the passage studied. In this part of the teaching-learning process the teacher helps his students get and understand the biblical information. A variety of methods are available to the creative teacher for this purpose. He can use a participative one, such as the buzz groups and reports used in the demonstration lesson. Or he can use a teacher-centered

method. A good lecture is the fastest way to cover content and make points. Or one can use charts, visuals, and so forth. Whatever the method, the purpose in this part of the lesson remains constant: to give biblical information and help students understand it.”

(a) According to Richards, what is the most important purpose behind the Book phase of the lesson?

(b) Upon which learning domain does the Book phase focus?

(a: To give biblical information and help students understand it. b: The cognitive domain.)

5. In order for the learners to know and understand the biblical information being taught, it is essential that the teacher first come to know and understand the material him or herself. This seems like a statement of the obvious, but unfortunately far too few “Bible teachers” in our churches, youth groups, and Sunday Schools have taken the time to learn basic principles of Bible interpretation. For this reason I would urge you (if you have not already done so), after completing this course, to seriously consider studying the PTEE course “Understanding the Bible Today.” The course presents six guidelines and twelve steps for careful Bible interpretation, which follow closely the Book, Look, and Took phases of lesson planning. If you were to study a text with the sort of depth presented in the “Understanding the Bible Today” course, you would have extensive tools for significant Bible teaching.

We do not have time in this course to address to the same depth the issues raised in the “Understanding the Bible Today” course. However, a brief summary is a necessary and beneficial guide to the process of careful lesson planning in Bible teaching.

Let us first look at the general guidelines to effective Bible interpretation. Of the six guidelines given in the “Understanding the Bible Today” course, the first three are related to the Book phase, and the last three to the Look and Took phase of lesson planning. The particular guidelines relevant to the Book phase are as follows:

(a) Guideline A: Let the Bible interpret itself. When we study any particular text, we must see how it is related to the primary message of the Bible as a whole, a message which might be summarised as follows: “Jesus is the Christ, the one anointed by God to bring God’s new age of salvation into the old age of man’s rebellious world.” [UTBT 3.1.6] Why is this guideline important?

(b) Guideline B: Distance yourself from the text. While God speaks to us here and now through the Bible, we must recognise that the text was written many centuries ago, and hence stand back or separate ourselves from the text and see what God was saying there and then [UTBT 3.2.3]. Why is this guideline important?

(c) Guideline C: Question the text. We should not stand aloof and remain uninvolved. We must bring questions from our situation to the text [UTBT 3.4.9]. Why is this guideline particularly important for those who teach the Bible?

(Your responses. I would suggest the following: a: A text studied in isolation from the big picture may create a misleading impression [UTBT 3.1.11]. b: Distancing ourselves from the text acknowledges the dynamic nature of the Bible and God’s involvement in history. c: Our students will bring questions, and if we can anticipate their questions we will help them to connect the Bible to life.)

6. The PTEE course “Understanding the Bible Today” also provides twelve essential steps in effective Bible interpretation, of which the first ten relate to the Book phase, and the last two to the Look and Took phases of lesson planning. Let us consider briefly these first ten steps:

(a) Step One: Dialogue with the text. Dialogue involves speaking and listening. If we want to understand the Bible, we first must listen to what a text is saying, perhaps reading it out loud, and letting it speak to you. In the process there will inevitably be things you do not understand. And so it is then appropriate to ask the text questions. Asking questions helps us dig deep in the text: What? How? Who? When? Why? Why do you think that the “Understanding the Bible Today” course has suggested dialoguing with the text as the first step to effective Bible interpretation?

(b) Step Two: What is the context? The context is what comes before and after a text. If we forget about the context we may miss the real meaning of what is being said in the text. Why is the context of great concern to accurate Bible teaching?

(c) Step Three: What is the historical background? The divinely inspired writers of the Bible wrote in specific historic contexts to specific historic audiences. Accurate Bible interpretation will seek to understand the historical background so as to better understand the intent of the writer and hence of the text itself. Which of the guidelines given in frame 5 above points to the necessity of understanding the historical background?

(d) Step Four: Check other translations. Translations are never as good as the original, and access to the understanding of a variety of scholars concerning any particular text will help clarify the meaning of the Bible passage. What advantage might there be in having a variety of translations available when you teach a class?

(e) Step Five: Check cross references. Other texts in the Bible which use the same words as the passage being studied or talk about the same ideas increase our understanding of the Bible. Which of the guidelines given in frame 5 above points to the value of examining cross references?

(f) Step Six: What kind of writing is the passage? There are many types of literary genre in the Bible – narrative, poetry, philosophical treatise, law, proverb, parable, teaching, sermon, etc. Each has its own characteristics and purposes. By way of example, in what way does this principle apply to Proverbs 31:6?

(g) Step Seven: What do the key words mean? These words may be theological or historical. Theological key words are concerned about relationships between God, men, and the world around us. Historical key words deal with persons, places, or things from a certain time in history [UTBT 8.1.5]. Through reference to a concordance we can discover the use of these words elsewhere in the Bible. Bible dictionaries can also be of value. Consider for example Mark 12:13-17. Name at least one theological key word and one historical key word in this passage.

