

Mason's Program for Bible Lessons

Art Middlekauff

CharlotteMasonPoetry.org



The Purpose of Education

“... the culmination of **all education** ... is that personal knowledge of and intimacy with the Supreme, in which our being finds its fullest perfection ”

“ Everything that need be taught to a youth is no doubt explicit or implicit in the Christian religion... ”



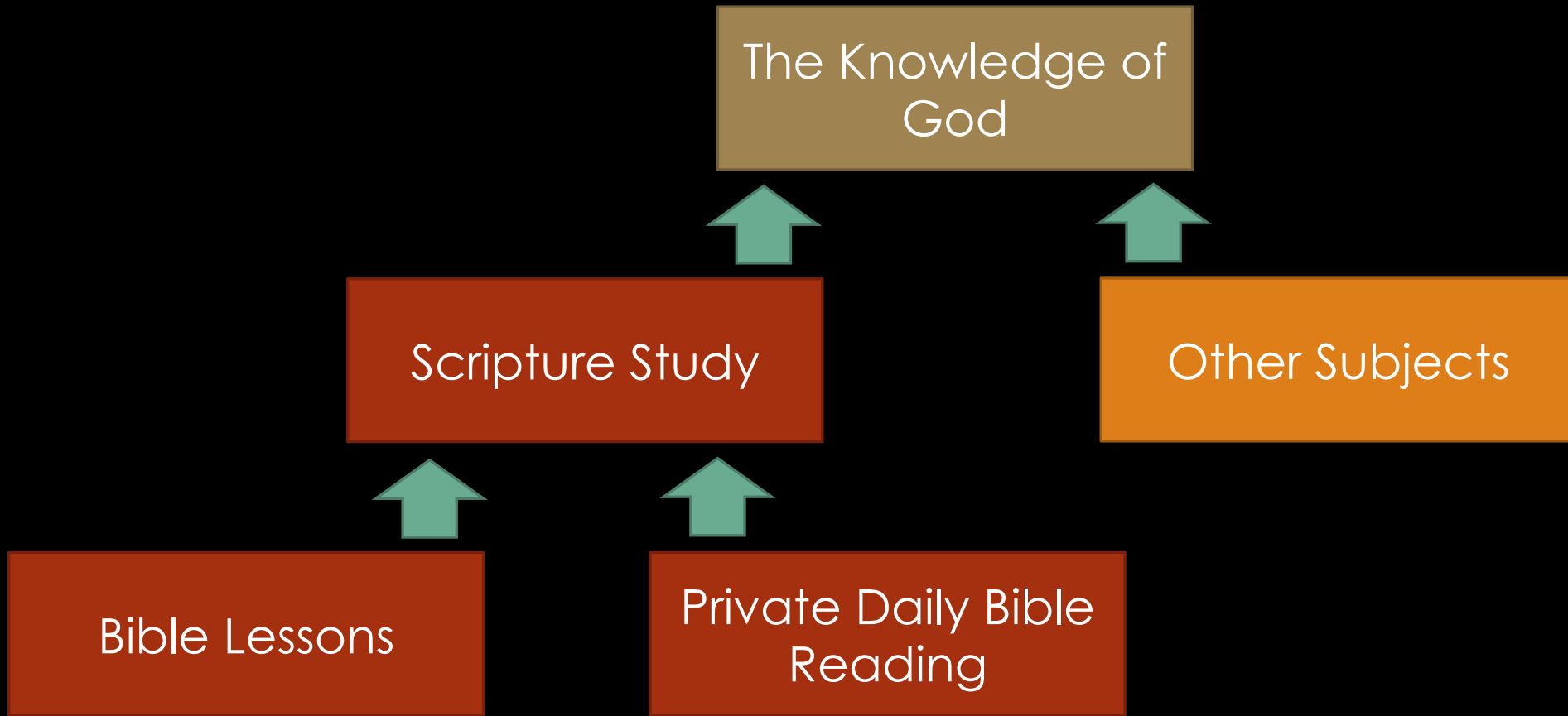
The Place of Scripture Study

“ To begin with, Scripture with us is **not an isolated subject**—the only ‘public recognition of God’ in the school curriculum.

We believe that in that painting in Florence, which Miss Mason ventures to describe as the Great Recognition, is shewn the true educational gospel—that **all knowledge is part of Holy Wisdom and the gift of God’s spirit**.

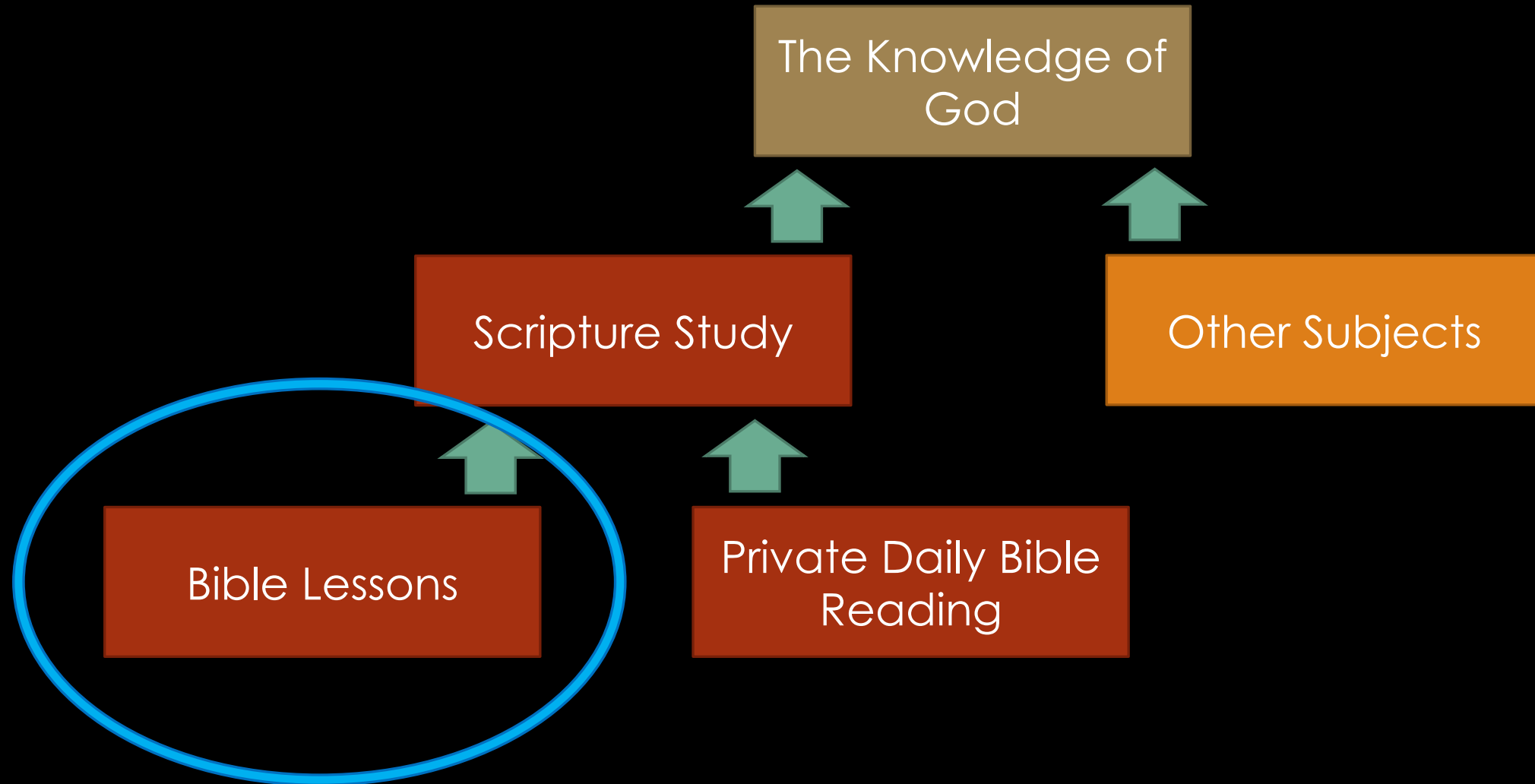
So we try to inculcate a spirit of reverence and wonder in all studies, while putting first things first and **beginning every morning with a scripture lesson in the place of honour.** ”

