

## Lesson 5: Teach Faithfully, Wisely and Well



### Teach Faithfully, Wisely and Well

Teach Faithfully

Wisely Maximize Dynamics

Teach With Skill

#### Introduction



#### Helps As You Start Teaching

- It may help if you can team-teach with someone for a lesson or two—that will really help if you are nervous.
- Find a mentor who is already teaching that can encourage you and walk through the process with you. She can help you with questions, lesson plans, or teaching styles.
- The Lord is faithful and his Word always works. Study hard and pray often, but trust the Holy Spirit to do his work. Be confident in the truth and power of Scripture.
- The Lord will give you words to say. It's not a cliché.

Let's walk you through what will happen, step-by-step as you teach class.

## **TEACH FAITHFULLY**

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To God be the glory—he has prepared you to teach!

### **Open With Prayer**

Before Bible study, spend time privately praying that God would bless your teaching. Ask him to keep you faithful as you teach God's Word. Keep praying while you teach, especially when difficult questions or comments arise.

When the Bible study begins, open with prayer. This is another place to engage other women. Do not ask someone to lead a prayer unless you have talked to them in advance. Tell women that you have asked someone to open with prayer so they don't worry about being called on to pray in front of others.

You may want to incorporate these Bible passages in your prayers:

*For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. (2 Corinthians 4:5)*

*May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart  
be pleasing in your sight,  
LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)*

Here is an example of an opening prayer:

Lord Jesus, it is a privilege and pleasure to gather together as sisters in Christ to study your Word. Bless our time together and strengthen our faith with your Word. Deepen our understanding of your truths and grant us wisdom as we learn to apply all that we have studied. When we see the truth of the law in your Word, pierce our hearts to see our sin, and then quickly comfort us with the blessing of your gospel. When we feel discouraged because we cannot keep all your commands, remind us that Christ has indeed lived a perfect life on our behalf. Help us focus on your amazing gifts of grace, forgiveness, and righteousness. May our time together leave us with joyful hearts, renewed faith, confidence in the gospel, and motivation to live for your glory. In the name of Jesus our Savior we pray. Amen.

See appendix for additional opening prayers.

## Teach What You Have Prepared

You have spent a considerable amount of time preparing to teach. The time you spent studying, praying, and talking with your pastor all prepared you to teach this class. Trust the power and influence of the Word—be confident that the Spirit will do his work. You have done the work, now it is time to simply present the material and teach the truth.



### Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

The learning objectives were planned as you prepared the lesson. Don't be distracted from what you have prepared to teach (unless you are experienced and know what you're getting into!).

Have participants read Scripture verses out loud and keep your Bibles open. Bible study should be a study of Scripture and the gospel should influence the conversations. The message of salvation will shed light on the Word and you should search Scripture to answer questions whenever possible.

## Watch Your Teaching Closely

*Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Timothy 4:16)*

A life of learning will keep you humble and dependent on Scripture. You teach Scripture—not your own thoughts. Recognize and respect the importance of handling Scripture correctly.

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)*



### What is False Doctrine and How Do You Avoid It?

Any teaching that contradicts, undermines, adds to, or takes away from God's Word is false doctrine (the word doctrine means "teaching").

*What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 1:5)*

The best way to recognize false doctrine is to study Scripture and know what is true. Learn God's Word so well that when something is untrue it doesn't sound right and draws your attention.

False doctrine appears in many ways and can be difficult to detect. Your pastor can help you see what to watch for.

The words of Paul to Titus are especially helpful.

*He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (Titus 1:9)*

*You, however, must teach what is appropriate to sound doctrine. <sup>2</sup> Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. <sup>3</sup> Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. <sup>4</sup> Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, <sup>5</sup> to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. (Titus 2:1-5)*

*But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone. (Titus 3:4-8)*

The words of 1 and 2 Timothy also give direction to those who teach the Word.

*The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. <sup>2</sup> Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. <sup>3</sup> They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. <sup>4</sup> For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. <sup>6</sup> If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. <sup>7</sup> Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. <sup>8</sup> For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. <sup>9</sup> This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. <sup>10</sup> That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe. <sup>11</sup> Command and teach these things. (1 Timothy 4:1-11)*

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16,17)*

Jesus spoke with perfect authority because he was the Word made flesh. As true God, his words and teaching were always perfect.

*When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, <sup>29</sup> because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law. (Matthew 7:28,29)*

The best way for you to follow the example of Christ is to teach Scripture and answer questions with Scripture. Your thoughts and opinions are not trustworthy nor do they carry Scripture's inerrant, inspired authority.

