

## **How can we adapt teaching to the Mentally Impaired?**

A mentally impaired child may learn at the level much younger than his actual age. Sometimes we can put these children in a class for younger children. There they will understand better. However, if the church is located in a city, it is likely there are many children like this. It is wonderful when the church can find a teacher who is willing to work patiently and kindly with these children. They could then have their own special class. The church could call the class a name like “God’s Little Birds,” “Little Lights,” or “Happy Children.”

The teacher should teach them like young nursery children and allow each child to learn what he or she can without pressure or embarrassment. There should be plenty of teaching about God’s love and the children should learn that Jesus is a Special Friend who is always with those who believe in Him.

The teacher should maintain a happy, even environment and avoid getting the children too excited.

Lots of teaching can be done with simple songs and motions, interspersed with short Bible stories and big teaching pictures.

God made and loves every child no matter what his mental capacity or educational achievement.

When the children do well, recognize this by saying “I see Johnny sitting quietly.” “Mary, I see you using your words. Good using your words.” “Tommy, I see you sharing a toy with Randy.” (Big, approving smile.)

Morals and behaviors can be taught by simple, short phrases repeated often. “We do not hit.” “We do not kick.” “It’s not OK to stick out your tongue.” “We are kind and friendly.”