



**Christian Education in the Church**  
**Teaching Notes**

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# **Lesson 1 – Introduction to Christian Education in the Church**

## **Introduction**

This course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to Christian Education in the church and its importance in the ministry of the church with regard to the growth and development of members in Christian understanding of the Bible and maturity in their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is also intended to give and affirm convictions in their Christian beliefs and standards of their moral conduct.

This first lesson is intended to define what is meant by Christian Education, explain the importance of the course in a local church setting and also give a biblical background to the concept of Christian Education in the local church. It will also present a course overview that will prepare the student an in-depth study of the course and show the main thrust in training new church members. It comprises seven (7) topics that should be taught to new church members, namely new life in Christ, the process of Christian growth, how to use the Bible,, the church and its covenants, beliefs, history, membership and the home.

*Note to Instructor: You may introduce the topic using questions in order to gauge the learners' awareness of the topic under study. You may also allow students to discuss their experiences regarding the reality or not of the topics in their local setting.*

## **Part 1 – Definition and Importance of Christian Education**

Local Proverb:

There is a Zambian traditional proverb that states that “a child is taught all the customs and beliefs of the family clan and tribe before he leaves the vicinity of the home”. Similarly before anyone can embark upon his new found life in Christ, he or she needs to know the basics that will navigate him or her in the various aspects of Christianity and church ministry.

This section will cover the definition, reason, and importance of Christian Education in the church.

- **Definition of Christian Education**

Christian Education is that function of the church which guides believers in understanding Bible truths, internalizing Christian beliefs and practices, reproofing those who depart from the correct beliefs and practices, correcting those who stray from these truths and instructing them to walk in righteousness with a view to lead them to Christian maturity.

*Ask the students to define 'Christian Education' and thereafter make an explanation of the same definition.*

- **Why Christian Education is an important part of each church?**

*Ask the students to explain why it is important for their churches to include Christian education as an important function of the church.*

Christian Education is one of the main functions of the church which include worship of the Living God, the proclamation of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the lost people, serving the needy and fellowship. Christian Education was practiced in the Old Testament as can be seen in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 which contains the instructions given to the Israelites to teach their children about the truths of the Scriptures.

Teaching was part of the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19-20. Christian Education was practiced by the early church as can be seen in Acts 5:42. The Apostle Paul also instructs Timothy to entrust the things that he learned from him to faithful men who would also entrust these to faithful men (2Tim. 2:2). There are many other passages in the Scriptures that talk about Education in the church.

Christian Education is also important in the church because the Apostles made it one of the priorities of their ministry in addition to prayer. Through Christian Education they were able to warn believers of the dangers of eternal damnation and to enable them to teach every man in all wisdom so that everyone may be presented perfect in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:28). In this way it gives church members the ability to carry out

what the Lord Jesus Christ commanded. The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:12 mentions teachers as very important personnel needed in the church for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ.

## **Part 2: Biblical Foundation of Christian Education**

- **Education in the Ministry of Jesus**

The New Testament teaches, in the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20) that believers are to go and make disciples of all nations after which they should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and taught to observe all that He had commanded them. In the Gospel of Matthew, it can be observed that the Lord Jesus Christ showed us the importance of Christian Education when it records that He “went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues . . .” (Matt. 9:35, KJV). This is the example that the Apostles and the early church followed as they embarked upon the function of Christian Education.

- **Education in the Ministry of the Apostles**

Further, when the Apostles were faced with a crisis of segregation in the distribution of food that almost caused the division of the church, they still counted the responsibility of teaching the word and prayer as the higher priority than the serving of tables (Acts 6:4). In order to show that they needed to solve the matter of segregation, they delegated the work of serving tables to other trusted church leaders. The importance of Christian Education is seen in the fruits that it produced as reflected in the increase of the number of disciples. This shows that Christian Education contributes greatly to church growth (Acts 6:7).

- **Education in the Churches of Zambia**

Among the churches in Zambia that have had a great impact in the nation are those who have strong Christian Education programs. These have given priority to teaching the word of God and have recorded tremendous numerical spiritual growth and maturity among their members. In addition, they have extended themselves beyond their own congregations by planting other churches and sending out missionaries to

other parts of the country. A few examples include Twin Palm Baptist Church, Central Baptist Church of Lusaka, Woodlands Baptist Church, and churches within the Copperbelt and Serenje Baptist Churches Association, to name but a few, who have sent many missionaries to other parts of the country.

### **Part 3 – Course Overview**

The remaining lessons will cover and what students should gain from each of the remaining lessons.

- **Lesson 2 – Leading a Bible Teaching Program:** The concern of the Bible teaching program the church's Education ministry to teach its members the Bible. The major emphasis of this program is the Bible teaching done in Sunday schools, Home Bible studies, Bible conferences and Bible study courses.
- **Lesson 3 – Age Group Ministries in the Church:** This lesson deals with an understanding church age levels and special groups and they can be organized as teaching groups and the content focuses of each age group
- **Lesson 4 –New Members/Beginning Discipleship Class.** This part of the course deals with aspects that contribute to deepening members faith such as prayer, witnessing, understanding the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the holiness of the heart, spiritual warfare, faith and the promises of God, separation and victory over sin. and lastly using the Bible as a source of Christian growth,
- **Lesson 5 – Leadership Training in Church Education.** This section will emphasize on equipping church leaders with knowledge and skills to enable provide leadership to the congregation effectively. This part will concentrate on teaching the history of the local church, church polity and organization, church covenants, constitution and by-laws and church programming. Stewardship will form another aspect of this section. Lastly, this section will provide knowledge, attitudes and skills that will help leaders to counsel and guide church members on various issues.

