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J. J. TURNER
jeremiahinst@aol.com
www.jeremiahinstitute.com
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RESULTS: THE MAJOR PURPOSE OF TEACHING

J.J. Turner, Ph.D. ©

Remember these axioms: "*If you aim at nothing you'll hit it every time*"? "*If you don't know where you want to go, any old road will do*"? I have often wondered if these sayings weren't coined by trainers of teachers.

When a teacher walks into a Bible class the presupposition is he knows where he is going and how to get there. He had spent hours preparing his lesson to insure this fact. This lesson is not only biblical and organized around a logical outline; it has a specific RESULT as the goal.

Knowing What a Bible Class is Not

In order for a teacher to prepare balanced result oriented lessons, he must have a broad understanding of the basic purposes of a Bible class. One way to achieve this understanding is to know *what the purpose of a Bible class is not:*

1. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to take up an hour of time with no clear result in mind.

2. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to entertain those who attend the class.

3. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to bore those in attendance.

4. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to showcase the knowledge of the teacher.

5. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to keep traditions alive.

6. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to promote an agenda or grind an ax.

7. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to pool ignorance.

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8. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to create doubts or frustrations.

9. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to create a sounding board for gossip.

10. The purpose of a Bible class IS NOT to mutilate Scripture by haphazard exegesis.

➢ *The purpose of a Bible class is to study God's word with an aim to change lives as a result; and to bring God glory in the church (Eph. 3:21).*

✓ CHANGE is the ultimate RESULT of what is taught in a Bible class.

Specific Areas of Change Targeted for Results

In order to teach effectively for change a working knowledge, understanding and application of the major targeted areas of change is essential. Here are seven basic areas of change that are targeted for change by a Bible class lesson. Keep in mind that not all seven will be the target of every lesson.

1. Change in awareness. All change begins with awareness of the need, possibility, challenge, or consequence of an action. You can't do what you are not aware of. Teaching creates awareness. In Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost he made the Jews aware that they had crucified their Messiah, Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 2:22-47). Awareness is change from not knowing to knowing.

2. Change in knowledge. This is actually part of awareness, but seeks to increase the content and level of the student's knowledge relative to a specific subject or point. More specifically, it is the acquiring of knowledge; going from ignorance of a subject or point to knowing it. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

3. Change in thinking. We are the product of our thoughts (cf. Proverbs 23:7). God gives us the fruit of our thoughts (Jeremiah 6:19). Wrong thinking is what got Paul in trouble (cf. Acts 26:10-14). This is biblical repentance which means "to have another

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mind or change your mind" (cf. Luke 13:3). From a change in thinking a change in life is set in place called conversion.

4. Change in beliefs. What a student believes usually determines his attitude and behavior. Beliefs may be false or without biblical foundation (cf. Mark 7:7, 9). If a student believes he doesn't have to give, attend or pray, he won't be headed in a spiritual direction. Biblical teaching seeks to change a student's beliefs.

5. Change in feelings. It has been estimated that we make 90 percent of our decisions based on our feelings. We say, "I know the Bible says that, but I feel…". On the Day of Pentecost the Jews were "pricked in their hearts" (Acts 2:37), which led to their response to the Gospel. Feelings are fickle and difficult to deal with.

6. Change in skills. The Bible commands us to be "doers of the word and not just hearers" (cf. James 1:22-25). It takes "spiritual skills" to apply God's word in life situations. Faithful men must be "able to teach others also" (cf. 2 Timothy 2:1-3); this takes skills. Various leadership roles such as teaching, preaching, shepherding and doing the work of a deacon require skills.

7. Change in behavior. This is in harmony with the "old man crucified and raised to walk in newness of life." It is a change in walking in the flesh to walking in the Spirit; to being like Christ. It is moving from being served to serving. Most teaching will have an application to changing behavior—"put off to put on." Character improvement is included in this result.

Each of these seven categories of change has a number of subjects related to it. There is also an overlapping of change categories. The challenge for the Bible class teacher, as well as the student, is to be familiar with these categories. The teacher should prepare his lesson within one or more of these categories with an intentional result as an objective. The teacher may also share application ways and means that will help the student achieve results.

The subsets in the seven categories may include changes in (1) judgment, (2) decision making, (3) spiritual practices, (4) problem solving (5) habits, (6) routines, (7) desires, (8) information, (9) relationships, (10) attitudes, (11) experiences, and (12) perceptions. The key is to specifically identify the result your lesson is going to target.

Learning means a change has occurred in one or more of the above areas; especially in behavior. Learning is a process that includes numerous factors such as the

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emotions, verbal understanding, and ability to solve problems, perception and conceptual awareness, and experiences, all taking place synergistically.

The lesson has not been prepared until the result targeted has been identified.