

# Teacher Selection, Preparation, Equipping, and Spiritual Development

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# Outline

- Introduction
  - Teaching in the Old Testament
  - Teaching in the New Testament
  - Jesus - the Master Teacher
  - Church education
  - Small groups
- Teacher Selection Process
  - Introduction
  - Identifying the gifted teacher

# Outline (cont)

- Identifying the gifted teacher
- Identifying the called teacher
- Teacher expectations
- Some tools and techniques to aid in the teacher selection process
- Some characteristics of a good teacher
- Preparing to Teach
  - Introduction
  - What does it mean to prepare?
  - Example of a formal teacher preparation program

# Outline (cont)

- Equipping Teachers to teach
  - Introduction
  - What does it mean to equip?
  - A formal teacher equipping program
  - Some equipping strategies
  - Learning, method, and curriculum
- Teacher Spiritual Development
  - Introduction
  - What is spiritual development?

# Outline (cont)

- Why is spiritual development important?
- How is spiritual development accomplished?
- Teacher affirmation, encouragement, and support

# Introduction

# Teaching in the Old Testament

- God said to Moses:

“Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

Deuteronomy 6:1, 5-7

# Teaching in the Old Testament (cont)

- Psalm 78:1 - “Listen, O my people, to my instruction; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- Psalm 34:11 - “Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”
- Psalm 119:33 - “Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes.”
- Psalm 119:101-105 - “I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep your word. I have turned aside from your ordinances, for you Yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! From your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”



# Teaching in the Old Testament (cont)

- Proverbs 3:1-2 - “My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.”
- Proverbs 6:23 - “For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life.”
- Proverbs 9:9-10 - “Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

# Teaching in the New Testament

- Matthew 28:19-20 - “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
- 2 Timothy 2:2 - “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”
- 2 Timothy 2:24-25 - “The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

# Teaching in the New Testament (cont)

- Who are the teachers?
  - Ephesians 4:11 - “and He (the Holy Spirit) gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”
- What is the purpose of teaching?
  - Colossians 1:28 - “We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.”

# Teaching in the New Testament (cont)

- Example of a New Testament Teacher's Mission Statement:

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom so you can teach others while singing with grace in your heart to the Lord. Teach every man in all wisdom so that you may present every man spiritually mature in Christ Jesus. Never cease teaching Jesus Christ.”

(Colossians 1:28; 3:16; Luke 5:42.)

# Jesus - the Master Teacher

- In the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as a Rabbi or Teacher forty-five times.
- Jesus made frequent use of:
  - Aphorisms - concise statements of principles.
  - Allegories - expressions by means of symbolic fictional figures or generalizations.
  - Similes - figures of speech comparing two unlike things.
  - Metaphors - figures of speech using one object or idea for another.
  - Analogies - inferences implying agreement between two or more things.
  - Parables - short fictitious stories.
  - Proverbs - brief popular maxims or adages.

# Jesus - the Master Teacher (cont)

- Jesus' teaching style was oral and dramatic. (e.g., John 8:7).
- In His teaching, Jesus always took into consideration the following:
  - The knowledge level of His audience.
  - Their level of spiritual maturity.
  - Their cultural backgrounds.
  - Their family relationships.
  - Current economic and political conditions.

# Jesus - the Master Teacher (cont)

- Jesus consistently made use of His knowledge of Old Testament teachings and how they related to His mission on earth. (e.g., Luke 24:27).
- Jesus frequently used questioning as a means of evoking the right responses from His listeners. (e.g., Matthew 12:1-8).
  - Rhetorical questions (e.g., Luke 13:18-21).
  - Direct questions (e.g., Mark 10:18; Luke 10:25-26).
- Jesus used concrete objects to teach difficult or abstract ideas. (e.g., Matthew 6:26-30).

# Jesus - the Master Teacher (cont)

## Six basic principles of Jesus' teaching:

1. He was always well prepared.
2. He developed His lessons around the needs of His students.
3. He was concise, clear and went to the heart of the matter. He did not ramble.
4. He used great illustration and was never distracted.
5. He would challenge His students to put to practice the truth he had heard.
6. He always glorified God and encouraged His students.



# Jesus - the Master Teacher (cont)

- Examples of how Jesus applied these principles:
  - The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 is an excellent example of how Jesus applied all these principles to a large group of people.
  - Jesus often used an indirect teaching style which included veiled references, allegories, metaphors, and/or parables. (e.g., Mark 2:2-12).
  - Jesus used great illustrations to make His point(s) and never got distracted during His teaching. (e.g., John 4:7-26).
  - Jesus always made a point of challenging His listeners to put into practice what He taught them. (e.g., Mark 10:17-27).
  - Jesus always glorified God and encouraged those around Him to do the same. (e.g., John 11:38-44; 15:1-17).

