

How to Prepare Lessons Effectively

Questions

- 1. How long should I take to prepare the lesson?
- 2. What steps do I take to prepare the lesson?
- 3. What to do if I don't have time to prepare the lesson or if the servant giving the lesson does not show up?
 - A. Open Discussion.
 - B. Cancel Class.
 - C. Take the kids out.
 - D. Give the lesson anyway.
- 4. What if I do not like the topic of the lesson which is in the curriculum and I have something more appropriate for them?
 - A. Give them something practical, since you know the kids better.
 - B. Give the lesson anyway, obedience has its special blessing.
 - C. Compromise and give half of each lesson.
- 5. Is it acceptable to just repeat an old lesson?
- 6. What if I have not experienced the lesson I must prepare?
 - A. Ask another servant.
 - B. Give a different lesson.
 - C. Give it anyway



- 7. What if I am not preparing the lesson, do I have to attend? What is my obligation?

How to Prepare Lessons effectively

Overview

- Know Needs
- Remove Weeds
 - Distractions, Obstacles
- Plant Seeds
 - Types of Lessons
- Grow Deeds

The Sower and the Seeds

- "Behold a Sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear let him hear" (Matthew 13:3-9)

Know Their Needs

- NOT WANTS
 - "What do you want to hear about?"

- "What do I want to talk about?"
- "Whatever is easy for you..."
- "Whatever you have already prepared..."

➤ BUT

- "What do they need to hear?"
- "What do I need to learn from you?"
- Lord, what do you want me to tell them?"
- "They are Yours, keep them Yours

➤ Prayer

- Reveals the hearts and the needs.
- For each of the students, how to take the lesson.
- Do not target one!
 - our anger, being rejected
 - may not benefit
 - oftentimes won't find him in the lesson
 - may not accept your words

➤ Research - Service

- Visitations reveals the needs of family
- Similarities, movements...

➤ Experience

- Essential and repeated messages
- Elementary: Bible

- Junior High: Saints
- High School: Purity
- College: Wisdom, Comparative, Liturgy.

Remove the Weeds

- "First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." (Matthew 7:4)

- Distractions in the Classroom

- Physical distractions (Noise, hunger, sugar, other students...)



- Misconceptions, early questions
- Are they ready to hear the lesson?
- Lesson itself (inappropriate)

- Weeds, Rocks, Birds, etc.

E-S-C-A-P-E

- Experience and Practical

- REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT

- Scripture & Salvation

- MAIN LESSON - read, memorize (HW)

- "And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation'" (Acts 2:40).



- ✦ Creativity (not copying)
 - surprising, unique, experienced
 - Audio visual (3 ways of learning).

Remove the Weeds

- ✦ Ask & Answer Questions
 - be active and Interactive; allot time
- ✦ Positive
 - "Treat a man as he is and he remains as he is; but treat him better than he is and he will become better."
 - Samaritan Woman
- ✦ Early - respect time.
 - exceptions

Plant the Seeds

- ✦ We don't plant fruits
 - Not end result, equation.
 - Ex: giving them answers to HW
 - Teaching them how to fish
 - Basic tools for growth
- ✦ Serious preparation:
 - 30 min. X 20-30 = 10-15 hours
 - well-researched ready for many questions (beware of resources)



- NOT individual opinions, guesses, experiences alone
- Consult the fathers, teachers, etc...

➤ **Labor and Toil**

- "We toiled all night but we caught nothing"
- Lessons that costs nothing accomplishes nothing
- Our Lord prayed all night before the Sermon on the mount.
- Hours of prayer for 1 point!
- Reciting from books does not change hearts!
- Giving lessons --> Giving Life!

➤ **Blind to the fruits**

- May not see for years
- Think they are not paying attention, caring
- Ones focused, be far from you
- We may forget our own lessons, later to be reminded by others!