In addition to general leadership training, this section will teach areas leadership in Christian Education, such as teacher training, training in evangelistic and witnessing skills.

#### **Part 4 – Lesson Review**

1. What is meant by Christian education?
2. Explain the importance of Christian Education in the local church.
3. Give reasons why Christian Education is an important component of the life of the local church.
4. What is the major foundation of Christian Education in the local?
5. Do you think many of our local churches are able to embrace this function?
6. In many local churches, especially in large peri-urban areas most churches emphasize the establishment of choir groups at the expense of this important church function. Is this the pattern we find in the New Testament?

## Lesson 2 – Leading a Bible Teaching Program

### Introduction

*Before embarking upon each part of the lesson ask the following questions: -*

1. What is meant by a Bible teaching program?
2. Why is this program needed in the local church?
3. What will be required for the church to have and maintain a Bible teaching program?
4. How will you be able to evaluate the program the success of the program?
5. What models of a Bible teaching program are you aware of?
6. What models do you use to teach the Bible to your church members?

This section examines the components needed to establish the Bible teaching program in the church. It particularly looks at the need, requirements, personnel or staff of the Bible teaching program, its maintenance, facilities needed for its effectiveness and how it can be evaluated. Afterwards, the lesson will examine various models of the Bible teaching program that are commonly used in a local church setting.

### Part 1 – Components of a Bible Teaching Program (Sunday School)

*Ask: Why is a Bible teaching program needed in the church?*

- **Two Reasons a Church Needs a Bible Training Program**
  - Insufficient knowledge of Scriptures
    - The need to deal with insufficient knowledge of the Scriptures can be met by:
      - Teaching the Bible on the basis that having the knowledge of the Bible is a normal and natural need for every Christian
      - Ensuring that the Bible is taught by trained people
      - Ensuring that the Bible is taught in an environment that will enable students to learn.

- Ensuring that the Bible is taught as God’s Word
- Ensuring that the Bible is taught regularly and that it must result in a positive response from the students.
- Guiding persons in development toward maturity.
  - This can be done by:
    - Teaching what the Bible has revealed.
    - Ensuring that we use the knowledge gained from Bible study to reach out to lost persons and include them into the membership of the church.
    - Ensuring that the knowledge gained is applied to people’s lives
    - Helping members of the church understand the nature of the Bible
- **Requirements for a Bible Teaching Program**

*Ask: What will be required in order for the Bible teaching program to be effective?*

*After the responses, explain what the requirements are for the Bible teaching program by emphasizing the following aspects:*

- Curriculum:

The Bible teaching program must incorporate all aspects that will help learners reach the desired established outcomes of the learning process as outlined above, namely, having a knowledge of the Bible, having trained people to teach the Bible, helping learners to reach out to the lost and bringing them into church membership, enabling learners to understand the nature of the Bible and applying what they have learned in their own lives. Whilst other sources may be used, the Bible is the primary textbook of the Bible teaching program.

- Organization:

*Allow the students to discuss the organization of their Bible teaching program in their local churches by asking;*

*How has your church organized its Bible teaching program?*

- Explanation

In order to take advantage of the many opportunities for Bible teaching every member should be involved in learning the Bible. Thus in organizing the Bible teaching program learners of all ages must be



enrolled in the Sunday school program. Planned organization helps in ensuring that the Bible is taught by the church to all the levels of the church membership since each one has the capacity to learn about God and to know Him. Therefore, the Sunday school should become the primary Bible teaching ministry of the church to its church members. Not only will the Bible teaching program involve church members. But there will also be non-Christians. This gives the believers to share their experiences with the unbelievers while they also enrich their spiritual growth. Sunday school gives the non-Christian the opportunity to be in a Christian spiritual environment and observe the commitment of Christians to God. Thus, no Bible teaching program will reach its greatest potential without good organization.

- The common organizational characteristics of organizing the Bible teaching, particularly, the Sunday school program is to ensure that:
  - Relationships are established between learners and teachers and which committees they relate to.
  - Responsibilities are clearly defined. Each leader should know what responsibility they have within the organization. Overlapping of responsibilities should be avoided.
  - The congregation must accept responsibility for the Bible teaching program and its activities as it does with other church ministries. It must determine what to teach, how it will be taught and the expected outcome of the program.
  - The congregation elects the personnel and teaching staff of the Sunday school.
  - The congregation must have a budget line that will ensure the provision of the financial needs of the Sunday school ministry.
  - Lastly, the congregation must ensure that it receives reports from the person responsible for the Bible teaching program regarding the work of the program.

- Personnel/Staff:

*Allow time for discussion by asking the kind of personnel that they have involved in the Bible teaching program in their local churches. Thereafter proceed to explain the suggested personnel.*

- Explanation:

Another requirement of the Bible teaching program is to have personnel.

The general officers of the Sunday school ministry include:

- The pastor, who should give the church the vision for the ministry through Sunday sermons, sitting in various classes from time to time, encouragement of teachers and general officers and also by making himself available for counseling and lastly, making the congregation aware of the needs of the Bible teaching program.
- The director of the Bible teaching program and his vice, or the Sunday school director or superintendent and his vice who must constantly lead the church in expanding and evaluate the Bible teaching ministry, actively encourage teachers, organize teacher training seminars, develop a visitation program and lead in the closing of the Sunday school tome before the worship service on Sunday.

- **Maintaining the Bible Teaching Program**

*Give time to the students to mention the ways they have maintained the Bible teaching program in their local churches.*

*Ask, how have you maintained your Bible teaching program (if any)*

- Explanation

Maintaining a Bible teaching program involves, examination of attendance, punctuality, learner participation, teachers effectiveness, making future plans, training with a view to teach improvements and dealing with consideration of specific challenges of the teaching activities.

