



Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide

Devotional

The sinners who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour have started on a pilgrimage. They have received the gift of eternal life (John 17:2,3) and they have a desire in their hearts to grow in their knowledge of the God Who has saved them (Col. 1:10). They begin their pilgrimage by taking the first step.

We saw last month that the first step for every believer in his desire to know God is to LEARN all he can about God. That is the obvious place to start. What is God really like? What does God do? The problem is that many Christians have an incomplete or even wrong

THE BELIEVER'S FIRST STEP

view or picture of God, and this would be a hindrance in their pilgrimage to know God. Yet God has revealed Himself in His Word. In it He tells us what He is like, and

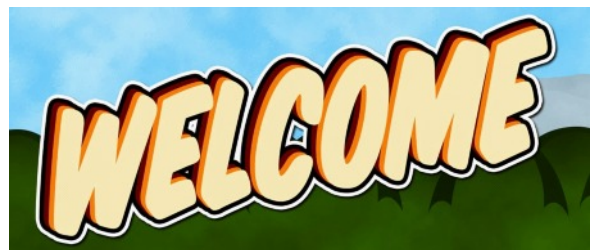
He expects us to study what He has written about Himself as the first step in our pilgrimage.

The first step for the pilgrim therefore is to read and study his Bible on a daily basis. When we are reading and studying a passage, we should ask ourselves the question "What does this passage teach me about God?" "Is there a truth about Himself, one of His attributes?" "Is there a truth about His work, His actions?" Write that truth down in a little book you keep for this purpose and meditate on what it means. Take a brief time to worship God on the basis of that truth. God has told you something about Himself and thank Him for doing so.

When I was a boy, I was fascinated by the thought of treasure, especially buried treasure. Would you like to find buried treasure? It is hidden and you must look for it. Truths about God are the treasure. Are you willing to start looking for them to-day in the Word of God? Start off with the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. You don't need to read the whole chapter. Then over a period of time, continue with the other 26 chapters. When you finish them, start "digging" in the book of Psalms.

Here is a map for you to follow in your daily treasure hunt:

- Choose the passage (in Isaiah or Psalms) you are going to read and study.
- Ask God to show you something about Himself or about His work in this passage.



A hearty welcome to every reader or downloader of this issue of Mini Mag, in which we will continue to try to encourage and help you in your devotional life and in your ministry to the children. One of the best ways of becoming a better teacher, or indeed, a better parent or a better preacher, is to conduct regular self-examinations of what you have been doing. Most of us find it easier to examine how others are teaching or preaching rather than to examine ourselves, and then to discover anything that needs to be changed. In our Mini Mags. We encourage you to examine your teaching, because self-examination can lead to great improvement for you and great blessing for the children.

- Write down in your little "Treasure Seeker's Manual" the truth which you have seen and learned.
- Think about this truth, meditate on it and ask God to help you to know Him better because of it.
- Worship God on the basis of this truth which you have learned.
- Keep thinking about it for the rest of the day as you have the opportunity to do so.

God will bless you as you continue, daily, to find these treasures and He will use them to help you know "the depth of the riches of the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD." (Rom. 11:33).

Children in the Bible

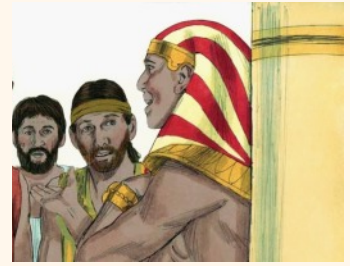
Joseph is one of the most interesting and most beautiful characters in the whole Bible. Unlike many other men and women of God, no examples of sin, deception or evil are recorded of him in Scripture. He was not sinless of course, but he was certainly a godly person in all places and at all times.

- ▶ He was godly in his home—when he was **IN**.
- ▶ He was godly away from home---when he was **OUT**.
- ▶ He was godly when he was in prison—when he was **DOWN**.
- ▶ He was godly when he was in the palace —when he was **UP**.

What a life and what a testimony to the grace of God. We see here in Genesis 37 a picture of a teenager who was uncomplicated, harmless and without guile, a picture of a teenager who was completely obedient to his father who gave him instructions to look for his brothers, and he persisted until he found them. What an example for children and teenagers to-day.

