

LESSON 1

The Master Teacher

"Teaching was His chief business."

—J. A. Marquis



WHAT A DIFFERENCE a teacher can make! Think of the teachers you have known—some have inspired you, others have discouraged you. In your estimation, what distinguishes a good teacher from a poor teacher?

List characteristics for each type of teacher.



Poor teacher



Good teacher

If you are a teacher, or are considering becoming a teacher, you desire to be the best one possible. What does it take to be a quality teacher? No greater example of excellence in teaching exists than the example of Jesus. In contrast to the poor teachers of His day, Jesus was a superior teacher.

Mark 1:22: “And they were astonished at his doctrine [teaching]: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.”

Any teacher would love to have that response at the conclusion of a lesson! Though none of us will ever teach on Jesus’ level, we can improve our basic skills.

Why bother?

Why should we invest the effort to become effective teachers? For one reason, a good teacher can have a tremendous effect on students’ lives. Consider the potential influence of competent instruction. As teachers, we have the opportunity to

- **introduce students to Christ,**
- **motivate students to learn,**
- **expand students’ thinking,**
- **create goodwill among students, and**
- **encourage students’ spiritual growth.**

Pause and ask the Lord to give you the determination to be the best teacher possible. Record your prayer.



A careful appraisal of Jesus will help us to identify what made Him a good teacher.

Foundational Elements

Christ places prime importance on the **internal qualities** of a teacher. A godly character, a desire to serve, a commitment to teaching, and knowledge of the Word are the foundational elements of good teaching.



Character

Character is the sum of the inner qualities, or values, by which we live.



What influence does character have in accenting or diminishing your teaching?



Have you ever heard someone say, “What you are thunders so loudly I cannot hear what you say”? Good teaching begins with the character of the teacher. An instructor who possesses poor character creates a tension in the minds of the students. Instead of reinforcing the instruction, the teacher’s character detracts from its message. However, good character serves to emphasize and illustrate the verbal instruction.



What negative character qualities did the Pharisees possess?



Matthew 23:1-33.





What kind of impact could these negative character qualities have had on the Pharisees' students?



How would each of the following character qualities of a teacher enhance his or her instruction?

Holiness



1 Peter 1:15, 16, and 22–2:3.



Integrity



1 Peter 2:11–23.



Respectfulness



1 Peter 3:1–6.



Compassion



1 Peter 3:7-9.



Perseverance



1 Peter 4:12-19.



Humility



1 Peter 5:5 and 6.



Vigilance



1 Peter 5:8-10.





How would the absence of these qualities in a teacher's life affect his or her teaching?





Endeavor to have your character and your instruction communicate the same message. By doing so, you will multiply your teaching effectiveness.



Desire to Serve

Jesus said, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

Jesus' students knew He was there to serve them, not the other way around. Displaying the heart of a servant will significantly enhance your instruction.



In what ways might a teacher serve the students in the following scenarios?



A child sick at home



A teen in a school activity



A single mom



A new couple visiting the church



A widow



Stay alert for opportunities to serve your students. You will find the influence of your teaching extending far beyond the classroom.



Commitment to Teaching

Jesus functioned in different roles during His earthly ministry—as a healer, miracle worker, leader, and friend. In every one of His roles, He was a teacher. As J. A. Marquis said, “Teaching was His chief business.”¹ Once Jesus issued a call to two men to follow Him. One of the men requested, “. . . Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father.” Jesus responded, “Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God” (Luke 9:59–62). Teaching demands a wholehearted commitment. We must make the

development of our teaching a priority. Your commitment to teaching will evidence itself in your instruction in the following ways:

PREPARATION	of lesson, materials, and classroom
PRAYER	for lessons and students
PROMPTNESS	to greet your students as they arrive
ENTHUSIASM	in your presentation



Describe a particular teacher who shows a whole-hearted commitment to instruction. Pause and pray for that teacher.





Likewise, pray that you will maintain a high level of commitment to teaching.



Knowledge

Your knowledge level of subject material will greatly influence the quality of your lessons. By knowing your material, your confidence will increase and your students will be more attentive.

Jesus was a capable teacher because He was first a diligent student. He knew the Word.



Luke 2:41-52.



What evidence do you observe of Jesus' knowledge of Scripture in the temple when He was twelve years of age?





As you consistently practice these good learning habits, you will find yourself growing in your understanding of the Word.

TEACHING TIP

By preparing your lesson, you can grow in your knowledge of God's Word. Follow these tips to help you keep learning.

- Read your Bible repeatedly.
- Use quality curriculum.
- Add books and cassettes to your library.
- Listen to good Bible teaching.
- Prepare early.

