



Training Children towards Biblical Literacy

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But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. – 2 Timothy 3: 14-17

Biblical literacy, in its fullest sense, aims to fully acquaint our children with the holy Scriptures so that they might know, honor, treasure, and glorify God, through Christ.

Nine principles for promoting biblical literacy in our homes and churches

1. Impress upon children a _____ for the holy nature of the Bible.

The Bible is much more than a story! It is “breathed out by God”. It is absolute, unchanging Truth! It is it is God’s authoritative Word.

- Our demeanor as we read and study God’s Word should reflect its holy nature.
- Provide instruction about the authority, inerrancy, clarity, necessity, and sufficiency of Scripture. (See “Be Ready to Answer Your Kids’ Questions About the Bible” by Jon Bloom at www.desiringGod.org)

2. Demonstrate a genuine _____ in God’s Word.

Our eagerness (or lack thereof) in reading and studying God’s Word will be evident to our children and students. (Psalm 119:16, 24, 35, 47; 174)

3. Develop a _____ strategy for acquainting children and youth with the entire Bible.

Read the Bible! This is especially applicable in the home.

- Establish consistent Bible reading in the home.
- Consider using age-appropriate Bible reading plans.

4. Over the course of their biblical education, proclaim the _____

Have an age-appropriate approach that presents the Bible from key theological disciplines/perspectives:

- Bible Survey/Chronological Bible stories
- Biblical theology
- Systematic theology



From Childhood You Have Known

Biblical Literacy For the Next Generations

- Gospel proclamation
- Moral and ethical instruction

5. Guide children to rightly _____ to and _____ God's Word.

Biblical literacy involves a progression of learning: Instructing the mind → engaging the heart → and influencing the will. The desire is true heart transformation, evidenced by faith in Christ and growth in Christian maturity. Never leave the heart and will untouched when teaching the Bible.

6. Instill in children the need for humble _____ on the Holy Spirit as they read and study the Bible. (John 14:26; 2 Corinthians 2:12 -13)

Begin and end Bible reading and study with prayer. While much "knowledge" about the Bible can be learned even by unbelievers, it is only by the working of the Holy Spirit that makes the mind, heart, and will alive to Christ and His ways.

7. _____ and _____ biblical truth to all of life.

Biblical truth is like a lens for seeing and interpreting *all of life*. No subject is outside its authoritative domain. (John 17:17; Romans 12:2)

8. Teach children to rightly _____, _____, and _____ Scripture by equipping them with age-appropriate Bible study skills.

Nursery (Toddlers) Bible Skills

- Tell simple Bible stories from both Old and New Testament
- Present key Bible themes about God, creation, man, sin, and Jesus
- Begin Bible memory with simple verses

Preschool Bible Skills

- Give children a wide scope of foundational chronological Bible stories
- Use the Bible as you teach and look for opportunities to read directly from the text
- Expand upon and review key biblical themes
- Make simple connections between individual stories as well as the Bible as a whole
- Use key themes and stories to present the Gospel
- Help children begin to understand the chronology of the Bible



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Biblical Literacy For the Next Generations

- Expand emphasis on Bible memory

Kindergarten Bible Skills

- Increasingly read directly from the biblical text where appropriate
- Write out key Bible terms and give simple but accurate definitions
- Write out a key verse/s and ask one of two questions from the verse
- Emphasize that God's Word speaks to them personally and is to be obeyed
- Begin teaching the books of the Bible in their proper order
- Emphasize the redemptive storyline of the Bible (the gospel)

1st - 2nd Grade Bible Skills

- Make sure each child should have his or her own "real" Bible
- Teach children how to find things in the Bible: Book, chapter, and verse
- Be intentional in leading students to interact with Bible during the lesson
- Demonstrate how to examine a simple passage of Scripture
- Expand the scope of biblical texts used by including passages throughout the Bible
- Use a variety of texts to demonstrate how key doctrines and thematic truths are arrived at

3rd - 5th Grade Bible Skills

- Begin to substantially increase the amount of text children interact with in a given lesson/setting
- In the classroom, carefully choose who will be reading the text/s – teacher or students
- Use guided questions and explanations to help the children properly interpret the text
- Have the children note key words, phrases, patterns, and the context of a passage
- Demonstrate how to look for and make connections between the Old and New Testament
- Introduce a few basic study helps: A concordance, Bible dictionary, maps, and timelines
- Show the basic chronological order of the books of the Bible

6th - 8th Grade Bible Skills

- Stress the importance of the objective meaning of the text
- Provide more formal training in inductive Bible study skills
 - Look for key words and phrases, repetitions, comparisons, transitions, etc.
 - Ask questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
 - Note the genre – Law, history, psalms, poetry, wisdom books, prophecy, gospels, epistles, etc.



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Biblical Literacy For the Next Generations

- Look for the context: What comes before and after a passage, its historical and cultural setting, and how it relates to the overall message of the Bible.
- Encourage the students to use underlining, highlighting, etc. as they examine the text
- Give students time to study, discover, and respond.
- Make clear connections between biblical truth and their lives and experiences
- Provide students with arguments for the reliability of the Bible
- Encourage use of age-appropriate Bible studies for personal use at home
- Review the major doctrines of the Christian faith

9. Foster a _____ partnership that promotes biblical literacy in both home and church.

By God's design, parents bear a unique responsibility for acquainting their children with God's Word and nurturing their children's faith. (Deuteronomy 6:4-7.) But the church also bears responsibility in teaching the Bible to children (Psalm 78:4-7) and encouraging and equipping parents. (Ephesians 4:11-16

- What is happening in our homes? Are parents fulfilling their responsibilities?
- How can the church encourage and equip parents?
- What is happening in our church classrooms? Is time devoted to biblical teaching the highest priority? Are the students actually interacting with the Word?

Additional resources

Bible reading resources for the home –

He Established a Testimony Coloring Book: Original (Sally Michael, 64 OT stories for ages 3-7)

He Has Spoken by His Son Coloring Book: Original (Sally Michael, 52 NT stories for ages 3-7)

Exploring the Bible: A Bible Reading Plan for Kids (David Murray, year-long plan ages 6-12. Videos also.)

ESV Illustrated Family Bible: 270 Selections from the Holy Bible (Crossway Bibles, out-of-print)

ESV Children's Bible (Crossway Bibles)

How to Study Your Bible for Kids (Kay Arthur, Discover 4 Yourself® Inductive Bible Studies for Kids – caution with regards to other books in this series)

The Inductive Bible Study Handbook (Sally Michael, youth)

Resources for parents and teachers –

What's In the Bible? (R.C. Sproul & Robert Wolgemuth)

Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith (Wayne Grudem & Jeff Purswell)

Taking God at His Word: Why the Bible Is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What That Means for You and Me (Kevin DeYoung)