



CHAPTER 1

Perpetuating Truth Through Faithfulness

Distribute copies of the note-taking page for study 1 found on page 87 of this leader guide.

- ASK:** "What do you think are the top five traits in a teacher's life that will encourage students to embrace their teacher's values and faith?"

List responses on a blank transparency sheet or on a dry-erase board. Record all the responses even if participants come up with more than five.

After this exercise is completed, tell them that the author of *Perpetuating Truth Through Teaching* has identified eight traits in a teacher's life that will help to more effectively pass values and faith to students. Display Resource 1A "Students Are Looking For--.-." (or slide 4 of the PowerPoint presentation) and read through the list revealing one answer at a time. Encourage students to fill in the blanks on their note-taking pages.

Compare your class's list with the author's list. Discuss how the lists are different or similar. In the unlikely event that the lists have little correlation, help students see the relevance of the eight traits to be discussed in this course of study. Explain that this first session will deal with the importance of faithfulness in the teacher.

- Display Resource 1B (or slide 5 of the PowerPoint presentation) "Faithfulness Quote," or read it to the class.

ASK: "How would accepting Colson's definition of success affect the way that you performed your teaching ministry?"

- Refer to the biblical narrative about Noah's faithful ministry located on pages 9–11 of the student text. The author shows both the challenge and the rewards of remaining faithful in a world that holds conflicting values.

ASK:

“In what ways is our ministry task similar to the one Noah faced?” “How does the world attempt to dissuade Christians from remaining faithful to God?”

- 4.** The author makes the following statement, “A common thread that weaves all followers of God together throughout time is our uniqueness within society” (page 12).

ASK:

“In what ways should Christians be unique in their society today?”

- 5.** Present Resources 1C and 1D, “Perpetuating Truth Through Faithfulness,” revealing each point as you get to it. If you are using the PowerPoint presentation, you can reveal each point by advancing through the presentation. Comment on each point based on material presented in the student text. Remind participants that these points, with additional information, can be found in their student book.
- 6.** Refer to the section of the student book titled “It Works,” found on pages 21–23, which records the author’s personal salvation story. Explain that the faithful lives of teachers in a small church transformed a little boy’s life that in turn transformed his family and continues to affect others, including those taking this course of study.

ASK:

“What is your salvation story and how did the faithfulness of others help to instill truth in you?”

- 7.** To close the group discussion, select a question or two from the “Personal Reflection” section on pages 24–25 of the student text.
- 8.** Have those in the class break out into age-level groups. Appoint a group facilitator to lead the entire group in a discussion of age-level appropriate issues based on the age-level handouts, or appoint a facilitator for each age-level specific group who will then lead the group through the age-appropriate handout. Provide a handout for each participant. These handouts are labeled Resource 1E “Early Childhood,” 1F “Elementary,” 1G “Youth,” and 1H “Adult.” Serve as an overseer of the learning process, offering encouragement and guidance as needed.
- 9.** At the end of the hour regather the class. Acknowledge that there may not have been sufficient time to cover all of the material in the handouts and encourage participants to complete the material at home or in subsequent age-level leadership gatherings. Close the session in prayer.

Students Are Looking For...

- * Faithfulness
- * Authenticity
- * Compassion
- * Leadership
- * Involvement
- * Conviction
- * Relationship
- * Instruction



Faithfulness

“God calls us, not to success, but to faith—obedience and trust and service—and He bids us to be unconcerned with measuring the merits of our work the way the world does. We are to sow; He will reap as He pleases.”

~ Charles Colson

Perpetuating Truth Through **Faithfulness**

GLEANING PRINCIPLES

1. Be a Part of Our Community
2. Present a Clear Message
in the Midst of the Culture
3. Act According to Your
Convictions
4. Leave the Results With God



Perpetuating Truth Through **Faithfulness**

GIVING IT A TRY

1. Making a Contribution to Our Communities
2. Getting the People's Attention
3. Being Willing to Be Transparent
4. Trusting God With the Results

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RESOURCE 1E 

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Early childhood teachers have a great opportunity to shape and direct their students' spiritual future. Many of the impressions of childhood are formed at this critical age, and such impressions will to a great degree determine how a child views God, His people, and himself or herself. Teachers who are faithful will lay a solid foundation for these vulnerable members of God's kingdom. Here are a few suggestions that will help you to be faithful in your teaching ministry to your students.

1. Be There Physically

"Being there" means consistently showing up to teach the children each week. Young children need to experience consistency in their lives, especially when it comes to caregivers such as their teachers. An ideal way to accomplish this is through a team-teaching approach.



How would team teaching be a benefit to the children in your classroom as well as to you?

