

BASIC METHODS OF TEACHING

LECTURE

Know what you are talking about.

When you lecture, become familiar with your subject.

Use lecture in combination with other methods.

What the lecturer says needs to be supported by visuals, outlines, diagrams, graphic illustrations.

Focus and refocus attention.

Remember that there is a limit to the information processing capacity of human beings. They can't pay attention to too many things at once.

Make ample use of illustrations.

QUESTION & ANSWER

If you want specific information, ask specific questions.

If the teacher wants specific answers, he might ask, "Can we infer anything about Lot's religious faith from the crucial choice which he made when he parted ways with Abram?"

Express a concept, then ask learners for examples.

Paul once wrote, "The love money is the root of all kinds of evil." Can you think of people in the Bible whose lives exemplify this truth?

Pose hypothetical questions to stimulate discussion.

Here are some examples: Suppose you had been called upon to appear as defense attorney for Adam and Eve after they had eaten the forbidden fruit. What points might you have made in their behalf? If John the Baptist were living today just as he lived during the earthly life of Jesus, would your church welcome him as a member?

Pose problem-questions to stimulate thinking about certain biblical principles.

"If you had no other way to get food for your children, would you steal?" In connection with a study of the concluding 1 Thessalonians, this question was introduced: "In this passage we read, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil' (5:22). Yet, Jesus associated with people who were regarded as sinners. He was even accused of being a 'glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. (Matt. 11:19, RSV). In light of this, how should we interpret this passage?"

GROUP DISCUSSION

Group size should vary according to the purpose.

Just two persons may team up to work on short problem-solving assignments in class. For person-centered discussions in which the participants talk about their attitudes, values, and experiences, groups of three or four are appropriate. Five is about right for task-oriented groups.

Give discussion groups specific assignments.

"You will have thirty minutes to discuss these three questions:

What are the advantages of Christian discipleship?

What are the disadvantages of Christian discipleship?

What are the Christian's sources of power?

Give task-oriented groups a chance to report.

Provide essential resources.

Don't ask discussion groups to go beyond their level of knowledge.

Group discussion should not be a pooling of ignorance.

Group discussion is not a monologue.

When two or more groups are going in the classroom, it is best for the teacher to observe from a distance.

CASE STUDY

You present a problem situation to a small group for them to analyze and solve.

Develop your own case study from real life situations.

Disguise the names and descriptions of people and places to avoid embarrassment and possible legal problems. Occasionally stories in newspapers or magazines can be developed into case studies.

In developing case studies, concentrate on presenting facts.

Try to make the situation as real as possible with conversations between people, descriptions of events, and so on. The entire case study can be a creation with no direct tie to a real situation, but it must appear realistic.

Select or create case studies that fit the backgrounds and experiences of participants as well as fit the learning objectives.

Provide specific questions at the end of the case to direct the group members.

For example, for cases involving interpersonal problems, questions might be: What would you do? Why? With whom? How would you do it? When?

Give participants a specific time for working on the case study.

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is a method of problem solving in which group members suggest in rapid-fire order all the possible solutions they can think of. Criticism is ruled out. Evaluation of ideas comes later. – Leroy Ford

Purpose of brainstorming:

Brainstorming has been used for years in business, industry, government, education, and community groups as a popular and effective problem-solving and possibility-producing technique. The usefulness of brainstorming has been demonstrated in product improvement, program planning, and all sorts of problem-solving. 'In its freest form, this learning process that comes to mind without fear of criticism, laughter, ridicule, or any of the other ways in which creative and imaginative thinking is usually squelched in a group.'

The object of brainstorming is to break down barriers to creative thinking, elicit a variety of ideas from every person in the group, and, in short, generate as many ideas, solutions, and suggestions as possible.

The rules are simple:

No idea is too wild.

No idea may be commented on or criticized.

Ideas may be hitchhiked on or expanded.

Ideas may not be discussed in the first round.

The recorder writes down every idea exactly as stated.

Lucien E. Coleman, J., "How to Teach the Bible", 1979