

Bible Classes - What Can I Do?

Perhaps not all of us can teach a class, but there are a number of ways in which we can help those who do teach and make our Bible classes of greater profit. Here is a list of some things you can do:

1. ATTEND EVERY BIBLE STUDY. These periods of study will make both you and the congregation stronger. We all need to continue to grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:18). Can you think of a better or more important way to spend an hour?
2. BRING YOUR CHILDREN (Don't just send them). With things the way they are in the world today, your children need all the help they can get — especially spiritual help. There is no better place for them than the Bible classes.
3. BRING/ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO ATTEND. Use your half-empty automobile to bring others (children or adults) to our Bible studies. We cannot expect others to come unless we first invite and encourage them. Remember, we have classes for all ages.
4. PARENTS, HELP YOUR CHILDREN WITH THEIR BIBLE LESSONS. No doubt you are concerned about whether your children complete their school homework assignments. Are you as concerned about their Bible lessons? Do you know what they are studying? Do you ever discuss the Bible with them? Encourage your child to prepare the lesson if one has been assigned.
5. PARENTS, ASK YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER HOW HE/SHE IS DOING IN THE CLASS. Perhaps there are some things you could do to help. Are you as concerned about your children's spiritual progress as you are his/her secular education?
6. OFFER A FEW WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO YOUR TEACHER (or to the teacher of your child). By so doing, you will not only let teachers know that you care, but will bolster their confidence and inspire them to greater efforts.
7. STUDY, STUDY, STUDY! You can attend every class that meets, but unless you study (preferably, both before and after) it will be of little benefit. There are too many who let the teacher do all of the studying. Do you suppose that might be one reason why there are not more who are able to teach?
8. PARTICIPATE IN THE CLASS DISCUSSIONS. When you study your lesson and become enthusiastic about it you will find it difficult not to participate. Participation is a sure sign that the learning process is in motion.
9. VOLUNTEER TO TEACH. Good teachers for Bible classes are always in demand. Let someone know if you desire to be of help.
10. PRAY FOR THE TEACHERS AND THE RECEPTION OF THE LESSONS.

Above all, don't let their labor be in vain. Do all that you can as a student of the Word and as a servant of the Lord.

- by Bob Dickey

Now This is My Interpretation

We have all heard someone advocate their own pet religious doctrine, and then justify (?) it with the statement, "Now this is my interpretation of the Bible; and we all have a right to our own interpretation." And many times they have scarcely read what the Bible says on the subject, to say nothing of having made the careful study necessary for objective interpretation.

Perhaps they have accepted the preacher's word for it; who, in turn accepted the word of some school teacher, commentator, or church father. Perhaps they read the Bible *AFTER* mentally acquiescing to a doctrine advocated by their parents or friends. Frequently this "interpretation" bit is only an effort to give respectability to a purely private opinion.

"Interpretation" — when properly used with reference to God's Word, means, "to tell the meaning of." The "meaning" must originate with the Bible, not in the person's imagination. In any

event, no one has the right to speak of their interpretation of the Bible until they have made a careful study of the text, in its context, coordinated all like passages, and reached a conclusion as free of bias and prejudice as is humanly possible.

Genuine Bible study is NOT a guessing game!

- by **Robert Turner**

Injured By A Friend!

As Christians, we must expect to be persecuted and ridiculed by those of this world. Jesus said: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake" (Luke 21:17). This is not surprising - it was the very treatment that Jesus Himself received. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). Paul wrote: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

The harsh treatment of the world is always hard to endure, but what is worse is when the mistreatment comes from those who claim to love us. Too often we are assailed by those closest to us - our own brethren.

David spoke of the terrible hurt he experienced from a friend. "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it - neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together and walked unto the house of God in company" (Psalms 55:12-14).

Have you been hurt by someone close to you? Have you been betrayed by a brother in Christ? Have you been wronged by those who should have loved you and treated you with kindness and affection? Don't imagine that you are the first to be misused in this way. What you have experienced has been common to God's faithful people throughout the ages.

How shall we deal with this sort of painful "wound?" In the same context quoted above, David gives the answer. "As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Psalms 55:16-17).

In the most difficult of times, continue to trust in God and serve him faithfully. Even when betrayed by a friend, maintain your confidence in Him. Remember, "your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

- by **Greg Gwin**