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# What Makes a Good Teacher?

by Verda Rubottom

## Successful Teaching Requires Preparation

The best teachers prepare well, knowing they and their students will reap lasting rewards. Preparation is indeed one of the marks of a good teacher.

At times, I think we are all tempted to use shortcuts in our preparation. I remember a lesson I learned as a junior high girl. I looked forward with anticipation to my first sewing class. Soon I would learn how to sew and design my own clothes.

But before long I realized the preparation steps were going to be very time consuming. First, the material had to be shrunk, then the pattern pieces had to be trimmed and carefully placed on the grain line of the material. But that was only the beginning. There was pinning, basting, sewing, and pressing.

I decided I could easily skip a few of these steps. Shrinking, basting, and pressing seemed unnecessary. But my teacher was not very impressed with my shortcuts, and needless to say, I ended up with a skirt I could not wear! My shortcuts in the essentials of preparation did not pay off.

Teaching is no different. Cutting out the essentials of

good lesson preparation, Bible study, and prayer will only result in disappointment and ineffective teaching. New technology can save us hours of precious time in the preparation of visuals and other teaching materials, but technology cannot replace preparation of the mind, the heart, and the spirit.



## Help Children Apply Biblical Truths

Life application is simply showing our students how to apply the things they've learned in Sunday School to their everyday lives. When a fourth grade child hears about the courage of David, he can be helped to see that God will give him the

courage he needs too—at home, at school, and in his neighborhood. Examples of how God works in the lives of children today will help him understand this in more concrete terms.

To be effective, the life application should be woven throughout the lesson—and the entire morning, not just applied at the end of a Bible story. Jesus often told stories to illustrate His point and to increase the understanding of His disciples.

Children, as well, will have a better understanding of a biblical concept when life application is taught through stories, interest centers, discussions, drama, and other methods. Through skillful teaching we can help students discover how the Word of God applies to their daily lives.

Let's heed the inspired words of Paul and stir up the gift God has given us. We will certainly be rewarded, and our students will be glad we did!

