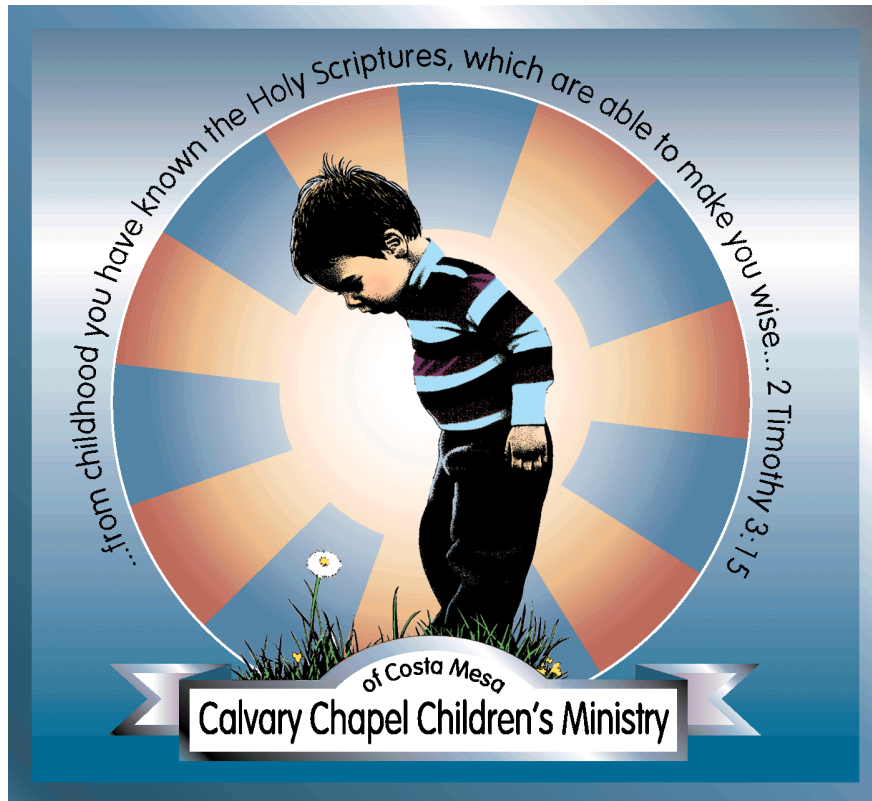

Calvary Chapel Children's Ministry Training Course



www.calvarychapel.org/children

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"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." II Timothy 3:15

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*Jesus said to Peter a third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"
... he said to Him, "Lord you know all things: You know that I love You."
Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep." - John 21:17*

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Message by Pastor Chuck Smith

Paul said, "I have great concern, lest you be removed from this simplicity in Christ". Just keep it simple. To the ministers at the various conferences where we are speaking I always urge them to teach the word of God simply. When a person comes and says, "I feel God maybe is calling me into the ministry, where do I start?" I tell them to go over and volunteer to teach third graders and learn how to communicate the truth of God to third graders or second graders or first graders or kindergartners. Learn how to communicate God's truth to them and you'll be an effective communicator for Jesus Christ. Simply teach the word of God simply. Don't be removed from that simplicity that is in Christ. The truth is simple. It isn't complex, as Paul said to the Romans, "...don't say who shall ascend into heaven that is to bring salvation down, or who will descend into the grave that is to bring it up. But the word of the gospel is near to you, it's as close as your mouth. For if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you'll be saved". That's how simple it is. Keep it simple.

Opening Prayer

“Father we thank You for this time together, coming in Your name, learning of You, considering the caring for Your children. We pray that You would be with us now, be a part of this class by leading it and guiding it in the direction that You desire, in Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Introduction to the Children’s Ministry

We’re going to be looking at a number of things throughout this evening. One of the outlines that we’ll be starting with is what I have there on the overhead, Basic Training Outline. But before we actually jump into that I want to start with the question, can children be saved? Whether you’ve thought through this or not, whether you’ve come to a conclusion or not this is extremely important in understanding ministry to the children. I’ve heard different ideas related to whether children can be saved or not. I’ve heard, well you know under twelve years of age it’s pretty difficult to even consider because they don’t have the intellectual understanding and maybe they don’t understand the concept of the cross and definitely four year olds and five year olds is out of the picture. Depending on what your answer is to that will be how you treat the little ones. Whether you’re willing to disciple them or baby-sit them. And it’s an important question to answer.

Many well know Christian leaders date their conversion from early childhood. Matthew Henry at the age of ten, Isaac Watt at the age of nine, Jonathan Edwards at the age of seven, Henrietta Miers at five, Mrs. Ruth Graham at five, Corrie Ten Boom at five, my boys at four and five and recently my daughter at four and a half. I believe that they can, I believe that they must. The scriptures tell us and point to that. D. L. Moody said that he believes that if children are old enough to come to Sunday School, they’re old enough to come to Calvary. Charles Spurgeon says, “I have usually found a clearer knowledge of the Gospel and a warmer love to Christ in a child convert than in a man convert. They have not to unlearned the habits of doubt and misconception which hinder so many from accepting the Gospel.” Charles Spurgeon again, “a child at five if properly instructed can as readily believe and be regenerated as anyone.” The word of God tells us, “...they bought the little children to him that he might touch them but the disciples rebuked those who bought them but when Jesus saw this he was greatly displeased and said to them, ‘let the little children come to me and do not forbid them for such is the kingdom of God. Surely, I say to you that whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it’.” On the contrary, for those who think that children are too young, Jesus said we need to become like them to enter into the kingdom of God. You see, the problem that we have many times from the adult standpoint of things is we’re thinking the intellect. The intellect and the act of salvation, although there is the intellect

involved, through knowledge and understanding is based on the will. Whether we're willing or not and that's one of the things I believe the Lord has pointed out to us about children, they're willing when they hear the truth. And we are to be the same. Not only can children at an early age give their life to the Lord but they must, they must. There's a lie from the pit of hell that says, "Oh no let's wait until they're old enough to make a real free choice, to see and experience all these things, and that's from the pit". We need to start training them from birth for the kingdom of God. I believe the parents' job isn't necessarily to train them for this earth as much as it is for eternal life. And sometimes we get so focused on this earth and we should not be so focused in that direction. How important it is that we see and understand that the children must believe and can believe and do believe. It's a foundation to be involved in ministering the kids. And if you haven't thought through that, it's important for you to do that. Ask the Lord if there's a challenge about this at this point in time in your mind. You really need to think through why is there a challenge, why am I thinking this way? It is such a blessing watching the children come to the Lord.

So many times here on Monday night, it's more of a evangelist night, and there may be 75 or 100 people go forward and what people don't understand is, all week long we have numbers that probably exceed that, that are giving their life to the Lord but it's done quietly. We had a situation recently, a first grade teacher came in and said, do you have any tracks that I can have because we're doing a lesson on what it means to give your life to the Lord, salvation? I said, yeah, there right over there. So we went over and picked up three or four and I was just being prompted by the Spirit, really kidding around but the Spirit was actually leading me. After this was all over with we could see, and I said, "What are you doing, you only picked up three or four, pick up some more", so we picked up another three or four and I went, "Oh no that's not enough", so I went over and matched the stack that he had and he ended up having about fourteen tracks. He goes back to class, and after class he comes in pretty excited, he said, "You'll never believe what happened. The teacher that I co-teach with felt like she should share, at that point in time the class just got started, and she asked if anyone would like to give their life to the Lord. And she was being prompted by the Holy Spirit at that point and fourteen hands went up." And they were so excited because these children gave their life to the Lord at that point in time and then the rest of the time they were able to disciple them in what they actually had done because that's what the whole lesson was about in the first place. Do we believe what the word has to say? The children are willing and I think that's important for us to understand.

All right, let's turn now to what I have on the overhead. What is Calvary Chapel's Children's Ministry? And we're going to take a look at that outline and we may be going to a few different pages from that outline but we'll be staying pretty close to it at this

point in time. (A) A Ministry of Building Up. You've got a page there Nehemiah 4 verse, 17-20. I'm going to read that to you at this point. "Those who build the wall and those who carried burdens loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me. Then I said to the nobles and rulers and the rest of the people, 'The work is great and extensive and we are separated far from one another. On the wall therefore wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. God will fight for us.'" How important it is to understand some of these truths here in Nehemiah. I don't know if you've had the opportunity to study the book but it's a tremendous book to look at.

Nehemiah saw the need, he saw the wall that was broken down and that was their defense in those days, defense from outside their city being able to come in and do at will what they wanted to do. The walls had been broken around, the children were not safe. The work was to rebuild those walls, the work was to protect the people in the city, and that's what Nehemiah set out to do. The battle was waged. Whenever God's work is being done, there is a battle, but never forget that greater is He that is in you, than he who's in this world. Don't allow the enemy to lie to you because he's already lost. But in the battle, in the situation that Nehemiah was dealing with, the enemy used discouragement, mocked, he belittled, he said, "Come on you can't do this you aren't able. Who do you think you are?" And in the same sense, I find those same lies and challenges coming to those who seek to go into ministry. Come on, you know yourself, you know what you lack. How can you even consider? He hasn't changed in his tactics over the centuries. He tries to create fear in our lives. He tries to get us to look at ourselves and that's a big mistake because if you do look at yourself, yes it is true, you don't stand at chance, you can't do it, it's impossible. What will you find over time if you haven't already is when God asks you to do something, it's really impossible. And He does that so that we will constantly come to Him, and that we have to constantly depend on Him. So the real issue is yes I can't do it, but yes He can through me.