Scripture Study in the Program



	Private Daily Bible Reading	Bible Lessons
Purpose	The knowledge of God	The knowledge of God
Status	Required	Required
Source	Specified in the Programme	Specified in the Programme
Participants	Student	Student and Teacher
Sequence	Christian Year	Comprehensive Bible Curriculum

Scripture Study in the Program



The Purpose of Bible Lessons

“ **The Knowledge of God**. These simple yet profound words... might stand perhaps with arresting effect at the head of any Bible lesson. They give at once, the essential reason for such a lesson; and who, seeing them, would let the manifold literary but lesser claims of the Bible outweigh its first and greatest, as a revelation of the Divine?

... to bring through knowledge the hearts of the children in love and loyalty towards their Maker, is thus the first duty in Scripture teaching, and it is through the establishment of this **personal relationship** that they are led to what a saint of old so beautifully described as ‘the practise of the presence of God.’ ”



The Design Principle

“ To repeat what I have already insisted upon to weariness, we must teach children a definite, ordered philosophy of life. It is all in the Bible?

Yes, but our teaching of the Bible is no longer of the **full, exhaustive, progressive** kind that should issue in a balanced character. ”



The Relevance of the Programmes

“ Throughout Miss Mason took the keenest possible interest in all the work, checking, revising and giving **the final word** before printing. This she kept up to the very last and during the closing days of her life some of the work was held up till she felt well enough to give her **word of approval**. ”

“ The trilogy of theology, philosophy and practice orchestrated Charlotte’s realised pedagogy, solidifying an epigenetic core of ideals and beliefs which were to **withstand** the general onslaught of taxonomic drift from **1886** until **1949**. ”

Frederic Middleton, *PUS Diamond Jubilee*, p. 19

Jack Beckman, *Lessons to Learn - Charlotte Mason’s House of Education And Resistance to Taxonomic Drift*, p. 147

“ full, exhaustive, progressive ”

	Old Testament	New Testament	
Forms I-II Grades 1-6	Genesis Moses and the Exodus Joshua and Judges Prophets and Kings J. Patterson Smyth	St. Matthew's Gospel St. Mark and the Acts J. Patterson Smyth St. Luke's Gospel Walsham How	
Forms III-IV Grades 7-9	Old Testament History H. Costley-White	John Acts	The Gospel History & The Saviour of the World
Forms V-VI Grades 10-12	Wisdom books Prophets Post-Exilic history	Epistles Revelation	

Forms I-II

Bible Lessons.

In all cases the Bible text must be read and narrated first.

A & B *The Bible for the Young*, by Dr. Paterson Smyth (P.N.E.U. Office, 1/6): (a) *Genesis*, Lessons 17-24, (b) *St. Luke's Gospel*, chapters 16-24. (S.P.C.K. Commentary, 9d.). Teacher to prepare beforehand: in teaching, *read the Bible passages ONCE and get the children to narrate*; add such comments (see Paterson Smyth) as will bring the passages home to the children.

Forms I-II

The Bible for the Young	Suitable Stories From	Terms
Genesis	Genesis	3
Moses and the Exodus	Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	3
Joshua and Judges	Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel	3
Prophets and Kings	1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, Jonah	2-4
St. Matthew's Gospel	Matthew	3
St. Mark and the Acts	Mark, Acts 1-8	3
St. Luke's Gospel*	Luke	3

* Not In *The Bible for the Young*

Forms III-IV

Bible Lessons.

In all cases the Bible text must be read and narrated first.

IV. & III. *Old Testament History*,* by T. M. Hardwick and H. Costley-White (Murray, 3/6), Vol. V., pp. 195-238. *The Work of the Prophets*, by R. Selfe (Longmans, 2/6), chapters 7, 9, 11, 12, 13. (a) S.P.C.K. *Bible Atlas** (1/-). (b) *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, by S. R. Macphail (Clark, 1/-). (c) *The Universal Bible Dictionary* (R.T.S., 7/6), may be used for all names of persons and places. (d) *The Saviour of the World*, Vol. IV. (P.N.E.U. Office, 3/-), pp. 120-193.

Forms III-IV: Old Testament

Term	<i>Old Testament History</i>
1	I:1-100
2	I:100-188
3	II:3-79
4	II:79-213
5	III:1-83
6	III:83-176
7	IV:3-79
8	IV:79-154
9	V:3-96
10	V:97-165
11	V:166-238

“Old Testament Studies in the Higher Forms” 🌐

Forms III-IV: New Testament (Track 1)

Term	Scriptures
1	John 1-7
2	John 8-14
3	John 15-21
4	Acts 1-4
5	Acts 5-9
6	Acts 10-13
7	Acts 14-17
8	Acts 18-22
9	Acts 23-28

Forms V-VI

Scripture.

VI. & V. *The One Volume Bible Commentary*, by J. R. Dummelow (Macmillan, 10/-), (a) Introduction, pp. xxiv.-xl. ; cxiii-cxxii. ; (b) Isaiah. chapters 24-66, pp. 433-453 ; (c), Hebrews, pp. 1012-1030.

**The Gospel according to S. Mark*, with introduction and commentary by A. W. F. Blunt, B.D. (Oxford Press, 4/6), chapters 1-6. *The Saviour of the World*, Vol. II. (P.N.E.U. Office, 3/-), pp. 1-54, with Bible text (see Index) and notes from "Dummelow." Use *The New Testament in the Revised Version* (Cambridge Press, 2/-). *Palestine in Picture*, by Canon Raven (Heffer, 10/6), may be used.