- **Facilities for the Bible Teaching Program**

*Ask the students: What facilities has their church provided in order to provide a good learning environment?*

*-Allow the students to discuss the facilities they have provided to enable the Bible to be taught in their church by asking, “Why is a church building one of the important factors in determining the quality and results of a Bible teaching program”? What other places within the church premises have been used for bible study gatherings?*

- Explanation

These include classroom space and the sanctuary. However, if the church does not have classrooms it may hold several small Bible study groups in different areas of the church such as the church building where worship takes place or in any place where a class can gather for Bible instruction. In the rural places of Zambia, the shelter which in some local languages is referred to as “insaka” (for Bemba speaking people), or “mpala” (for Tumbuka or Senga speaking people) or “kuta” (for the Lozi speaking people), or “nkuta” (for the Tonga, Lenje speaking people), and so forth, is normally used for such gatherings.

- Other facilities would include a library or reading room where the teachers can have access to reference materials to gather material for teaching the Bible.

- **Evaluating the Bible Teaching Program**

- In order to improve the Bible teaching program there must be some evaluation done of the work of teaching, class attendance, how many learners use the Bible in the during the learning process and, class participation. In order to know the above information, records must be kept of prospects, for each class and new church member enrolment and reports done on the achievements of the teaching program.

- In addition, observance of increase in church membership as a way of showing that class members are reaching out to the lost people and bringing them to church.

## **Part 2: Models of Bible Teaching Programs**

*Pose a question to facilitate a discussion on various types of Bible teaching models. In particular, discuss how the Sunday school is conducted in each local church.*

*Does the church use a prepared curriculum or writes its own materials? What have been the advantages or disadvantages of using either method?*

*Are there models of Bible teaching that incorporate a group of churches? How often do these take place? What have been the advantages or disadvantages of these? How can you improve each of the models you have used before?*

Below are some examples of the different approaches that have been used at a local church in Zambia.

- The traditional Sunday school: This model is the most common that has been used by many Baptist churches in Zambia.
- Home Bible study or home cell groups where the Bible is taught at a section level during the week. In rural areas where people have to travel long distances to reach their places of worship, the home Bible studies have been a challenge. *(Pause and ask how in this case leaders are carrying out this task.)*
- Bible conferences that have been organized during special times of the year such as Easter or some spiritual emphasis times established by a particular church. *(Pause here for a discussion regarding how this model is carried out and to what extent churches participate)*
- Bible conferences that are held once yearly at established places and times of the year to which Baptist churches in a particular region come together for Bible teaching, worship and fellowship. These are sometimes referred to as “Misasa” meetings held at chosen meeting centers. These emphasize particular themes of the Bible for the specified time.

### **Part 3 – Lesson Review**

*Ask the students to answer the following questions for purposes of reviewing the lesson.*

1. What did you learn concerning the need for having a Bible teaching program at your church?
2. What things are required in order to enable students in your church to know the nature of the Bible, to grasp its truths, to grow in their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and, in particular, an effective Sunday school? Why are these requirements very important?
3. What kind of personnel and staff do you have in your church to carry out a Bible teaching program? What kind of training have they had to do this work?
4. Explain how you have maintained the Bible teaching program at your local church. What models of the Bible teaching program has your church been involved in? Which ones of these models has your church conducted at the local level and which ones have been done cooperatively with other churches in your area?

## Lesson 3 – Age Group Ministries

### Introduction

This lesson deals with an understanding church age levels and special groups and they can be organized as teaching groups and the content focuses of each age group. The lesson looks at teaching Adults (young adults, median adults and older adults), youth (teenagers, college/career singles), and children. It will also examine life stage description, that is, unique characteristics of each age group and ways of teaching each category according to their own peculiarities, perspectives and spiritual needs as a way of providing emotional support and outlet

*Ask: What is meant by age group ministries? Why is it important for the church to have a Bible teaching ministry for each of these groups?*

*Ask: why should age groups should be taught separately?*

*Ask: are there times when adult men and women can be taught separately?*

*Ask: what are the spiritual needs of each category?*

### Part 1 – Teaching Adult Disciples

Anecdote: It has been said generally that, “life begins at forty”! *What does this mean in relation to the characteristics and teaching of adults?*

- **Unique characteristics of adult disciples:**

As adults advance in time and experience their characteristics tend to change. They have life-centred needs especially in areas such as family, vocation, physical needs, and social activities, and economic affairs, civic and religious relationships

- **Spiritual needs of adult disciples:**

The spiritual needs of adults are always related to where adults find themselves along the uninterrupted process of their development, namely, the period of life in which they find themselves and the tasks that cast on them. Thus, when persons commit themselves to Jesus Christ, they have the resources needed to help them cope with life’s struggles. Jesus Christ helps

them to adjust to the tasks of life. A teacher of adult disciples is privileged to lead each adult in his/her class to commit all of life to Jesus Christ whose grace works in and through us to produce character and eventual fullness of personality that begins at conversion.

In particular, adults need love, belonging, personal recognition, security, change and spiritual fulfillment.

- **Biblical priorities for the growth of adult disciples:**

*Allow the students to suggest biblical priorities that adults face and follow this suggestion time with a discussion time before explaining the teaching material.*

Adults want to establish their own training objectives and thus prefer to choose what they will learn. Consequently, adult learning is problem-centered. Adults can also give more to a learning experience than children and youth. Whilst they can be dependent, adult learners can also be independent.