People ask what are the qualifications to enter into the Children's Ministry. Now, there are some specifics and we'll cover that, but the reality is availability. It's not ability. If you think you have the ability then your attitude is wrong. If you think because you've done it before that you're able to do it now you're wrong. Because you did it before I would pray by the leading of the Holy Spirit and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and that's what you need again. If you've never done anything like this before then you need to surrender and say, "Lord I need your help". And that is when it's happening, that's when things will happen. That's when God will work through your life, it's availability, not ability. So Nehemiah realized, but persevered, and it's something you need to be aware of as you start in this training process. If God has called you to minister

to the children there is a slight chance that the enemy will try to discourage you. You may have already experienced that getting to this class. I find it interesting over time how people will respond and tell me on Tuesday's the strangest things happen, being the night of the class. Why isn't it on Monday or Wednesday or Thursday or Friday? Why do the flat tires happen on Tuesday? The employment asked to stay late on Tuesday. That's not coincidental, and you need to be aware of that. People who are in the Children's Ministry, couples will come and say, why is it Sunday morning when we teach our class before we get in there we get into an argument? And after class is over with, everything is great, everything is fine. I just say, why is it? The enemy will try to discourage, no question about it. If he doesn't then thank the Lord, if he does just realize it.

(B) on the outline the purpose is two fold. The Children's Ministry we want to allow the adults to study with the adults, so that they can go home and disciple their own children, and the children to be taught at their age level. This always get challenged, about age level learning. I find it interesting because it's a natural process of learning. You wouldn't put a seven year old in a college class unless they were absolutely exceptional. Why not? With some of the ideas that I hear you would think that would be common place. We'll be covering learning levels, we'll be covering different aspects of ministering to the children as time goes on. But there are appropriate age levels to be learned and taught and it's important.

(C) the goal is to bring the children into fellowship with God, to grow in that fellowship with the Lord, to know God by experience. You know it's real easy to talk about God, it's real easy to explain God, but what's important is that the children come to know God experientially. It's so important, and that's one of our goals.

(D) The Ministry. We're going to take a look at a page that you have in there, in your book with a few thoughts on teaching children. It's by C.H. Spurgeon. And before we read this I want to encourage you to reread this, and over a course of time read it often, because it has insights throughout the entire page that you will constantly be having God speak to your heart about. "Our Lord Jesus Christ evidently felt deep sympathy with children, and he is but little like Christ who looks upon them like trouble in the world and treats them as if there must needs be either little deceivers or foolish simpletons. To you who teach in our schools is given this joyous privilege of finding out where these young disciples who are truly the lambs of Christ's flock. And to you He said, "Feed my lambs", that is instruct such that are truly gracious but young in years. Christian children mainly need to be taught the doctrine, precepts, and life of the gospel. They require to have divine truth put before them clearly and forcibly. It is ours to make doctrine simple, this is to be a main part of our work. Teach the little ones the whole truth and nothing but the truth, for instruction is the great want of the child's nature. The only way to keep

chaff out of the child's little measure is to fill it brim full with good wheat. Train up a child and he may have fifty years of holy service before him. We are glad to welcome those who come into the vineyard at the eleventh hour but they have hardly taken their pruning hook and their spade before the sun goes down and their short days work is ended. Oh dear teachers, and I speak here to myself also, let our teachings be more and more scriptural. Fret not if our classes forget what we say but pray that they remember what the Lord says. Be sure that whatever you leave out that you teach the children the three R's, ruin, redemption and regeneration. Tell the children they are ruined by the fall and that there is salvation for them only by being redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. God forgives those who despise the little ones. Will you be very angry if I say that a boy is more worth saving than a man? There's infinite mercy on God's part to save those who are seventy for what good can they now do with the end of their lives? When we get to be fifty or sixty we are almost worn out, and if we have spent all of our early days with the devil what remains for God? But these dear boys and girls, there is something to be made out of them. They are the world's future. The past has been and we can not alter it. Even the present is gone while we gaze on it, but our hope lies in the future, therefore leave room for the children, room for the boys and girls. When the Lord calls a man to work, he gives him the preparation necessary for it. Get near to Jesus. An hour's communion with Jesus is the best preparation for teaching either the young or the old. So in the case of many a faithful teacher of young children you hear but little about of him, yet he is doing grand work for which future ages will call him blessed. His master knows all about him, and we shall hear of him in that day, perhaps not until then. Good teachers of the young look after them all of the days of the week as they have opportunity and they are careful about their souls with prayer and holy example when they are not teaching them by word of mouth. The shepherding of lambs is daily, hourly work. Go and catch the children, there is no law against it; all is fair in war against the devil. So my first instruction is get the children, get them now that you can. He who teaches a class in a Sabbath School has earned a good degree. I had rather receive the title of SST, Sunday School Teacher, than MA or BA or any other honor that ever was achieved by man. Let me beg you, then, to take heart because your duties are so honorable. Let the royal example of David, let the Godlike example of Jesus Christ inspire you with fresh diligence and increasing ardor with confidence and enduring perseverance, still to go on in your blessed work same as David did. Come ye children harken unto me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord." So much in that, so much to meditate on, how important to consider that, to continue to think on that when you are able to. There is a lot here and because of the lack of time we really can't go in depth into this although we are going to be hitting on much throughout the training on what was said here.

But one thing that is so important, is to get near to Jesus. You're walk with him is of all importance. Now I'm not talking about as long as you fellowship with God and spend time with God that you don't prepare in class, because that's not what I'm saying. But if you prepare and prepare and prepare and yet are not fellowshiping with him what do you have? He is the enabling power, He is our strength and our salvation apart from Him we can do nothing. How important it is to get near and stay near to Jesus. Some very important truths that we just read to consider. Back to that outline, Basic Training Outline.

(E) The Teaching. Need I say we want the bible to be taught. Teach the bible. Teach the truth. I cannot stress that enough. We can get, especially when we're not prepared, we can get caught up in teaching what we think or giving our good ideas that's exactly what will happen when you don't prepare for your class and what you're going to teach. You'll just start sharing. It's important to understand as you're just sharing, that everything that's going on in that class you're going to be held accountable for. Everything. If you choose to go in that direction, and that's to teach, and you maybe saying, "Well, I just want to help right now." Trust me, in that position of helping you are teaching by your lifestyle, by what you say, by what you don't say. So anyone who finds themselves in the class is going to be held accountable on the day of judgment for what you did with this time. It's God's time, it's His children and He's looking for vessels that are willing to stand up and say, "God use me. Use me to touch these little ones lives." But accountability is real.

Teaching the truth. We spend too much time teaching about the lies. What do I mean? Easter coming around. There's always the consideration of the Easter Bunny, the Easter eggs, the Easter hunts, what do I do? I need to let the class know what I feel about this so we're going to give more time to the lie. We're even going to waste time in addressing that? The most glorious of seasons, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and we're going to waste time dealing with something else? Many times we don't understand how smart the kids are. You teach what it is about and they can figure out the rest. What about Christmas? What about the Christmas tree or Santa Claus, or why waste time? Christmas is supposed to represent the birth of our savior. Why give any time to the lie? How about sanctity of life? God speaks clearly about that and yet we spend so much time talking about, and you can fill in, why not just share what God feels about each person before they were even born. Teach the truth, teach what God has to say. It's so important that we don't get hung up, we want the Bible to be taught, we want the children to learn what it is. How do they train those tellers in banks to know counterfeit, do they spend a lot of time with the counterfeit? No, they shown them the real thing. Show the kids the real thing and you cannot go wrong. Teach them the truth, so when they see the lie they'll go, the lie. It's really obvious when they've been taught the truth and we think they can't

figure it out. Hey, the kids are sharp. They can figure it out, maybe they can't figure it out because they've never been taught the truth, but if they've been taught the truth they understand. You can't go with them as a teacher around their life, the Holy Spirit can. And if His word is hid in their heart, we are to hide God's word in our heart that we may not sin against Him. That's our fault as those that are ministering to the children to teach the truth.

And (F) on the outline, The Fellowship. First John speaks of fellowship that we have with the Father, with the Son. He speaks of the fellowship that we have with one other, the koinonia, and there is such a koinonia among those in the children's ministry. If they're willing to reach out, there is such fellowship. It's kind of like you go into the office and you've had a really bad class and your heads down and you're going, oh man this was a disaster zone, and there's going to be some teachers there that just smile and put their arm around you and go, yeah I've been there. Or they come in excited because as I shared earlier fourteen children gave their life to the Lord, and somebody else has experienced that. Or with a parent being upset or a parent that thanked them.

Being a part of the body of Christ is so important and I want to take this opportunity to say, you know what? As I said earlier maybe God isn't calling you into the Children's Ministry, but I believe that He wants us to be a part of the body of Christ somewhere. There is a ministry that God has set up for you somewhere in the body. You all are important to the body of Christ, you all have a place. When one of us is hurting the body is hurting and it's important to understand, and there's gifts that God has given each of us to minister throughout the body somewhere, somewhat, some way. So if you happen to find that this isn't what God's calling you to do don't stop seeking for what God would have you to serve Him. That's so important.