Forms V-VI: Old Testament

Term	Scriptures
1	Job
2	Psalms 1-41, 1 Samuel
3	Psalms 42-89, 2 Samuel
4	Psalms 90-150, 1 Kings
5	Amos, Hosea
6	Micah, Isaiah 1-23
7	Isaiah 24-66
8	Ezekiel 1-24
9	Ezekiel 33-38
10	Ezra, Haggai
11	Nehemiah, Malachi

“Old Testament Studies in the Higher Forms” 🌐

Forms V-VI: New Testament (Track 1)

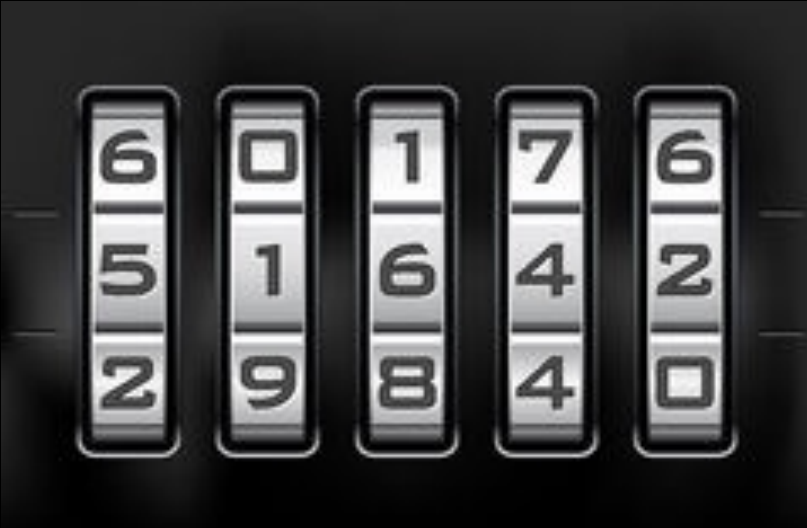
Term	Scriptures
1	Romans 1-8
2	Romans 9-16
3	Galatians
4	Ephesians
5	Philippians
6	Colossians
7	James
8	Hebrews
9	1-3 John, Jude

Forms III-VI: New Testament (Track 2)

Term	Saviour of the World
1	Volume 1, pp. 1-52
2	Volume 1, pp. 55-104
3	Volume 1, pp. 107-159
4	Volume 2, pp. 1-54
5	Volume 2, pp. 57-122
6	Volume 2, pp. 123-174
7	Volume 3, pp. 1-65
8	Volume 3, pp. 66-126
9	Volume 3, pp. 129-187

Term	Saviour of the World
10	Volume 4, pp. 1-65
11	Volume 4, pp. 66-133
12	Volume 4, pp. 134-193
13	Volume 5, pp. 1-63
14	Volume 5, pp. 67-128
15	Volume 5, pp. 129-192
16	Volume 6, pp. 1-55
17	Volume 6, pp. 59-124
18	Volume 6, pp. 125-185

Rotations



- No coordination between tracks
- Students may join and leave at any point in the rotation
- One grand rotation of *Saviour of the World* shared by Forms III-VI

What if some Bible books are missed?

“ Lastly, in Class IV., the teacher's work is not so much to teach as to direct; the pupils must search and strive for themselves; her office is to stimulate their thought, quicken their conscience and show them the way of personal study,

that when the actual supervision of school days is over they may know how to continue Bible Study for themselves. ”

Commentaries

	Forms I-II	Forms III-IV	Forms V-VI
For	Teacher	Teacher & Student	Student
Old Testament	<i>Matthew, Mark:</i> J. Patterson Smyth	H. Costley-White	J. Dummelow
New Testament	<i>Luke:</i> W. How	<i>John:</i> W. How <i>Acts:</i> E. Knox	

Commentary Example — Acts



- By Ellen M. Knox, first principal of an Anglican girls' school in Canada
- “Commentary” published in 1908
- Book review by Charlotte Mason in *The Parents' Review* in 1910
- In use in the Parents' Union School from 1913
- “there was great scope for much individual effort by the pupils, and also for the use of pictures and maps.”



Commentary Example — Acts



“Miss Knox, the Principal of Havergal College, Toronto, has done both the family and the school an admirable service in the production of a book on the *Acts of the Apostles*, **written with some literary distinction**, a considerable knowledge of history and much spiritual insight. The following extract from the Preface will show the spirit of the work:—

‘The following lessons are drawn up with a view of leading teachers and pupils, whilst availing themselves of every modern research and accessory, to study the Acts **as a whole**, instead of dwelling upon its exterior and incidental parts. If the student would find the secret of the greatest of all movements, he must pass beyond the glamour of the knighthood of St. Peter and St. Paul, the civic problem of a Corinth and an Ephesus, the adventure of a stoning at Lystra and a shipwreck, to the **spiritual power** which awakened that knighthood, inspired the character of its leaders, and taught the world what Christian love, joy and endurance might be.’ ”

Observations about the Commentaries

- They were all written by members of Mason's own denomination (Anglican)
- They were all recent publications (Walsham How 1887, Paterson Smyth 1902, Knox 1908, Costley-White 1908, Dummelow 1909)
- They were living books (literary form, spiritual power)
- They were probably not meant to be permanent choices

Commentaries — My Advice

- Don't put a commentary in front of your child that you don't believe in
- The best way to learn to identify counterfeit bills is to study good currency
- "The ultimate basis of all sound education is not Enquiry, but Faith."
- Preparation for Bible lessons is the most time-consuming aspect of my daily lesson planning

Time Tables

	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
	Old Testament	New Testament	Old Testament	New Testament
Forms I-II	20 min	20 min	20 min	20 min
Forms III-IV	20 min	20 min (Track 1)	20 min	20 min (Track 2)
Forms V-VI	30 min	30 min (Track 1)	30 min	30 min (Track 2)

Time Tables — My Practice

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	OT	NT Track 2	NT Track 1	OT	NT Track 2	NT Track 1
Forms III+	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min

- It is our favorite subject
- It was hard to get through an entire *Saviour in the World* volume in one year with only one lesson per week
- “So we try to inculcate a spirit of reverence and wonder in all studies, while putting first things first and **beginning every morning** with a scripture lesson in the place of honour.”

