

Making a Strategic Plan for Teaching the Whole Counsel of God – Jill Nelson

Teaching the whole counsel of God should incorporate these six disciplines:

1. **A chronological overview of the Bible**—introduces children and students to the main character of the Bible, God, and acquaints them with key themes, people, places, and events. In the younger ages, this is usually “story-based”—introducing young children to a wide variety of both Old and New Testament stories. In the older grades, this discipline is usually called “**Bible Survey.**”

Addresses: **What’s in the Bible? Who is the Bible about?**

2. **Biblical theology**—the main “storyline” of the Bible, in which God progressively reveals His redemptive purposes, which come to their complete fulfillment in the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

Addresses: **What’s the main message and storyline of the Bible?**

3. **Systematic theology**—“...seeks to present the entire scriptural teaching on certain specific truths, or doctrines, one at a time....”(Monergism, Copyright © 2008)

Addresses: **What are the essential doctrines (truths) of the Christian faith?**

4. **Moral instruction**—explores the commands of Scripture—from Genesis to Revelation—which communicates ethical instruction.

Addresses: **How are we to live?**

5. **Explicit Gospel**—An explicit presentation of the essential truths of the Gospel, leading to a clear understanding of saving faith.

Addresses: **Why do we need to be saved? What must we do to be saved?**

6. **Bible study methods**—that provide the necessary tools for rightly reading and interpreting Scripture.

Addresses: **How should we read and understand the Bible?**

Note: A fuller exploration of each of these six disciplines can be found in the training seminar, “Teaching the Whole Counsel of God” (www.childrendesiringGod.org)

- These six disciplines are all interconnected and complement one another.

- Although each has a particular focus and helps answer a particular question or questions, they are all part of the “whole counsel of God” and are important for a life of faith.
- ALL of these disciplines are “Gospel-” oriented. They all have to do with rightly knowing, understanding, and applying the Gospel. (For a fuller explanation of this, see my seminar “Communicating the Gospel within the Whole Counsel of God.”)

The Basics for Making a Strategic Plan

- 1. Assess your current situation within your church and, if needed, implement changes.**
 - **Curriculum—scope and sequence from preschool to high school.**
As a whole, does the curriculum used—over time—reflect the six disciplines presented?

Does your scope and sequence present them in a balanced way?
 - **Does the scope and sequence present biblical concepts to the targeted age group at an appropriate level?**
 - **Classroom time and structure—What timeframe is available for formal teaching on Sundays, Mid-week, and other avenues? What age groupings compose each classroom?**
 - **Is there a stated, coherent vision and philosophy from the leadership driving the current structures and programs?**
 - **Church *and* home instruction—Are there opportunities to partner together with the home in order to enhance and supplement the formal teaching of the church?**
- 2. Creating a Scope and Sequence – See attached CDG Curriculum Scope & Sequence Charts**
- 3. Review your plan periodically**
 - **Is your plan accomplishing your stated goals? Do you have a means to assess this?**
 - **Are new curriculum options available? How could these be integrated into your plan?**
- 4. Examples of resources to promote in the home.**
(Age ranges: **FA** = Family devotional, **EL** = Elementary, **JR** = 7th – 9th grade, **SH** = 9th grade and up)
 - **Chronological Bible Stories and/or Bible Survey** (Some also incorporate biblical theology.)

Mighty Acts of God—Starr Meade (EL)
ESV Illustrated Family Bible—Zbigniew Freus, illustrator (FA, EL)
What the Bible Is All About for Young Explorers—Blankenbaker (EL)
66 Stories One Book—Paul Reynolds (EL)
What's in the Bible?—R. C. Sproul (SH)

○ **Biblical Theology**

Long Story Short [Old Testament]—Marty Machowski (FA)
Old Story New [New Testament]—Marty Machowski (FA)
God's Big Picture—Vaughan Roberts (SH)
The Symphony Of Scripture—Mark Strom (SH)

○ **Systematic Theology**

Everything a Child Should Know About God—Kenneth Taylor (Early EL)
Christian Beliefs—Grudem (JR, SH)
Bible Doctrine – Grudem (SH)
Essential Truths of the Christian Faith—R. C. Sproul (SH)

○ **Moral Instruction**

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith Family Devotional Guide—Sally Michael (CDG)
CDG Curriculum Parent Pages (GIFT pages)

○ **Explicit Gospel Presentation**

Helping Children to Understand the Gospel—CDG (EL)
The Gospel for Children—John Leuzarder (EL)

○ **Bible Study Skills**

How to Study Your Bible for Kids (other titles in the series) —Arthur and Arndt (EL)
The Fighter Verses Study Guide—Michael and McIntire (CDG) (JR, SH)

○ **Further resources:**

Catechism style—
The Baptist Catechism Set to Music—Scott Orrick (EL)
My First Book of Questions and Answers—Carine MacKenzie (Early EL)
Big Truths for Little Kids—Susan and Richie Hunt (Early EL)
The Big Book of Questions and Answers—Sinclair Ferguson (EL)
First Catechism: Teaching Children Bible Truths—GCP (Early EL)
Training Hearts, Teaching Minds: Family Devotions Based on the Shorter Catechism—Starr Meade (FA)