2. Be There Emotionally

"Being there" also means that while in class teachers should give their undivided attention to their students. Take time to play with them, listen to their stories, and show them love. When you do this you will be perpetuating truth to the next generation and influencing students to become attentive members of the kingdom of God.



What distractions could you eliminate from your classroom to enhance your being there emotionally for your students?

3. Be Aware of Student Temperaments

Learning theorists tell us that children are born with one of three basic temperaments or a blending of the three. Some children have an "easy" temperament. "Easy" children adapt quickly to new situations. These children greet the world with a smile. They welcome change without feeling threatened. An easy child doesn't mind new people being in the classroom. Other children have a "slow-to-warm" temperament. These children need time to adjust to a new situation. Often you can identify this child as the one who, when first introduced to the class, stands quietly watching the other children play before engaging in play. Don't make the mistake of

trying to force this child into the action. Allow such a child time to adjust. In a few minutes he or she will slip into the activities of the other students. Having taken this step, this child will represent little trouble until you make a significant change in the classroom dynamics. The third temperament is labeled as "difficult." This does not mean that the "difficult" child is bad, although they are often labeled that way. It simply means that the child has a temperament that is resistant to change. This child likes routine, tends to cling to familiar people and toys, and often cries when forced to do something new. To minister effectively to this temperament, introduce very few changes into the child's life. The difficult child will eventually adapt, but premature attempts at change will be futile. There are a percentage of children who are a combination of these temperaments. Understanding the basic three temperaments will help you to work with this last group.



How would understanding a child's temperament help you more effectively teach your class?

4. Be Aware of Abilities

It is unfair to ask students to do what is beyond their abilities. You must be faithful to them by determining their physical and mental limitations. Don't expect young children to sit still very long at a table. God made young children to move, and you must let them do so in a structured and productive manner. Gospel Publishing House offers many resources that will help you structure an early childhood class that incorporates movement in the learning process.



How does recognizing a child's physical abilities and limitations influence the way you teach, set up your classroom, and discipline a student?




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Elementary children are some of the most enjoyable people to work with. They are learning to read and write, to socialize in an appropriate manner, and to discover their strengths and abilities. Most elementary students still trust and respect adults. If students are going to learn to trust God with their lives, it is important that their teachers be seen as faithful and reliable. Here are a few ways that you can be the faithful teacher that elementary students need in their lives.


1. Always Be Prepared

Teachers who have discipline problems with their students are often those who come to class unprepared. When this occurs, students quickly sense that they themselves are in control and take advantage of the situation. Gaps in class time created by a lack of planning communicate the teacher's lack of commitment to the students and a lack of faithfulness to the ministry. Being faithful to your students means being faithful to lesson preparation.

 What strategy do you use to ensure you are prepared to meet your class each week?


2. Pray for Your Students

A faithful teacher understands that the most important spiritual transactions take place only when God does the work. Therefore, it is your responsibility to pray for your students each week, asking God to prepare their hearts to receive and act on the biblical lesson. You should also pray for your students to draw closer to God throughout the week and ask Him to protect them from the evil in their environment. Letting your students know that you pray for them throughout the week will reinforce the fact that you care for them and that you will be there for them when they need you.

 What specific needs do your students have that you can pray about?


3. Be Fair

Being fair is very important to elementary students. It is tempting to treat the well-mannered child better than the child who tends to cause problems. Yielding to this temptation has multiple negative consequences. First, the child who is being treated more harshly will feel unaccepted, and a plummeting sense of self-worth. Second, favored children will begin to look at themselves in a manner that can lead to pride. Finally, all those children who fall in between will see the inequities and feel insecure in your classroom. Try to treat all children alike, and always dispense acts of loving-kindness in an equitable manner.

 How are you doing in the fairness arena and how could you make improvements?

4. Tell the Truth

You are laying the spiritual foundations for your students in their elementary years. During this time students should learn basic doctrines of the Bible and become acquainted with its major characters. Be sure that what you tell your students is accurate. Don't make up elements of the story for effect, because students of this age take information literally. Most Bible stories are exciting enough without embellishment. In the process of storytelling, take care to be faithful to the Word of God and to your students.

 What steps can you take to make sure you are presenting solid biblical truth each week?

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RESOURCE 1G 

Y O U T H

Noah showed his faithfulness to God in very difficult circumstances. His audience was not especially responsive, he was trying to introduce concepts that were foreign to their culture, and many he attempted to minister to thought he was a freak. In many ways, the circumstance of Noah's ministry was not unlike that of many teachers who attempt to minister to teens today.

