

WHY DO WE HAVE A SUNDAY SCHOOL?

A. Why Should You Have A SUNDAY SCHOOL? (2 Timothy 3:15- 4:5)

1. Because _____ can learn the _____. (3:15a)
 2. Because children need to know about _____ through faith in Christ. (3:15b)
 3. Because learning the Scriptures encourages spiritual _____ in the life of the saved child. (3:16- 4:5)
 4. **Conclusion:** The life God wants us to model and teach is the life rightly related to _____ and His _____ beginning with salvation and then resulting in spiritual growth and service to our Savior.
- Is it really that important for children to learn the Bible and sound doctrine?

YES!!! Why? Because...

- 1) It can give _____ of _____ to the sinner who places his faith alone in Jesus Christ alone as Savior. (1 John 5:13)
- 2) It can give the believer in Christ _____ in _____ by _____. (1 John 5:14-15)
- 3) It can make a believer in Christ a _____ and _____ Christian who has an _____. (1 John 2:12-14; Psalm 1:1-3)
- 4) It can give the believer _____ and _____ in his life. (Psalm 119:9-11)
- 5) It can provide the child of God _____ in the decisions of life. (Psalm 119:105)
- 6) It can _____ the yielded believer to become more like _____ and to do _____. (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Cor.3:18)
- 7) It can _____ the believer in Christ to _____. (Romans 10:14-17)

- Is teaching the Word of God in a clear, accurate, and practical way through the power of the Holy Spirit important to you?

B. Five FACTORS To Consider for an Effective Sunday School Class.

1. The spiritual condition, gifts, experience, and faithfulness of the _____.
2. The age, background, characteristics, and volition of the _____.
3. The preparation and presentation of the _____ and its _____.
4. The cleanliness, creativity, and control of the _____.
5. The importance of _____.

C. Four PROMISES To Claim by Faith as a TEACHER.

1. **Isaiah 55:8-11** - "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.
2. **2 Corinthians 3:5-6** - Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
3. **1 Corinthians 15:58** - Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
4. **Romans 1:16** - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

- What is an important truth to remember?

- What did you learn in this lesson?

THE ROLE AND PREPARATION OF THE TEACHER (Faithfulness and Effectiveness as a Sunday School Teacher)

A. Your ROLE as a Sunday School Classroom Teacher

1. LEADER: Overseer and Disciplinarian of the Classroom

As a LEADER-OVERSEER, you are ACCOUNTABLE for whatever transpires within your classroom. In advance, you prepare yourself, your lesson and your classroom. Mrs. Lydia Erb would often say “If you don’t have a plan for the children, the children have a plan for you!” By coming into the class period prepared, you are nearly 90% of the way to your goal. At the start of the class period, you are waiting for the children to arrive, greeting them by name and guiding their energetic behaviors. They sense from the entrance into your domain, you are the leader-overseer of this classroom. With a delicate balance between loving grace and classroom law, the Sunday school teacher guides the students and the many details of the classroom in order that God’s precious truth can be effectively communicated. Each activity in class you instruct them WHAT you will be doing and command them HOW they will be doing it. [Example – “Next children when I tell you, we will be moving over to the sitting area to listen to our story (instruction in WHAT) and I want everyone to not say a single word nor touch anyone as you quietly and slowly walk to the story telling area. Now everyone quietly get up and move.” (instruction in HOW)] Consistent classroom procedures and rules are absolutely necessary, giving structure to the classroom atmosphere and security to each individual student. After several weeks in your classroom, new students should be able to observe the procedures and rules giving them security to know how everything fits in the classroom.

Each teacher has a personality style of classroom management, but within your personality style, you must oversee/manage all aspects of the classroom with settled confidence to create a secure atmosphere for learning. A timid or confused teacher creates chaos within the classroom simply because she/he is not deliberately leading the class along a prescribed pathway or to a specific predetermined goal. Classroom leadership is up for grabs with a weak leading teacher. If you waffle with a “ho-hum” delayed decision during giving instructions or hesitate in a transition between activities, then the strong-willed, aggressive children will jump right in and try to take charge of your classroom direction. They do it at home with little consequences and they will try in your class until they sense you know where you are going and that you mean business. My suggestion is that you “strongly lead” the classroom procedures and activities with a firm posture, almost militarily commanding instructions, but then “graciously and tenderly handle” each child individually whether they be an aggressive, in-your-face brat, or a sweet little angelic cherubim. God loves them all equally and so should we. You may never know the details of their home life or the difficulties they face outside your classroom, but under your care they receive an hour of structured, loving, instruction in God’s eternal Word.

