
Reaching the Heart: The Importance of Application

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The Need for Application

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.—James 1:22-25

Apply: to make _____ of something to achieve a _____

The goal of application is to put the _____ to use in your life so that _____ occurs

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!—Psalm 34:8

“I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you.”—Job 42:5

Knowing the Word is the first step toward application:

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.—Romans 10:17

Teaching that aims only at _____ the intellect falls short of the potential we have to mold young hearts in response to God’s truth.

Though _____ of the truth is extremely important for faith to be born and to grow

(Romans 10:17), children must _____ on the truth, appropriating it into their lives and walking in the truth.

And the Lord said: Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men... —Isaiah 29:13

Faith is more than mere hearing—hearing is a means, not an end; the end is faith which results in obedience (John MacArthur, Jr., *Faith Works*, p. 142)

Moving from facts to response

Larry Richards—*Creative Bible Teaching*—Five Levels of Learning

The first two levels of learning—rote and recognition—_____. The teacher is active as the teller of these facts.

_____: Child can repeat the facts without thought of meaning.

_____: Recognition is the ability to recognize Biblical concepts (comprehension of the facts).

The next three levels go **beyond** _____ **to** _____. In these levels, the teacher is not an active teller but rather a guide. The students are active participants rather than just listeners.

_____ : The ability to express or relate concepts to a Biblical system of thought. The child understands the meaning in terms of Biblical worldview (able to relate the truth to other ideas).

In the last two levels of learning—relation and realization or response—the student is able to understand the meaning in terms of his own life and personal experience.

_____ : The ability to relate Bible truths to life and see an appropriate response to that truth. In other words, the student understands the relationship between the truth and his own life.

Once again, rather than _____ children the concepts in the lesson, we must, _____ children to _____ the truth. Ask many questions and encourage children to think, look up answers for themselves, and draw conclusions. Then, move to encouraging the children to respond to what they have discovered.

_____ (or Response): Child makes a response to the truth—he applies Biblical truths to daily life. He acts on the Word instead of just hearing it.

What is Application of the Truth?

So what?

- So what does this say about _____?
- So what does this say about _____?
- So what does this say I should _____? _____? _____?

In other words, how does this truth apply to my life?

Application begins with _____ which then results in _____ and _____.

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.—Hebrews 4:12-13

We must observe that the knowledge of God which we are invited to cultivate is not that which, resting satisfied with empty speculation, only flutters in the brain; but a knowledge which will prove substantial and fruitful whenever it is duly perceived and rooted in the heart.—John Calvin

As we search the Scriptures, we must allow them to search us, to sit in judgment upon our character and conduct.—Jerry Bridges

We learn God's Word not to know but to grow by doing for _____ is the mother of true knowledge of God.—John Calvin

How to Make Application

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2

In application we must be transformed in our minds—enlightened by the truth of scripture—but the next step is _____; putting it into practice.

Children need instruction to apply Scripture to issues of authority, obedience, conflict resolution, and God-given roles in relationships. Everyday life affords scores of opportunities to connect Scripture to life—from lost book-bags to broken friendships and poor test grades. Scores of training opportunities evaporate without notice as we hurry through our days thinking that devotional time with our children is enough. Our responses to the circumstances and crises of everyday life make our theology real. (Tedd and Margy Tripp, Instructing a Child's Heart, p. 28)

And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.—Ezekiel 36:27

Not only do we need internal change, we also need empowerment. (Ezek. 36:27) We know what we ought to do, but we cannot do it apart from grace. We have the assurance that God's grace empowers us. Ezekiel 36 speaks of everything we need before God: forgiveness and cleansing, radical internal change, and empowerment. (Tedd and Margy Tripp, Instructing a Child's Heart, p. 59)

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.—2 Timothy 3:16-17

Explanation of 2 Timothy 3:16 words:

_____ shows us what is true and right and structures our thinking. Like a compass, the Bible always points you in the right direction.

Joshua 1:7-9—Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. ⁸This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

_____ shows us where we are wrong.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.—James 1:23-25

_____ reveals sin and shows us how to get right _____ **in righteousness** develops discipline to live rightly.

Application:

- Not re-teaching but making personal application
- Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to direct the discussion
- Don't belabor points—move the discussion along—ask questions to get the children thinking along the right lines, then move to the next question. The aim is to get to the heart application.
- Make personal application.
- Ask children to reflect on real life personal experience.
- Zero in on a child's statement and follow it through to personal application—don't consistently choose the same child.
- Lead children to praise God/to pray for one another.
- Use the Word to bring truth to specific situations.
- Give an application assignment; a way for them to follow through on the discussion—report the next week.
- Be sure to include all the children in the discussion—draw out the quiet ones.
- Share a personal example to help the children think of a response and to open up—giving personal examples shows that you are in need of the Lord and encourages them to open up about their needs.
- Relate to child individually at the end of the class (i.e. Joey, I will be praying for you when you go to the dentist).
- Be verbally and facially encouraging to the students when they respond.

Example—Promises: God Will Be With You (2nd grade)

Ask children to reflect on real life personal experience:

Can you think of a time when it was a help to you that someone was with you—that you were not alone.

- When I had to get a shot I was glad my mother was with me. I don't like shots.
- My sister went with me to get something in the basement.

Can your mother or your sister be with you all the time?

- No.

Why not?

- Because they have other things to do.

Why can God be with you all the time?

- Because He is God.
- He is everywhere all the time.
- He can do a lot of things at the same time.

What would happen if God went to bed at night?

- Then He couldn't help us.

Ask children to reflect on real life personal experience:

What if God were with you at home but if you went on vacation He stayed home and didn't go with you?

- Maybe our car would run out of gas and we couldn't pray and ask Him for help;
- that wouldn't be good; we would die! ...because God helps us breathe!

Why is it so good that God is everywhere all the time?

- Because He can help us whenever we need Him;
- because He takes care of us everywhere, not just at home

Can you think of some times in the Bible when God was with His people? What did He do?

- He helped Daniel in the lion's den;
- yeah and He opened the Red Sea;
- He helped David kill Goliath!

Did God just sit back and watch Daniel in the lion's den... did he just watch what happened?

- No, he made the lions not eat Daniel.

Right. God works for His people. He helps His children. He takes care of them. He shows them what is right to do. Where will God be with you this week?

- In school,
- in my piano lesson,
- I have to go to the dentist this week...

God will be with you in all those places. So all week long you can talk to Him, you can ask Him for help, you can tell Him you are happy... or scared... or sad, you can tell Him when you do something wrong.

- I can ask Him to help me when I go to the dentist! I don't like going to the dentist.

Zero in on a child's statement and follow it through to personal application:

Brian, will you go to the dentist alone?

- No my mother will bring me.

God is good to give us mothers. Mothers are good helpers. Who else will be with you?

- God.

Yes, God is with us everywhere, all the time. He is the very best Helper of all! Brian, when you go to the dentist this week, tell Jesus that you are a little scared. Ask Him to help you. Ask Him to make you brave and strong.

Lead children to praise God/ to pray for one another.

Let's pray for Brian and ask God to help him when he goes to the dentist...

Relate to child individually at the end of the class.

I used to be nervous about going to the dentist too, Brian. But I know that God will go with you. I will be praying for you. What day are you going to the dentist?

Follow up next week by asking Brian about his trip to the dentist.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.