Don't despair! There are principles that can be gleaned from Noah's life that will help you build a spiritual lifeboat for students in your class.

1. Be Careful How You Define Success

Each week when you walk into your classroom you have two audiences. The first is the most obvious: your students. Sometimes you can become frustrated if there are not enough of them or if they seem to reject the message that you have prepared. It is very easy to become discouraged and to even want to quit because you feel that you aren't being very effective. The second audience is invisible but ultimately important: your God. He is watching, basing your effectiveness on your obedience—regardless of the number of your students or their response. If you are doing what He has called you to do, your ministry is a success.



How do you measure your success as a teacher?

2. Move Into Your Students' World

A key to effective ministry to youth is to be where they are and to care about what they care about. Teens are much more concerned about who you are outside of the classroom than they are with what you say in the classroom. As you live your life before them and with them, they will recognize what is really important to you and begin to accept it.

A good way to enter a teen's world is to take out small groups of them, two or three. Play games, eat pizza, or go to an amusement park. Such activities may not seem like ministry outlets, but these informal times allow students to see who you really are and to begin to bond with you. Teens are more interested in the messenger than the message. But once the messenger is embraced, the message will likely be embraced as well.



In what ways could you become more involved in the world of teens without being seen as "trying too hard"?

3. Be Clear Without Being Judgmental

The gospel is a positive message. It offers hope and help to oppressed people. Teens need all the hope and help they can get. They live in a society that seems to want to destroy them. They are continually being bombarded in some way, resulting in lowered self-esteem, rejection, and despair. The last thing they need is to come to church and have their teachers compound this situation through condemnation and guilt.



What can you do to present biblical principles from a positive perspective rather than from one that seems to attack the student's world?

4. Practice What You Preach

There is nothing more damaging to your effectiveness as a teacher than to say one thing and to do another. Teens may not always seem like they are listening to you, but you can be sure that they are watching you. If you teach students to practice self-control, it is important that they not see you devour ten slices of pizza! In the same manner, we must be careful in the speech we use, the entertainment we enjoy, and the attitudes we display to our students.

Don't try to portray yourself as a perfect Christian. Your students are smarter than that. When you are presenting a lesson that deals with an area that you are struggling with, be courageous enough to tell them that you need their prayers and support. You don't need to go into detail, but by being vulnerable you can help them see that God is in the business of grace and mercy.



What do you feel is a healthy degree of transparency for you to have with your teen students?




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The goal of any teacher is to transmit key values and concepts to students. For Christian teachers, the values we want to transmit are biblical values and the concepts are the truths of Scripture. Transmission of these values and truths requires more than words. Successful transmission also requires a faithful character in the transmitter. Here are some ideas on becoming the best transmitter possible.


1. Understand Your Students

It is possible to teach a class without knowing anything about its members, but this is not the most effective way to accomplish your task. Adults come from a variety of backgrounds, represent various learning styles, and are at different stages in life. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the basic learning styles of your students and to choose teaching methods that will help them grasp what you are trying to transmit. Some learn best with their ears and mouth. Others learn through their eyes. Others learn best through physical interaction and movement. Each class period you must strive to include methods that appeal to each of these types of learners.

 What methods could you use to reach the various learning styles if you were teaching a lesson on Noah and the ark?


2. Understand Your Students' World

Sometimes Christians are accused of not being in touch with reality because they don't pay attention to the latest music, movies, or literature. Teachers don't need to immerse themselves in secular culture, but they should know the basic cultures of the adults who attend their class. If you have students who own their own businesses, be sensitive to issues that would relate to businesspeople and use illustrations that would connect with that world. If you have white-collar workers, use examples that will apply to them. The same is true for the housewife, the blue-collar worker, the student, the unemployed, the retiree. It is only when you are aware of the world of your students that you will be able to relate to them.

 What are the professions of each of your class members and how will keeping this in focus influence your teaching?


3. Don't Compromise Your Message

It is acceptable to shape a lesson according to the students in your classroom, but you must never compromise the message in order to appeal to them. Adults will respect you if you are willing to tell them the truth and challenge them to live better lives. Those who reject the truth that you present are not rejecting you but rejecting God. It is better for people to leave your class convicted by the Holy Spirit than it is for you to try to massage the message to get them to stay. You must remain faithful to God and His Word regardless of the consequences.

 How would you handle someone who demanded that you soften the requirements of Scripture?

4. Leave the Results With God

As a teacher, your job is to teach. It is God's job to convict and to draw people to himself. It is possible that you will never have a large class. The size of your class is not the criteria of success in God's eyes. He is looking for faithfulness and will judge you accordingly.

 How would accepting this point affect your attitude toward teaching?