(h) Step Eight: Check what others have said – generally in commentaries. Why do you think the “Understanding the Bible Today” text left access to commentaries to this late point in the interpretative process?

(i) Step Nine: Outline the text. Write the key ideas of the passage in summary form. What advantage is there to outlining the text?

(j) Step Ten: State the original meaning. The purpose of all the first nine steps is to come to understanding of the main idea being taught in the passage. In what way does this tenth step provide the essential link between the Book and Look stages of lesson planning?

(Your responses. I would suggest the following: a: By beginning with dialogue we are allowing the Bible itself to take precedence in the interpretative process, rather than coming to the text with preconceived notions. b: We cannot hope to help students understand biblical information accurately unless we examine the context; c.f. frame 4 above. c: Guideline B: Distance yourself from the text. d: All members of the class, including ourselves, will have access to the opinions of a variety of scholars concerning a particular text. e: Guideline A: Let the Bible interpret itself. f: This verse is a proverb – a popular wisdom saying of the day – and not a law to be applied in every situation. g: Theological key words include: the way of God; truth; hypocrisy. Historical key words include: Pharisees, Herodians, taxes, Caesar, denarius. h: To allow the bible to speak for itself and avoid coming with preconceived prejudices to our interpretative work. i: It helps us to focus on what was important to the original author, rather than getting distracted by peripheral issues. j: The main idea will generally be a universal principle that is as relevant today as it was centuries ago. Through understanding that principle we are able to help our students see the connection between the biblical passage and their everyday lives. This is the movement from the past to the present depicted in the diagram given yesterday – Week 5 Day 1 frame 6.)

7. Good Bible teaching requires hard work. The ten steps mentioned above cannot be taken in five minutes. If we are serious about bringing the Bible to life for our people, we dare not be like the teacher in the cartoon, planning the lesson an hour beforehand, or (worse) reading the curricular materials as the students enter the class. Our lack of preparation will show, and we do an injustice to our students. For a Sunday School teacher who teaches the same class week after week, what should be the first stage of preparation for a lesson:



- (a) A quick read through the curricular materials five minutes before the lesson begins.
- (b) Several days before the class is to be given, a careful study of the Bible curriculum, to get ideas and direction for understanding the passage and how it should be taught.
- (c) As early as possible in the week, extended prayerful study of the passage to gain a personal understanding of the passage before coming to the Bible curriculum.

(c. While published curricula are invaluable aids, they are a poor substitute for the teacher's own hard work in understanding the Bible.)

8. Effective lesson planning involves four major stages:

- (i) A prayerful and thorough study of the Bible passage, leading to ...
- (ii) A statement of the main point of the lesson, stated in one brief and memorable sentence, which helps clarify ...
- (iii) Application of the passage to life – beginning with the teacher applying the lesson to his or her own life. Application precedes organisation for two reasons. From the perspective of the teacher's own life, experience leads to passion: when we ourselves have found the word of God as living and relevant, we long to see our students likewise experience the living message of the Scriptures. From the perspective of lesson preparation, we must remember that our ultimate teaching goal is not Bible head-knowledge but the application of the Bible in daily life (See Week 2 Day 1 frame 15), and we cannot rightly organise our lesson unless we are clear about the living goal to which we want to direct the lesson. once we have our goal clearly in mind we can then ...
- (iv) Organise of the lesson around the main point, moving purposely towards the application of the main point in the students' lives. In general a good lesson will:
 - move from the theoretical to the practical
 - lead students from factual knowledge to deepening understanding to living application
 - incorporate affective (feeling) questions
 - keep students involved and engaged throughout, through the use of varied methodology

(a) Why is it necessary to begin with the Bible passage, and not with published

curricular materials?

(b) Give two reasons why application should precede organisation?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(c) The four major stages of effective lesson planning are:

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

(a: While published curricula are invaluable aids, they are a poor substitute for the teacher’s own hard work in understanding the Bible; see frame 7. b: i: From the teacher’s perspective, prior experience of the living message gives passion to the organisation and presentation of the lesson; ii: our ultimate teaching goal is not Bible head-knowledge but the application of the Bible in daily life, and we cannot rightly organise our lesson unless we are clear about the living goal to which we want to direct the lesson. c: A prayerful and thorough study of the Bible passage; a statement of the main point of the lesson; application of the passage to life; organisation of the lesson around the main point.)

9. Consider the following quote (from Schultz and Schultz, *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church*, p. 29):

“The preacher spoke for 30 minutes. His content was solid, theologically correct in every detail. He said all the right things, using grammar and sophisticated vocabulary. He *taught* some great stuff! But did anybody *learn* anything? The next night at a church dinner the parishioners were asked, ‘What was the point of the pastor’s sermon yesterday?’ Only two out of 50 had any idea.”

(a) What was wrong with the preacher’s message?

(b) If a similar survey was done in your church on an average Sunday, do you think the results would be similar, better, or worse? Why?

(c) Suggest one way in which the situation described in the quote might be improved:

(a: Although the content was good, the people did not remember the main point. b and c: Your responses. I would suggest that it is a matter of grave concern that so few preachers leave their congregations with a clear understanding of the main point they are trying to make. Do you?)