Number two, on the Basic Training Outline is; How do I Become a Part of the Children's Ministry? The first and the most important is that you pray, and I referred a little bit to this earlier on. It's between you and the Lord, it's between you and the Lord. Yes, God has put me in the place of overseeing the Children's Ministry and he will confirm that in my heart, but it is ultimately between you and the Lord. I'm not going to call you, I'm not going to try to convince you because I don't want to, because it's not my place. My place is to pray for each of you as you go through this class that God will reveal His will for you and then enable you, but He's the one who has to do it. I can't do anything. If you come and ask me it's like, "If you want to take a chance," I mean that's about what you'd be doing. You can hear from God as easy as I can hear from God. He has spoken, we need to have ears that hear, that's the issue. Pray and ask God. I'm asked many times, "Well how long do I have to be around here to be a part of the Children's Ministry?" Well, let me define it this way, I'm not going to give you a time or a date. This ministry

is set in motion to support the Senior Pastor. God has worked through the Senior Pastor to do this work, therefore we are a support to that work. Being a support to that work, we need to know what we're supporting. We need to be in agreement with what we're supporting. And if this is your first month here I doubt that you can be in agreement and know what he's even teaching unless you've listened for years by tape or radio or whatever it may be. You've got to be able in your heart to say yes, I want to support that ministry and I agree with that. That's so important, so how long, I don't know. But you need to be able to say yeah, I'm here to support our Senior Pastor's ministry that God has put him in place for and that's the answer that I can give you.

(B) The Application. Let's take a look at the application in your first chapter there. We're going to spend a couple of minutes looking at that, I believe it's important. On the first page where it says Children's Ministry Application, we'll bypass much of that first part but down where it says Children's Ministry Data. Children's Minister, Teacher or Helper, I want to define for you.

A teacher is one who is involved with doing the lesson, doing the Bible study, controlling what happens in the class, deciding what happens in the class, that's the teacher position. A helper position is to come along side and support. Now the teacher may say, this week will you do the craft or this week will you prepare for the pray time or there is involvement but it's not the total responsibility. We like the helper to be able to move in, in a way where they feel comfortable and there may be a few weeks where they aren't doing anything. But eventually we want there to be that interaction. Many classes team teach, where there's two people actually rotating. There are a number of classes where there is just a helper and just a teacher. There are a number of classes that there are three people involved and there is rotating going on. So defining that is not clear cut to some degree, because it depends on the gifts and the abilities and where God has those individuals at that time. We try to look to that need of where they're at.

We ask everyone to go through the training simply because 85% to maybe 90% of those who start off as helpers want to teach. Because after they've been in class for a while they go, "You know what, I'm doing everything, but the joyful part of giving a bible study", and so at that point in time they have that freedom because they've already gone through the training. There's always those who God has not called to teach and just to be there to support and help. So that's the difference basically between those two, and on the application it's just a matter of, you don't have to necessarily know what age, what evening, but if you have any kind of idea just check it down there.

Next page, Why do I desire to be in the Children's Ministry, that's pretty self explanatory, we'll skip over. Moving on to the next page at the top it says, Is Calvary

WEEK 1 - INTRODUCTION & GOALS

Chapel your home church? How long have you been attending here? What bible studies are you regularly going to? Sunday morning, Thursday, Wednesday, Monday, whatever it may be. And then right below that, please give two references whom we may contact because we send out letters of reference, we need to have complete addresses. So if you don't put the zip code down, it slows the process of the application. If you don't put the numbers down, all those different things, it just slows it because we have to contact you and say, what is it? That is the fill out part, I want to turn to Children's Minister's responsibilities, that's the next couple of pages. We're going to hit over this real quick, but it would be a very, very good idea for you to read over it again outside of class before you turn the application in, if you do turn it in. You need to understand what's here.

Number one, under spiritual, your personal relationship with God is important. You are going to be involved with teaching the kids. Number two, you are required to attend Calvary Chapel on a regular basis, and it needs to be your home church. If it's not your home church and God is calling you to the Children's Ministry, then get involved with that church. I'm sure they'll be in need. It's important. To be equipped, number one. We have seminars throughout the year. I find that the teachers that are willing to partake in those, are the teachers that grow in a much quicker way in the classroom than anyone else. When you get set and you've been teaching for a long period of time there's this thing that can set in, oh, I've got it wired, I've got it down. And unfortunately that's not the truth because teaching is ever changing, forever growing, we need to be learning. And there may only be one idea out of the seminar that you have found, but it's a new idea that you can use in class, so we highly encourage those to get involved. We just recently had a craft seminar before that, the week before, we had an activity game based on biblical things seminar, so a lot of things to help in the class and throughout the year we have those.

Moving to (B) an example, number one, you have a responsibility to represent God, and that's pretty heavy. The minute you walk through the door you represent God. Number two, to abstain from substance abuse. If you have areas in your life that you're struggling, with you need to care for those, you need to deal with those and you need to overcome that through the strength and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. But if you have issues and you think by going into the Children's Ministry or any other ministry that's going to help you, you're wrong. You're absolutely wrong, it will not. Going into the Children's Ministry is not a fulfillment issue. Getting a new job is not a fulfillment issue. Getting a new car is not a fulfillment issue. Becoming a Pastor is not a fulfillment issue. Getting a new house is not a fulfillment issue. There's only one thing that I know that the scripture points us plainly to, and that's going to Jesus. If you're weary and heavy laden. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." Are you willing to let Him in? The issue of fulfillment is only found in us coming to Jesus Christ, and if we try to find fulfillment any

other way, we'll come up empty. People hop from church to church to church trying to find fulfillment, to find that perfect church. Little do they realize that when they find it that they're ruining it, it's no longer perfect. There isn't that place. Fulfillment comes from Jesus Christ and Him alone. There's no other. If you're chasing something, "if only", the big "if only's", and we all get trapped in those things. "If only", it won't fulfill you when you get it. Think back to all the if only's that you chased and got and you're still looking. Jesus is our fulfillment, the beginning, the end, that's it. The Children's Ministry will not fulfill you. So important to understand.

Your family leader, what is a family leader? A family leader is someone that's been involved with the Children's Ministry teaching and they have been brought into the leadership part of it. They have shown faithfulness in their teaching to the Lord, and they are now there as an example and a help and an aid to teachers. Family leaders will oversee X amount of classrooms on Sunday morning and the evening ministries, and they're there to support you. They're there to serve you, they're there to pray for you, they're there to give you ideas and help when you find yourself in need. An important aspect, we have a lot of people involved in the Children's Ministry. There's no way, on a daily basis, that I could meet the needs of all those people, no way. That's where the family leaders come in. Yes, I still have a lot of involvement with people's lives, but they can have very specific involvement with ten or twelve teachers at a time in a way that I can't. So, if the Lord does lead you into the Children's Ministry it's important to use them. Have them pray for you, have them show you, that's why they're there. We'll talk a little bit more about some of that at a later session.

Teaching, number one, be prepared when you come. Be prepared. Number three, if you're dealing with a very sensitive subject, please come to me first and let us talk it over to see if it's really needful. Very important. Number four, being in complete harmony with the teaching here, if you can't be, then you need to find a church that you can be. Not to come in and create division, but to find a body where you are in agreement with them. God has created a lot of the parts of the body of Christ, and so you need to be in harmony with the teaching.

The next page, to the children and parents, number two tell your class if you're going to miss a week, don't just up and leave. You become very, very important to the kids. No different than a Pastor here on staff who you're planning on going and listening to, and they aren't there and you experience a let down, but nothing compared to what a child can experience. So it's important. There will be times when you can't be in the class, let them know. "I'm going on vacation next week", you know, "we'll miss you, pray for us", so they know. A lot of the kids have been ripped off. We had a situation that just broke my heart. A few weeks back in one of the evenings, we have a lot of the family leaders

the husband and wife are involved, and the wife was overseeing this particular evening, the husband was on a business trip. And there were a couple of boys that were brought basically off the street to get ministered to, and we were having issues with one of them. They'd never been in a church, and the subject got brought up that her husband was on a trip and would be back tomorrow, and the boy said, "you bought that one huh? That's a lie he won't come back". Because that's what he'd experienced, his dad left and never came back. And she tried to convince, "No, no, he loves Jesus, he loves me he will be back", But as far as that boy was concerned that man wasn't coming back, because his man didn't come back. And it's important to understand that those kids are going to get ministered to, by you in ways that you can't even comprehend, ways that you don't even realize, by just being there, by just being there. So don't just up and split.

Four, drop off, pick up policy. We will go over that a little bit more, but it's important that those who drop off are the same as pick up. There's custody issues, there's all kinds of issues that, like I said, most likely we'll talk about a little bit more at a later time, but the person who signs them in is the only person who's allowed to sign them back out. Five, for safety reasons, please be with the children when they go to the restroom and we'll talk a little bit more about that, the office staff helps in that and supports in that. Seven, children may not be taken off Calvary Chapel grounds without permission for field trips, without a medical form, and we really encourage you not to do that anyway, and we can talk more about that.