# Jesus - the Master Teacher (cont)

## The Qualities of Jesus' Life

- Living a holy and righteous life (Matthew 3:13-17).
- Living a life of prayer and trust in God (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12-16).
- Living an open and receptive life (Mark 10:13-16).
- Living a caring life (Luke 8:40-56).
- Living a courteous and loving life (John 4:16-18).
- Living a life of service (John 13:1-17).
- Living a life sensitive to the needs of others (Matthew 17:24-27; Luke 5:4-10; John 2:1-11).

# Christian Education

- Christian education refers to the preparing, equipping, and teaching of God's word by the church and does not include education offered by formal, higher-level, secular or non-secular educational institutions.
- Purpose statement: Christian education is to change how life is to be viewed and to be lived according to the principles and doctrines of faith and Christian values.

# Christian Education (cont)

- Scripture is better used as a light under which each of us can examine ourselves and learn how to live in accordance with God's commands.
- Teachers must be careful that their teaching is not just for the sake of passing along knowledge without any real spiritual substance or usefulness to it.

# Christian Education (cont)

- “Christian faith and education are inevitable companions. No longer can we assume that the educational understandings that have informed us, the purposes that have inspired our efforts, or the theological foundations that have undergirded our programs are adequate for today.”  
*Church Education for Tomorrow*, Dr. John Westerhoff.
- How are Christian faith and values to be fostered in the classroom?
  - Romans 10:17 - “so faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

# Christian Education (cont)

- All who hear the word will react either positively or negatively.
- A change of heart is needed which comes about only through the gift of saving faith.
- The believer must open his heart first which then sets his feet on the road to salvation.
- It is a life-changing faith, built upon with effective teaching, that leads the believer down the road of sanctification.

# Christian Education (cont)

- An effective Christian Education can help build the core dimensions of our faith:
  - Trusting in God's saving grace and believing firmly in the humanity and divinity of Jesus.
  - Experiencing a sense of personal well-being, security, and peace.
  - Integrating faith and life, seeing work, family, social relationships, and political choices as part of one's religious life.
  - Seeking spiritual growth through study, reflection, prayer, and discussion with others.

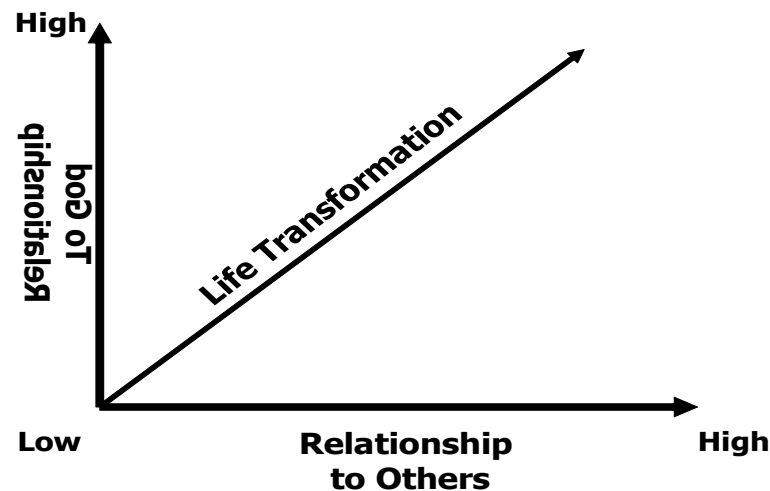
# Christian Education (cont)

- Core dimensions of faith continued:
  - Seeking to be part of a community of believers in which people give witness to their faith and support and nourish one another.
  - Holding life-affirming values, including commitment to racial and gender equality, affirmation of cultural and religious diversity, and a personal sense of responsibility for the welfare of others.
  - Advocating social and global change to bring about a greater social justice.
  - Serving humanity, consistently and passionately, through acts of love and justice.



# Christian Education (cont)

- A teacher's objective should be to help others progress along the life-transformation line shown below:



# Small Groups

- A Small Group is a group of committed people who come together on a regular basis for a specific function—that of the growth and discovery of God's precepts from His Word.
- The basic idea is a group of people, from three to 12 in number, who come together for connection in their faith building and fellowship.
- Small groups represent the New Testament model for teaching the word of God (Acts 2:46-47).
- This is the best forum for teaching the Bible because it allows for a more intimate teaching experience and a better time of fellowship.
- Small Groups are essential and necessary in building supportive and meaningful relationships and Bible learning, and they must be a part of every church who seeks to know our Lord and make Him known.

