



### GOING THROUGH A PHRASE

We all like the 'nice' bits of our Christian faith: joy, love, contentment, fulfilment, eternal Life. The other bits aren't as popular: spiritual warfare, work, persecution, mission, the cross, giving, forgiving! All part of the same package, in fact the 'good' bits are often a result of the 'hard' bits!

**CAST** Teacher  
Any numbers of pupils, only two have their own line to say.

Class sit awaiting teacher in usual semi-comatose attitudes of pupils preparatory to lesson:  
Enter teacher, pupils rise:

**Teacher** Good morning, brothers and sisters.

**Class** Good morning, sister. (or brother)

**Teacher** Sit! (they do) For this lesson in the Language of Zion course, I want you to repeat the following phrases after me. First, some easy ones.

**Class** First, some easy ones.

**Teacher** No, (sighs) the first phrase is 'God is good'.

**Class** God is good (they are very smug at the easiness of these phrases).

**Teacher** Jesus loves me.

**Class** Jesus loves me.

**Teacher** Let brotherly love continue.

**Class** Let brotherly love continue (they smile soppily at each other).

**Teacher** Praise the Lord

**Class** Praise the Lord

**Teacher** May the peace of the Lord be with you.

**Class** ...and also with you!

**Teacher** Oh, very good! Now for something a bit harder (class sit up, clear their throats and wait expectantly). I want to serve You, Lord.

**Class** I – want – to – serve – you – Lord.

**Teacher** I will serve You, Lord.

**Class** I - will serve – you – Lord.

**Teacher** Notice the difference in the tense of the verb ‘serve’ I WANT TO serve, I WILL serve – indicating a willingness to change from the passive to the active sense (class nod, knowingly ) next phrase ‘Spiritual warfare’.

**Class** Spir – it –ual –war – fare.

**Teacher** Evangelism.

**Pupil A** (stands up) Please, Miss (or Sir) what does the word mean?

**Teacher** Evangelism. This word means telling the Good News about Jesus... (Class understands and nod and smile at each other) ...which can sometimes lead to ‘Opposition’ (worried expressions and murmurs) ... but is essential to lead other people to faith. (class nod is a resigned sort of way) Next phrase, just a word this time.

**Class** Just a word this time.

**Teacher** (gritting teeth) Temptation

**Class** Tempt – ation.

**Teacher** Resisting Temptation.

**Class** Res-ist-ing tempt-ation.

**Teacher** Resisting temptation by the Power of Christ in you.

**Class** Resist – ing tempt – ation by – the ... (class forget and stumble over the last phrase).

**Teacher** Power of Christ in you.

**Class** Power- of – Christ- in – you (class look quite excited by this possibility).

**Teacher** Good! Now, the following phrases are some of the most difficult to master – for some reason, most of the pupils of the former classes have been unable to say them. Let’s see if the class of Two Thousand and \*\*\*\*\* can do better! (class can be seen to mentally gird up its loins, to face this new challenge) I’m sorry.

**Class** I’m s-s-s-s-s...

**Teacher** I’m sorry.

**Class** I’m s-s-s-s-s... (some could perhaps mouth the words but no sound comes out).

**Teacher** Perhaps you’d better practise that one at home – next phrase. You were right.

**Class** You were – you were – you were.

**Pupil B** (stands up) Miss (or Sir) I think I’ve got it! (clears throat) You were wrong! (class are beginning to look a bit mulish – they are not enjoying this lesson, now).

**Teacher** No, not quite, let’s go on to the next phrase, which is a little harder. I was wrong.

**Class** I was right . I was right. I was right!

**Teacher** No. No. I’m afraid you’re wrong!

**Class** You are wrong. You are wrong. You are wrong! (they find this easy to say, of course)

**Teacher** You must practise this at home. Now, we’ve just time for one more phrase, and if you can learn this one, you can learn anything in the language of Zion. Of course, it is one of the most difficult, and it has taken me a long time to master it (takes deep breath). Please – will you - forgive – me?

**Class** (look aghast) Please – will – you f-f-f-f-...

**Teacher** Please will you forgive me?

**Class** Please will you, please will you, please will you... (some burst into tears and say “I can’t”. Some slump and sulk and say “I won’t”. Some say “I’ll try” and stumble. Some clutch their throats, gasp, choke and die. Teacher looks around sadly, sits down, head in hands - Freeze).