Eight, Children's Ministry classes may not be taken outside on Sunday mornings. The reason we have that in there because in the evenings we do go outside, we go on the playing field, we go in the gymnasium. Sunday mornings though, we don't allow that, partially because it will disrupt, partially because the time is much shorter. Classrooms should be left clean and in order there are not custodians that follow us on Sundays, so what we do to the classes, we need to make sure we undo and have them ready for Monday morning. There's a lot that goes on around here, and you can read through the rest of these things and please do again before you fill out the application, and pray about them. You may go, "Hey, this is too much, no thank you." This is important so read through it, understand. Back to that outline, that was the application.

The next (C) is The Interview. That's a time where you set up and you come in and talk to me, and we pray and see what the Lord is doing. We talk about your application basically, anything you want to ask, questions you may have, to see maybe where the Lord is going, what he desiring to do.

(D) The Observation. That's the page right after your Children's Ministry application there. Let's take a look at that real quick. You need to observe at least three different age

levels, different classrooms before the fifth session of this training course. So five weeks from now you will need to have observed three classrooms, either in the morning or in the evening. Who needs to do the observing? Number one, those who feel that the Lord may possibly be leading them to help in the Children's Ministry. Who does not need to observe? Those attending this training from other churches, those who are taking this class just to gain information, those who do not consider Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa their home church. What do you need to do to observe the classrooms? You've got to listen and understand this, because there's always confusion on this and there really shouldn't be. There are two categories; one is Sunday morning and other one is in the evening ministry. We're going to start off with Sunday morning. If you want to observe a Sunday morning Children's Ministry class, all you need to do is come into the Children's Ministry office, which is room 101, which is downstairs in this building, ten minutes before the service starts. That's either the 7:45, the 9:30 or the 11:15, ten minutes before. So if you want to observe at the 11:15, just show up in the office around 11:05. Then either myself or a family leader will take you down to a class, introduce you to the teacher, letting them know that you're going to be in there observing the class. And that's all you need to do on Sunday mornings. We do not set up any kind of appointment, because your schedule may change at the last minute, and that way you don't need to try and call. It just gets awkward and so that's all you need to do Sunday morning. Evening ministry, we have evening ministry every night of the week except Saturday night. A few of the evenings have different times, but what you need to do to observe an evening ministry is to call our office and set an appointment up, and you can call the day of when you want to observe that evening. We need to get word to the family leader that evening that you will be observing the class, otherwise most likely, they aren't going to let you in. So, it's probably to your benefit that you call, then we'll set up the time at that point in time. Now, this is where it gets really confusing. Even though I do oversee the nursery, I am not the director of the nursery. Rose is the director, and does everything, the hands on in the nursery. I direct the Children's Ministry and we have it divided a certain way, and this is where you need to pay attention. Sunday morning class, two years of age through the sixth grade, I oversee. So if any of those classes you want to take a look, at two ages through the sixth grade, check it out with me. In the evening ministry, I only oversee first through sixth grade, and Rose, the nursery, takes from infants up through kindergarten. So if you want to observe a preschool class in the evening don't go through me, you want to do that on Sunday mornings. As long as that's clear, that's very, very important. Back to the outline

(E) The Internship. That's where we will place you with someone for a period of time to see if that's the class the Lord would have for you, teaming up with people, that's got a lot of variation and we talk about that in the interview.

And (F) Placement, and that is when you have been brought into the Children's Ministry to team up and to be a part of it. Those are the ways and how's of coming into the Children's Ministry. Looking at the outline, number three, we just got done dealing with number one and number two. Number one being, what is Calvary Chapel Children's Ministry? Number two, How do I become a part? Moving to number three, Children's Ministry Goals. That's the first couple of pages in there that you'll find. I've got the overhead that will show you what you're looking for. We're going to be going over this outline for the rest of this class. We'll be referring to a few different pages, so you'll be going back and forth, so basically you'll have to squeeze your notes in here.

Children's Ministry Goals

But let's go ahead and start in with this, Children's Ministry Goals. (A) Fulfilling the Great Commission, Matthew 28, verses 16-20. And again, for sake of time, I'm not going to read over that, we should be very familiar with that. We should understand that it's our calling to go forth into the world and to share the good news. It has two parts in fulfilling that in the Children's Ministry here. The first, being evangelism, that's number one on your outline, and number two is Christian growth.

Now number one, evangelism; there's many ways to evangelize. You can think immediately of Billy Graham, Greg Laurie, or maybe street evangelism, or door to door evangelism, missionary evangelism, and what I want you to consider this evening, is the fact that those who are ministering to children are basically in that category of missionaries to the children. That's the kind of evangelism that takes place. The question you need to ask yourself is, "Well, what does a missionary do?" Well, they go somewhere and they get to know the people. They find out particulars about the people. They find out what their needs are. They may need to learn their language. They may need to build some relationships with them. Obviously, one of the great needs is to lead them to the Lord, to cause them to understand the love of the Lord. How important that is and so, to evangelize and the term evangelism, a good running definition would be, educating one towards a response towards God, educating someone towards a response towards God. And so that can be done in different ways. It can be done over night, it can be done in an hour, it can be done in weeks as we educate for a response to God.

Evangelism, Philippians 3:10, "...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, being conformed to his death." We want the children to come to know Him. The motivating factor in Paul's life was the love of Christ that compels. The fact that Paul had such a great desire to know Jesus in every aspect, to know Him in His suffering. When he was talking about knowing he was talking about by experience, knowing. We want the children to come to know by experience. We don't

want them to come to know about, as much as we want them to come to know Him personally. It's real easy to talk about someone, I can know about the President but not know him personally. We don't want them to get so hooked into knowing about, that they don't know him, the driving force.

And (B) To Love God. Mark 12:30, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength." You know people will come up and say, I need to love God more. And I say to them, you know it's not really right. You need to know God more, because to know Him is to love him. As we come to know His great love for us, and we stop and think that He says that He's got the hairs on our heads counted, and when one falls out He still knows. And then He tells us that His thoughts towards us are more than the grains of sands on the face of the earth, and He goes on to say that those spots are for the good. As we come to know Him we can't but help love Him, and that's what we want to take place in class, that we're involved in teaching the kids who Jesus is, that they may come to know Him and experience His love. To minister to children you basically, from the standpoint of a missionary, could say that you're ministering to one of the world's largest missionary groups in the world. Children are everywhere.

Something that most of the time people are not aware of, is that 85% of all commitments made to Jesus Christ, happen between the ages of four and fourteen. Again, 85% of all the commitments made to Jesus Christ, happens between years four and fourteen. You can tack on another 10% through the nineteenth year, because from fifteen to nineteen another 10% come to know. What's that say? We don't act that way many times in church. It's a necessary evil, oh, we've got to get rid of the kids so that we can do something. The world's wiser than that. If somebody's trying to start a generalized business, are they going to mess around with all of their funds and energy for 15% to cover all of the populace or are they going to zoom into the 85% first to see what's going on there? The world's smarter in many cases. There's another way to term it, 85% of the children who do not receive the Lord before the age fourteen will never accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and savior. It's a call, we must touch these little lives. Have you ever thought back to the times in your life when you were young, and you learned things you wish you hadn't, and you can't get rid of them? And you're constantly going to the Lord saying, "Lord change me." What happens in our childhood sticks, and if we can introduce them to Jesus Christ, their life will be changed. It's very difficult to relearn, we kind of have this philosophy in our home that, brainwash the kids in the word of God as much as you can while you have the chance, because it's so hard to change when you get older.

My greatest desire is that our children will serve the living God. What we learn when we're young goes deep. Let's have the word of God go into these children when they're

young, so that it goes deep and it's with them, and has been returned the hound and heaven can go throughout their life and constantly speak and let them know the importance of God's love. How important it is for us to realize, we must touch the lives of the children. God's desire is for that to take place. This is not, I repeat, this is not a babysitting service. We are not here to fill time, we are not here for the purpose of their safety only, we are here to disciple the children that they may come into that saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. That's our goal.

And number two, Christian Growth, how important that is growing up in all things. Ephesians 4:15 says, "...but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things unto him who is the head and that's Christ." We need to disciple, and we'll cover that a little bit more when we cover Bible instructions. But that's what we are to be causing growth to come from, and that's the teaching of the word of God, that they learn what God has to say to them, that they understand it. It is so important. And number two, under A in the outline. Through following our example, we need to understand something real, real clear, we need to know that they are going to be watching you, this needs to be understood, they are going to be watching you, they aren't going to say, "you know I'm watching you" but they are. They're watching you for an example, because maybe they don't have an example at home. They're watching you, maybe the boys are watching you because they don't have a father, and they want to see what a Godly man is suppose to be like. Or they may not have a mother, and they're watching you to see what a Godly woman is to be like, to pattern their life possibly after what they see. You will be watched, you will be analyzed, you will be checked out. It's for real, and it's important to understand that.