10. The heart of any lesson (or sermon) is the main point, and it is here that far too many teachers fail. They may study hard. They may present the content in an interesting way. The students may thoroughly enjoy the lesson. But an hour after the lesson the students are unable to say what the lesson was about. The main point was not made clear. A good “main point” has five chief characteristics, namely that it is:

- (i) The main point of the passage. Too often teachers and preachers use texts as pretexts for their own agendas, rather than allowing the text to speak for itself. The point of careful study is to understand the key theological principle of the passage; this then needs to be simplified into a clearly stated idea.
- (ii) Short and easily remembered. The younger the child, the shorter the main point should be. Irrespective of the age of the students, the main point should be brief enough to remain clearly in the mind of the teacher, so that he or she can repeat it frequently throughout the lesson. A good “rule of thumb” is to aim for ten words or less.
- (iii) Stated in the form of a declarative sentence. The title is *not* the main point. The main point should be a statement of truth which can remain with the students.
- (iv) Positive in tone. Human beings resist rebuke – even where it is called for! Words like “should,” “must,” or “ought” will generally build a psychological barrier which causes the hearer to quickly forget the point.
- (v) Focused on one idea. One of the problems with the thorough study we are advocating in this lesson (frames 5-8) is that there are usually several important points in any particular lesson. However, if we try to teach all these points or students will generally remember none.

By way of example, consider the following examples:

Psalm 51: “Sin is sin, but God is gracious to the truly repentant.”

Psalm 133: “God’s blessing and life come when believers live in harmony and love.”

Isaiah 40:29-31: “In darkest times, hope in God brings strength.”

In each case, the main point is:

- the main point of the passage
- short and easily remembered
- stated in the form of a declarative sentence
- positive in tone
- focused on one idea

(a) How often should the main point be said to the students in the course of the lesson?

(b) The five key characteristics of a good main point are that it is:

- (iii) _____
- (iv) _____
- (v) _____
- (vi) _____
- (vii) _____

(a: As often as possible! b: The main point of the passage; short and easily remembered; stated in the form of a declarative sentence; positive in tone; focused on one idea.)

11. Following are some suggested main points. In each case, study the passage carefully, explain what is wrong with the main point, and then suggest a better alternative. You will be asked to bring your alternatives to class for discussion.

(a) Joshua 9: “If you are in trouble with your parents or teachers, lie to them!”

- (i) What is wrong with the main point?

- (ii) A possible better alternative:

- (b) Luke 12:16-20: “No-one knows the hour he will die and face God.”
 - (i) What is wrong with the main point?

 - (ii) A possible better alternative:

- (c) Psalm 3: “Trusting God.”
 - (i) What is wrong with the main point?

 - (ii) A possible better alternative:

- (d) II Kings 5:1-14: “Most of the time we are afraid to speak about God and what He has done for us because we think people will not believe us, but when we are brave and we speak about God, He can do great things through us.”
 - (i) What is wrong with the main point?

 - (ii) A possible better alternative:

- (e) Matthew 6:14-15: “You should forgive others, or else God will not forgive you.”
 - (i) What is wrong with the main point?

 - (ii) A possible better alternative:

(a: The teacher did not follow Guideline A, and take into account the big picture of biblical teaching on truth and attitude towards parents. b: The teacher has failed to take into account the context of the passage (Step Two), and has missed the main point of the passage, which is a call to be rich towards God rather than focusing on earthly possessions. c: This is not a main point but a title; it needs to be turned into a declarative statement. d: The main point is too long, and embraces several points; it needs to be shortened and simplified. e: The tone of the main point is unnecessarily negative; the “should” needs to be removed, and the focus moved to the joy that comes through forgiving others because God has forgiven us, rather than fear of God’s judgement.)

12. The Book phase of lesson preparation requires study and hard work, but brings the rewards of seeing our students grow in understanding and application of God’s holy Word.

(a) According to Richards, what is the most important purpose behind the Book phase of the lesson?

(b) Upon which learning domain does the Book phase focus?

(See frame 4.)

13. The four major stages of effective lesson planning are:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

(See frame 8)

14. The five key characteristics of a good main point are that it is:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____

(See frame 10)

The Art of Teaching **Week 5 Day 3**

Lesson Planning III: Look [استيعاب]

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- give the most important goal in the Look phase of the lesson
- state why the use of varied and creative methodology is of particular significance for the Look phase of the lesson
- state the important role played in effective lessons by each of cognitive, affective, and behavioural questions
- state the seven steps in the movement from the Book phase through the Look phase

1. In thinking about lesson-planning, we are using a “psychological ordering” approach. Briefly define what is involved in each of the following four phases:

- (a) Hook: _____

- (b) Book: _____

- (c) Look: _____

- (d) Took: _____

(See **Week 5 Day 1** frame 5.)

2. Over the past lessons, we have discussed the Hook and Book phases.

- (a) Why is the Hook essential to effective lesson planning?

- (b) What is the most important purpose behind the Book phase of the lesson?