Bible Translation

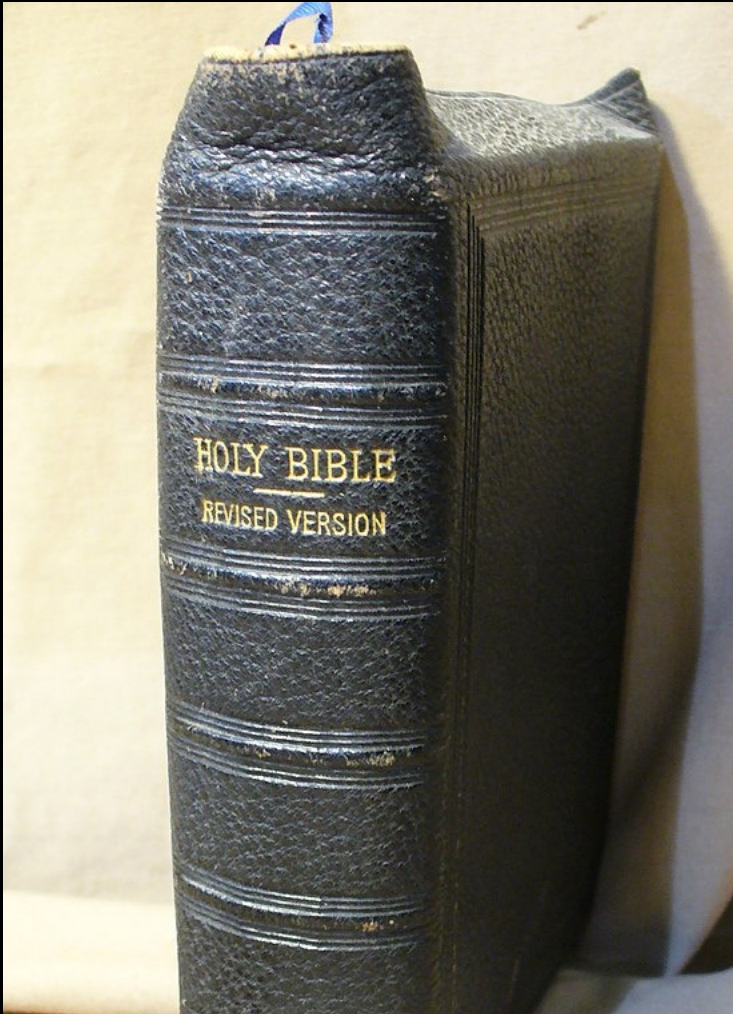
- The programmes rarely specify an English translation, but when they do, it is the English Revised Version (ERV)
- Mason evidently used the ERV as it was her text in the 1898 Meditations
- Mason's *The Saviour of the World* is based on the ERV
- Mason and PR writers occasionally point out differences between the ERV and the AV (KJV)



Charlotte Mason on John 2:11

“ The Revised Version gives us ‘**signs**’ instead of ‘**miracles**,’ and the change is significant. A miracle is a portent, a marvel. The beholders wonder at it and their thoughts go no further. A sign, on the other hand, arrests the attention, directs thought beyond itself to the thing signified; and the thing signified in this case was the glory of Christ which he manifested forth that day. ”

English Revised Version (ERV)



- Completed in 1885
- The first and only officially authorized revision of the AV in Britain
- Mason using the ERV in 1898 is like someone using the ESV in 2014

Why I Use the NKJV

- Closely follows the KJV and the ERV
- Uses the traditional Greek text
- Consistently follows the gender of the original language

How a Lesson is Conducted

1. The lesson is connected with the previous one
2. The lesson may be introduced
3. The Bible passage is read
4. The Bible passage is narrated
5. Discussion follows

The Lesson is Connected

“ Every Lesson must recall the Last... let each new lesson be so interlaced with the last that the one *must* recall the other; that, again, recalls the one before it, and so on to the beginning. ”

“ First of all the previous lesson is recapitulated by the children, and then the teacher connects it with the present lesson. ”

The Lesson May be Introduced

“ If there are remarks to be made about **local geography** or **local custom**, the teacher makes them **before** the passage has been read. ”

“ If places are to be found on the **map** let this be done now so as not to interfere with the flow of the lesson **later on**. ”

“ the children will want to get on to the real thing, namely, the reading of the Bible text, followed by narration. ”

Towards a Philosophy of Education, p. 272

Miss Bruce-Low, PR30, p. 129 

E.C. Plumptre, PR40, pp. 368 

Discussion

“ Discussion follows and explanation, the pupils being led to do as much as possible of this themselves. ”

“ The last part of the lesson is devoted to discussion—this is a very important part, as here lies the opportunity for bringing home any special teaching the story may afford and of clearing up any difficulties raised by the children. ”

“ So **we encourage them to ask questions**, and with a little help they often can answer them themselves.

For example, suppose we have just read the parables of the Finding of the Pearl and the discovery of the Hidden Treasure. The teacher may say that she thinks these two parables are very much alike, but supposes they must teach different lessons, or they would not both be there side by side.

The children will probably look at the verses again, and pretty certainly one of them will exclaim, ‘Oh, yes, I see, they are *quite* different, the merchant was hunting everywhere for the pearl, he was willing to give up everything he had for it, but the other man just came across the treasure by chance.’

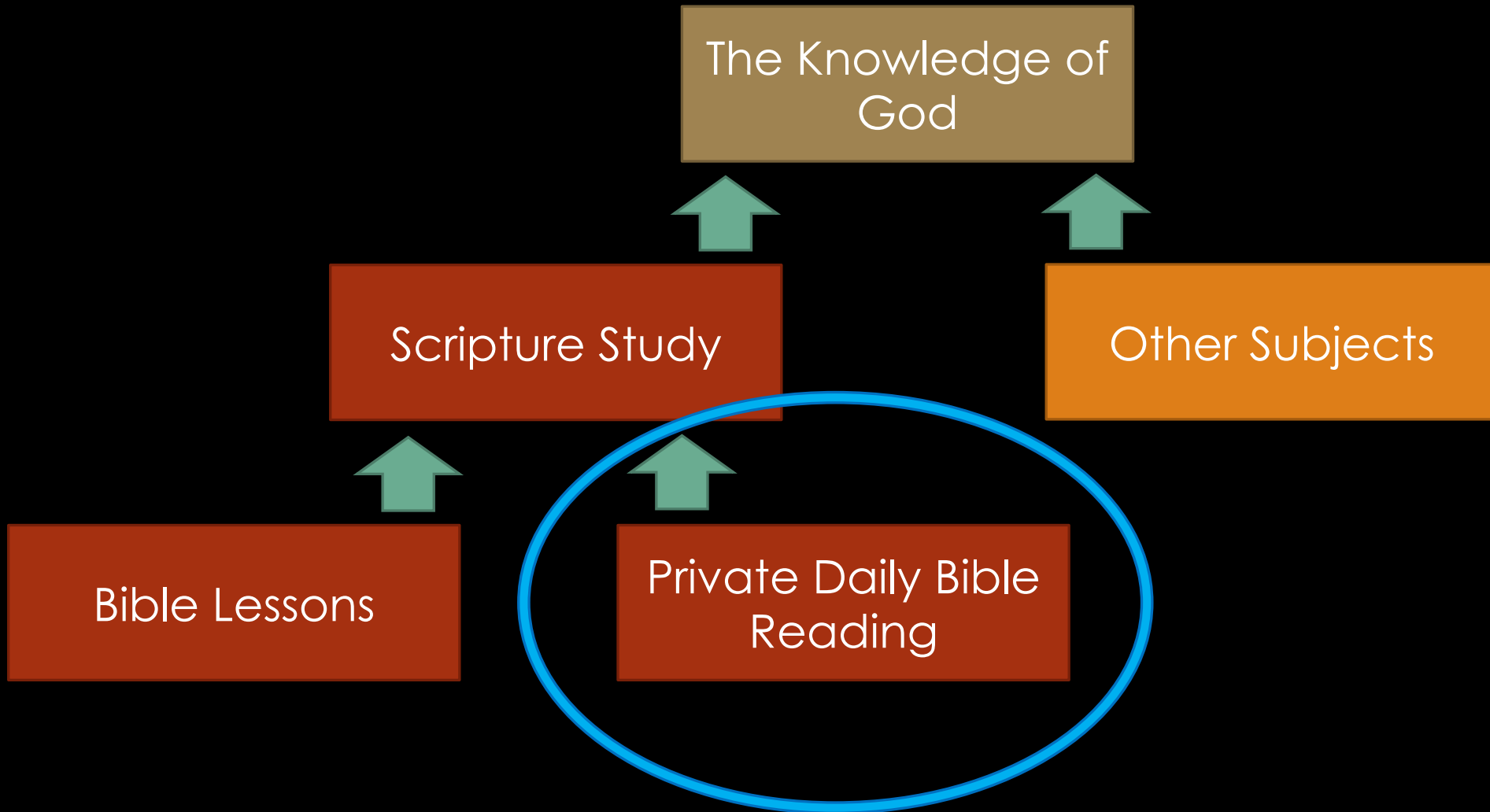
From this point it is easy to lead the children to think of characters in the Bible who have found either the Pearl or the Treasure, and then again of people they have read of in history. ”