# Small Groups (cont)

- Small groups are the perfect place:
  - to practice our call to be discipled and make disciples
  - for Spiritual growth to make His truth come to life in our lives (Matt. 28:18-20).
  - to understand the Bible and heartfelt prayer and put it into action.
  - to unwind, release your stress and reprioritize your life.
  - to have our needs met and dealt with and fulfill those burdens in others in a stable community. In this way we can handle stress, crisis, changes and the pressures of life better.

# Small Groups (cont)

- to be in study of His Word and to be in prayer, we do this individually but we are also to do it in community.
- to welcome your friends into the church and introduce them to Christ.
- to develop our skills, leadership and ministry so we can be better servants of our Lord.
- to understand how to share Christ with loved ones and coworkers.
- to deepen your understanding and practice of worship.
- to put into practice the teaching you are receiving from your church, radio, web and your personal devotions. Remember the phrase "*one another*" is used over 50 times in the New Testament to describe our relationship to other believers. So, small groups are the perfect place to be with one another.

# Small Groups (cont)

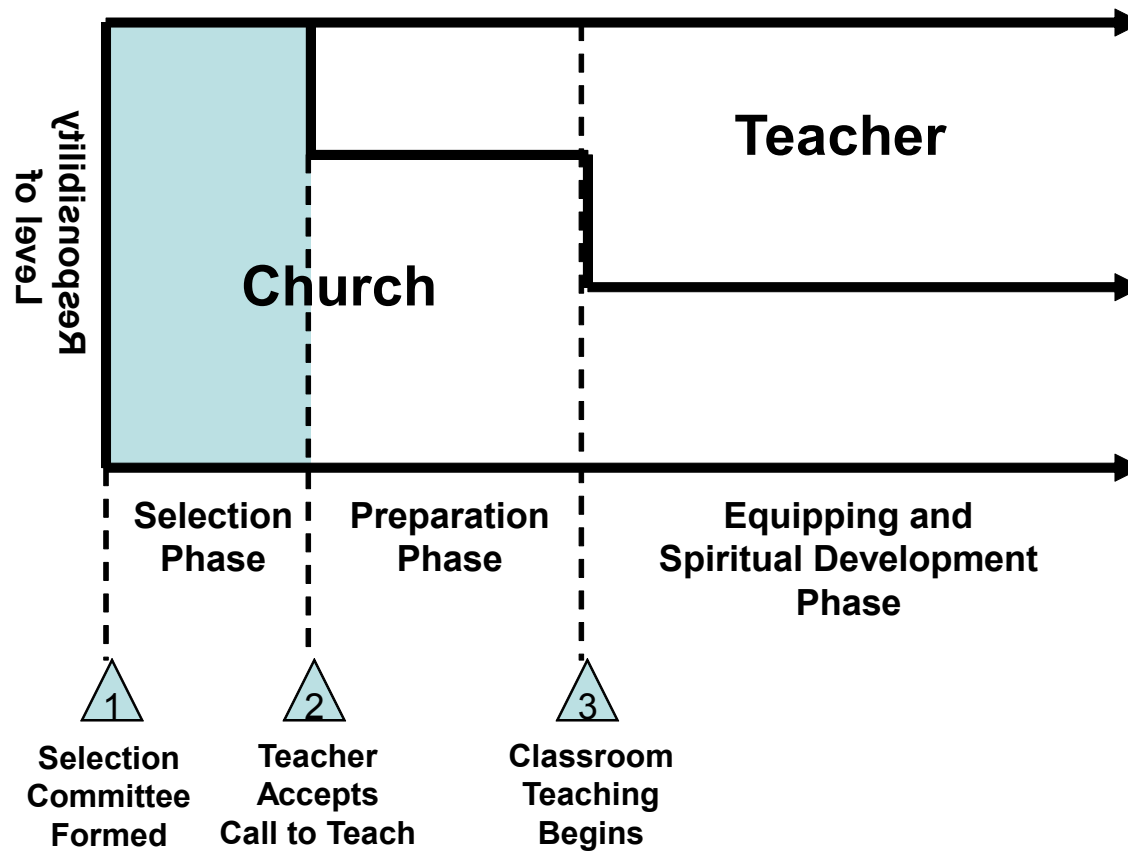
- We all need encouragement, connection, advice, and support from a community of Believers who are growing in Him.
- Small groups can provide a place to reflect on our life and situation, build community, encourage accountability, study the Bible and learn to apply it, pray for others, and reach out to the world around us.
- Learning to do life together, receiving care, discipleship, and learning, and learning about the ways of God through the Bible and prayer will help to build us up as individuals and as a church.
- The effective Small Group will always have an open Bible, have committed prayer, and the attitude of care for the people who are there.