(a: see **Week 5 Day 1** frame 11. b: see **Week 5 Day 2** frame 4.)

3. The Look phase is next in the “psychological ordering” approach to lesson planning. Richards comments that, once the students understand what the Bible says, it’s time to move to implications, leading students from Bible knowledge to “spiritual wisdom and understanding” as they gain insight into the relationship between Biblical truth and everyday life.

- (a) What does Richards see as the most important goal in the Look phase of the lesson?

- (b) State briefly in what why each of the learning domains might play a role in the Look phase of the lesson:
- (i) Cognitive:

(ii) Affective:

(iii) Behavioural:

(iv) Dispositional:

(a: guiding the class to seeing the relationship between the Bible and everyday life. b: Your responses. I would suggest that: (i) the Cognitive domain is involved through the increasing levels of understanding the students need, perhaps through the use of analytic, synthetic, and evaluative questions; (ii) the Affective domain is involved in that a good lesson will demand attitudinal response, seeking to motivate the learner into action; (iii) the Behavioural domain is involved in that our ultimate goal in the Look phase is action, as we encourage the learners to live out the Word in their daily lives; (iv) the Dispositional domain is involved in that any actions suggested will only carrying lasting significance if they emerge from changed dispositions.)

4. For the Look phase to be effective, it needs to embrace all four dimensions of learning. Consequently, effective teachers devote more time to preparation of the Look phase than to any other, using every means possible to help students connect the content to their daily lives. While the use of varied and creative methodology is important throughout the lesson, it is of particular significance for the Look phase? Suggest one or two reasons why this might be so.

(Your response. I would suggest that different methodology appeal to different learning dimensions. Consequently, the use of varied and creative methodology will best facilitate touching the student in each of the four learning dimensions.)

5. **Week 7** of this course will be devoted to creative methodology, and consequently we will not here address this topic in depth. Our focus in this lesson will be on one aspect of methodology, and one of the most important aspects of almost any lesson, particularly the Look phase – question design. To facilitate our discussion we will use the example of a Bible lesson prepared for a group of young adults.

A relative of one of the young people has just died of cancer at the age of 25. Many questions have been raised about God’s goodness and care – even His existence. The leader has decided to approach the subject with a Bible study on faith and hope, and has chosen Isaiah 40:29-31 as the springboard passage for discussion.

(a) Was the choice of topic a good one? Give reasons for your answer.

(a: I observed the following: He has applied guideline A (Let the Bible interpret itself), step two (What is the context?), and step five (Check cross references) in the care taken with the immediate context and in the cross-references to Job and Hebrews. Guideline B (Distance yourself from the text) and step three (What is the historical background?) are seen in that the leader has begun by seeing the text in its historical context, rather than making immediate application from the text to the present. He concludes the interpretative piece with a clear statement of the original meaning (step ten). Guideline C (Question the text) and step one (Dialogue with the text) are not immediately evident, but probably lie behind the details of the interpretation. Steps four (Check other translations), five (Check cross references), seven (What do the key words mean?), eight (Check what others have said), and nine (Outline the text), may have been applied, but are not evident in the interpretative piece. b: Your response.)

7. The leader next stated his main point: “In darkest times, hope in God brings strength.”

(a) Which of the five characteristics of a good main point (Week 5 Day 2 frame 9) has the leader applied?

(b) If you were to give this main point a grade out of 10 (10 being excellent), what grade would you give it? Why?

(c) State your own main point for this passage.

(a: He has given a reasonable explanation of why it is actually the main point of the passage: the concluding sentence of the interpretation moves naturally to the main point. Eight words is suitably brief, and easily remembered. It is a declarative sentence, positive in tone, and focused on the one single idea of hope in God bringing strength. I would suggest that it is a very good main point. b and c: Your responses.)

8. The leader then moved to the Look phase – how does this main point relate to the young people. After some reflection he wrote down the following:

There are many things which cause us to doubt God. A loved one is diagnosed with terminal cancer. Why God? Despite our best efforts we fail in ministry. Why God? We are overwhelmed by the poverty and suffering around us. Why God? We see injustice, war, evil. Where are you God?

The message of the Scriptures is clear: God does not promise answers, but He does promise that he will never leave nor forsake his people (Hebrews 13:5). In times of darkness we see little evidence to accept this promise – it can only be accepted by faith, “being sure of what we hope for” (Hebrews 11:1; c.f. Isaiah 40:31). However, great strength and confidence can come through trusting God, and we can be empowered to see beyond the darkness rather than having the darkness overwhelm us (c.f. Psalm 23:4).

Notice that the leader begins by raising questions, even challenging the validity of the main point. He does this to describe ways in which the young people might be having difficulty experiencing the main point, perhaps raising important questions that are in the minds of the learners. In effect the leader is seeking to explain why the main point is important and relevant for his students. In so doing the leader is pointing to potential areas for spiritual growth. Relevance and potential growth are the keys to an effective Look phase of a lesson.

(a) What is the most important goal of the Look phase?

(b) What are the keys to an effective Look phase?

(a: To guide the class to see the relationship between the Bible and everyday life; see frame 3. b: Relevance and potential growth.)