“ We do not ever believe, in the P.U.S., in working into or at our pupils, they have often so much more wisdom than we, but in Class IV this is especially the case.

The teacher is certainly older than her pupil, and has, we may suppose, a little more experience, and has, of course, prepared the lesson beforehand, and all this gives her a just and right advantage, and so she aims at being guide, counsellor and friend to the girl to the best of her ability. ”

1. The lesson is connected with the previous one
2. The lesson may be introduced
3. The Bible passage is read *in The Gospel History*
4. The Bible passage is narrated
5. The individual Gospel accounts are compared (*Forms 5-6*)
6. Discussion follows
7. The poem is read
8. The poem is narrated

Scripture Study in the Program





Private Daily Bible Reading

“ In the first place, ‘every word of God’ is the food of the spiritual life; and these words come to us most freely in the moments we set apart in which to recollect ourselves, read, say our prayers. Such moments in the lives of young people are apt to be furtive and hurried;

it is well to secure for them the necessary leisure—a quiet twenty minutes, say—and that, early in the evening; for the fag end of the day is not the best time for its most serious affairs.

I have known happy results where it is the habit of the young people to retire for a little while, when their wits are fresh, and before the work or play of the evening has begun. ”

Forms II+ (Age 10+)

For private daily Bible reading, children may use *Lectioes for Older Children* (Spottiswoode, 1d. each). (e) *A Boy's Book of Prayer*, by A. Devine (Methuen, 2/-).

*Lectio*es by Spottiswoode

- Assigned for Forms II-IV in every programme from 1921-1933 with the exception of 1922 (92% of terms)
- **lec•tion** \ 'lek-shən \ *noun* : a liturgical reading for a particular day
- Not a commentary or a devotional