# Teacher Selection Process

# Introduction

- Finding qualified, faithful, and reliable church members to serve as teachers is a major challenge.
- Problems include:
  - Lack of education and training to teach.
  - Lack of spiritual maturity.
  - Lack of knowledge and understanding of Scriptures and church doctrines.
  - Lack of calling and giftedness to teach.

# Introduction (cont)





# Identifying the Gifted Teacher

- The Holy Spirit gifts believers as He sees fit to accomplish the mission of the church. (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:28).
- It can be a challenge helping believers find their place(s) of service within the church.
  - Communications skills are essential to effective teaching.
  - The prospective teacher should feel that teaching is their gift and calling.

# Identifying the Called Teacher

- The right person to fill a teaching position should feel the “call” upon their life to teach.
- The “call” is the means by which the Holy Spirit engages all people in ministry (Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 4:1).
- It can be a difficult and challenging process to identify the “called” person to teach.
  - It requires much prayer and discernment on the part of the person or committee.

# Identifying the Called Teacher (cont)

- 2 Timothy 2:24-25 offers some characteristics of the “called” teacher that must be taken into consideration:
  - Is not quarrelsome.
  - Is not arrogant or argumentative.
  - Exercises patience.
  - Exhibits meekness.
  - Demonstrates a willingness to suffer wrong without retaliation.
  - Shows courteousness toward others.
- These traits were all exhibited by Jesus during His teaching ministry and provides the example for us to follow.

# Identifying the Called Teacher (cont)

- Before an individual is placed into a teaching position, the selecting person/body should conduct extensive, biblically-based interviews with the prospective individual as well as others who know him/her to try and determine the “calling” upon their life.
- Failure to due diligence in this regard can have long-term detrimental impacts and create divisiveness in the local church body.

# Teacher Expectations

- It is important to communicate to the prospective teacher what the expectations are for him/her individually and the church.
- The prospective teacher should understand:
  - The importance of the job of teaching.
  - How much value the church puts on the ministry of teaching.
  - What the church expects from the teacher.

# Teacher Expectations (cont)

- Failure to come to an understanding of these expectations can result in misunderstandings and disappointment for the teacher and the church members.
- It is recommended that, at a minimum, the following expectations be discussed with any potential teacher:
  - The importance of teaching to the church's ministry.
  - The specific responsibilities of the teachers.
  - The relationships in terms of who will be on the teaching team and whom to go to for assistance.

# Teacher Expectations (cont)

- The time frame in terms of how many weeks in a year and how many hours a week is required.
- The gifts that will be utilized and developed.
- The resources and support that will be provided.
- The benefits or blessings the teachers can expect to receive as they engage in the teaching ministry.
- Three major areas of teacher responsibility:
  - Bringing generations together by reminding listeners of their faith heritage and teaching them to make use of that heritage in their Christian lives.

# Teacher Expectations (cont)

- Building up the community of faith, to glorify God, and to serve one another.
- Instructing for faithful discipleship and faithful living.
- Understanding of expectations between the teacher and the student is also important. It should be made clear:
  - What is expected in the classroom.
  - What is expected of the students.
  - The importance of Christian education in their lives.



# Some Tools and Techniques to aid the Teacher Selection Process

- Spiritual inventory tools are available to help identify the spiritual gifts of church members.
- Use a mentoring system where a new teacher is partnered with a more experienced teacher. (Mark 6:7)
  - This takes some of the “pressure” off the new teacher so that the gifted teacher is more readily willing to accept a teaching position.
  - It provides a learning environment for the new teacher.
  - It allows time off if needed without classroom disruption.
  - It allows students to be exposed to alternative teaching styles which can make the classroom instruction more interesting.

# Some Tools and Techniques to aid the Teacher Selection Process (cont)

- Part-time mentoring can be an effective inducement to get the new teacher started in the classroom.
- An effective teacher is able to build relationships with his/her students.
- Consider creating “doable” tasks for the new teacher. For example, offer the following:
  - Limit the term of commitment.
  - Limit the number of lessons to be taught.
  - Provide for time off and substitutes.
  - Provide good teaching materials.