9. The leader then began developing a series of questions addressing aspects of the cognitive learning domain:

- (i) What was the Israelites’ complaint against God (40:27) which forms the background to the famous verses in 40:29-31?
- (ii) Read 40:2,23; 41:9. What do you think might have been some of the reasons for the Israelites’ complaint?
- (iii) Which aspects of God’s character are brought to bear on the Israelites’ complaint in: (i) 40:7-8; (ii) 40:10,12-15,22-26; (iii) 40:11; 41:8-10; (iv) 41:1?
- (iv) In their doubts, depression, and questions, God does not really answer their questions, rather stating His sovereign power and authority. In what ways is God’s response here similar to that given in Job 27:2-6; 38:1-42:6?
- (v) Surely such a “silent” response was as unsatisfactory for the Israelites and Job as it is for us when we have doubts and questions?
- (vi) Compare 40:31 with Psalm 23:4 and Hebrews 11:1-2; 12:1-3. What is the connection between faith and hope? How might hope in God become a source of strength?
- (vii) The progression from flying to running to walking in 40:31 is notable. In what way might this progression be an encouragement to persevere in the face of suffering?

According to Bloom’s Taxonomy, which of the above questions are at the:

- (a) Knowledge level: _____
- (b) Understanding level: _____
- (c) Analysis level: _____
- (d) Synthesis level: _____
- (e) Evaluation level: _____

(a: i; iii. b: ii. c: iv; vi; vii. d: none. e: v)

10. In the space below write at least one further Divergent cognitive question which could be used in this lesson:

(Your response)

11. Recognising the important role that affect and behaviour play in learning, the leader then designed some questions addressing these dimensions of learning. Affective questions address feelings, attitudes, and motivations (See Week 2 Day 3 frame 5), and often include the word “feel” or words that reflect emotions or attitudes – “easy,” “difficult,” “happy,” “sad,” etc. Behavioural questions ask the students to talk about their previous or current experiences as a springboard to discussing potential future action.

- (i) Have you ever felt doubt or suffering like the Israelites or Job? Talk about how it felt? When you have doubts and questions, or when you are confronted with evil or suffering, do you ever find God’s answers unsatisfactory? Explain. (This affective question would go between cognitive questions v and vi.)
- (ii) In your own times of suffering or doubt, have you found it easy or difficult to trust in God? Explain. (An affective question which fits neatly between cognitive questions vi and vii.)
- (iii) What is the single biggest life difficulty you are currently facing. Can you suggest one or two ways in which you could at the very least “walk” through this time in faith. (A behavioural question following cognitive question vii, a suitable conclusion to the Look phase, leading the lesson logically into practical application.)

Write down at least one further suggestion which could be used in this lesson for:

(a) an affective question

(b) a behavioural question

(Your responses)

12. Briefly explain:

(a) why affective questions like those given in 11 (i) and (ii) are important.

(b) why behavioural questions like those given in 11 (iii) are important

(Your responses. My observations are as follows. a: The issues being raised in this lesson are very sensitive and highly emotional; affective questions open the door for these feelings to be expressed openly. Change will not occur unless the feelings and attitudes of the learners are addressed honestly. b: Our ultimate goal in Christian teaching is to facilitate change towards spiritual maturity, and this implies behavioural change; behavioural questions can facilitate this process.)

13. Over the past few frames we have seen a Look phase of a Bible lesson being developed from the Book phase through the following steps:

- (i) Careful interpretation of the text, explaining what the passage meant (frame 6), leading to ...
- (ii) A statement of the main point. (frame 7)
- (iii) A description of ways in which the learners may experience difficulty believing the main point, or living it out in their daily lives. (frame 8)
- (iv) A statement of how the main point responds to these difficulties. (frame 8)
- (v) Formulation of cognitive questions at appropriate levels of complexity. (frame 9)
- (vi) Formulation of affective questions, opening the door for attitudinal and emotional expression (frame 11)
- (vii) Formulation of behavioural questions, leading to discussion of specific possible ways in which the lesson might be applied to the learners' lives. (frame 11)

(a) Why are steps (iii) and (iv) important?

(b) Why is step (v) important?

(c) Why is step (vi) important?

(d) Why is step (vii) important?

(a: We need to understand ways in which our students are experiencing difficulties living the main point, as these are potential areas for spiritual growth. b: The deeper the understanding of the text, the richer the potential life application of the text; compare with Week 2 Day 2 frame 7 and 9. c: Change will not occur unless the feelings and attitudes of the learners are addressed honestly; affective questions open the door for these feelings to be expressed openly; see frame 10. d: Our ultimate goal in Christian teaching is to facilitate change towards spiritual maturity, and this implies behavioural change; behavioural questions can facilitate this process; see frame 10.)

14. In next week's lesson, you will be asked to prepare a complete Bible lesson, applying the principles studied in today's lesson. Let's see how much you have remembered of these principles:

- (a) What is the most important goal in the Look phase of the lesson?

- (b) While the use of varied and creative methodology is important throughout the lesson, why is it of particular significance for the Look phase?

- (c) What are the keys to an effective Look phase?

- (d) What value do cognitive questions have in the Look phase?