"Lectones for Inspection" 🌐

Charlotte Mason Poetry.org

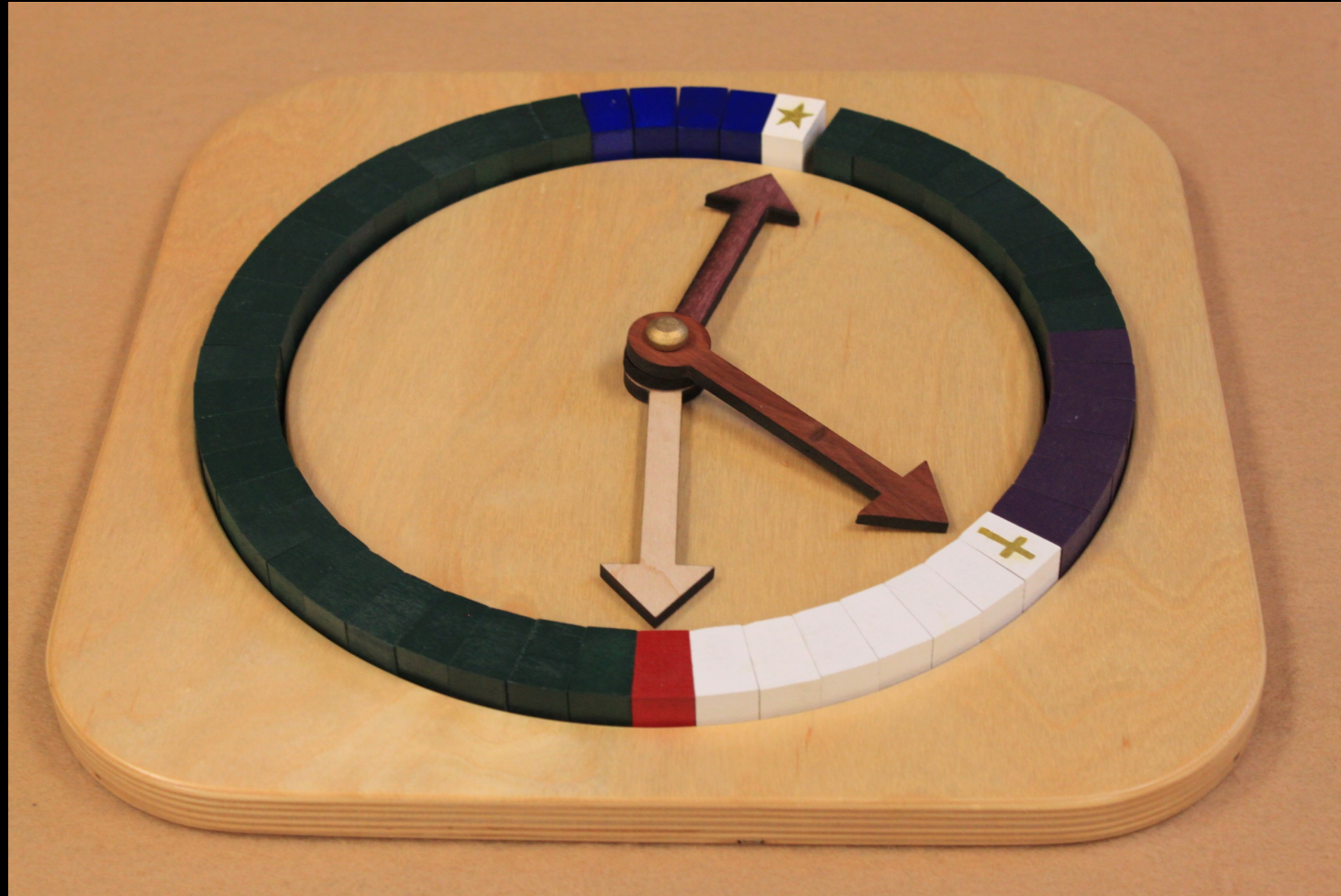
©2023 Art Middlekauff

*Lectio*nes by Spottiswoode

“ Therefore short passages called *Lectio*nes have been selected by a committee composed mostly of schoolmasters; just **ten or twelve verses** are grouped round **the festivals of the church**; and are so selected that a boy does not say simply, ‘that’s over,’ and get into bed, but he really thinks, ‘now that has meant something, there is a definite thought running through that, something that applies to my life and can be used in my life.’ ...

[The *Lectio*nes... can be purchased from Messrs. Spottiswoode, Eton College.] ”

The Festivals of the Church



Experiencing the Scriptures

By Book	By the Chronological Life of Christ	By the Liturgical Season
Bible Lessons OT & NT Track 1	Bible Lessons NT Track 2	Private Daily Bible Reading
With the Form	With Forms III-VI	With the Church

Three Vantage Points
All Corporate



By Book

“ How delightful it would be that each birthday should bring with it a gift of **a new book of the Bible**, progressing in difficulty from year to year, beautifully bound and illustrated, and printed in clear, inviting type and on good paper.

One can imagine the Christian child collecting his library of sacred books with great joy and interest, and making a diligent and delighted study of the **volume for the year** in its appointed time. ”





By the Chronological Life of Christ

“ Let us observe, notebook in hand, the orderly and progressive sequence, the penetrating quality, the irresistible appeal, the unique content of the Divine teaching; (for this purpose it might be well to use some one of the approximately **chronological arrangements** of the Gospel History in the words of the text).

Let us read, not for our profiting, though that will come, but for love of that knowledge which is better than thousands of gold and silver. **By and by we perceive** that this knowledge is the chief thing in life; the meaning of Christ's saying, 'Behold, I make all things new,' dawns upon us; we get new ideas as to the relative worth of things; new vigour, new joy, new hope are ours. ”



By the Liturgical Season

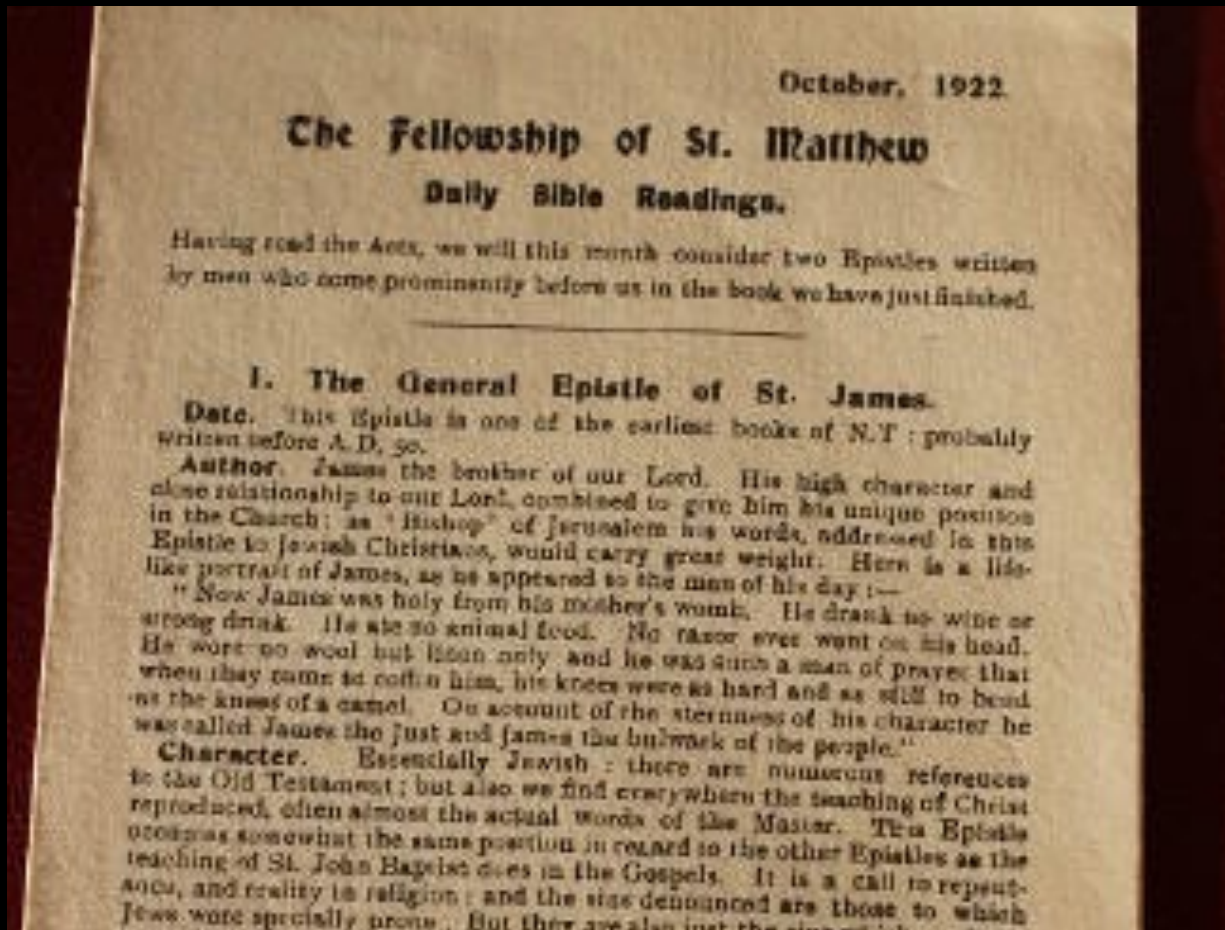
“ Even those who do not belong to the Church of England would find her Sunday Collects, Epistles, and Gospels helpful, as giving the young people something definite to think about, week by week. We can hardly hope in this life to grow up to all there is in those weekly portions, but the youngest Christian finds enough to go on with, and has the reposing sense of being led, **step by step**, in his heavenward progress.

