

## Personalize a Bible Passage

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As Seventh-day Adventist teachers our goal is to inspire our students to learn about the "three R's" as well as to develop a relationship with Jesus. There are many creative ideas available to help us do this. I believe it is very important to be creative. We can't do this alone though. We need to get ideas from each other as well as books and the internet. Take those ideas and make them your own, that is creativity.

As an educating power the Bible is of more value than all the philosophers of all the ages. In its wide range of styles and subjects there is something to interest and instruct every mind, ennoble every interest.

*Ellen G. White - Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students pg. 428-429*

One idea I have read and heard about is taking a passage from the Bible and personalizing it. One I remember from my childhood is "For God so loved Richard, that He gave His only begotten Son so that if Richard believeth in Him should not perish but have ever lasting life." John 3:16, Richard Gray's version. A favorite in several books and internet site is 1 Cor. 13. I was moved to tears as I read some of these. Last year I tried this idea with my class. The results were beautiful. This passage is a good one to start off with because the phrases that you replace are fairly easy to explain and fill in.

I have been watching my students this year and one thing that has stood out is their unity. At times it is iron clad and they move like a single unit. However on bad day they can turn on each other with amazing fury. I know they really do love each other but Satan's attack is often "Divide and Conquer", so I went to the Bible to find a passage that they could personalize. Unity is essential for any group of people, kids and adults alike.

Psalms 133 is a wonderful chapter on unity. First we read the chapter aloud. What is unity like? Oil. We discussed how the author felt about the importance of oil in this context. What did it represent? What Bible characters or famous people do you think were good examples of unity? What are some things these people use in their lives? What is the longest lasting thing you can think of?

EXAMPLES of the Students' work:

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters live in unity! It is like a Bible on my hands opening up the pages, opening up Paul's arms.

... It is like a little lamb cuddled in my arm running down Joshua's lap, down his coat.

... It is like Mario Lemieux's hockey stick in the hand shooting down the ice.

... It is like very expensive conditioner lathered carefully on the head creeping down my face.

... It is like soothing shower bubbles on your hair and on the head melting slowly down the face.

...It is like freshly imported squeezed olive juice running down a raw hide leather coat.

... It is as if the water of a great rain were falling on my heart. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as friendship exists.

... It is as if the water of Atlantic Ocean were falling on my heart. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as it takes to strap up a snowboard.

... It is as if I were playing hockey with Mario Lemieux's stick. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as hockey has been played in Canada.

... It is as if the cat of God was curled up on my lap. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as God lives.

... It is as if the walls of Jericho were falling for Joshua again. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as Joshua had to wander in the wilderness.

... It is as if the Love of the Lord were filling my heart. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as I am alive.

... It is as if my pets could never die. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as I could walk them all around the world.

... It is as if my Mom and Dad built my dog a huge back yard. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as if I walk him around the world.

... It is as if I were flying to a land where you play hockey all the time. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as Heaven is going to exist.

... It is as if I could memorize the whole Bible in my heart. For there the Lord bestows His blessings even as long as I live."

The children wanted to be very creative. They didn't want the prepositions and participles chosen for them. I explained they needed to have guidelines so that it followed the flow of the Bible. We talked about Biblical poetry and how it is different from modern poetry and how it is similar. There are limitless ideas you can draw from making the Bible passage more personal for our students.

There are several objectives you can satisfy when doing this activity. Creative Writing, Poetry, Editing Skills, Bible, and History/Socials and many more. God desires to have us know Him personally. You can't get to heaven unless you know the Savior. It is my prayer that my students know Jesus better through out the year. Give this idea a try and please let me know how it went.