

## 5.1 How can we choose a Bible passage for a lesson text?

### How to Choose Which Bible Passage to Teach

#### What Bible passage would make a good lesson?

- **Choose a story that shows the principle you want to teach.** It should be a story, or part of a story that is somewhat complete in its thought and action. Some Bibles group thoughts together in paragraphs. This can help you decide where thoughts begin and end. A lesson text may be a single verse, or a paragraph, or a few paragraphs. The important thing is that it presents one completely developed thought. The story you choose should illustrate the principle you want to teach, that is, the lesson aim.
- **Choose an action story** Stories showing action make the best children's lessons. Stories that are only teaching or talking are harder to teach, especially to young children. The parables of Jesus, however, are not hard to teach even though they are teaching given by Jesus, because they are themselves action stories in most cases. (An action story is simply one in which someone does something. They need not be violent stories.)
- **Choose only the relevant verses or parts of verses.** It is not necessary to include in the lesson text every verse in a chapter, or every chapter in a story. We can leave out certain verses that do not aid the development of the teaching we are giving because they introduce other ideas. We should never leave out verses, however, in order to change the meaning. Example: Genesis 37 to 50 is the story of Joseph, but some other ideas are also discussed within these chapters. For example, chapter 38 tells about Judah's shame, chapter 46:1-5 tells about Jacob's dream, and 46:8-26 tell the names of everyone in Jacob's family when they went to Egypt. If a teacher were teaching the story of Joseph's life, he could leave out the parts that talk about these other topics, because these verses would not do anything to further the story of Joseph's life, even though they are found in the chapters that talk about Joseph's life.
- **Select only the most important verses.** If a story is long, or if the teacher is teaching young children, the teacher could select only the most important or key verses, or he could divide up the story into several lessons. Example: Genesis chapter 37 could be taught in four lessons. The father gives Joseph a coat (37:1-4) could be one lesson. Joseph's dreams (37:5-10) could be a second lesson. Joseph's brothers sell him (37:11-27) could be a third lesson, and Joseph arrives in Egypt (37:28-36) could be a fourth.
- **Mark the verses in your Bible.** If the teacher will not be teaching every verse of a passage, it is helpful to put a symbol or mark in his Bible to remind him easily which verses are to be included in the lesson. If he writes in pencil, it can be easily erased after class.

#### LET'S REVIEW

##### Circle the best choice.

What kind of Bible stories make the best lessons?      Action      Teaching

You could leave out verses that are not      True      Important to the story

5.1 How can we choose a Bible passage for a lesson text?

You should mark the verses of the story in your Bible To show you are spiritual To remember them

**LET'S PUT IT INTO PRACTICE**

Read Acts chapter 16. Divide it up into segments that could be used as lessons for your class. Write here the segments you have chosen. Remember to consider the age and academic level of your students in choosing an appropriate sized segment.

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Compare your segments with another teacher's choices. If you divided the chapter differently, discuss your thinking and listen to his ideas.

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Now list any verses you would leave out of each story, and tell why.

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Now pretend that your students fight a lot amongst themselves. What story could you use for a lesson? Where is it found in the Bible?

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Choose the verses you would use for the story. Which ones would you leave out, and why?

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