Four on the outline, Obtaining our Goal, we want to obtain these goals for the great commission in two ways; one, is through the environment, and second is through bible instruction. A) the environment, B) that of the family. We would like to have the classes patterned after a Godly home. Now what would that be in regards to? Well, what was God's intention? His intention was a husband and a wife. Well immediately you go, "Does that mean two gals can't be used by God or two guys can't be used by God?" Let's take it a little deeper in regards to this. What would you consider the characteristic of a Godly family? One would be you would find love in that family, you would find good communication in that family, you would find sharing in that family, you would find warmth in that family, honestly in that family, receiving one another in that family, supporting one another and guiding one another. We want classrooms that are safe for the kids to come into, because they may not be living in a safe situation. We want them to be able to walk through the door and have a sigh of relief and go, "God's here, they love in this class. I learn about God and his love for me." That's what we're desiring to have in the classroom that family environment. Now, number one there says, God's Ordained

Institution, and we have a page there, which I'm not going to spend time on. Content of Christian Education. Dealing with three families, one is the natural family, two is the national family, three is the spiritual family. If you have questions about the Biblical soundness of this, I would suggest that you do some study on it, but for the sake of this class I'm going to assume that we're in agreement there.

Number two, Instruction of Children. Back to the outline, number four, Obtaining our Goals, Deuteronomy 6 verses 6 and 7 tell us "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, when you lay down and when you rise up." When? Everyday in every way, that's when. It says, when you sit down, when you walk, when you lie down, when you rise up. It needs to be understood and it needs to be clear, that the responsibility of the rearing of the children is in the parent's lap. That's who God has called to rear the children. The instruction of the children, this is what the family is to do.

Now, (A) Children's Minister, a supplement, we are here to support that. We are here to come along side the family, that is trying to raise their children as God would have them, and to support that. Now there may be times when we're supporting much more than that, but we need to understand that we are only a support for the family. We are not the family, we should not partake of things that are special to that family. We are there to support them, we should not direct them, we should not train the parents in that sense. So many times we'll go, "Well, I do it this way or that way." We're here to support them in the teaching of the word of God to their children, and to love their children as Christ would have us to love them. That's important, and we will be dealing with that a little bit later, of the importance that we are here to support them only. It's important for us to understand that and, there are reasons for that.

And (B) Children's Ministers as a model, and we touched a little bit on that already, that you will be watched. You are going to model before them, what they will interpret a Christian man or a Christian woman is. That's no light thought, what comes out of your mouth, or they may see you when you aren't in class. It's amazing how many kids I run into, how many parents I run into in this community. How many, I probably don't even know that are around that I really don't even know who they are. The world's a lot smaller than we think many sometimes. Developing a family atmosphere. You want to turn to that page that looks like a target.

There are basically three groups that you will find yourself involved with ministering to here in the Children's Ministry. The first being the outer part of this target looking page, the visitors. Many people coming by to see what's going on here. They may go, "Oh,

they're just teaching the word of God", and not want to come back, or they may be visiting on vacation, may be visiting family. Maybe a worker invited them and they'll bring their kids. Those are the visitors; that's a group of kids you'll see once and maybe never again. Then you have the irregulars, they would be those who come every two to three weeks. There's something that goes on in this church unfortunately that many times the parents don't realize, that actually they're defeating the purpose of bringing their kids. We have three services on Sunday morning; want to get up early, get the day done to go somewhere, so we'll go to 7:45 service; don't want to get up too early one week, 9:30 service; maybe we'll sleep in, it was a late Saturday night and we'll go to the 11:15 service the following week. Well, they get the same teaching as a parent, they get the same pastor but their children do not. Their children get a new person every week, new kids in the class every week, and they never quite fit in. And sometimes parents come and they can't figure it out, and they say, "You know I don't get it, what's happening here?" and I'll share this with them. If you came to the service as an adult and every week it was somebody different, what would you feel like? God uses the teachers in the Children's Ministry to be as a Pastor to the children. They never can build a relationship, especially in the class, with the kids. And so you will have irregulars that will come and go, because the parents are not aware of what they're actually doing, because all they're thinking about is, "Well, I'm getting them the teaching I want to give."

Then you have the core group. The core group are the kids that will be in your class rain or shine. The only time they won't is vacation or sickness, they'll always be there. Now there is a group that would kind of be classified as irregulars that are not, that are actually core group, and that would be those that have come from split homes and every other week they're in another home. So the week that they are here with their parent that goes here, they will be here. And that's still considered core group, because you'll get to know them and you'll know that they are in that situation. But it's just for the purpose of identifying and seeing, and maybe encouraging parents when you see them come every three or four weeks, you know, "What's going on?" I have teachers all of the time say, "Oh, so and so I saw him" they may be teaching the 11:15 service and "they were signing them out at the 9:30 when I was getting ready for class, oh, I miss that little one." The parent doesn't realize that's what's going on. So you have the visitors, the irregulars and the core group.

Effective ministry to all groups will transpire when we are focusing in on the core group. That's where we need to focus. Now, I'm not saying that you say, "Okay, you're a visitor, you go sit over in the corner. We don't really want to talk to you right now, because you're not coming back and because you're so erratic, you get in the other corner, because I want the core kids right here in front. No, no if it's the only chance that those visitors may have to know of Jesus Christ, they are as important as anyone. But as

you minister to the core group, you will minister to the irregulars, you will minister to the visitors as they see the love, as they see you caring, knowing their names, praying for them, wondering how their life's going. A visitor sees that and they go, "Wow" and it happens all of the time. Kids will get their parents to bring them back when they see that happening, because they know something's happened, they don't know what it is but it's happening, it's authentic, it's real, you can feel it. I hear kids all of the time, "You can feel it in that class. I don't know what I'm feeling, but I like it." So it's important that we do minister to the core in order to minister to all of them. Back to the outline, Evangelism, message received through relationship. Okay we're switching back again.

I want you to take a look at, *Building a Family Atmosphere in the Classroom*, it's one of the pages toward, I don't know, it's in your book somewhere. Okay, mine is so all over this place that like I don't even want to tell you where yours is, but it looks like this, like what I have on the overhead there, *Building a Family Atmosphere in the Classroom*.

Commit yourself to minister every week to each specific child by, number one, acknowledging each child by name. You don't like to be called, "Hey you" now, unfortunately, because this is a short period I will probably call you, "Hey you" I can't learn all of your names. But there are ways, over time to learn names. I have a three year old class teacher, and it was really great how she would learned the names. We have sign-in sheets, well three year olds are not totally aware of things going on, and so at the beginning of the class they would sit them down in front, and she'd get the sign-in sheet and go, "Hi Carley, hi Carley, I'm so glad you're here Carley, wave to everybody Carley. Well, she didn't know who Carley was, well Carley waved and now she knew. Jimmy we're so happy to have you in class, wave to everybody Jimmy. And through that process every week, she was able to find out who was who. Some of the classes put name tags on so it helps them. One of the great ways of doing it is there is always going to be paperwork, coloring page, word search whatever it may be, you either or have them if they can write their name on the top of the page. You walk around the class and say, "oh, you're doing a great job coloring" and the name's right there. "Billy you do such a good job." Billy's like, "He knows who I am." And it's important. You like to hear your name, be honest, and they do too. And so it's important to learn their names as time goes on.

Number two, come to know something new about each child. Maybe that's not phrased correctly, but what I'm saying here is, especially in times of prayer, the following week you'll just find yourself anxious to know if God did something in that area, and so stay in touch. As far as coming to know something, number three, about you, you've got to be wise and be careful. Now, what I mean by this is not necessarily to speak about, "Well yeah before I was saved," because kids have a real hard time with time and space. They really can't see that period, and so it may be a seven or eight year old or nine year old and

you're going, "Yeah man, I was really heavy into" okay and all of a sudden the kids going, maybe he didn't hear that he was sharing about the way he use to be and all he heard was, "I'm heavy into" and he goes mom and says, "You know mom, I think we need to pray for my teacher" "Well why?" "Well he's doing this thing" and then I get a phone call and go, "No I don't think so" and then we go through the process of dealing with it. What I mean about letting them come to know something about you, is that you're real. Let them know that you wept the other night, because something took place that really touched your heart. "You did teacher, oh no teachers don't cry." Or I was overjoyed, so they have something that they can identify you with. I would pray that you would be really wise about sharing what God has brought you from. In most cases, it's really not needful. It's not going to help out at all, because it's real simple for me to say to you right now that God has brought me from junk to Him, from things that weren't worthy or worthwhile, to that which is worthy. And I'm a new creature in Christ, old things have passed away, okay? I don't need to describe the way I was, you know. So something new, something interesting, use wisdom in that.

Number four, Show love or affection overtly, again be wise, be careful. Today in the age that we live in, because of abuses, because of situations that kids have come from, because of what's going on in the world we have to be wise and consider. It's not wise for a man to have a little child on their lap, a three year old. It's just...if it was my child and I was walking away to service I'm going, "you know I'm sure they screen these people, and I'm sure that they mean good and well but what's that guy got my daughter on his lap for? Why is that guy giving my daughter a full on body hug in the fourth grade?" There's ways of shaking hands or a side hug or a pat on the back to allow the parents the freedom, as we said we want them to be able to go over to the sanctuary and rest in what's taking place with their kids. And so you've got to be wise with that, be very, very wise with that.

Five, Pray for them. Remember pray for them, the more you pray for them, the more you get to know them, the more you get blessed. And you know what? Have them pray for you, have a child pray for you. Man you're going to see things happen. When you have prayer time in class, within reason, you can have them pray for you. We don't think about that a lot of the time. I've got some needs, pray for my work and that's all they need to know. They don't need to know that you're getting ripped off by the supervisor who...you know, just pray for my work. Watch God work, pray for them and communicate God's message to each child, important, important. Building a Family Environment. Back to our outline, hopping all over trying to stay there.

