



TREASURE CHEST

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e-NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.
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A FEW TIPS ON CLEARLY

PRESENTING YOUR MESSAGE

"We are to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make it **clear** to everyone."

Ephesians 3:8, 9

We have the greatest message in the world, but sometimes we find it difficult to make it clear and understandable to children (or even teens and adults!). Let's be C-L-E-A-R when it comes to running a program or conducting a teaching time. Here are a few tips.

Connect – Our audience has come from a whole lot of different backgrounds, recent experiences and with a variety of emotions or attitudes.

Now, all of a sudden they are in our program led by adults 10 to 50 years older than they are. So, firstly, we need to **connect** with our audience ... we may use games, video clips, small talk (about sport, movies, funny stories) ... anything, in order for barriers to be broken down ... **rapport** needs to be developed.

Learn – To be able to give clear information for the children to understand, we must have a clear understanding ourselves as teachers. Reconciled, sin, substitute, forgive, justified, repent ... and heaps more Bible-words are an essential part of our teaching, but often not clearly or fully understood by the teacher. Break the words and concepts down into understandable phrases at the level of understanding of your audience. Write it down for yourself so that you have a clear, visual understanding. To help you get your message across, use stories, object lessons, visuals, role plays, drama, video clips, activities, etc to assist in helping the child **learn**. The teacher 'lecturing' has its place, but only when other mediums are also used. There are a variety of different learning styles and teaching methods that should be considered.

Explore – Children learn best by doing and by learning for themselves. Those wonderful 'aha' moments will be remembered much longer than other forms of learning. Get children to do 'assignments' or tasks whereby they are to find information and understanding at their own ...

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THINK before you 'speak'.

Whether we are 'speaking' directly to another person, tweeting on Twitter, posting on Facebook or communicating via any other form of social media ... always pause before you push the SEND or POST button ... or open your mouth. Often when something happens in life that irritates or bothers us – we immediately have a need to vent our frustration.

When you post on social media or speak your mind in other ways – people form their perception of you and often, their perception of Jesus. It's not just your close friends who see your statement, but there are hundreds of people who may also see it ... friends of your friends who don't know much about you – other than what you post.

Be careful what you say or post:

- When you are **angry ... you may lose your temper**
- When you are **disappointed ... you may be sulking**
- When you are **talking about others ... you may be gossiping**
- When **someone makes a mistake ... you may be criticizing**
- When you are **treated unfairly ... you may be expecting people to feel sorry for you**
- When you respond to **someone who is hurting ... you may be insensitive**
- When **someone sins or fails ... you may be judging**

We should put much more thought into every word we speak or type. Our words have power. **When you open your mouth before you engage your brain, it leads to disaster.** It can ruin your life – and the person who is the object of your words.

The Bible has a term for "Speaking without thinking." It's called "Careless Words." Jesus addressed the subject of "careless words" in **Matthew 12:36-37** *I tell you that men will have to give account, on the day of judgment, for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.*"

Your words are not "just words." They can either help or hurt; build up or cut down; encourage or discourage.

James picked up where Jesus left off...

James 1:26 *If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.*

Your unfiltered, careless words invalidate your testimony.

A careless word
--may kindle strife,

A cruel word
--may wreck a life,

A bitter word
--may hate instill,

A brutal word
--may smite and kill.



33% of the world's 7 billion population ... are under 15 years old.
72 million children in the developing world ... have no access to school.
8 million died from treatable diseases ... before age 5 in 2008.

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... **THINK before you speak (continued from front page) ...**

Here are some thoughts and some questions to ask yourself before you speak or tweet. Let's use the word "T.H.I.N.K." to help you install a filter on your words.

Is what I am about to say or post ...

TTrue?

- If it isn't true – don't say it.
- If it's only partially true, but it's embellished so as to make you look good or important – don't say it.
- If it is a technical truth, but the major portion of facts are left out so as not to incriminate you – don't say it.



