



Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide

Devotional

To get to know your new next-door neighbour you need to **LEARN** all you can about him, and then **LOOK** at him to see what he is like. Thirdly, you need to **LISTEN** to what he says to you and **SPEAK** to him in return. The same principles apply if we, as believers, want to know God. To know God, we need to **LEARN** about Him and His attributes in the Bible; we need to **LOOK** at Him as He is revealed in His Son Jesus Christ; and we need to build up a good relationship and good communication with Him by **LISTENING** to Him and **SPEAKING** to Him. If you do not communicate with God on a regular basis, you will never get to know Him.

Your communication and conversation with God consists of two parts:

GOD WANTS YOU TO LISTEN TO HIM. (Psalm 119: 105,130)

The Bible is God's letter to you and this letter consists of His very Words to you. As you read these words, you are **LISTENING** to Him.

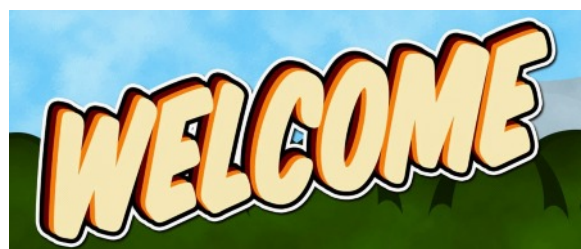
GOOD COMMUNICATION IS THE BASIS OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP

He speaks to you as your Heavenly Father. In this wonderful letter He expresses His desires for you and His plans for you. As you read it earnestly and

prayerfully, He can and will guide you, correct you, command you, warn you, encourage you and give you promises. The more you read it, and understand His desires for you, the more you will get to know Him, and the more you will be blessed in your personal life and in your ministry. If you really want to know God, make it your practice to have a Quiet Time every day and devote a good part of that Quiet Time to reading and meditating on what God says to you.

GOD WANTS YOU TO SPEAK TO HIM. (Psalm 91:15, Matthew 7:7)

For communication to be effective, both parties need to be involved. On the one hand, God speaks to us with authority, and on the other hand, we speak to Him, in the second part of our Quiet Time, with praise and petition. You speak to Him as your Heavenly Father. As you do so, you can **THANK** Him, you can **CONFESS** your sin and



We welcome you to the 29th issue of Mini Mag ready for downloading and reading. We trust you will find it really helpful in your desire to know God, in your desire to understand what the Bible teaches about children, and in your desire to teach and evangelise your children in the best possible way. If you have any questions about these subjects, or any other questions related to a ministry to children, please E-mail us at TFACEW@aol.com. We would **WELCOME** your questions.

disobedience, you can **ASK** Him for guidance, you can **PRAY** for your needs and the needs of others, and you can **REQUEST** that He will enable you to be what He wants you to be and to do what He wants you to do. Above **ALL**, you can, and should, **WORSHIP HIM** and **PRAISE HIM**.

What a wonderful conversation we can have with God every day in our Quiet Time as we LISTEN to Him and SPEAK to Him, and the more we do so, the better we will know Him. And don't forget that you can listen to God and speak to Him at any time and in any place.

This month we are looking at the first three chapters of 1 Samuel to see one of the most wonderful pictures of children in the Bible. Samuel was born in answer to the prayers of a godly woman called Hannah. She nursed him, weaned him and, I am sure, taught him God's Word. Hannah then took him, her young child (1:24), just weaned and probably around five years old, to the High Priest, Eli, to dedicate him to service in the House of God. (1:27,28). He ministered there to, and before, the Lord, (2:11,18, 3:1) under the direction and guidance of Eli (2:11, 3:1). During this time, he "grew before the Lord" (2: 21) and he "grew in stature and in favour both with the Lord and with men." (2: 26).

Throughout these three chapters, Samuel is called a child or a boy. (The Hebrew word "naar" used in the translation of both these words means "child" or "young child. "). The frequent use of this word plus the recording of his physical growth, and the picture we have of his naivete and childish simplicity, clearly indicate childhood, -possibly early childhood. But Samuel "did not yet know the Lord" (3:7) in a personal sense until that special evening, recorded in 3:4-11 when God spoke to him and called him three times. Samuel thought it was Eli who was calling him, but Eli assured him that it was God. So, when God called the fourth time, Samuel responded "Speak Lord for your servant hears." (3: 10) and we read that, from that time onwards, he "grew and the Lord was with him" (3:19). That was the

SAMUEL

-THE CHILD WHO HEARD GOD'S VOICE AND RESPONDED TO IT

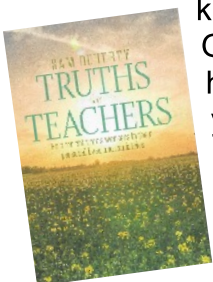


moment when this child came to know God personally for the first time and started out on a life of service for Him. He was still "a boy," (naar) (3:1,8) still a child, and still growing. (3:19). In the years which followed he became a prophet, a judge and one of the most godly of God's servants.