Of paramount importance, adults tend to withdraw from situations that threaten their self-image. They however need help to put what they learn into practice. Adults also impose restrictions on their learning. However, it is also important to note that biblical priorities for the growth of adult disciples are not the same for both sexes of adults. Thus it is important to identify specific priorities related to each as below: -

- **Men**

Focus should be placed on:

- 1) Special problems of men related to their home (family responsibilities related to their leadership, their role as husbands, fathers and teachers, their vocational and or business adjustments (and the need to have the right perspective of work), social pressures, physiological changes due to the aging process and psychological problems arising out of their physiological changes, family crises, changed interests and activities. For senior adults, matters related to limited physical abilities, adjustment to fewer financial resources, adjustments related to death of spouses, failing health and finding an acceptable role in civic, social and church life.

- 2) Reinforcing men's roles and responsibilities in the church and at home as husband, father, and teacher of his children.

3) Creation of an accountability group of peers that will help in the critical period of a median adult disciple which can positively lead to renewed religious interests or negatively drop out of the interest in the place of other worldly interests. This is also a time for evaluating values and interests.

- **Women**

Focus should be placed on:

- 1) Allowing the expression of their viewpoints and perspectives, using biblical resources, on the needs pertaining to contentment, stability, satisfaction, certainty and what to build one's life on. (These are to be taught by spiritually mature women.)
- 2) The changing role of women and this affects their traditional responsibilities
- 3) Provision of emotional support and outlet, especially in areas of forgiveness, love, security, acceptance, relationships, compassion and her man (if married.)
- 4) Reinforcing roles and responsibilities in the church and at home.

- **Practical advice for teaching adult disciples**

The focus of adult learning should be on the individual, the message of the Bible directed to the whole person, namely, mentally and emotionally. Efforts must be made by the teacher to encourage each adult disciple to personally participate as the teacher guides them to discover truths and insights from the Bible. Adults also need to participate in serving the church. Consequently, they need to have knowledge, attitudes and skills to enable them participate in the ministry of the church.

## **Part 2: Teaching College/Career-aged Disciples**

*Ask the class to explain what the unique characteristics they have noticed about this age group in their own geographical setting and later explain this life stage description, spiritual needs, biblical priorities for their growth and the practical advice they can suggest for their growth.*

*Allow a few minutes for discussion before giving the following explanation.*



This age group category is the most mobile, individualistic adjustment oriented, full of originality and very productive of all the groups that the church deals with. It is consequently the period when the teaching opportunity is most effective. It is also the age range when cultural demands such as the desire to succeed, family, social and moral pressures exert their greatest pressure on individuals, hence the need for teaching to help them cope with them.

- **Life stage description: unique characteristics**

- 1) Detachment:

This age category of singles may experience a period of detachment and their living pattern may be described as fluid. At least one half of this age group changes residences in a year: in other words, the mobility rate continues to be high through this period continues to be high.

- 2) Individualistic:

This age category is the most individualistic of all of life. They rebel at the invasion of their privacy even though they may suffer loneliness in doing so.

- 3) Adjustments:

At this age group happy youth days are gone and an organized way of life takes place. Making adjustments brings a change in personality. In spite of the changes, this is usually the period of great happiness, possibly caused by two of life's happiest events-marriage and the birth of children.

- 4) Originality and productivity:

These characteristics develop during the young adult period. Many great inventors did their best work in this early period of adulthood.

- 5) Greatest teachability:

This life stage of development is at the peak of learning ability and is keen and sensitive and ready to learn. This period is the fullest of teachable moments and the emptiest of serious efforts on the part of teachers of young adults. Our churches should and can reach, minister and teach them to meet their spiritual need for Christ.

*Before teaching the next section section,*

*Ask: what are the spiritual needs of this stage of life development? How does the aspect of social acceptance bear upon this group's educational process in the church?*

- **Spiritual needs of C/C disciples:**

The greatest need of this category is Christ. Basic felt needs such as gaining and maintaining status, achievement, vocational choice, choice of spouse, character development, family responsibilities and social acceptance may cause them to stay away from church, realizing that vocational success is usually essential in order to achieve and hold to a social position. Some even frequently grow indifferent to their earlier beliefs, while others may reject them altogether.

Our churches should and can reach this group and minister to their needs. Usually this stage responds to churches that show interest in them and make adequate preparation for them.

- **Biblical priorities for the growth of C/C disciples**

*Ask the class to suggest according to their experiences the biblical priorities for the growth of College/career age singles. Write these suggestions down and later ask the class to discuss each suggestion.*

*Also, ask the class to identify areas which to be focused upon in undertaking Christian education in their local church*

In order to meet both the spiritual needs and biblical priorities of this age group there is need for them to be taught by spiritually mature men and women.

Teaching therefore should focus should be on: -

- 1) Dealing with issues of God's will, career and job choices
- 2) Teaching on how to deal with sexual temptations
- 3) Providing some pre-marital training
- 4) Providing forum for current issues
- 5) Building biblical relationships

- **Practical advice for teaching C/C disciples**

Since young adult singles prefer to associate with persons in their own age, they need to be in a group of their own in studying the Bible in the church. Despite being in a group, especially in the Sunday school program, they should be taught as individuals because each person perceives the Bible concepts in a unique way. In addition, the focus of the study should be on the message of the Bible.

### **Part 3 – Teaching Youth Disciples**

- **Life stage description: unique characteristics**

Youth experience biological and physical influences. They are also torn between family values and other values. Though they enjoy the security of the family, they also must have peer acceptance, which is great youth need. Consequently they tend to attempt to make life-changing decisions but without the background that an adult has on which to base their decisions. Youth also possess positive areas of emotions that exist in youth include learning how to love and care for people. Negatively, youth live in a world of frustrations in that they see the differences in what they are and who they want to be. Whilst they dream of the ideal, yet they see what is realistic, which may result in lack of compassion, anger, feelings of depression, or a mixture of other emotions.