Okay, down to (B) on number four, Obtaining our Goals, Bible Instruction on that outline. The Proper Message. Before we get too far into that, let's put this overhead up about C.H. Spurgeon and what he says in regards to the word of God. "A sentence from

the mouth of God will have more permanent power over a Christian man than the best composed of human statements. God's word is living and powerful, and has a power to enter the heart beyond that of any other word. The words of the Bible strike and stick." What we have to say does not strike and stick but what God has to say strikes and sticks. And in the Bible instructions first and foremost, it's important to understand, yes, we want to have the environment of the family, enjoyment, fun, communication, but it's for the purpose of this part, Bible instruction, that we open up the channels of relationships in order to teach the word of God. If we just have environment only, fun and games, not much is going on. And if we have only lecture, which is teacher reading the bible and that's it, we've got really, as far as the kids are concerned, boringness. We need to have that family environment of love and care always for the purpose, never lose track of this, always for the purpose of the teaching of the word of God. That is what has to happen, that is what has to take place. The proper message, the proper message, I can't imagine a more important message than the salvation issue, what Jesus has done for us. It needs to be clear, it needs to be understood. They need to understand that just because they come to church doesn't make them a Christian.

I remember one time when I was teaching a third grade class many years ago, and this gets used a lot, but I said, "You know what, just because you're in this Sunday school class doesn't make you a Christian." And 50% of the eyeballs just jumped out at me, "What?" they couldn't figure out what I was saying and I said, "You know it's no different than if you're standing in the middle of your garage claiming to be a car", You aren't. And they're just like, "Really." I thought because I came in this class I was. The proper message, they need to understand, they need to learn what it is they must do to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. What He desires. You can be talking about being born again to a four year old, and I believe many four year olds will come into the Kingdom of God, but if you talk to them about being born again they may freak. "Wait a minute let me get this straight I'm not quite sure about how I was born, but you're telling me I've got to do this again." They are very literal, and then they start, if they can think this far maybe even five, six years old, "I was told my heart was about this size, and you're talking about asking Jesus into my heart. Now He's a guy, and He's got to be at least four feet, and four feet is not going to have room in my heart." And we need to be careful how we communicate God's word to the children. There's age appropriateness. The proper message, and there is nothing more important than understanding what it takes to come to Jesus Christ and to blur that, is sad to say the least. I had somebody in class a few years back say, "you know that's so true. My daughter and I were driving down the freeway and we had Salty on, and we were singing "I got to hide Jesus...God's word in my heart" I think that's how it went. Hiding God's word in my heart. And my little girl stopped and said, "No dad, no, no, no we can't hide God's word, we need everybody to know about

God's word". They're literal in their understanding, and so in the proper message we need to understand how to communicate to them, very, very important.

Bible instruction closely tied to the proper message is (B) Appropriate presentation. How important it is to explain...you know many times people say, "Well what should I teach, what should I teach?" You know maybe they're from another church or they want to go and teach their block or kids at the park, "What do I teach?" Man, all you have to do is teach about Jesus and you're safe. Teach about Jesus teach about who He is, teach about who God is. If you haven't been aware, which I'm sure you are, the world has lied about who Jesus is. "Oh, He's a poet, oh, He was a good man, He was a good teacher or He might have been a prophet or, you know, He... a philosopher, yeah a philosopher, that's who Jesus was. And you will have students coming into your class, depending on what age you're teaching, going in their mind, "Well Jesus was just a good man". So the more you teach about who Jesus is, and what the word has to say about who He is, the better off everybody's going to be. Teach who Jesus is. In every study, be it Old Testament or New Testament, Jesus should be brought into this. There's a book out, off the top of my head don't know the name of it, I've got it in my office, but it goes through all of the Old Testament, all of the scriptures in the Bible, and points to how Jesus is reflected in it, in every key chapter. Jesus is throughout the whole Bible. We need to teach who Jesus is. We need to lead the children in the ways of Jesus. He is their answer, He is all they've got, they have no other hope outside of Him.

Christian growth. Look back now on the outline, Colossians 1:9-10, "For this reason also, since the day we heard it do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that you may have walked worthy of the Lord, boldly pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." Bible instruction they may be filled with the knowledge of His will. People often ask me, "Well how do you know God's will? I need to know God's will." Well, He has spoken, and He has given us volumes in the Bible, and it's for us to have ears to hear. That we might be filled with the knowledge of his will, comes by the means of studying and receiving and listening to the word of God.

It's kind of funny we make it really difficult, say I have a friend and we've decided that at 7:00 on Wednesday night we're going to meet and go out to dinner. We didn't discuss where we're going to meet, we have the time and the day, but a slight oversight on our behalf we went our separate ways. So the next day what do I do? I frantically pace up and down in my office, maybe he does the same, knowing that there's a phone right there on my desk, but I need to know what it is, where we're going to go. You would think I'm crazy. Pick up the phone, call him, find out. We do that so often with what God wants me to do. Hang out with him, hang out with Jesus and you will know what He wants you to

do. “That ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will.” It’s that simple. Of course we have to hang out with Him on his terms, that’s where it gets kind of tough. He says you’ve got to have your sins cared, for you’ve got to ask for forgiveness. I don’t want to forgive those people, well hang out with somebody else then. Hanging out with Jesus, that’s how we find out. In all wisdom and spiritual understanding, what’s the difference between a smart person and a wise person? A smart person has a lot of information, a wise person knows how to use that information. We have proven that there is not a lot of wisdom in the world. They have a lot of knowledge, but they don’t know how to take care of their own planet. “In all wisdom and spiritual understanding that you may walk worthy of the Lord into all pleasing”, being doers of the word is what they’re saying. “Being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God”. Teaching the Bible, that’s what we’re here for, that’s what we want to see in class. Not our ideas, not our great projects, not our good plans, but that God’s word would be able to speak for itself and it does and it will.

Bible instruction, we have covered a lot in this first session. Again, it’s an introduction. We will get more into some hands on, as we do the class leading the child to Christ, it’s such a blast. You’ll be interacting, doing different things. Many opportunities for you to ask questions in classes up and coming. This class, though, I feel is real important to get this flow out, the direction we want to take Children’s Ministry in the classroom. You need to understand that you need to be in agreement with it, and if you aren’t in agreement with it, then probably the Children’s Ministry isn’t the place right now that God’s calling you. So it’s an important class to understand this. I would recommend that you read over some of your notes before the next class, and pray. Ask God to speak to your heart, to know His will. Hang out with Jesus this week Spend time with Him, you know, that’s why he created you, that’s why He created us. If He wanted somebody to serve, He could have done a better job with robots. He created us primarily to love Him. And when you love someone, what do you do? You hang out with them as much as you possibly can, and that’s what He wants from each of us, that love relationship. “Oh, but God can’t love me that way.” Oh yeah he can. He loved you while you were yet in your sin while you were yet in rebellion against Him, He loved you. And now you desire to know Him, to do those things that are pleasing to Him. Are we perfect? No, but you have some desire that you never had before, and that’s what He wants. He wants to spend time with you, He wants to be with you. He wants you to listen to Him and He wants to listen to you. Let’s pray.

Closing Prayer

“Father, we thank You for that understanding, we thank You for Your word, as it guides us and leads us and rebuilds our insufficiencies, that reveals how significant You are.

WEEK 1 - INTRODUCTION & GOALS

May we grow in our knowledge of You in an experiential way. May we hang out with You Lord? Enable us Lord to do that. Give us the desire to do that. Speak to these hearts Lord, reveal Your will, what Your desire is for their lives. We thank You again for this time together. In Jesus' name, Amen.”

Opening Demonstration

Dalton: You are?

Juan: Juan.

Dalton: Juan. Welcome Juan.

Juan: Thank you.

Dalton: I like your smile Juan.

Juan: Thank you.

Dalton: Good. Did you have a good day today?

Juan: Great one. Thank you.

Dalton: Good. Thanks. And you are?

Trish: Hi, I'm Trish.

Dalton: Trish. My next door neighbor's Trish. How do I know that you're the real Trish?

Trish: (Laughs)

Dalton: Huh?

Trish: I don't know.

Dalton: Well, come on in Trish.

Trish: Thank you.

Dalton: Pick whatever you like, write your name on it. Take a seat. Was it Michael? Oh no, don't be afraid. Come on in. It's going to be okay. What's your favorite color?

Michael: Get your hands off me.

Dalton: No. (Laughs) Come on in.

Michael: I'll hit you.

Dalton: No, we don't do that in first grade. That's a kindergarten trait. Hi.

Greg: Hi, I'm Greg.

Dalton: Greg, come on in. Pick whatever you like. Greg, when you sit down, would you write your name on top of your paper before you get started?

Greg: Okay.

Dalton: Howdy. We haven't met yet.

James: James.

Dalton: James, welcome...

James: Thank you.

Dalton: ... nice to see you. Come on in James. And?

Nancy: Nancy.

Dalton: Nancy, welcome Nancy. Nancy, whoa, what a handshake. You brought your smile too, that's neat.

Scott: Scott.

Dalton: Scott, nice to meet you. Scott, come on in. Are you guys doing your word search and your color sheets? If you need help on the word search, just raise your hand, and I'll be right around to help you. Don, good to see you again Don. Come on in. How was your day today?