What a wonderful story. It is interesting that this little boy was one of only seven people in the Bible whom God called with their name spoken twice. (3:10) There is so much we can learn from the early years of Samuel:

- God calls children to trust and serve Him. He does not call them audibly as He called Samuel. To-day He calls them through the preaching and hearing of His Word.
- It is possible for children, even young children, to hear the voice of God and, like Samuel, respond to Him and have a relationship with Him.
- God uses people to prepare children for, and help them to respond to God's call, just as He used a mother's prayers and dedication, and a Christian leader's advice and direction, related to Samuel's call.
- May we all have the privilege of preparing children for the call of God.

We have written and printed a book which will help you in every part of your life and ministry. It is entitled "**Truths for Teachers**" and is available free of charge on the Internet at www.cefbokministry.com. It has six sections covering each part of a children's worker's life and ministry--his worship, his worries, his walk, his work, his knowledge of God's will and his use of God's Word. You will find each section helpful. In the light of this month's Mini Mag you will find the sections on your walk and your work to be especially helpful. Pages 193-198 will give you more information about building a good work.



HELP!



ACEW CAN HELP YOU

Your Ministry to Children:

Teaching is governed by a number of principles. In recent issues of Mini Mag we have studied the principles which govern the preparation of our Bible lessons—comprehension, concentration, application and organisation. However, no matter how well you follow these principles in your PREPARATION, your lesson will be a failure if you don't understand and follow the principles which govern the PRESENTATION of your lesson. If you follow these principles your lesson will be both enjoyable and effective.

In previous issues of Mini Mag we have already identified and studied three of these presentation principles.

- **THE PRINCIPLE OF ATTRACTION.** (Issues 13,14 and 15) A good teacher is an attractive person teaching an attractive message in an attractive way.
- **THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNICATION** (Issue 16) Speak clearly and use understandable words and concepts.
- **THE PRINCIPLE OF VISUALISATION** (Issues 17,18, and 19). 3 studies on how to use visual aids in your teaching. You can find all these issues on our website www.cefbookministry.com and you can study the sections involved. But there are a number of other vital presentation principles which you need to know, understand and follow.

THE PRINCIPLE OF EXPLANATION is probably the principle which is least followed by teachers. We need to understand that saying something is not teaching it. Children will not be helped when you TELL them "God loves you" if they do not understand who "God" is, what "love" is, or even what "they themselves are." It is not sufficient just

GOOD PREPARATION NEEDS GOOD PRESENTATION



to SAY "Jesus Christ died for your sin" if the children don't know who "Jesus Christ" is, or what "sin" is, or what "death" can do. Teaching means that you take time to make a truth really understandable to those who are listening, and this needs careful EXPLANATION. Even your repetition of truths will have no effect if the children don't understand what you are saying. I remember a type of Bible lesson presentation which I used many years ago in which I made it my goal to include seven truths in every lesson. I usually did include them, but only because I said them or stated them. However, I did not explain and teach them. Since then, I have learned to concentrate on teaching one central truth in each lesson and to explain it thoroughly so that the children can understand it and make an intelligent response to it.

The vast number of children in our world to-day don't understand the truths we want to teach them. We can't even take it for granted that "church children" understand key truths. They all need to be taught by teachers who are willing and ready to invest time and effort to EXPLAIN these truths, one at a time, in a way that is interesting and attractive but thorough. *I want to be one of those teachers.*



KEY QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

The Kingdom of God is defined as "the realm where God's rule is recognised and obeyed" or, according to John 3:3 "the Kingdom where all its residents have been born again and have received eternal life." Are all children in this Kingdom? Certainly not. The Bible teaches that everyone, including children, are born spiritually dead, (Eph. 1:1, 2:1, 6:1) with a sinful nature and outside the Kingdom of God, and therefore in need of salvation and conversion. All children, including babies, are born spiritually dead right from conception and from birth (Psalm 51:5) and will remain "dead" until they trust Jesus Christ as their Saviour and enter into the Kingdom of God. That is why children need to be evangelised, instead of being taught to be "better members" of a Kingdom which they are not in.

