

that are to be presented, and the principal lesson, or lessons (usually one good lesson is enough), to be enforced.

*Secondly*—There is nothing so helpful to teachers as the interchange of thought. I am presupposing that all the teachers make an honest effort to study the lesson, as this is the very least that can be expected of them. This having been done, each should come prepared to contribute his or her thought upon some portion of the passage. It is astonishing, after having given one's best personal effort, how much that is fresh will be gathered at a teachers' meeting, what new light will be cast upon phases of the truth, and what striking ways of presenting the lesson will be brought out.

The chief factor in this meeting is, of course, the leader. In most of our country churches this duty will devolve upon the minister, and even in our city churches, unless there is a layman specially qualified, it is better that the minister take the chair. In any case his presence is indispensable. This, it is true, means some extra work on his part; but if the preparation of the lesson be made part of his pulpit work, it will not add greatly to his weekly study. Expository preaching is one of the great needs of this day and at least one sermon per week can be obtained from the lesson.

Let me venture, with great diffidence, to throw out a few hints to the leader.

Divide the lesson carefully, using short, suggestive titles for your heads, so that the outline may fasten itself upon the minds of your teachers. With a good outline in the mind, the lesson will never be unprofitable. The leader's details in filling in may be, perhaps should be, largely dropped in teaching, but his outline should form the basis of the teacher's work. Let me advise asking the teachers to bring outlines of their own each week and be always ready to adopt a more suggestive one than your own, which you will find you will not unfrequently receive.

Study all the helps available, never forgetting to make the Word expound itself. Try to obtain from your teachers as clear and full a view as possible of the lesson surroundings and of the lesson story itself. The more

clear and vivid these accessories are made, the more will the picture of the lesson be impressed upon the mind and, if we are to teach a lesson thoroughly, we must have it clearly and vividly before our minds.

Use the blackboard, mapping out the lesson with outline and details as far as may be deemed advisable. This may be all done beforehand (as I myself prefer) or it may be filled in as the class advances from stage to stage in discussing the lesson. Invite the teachers to use their note books as aids to their private study:

"The time of the meeting is a matter of some importance. When possible, it should be held in the middle of the week. The teachers will then be able to bring together the result of their private study and crystallize their thoughts under the guidance of the leader. This, in turn, will form a basis for further and more profitable study. If the meeting be held early in the week, there will not be time for preparation; if late, the Sabbath teaching may degenerate into a parrot-like repetition of the material obtained at the teachers' meeting.

Invite the Bible classes to attend, especially if, as seems to me desirable, these classes pursue a connected study of some topic rather than follow out the regular course of lessons. The meeting will then serve to give unity to your school work and, in addition, it will become a training-ground for future teachers.

Where a teachers' meeting is impracticable (and there may be a few such cases) the minister should make the lesson the subject for his weekly prayer meeting, giving such an exposition of it as he feels will be most helpful to his teachers. This is the best, in fact the only, substitute that I can suggest for a teachers' meeting; and, highly as I appreciate the abilities of our ministers, let me say that it is but a poor substitute. The minister will be the first to acknowledge this; for it is in the free interchange of thought, the contact of mind with mind and heart with heart, that the chief virtue of the teachers' meeting lies.

In closing, I venture to present an outline of a lesson, not as a model, but as a sort of