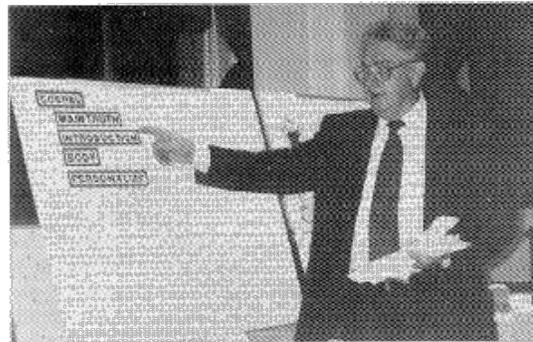




## WHY NOT A CMI SEMINAR FOR YOUR CHURCH?

The official motto accepted for CMI at our last Strategic Planning Meeting was 'TEACHING TEACHERS TO TEACH ABOUT CHRIST'. At least once a month (sometimes just about every weekend), a CMI staff member (or team) heads out to give another 'Teacher's Training Seminar', generally on a Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Maybe you have attended one and remember how you were motivated, enthused and given new direction as a result of these concentrated training periods. Most of our loyal, longtime supporters have heard about these two day seminars. For those of you who haven't had one (or think it's about time to have another one), let me give you an overview of what we have to offer.



### WHY HAVE A SEMINAR ANYWAY?

Before we can get the wheels moving to place a team in your church you should have a good reason(s) for wanting one. A seminar does cost the church (or group) time and money and your leadership must be certain that it is worth it. We try to write our curriculum in a way that anyone should be able to use it if they follow the directions. However, there are many reasons for a CMI seminar. Here are 10 reasons to get you interested in having one:

1. The church's leadership has just decided to use these unique products (such as our "BIBLE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE FAITH" curriculum) and wants to "excite", "educate" and "motivate" its teachers to "get on board".
2. The best way to understand the question and answer" (catechistic) approach we use as the basis for each of our lessons, is to see a well trained teacher actually teach it.

3. Many churches, teachers and parents have questions on specific items in each lesson (such as using the flannelette as a "never-out-of-date" method for instruction). These specific questions are completely answered in the seminars.

4. Sometimes a church wants to adapt the material to a children's church or Bible Club format and needs some help in doing this.

5. The seminar can demonstrate how to integrate the Bible memory verse, songs, Bible story, review game and craft to better underscore the truth being taught in every lesson. This is our multistory approach to ensure that the basic doctrine is learned.

6. We can demonstrate how these materials may be used for 3 and 4 year old, right up to 5th and 6th grade classes (we have even used these materials to visualize theological concepts with adults). This is often confusing to many teachers and they can be shown how this is done.

7. Some churches or parents want to use these materials as the basis for their family devotions and want to know the best way to do this.

8. Many times churches want to train new teachers in skills such as classroom discipline, teaching songs, learning how to put the Gospel into every lesson, and other 'basics' that this seminar covers.

9. The seminar can be adapted to meet unique needs of the audience that it is teaching.

10. Sometimes it's good to "sharpen the knife" even in a church that has a well running Christian Education program. This is a great opportunity to give teachers a Godly vision of their impact on these "little ones" placed in their charge for a short season. All teachers can become tired and sometimes discouraged. This is a tremendous opportunity to "spark-up" a program and bring a renewal of commitment to already dedicated and experienced teachers.

## **WHAT'S IN A SEMINAR AND HOW WILL IT BE TAUGHT?**

The answer to this question depends on the church asking it. Each situation is unique and therefore the seminar is molded and conformed to meet the specific need of the group asking for it. The 10 reasons listed above help to explain it. The core of the seminar is to 'teach teachers to teach about Christ', to ensure that teachers realize what an important task they have and to show them ways to do it correctly and efficiently.

Sometimes teachers and parents are not aware of the question and answer (catechistic) method of instruction. As Protestants, this is one of our heritages. The question and answer approach uses 145 basic questions of foundational doctrine (taken from the Catechism for Younger Children). We then ensure that the child is taught the "basics".

If a church wants a basic teacher's seminar we will send the leadership the outline that we generally cover. Normally, the seminar begins Friday evening after supper and goes to lunch on Saturday (about 6 hours of instruction). If you want to extend it into Saturday afternoon you may. Or, you may want to hold some special meetings with individuals or leaders on Saturday afternoon. If you desire the team to stay over for Sunday School and church this can also be arranged (although it is

not common). Several of our teachers are ordained teaching and ruling elders and could speak in a church service or Sunday School class on the subject of educating your children.

Sometimes a church wants to use part of the time to construct their own flannel boards and put together other teacher's aids. This can be accomplished on Saturday afternoon, also.

## **WHO SHOULD ATTEND?**

Christian education administrators, parents, teachers, teen helpers, grandparents basically anyone who works with, lives with or is concerned about Christian education for children.

## **WHAT ABOUT THE COST?**

Your pastor and Christian Education Committee/administrator might want to know this before the discussion even starts!

Basically, the group inviting CM to come must pay for the expenses to get them there and back home. Sometimes the team (or individual) is flown

out. If the church or group is located in the Southeast (CMI is located in Atlanta and the Thigpens live in northern Alabama) the team will often drive to a seminar (30 cents a mile). Lodging and meals must be provided. Whether or not an honorarium or additional gift is given depends upon the church, but is not required. Love-offerings to CMI and special gifts are accepted. CMI is a faith ministry that depends on God's moving His people to give tax-deductible contributions.

We encourage like-minded churches to join together in order to share the expenses.

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?**

As in all things pray about it, then approach the pastor or Christian Education Committee/administrator. Select several possible dates to ensure that the one you get will work out.

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*Brad Winsted, Director*