

Children's Classes At The 2010 Truth Magazine Lectures: Some Implications

Tim Haile

The Guardian of Truth Foundation did something new with their lectures in 2010; they conducted classes for children. Supporters of business Bible lectureships will likely see this as a wise and logical extension of the lectureship program. It will be reasoned that if it is right for a business organization to conduct Bible classes for adults, then why is it not equally right for it to also conduct Bible classes for children?

From a purely human perspective, there is no difference between the two. However, there are certain implications that need to be considered.

I have addressed several of the arguments that have been made by Guardian of Truth apologists. My articles are housed at www.biblebanner.com. Many of the arguments that I have addressed on this site misuse Scripture. Others contain logical fallacies. The purpose for this present article is to point out a glaring contradiction between one of the GOT arguments and their actual practice.

Some have tried to defend the Truth Magazine lectures on the basis that Truth Bookstore is a *business*, and as such, it may conduct lectureships as a means of promoting its products and services. It is argued that just as other businesses give away promotional products in order to lure buyers, Guardian of Truth Foundation gives away *teaching* as a means of advertisement. I have pointed out in other articles that this practice cheapens the gospel, reducing it to a mere marketing device. I wish now to draw attention to a different matter.

The innovation of children's classes creates a new problem for the makers of the *business-model* argument. The 2010 lectureship advertisement stated that the classes would be for children ages (2-6) and (7-10). This is a problem, for a 2 year old cannot be a *customer*! Two and three year-olds are not going to "visit the Truth Bookstore" while in town, and pick up some age appropriate Bible materials. A 2 year-old child is incapable of making purchasing decisions.

Some might attempt to answer this by saying, "the child's parents can go to the bookstore and buy for them." Yes they can, but this misses the point entirely. In order for the argument to remain valid, those targeted by the lectureship organizers must be capable of doing the thing that they are being encouraged to do, which is, in this case, to go to the Truth Bookstore and purchase material. Arranging classes especially for these little children

removes them from the category of incidental (at the lectureships because their parents are there), and classifies them as attendees and students. This reclassification nullifies the argument being made by many preachers, that the Truth Magazine lectures are simply a means of marketing business products and services. If these brethren are honest, they will now quit making this argument. Of course, as I said earlier, the argument already contained serious implications with regard to the use of the gospel.

Conclusion

Parents are instructed to teach God's word to their children (Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:7). Among other things, parents need to teach their children that *the ends do not justify the means* (Rom. 3:8; Prov. 14:12; 16:25). Many children have learned the Bible as a result of teaching that has been done by church funded missionary societies. This, however, doesn't justify the missionary society arrangement. It is still sinful and wrong.

Children also need to be taught that God's silence is prohibitive, not permissive (Acts 15:24; Heb. 7:14). This means that when God authorizes a specific institution for a certain purpose, we are not at liberty to form, fund, operate or use other institutions for that purpose. With its lectureship program, the Guardian of Truth Foundation has become a worship, edification and missionary society. Rather than using this institution as a training center for their children, parents need to teach their children that GOTF has no scriptural authority to function in these capacities. Parents should teach their children [the difference between the selling of gospel materials and the preaching of the gospel.](#)

Young children are extremely impressionable. Some no doubt attend local churches whose classes are small, which will make the children view the institution's classes as more desirable. Some will look forward all year to the institution's assemblies because they get to meet with other children from all over the country. They will begin to view the Bible classes of the human institution as being more "spiritual" than the classes that are provided by local churches.

The theme of the 2010 Truth Magazine lectures was, "*A Crisis in Leadership.*" I agree. There is indeed a crisis in leadership, and this crisis exists among business *leaders* who presume to be the arbiters of *crises* among churches. The real "crisis in leadership" is in the Guardian of Truth Foundation!

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