Helpful?

- Is what you are planning to say helpful to the listener or the situation? It may be true, but is it helpful?
- Some people make excuses for their gossip simply because it is true. **Just because something is true doesn't mean it is helpful.**

Inspiring?

- Your words can either build up or tear down.
- There are a lot of unfiltered words being spoken that are focused on tearing others down (usually in order to build ourselves up!). Speak words that inspire others and build them up according to their needs.
- Imagine the perspectives you could change – the lives you could change – if you put more thought into the words you speak and tried to inspire those who would hear it.

Necessary?

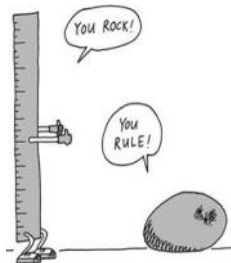
- This might just be the **first** question you need to ask. Is it necessary? If not, it most likely would be best left unsaid. *Prov. 10:19 When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.*
- Ask, "Lord, do I need to keep quiet and not say anything?" If you aren't sure whether what you are about to say is necessary, don't say anything. Just be quiet. Hold your tongue.

Kind?

- Is what I am about to say harsh or gentle and kind?
- Harsh, unfiltered words are always better left unsaid.

T.H.I.N.K. hard this week. Use every conversation, every post, to "build others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Adapted from Brian Dollar's article 'Think before you Tweet' – Kidzmatter magazine May/June 2015



BILL THE BUILDER

Bill had been a builder all of his life. He worked hard and had built some beautiful houses. He was well known for his skills and craftsmanship. But Bill had lost his enjoyment and became sloppy in his work. His boss was saddened when Bill told him he was going to quit. "Please Bill, would you build just one more house for me as a favour?" pleaded the boss. Bill half-heartedly agreed and set about building the last house. He did poor quality work and used cheap materials. It was a sad way to finish off such a great career.

After many long months, Bill finished the house. After the boss inspected the house, he handed the front door key back to Bill. "This is your house now," he said, "it's my gift to you." Bill was so shocked! What a shame. If he only knew he was building his own house he would have done it differently.

We build our lives one day at a time, often doing less than our best. Then with a shock we realise that we have to live with the life we have built. We may even wish, later in life, that we can go back to our early years and start all over again. But we cannot go back.

Your attitudes to life and the choices that you make today, build the 'house' you will live in tomorrow. So build wisely and well now so that you will have no regrets later on.



Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.

Col. 3:23

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep on enthusiastically, serving the Lord. Rom 12:11



Presenting your message CLEARLY (continued from front page) ...

... pace. Encourage the students to give a 2-3 minute presentation to other students on a particular topic or experience they have had that relates to their life. Not only does it help build public speaking confidence into the child, but it also gives them a reason to **explore** for themselves because they have a task or project to work towards. Encouragement, sensitivity and support is important here, especially with those who are more introvert by nature or have certain fears.

Apply – God's word was given, not just to inform us but to transform us. How does this teaching relate to my life? Applying it to the child at their age and stage of life is essential, but also there is no harm in giving examples of how this teaching can be put into practice at an older age (i.e. prepare the children for later in life). Always give practical examples of how they can **apply** Biblical principles in life. Short stories, scenarios, "what if's", your testimony as a younger child, examples, etc, are all different ways to help the child see how this teaching applies to them at their point in life.

Respond – Giving good, clear and relevant information is important but the child needs to be challenged to actually decide to act upon and put into practice what they have learnt. This is the 'I will' response or commitment they make to a particular issue. Maybe the child writes down what they are planning on doing in order to put the particular Biblical principle into practice. Keeping a diary is helpful for some students. Maybe they have an accountability partner. Maybe sharing with the other students several weeks later how they managed to **respond** when they came face to face with bullying, forgiveness, sharing, daily Bible reading & prayer, obedience, or whatever the issue is that has been part of the teaching program.