I am not suggesting this as a substitute for wider reading of the Bible, only as a definite thought, purpose, and prayer for every week as it comes, in addition to whatever other prayers general or special needs may call for. ”

Forms V-VI

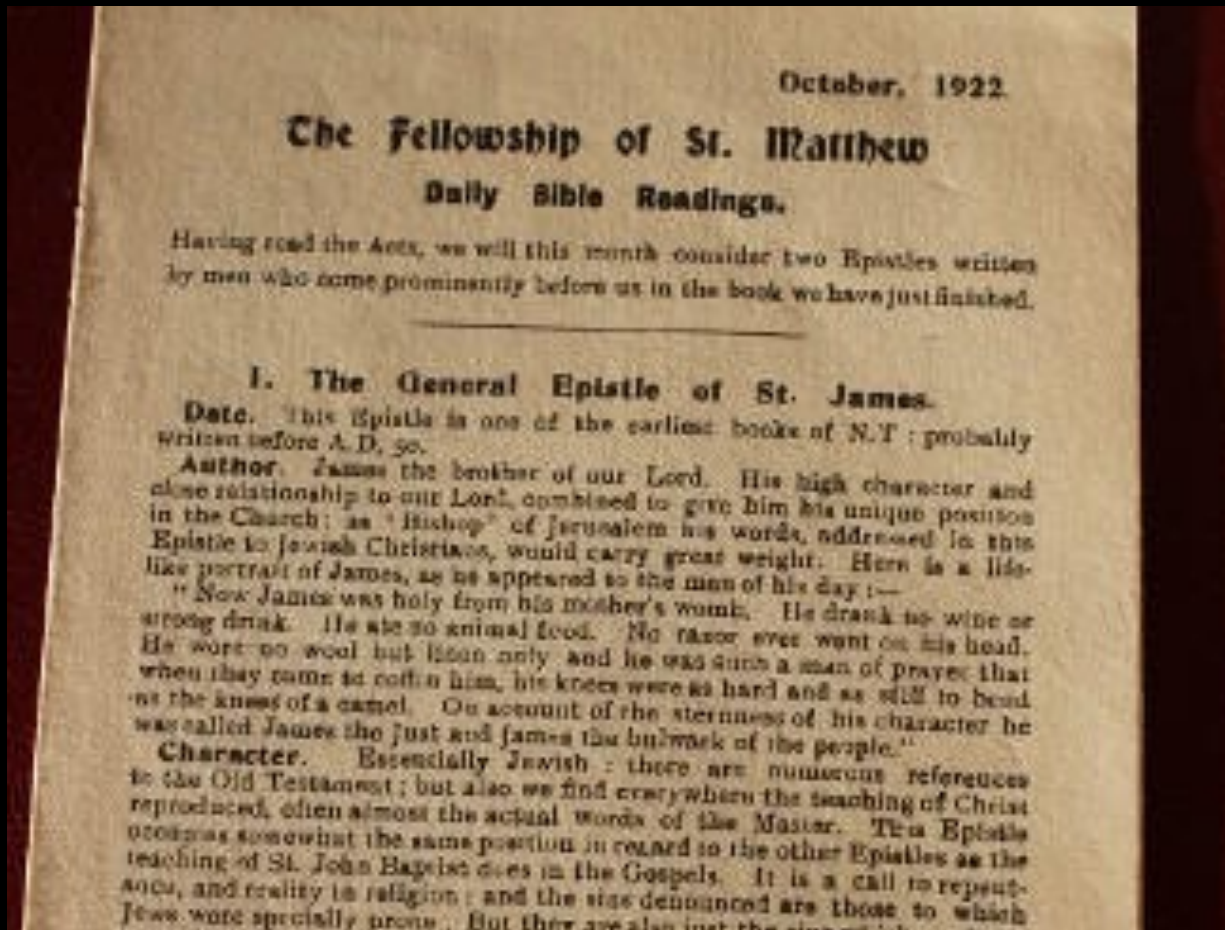
Programmes	Years	Private Daily Bible Reading
90-114	1921-1929	Not in the digital collection
115-122	1929-1932	Nothing specified
123-127	1932-1933	<i>Daily Readings & Notes</i>

Daily Readings & Notes



- Originated in 1922
- Published by The Fellowship of St. Matthew
- "A new monthly leaflet was devised which provided Bible passages for daily reading with brief explanatory notes"

Daily Readings & Notes

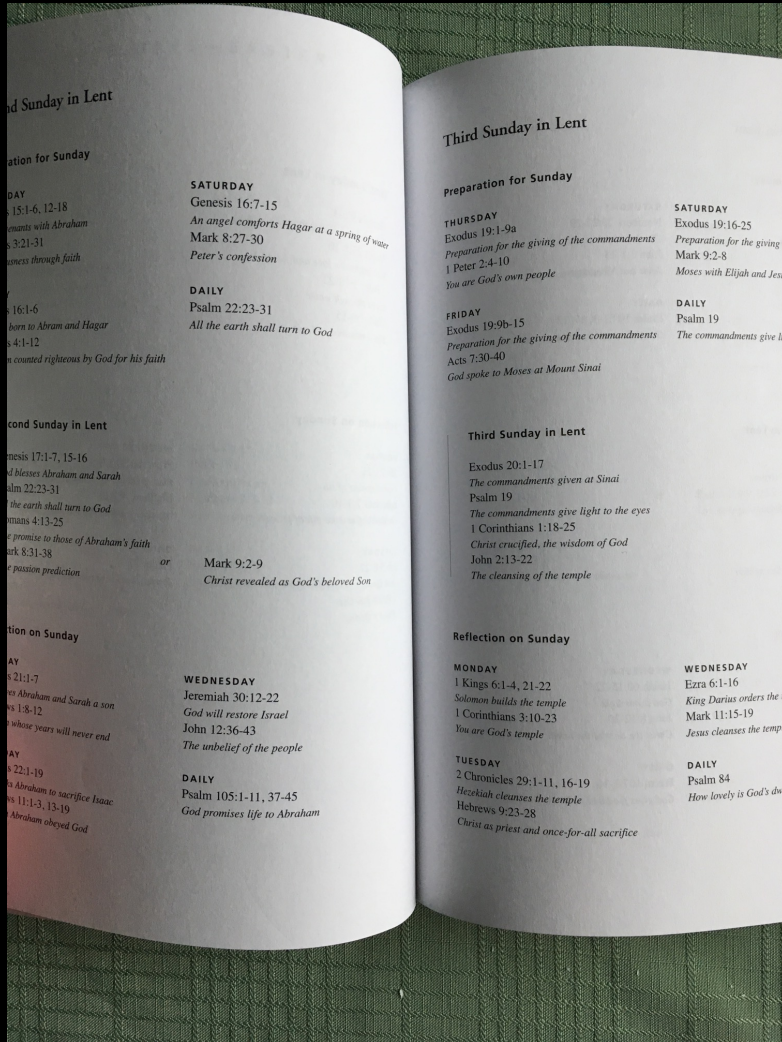


- By the end of 1926, several other churches had adopted the scheme
- The Fellowship of St. Matthew became The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF)