. Hence the natural affinity youth have to other youth in the program of youth ministry.

*Ask: what are the common spiritual needs of youth in your own locality. Ask the class to discuss the question and bring a report toward the beginning of class*

- **Spiritual needs of youth:**

Faith in Christ is tied to their relationships in the church, family, school, self, and peers.

. There is also need for youth to develop their sense of trust, especially during this time of questioning. To this effect, they also need guidance in their faith. Therefore opportunity should be given for them to serve in the church. Youth also have a need to discover their identity.

Youth also have moral conflict and thus need to be helped by teaching and modeling as they grow.

- **Biblical priorities for the growth of youth disciples:**

These should be taught by a mature couple or man or woman if divided into groups of boys and girls.

Focus on:

- 1) Dealing with matters of peer pressure, school, drugs, sex, alcohol, dating and respect for adults.
- 2) Youth must be taught to put their trust in Christ and to rely on Him. They also must be helped to develop a biblical value system.
- 3) Reinforcing support group.
- 4) Strengthens foundation for wise decision-making.
- 5) Provide role models of mature Christians.

- **Practical advice for youth ministry**

Many youth are open to God's call to church vocations. Thus help should be rendered to youth to "test" the sense of calling. Also youth should be introduced to a variety of expressions of ministry. Youth should also be helped to identify maturing gifts and given abilities to exercise them..It is also important to be available and willing to listen as youth talk through their feelings and emotions while also helping them to avoid the problem of too much or too little emotion. Also, involve youth in ministry and mission and be patient with them, while at the same time affirming.

#### **Part 4 – Teaching School-Aged Children**

- **Life stage description: unique characteristics**

*Ask the learners about their experience regarding how children in their church and community grow according to their ages. Provide time for discussion before embarking upon the explanation below:*

## Explanation

Children, especially ages six to eleven years are mainly of school going years in which children pass through tooth looseness and the loss of baby teeth. During this period children think literally and concretely. They also like friendship with age-mates and being in groups with them. They love rituals and celebrations.

Children development is associated with the cause which produces the effect in them. Thus they like imitating what they see in others. In order to understand a child, it is important that all areas of a child's development, namely, physical, mental, moral, spiritual, social and emotional are taken into account.

The rate of development is a product of maturation and of learning and, a child cannot learn until he is developmentally ready.

- **Spiritual needs of children:**

*Ask the class to tell their experience of what they know about the spiritual needs of children in their church and community and follow the question with the explanation below:*

*Ask, why is it important for the church's bible teaching program to take seriously the teaching of children, youth and college/career disciples?*

## Explanation:

a. Children need love, trust, security, guidance, acceptance and self-respect.

b. Children (six to eleven): Children need the family as the first environment and sets the pattern for attitudes toward people, things, and life in general.. The family is the home base from which children venture successfully or unsuccessfully into the larger world of others.

Consequently parents who are warm, mature adults are a great need for children. These provide affection, encouragement, consistent guidance and example. Consequently, they provide personal relationships with their child thus providing the personal security that leads to self-confidence, mental health. Parents also provide structure in the form of rules and limits and support in the form of love, affection and gentleness.

In addition, children need sibling relationships so that they can learn how to love and get along with their own brothers and sisters. Also, this provides an underlying feeling of belonging to each other in the family. This is made easy when a warm relationship with their parents is established. The siblings will act as a testing ground for forming relationships with other children.

Children also need peers, that is, the need for other children in order to develop a sense of adequacy about themselves. Peer groups also provide companionship that helps the child to avoid boredom and loneliness. The peer group is also a great teacher of rules and logical consequences.

Lastly, children also need the community

- **Biblical priorities for the growth of children**

Focus on:

- 1) Providing opportunities for each child to be more aware of the body God made for them.
- 2) Teaching four and five year-old children to know about God as the one who made them, provides for their needs, loves them and maker of everything that are in the natural world.
- 3) Teaching them about the presence of Jesus at all times.
- 4) Teaching them bible stories about Jesus.
- 5) Singing songs about Jesus.
- 6) Showing pictures about Jesus.
- 7) Speaking about the name of Jesus at a time the child has his needs satisfied.
- 8) Teach about the Bible by providing the child with a Bible in real-life experience.
- 9) Teach the child to make the Bible the most important reading material.

Learning helps children to discover how to make accurate, consistent predictions about life. In order to help children to learn the teacher should focus on providing learning by example, association and consequences. In addition, aim for the following goals of learning: -

- 1) Aim at providing ways that will promote thinking through the process of reading exercises, counting, and knowledge about facts, memorization of biblical passages, reasoning and problem solving in order to provide creative thinking.