- (e) What value do affective questions have in the Look phase?

- (f) What value do behavioural questions have in the Look phase?

(a: see frame 3. b: see frame 4. c: see frame 8. d,e, and f: see frame 13.)

15. State the seven steps in the movement from the Book phase through the Look phase described in this lesson:

- (i) _____
- (ii) _____
- (iii) _____
- (iv) _____
- (v) _____
- (vi) _____
- (vii) _____

(See frame 13)

The Art of Teaching Week 5 Day 4
 Lesson Planning IV: Took [انسحاب]

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- state five essential characteristics of effective applications
- give a basic framework for effective applications
- develop the main point and an effective application for six different lessons

1. The American entertainer Dick van Dyke once told of a little girl who, returning home from Sunday school one week, told her mother of her disappointment with the lesson: “We were taught to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations,” she said, “but we just sat.” I suspect that there have been times when you have had similar feelings about sermons or Bible lessons you have heard: the problem was *not* in the quality of the content, but in that the preacher or teacher failed to

(apply the message.)

2. The problem is not new. The ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius is reported to have said: “The essence of knowledge is, having it, to apply it; not having it, to confess your ignorance.” According to Confucius, wisdom involves first recognising your _____, then gaining _____, and having acquired _____, _____ it.
 (ignorance, knowledge, knowledge, applying)

3. The final phase in Richards’ “psychological ordering” approach to lesson planning is the “Took” phase. Richards (*Creative Bible Teaching*, 110-111) writes: “Like a vaccination, the Word of God is of no effect until we can say it “took.” Response is required. Normally response to teaching will take place outside of class, in weekday life. “Faith without works,” the Bible says, “is dead” (James 2:17). For spiritual growth and reality in Christian experience, faith demands response in all the varied situations of human life. ... Often we leave church full of good intentions. We’ll be more loving that week, more dedicated. But because the resolution is vague, because we haven’t gone beyond the generalization to plan *how* we’ll change, no change takes place. The creative teacher helps his students respond by leading them to see God’s will and by helping them decide and plan to do it.”

(a) According to Richards, why is the “Took” phase of the lesson so important?

(b) What is the main reason Richards suggests for the failure of Bible lessons to be “taken” into daily life?

(c) What role does the teacher play in the application process?

(a: Since faith without works is dead, Christian learning is not complete until it is “taken” into daily life. b: Generally Bible lessons fail to be “taken” into daily life because the application is too vague. c: The teacher helps students respond by leading them to see God’s will and by helping them decide and plan to do it.)

4. Consider again our goal in Christian education.

(a) What is our general aim in the teaching ministry of the church?

(b) Why is application central to the fulfilment of this goal?

(a: To develop mature Christians in mature churches. b: Christian maturity involves not merely knowing the message, but living the message – being doers of the word. Compare with Week 2 Day 1 frames 6-8,15.)

5. While most Christian teachers recognise the importance of application few do it well. Consider the following example:

Imagine that you have just given a class of older teenagers a Bible study on Matthew 5:13-16, and asked them to write down how they are going to apply the message to their lives. The following are their responses. They are all acceptable applications of the passage, but some are less vague and more likely to lead to action than others.

If you were to grade each of these applications out of 10 on the basis of how likely it is to lead to action, what would you give each one?

- (a) _____ “I want to be light and salt in the world.”
- (b) _____ “I want to be a Christian example to those around me.”
- (c) _____ “I want to bear witness for my faith.”
- (d) _____ “I want to install neon lights in the salon of our house.”
- (e) _____ “I want to visit my friend Ahmad during the coming week and tell him about Jesus.”
- (f) _____ “I want to help George and Mazin to reconcile their differences, and so I plan to telephone each of them before next Sunday.”

(Your responses. Note that the first three applications are accurate, theologically sound, and directly linked to the passage; however the last two are clearly better applications. The issue here is not accuracy, but whether or not the message will in fact be applied!)

6. In order to evaluate the responses given in frame 5 you intuitively applied a variety of principles. Name some of the principles of good application which you used in your assessment:

(Your response.)

7. One suggested framework for effective application is to make them SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Tangible.

(a) **Specific** applications give names, places, details. Which of the six applications in frame 5 are specific? _____

(b) **Measurable** applications give numbers and time, such that after a fixed period we can measure whether or not the message has or has not been applied meaningfully. Which of the six applications in frame 5 are measurable? _____

(c) **Attainable** applications can be accomplished. If someone were to respond to Matthew 5:13-16 by saying that during the coming week they would seek to share the Gospel with **every** person they met, are they likely to do it? _____
Why? _____

It is improbable that a person is going to change the world overnight, but one is capable of taking one step. Remember the old saying: رحلة خمس ميل تبدأ بخطوة واحدة: ["A five mile trip begins with one step."]