Reach out to your pastor with difficult questions or topics that come up. Women should know that the pastor continues to give you guidance—you should share his insights and the answers he offers. Remember that your teaching should build respect and appreciation for your pastor.



### Activity: Teach Faithfully

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It's your turn to Teach Faithfully

Step One: Write a prayer, hymn verse, or Scripture passage appropriate for opening Bible study with the group.

Step Two: If someone asked a question about addiction, how could you respond? (Don't forget about the Bible study resources you learned about in Lesson 1.)

Step Three: What epistles in the New Testament will be especially helpful for you as a teacher? (You are still applying what you learned in Lesson 2.) Make a reading plan so you return to their truths regularly.

## MAXIMIZE DYNAMICS WISELY

When women teach women there is a special connection. Watch the bond of Christ's love and fellowship bring them delight as they are learning. The interaction is very personal and encouraging. Encourage women to share—facilitate more than teach.

Any special learning needs should have been noted when you were selecting your audience, but once the class has begun, note how various participants are engaging. If someone regularly checks the table of contents in their Bible to find a book, you may want to say, "Let's look at Philippians 2:1" then add, "Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians." Help women stay engaged.



### Learn Teaching Skills From Your Pastor's Example

You can also learn teaching skills at your pastor's Bible studies. Listen to how he asks or answers questions and note any resources that he mentions—learn from his example as a theologian and teacher.

### Create Unity and Build Fellowship

Create unity and respect diversity. Make sure everyone is engaged, has a chance to talk, and feels included. Pay special attention to new participants or those who might struggle to fit in and look for ways to create cross-cultural or cross-generational bonds. Remember that women are very relational. They appreciate moments to encourage one another and build one another up.

Bible study participants will have insights and experiences to share. The personal interaction is a great blessing and builds up the body of Christ. Encourage their active participation and eagerness to ingest the Word of God. Women are often eager to make applications from God's Word and understand how their lives can reflect God's holiness.

Remember the joy of the Bereans, *"Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true"* (Acts 17:11).

It is also important for you to have a servant's heart and a spirit of servant leadership. Servant leadership puts Jesus at the center and works to connect others to him—it also connects believers to their pastor and congregation. It isn't about connecting them to you.

### **Troubleshoot People Pitfalls**

Inevitably, you will have situations that need a some loving redirection. Personalities and sinful natures can create conflict or raise tension. Don't be surprised to see Satan hard at work trying to divide God's people and edge others out.

Listen carefully for comments that are aggressive, accusatory, or divisive. Point women back to the attitude of humility, love, and unity. Help women soften any sharp opinionated edges. Encourage them to talk to their pastor if they are truly upset about something. You can't solve all the world's problems—you are there to point them to Jesus.

Engage other participants in the discussion with open, encouraging questions:

- “Are there any other comments?”
- “Any final questions before we move on?”
- “What else do we need to keep in mind?”

If you still struggle to manage Bible study discussions, don't be afraid to ask your pastor or an experienced teacher for insights or help.

### **Know What Adult Learners Need**

Adult learners have similar learning patterns—consider how you can adapt your teaching style for the benefit of others. Experts have found that adult learners need to understand why they are learning something. They aren't interested in extra information—it is more important for them to know how it benefits them. Keep that concept in mind and let it shape your teaching, because nothing benefits them more than learning God's Word—and you want to remind them of that truth.

Adult learners also appreciate learning when it allows them to solve a problem or address a struggle they face. Since everyone suffers under the curse of sin, God's Word is a ready and powerful solution. Help the participants connect the dots from the hardships and sin in this world to God's redeeming love story in Christ. Show them how personal Christ's love really is—help them meet God in the Word.





### Adult Learners are Unique

Educational specialists have identified and theorized similar principles for adult learners. Most adult learners value the process of learning as much as the content. Strategies such as simulations, self-evaluation, and role playing are powerful tools. The role of teachers should reflect a facilitator or resource more than one who lectures. These principles are also commonly accepted:

1. Adults need to know why they need to learn something.
2. Adults need to learn experientially (or relate the learning to their experiences).
3. Adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value.
4. Adults approach learning as problem-solving.



### Activity: Maximize Dynamics Wisely

It's your turn to Manage Dynamics Wisely

Step One: Plan an ice-breaker activity for your first Bible study that will help women build relationships with each other.

Step Two: What emotion describes how you might feel in a difficult discussion at Bible study: frustrated, defensive, threatened, intimidated, or afraid? How will you handle that emotion?

Step Three: Write down three reasons that women need to know God's Word better.