# Characteristics of a Good Teacher

## Mental:

- love of study
- ability to concentrate
- carefulness
- ability to remember
- reasoning power
- sound judgment
- decision-maker

## Moral and Religious:

- love of God
- surrender to Christ
- dependence on the Holy Spirit
- devotion to others
- interest in Bible and church
- sense of victory over self
- sincere and genuine faith
- willingness to serve
- evangelistic

## Knowledge/Skills:

- good general education
- knowledge of Bible
- knowledge of teaching
- knowledge of human nature
- knowledge of church work
- communications skills
- organization and planning skills

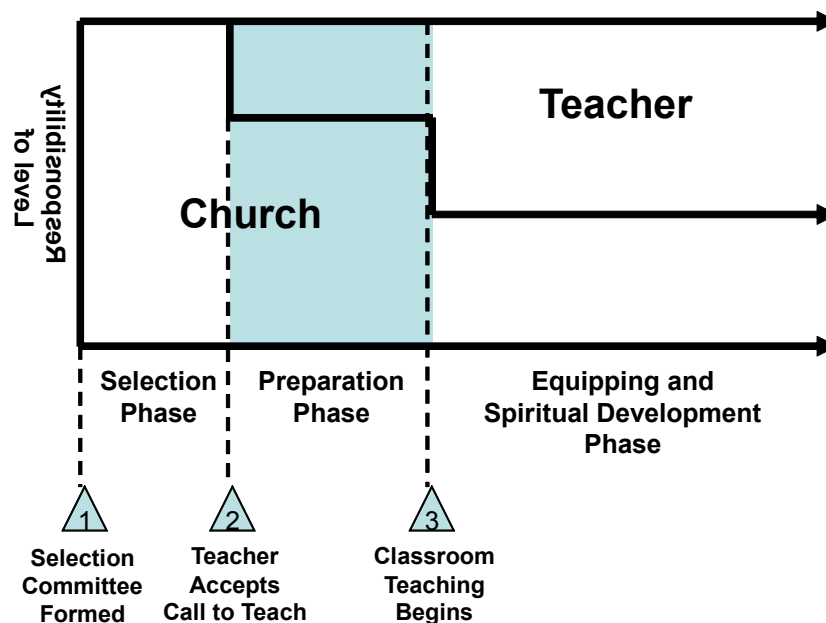
## Temperament:

- good general health
- persevering
- dependable
- cheerful
- optimistic
- friendly
- sympathetic
- sense of humor
- patient
- tactful
- self-controlled
- enthusiastic

# Preparing Teachers to Teach

# Introduction

This phase begins when the teacher accepts the call from the church to teach and ends when the teacher assumes responsibility for actual classroom teaching



# What does it mean to prepare?

- Preparation is the key to success - “Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.” 2 Timothy 2:21.
- Failure to properly prepare will ensure failure in the classroom.
- Fundamentally, the new teacher needs to understand:
  - The fundamental principles of how to study biblical material and prepare a lesson plan.
  - How to present material clearly and with tact in a classroom environment.
  - The fundamentals of classroom etiquette.

# A Formal Teacher Preparation Program

- The teacher must be committed to build a firm foundation in the word of God:
  - “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15.
  - “As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.”

# A Formal Teacher Preparation Program (cont)

- Failure to effectively prepare can result in having difficulty:
  - Rightly discerning the truth.
  - Correctly answering questions posed by others.
  - Effectively sharing his/her faith with others.
  - Effectively leading others to Christ.
- What are some characteristics of an effective formal teacher preparation program?
  - It is an ongoing, year-round, program and not just a one-time event.



# A Formal Teacher Preparation Program (cont)

- Potential candidate teachers are identified a full year in advance of when they will be needed to assume the role of teacher.
- If possible, the program should be under the oversight of the pastor, minister of education, or education committee to ensure that it stays on course and pertinent to the needs of the church.
- It provides the new teacher with the necessary teaching tools and techniques to help him/her study the Bible.
- It includes instruction regarding Bible doctrines so that there is consistency in the classroom with the pastor's teaching from the pulpit.

# A Formal Teacher Preparation Program (cont)

- Includes helping prospective teachers develop effective communications skills.
- Assigning mentors to new teachers to help them get started in the classroom.
- A formal recognition program for those who have successfully completed the program.
- Periodic follow-up training to keep teachers fresh and engaging with new teaching styles.

