

THE TEACHER --- A LEARNING ENABLER
Children's Ministry
Resource Ministries
By Jean Stephens

INTRODUCTION

A Learning Enabler

A teacher has not taught if the student has not learned.

The wise person makes learning a joy; fools spout only foolishness. (Proverbs 15:2 NLT)

“Now may I who am myself an elder say a word to you my fellow elders? I speak as one who actually saw Christ suffer, and as one who will share with the glories that are to be unfolded to us. I urge you then to see that your ‘flock of God’ is properly fed and cared for. Accept the responsibility of looking after them willingly and not because you feel you can’t get out of it, doing your work not for what you can make, but because you are really concerned for their well-being. You should aim not at being ‘little tin gods’ but as examples of Christian living in the eyes of the flock committed to your charge. And then, when the chief shepherd reveals himself, you will receive that crown of glory which cannot fade.” (1 Peter 5:1-5 Phillips)

We as teachers (learning enablers) have the responsibility to teach and train our children in such a way as to make the ways of God real and workable to them; to make it possible for them to live an abundant life as Jesus intended. It is important to remember that God has given teachers (learning enablers) responsibility as under-shepherds over the class (group of children) that is in their care. This responsibility to lead them, to show them, and guide them into the ways of God is very important. We must remember that the example of the teacher is so significant in the lives of the children. The class (group of children) that we as a teacher have the responsibility over truly is a flock committed to our charge. We should accept that responsibility willingly and with concern and care.

One key thought to remember as a teacher (learning enabler) is that children – the children we are teaching – are individuals. As such our responsibility is to teach individual children, not merely lesson material. The material, lessons, methods, etc. we use are but tools used to enable individual children in the learning process.

- I. Qualifications of a teacher (learning enabler)
 - a. Personal (living and growing) relationship with Jesus
 - b. Willing worker – eager to serve the Lord
 - c. An example for good – 1 Corinthians 11:1
 - d. Recognizing children as people, individuals
 - e. Willingness to care for children as an under-shepherd
- II. Characteristics of a teach (learning enabler)

- a. Enthusiastic
- b. Creative
- c. Flexible
- d. Moderation
- e. Appreciate beauty
 - i. In God's creation
 - ii. In individuals
 - iii. In what God is doing in the lives of the children
- f. Sense of humor
- g. Self-evaluation
 - Balance: (know yourself and accept yourself – work on weak points, use the strong points)
- h. Train others
- i. Teachable
- j. Wise (understand the needs of children)

THINGS TO REMEMBER AS TEACHERS

1. Children learn when they are interested
2. Children learn at their own rate
3. Children learn best when involved personally
4. Talking (lecturing) is not always necessary – listen, discuss, learn from one another
5. Take advantage of a child's curiosity and need to be active
6. Successful experiences help in learning
7. Consistency on the part of the teacher is so important
 - *In giving and following through on guidelines
 - *In example to the children
 - *In being on time and being prepared
8. Children need opportunity to learn to think for themselves, to make decisions, to find that God's ways can work for them

SOME IMPORTANT DO'S AND DON'TS

1. Be a Bible student
2. Be one that prays regularly
3. Be prepared in spirit and with lesson material
4. Make things interesting and exciting
5. Make each child important
6. Be on time always
7. Make yourself available to your students
8. Make visits in their homes if possible
9. Don't yell or raise your voice. Lowering your voice is more effective.
10. Don't do all their work for them. Don't have everything pre-made. Get them to use their imagination.

11. Don't overly correct them in front of their peers. Don't call attention to their mistakes. Direct their attention elsewhere. Get them involved (by answering a question, getting some supplies, etc.)