Don: It was great.

Dalton: It was great, praise the Lord. And Donald, good to see you back today...

Donald: Hi.

Dalton: ... How ya doing?

Donald: Fine.

Dalton: Come on in Donald. And?

John: John.

Dalton: John. Welcome John.

John: Nice to be here.

Dalton: Like your smile, it looks so good. What's your name?

Martha: Martha.

Dalton: Martha, are you okay Martha?

Martha: I'm okay.

Dalton: Did you have a good day? Are you tired?

Martha: No.

Dalton: Come on in Martha. Martha, would you like to do a color sheet or a word search?

Martha: This.

Dalton: Okay. There you go. Martha, when you sit down will you write your name on top of your paper? Okay. Who needs help on the word search? Any too tough... you too Billy?

Billy: I do.

Dalton: Billy,... well Billy, you've already found three. Gosh, that's terrific. Which one are you looking for?

Billy: I'm looking for the big one.

Dalton: The vine dresser. That's the real long one, isn't it?

Billy: Uh-huh.

Dalton: Where is it Karen?

Karen: Over here.

Billy: Where is it?

Dalton: Oh, right there, and it goes that way.

Female: Oh, I just did vine, I didn't...

Dalton: Good job Billy.

Billy: Thank you.

Dalton: Let me know if you need some more help. Oh Rhonda, oh, you colored the grapes purple and that's what color grapes are. That's really good. Jana, what's your favorite color?

Jana: Green.

Dalton: Green? That's neat. Do you like yellow? No, that's my favorite color. Wow, you found one, two, three, four, five words already?

Jana: Yep.

Dalton: Wow, that's great. Oh, can you put your name right up here? Tony, how did you learn to write so small? That's really good.

Tony: I only got two words.

Dalton: Nancy's got one, two, three, four words. Sandy, you found the biggest one on the whole page. How you doing?

Sandy: Just great.

Dalton: Did you have a great day today?

Sandy: I sure did.

Dalton: Everything okay at home?

Sandy: Yeah.

Dalton: School too? Is it really good?

Sandy: School's pretty hard but...

Dalton: Whoa, look at Don. Don, what's your favorite color?

Don: Blue.

Dalton: Blue? All right, but do you like the yellow?

Don: Yes, I do.

Dalton: Do you like strawberries?

Don: Yes.

Dalton: Pizza?

Don: Love pizza.

Dalton: What's your favorite food? Pizza?

Don: Spaghetti.

Dalton: Spaghetti, that's good. Do you like Jesus?

Don: Yes, love Jesus.

Dalton: Love Jesus. He loves you too. Isn't that neat?

Don: It is.

Dalton: All right Trish, do you need some help? Are you doing okay?

Trish: I'd like to color.

Dalton: You'd rather color? Okay, here's some crayons right here. Trish, what's your favorite color?

Trish: Green.

Dalton: Green?

Trish: Uh-huh.

Dalton: That's good. Do you like yellow?
Trish: Yes.
Dalton: I like yellow.
Trish: I like yellow too.
Dalton: That's my favorite color.
Trish: Uh-huh.
Dalton: Do you like pizza?
Trish: Uh-huh.
Dalton: Do you?
Trish: Uh-huh.
Dalton: Do you like Jesus?
Trish: Oh yes.
Dalton: Do you love him?
Trish: I love Jesus.
Dalton: He loves you, Trish. Mike, whoa, one, two, three, four, that's really good. You guys are doing super on the word search. Annette, you found one, two, three, and you're so neat Annette, the way you get the lines there. That's really good. Yes, Parker?
Parker: Why is this one backwards?
Dalton: Well, some of them are backwards and some of them are side... you know, diagonal?
Parker: Uh-huh.
Dalton: But, that's why they call it a word search.
Parker: Oh.
Dalton: But I bet you can find them, though. Look how many you've already found. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Parker, you're doing great. Sandy's still doing good. All you guys are doing so good. Donald, whoa, you stay in the lines so good. And Elaine, that's my favorite color. You guys are really doing... anyone need help on the word search? Anyone stuck? Okay. Juan is stuck. Right Juan?
Juan: No. What happens if we find all the words?
Dalton: Well, then you need to start on the color sheet. But you know what? We're going to start class in just a minute, so... and ... I didn't meet you. I'm Dalton.
Sherri: Hi Dalton, I'm Sherri.
Dalton: Sherri, welcome to first grade.
Sherri: Thank you.
Dalton: Okay. Sherri, will you write your name right on the top? Boy you guys are doing super. Wow, Billy, you've almost got them all done, haven't you?
Billy: Uh-huh.

Dalton: And Rhonda, look at Rhonda's color sheet. Whoa, and...

Billy: Excuse me?

Dalton: Yes, Billy.

Billy: Do we have to do the bottom... can we do the bottom?

Dalton: Yeah, you can do the bottom too. That's the maze.

Billy: I mean, we don't have to do all of it, if we don't want?

Dalton: Yeah.

Male: They go backwards?

Dalton: They go backwards too. Wow, you guys are really doing good. Parker?

Parker: Dalton.

Dalton: Yeah, Park.

Parker: I don't like prunes.

Dalton: Well, you don't have to eat them. You just have to find them. Can you find them? You can find them, give it a good try. If you can't find it, I'll come back and help you. Oh Don, you're really doing good. Donald's doing good too. Oh hi. Welcome you guys. Want to get a color sheet or word search? And you can have a seat right there, I guess.

Paul: I think we got the wrong door.

Dalton: Introduction to Children's Ministries?

Paul: Yeah, okay.

Dalton: You're here. I'm Dalton.

Paul: I'm Paul.

Dalton: You're a first grader Paul. Welcome. And your name?

Candace: Candace.

Paul: My wife Candace.

Dalton: Candace?

Candace: Yeah.

Dalton: Nice to meet you Candace. You're just in time.

We're going to start class in just a minute, cause you guys are really doing good. Well, I tell you what.... Okay, kids. Would you put your pencils down and leave your papers right where they're at, and lets all of you come up... stand up, and let's come sit right here on the floor facing me, please. It's good to see all you guys tonight and I hope you all had good weeks. Hope the Lord just watched over you and took care of you. Now, if you're here for the first time, I don't want you to be frightened. I'll just give you an idea of what we're going to do. In a few minutes, we're going to sing to the Lord, and then we're going to have a Bible study, then after that, we might have a snack and a puppet show, and maybe a video. So that's what we're going to do. And if we have enough time,

we'll go out to the field too, but the first thing we want to do is pray and ask the Lord to bless us tonight. So let's pray.

Opening Prayer

“Father, we just want to thank You and praise You for Your love for us Lord, For Your kindness towards us Lord. And Lord, the truth that You know each one of us Lord. Lord You know us by name, for You created us and Lord I pray tonight, Lord, that the work of Your Spirit in our hearts will bear fruit Lord. Dear God, that we will become a little closer to You. Our hearts will be more fully devoted to You Lord, so Lord, we give You this time. We ask Lord that You bless it, that You be glorified Lord. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen”

Singing

Jesus loves me, this I know. For the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong, they are weak, but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so...“You guys sing now”...Jesus loves me, this I know. For the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong, they are weak, but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so. ... Our God is an awesome God; He reigns from heaven above; with wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God Our God is an awesome God; He reigns from heaven above; with wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God.

Dalton: Let's see now, we just read... we sang that Jesus loves me and God is an awesome God. See, if God loves me and... is there anyone more powerful than God? Anyone bigger than God or more powerful?

Male: No.

Dalton: No, there isn't. So if He loves me and He's all powerful and He's taking care of me, what do I have to worry about? Nothing.

Singing

If you know the Lord is keeping you, whatcha gotta worry about? Ah, nothing. If you know the Lord is keeping you, why don't you stand up and shout, hallelujah! If you know the Lord is keeping you, if you know the Lord is keeping you, if you know the Lord is keeping you, whatcha gotta worry about? Ah, nothing. Whatcha gotta worry about? Ah, nothing. If you know the Lord is keeping you, whatcha gotta worry about, ah, nothing. If you know the Lord is keeping you, why don't you stand up and shout, hallelujah! If you

know the Lord is keeping you, if you know the Lord is keeping you, if you know the Lord is keeping you, whatcha gotta worry about? Ah, nothing. Whatcha gotta worry about? Ah, nothing.

Dalton: Praise the Lord. We don't have to worry if He's taking care of us, do we? Well, let's see. We sing that Jesus love me, this I know. Our God is an awesome God, and He's taking care of me, what do I have to worry about? We sort have been singing songs about God, haven't we? You know what? Why don't we sing a song to God, so I want you to close your eyes while we sing this. I don't want you to worry about your neighbor next to you and we'll sing Father I adore you. Go ahead. I see some eyes open. Need to close your eyes now, while we sing.

Singing

Father, I adore you, lay my life before you, how I love you. Jesus, I adore you, lay my life before you, how I love you. Spirit, I adore you, lay my life before you, how I love you.

Dalton: Isn't God so good? He's so good. Let's see. Well, you guys are all first graders, right? We don't... do we have any kindergartners in here? One kindergartner, that's okay, you're big. You could be... well, let's see. When you're in first grade, you're learning how to spell, right? Can anyone spell cat? Who can spell cat? Billy, can you spell... Karen?