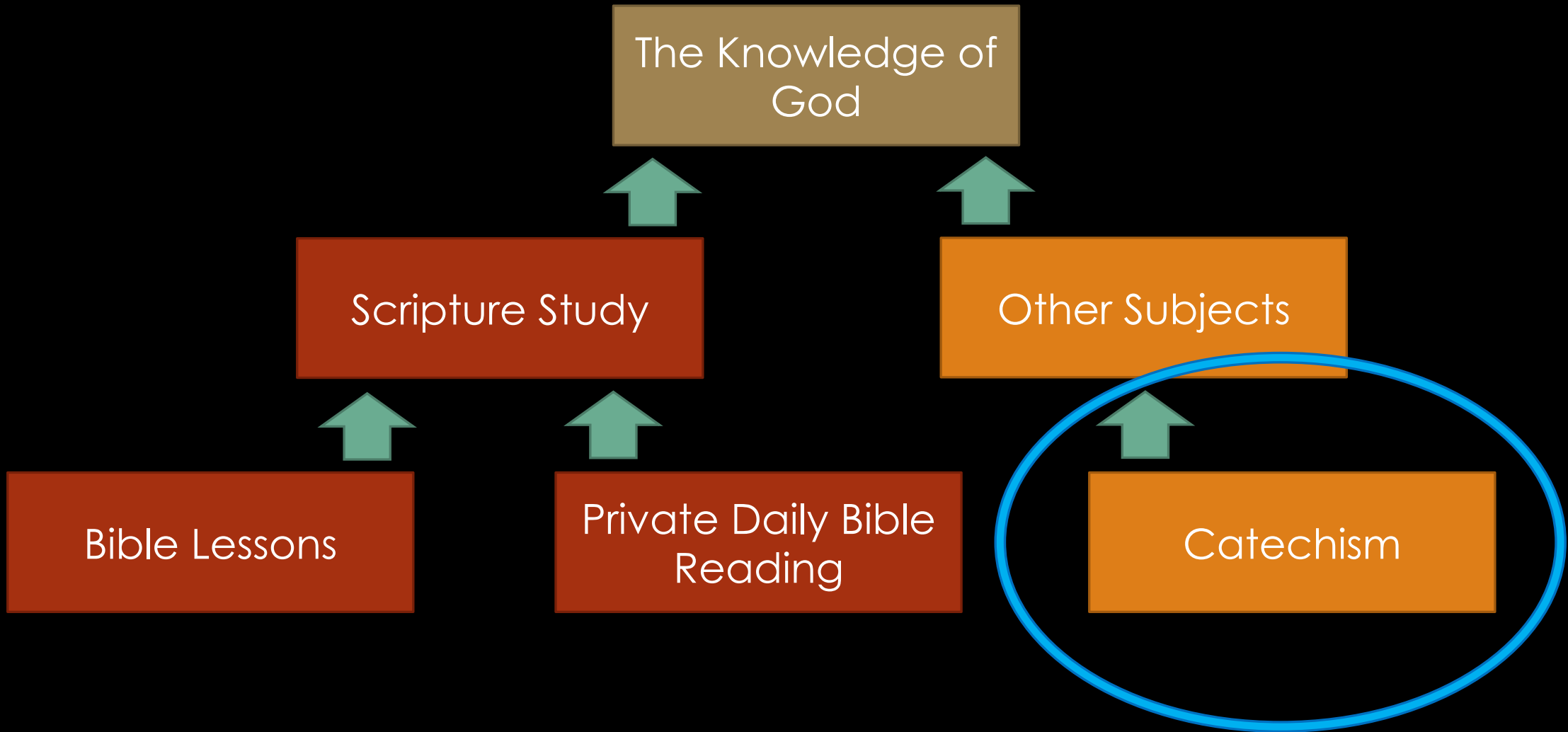
My Hypothesis

- Form V-VI students have always been expected to do private daily Bible Reading
- The readings should be lectionary-driven and not left to the student to select

The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL)



- Prepared by an ecumenical committee of Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Methodist scholars
- Follows the liturgical calendar
- Coordinates with the Sunday reading of many churches
- Generally 20-30 verses per day





Catechism

“ The Catechism, Prayer-book, and Church History are treated with suitable text-books much in the same manner and give opportunities for such summing-up of Christian teaching as is included in the so-called dogmas of the Church. We find that **Sundays** together with the time given to **preparation for Confirmation** afford sufficient opportunities for this teaching. ”

“ But what we have no right to do, is to pass these **opinions** on to our children. We all know that nothing is easier than to make vehement partisans of young people, in any cause heartily adopted by their elders.

But a reaction comes, and the swinging of the pendulum is apt to carry them to a point of thought painfully remote from our own.

The mother of the Newmans was a devoted Evangelical, and in their early years passed her **opinions** over to her sons, **ready-made**; believing, perhaps, that the line of thought they received from her was what they had come to by their own thinking.

But when they are released from the domination of their mother's **opinions**, one seeks anchorage in the Church of Rome, and another will have no restriction as to his freedom of thought and will, and chooses to shape for himself his own creed or negation of a creed.

Perhaps this pious mother would have been saved some anguish if she had given her children the living **principles** of the Christian faith, which are not matters of **opinion**, and allowed them to accept her particular practice in their youth without requiring them to take their stand on Evangelical **opinions** as offering practically the one way of salvation. ”

¶ *Catechist.*

Reherse the Articles of thy belief.

¶ *Answer.*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Iesus Christ his only son our Lord, Who was conceived by the holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered vnder Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead and buried, He descended into Hell, The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to iudge the quick and the dead. I believe in the holy Ghost, the holy Catholick Church, The Coñunion of Saints, The forgiveness of Sins, The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.





The Passive and Active Principle

“ Here Goethe unfolds for us a principle of education which those who desire their children to possess the **passive as well as the active principle** of religion would do well to consider;

for it is probably true that the teaching of the New Testament, not duly grounded upon that of the Old, fails to result in such thought of God—wide, all-embracing, all-permeating—as David, for example, gives constant expression to in the Psalms. ”



The Passive and Active Principle

“ Is it that, like Goethe, they are aware of themselves only as ‘sheep of His pasture,’ and for the rest, take life as it comes? This **peace** comes to all simple, natural persons who have faith in God...

‘My peace shall flow like a river’ has been said; and this is what we forget, that the peace of God is an **active principle**, ever-flowing, ever-going, ever-nourishing, ever-fertilising,—and not a **passive** state, a quiet creek, where we may stagnate at our ease.

‘My peace I leave unto you’ conveys a legacy to children as well as to their elders. ”

The Knowledge of
God



The peace of God

active

passive



Questions?

Art Middlekauff

CharlotteMasonPoetry.org

Art@CharlotteMasonPoetry.org