- 2) Teach about feelings. Teach children to be emotionally healthy; to be aware of all their emotions, both positive feelings (such as happiness, love, pleasure-enjoying playing with the family) and negative (such as distress, sadness, pain and crying when something valuable is lost) and to express emotions in an appropriate manner.
- 3) Teach how children can do something so that they may gain some competence in such areas as self care, physical activities, to develop self discipline and delay gratification. Consequently the teacher should involve children in playing sports, doing household chores, working with parents, saving money to buy what they want.
- 4) Teach about self-concept in order for them to accept themselves and have a realistic sense of their own abilities and weaknesses. To enable them to appreciate that God made them very good.
- 5) Teach about relationships: Teach them to love and care for others to communicate effectively with others through understanding and acceptance of others. Teach them to share ideas and feelings with others. Also teach them how to respect authorities and how to obey them.
- 6) Teach how to promote the development of moral and biblical values so that they can develop Christian values of love for God, love for family, love for one's neighbour, respect for all men and women, personal purity, honesty, goodness and stewardship of time and possessions. In order to do so, teach using biblical stories
- 7) Providing godly adult models

These are to be taught by spiritually mature men or women

- **Practical advice for teaching children**

Provide the following conditions for learning: -

- 1) Motivation - Allow children to learn by participation
- 2) Proper timing – A child cannot learn till he is ready and mature to master a task. To determine how to know that the child is ready, ask questions such as, is he interested? Does his interest continue? Does he show improvement?
- 3) Practice – a child needs practice in order for him to learn
- 4) Guidance – Practice must be directed by the teacher.

## Part 5 – Teaching Preschoolers

**Preschoolers:** For preschoolers (Babies to fives): This age group can be divided into babies, creepers, toddlers, two, three, four and five-year old children.

- **Life stage description: unique characteristics**

Generally, preschoolers are active, curious, imitative, imaginative, have limited attention span, self-centered and sensitive.

- **Spiritual needs of preschoolers:**

- **Babies:** The basic needs of the baby are love, security, and attention to his physical needs. The baby's feeling of security is strengthened when he is cuddled and loved. The baby's hearing is also sensitive and the baby jumps at loud noises or voices. He or she is upset quickly. Consequently, the teacher should provide a clean, attractive, serene, and happy atmosphere for the baby.

The very small baby spends a large percentage of the time sleeping. When he or she is awake, she cries to announce his or her physical needs such as food or diaper change. Therefore, a clean bed should be provided for churches that can afford such facilities or space provided for mothers to care for their babies when these needs arise. When the church can afford bed facilities for babies, the mothers should leave with the teachers a bag containing clean diapers and food, as well as any instructions for caring for the baby. When the needs of the baby are met, the parents feel at home to leave their babies and participate in church activities to enhance their own spiritual growth.

*The instructions above may not be applicable to the rural or peri-urban churches. However, churches should provide facilities that will allow mothers of babies to have opportunities to participate in church activities so that they are not deprived of their own spiritual growth.*

- **Toddlers:** This refers to a child who is learning to walk. The toddler needs time and patience to help with his or her physical growth. Most of this child's



attention is focused on learning to coordinate the muscles so that he or she can function in an upright position. Consequently, children's workers should help the toddler to achieve this need.

The toddler also needs plenty of space to move about. He or she puts everything in his or her mouth. Sharp objects that can cause injury or could be or she can swallow should be removed from the room. Electric outlets should be covered.

Classroom procedures should be informal, leaving the child to play without interruptions while at the same time, keeping a careful watch over him or her. The child should be permitted to do as much for himself or herself as possible. The toddler usually is clumsy and stumbles and falls. Children workers should not ridicule or laugh at him or her when he or she falls. Instead the children worker should encourage the child to pick him or herself up.

- ***Two-year olds:***

This category of preschooler is interested in his or her surroundings and prefers to play alone. He or she should therefore, not be given a rigid schedule. It is too much to ask the two-year to sit in a group to listen to a story.

The teacher should therefore provide safe materials such as dolls for girls, blocks, toy motor-cars, dishes that are adapted to his or her interests. The two-year old loves to ask questions and can sing simple songs. He or she likes stories about mommy or daddy or other persons related to him or her.

- ***Three-year olds:***

This child is far ahead of the two-year old in development. He or she can enjoy various activities, such as listening to brief stories and learning short Bible stories, verses and songs. Since or she forgets easily, he or she must be

encouraged to repeat songs or even verses often in order to remember them. Care should be taken not to overload this child with information he or she cannot absorb.

This is a period of marked insecurity and lack of balance and coordination. Therefore, the child may have difficulties in relating to other persons. He or she desires attention and may become jealous when parents give attention to another child in the family. Therefore, this child needs much patience and understanding on the part of the teacher. Severe reprimands will only make such a child much worse.

○ ***Four year-olds:***

This child does not feel any limits and will stop at nothing. He or she is proud of the words he or she has learned. At this stage this child is daring and has to prove his capabilities and does not always recognize the dangers involved in needing to exercise his or her freedom. The teacher needs to be firm in placing limits on him or her for his or her own good. The four-year old is also a good conversationalist. And thus asks many questions that show evidence of the desire to learn.

○ ***Five year-olds:***

These are characterized by independence, which is shown activities such as dressing for self without the help of parents, activity and feels happier when busy. Has ability to concentrate on a given activity though has difficult to finish it. He or she is group conscious, curious, has limited attention span, imaginative, sensitive and realistic. This category is also susceptible to diseases..

The five-year old is basically good, well-adapted, stable and confident. He or she is friendly, calm, and capable. Because he or she likes to be obedient, he

or she wants to be told what to do, or will seek permission to live with, his energy and mischief are often trying to parents.

## **Part 5 – Lesson Review**

1. What is meant by age-group ministries? Why is it necessary these groups to be taught separately?
2. Outline the spiritual needs of adults. How are these needs met in the Church's Bible teaching Program?
3. Explain why the church's Bible teaching program should consider college/career young adults in their program? How do their life stage developments demand that they be also an important component of the education program of the church?
4. What are the Biblical priorities related to adult disciples, college/career young adult disciples, youth and children disciples?
5. Why it is very important for children to be considered for inclusion in the church's Bible teaching program? We sometimes see children neglected in Christian education. Is this acceptable?
6. From what we have learned concerning children disciples, how does the programme meet their spiritual needs and biblical priorities for their growth?
7. How do learning by example, association and consequences affect children disciples' learning?