The Bible tells us in Genesis 37:2 that he was 17 years old, a later teenager; but we need to remember that a seventeen-year-old of those early years could likely be equated with a young person to-day in their early teens. This is backed up by the use of the Hebrew word “Naar” (translated “lad”) in verse 2, and by what seemed to be the childish naivety he displayed in recounting his dreams to his brothers and to his father. It is interesting, also, that Reuben, his eldest brother, as he looked back to what they had done to him, called him a lad (“Yeled”) in 37:30;

JOSEPH - the Godly teenager



and he called him a boy (“Yeled”) in 42:22. These Hebrew words (“Yeled” and “Naar”) are translated in the Bible as both “children” and “young people.” As we look at, and study, the life of Joseph, we can learn four lessons which will help us and encourage us in our ministry to children.

- The importance and value of the years before teenage years when children like Joseph can be helped spiritually by the words and witness of parents, and a foundation laid for the future.
- The tremendous impact and influence godly teenagers can have later in life and how they can become a blessing to many.
- That we, as children’s workers, should do all we can to continue teaching and ministering to our children as they enter teenage years, praying that they will also become godly teenagers.
- Above all, we learn from the life of Joseph that **TEENAGERS AND CHILDREN CAN LIVE GODLY LIVES**



KEY QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Question: We have a Sunday School in our church but almost all the children who come are children of church members. We as a church are burdened for the unreached children of our locality. Could you tell us how we could reach them with the Gospel?

Answer: There are two practical and effective ways you could do so:

1) If some of your church members would be willing to open their homes for a weekly meeting or Good News Club, and if they, or other church members, were willing to teach these clubs each week, you could invite the local children to attend them. A good number of children would come each week and enjoy, for sixty minutes, the singing, Bible quizzes, learning verses, hearing missionary stories and listening to an exciting Bible story/lesson.

2) In the summer months some of your young people could go out in groups of two or three and conduct meetings for the local children in the open air. A good number of the local children would be glad to attend and enjoy the singing, the learning, the quizzing and the stories. These meetings could be held either on a weekly basis throughout the summer, or

as a five-day club, meeting each successive day for one week.

Over a period of time, the aim in both types of meeting would be threefold :

- 1) To evangelize unsaved children
- 2) To help saved children to grow.
- 3) To encourage all these children to attend your church and Sunday School.

You could contact the nearest CEF office and ask if they would conduct training classes for all those who would take part, and you could also get good teaching materials from them. We in ACEW would be very willing to supply you with good teaching materials on the internet for the Bible lessons you will teach. Developing these two ministries would not only result in reaching many of the local children with the gospel; it would also be a means of spiritual growth for those who take part in them. At a later date you could also consider the possibility of organising a one-week series of children’s evangelistic meetings in the church, primarily for the local unsaved children, or a one week holiday club or a camping programme for all children.

Your Ministry to Children:

DON'T FORGET THE THEREFORES

We have seen, in the last two months, that the value and impact of your Bible lesson depends upon your understanding and use of a number of teaching principles like the principle of comprehension (You must understand what you are teaching) and the principle of concentration (You should concentrate and apply ONE truth in your Bible lesson). The third principle to understand, and follow, in your teaching is the **PRINCIPLE OF APPLICATION**. You need to challenge the children to respond to what they have been taught. Use the word "Therefore" to help you find the applications. That's what it is there for! Teachers of Bible lessons are often guilty of one of the following mistakes.

➤ They teach truth (which is good) but they do not apply that truth to the saved and unsaved children and do not challenge each group to respond to it.

➤ They challenge both groups of children to do something without basing their challenge on the biblical truth which recorded in the Word of God. Good teachers TEACH truth in the Bible lesson and, at the same time, APPLY that truth to the children and CHALLENGE them to respond to it. Teaching is primarily directed towards the mind, but application is directed towards the heart and will. Content results in knowledge; application results in action. You can see these principles being used together in the Bible. For example: in Ephesians and Romans the first section of each book is devoted to the teaching of truths and the last to the application of those truths.

Your teaching of a Bible lesson can be really quite simple and very logical if you follow these principles:

- 1) Find your central truth.
- 2) Outline the events in your story.
- 3) Decide where in these events you will teach the truth.



4) Decide where and how you will apply the truth to the unsaved children.

5) Decide where and how you will apply it to the saved children.

6) Always end with a brief final challenge (no pressure) to one or other group (or both groups) to respond.

You can see how these three basic principles fit together to give you a unified lesson in a logical blend of understanding, teaching and applying. In future issues of Mini Mag we will study and learn the key principles which will help us gain and hold the attention of the children while we are teaching our Bible lesson. Your planning and delivery of your lesson will be of no avail if the children do not listen to you or understand what you are saying.