Those who believe that all children, or the children of believers, are in God's Kingdom usually base their belief on the words of the Lord Jesus in Mark 10:14 when He says "Let the little children come to Me for OF SUCH is the Kingdom of God." But the words "of such" (or "of people LIKE THIS") in this verse make it clear that the Kingdom of God is populated, not by little children, but by those who become "like little children," and trust Christ. That includes children who are already "like little children" and who have found it

ARE ALL CHILDREN IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

simple and easy to trust Christ. The following verse confirms this when the Lord Jesus says "Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as, (or LIKE) A LITTLE CHILD will by no means enter it" *A supplementary question asks, "What happens to a baby, who is outside God's Kingdom, when he dies?"* The Bible makes it clear that God judges people on the basis of what they know and understand about Him and how they have responded to Him. (John 3: 18, 36). It is their unbelief and rejection which condemns them. It is obvious therefore that a baby will not be judged or condemned. How then can a baby with a sinful nature who is outside the Kingdom of God enter into that sinless holy Kingdom when he dies? The only explanation is that God the Holy Spirit sovereignly justifies and regenerates that little baby when he dies, on the basis of Christ's death on the cross. As a result, that little baby goes to be with God. What wonderful peace this brings to the parents of a dead little one, and how wonderful it is to know that those millions of babies who have been aborted will all be with God in His Kingdom of Heaven.

David, a man after God's own heart, had this assurance that he would see again his little baby son who had just died (2 Samuel 12 :23), and this confirms what we have written.



I SEE IT

YOU ARE NOT SAVED BY BEING GOOD

*An Illustration
for children*

Have you boys and girls ever seen one of those old fashioned water pumps, where you have to pump the handle up and down to draw the water up? It was Phil's job to bring in the water every day to his mother in the kitchen of their old farm house. One day he discovered that the water coming out of the pump was dirty. So, he went to the farm and picked up a tin of bright orange paint and painted the pump orange. It looked nice but the water was still dirty. So, he got a tin of red paint and painted it again. But—no

change. He asked his father what should be done. His father asked him what he had done, and when Phil told him about painting the pump red and orange, his father laughed. "Paint won't help" he told Phil "the problem is inside the pump not outside." He opened the pump and fixed the problem on the inside and the pump worked perfectly. Going to church, wearing nice clothes and trying to be good are not enough. They do not solve the problem. They are all on the outside. **Only the Lord Jesus can clean and fix the inside when you ask Him to do so.**

72 Years and Still Learning:

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF EXAMINATION

One of the greatest lessons I have learned is the need and importance of keeping moving, developing and growing, and, if necessary, making changes in our lives and ministries to children. The Bible encourages us to do this and tells us how essential self-examination is during this process.

• **The Word of God teaches us to examine OUR LIVES continually**, and on the basis of His Word, to see if there is any need for improvement or, even, change in our lives.

"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves." (2 Corinthians 13:5)
"Let a man examine himself....if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged." (1 Corinthians 11:28,31)

The process of sanctification is an essential part of our Christian lives and if we follow God's instructions there will be development, growth and, if necessary, changes in our lives. (2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Peter 2:2). We cannot be more justified or regenerated but we can, and must, be more sanctified.

• **The Word of God teaches us to examine OUR WORK continually** to ensure that it is as biblical as it should be and if any changes are necessary. In 1 Corinthians 3: 5-17 Paul reminds us to be sure that we are building on the right foundation and that we are building with "gold silver and precious stones," and He tells us that our work will be tested "by fire" on the Day of Judgement. What a tragedy it would be if our work was burned up. So, we need to examine our work and ensure it is biblical and built on good foundations. Paul exhorts us to "take heed how we build." (verse 10).

We need to ask ourselves two questions:

► **Is your ministry to children based on the right foundation "which is Jesus Christ." Are you obedient to Him and His Word in your ministry? Are you dependent on Him and His power in your life and ministry?**

► **Are you using the right materials in building your ministry? The good building materials are the "gold, silver and precious stones" as revealed to us and given to us in the Word of God. Are you using them in your ministry to children?**

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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