## **Lesson 4 – New Member/Discipleship Class**

### **Introduction:**

This lesson is designed to provide spiritual basics for beginning Christians. It covers material that will enable new church members to know how to commit their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, to be rooted in Him thereby reflecting an understanding of Christian beliefs and conduct and how to be fruitful as they participate in the worship of our living God and his Son Jesus Christ, evangelism and missions, work of the church ministry and fellowship of the saints until they come to maturity in Christ.. This lesson composes three main sections, namely new church member training, discipleship of new church members and an introduction to the study of the Bible.

This lesson will cover the following topics:

- The meaning and description of new church member's and discipleship classes.
- The purpose and composition of the new members' and discipleship classes.
- The composition of the class, namely, the students and the leaders.
- How new believers will become familiar with the contents of the Bible such as knowing how we got the Bible, surveying the New and Old Testaments.

### **Part 1 – What is a New Members/Beginning Discipleship Class?**

*Ask: What is a new member/beginning Discipleship class?*

*You may add an anecdote such as: A Child is taught while he is at home and before he immerses himself in community affairs. Or, an uninitiated child will be an embarrassment to his family among his in-laws*

In other words, a church member who is not initiated in the basics of the church and its beliefs will mess up the Lord's work.

- **Definition of the class:**

The new member class is designed to teach new members what it means to be a member of the church

- **Purpose of the Class:**

This class introduces new members composed of those who have been incorporated into the church, to understand what it means to be a member of the church. It also introduces them to the purposes of the church, the requirements, responsibilities and benefits of church membership. The class also explains to new members the vision, strategy and organization of the church. The class is also intended to elicit commitment from new members at the time they join the church.

- **Composition of the class:**

- Students – The class is composed of those who have regularly attended the church for some time and are also listed in the prospect file with a view to incorporate them into the body of the church as members. These must show commitment in order to be incorporated into the membership of the church. Other persons that should be enrolled in the new member's class are the candidates for Baptism.
- Leaders – The class should be taught by the pastor Himself or a mature leader appointed by the church.

## **Part 2: What is to be included in these classes?**

- **New Members Class**

The New Members class should include everyone who joins your church. This class should cover the following topics:

- Your salvation – making sure you are a Christian
- The symbols of salvation, namely, Baptist and Lord's Supper
- What is a church?
- The history of our church
- Why does this church exist?
- Our church covenant
- What do we intend to do as a church?
- What do we believe?

- How do we live as Christians?
- The history of our church
- The people we are trying to reach - our target
- The process of Christian growth
- How our church is organized for growth
- Our affiliations
- What it means to be a member
- How can you get involved in the ministry of the church

- **Discipleship Class**

This class may take longer than first one above. Each topic will take one session. It is composed of persons who have prayed and confessed and repented of their sins and have expressed their need to follow Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. In order to reach that goal, they will need to be committed to follow in a series of the following lessons that will make them spiritually mature in Christ. These will include:

- Assurance of salvation
- Understanding the three stages of salvation
- How to have time with God alone
- The sources of authority
- How they can use the Bible as a source of their Christian growth
- Learning how they can be able to pray
- The church as the body of Christ
- Being a member of the body
- Living in obedience to the teachings of the Bible
- Christian service and Christian giving
- Understanding the two natures
- Understanding the three stages of salvation
- The Lordship of Christ

- **New Believer's Bible study class**

This lesson will help the new believer to get acquainted with how we got the Bible, and

be familiar with the important details and theological themes Old Testament that are found in the five books of the Law of Moses, the Books of History, the Writings and the Prophets. It will also help the new believer to be aware of the important teachings on the major historical and theological themes of the New Testament.

The section will include material that should contribute to the student's understanding of the history and content of the books of the Bible. To this end, the lesson should cover the following topics: -

- How we got the Bible
- Old Testament Survey, including:
  - Books of the Law of Moses - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy;
  - Books of history - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings and 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.
  - Writings - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs.
  - The Prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.
- New Testament Survey, including:
  - The Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
  - Book of History – Acts of the Apostles
  - Letters of the Apostle Paul – Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.
  - General Epistles – Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John and 3 John, Jude.
  - Apocalyptic – The Revelation of John the Apostle.

### **Part 3: Practical advice for leading a new member class**

- Recruiting tips: The church needs to take note of those who respond to the preaching of the Gospel and have received Christ as Lord and Saviour. These must be written down on the prospect list.

The church can also include on the prospect list those who regularly attend home bible studies and enroll them in the new members' class.

- Teaching tips:

The **new member's class can be taught in a four-hour period in one day**. The teacher may use the Socratic (question and answer) method during the teaching process. It is also important for new member class participants to be given an opportunity to ask the matters of concern regarding church membership. This lesson can be taught in one or two sessions.

The **Discipleship class may take longer since it requires concentrated teaching on each topic**.

The **new believer's Bible study class can be taught one lesson for each week day or be taught for a concentrated period of one or two weeks**.

- Evaluation tips: At the end of the class, the teacher may use questions to draw out answers from learners and may also use a questionnaire that will elicit the learners' responses to the lessons.

### **Part 4: Lesson Review**

In this lesson we have studied what is involved in having and implementing the New Member church training, discipleship class and new believer's Bible study class.

1. Why is there then for a new church member training and discipleship classes?
2. How is the purpose of the new believer's Bible study class? How does this help a new believer to grow to maturity in Christ?



