



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).