As a LEADER-DISCIPLINARIAN, you are accountable for the wellbeing and safety of each student in your classroom. You are the authority in the classroom protecting all students from any and all harm. Strong-willed or aggressive children may bully other children in class. Undisciplined children may disrupt class with attention-getting behavior. Sassy little girls may criticize other girls in a harmful way. The possibilities for disruption or harm in the classroom are vast, yet PRINCIPLED CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP can eliminate many of the potential distractions or hindrances to learning the Word of God.

A Few Classroom Principles:

1. LEAD the classroom WITH AUTHORITY and GRACE.

2. Come PREPARED to each class period.
3. LOVE and TREAT each child equally with unconditional GRACE.
5. Require all students to follow the ESTABLISHED CLASSROOM PROCEDURES and RULES.
6. SEEK HELP from leadership, other staff and parents when a child is continually disruptive. Most Sunday schools have set procedures to handle disruptive children.
7. Remember you are not trying to CHANGE THE CHILD in your classroom, but assist the parents in teaching them the Word of God.

Seek to lead your classroom with the same humble, diligent and loving leadership that Christ leads the church. (Phil. 2:3-6)

Always remember that you are still under the authority of Jesus Christ, the local church leadership and the parents of the children. Jesus Christ is the “Head” of the church and promises to build His church. (Matt. 16:18) Each local church may have a simple or an elaborate Sunday school leadership structure under which the teacher functions. You want to work interdependently with that leadership so as to fulfill their stated objective for your grade level in Sunday school. Lastly, do not forget that the parents are the ultimate human authority over the children in your classroom and they are willing to entrust them to your care.

2. TEACHER: Communicator of the Gospel and the Word of God

In all settings of academics, a teacher communicates information. In the Sunday school classroom setting, God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God are your main subjects. You have a high privilege to teach children about God, the gospel and His Word. Each teacher must be a GROWING STUDENT of God, His Word, the gospel, children and pedagogy in order to be an effective communicator in the Sunday school classroom. As a diligent student, you become more and more an expert on the topics of God, His Word, the gospel, children and teaching methods. Many things may transpire during your class period, but you want to be certain that you communicated at their level of comprehension, the truth of the gospel and His Word.

Every lesson in a curriculum should have a stated LESSON AIM or TARGET GOAL that the teacher seeks to fulfill. The lesson aim may be “teach the children that Jesus loved sinners using the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10”, or “share the gospel using the story of the Philippian jailor in Acts 16” or “teach the children the importance of being doers of the word and not only hearers using James 1:22-25” or “teach the six days of creation and how God rested on the seventh day”. The AIM OF THE LESSON directs all aspects of the class time and teaching time to accomplish that TARGET GOAL. The Bible is designed by God to be taught “precept upon precept, line upon line.” (Is. 28:10, 13) Every lesson in Sunday school curriculums cannot contain all aspects of the truth of Scripture, but instead is designed to build upon other truth learned in previous lessons. Therefore, the wise teacher must repeatedly cover the AIM OF THE LESSON using a variety of methods in the teaching time allotted. When the class period is completed and the students have departed, you can know your time was a success when the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God were communicated in the context of your lesson aim or objective. You can also prayerfully rejoice that the Spirit of God uses the gospel and the Word of God to convince them of their need of salvation and their need to apply the Word of God in their own life.

Every teacher must grow in their ability to communicate the Gospel and the Word of God. Prayerfully evaluate your lessons and illustrations, being open to feedback from other teachers, helpers, students and parents as you grow in your ability to “speak the truth in love.”

B. Your PERSONAL PREPARATION as a Sunday School Classroom Teacher

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION towards the LORD

- 1. To be an effective teacher of the Word of God, you must be SAVED and ABIDING IN JESUS CHRIST to be ENABLED by GOD'S GRACE. (John 15:4-5; Phil. 4:13; 2Tim. 2:1)**

A growing, empowered believer in the Lord makes the best Sunday school teacher. The Lord will lead you, empower you and direct both your preparation and your time in class; bringing great blessing to the children and glory to His name.