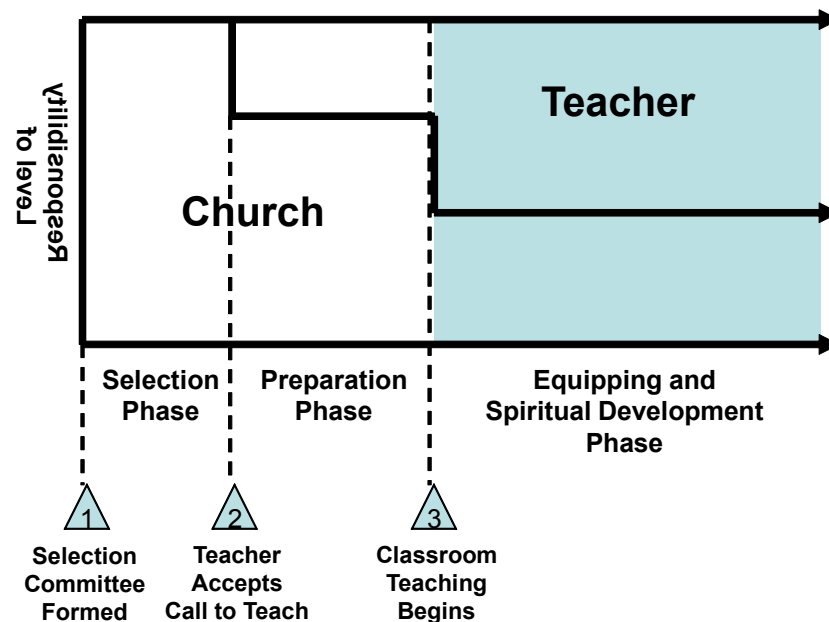
# A Formal Teacher Preparation Program (cont)

- “Today’s church needs trained teachers who put their whole mind in their preparation, their whole heart into their presentation, and their whole life into their illustration.” *Evangelical Teacher Training Association’s manual on Teaching Techniques.*
- “What a man does not know, he cannot teach...teach from a full mind and a clear understanding.” *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, Dr. John Gregory.
- Six kinds of preparation are necessary for maximum teaching results: *Keys for the Sunday School Teacher*, LaVose A. Wallin.
  - Prayer preparation.
  - Early preparation.
  - Thorough preparation.
  - Purposeful preparation.
  - Practical preparation.
  - Expectant preparation.

# Equipping Teachers to Teach

# Introduction

- The primary purpose of this phase is to help ensure that teachers who have completed the preparation phase and have begun to teach in the classroom either by themselves or under the mentorship of another teacher can continue to function effectively in their teaching ministry role.



# Introduction (cont)

- Equipping teachers requires a full commitment from the church to the teacher.
- “God has called you to the ministry of teaching in our congregation, and we are committed to equipping you for this calling. We will journey with you, care for you, pray for you and support you in growing spiritually in a personally demanding role. We will make sure you understand what is most important to know about your responsibilities, the topics at hand and the people you are serving. We will help you to be confident about doing the specific tasks you are called to do, so that you can do them as effectively as possible. You’ve made a significant commitment to this ministry, and we make that commitment to you.” *Equipping Leaders: Toward a Holistic Approach*, Jeffrey Greenman.

# What does it mean to equip?

- “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;” Ephesians 4:11-12.
- Equipping involves three major areas:
  - Mending or restoring (Matthew 4:21; Galatians 6:1).
  - Laying foundations (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
  - Preparing or training teachers how to teach.

# A Teacher Equipping Program

- Includes both formal and informal activities.
- Primary goal is to lead teachers to be more committed, responsible, and effective communicators of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- It includes a name, some goals, some structure, oversight, a schedule, and a process to guide how it works.
  - A name helps to formalize the program, should be a good fit, and easy to remember to help with congregation “buy-in.”



# A Teacher Equipping Program (cont)

- The primary goal should be something like: the equipping of teachers to effectively teach the word of God.
  - It is similar to the training-the-trainer concept used by secular and military organizations.
  - It involves training a small number of qualified church members who are experienced, respected, and have the call to teach on their lives to teach new teachers.
- A secondary goal of this program is to develop a corps of teachers who are always prepared and ready to teach.

# A Teacher Equipping Program (cont)

- Another goal of this program is to improve the overall quality of the teaching currently being provided.
- Oversight should be provided by church leadership (i.e., pastor, minister of education, or education committee) to ensure it stays relevant and in line with doctrine.
- Optimally, one or two individuals should be assigned responsibility for the execution of this program who can call upon a well-trained cadre of teachers to provide the instruction.

# A Teacher Equipping Program (cont)

- Instruction should be based on the needs of the church which will likely include topics such as Bible studies, teaching techniques, and how to use reference materials such as commentaries, dictionaries, and maps.
- Teachers who successfully complete the program should be recognized formally in front of the church and be presented with a formal certificate of completion.

