

***Beacon Media***  
**Professional development for  
teachers**

**Session 3**  
**God is the curriculum**

**The Power Point presentation can be found at:  
[www.beaconmedia.com.au](http://www.beaconmedia.com.au) – Key topics for  
Christian teachers**

## **God is the curriculum**

Does this mean we only teach the Bible in a Christian school?

Just a minute!

We didn't say: "The *Bible* is the curriculum."

*God* is.

This doesn't mean that the Bible is less important.

When God is the curriculum, the teacher points the students to God the *person*, and uses the Bible to show His character and nature.

## **To know God**

Isn't the aim of the Christian life to *know* God?

It is possible to know the Bible without knowing God.

Christian teachers therefore need to point students to a personal God who can be their Saviour, Lord, friend and role model.

## **How do we show students what God is like?**

We can use the Bible to point out God's *ways* through His mighty acts.

We can also point them to God as seen in the world around us... the creation, the work of Christians throughout history, the impact of the Gospel on nations, comparison of worldly standards to Godly standards.

## **Creation**

The whole of creation speaks to us about God.

We can see God at work in physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics and EVERY area of study, and the whole of life. All knowledge belongs to God.

## **The work of Christians**

We can also see God working in the world through His servants...

- Heroes of the faith who have demonstrated God's character in the past
- Community servants, Christian scientists and missionaries of today
- The impact of bringing the Gospel to the nations

## **Compare worldly standards to Godly standards**

We can help the students to measure up what they see around them against God's standards. God has something to say on EVERYTHING!

## ***Refer to poster: Build on the rock***

So for this reason we need to ask God what He is saying about the subjects we teach, and build these subjects on the Rock.

### **What does it mean...to know God?**

- Relationship
- Friendship
- Trust
- Obedience
- Love
- Call Him our Father
- Communicate with Him

### **Results of knowing Him**

- Eternal life
- Grace, peace and joy
- Love Him and others
- Worship Him
- Seek to become more like Him
- Be His witnesses

### **Every curriculum should start with God**

- God's character and nature should be the **FIRST** focus in Christian education.
- Use the Bible to show what God is like.
- Character training is taught as a *response* to understanding God's character.

*Seek **first** His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you... (Matt 6:33)*

What things? Provision, protection, healing, contentment, security, trust and confidence in God's love, when we pursue *His* righteousness.

### **A God-centred lesson**

What does it look like?

How do I make my lesson to be like a well-blended milkshake and not a pizza?

The pizza has many separate ingredients that are placed on top of the base. The ingredients such as cheese, tomato, olives, ham...are all separate and individually identified.

The milkshake on the other hand has ingredients that are blended together. We can't identify the milk from the ice-cream or the chocolate or strawberries. This is how a class lesson should be. God, the Bible and the subject are all blended into one. Instead of Science for example, in one separate time slot, and Christian Studies in another, we have the two merged into one.

***Refer to poster: pizza / milkshake***

## **A tool for helping our students to know God**

We can use the ABC principle.

Think of a 3-pronged fork.

A – Attribute of God

B – Bible

C – Character development

The teacher is the handle.

The teacher explains to the students the connection between ABC.

The teacher also explains the connection between the topic being studied and the attribute of God.

### **Examples of connections**

**Science topic:** light

**Attribute of God:** God is Light

**Bible passages:**

Ps. 119 Your word is a lamp unto my feet

Acts 9 Saul changed to Paul through light.

**Character development:** Choose righteousness and walk in the light.

**Science / social studies topic:** Plant life

**Attribute of God:** God is Life

**Bible passages:**

John 14:6 Jesus the way, the truth, the life.

John 4 The woman at the well learned about the living water.

**Character development:** God gives life to His creation. He gives life to me.

The Holy Spirit can help me live as Jesus wants me to live.

### **The Bible is not just for devotions**

We can use it and refer to it in our subject lessons.

We can use the Bible to show what God is like.

Teachers should make use of Bible *stories*, not just Scripture verses.

### **God wants us to practice hearing His voice...**

**He wants us to wait on Him and listen to what He is saying about how and what we should teach. This is Holy Spirit-led teaching.**

Steps in hearing God's voice

- Ask God to show you any wrong attitudes. (These might be a blockage to hearing from God.)
- Lay down your own "good ideas". Isaiah 55:8 says. "My ways are not your ways; My thoughts are not your thoughts."
- Invite the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the ideas that HE wants.
- Listen to God. He may give you a thought, a picture in your mind, or a Bible passage.
- Write it down, or if in a group, share with the group what you think God has said.

## God is a Person

- He has a personality.
- His attributes are beautiful.
- He wants to communicate with us.
- He wants us to communicate with Him.
- Listening to God is a way of communicating.
- We can teach our students to hear His voice.

*Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice," John 10:27*

## What does God-centred curriculum look like at the planning level?

- The classroom topic linked to an attribute of God, e.g. "God is love."
- Bible teaching is linked to this attribute".
- Character training linked to this attribute.

## Example

- **Topic:** Food ...linked to... God is Provider
- **Bible teaching:** Provisions miracles in the Bible
- **Character development:** generosity; faith in God

## What does God-centred curriculum look like at the classroom level?

- A colourful "God is" sign created by the children in art lesson.
- The Science or Social studies lesson *begins* with the teacher explaining the connection between God and the topic.
- The room display will reflect the link between the science/social studies topic and the attribute of God. Relevant Scripture verses may be posted on the walls.
  
- The teacher will look for ways of making learning connections across various subjects.
- Songs, Bible study and values education will be represent the "God is" theme.
- There will be opportunities for prayer, testimony and listening to God.