- 2. To be an effective teacher of the Word of God, you must FIRST be a DILIGENT STUDENT and possess a CLEAR UNDERSTANDING of God's Word in order to then TEACH OTHERS. (2Tim. 2:2, 15, 3:15-17, 4:2-4)**

You cannot pass on to the students what you do not possess for yourself. The Bible is the only book God has given. It is the greatest collection of wisdom and revelation to meet our ever need. Seek not to lose your thrill of the gospel of grace and the Word of God. Keep studying on your own the stories of the Bible and keep hearing the Word of God taught by faithful pastors and teachers. Your thrill for the Word of God will be reflected in your teaching and in your passion to communicate it to others.

- 3. To be an effective teacher of the Word of God, you should manifest some FAITHFULNESS, GIFTEDNESS TO TEACH, willingness to STUDY, and continue to acquire TRAINING, FEEDBACK and EXPERIENCE. (2Tim. 2:2, 7, 15)**

"Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." 1Cor. 4:2 Faithfulness is a character trait/quality – trustworthy, reliable. Sunday school teachers must be quality individuals to whom can be entrusted the high calling of teaching God's Word to our children. Faithfulness is a fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22-23 indicating that God can make us more and more faithful as we abide in Him.

Giftedness to teach speaks of a skill or ability – the ability to communicate to others so they understand you clearly and benefit from your teaching. Not all believers possess the ability to stand up in front of others and teach the Word of God. Over time and with the proper training, feedback and experience, many can become very effective teachers of God's Word.

RELATIONSHIP PREPARATION towards OTHERS

- 1. Toward PARENTS: God's perfect design in the family has the parents as the primary teachers for their children. Sunday school teachers are not intended to replace parents, but to COMPLEMENT their Christian training at home. Remember, you may be the one GODLY INFLUENCE in the child's life. Many children have been led to the Lord by their Sunday school teachers. (Eph. 6:1-4)**

2. Toward the *PASTORS*: God desires you to be **OBEYING** and **SUBMITTING** to your spiritual leaders in your church, not functioning as an independent maverick teacher. Sunday school is designed for you to serve as a member of the teaching team under the leadership of the local church. Most policies, procedures and curriculum have been determined through prayer and experience, so before you make a significant change in the classroom it is always wise to check with the person overseeing the Sunday school. (Heb. 13:17)

3. Toward other *TEACHERS and HELPERS*: God wants you to remember that some teachers **PLANT** the seed of God's Word, some **WATER** the seed, but it is **GOD** that saves and causes spiritual growth in the life of every child. (Isaiah 55:10-11; 1Cor. 3:5-9)

4. Toward the *CHILDREN*: you need to remember that you are the **AUTHORITY** in the classroom, and that you are the **KEY INSTRUMENT** God uses in the **TEACHING** process. (2 Cor.4:3-7)

PRACTICAL PREPARATION as a TEACHER

1. **Always be WELL PREPARED for each and every class.**

Abide in the Lord throughout the week, seeking His wisdom for your lesson preparation. Read the lesson early in the week and review it often with prayer. Seek to schedule time early in the week for windows of opportunity to prepare for your class period. Early preparation gives time to think, review and meditate upon the truths of the lesson.

2. **Beware! The teacher sets the MOOD and EXAMPLE for your classroom.**

Your internal attitude will set the mood of the classroom. Grumpy or crabby (carnal) teachers infect the atmosphere of the classroom. As you delight in the Lord by faith, He can give you a peaceful heart of rejoicing even when things do not seem to be going your way. Remember that your vertical walk with the Lord **WILL AFFECT** your horizontal relationship with the children.

3. **Be certain that during each class period you communicate clearly, accurately, and practically the BIBLICAL LESSON, repeatedly emphasizing the specific AIMS or OBJECTIVES for that lesson.**

4. **Seek to always maintain DISCIPLINE and ORDER in your classroom.**

Children will naturally rebel against procedures and rules in the classroom. The teacher must use all available wisdom and patience to seek to maintain discipline and order in the classroom. Many children are not required to obey at home or to follow their parent's instructions; therefore your classroom becomes a real challenge to their volitions. Other times the children are simply tired and not feeling well, making misbehavior a frequent occurrence. Learning cannot transpire when chaos distracts the attention of the students; therefore, by God's grace, every effort must be made to keep the classroom procedures and students in good order.

5. Use every effort to personally KNOW and PRAY for each child in your class.

Greeting the children by name communicates that you care about the children. Memorize their names soon after they join your class. Observe them and talk to them in the hallways of the church during other occasions. Ask them questions about themselves or their activities. You will soon know how to specifically pray for that child and even his family. A prayer list for your class, including teachers, helpers, classroom goals and students is a very valuable and helpful tool.