# Some Equipping Strategies

- There are a variety of tools and techniques available to help the church provide the proper training:
  - Teachers can observe more-experienced teachers to learn styles and techniques that are successful in the classroom.
  - More-experienced teachers can observe the new teachers and provide them with feedback on areas needing improvement.
  - The use of video materials can be an excellent means of training teachers how to teach, prepare lessons, and present the lessons effectively.
  - New teachers can be assigned a mentor to closely work with them as they are learning the “ropes.”

# Some Equipping Strategies (cont)

- Group sessions can be conducted to discuss Bible topics and/or teaching techniques.
- Briefing sessions can be conducted by the pastor or minister of education to address specific topics of interest to new teachers.
- A retreat involves teachers meeting at some off-site location to worship, share, and engage in a wide range of topics pertinent to the development of teaching skills.
- Workshops can be conducted to address the specific needs of new teachers.

# Some Equipping Strategies (cont)

- A successful workshop should include the following:

- ☐ Focus on a limited set of skills or body of information.
- ☐ Involve participants in ways that they have direct experiences with teaching activities and resources.
- ☐ Utilize teaching activities that participants can adapt and use in their own teaching situations.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for participants to interact with one another in small groups.
- ☐ Use a variety of media resources.
- ☐ Duplicate some materials for distribution as take-homes.
- ☐ Provide display tables with materials for participants to browse and review.
- ☐ Use a large room for the workshop and arrange the tables and chairs so everyone is comfortable.
- ☐ Use a newsprint chart, overhead projector, or LCD projector with a computer to present information.
- ☐ Include some aspect of spiritual nurture including time for Bible study, prayer, and reflection.
- ☐ Keep the presenting part to a minimum.
- ☐ Encourage participants to ask questions, to share their experiences, and insights, and to express themselves.

# Some Equipping Strategies (cont)

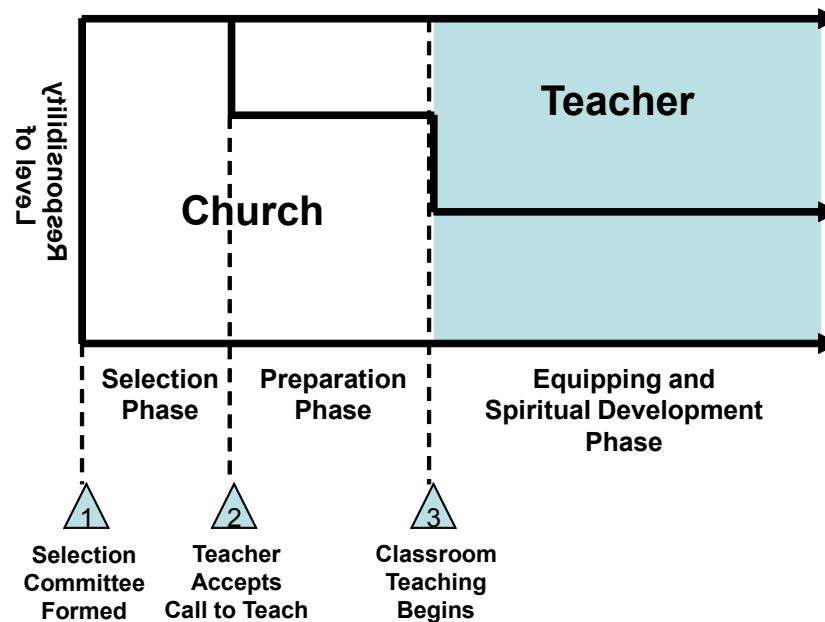
- Good home-study materials should be made available to new teachers to help guide their study and preparation of lessons.
- Regularly scheduled teachers' meetings should be conducted only when there are specific needs to be addressed to avoid their becoming unproductive social gatherings.

# Teacher Spiritual Development



# Introduction

- Spiritual development refers to what needs to be done to help the teacher with his or her personal spiritual growth and maturity.



# Introduction (cont)

- The contention is that spiritual development of the teacher is as important as preparation and equipping for without it the teacher will not sustain their interest and enthusiasm for teaching.
- While spiritual development requires a concerted effort by both the church and the teacher, it is ultimately the teacher's responsibility to ensure his or her own spiritual growth and development.

# What is Spiritual Development?

- Spiritual development refers to all the activities necessary for a church to spiritually assess its teachers and develop a plan of action, including the activities necessary to foster spiritual development and growth.
- The primary purpose of spiritual development activities is to ensure that the church does not lose touch with the teacher and that the church continues to minister to the teacher's needs throughout his or her teaching tenure.

# What is Spiritual Development? (cont)

- Preparation, equipping, and spiritual growth collectively form the foundation of teacher development.