Now comes self-examination time:

- Thank you for your teaching. I always use these three principles and God has blessed their use.
- I see myself only as a storyteller and teacher. It is the Holy Spirit alone Who applies what I have taught.
- I will look carefully at what you have taught and decide whether or not I use it. I am open to change.
- I am interested and challenged. I am going to use this pattern of teaching from now on.

Are any of these reactions yours?

HELP!



ACEW CAN HELP YOU

We have produced a book which will show you, step by step, and in detail, how to teach an effective Bible lesson to children. It is called "U-Can Teach a Bible Lesson to Children" and it is available, free of charge, on our web site www.cefbookministry.com. You will find it very helpful.

Each month we write about using illustrations in our Bible lessons to help children to see and understand what we are teaching. Where can you find good and suitable illustrations? Go to our web site and download our book "Now I See It." You will find, in that book, over 550 good and effective illustrations of more than 150 Bible truths which are all directed towards the needs of children. Each illustration is linked to one or more truths to help you teach that truth.



I SEE IT

Eureka!

Have you ever heard of the Berlin wall? After the second World War, the city of Berlin in Germany was divided into two parts. The Russians controlled one part, and USA, France and the United Kingdom the other part. To keep people from leaving the Russian part, the Russians built a high stone wall between the two parts of the city and put guards on it so that no-one could get out. Walls like this result in separation.

Did you know that there is a wall between God and us. It is the wall of our sin. (Isaiah 59:2)

SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD

An ILLUSTRATION for CHILDREN

Because we have sinned and because God is holy, we are SEPARATED from God and can never go into His presence or into Heaven when we die. This is a wall you cannot climb over, or dig under, or get around. There is no way out for us. But the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ died on the cross to take the punishment for all the sin which separates us from God, and when we trust Him as our Saviour we are saved. God becomes our Father, and we are no longer separated from Him

72 Years and Still Learning:

YOUR MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITY

As a young Christian and an inexperienced children's evangelist I knew that I should take time each day to be alone with God. I did not know when to have it, how long it should be and what exactly I should do. In the years which followed I believe that I found the answers to most of my questions. I learned firstly that my daily Quiet Time or Devotional Time should be the most important part of my day and of my ministry. If we don't have a daily Quiet Time, our spiritual life and our ministry will both suffer. As I grew in my Christian life, I made several discoveries.

- 1) That it is necessary to have a Quiet Time each day, and if possible, to have it at the same time each day provided circumstances do not interfere.
- 2) That the best time is early in the morning preferably before breakfast, even if it means getting up earlier, although some people find that it suits them better to have it late in the evening or early in the afternoon.
- 3) That our Quiet Time needs time. It should not be rushed. It could be 30 minutes, 45 minutes or an hour.
- 4) My most helpful discovery was to make a prayer book with a written plan to guide me in my Quiet Time. Others have found my suggestions to be a help.

Page 1 is a Worship page. List several of God's attributes and worship Him DAILY with them as your basis.

Page 2 is a Thank You page. List personal and family blessings and thank God DAILY for them.

Page 3 is a Family page. List the names and needs of all your family members and pray for them DAILY.

Page 4 is a Personal page. List your own personal needs and pray DAILY for them. Confess any known sin.

Page 5 is a page where you list remote family members like cousins and pray for them DAILY.

Pages 6-12 Each of these pages is tiled Sunday to Saturday. At the top of each page put one of God's attributes which has been a special blessing to you and worship Him WEEKLY on the basis of that attribute. Also add on each page the name of a co-worker and his/her needs and pray FOR THEM weekly

Pages 13-44 Each of these pages has a monthly date on it. On each page list one thing to thank God for MONTHLY and the name and needs of a friend to pray for MONTHLY.

You might find this pattern of using seven prayer pages each day (five with daily requests, one with weekly requests and one with monthly requests) as helpful as I did. You could adjust it to your own needs. Start with a small number of brief prayer requests on each page. They will increase and expand with time.

The Mini-Mag is published by Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide and written by Sam Doherty with the assistance and advice of Terry Flannigan, Administrator of the ACEW Trust, and Kenneth Martin, Chairman of the ACEW Trust.

All of them have occupied leadership positions for many years in the worldwide ministry of Child Evangelism Fellowship®. The contents of each Mini-Mag are based upon the author's 70 years of experience working with Child Evangelism Fellowship, successively as national director of Irish CEF, as European CEF regional director and as founder of the CEF Specialised Book Ministry. Contact can be made at www.CEFBookMinistry.com.

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