## Plan together

- What if a class has more than one teacher?
- What if your school has a teacher assigned to teach Scripture?
- Unless there is co-ordination between teachers, a school can soon become "Greek". The classroom teacher can plan with the Scripture teacher so that both are teaching the same aspect of God at the same time. This goes for any subject where different teachers take the same group of students.

## Unity among staff

Staff members need to:

- Be unified in hearing God's voice.
- Work together.
- Be Spirit-led in their teaching.

## Steps in planning a God-centred unit of study

These steps need to be included in a planning document:

- Decide the "God is"...(attribute) that will be linked to the classroom topic.
- Decide which Bible passages you will use.
- Outcomes: What do you want the students to know by the end of the unit of study?
- Activities: What do you want them to DO? e.g. write, draw, make, research, give a class presentation
- Evaluation: How will you assess what they have learned? e.g. a class presentation or test

## Example

- **"God is Wise"** may be linked to a study of the human body/ health and hygiene.
- **Scripture:** The Ten Commandment... wisdom in obeying laws
- **Outcomes:** Students will... understand that diseases can be carried by flies; wash hands before meals; cover mouth if coughing. You can also include some outcomes about the spiritual understanding you want the students to have by the end of the unit.
- **Activities:** make a poster; prepare and eat some food following hygiene rules; write a story on the life of a fly
- **Evaluation:** a short answer test

## More examples of topics

### ***God is Creator***

- Living things, human biology
- Rocks and landforms
- Creation and the Great Flood

### ***God is Protector***

- Shelter / houses / buildings
- Health and hygiene, medical profession
- Family

**God is Love**

- Nations of the world
- The family
- World evangelism /reaching the lost
- Serving the poor, the elderly

**God is Provider**

- Food
- Resources
- Occupations

**God is Truth**

- Creation/evolution
- Finding out the truth about the past
- Unchanging scientific laws

**God is Wise**

- Safety
- health and hygiene
- wise use of money
- Choices and decisions

**God is a Servant**

- Community servants
- Missionaries
- Technology

**God is Powerful**

- Forces of nature – weather, electricity
- Solar system
- Government

**God is Pure and Holy**

- The Great Flood
- God's perfect Creation corrupted; Pollution
- Cleaning up the planet
- The Tower of Babel and the origin of language groups

**God is Life/Redeemer**

- Missionaries
- Heroes of the faith
- History of Israel / World history

## **Showing God's character and nature through the Bible**

We usually tell a Bible story and then explain the POINT.

- The POINT is usually at the end.
- But what if...
- The POINT came at the BEGINNING!

We can alert the students to the fact that this story is going to show us something about God, e.g. God is Love. Then at the end of the story we can ask them how it showed God's love.

Here are some well-known Bible stories and passages that show God's character and nature. Note how the point is the heading. It's at the beginning. Also note that most of these passages are STORIES. Children relate to and remember stories extremely well.

### **God is Creator**

- Genesis 1 The Creation
- Genesis 26 Man made in God's image
- Genesis 2 The Fall
- Genesis 6-8 The Great Flood
- Psalm 8 God has placed us ruler over creation
- Psalm 139 God knew us before we were born.

### **God is Love**

- The Good Shepherd
- The Good Samaritan
- Zacchaeus
- Jesus said "Let the children come".
- The prodigal son
- Jesus died for us

### **God is Provider**

- Feeding of the 5000
- Elijah and the widow
- Elisha
- Manna and quails in the desert
- Water from a rock

### **God is Protector**

- David and Goliath
- The armour of God
- The Israelites escape from Egypt
- Daniel in the lion's den
- Three men in the fiery furnace

### **God is Wise**

- Wise and foolish builders
- King Solomon
- God gives wisdom to Daniel
- The ten girls and their lamps



### **God is Powerful**

- Healing miracles of Jesus
- Raising of Lazarus from the dead
- The day the sun stood still
- The walls of Jericho
- The Kingship of Jesus / triumphal entry
- The resurrection of Jesus

### **God is Truth**

- Elijah - God of Israel or god of Baal?
- Ananias and Sapphira
- The Good shepherd /wolves in sheep's clothing
- The broad and narrow way
- The house on the rock
- The sower

### **God is Pure and Holy**

- Christians as salt and light
- The Perfect Creation; the Fall
- The Great Flood
- Heaven
- Salvation as the way back to God
- The Fruit of the Spirit

### **God is Patient**

- Mary and Martha
- Abraham and Sarah
- Hannah
- The crippled man at the pool
- The Prodigal son
- Jesus let the children come

### **God is a Servant**

- The Healing miracles of Jesus
- The wedding at Cana
- Jesus washed the disciples feet
- Faithful friendship between David and Jonathan
- The rich man and the tax collector (humility)
- Spreading the Good News

### **God is Life/Redeemer**

- Creation
- Salvation
- Jesus the Living Water
- Jesus the bread of Life

### **Keep the fire alive!**

It can easily go out!

### **Keep reviewing your school's commitment to God-centred curriculum**

- For a school to maintain a God-centred focus, each new teacher coming into the school must be trained in the God-centred model.
- Staff must work together and keep evaluating their commitment to God-centred curriculum.

### **God-centred curriculum - A lost treasure**

Many schools have taken on God-centred curriculum, but down the track, have lost their God-centred focus.

Teaching is a calling and as Christian teachers we have a higher calling. Teaching is a wonderful opportunity to reach students for God through *whatever* subject we are teaching.

### **Be a torchbearer for God-centred curriculum**

- *Jesus said "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel."*
- *We can do this through God-centred education.*