➤ **Types of Seeds:**

- **Kerygma (keraza, preaching)**
 - proclamation/announcement w/o argument... "We believe..."
- **Didache (Dogma)**
 - Teaching; explanation of kerygma.
 - Creed, history, theology, etc

- Paraklesis (comfort, change life)
 - Exhortation of faith and life
 - Must follow kerygma and didache
- Homilia
 - General discussion of any subject of Christian faith.

Grow the Deeds

- Goal of each lesson:
 - WHAT lessons.
 - HOW lessons.
 - Seeds must be watered regularly.
 - WE MUST BE PRACTICAL
 - Convince - of a truth in the Church
 - "are you convinced"
 - "We will hear you again on this matter"
 - Rebuke - correct misconceptions
 - With love and wisdom
 - Exhort - to change life.

➤ Lecture vs. Lesson

- For the ear - for the heart.

- One changes the mind- the other life.
- May forget words, but not virtue!
- Good words - good life.
- Speak about repentance - persuade people to repent.
- arguing of faith - to BELIVE
- We cannot only explain Love, but we must foster that love in them
- A Heart -Transplant

➤ **The Living Lesson**

- DEMONSTRATION
- "Did you prepare the LESSON?" vs. "Are YOU prepared for the lesson?"
- Avoid "the business of hypocrites"
- Story: "How long did it take you to prepare the lesson"
- "Those who preach lend their voices to the Holy Spirit so that the may write words of eternal life in the hearts of the faithful." - St. Basil
- "He who teaches others by his life and not his speech is truly wise." A Desert Father
- "By words one may convert others to salvation; but by evil behavior, one injures them." Mother Syncletia.

Review

- The Sower.

- Know Needs.
- Remove Weeds.
- Plant Seeds.
- Grow Deeds.
- **1. How long should I take to prepare the lesson?**
 - years of experience
 - months of field work
 - days of prayer
 - hours in preparation
- **2. What steps do I take to prepare the lesson?**
 - Know Needs
 - Remove Weeds
 - Plant Seeds
 - Grow Deeds
- **3. What to do if I don't have time to prepare the lesson or if the servant giving the lesson does not show up?**
 - A. Open Discussion
 - B. Cancel Class
 - C. Take the kids out
 - D. Give the lesson anyway. Ask another servant to prepare
 - Emergency lessons prepared

- Old lessons prepared.
- Repent - reasons for doing so?
- Depend on prayer and the Holy Spirit

- **4. What do I do if I do not like the topic of the lesson which is in the curriculum and I have something more practical for them?**
 - A. Give them something practical, since you know the kids better.
 - B. Give the lesson anyway, obedience has its special blessing.
 - C. Compromise and give half of each lesson.
 - Should follow curriculum but get special permission to make exceptions.

- **5. Is it OK to repeat a lesson?**
 - "Sermon on the Mount, Sermon on the Hill"
 - Some messages repeated to Israel by same prophets or different prophets.
 - Have a message, must be given.
 - But must prepare again!
 - Ex: Liturgy sermons (same gospel, but distinct messages)

- **6. What if I have not experienced the lesson I must prepare?**
 - A. ask another servant

- B. give a different lesson
- C. give it anyway
- prayer, repentance
- Start with the lesson, speak to yourself, ask for help from God.
- evaluate, review
- **7. What if I am not preparing the lesson, do I have to attend? What is my obligation?**
 - Prayer
 - Assist in preparation
 - Weeds (control)
 - Filling in the discussion (without dominating or distracting)

Conclusion

- Heart transplant
 - speaking from the heart to the heart)
 - "our hearts are wide open...open your hearts to us." (2 Corinthians 6:11; 7:2)
 - "You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men" (2 Corinthians 3:2)
 - "That your love may be in them." (John 17:26)
- Breathing into old bones
 - Ezekiel 37

- dry bones, scattered in the sun, shameful, without life
- "Behold I will bring upon you the breath of life" (v. 5).
- "Prophecy to the wind, son of man, and say to the wind (spirit), thus says the Lord come from the four winds, and breathe upon these dead men and let them live." (v. 9)