## TEACH WITH SKILL

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### Plans and Objectives

Don't second guess your plans, objectives, and preparations at the last minute. Trust the preparation and processes you have worked through. Follow what you have planned for your lesson and teach to your objectives. You may wonder if you have done enough preparation or if you will really reach women—but those are the wrong questions. Remember it is not about you. They will meet God in the Word.

Tangents often come up in class. One question leads to another and soon the topic is completely unrelated. If you are new to teaching, simply thank the women for the great discussion and lead them back to the lesson. Or you might let them know they have two more minutes for the discussion and ask if they would like to have a Bible study on the topic at another time.

A more experienced teacher may know how and when to use the opportunity for a beneficial discussion. Wisdom and experience will guide the decision of whether the teaching objectives can wait. You will need to determine the value of the discussion in a very short amount of time.

Manage the time you have well. Keep the group moving forward through the material but balance that stride with a sensitivity to the needs of the group. Earlier you gave consideration to the importance of completing a lesson in the allotted time. Remember that decision prior to Bible study so you know how flexible you can be.

### Managing Questions In the Classroom

Questions are a very important part of your teaching, and they should not be used randomly. Have your key questions planned and written out. Your word choices can make a huge difference in how participants will answer.

Give the participants time to think of their answer and figure out how they want to say it—do not rush them or start speaking. They will quickly learn to stay quiet if you always step in with the answer or additional comments. Wait 10-15 seconds (which will seem like an eternity).

Watch the faces of participants to see if someone has a thought they might share—but be careful not to embarrass anyone. If you know that someone doesn't mind being called on, you could ask, "Mattie, did that spark a thought?"

Questions that are answered with a simple “yes” or “no” limit discussion and should be rephrased if possible. If the answer needs to be yes or no, consider adding:

- “(yes or no)...and why would that be important?”
- “(yes or no)...and please explain your answer.”
- “(yes or no)...and can you provide an example or reference in Scripture that supports your answer?”

Redirect wrong answers and be cautious not to embarrass the person who answered (sometimes it could be your fault because you asked a bad question!). If part of the answer is correct, pick up that thought and ask for other ideas, “Yes, he was from the tribe of Judah. Do we know anything else about where he came from?”

If a participant asks you a question that is unclear, ask them to explain it further or give an example. Allow them time to explain what they mean. If you are still unsure, restate the question to them so you are clear about what they are asking.

Defer questions when necessary. No one knows all the answers, and it provides an opportunity for your group to recognize the leadership and spiritual guidance of your pastor. When you get his answer, don’t forget to share it with the women next time you meet. Sometimes, the pastor is down the hall and available to step in for quick answer!

You will learn much more as a teacher and gain insights as participants ask questions and respond with comments you would have never imagined! Listen carefully and well—not just to answer the question but to appreciate the faith of others and understand where they are coming from. Unique questions need unique answers. Don’t push the question into the same old box—marvel at the insights and thinking of your sisters in Christ.

### **Finish Strong**

Ask participants about their key takeaways. What will they remember from their time in God's Word? This will help you see how clearly you taught the lesson and whether you met the objectives—but this is not the time to reteach the lesson! (You may write a note that your review time next week might be longer!).

Some closing discussions could end on a somber or heavy topic, and the participants might need a fresh breath of gospel before they leave. Take the time to remind them of the big picture and God's redeeming love story!

Include these elements in your closing moments:

- Review homework or optional reading. Do they need any materials to prepare for the next lesson?
- End on time.
- Mark the ending point.
- Thank them for attending.
- Close the class with prayer. Many times women will have special prayer requests. You may want to keep a list of those requests.

After class, find time to write down a few notes from Bible study.

- What concerns did the women express or want to pray about?
- What went well during the class and what could have been done better?
- Did any topics come up that might be a good Bible study in the future?
- Were there any women that were missing—do they need to be contacted?
- Spend time privately praying for the women.



### **Activity: Teach With Skill**

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It's your turn to Teach With Skill

Step One: Write down one or two statements that will help you redirect participants back to the study if they have gone too far on a tangent.

Step Two: Write down two things that make a question less effective.

Step Three: Where are you going to keep your notes from the Bible class? Will you have a separate journal or binder? How will you organize all the information—and what information are you keeping?



## **Your Turn to Teach Faithfully, Wisely and Well**

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It's your turn to Teach Faithfully, Wisely and Well

### **Review and Exercises**

Review the following exercises from this lesson. If you are uncertain how to proceed, reread the appropriate section.

### **Teach Faithfully**

- What epistles in the New Testament will be especially helpful for you as a teacher? Make a reading plan so you return to their truths regularly.

### **Wisely Maximize Group Dynamics**

- Write down three reasons that women need to know God's Word better.

### **Teach With Skill**

- Write down two things that make questions less effective.