# Why is Spiritual Development Important?

- Teaching every week over extended periods of time can be exhausting and take a toll on the teacher's enthusiasm and willingness to prepare properly.
- A teacher can become spiritually depleted over time if spiritual development activities aren't a priority in the church.
- Without spiritual development activities, teachers can experience “burn-out” in the classroom and lose the love and enthusiasm they had when they began their teaching responsibilities.

# Why is Spiritual Development Important? (cont)

- Without consistent spiritual development, it is possible that:
  - We may grow dull (Matthew 13:15).
  - Our love may grow cold (Matthew 24:12).
  - We may grow weary of doing good (Galatians 6:9).
  - We may become corrupt (Ephesians 4:22).
  - We may grow wanton against Christ (1 Timothy 5:11).
  - We may grow worse and worse (2 Timothy 3:13).

# Why is Spiritual Development Important? (cont)

- Diligence, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, kindness, charity, and grace are all areas of spiritual development which must concern the teacher.
- Spiritual development is a result of our choosing to allow God to keep working in and through us until the Lord is finished with us.
- It is not a one-time event but a continual process that must never be abandoned.
- “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (Ephesians 6:10-11).

# How is Spiritual Development Accomplished?

- Set some goals for personal spiritual development: For example,
  - Strive to be more like Christ (Luke 6:40).
  - Find your place of service (1 Corinthians 12:12-22).
  - Seek to develop understanding and wisdom based on the word of God (Ephesians 4:11-16).
  - Set aside “quiet time” to spend with the Lord on a regular basis.
  - Seek other ministry or mission opportunities outside your teaching responsibilities that will help to “stretch” your spiritual growth.



# How is Spiritual Development Accomplished? (cont)

- Develop a plan of spiritual growth that can be accomplished within a one-year period.
  - It should be a written document signed by the church leadership and the teacher so that it is formalized to gain commitment.
  - It should include a schedule of activities that is tailored to meet the needs of the church and the teacher.
  - The plan should include some type of spiritual assessment tool or other formal feedback mechanism such as a carefully designed questionnaire, an interview process, or some other tool to help determine exactly where the teacher is in his/her spiritual development.

# How is Spiritual Development Accomplished? (cont)

- The teacher should strive to develop some habits that support spiritual development and growth:
  - Immerse yourself in the word of God (Psalm 1:1-3; 1 Peter 2:2).
  - Practice regular prayer (Daniel 6:10; Psalm 55:17; Romans 12:12; Philippians 4:6).
  - Praise the Lord (Psalm 81:1; 95:1; 104:33; Colossians 3:16).
  - Practice exhortation in service to Christ, for worship, and for Bible study (Hebrews 10:24-25).

# How is Spiritual Development Accomplished? (cont)

- Two key elements for spiritual growth are having a positive attitude and perseverance. (1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9; Hebrews 12:1-3; James 1:2-4).
- Having good role models to emulate can lead to spiritual growth and maturity (Philippians 3:17; Hebrews 6:11-12; 3 John 11).
- There are some steps to help ensure spiritual growth is attained:
  - Remain engaged in the work of the church (Matthew 25: 21,23).

# How is Spiritual Development Accomplished? (cont)

- Spend time alone with God each day engaged in prayer and Bible study (Matthew 7:14; Luke 6:39).
- Participate in Bible study groups to help foster mutual sharing and encouragement (Acts 2:42).
- Learn how to lead others to Christ (John 1:40-46).
- Continuously examine yourself (1 Corinthians 13:5).

# Teacher Affirmation, Encouragement, and Support

- This is a key element to teacher success within the church. Some ways to accomplish this follow:
  - Plan a service of dedication or commissioning to start the program year.
  - Arrange for prayer partners for each teacher and leader.
  - Provide a mentor or buddy to be on call when needed for each new teacher.
  - Have a teachers' dinner, mid-year, for fun and fellowship.
  - Send occasional notes to say “thank you” or “I’m thinking of you.”
  - Prepare a monthly newsletter just for the teachers.
  - Plan a teacher recognition dinner or luncheon in the spring.

# Teacher Affirmation, Encouragement, and Support (cont)

- Express appreciation to the volunteers' families.
- Offer occasional workshops, briefings, or consultations for groups and individuals.
- Invite a teacher or leader to make a report to the church's official board.
- Plan for an open house or visitation of classes by church members.
- Encourage teachers to submit stories about what is happening in their classes.
- Provide a resource library especially for the teachers and leaders.
- Give a certificate of recognition during a worship service at the end of the year.