Which of the six applications in frame 5 are attainable? _____

(d) **Relevant** applications are directly related to the message. If a young woman were to say that she was going to apply Matthew 5:13-16 by going home and telling each of her brothers and sisters how much she loved them, this would be a good thing to do, but its relevance to the passage is questionable. Which of the six applications in frame 5 are relevant? _____

(e) **Tangible** applications are visible acts. In other words, it would (at least theoretically) be possible to observe the person doing the application. Which of the six applications in frame 5 are tangible? _____

(a: d, e, and f. b: e and f. c: no; because there are many situations where the conversation does not open the door to share one's Christian faith; d, e, and f. d: a, b, c, e, and f. e: c, d, e, and f.)

8. As you can see, both e and f are exemplary SMART applications – even though they are very different in character. The strength of both these applications is that they hold great potential actually to be done. Recently I visited a Bible study group, with about 20 young adults attending aged between 25 and 40 years. They were in the middle of a Bible study series on James. The leader of the group began the lesson by briefly reviewing the lesson from last week, and then asked the group if anyone had been able to apply the lesson during the past week. Three of the members gave detailed descriptions of ways in which they had seen the previous lesson at work in specific ways during that week.

(a) For these three young adults, how might their view of the Scriptures have been impacted by their ability to apply the previous week's Bible lesson?

(b) In what way did these young adults show movement towards Christian maturity – our primary goal in Christian education?

(c) Apparently the rest of the group did not apply the message. How might they nonetheless have been impacted positively by the reports given by the three?

(Your responses. I would suggest that; (a) the three would have a greater respect for the Scriptures as a living word, relevant to contemporary life – rather than an ancient word with little relevance to the modern world; (b) the three showed growing Christian maturity in that they not merely heard the word but did it as well; (c) in that the three had applied the message in their lives, the rest of the group would have been encouraged also to seek ways of applying the message in their lives.)

9. Unfortunately many Christians seem to have little inclination to apply the message in their lives. They listen to hundreds of sermons and they are faithful in attending Bible studies, but all this input seems to have little impact on their lives. They seem most content when Bible teachers give great content but ask nothing from them, because they do not want to change. In such circumstances only the Divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit, can transform the person's heart. What role might the teacher play in facilitating the work of the Holy Spirit?

(By continually laying before our people SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, tangible – ways of applying the message, we can clarify how a willing heart might respond, and this can facilitate what the Holy Spirit longs to do in the learners’ hearts.)

10. One particularly helpful approach to developing SMART applications is by using the framework: “During the coming week (two weeks/month/etc) at least once I will ...” (followed by a specific tangible act). Will an application using this framework necessarily be: (a) Specific? _____; (b) Measurable? _____; (c) Attainable? _____; (d) Relevant? _____; (e) Tangible? _____.

(Such applications will *always* be Specific, Measurable (you can come back after the time period and ask if it has been done), Attainable (one can do virtually anything at least once), and Tangible. Relevance would need to be worked upon.)

11. One of the great challenges facing Christian teaching is to apply the message in specific and tangible ways. The Bible is full of exhortations to believe, to know, to understand, to enjoy, to rejoice, to love, and it is essential that the believer embrace such characteristics in his or her life. The difficulty is that so many of these words are not tangible, and we have difficulty in giving our people specific ways to learn and to express them. And yet it is often in performing specific acts that believers come truly to experience the meaning of these words. As we studied previously (Week 2 Day 4 frame 12) our actions deeply impact our attitudes. While character words such as belief, knowledge, understanding, joy, and love are essential to Christian maturity, they are often learned through tangible actions in SMART-type applications based on “doing” words – write, state, clap, speak to, hug, kiss, etc.

(a) In Week 2 Day 2 we spoke of four dimensions of learning, which are:

(b) _____
Which learning dimension relates directly to the goal of Christian maturation?

(c) _____
The greatest problem we encounter with dispositional learning is that the formation of dispositions is largely the work of the Holy Spirit. However, we can facilitate the work of the Holy Spirit through effectively promoting learning across the cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions. In Christian teaching the content usually focuses on cognitive and affective learning, while SMART applications seek _____ learning. Unless we encourage behavioural learning through effective application of the message, it is far less likely that our students will learn Christian _____, and grow to Christian maturity.

(d) We have given six SMART doing words earlier in this frame (write, state, clap, speak to, hug, kiss). Give at least two more.

(a: affective, behavioural, cognitive, and dispositional learning. b: dispositional. c: behavioural; dispositions. d: Your answers.)

12. You have probably observed that all of the practical applications given in this lesson have been worded in the _____ person. The reason this has been done is that effective teaching begins when teachers first themselves _____ the message in their own lives before asking their students to do so. Teachers cannot expect their students to be doers of the word unless they themselves are. Can you think of a situation where a lesson gained power through the teacher’s own personal application of the content? Describe what happened.