## Lesson 5 – The Leadership Training Class

### Part 1 – What is a leadership Training Class?

Ask:

*What is a leadership Training class?*

*Why is leadership an important requirement for the well-being of the church?*

*What is the purpose of a leadership training class?*

*Who should be included in such a class?*

*What leaders does your church have and how are these equipped?*

- **Definition**

A leadership training class is a class that the church has set aside to equip those of its members elected to leadership responsibility with knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them develop increased confidence in providing guiding in vision casting and the formulation of plans to actualize the vision of the church.

- **The purpose of a leadership training class**

This class is designed to equip those identified as church leaders with spiritual knowledge, attitudes and skills to carry out their responsibilities effectively and efficiently as they set goals, and formulate ways and means of achieving them.

- **Who should be included?**

The people that should compose the class include: deacons, counselors, outreach leaders, Sunday school leaders, Bible teachers, worship and evangelism leaders, secretaries, organization leaders adult and youth leaders, children workers and other ministry leaders.

- **The students**

Students should include those potential leaders discovered by the church nominating committee in the study of the entire membership roll, those recommended by other church leaders, and those observed by church members as they serve in the church:

○ **Leaders:**

*Ask: Who should take leadership responsibilities for this class?*

Existing leaders or qualified leaders from sister congregations, such as pastors,, deacons, teachers and other organizational leaders, may provide leadership of the class.

**Part 2: What do I include in a leadership Training class?**

*Ask: What guidance does the Bible provide regarding the qualifications of those who should provide church leadership?*

Explanation:

This class is designed to equip trusted church members to begin serving through various leadership responsibilities. The class will include the following topics: -

- Background knowledge that should incorporate knowledge of Christian doctrines (1 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:11-13)
- The history of the local church
- Church polity and organization
- What the church intends to achieve in order to function as the body of Christ and how it will achieve its goals.
- The church covenant, constitution and by-laws
- The church and its programs (Acts 2:42)
- Developing leadership skills (Acts 20:17-35; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- Stewardship (Gen. 2:15; Malachi 3:1-10; 2 Corinthians 8 and 9)
- Counseling and vocational guidance (Acts 20:17-35)
- Skills in family ministry

### **Part 3 – Practical Advice for leading a Leadership Training Class**

There are three practical aspects for leading a leadership Training class. These include, determining the recruiting process, the teaching tips and how the teaching will be evaluated.

- **Recruiting tips**

Before embarking on the composition of the class, it is important to determine the leadership needs of the congregation, analyze of existing leadership vacancies to be filled in and determine the requirements for filling in the vacancies. The church's nominating committee will lead the process of determining the requirements and also identify the students to be selected for inclusion in the class. Besides the nominating committee the church should give room to the existing leadership to identify those who are potential leaders and therefore need training. In addition, room should also given for members of the church to identify those they see as having the potential to provide leadership among them will be taught and how the outcome of the equipping task will be evaluated in order to determine its effectiveness.

- **Teaching tips**

The training of church leaders comprises both theory and practice. It is therefore necessary to embark on short-term general training followed by some practice in order to gauge the effectiveness of the general training process. In this case allowing the student to observe how leadership is carried out by existing leaders will give confidence to the learner to effectively carry out his or her responsibilities.

Consequently the use apprenticeship should be incorporated in the training of church leaders. During this period, the learner should be acquainted with the entire process and have an opportunity to do the total job. In addition, there should be an opportunity to have general workers' conferences that involve discussion of the administration of the work followed by sessions on how to carry out specific aspects of the tasks such as, visitation, lesson preparation,, sourcing teaching material, curriculum planning and evaluation of the work. This process will afford potential leaders to grasp the essential leadership skills.

Other training opportunities will include, preview studies, skill development clinics, additional short-term courses, denominational conferences, and the use of the church library.

- **Evaluation**

*Ask, how can you measure the effectiveness of your leadership training program?*

Leadership training can be improved by continual measurement of the effectiveness of the program. In seeking to evaluate the program, it is necessary that ask whether the training was relevant for the recipients of the training.

You may also ask whether the topics covered during the course were adequate to prepare candidates for leadership responsibilities. To do so, you may give students a questionnaire that contains things in the program that were helpful to the performance of their leadership responsibilities. And those they feel may not be relevant or helpful. The questionnaire may also contain what things they would have liked to learn in order for them to be effective church workers. In other words, allow the students to identify the strengths and weaknesses they found in the program.

You may also determine the effectiveness of the program by examining the number of leaders who participated in the training as against those who did not: the number of potential leaders involved in some type of preparation for service.

Finally, is there improvement in quality of work being done by leaders?

#### **Part 4 – Lesson Review**

1. Define church leadership training
2. What is the purpose of leadership training in the church?
3. Who should be included in the class of potential church leaders?
4. Who is responsible for the leadership training task?

5. Does the Bible give us guidance on what is involved in leadership training? Mention some of the Biblical passages that indicate the importance of training church leaders.
6. How would you recruit potential leaders for a leadership training course?
7. How would you measure the effectiveness of the leadership train

# Christian Education in the Church

## Final Exam

<p>1. Write down all the educational programs of the church of which you are a member. If you are not a leader of your church, ask your leader to provide the information and the times required for each part of the program to be done</p>
<p>2. Describe the church educational needs that each program meets</p>
<p>3. Explain the ways or manner in which each of these church educational programs is administered to fulfill its responsibilities</p>
<p>4. Why do you think you need a church education program for your church?</p>
<p>5. Explain why every church member needs to be involved in the church's Christian Education program.</p>
<p>6. Mention at least five of the most important Biblical passages that instruct the teaching of disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in the church.</p>
<p>7. <b>Note: For those who are oral learners provide answers to the examiner orally</b></p>