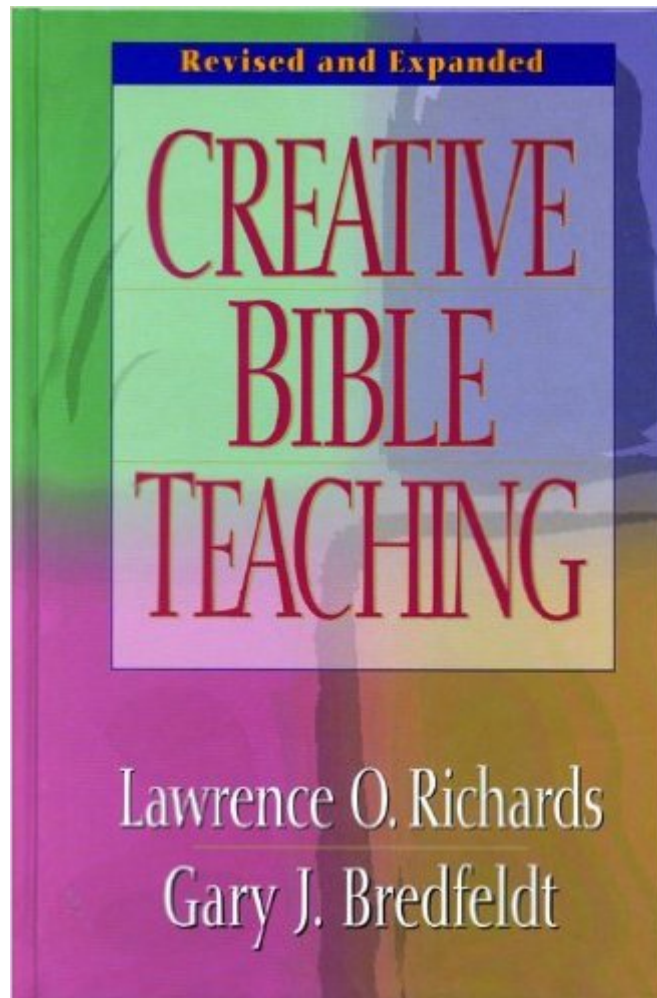


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# Creative Bible Teaching



## Synopsis

Are you a bridge builder? Communicating the Scriptures is much like building a bridge. However, instead of ravines or rivers, the teacher must span both cultural boundaries and great gulfs of time between the present and the past of Moses, David, Jesus, and Paul. God's Word is "living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). It is contemporary and relevant. But it is the teacher who has the task of helping the student to see its vast treasures. This is no easy task, but it can be done through creative Bible teaching. Together, Richards and Bredfeldt have written a book on bridge-building that reveals a detailed five-step process by which Christian educators can construct a bridge across time, geography, and culture. Simple, clear, and memorable, the method laid out in *Creative Bible Teaching* gives a sure-fire way to communicate God's Word in a way that sticks.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book takes the reader through a five step process of biblical lesson preparation. It begins with Studying the Bible. This step assists the lay person, Bible college student or seminarian in the study of the Bible for the purpose of teaching the Bible. The second step is entitled "Focusing the Message". The reader is instructed in how to take the message of the passage and make it relevant to the modern day learner. Teachers are given practical help in assessing student needs and in designing the class to target those needs. The third step involves Structuring the Lesson. Here readers are taught how to structure a lesson for maximum impact and student involvement. The

fourth step is the teaching step. Here the actual teaching process is explored. The final step is the evaluating step. Effective teaching depends on evaluation and improvement. This section of the book helps teachers gain insights into their teaching and assists in developing ways to improve. All in all the book is designed to be a systematic presentation of the lesson preparation process.

The book is divided into five sections: (1) "Studying the Bible," (2) "Focusing the Message," (3) "Structuring the Lesson," (4) "Teaching the Class," and (5) "Evaluating the Results." The question that is posed is, "How is it that a book (the Bible), given by God to transform, seems so unproductive when taught in the very churches where it is most honored and best known?"(29). It is that particular inquiry that drives the authors to find an answer. Their findings showed the lack of an effective teaching method. Through this book, the authors hope to educate ministry leaders and teachers the "hook, book, look, and took" technique of Bible teaching. The foundation of any Bible teaching starts with a clear understanding of who God is (that He is the Creator) (28) and how He speaks (that God used people to write the Bible) (38). The Bible provides the human race with God's plan for salvation and reconciliation. Richards and Bredfeldt discusses various ways to read and understand the Bible. For example, they suggest that while reading the Bible, one should ask probing questions like "Are there any repeated words or phrases?" (79). When teaching the Bible, it is imperative that the age of students is factored into the lesson. The authors point out that the task for teaching adults is different than teaching preschoolers. For instance, adults desire a challenge and an emotional supportive learning environment (245), while preschoolers learn best in an active, participatory play setting (296). The inclusion of the "summary of developmental characteristics" and "spiritual developmental tasks" for students from preschool to adulthood is helpful, but the student's needs assessment seems too complicated for the average Sunday school teacher to complete (106). The section entitled, "Questions for Discussion and Further Study" facilitates the application of the information read (333). Review by M. Teresa Trascritti

"Creative Bible Teaching" goes beyond teaching the Bible as information. It is vital to help the student leap the gap between the Biblical world and today's world. To do this, one must first begin with the bridge principle; it is the big idea in a passage expressed in today's terms. Then one should state the pedagogical idea; apply the idea to the needs of the students. One should ask, "How do I want my student to change?" Bloom identifies three different areas of learning. First is cognitive learning, which is head knowledge. Second is affective learning, which is in the heart. Third is behavioral learning, which is represented by the hands. Acts 2:37 addresses all three of

these areas of learning. First the people heard, then they were cut to the heart, then they asked, "What shall we do?" All truth starts in your head, moves to your heart, and must be manifested by your hands. Your head is cognitive, your heart is emotion, and your hands are behavioral. The author explains his simple structure for planning a lesson. The method for organizing a lesson can be remembered by four rhyming words: Hook, Book, Look, Took. The hook is the way you capture the attention of your students. It is used to capture attention, to break the ice, to identify a need, and set a goal for the class. The book is the way you bring the truth of God's word to the situation. The look explains the implications of the passage to the student's life. Finally, the took is the response of the student to the lesson in his or her daily life. If there is no concrete response then the lesson is just abstract knowledge.

My title sums up the underlying approach of this book. Unfortunately, most people's view of "teaching" is so narrow that the book's own title does not capture what Richards accomplishes here. He sets out a comprehensive philosophy and practice of teaching the word of God that is easily understood by a lay Bible teacher. The Bible makes it clear that teaching God's truths is categorically different than mere "teaching." Richards gives a foundation for understanding our partnership with the Spirit of God to teach the word of God. But what I love about Richards is that he grounds the mystical, spiritual side of teaching the word of God in practical means through which the Spirit works. He combines best teaching practices and Biblical wisdom to put spiritual teaching into concrete terms without losing sight of the truth that only the Spirit of God reveals Scripture. In short, this is a great example of a belief that God alone works to reveal truth, but He works through wise means in His church. Richards hits the bulls eye in this regard.

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