(First; apply; your response)

13. When it comes to planning an actual lesson, most students need to be guided through the process towards applying the message in a specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and tangible way. Although not to be seen as the “Law of the Medes and the Persians,” a possible general approach for developing the “Took” portion of the lesson is as follows:

- (a) As the lesson draws near to its conclusion ask students the following behavioural question: “Name 2 or 3 ways in which the main point is not practiced. What are some of the main barriers to the practice of the main point?” The reason for teaching is that there is some aspect of the main point that is not being lived; if the students are already living the main point, then there is no point in giving the lesson! A question such as this provides the students with the opportunity for general reflection on the possible life implications of the main point from a negative standpoint.
- (b) Having looked at why it is difficult to practice the main point, it is then important to look at positive possibilities. And so a second behavioural question should follow, along the lines of: “State 2 or 3 specific and practical ways in which you have seen the main point practiced in your own life or in the life of someone you know.” Practical living out of the scriptures is most effectively facilitated when people have specific examples or models to follow. This sort of question provides such a model.
- (c) Through the previous two questions the students have shared together in general terms both the barriers to living the main point and the possibilities for changing their current behaviour. The next question challenges the student to personal reflection and response: “Write down one specific area of your life in which you wish you could live out the main point more effectively. Considering how you or others have seen the main point lived out in the past, give an example of how you think it could be lived out in the future.” Because of the personal nature of the question it is best to have the students complete their responses privately on paper in a “Personal Response Form” along with the personal covenant shown below.
- (d) The student has now articulated a specific, relevant, and tangible way in which he or she could apply the message. To make the application measurable and attainable, it is often helpful to have students complete the study by filling out a covenant form, along the lines of either “During the next week at least once I will act upon the main point by doing ...” or “With God’s help and strength I covenant that for the next week I will not ...” This response is private between the student and God, but it is possible for the teacher to ask the following week whether any of the students were able to apply the message in a practical way.

In the space below, write down the framework for an effective Took section of a lesson, as given above.

- (a) _____

- (b) _____

- (c) _____

- (d) _____

(a: A behavioural question: “Name 2 or 3 ways in which the main point is not practiced. What are some of the main barriers to the practice of the main point?”; b: A behavioural question: “State 2 or 3 specific and practical ways in which you have seen the main point practiced in your life or in the life of someone you know”; c: A personal response: “Write down one specific area of your life in which you wish you could live out the main point more effectively. Considering how you or others have seen the main point lived out in the past, give an example of how you think it could be lived out in the future”; d: A personal covenant: Have students complete a covenant form, including either “During the next week at least once I will act upon the main point by doing ...” or “With God’s help and strength I covenant that for the next week I will not ...”)

14. Earlier this week (Week 5 Day 2 frame 8) we suggested four major stages in effective lesson planning. Write these four stages in the spaces below:

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

(a: A prayerful and thorough study of the Bible passage. b: State the main point in one brief sentence. c: Develop a practical application. d: Organise the lesson.)

15. In the remainder of this lesson we are going to focus on stages (b) and (c). Let’s begin with the well-known story of Jonah. For each of the following age-groups:

- (a) Choose a passage or story from the book of Jonah
- (b) State a main point which would be appropriate for that age-group
- (c) State how you are going to do a SMART application of the lesson in your own life.
- (d) Suggest at least one possible SMART application for your students.

A Sunday school class of ten 6-8 year old children:

- (a) Passage: _____
- (b) Main point: _____
- (c) Your personal SMART application: “At least one time during the coming week I will _____”

(d) The SMART application for the students: “At least one time during the coming week the student will

_____”

A Youth group of fifteen 16-18 year old young people:

(a) Passage: _____

(b) Main point: _____

(c) Your personal SMART application: “At least one time during the coming week I will

_____”

(d) The SMART application for the students: “At least one time during the coming week the student will

_____”

A Sunday sermon:

(a) Passage: _____

(b) Main point: _____

(c) Your personal SMART application: “At least one time during the coming week I will

_____”

(d) The SMART application for the students: “At least one time during the coming week the student will

_____”

(Your answers should be discussed in depth with the rest of the class. In next week’s lesson you will be asked whether you actually put into practice any of your SMART applications.)

16. And now a very different passage: Matthew 5:38-48. Read this passage very carefully and state how you would develop the main point and practical application for the same three groups.

A Sunday school class of ten 6-8 year old children:

(a) Passage: _____

(b) Main point: _____

(c) Your personal SMART application: “At least one time during the coming week I will

_____”

(d) The SMART application for the students: “At least one time during the coming week the student will

_____”

A Youth group of fifteen 16-18 year old young people:

(a) Passage: _____

(b) Main point: _____

(c) Your personal SMART application: “At least one time during the coming week I will

_____”

(d) The SMART application for the students: “At least one time during the coming week the student will

_____”

A Sunday sermon:

(a) Passage: _____

(b) Main point: _____

(c) Your personal SMART application: “At least one time during the coming week I will

_____”

(d) The SMART application for the students: “At least one time during the coming week the student will

_____”

(Your answers should be discussed in depth with the rest of the class. In next week’s lesson you will be asked whether you actually put into practice any of your SMART applications.)

17. Consider the six SMART applications you have developed for yourself in frames 14 and 15 above. Do you *really* believe that these are the way we should live? If you actually do these, will they help you to grow as a Christian? How?

Ask God by his Holy Spirit to strengthen you in your walk with Him.

(Your response.)

18. Choose one of the practical applications you have developed in frames 14 and 15 above, which you believe you could put into practice during the coming week. If you are willing to make a commitment to live the message, complete the following contract:

I _____, with God’s help, will endeavour during the coming week at least once to

Signed: _____