Billy: She can.

Dalton: Karen, can you spell cat? Can you spell cat for me?

Karen: Yes. C-a-t.

Dalton: That's pretty good. Who can spell dog? Who... just... not all at one time now. Just raise your hands or I won't call on you... Billy? Can you spell dog for me?

Billy: Yes. D-o-g.

Dalton: Good, that's. So spelling and reading. How about counting? Are you learning how to count?

Female: Yes

Dalton: Okay. Who can count from one to ten? Don, can you count from one to ten?

Don: Yes.

Dalton: Let's hear you.

Don: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

Dalton: Ten! That's good Don. (Clapping) Good job. Well, but... who can count from one to ten really fast? Parker, can you count...

Kent: One to ten...

Dalton: ... well, you missed some. That's pretty good Kent, but you missed some, like two through nine. Now can you count real fast, one to ten? Let's hear.

Parker: (counts fast).

Dalton: Pretty good. But anyone can count faster than Parker? Go for it Sandy.

Sandy: (counts fast).

Dalton: Who can count faster than Sandy now? Come on. Juan, can you count faster than Sandy? Go ahead?

Juan: (counts fast).

Dalton: Whoa, I think you guys are good counters, and good spellers. You might be good readers too, but I... are you sure you guys are good counters? Do you think you're good counters? I think... well...

Male: Yeah.

Dalton: ... well, let's see, first graders usually are good counters, so since you're such good counters, I want you to do something for me. Okay? Now, I know you're first graders. I know you guys can count good, cause Parker counted, and Juan counted real fast. And Don, you did a great job of counting from one to ten too. So now, since you're good counters, when I pour the sand from the jar into the dish, I want you to count it. Okay? Are you ready? Ready?
(Laughter)

Dalton: Rhonda? Did you count the grains of sand? How many did you count?

Rhonda: Oh, about twenty.

Dalton: Twenty. Rhonda, I think there's more than twenty.

Billy: A hundred.

Dalton: A hundred? Well... Donald, how many did you count?

Donald: You can't do it.

Dalton: Well, you... I just heard you guys count. Are you... you guys are first graders. You're good counters. I'll tell you what. Let's just do it one more time now. Look, look... are you guys all looking? Now when I pour the sand, I want you to pour the grains of sand, cause I know you guys are good counters. Ready?

Billy: Seven thousand.

Dalton: Seven thousand, Billy? Did anyone count any different than seven thousand?

Male: Yeah, I did. A thousand.

Dalton: A thousand. Who...

Male: Ten thousand.

Dalton: Ten thousand.

Female: Too many.

Dalton: Ten thousand one? Well...

Female: It went too fast.

Dalton: It went too fast, didn't it? You know what, maybe the sand, when I poured it out, it went too fast, into the cup here and so you couldn't count... so what I want you to do now... a bowl. Thank you Parker. What I want you to do now, is when I say go, I want you to count the grains of sand now in the jar. Ready? Ready? Go! How many... are you counting?

Male: No.

Female: Yes.

Dalton: Well... well wait a minute, you guys are good counters. How many grains of sand now are in that jar? Sandy?

Sandy: They're too small.

Dalton: Too small. Billy, how... yes?

Billy: What's a grain to see?

(Laughter)

Dalton: Well it's one of these little things, right there.

Male: Grains of sand there are?

Dalton: Does anyone know how many grains of sand there are here? I know how many grains of sand there are. There are so many grains of sand in this little jar that you can't count them. But you know what? God uses sand to tell us something about Him and about us. Did you know that? I want to read from God's word, the Bible. Is this the Bible? This is God's word, isn't it? Have you ever heard about David? God said of David, that he was a man after His own heart. And David rote Psalm 139, and I want you to hear what God says about him, and about you, and about sand. Okay? In Psalm 139 verse 17, from God's word, this is what God says,... he says, "How precious also are your thoughts towards me. Oh God, how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." Did you know that God thinks about you? Did you ever stop to think that... I think God's thinking about me right now. Right here it says, "How precious are your thoughts unto me. Oh God, how great is the sum of them!" Do you know God thinks about you, but just not any kind of thoughts? They're precious thoughts. Juan, do you know what precious is? What's a precious thought? Can you think of what a precious thought is?

Juan: Beautiful.

Dalton: Beautiful. Okay. Don, can you think of... what is... if God's thinking about me and He's thinking about me and He's thinking precious thoughts, what's precious... Karen, what's precious mean to you?

Karen: Valuable.

Dalton: Valuable?

Karen: Yes.

Dalton: Yeah. Yeah. That would be it. Yeah. Huh. You know what I think? I have a little granddaughter and when she was first born, I would hold her like this, and I would... oh... I'd look down at her, and I'd look at her and say, "oh, you're so precious. I just love you so much", and oh, I'd make faces at her to try to get her to smile. Am I being precious towards her? Is that a precious thought? Am I having precious thoughts towards my granddaughter?

Female: Loving.

Dalton: Loving thoughts, yeah. Right here it says, "Oh how precious are your thoughts towards me, oh God. And how great is the sum of them?" You know what? I used to think "Oh God, if I just knew that God thought about me once a month, my heart would just fill up at the thought that God would think about me one time every month." But you know what? God thinks about us all the time. He does, it says so right here, "He has precious thoughts towards me, and if I could count them, they're more in number than the sand." Well, I wonder how many grains of sand are in this jar?

Female: A lot.

Dalton: But you know what? You know where I got this jar of sand from? Huntington Beach. Do you think there's a lot of grains of sand in Huntington Beach? I think... whoa, there's a lot of... you know what? If I took my vacation this summer, and I drove down to Huntington Beach, and I had these big dump trucks follow me, and I had a pair of scissors... or tweezers, and for two weeks, I went down and "there's a grain of sand, oh, there's another one. I got another one", and I did that for two weeks, kids, okay? When you came down to Huntington Beach, and looked at the beach, what do you think you'd see?

Female: Sand.

Billy: A lot of it.

Dalton: Sand. You know what? You wouldn't even be able to tell I was there, would you? I could stay there the rest of my life taking grains of sand and putting them up in this truck, and you know what? Once I died, you could come down there, and it would look like I'd never been there. Oh, I just thought of something. Oh no, this is Huntington... Newport Beach, Balboa, San Diego. Do you think there's a lot of grains of sand between here and San Diego on the beaches?

Female: Uh-huh.

Billy: Yes.

Dalton: Oh no. Hawaii. Have you ever been to Hawaii? Yes Parker.

Parker: My mom and dad are taking me there next week.

Dalton: Wonderful. Wonderful.
(Laughter)

Dalton: But wait a minute. The Sahara Desert. Are there a lot of grains of sand in the Sahara Desert?

Male: Yeah.

Dalton: Do you think God's trying to tell us something? Yeah, I think He is. You know what? Are you going to go to the beach this summer?

Female: Uh-huh.

Female: Uh-huh.

Dalton: Well, you know when you get out of your car and you park in the parking lot there; and maybe you have your boogie board dragging behind you, and you walk off the blacktop, and you step down on the sand, and you let your toes get down there; why don't you just pause for a minute and think, "Oh yeah, thank You God. You're thinking about me, and Your thoughts are precious, and if I could count them, Father, they would be more in number than the sand. Oh Lord, thank You." Shall we pray to the Lord and thank Him for thinking about us? Let's do that.

Prayer

"Father, thank You for Your love for us, and thank You Lord that You think about us. And Lord, they're just not mean thoughts or evil thoughts, but Lord, Your thoughts towards us are precious and loving. And Lord, if we would be able to count the number, Lord, they'd be greater than the sand. Lord, thank You. Help us Lord to think about You. Help our hearts, Lord, to be thankful too. We thank You in Jesus' name, Amen.

Dalton: Okay, that was about eight minutes long. And that's about all you're going to be able to hold the attention of a first grader after he's been in school all day and he's come home and maybe had a quick dinner, and things like that. And then mom and dad have brought him to class. Okay. And so the whole point in this, is what were we trying to do?

Billy: To relay a message.

Male: ...or a parable.

Dalton: Okay. We didn't want to stand and lecture the first graders, but we want to gain their attention and bring them in, involve them by... now you guys are really subdued. Who can count from one to ten? Well, every hand in the classroom was going to go up and it's going to be waving like this. See. And then... so they get involved and they start, "Oh, I can count from one to ten fast... one, two, three"... okay, and then once they're involved, and they're attentive, you take them right to the Word of God, and bring out a truth on their level, where they can understand it, okay. It's better than standing up and lecturing, isn't it? For first graders now, you're first graders, okay? So I want

to do another one now. You know kids, what I really like? Do you guys like toast for breakfast? I love toast for breakfast. I don't know. I just love the smell of the toast and you know what I love to put on my toast? Apricot jam. Do you guys, who likes apricot jam? Do you guys like apricot jam? Strawberries...

Female: I like it on my chicken.

Dalton: Yes, that's good too. Apricot glaze, but you know what? Sometimes I'll go to the store and I go to buy apricot jam and they're out and they still have strawberry and blueberry and grape, but I like apricot. And sometimes I go to get it and it's not there. So you know what I'm going to do? When I get home tonight, I'm going to plant a seed... where's the knife?

Female: Right here.

Dalton: Where? Thank you. Because I'm tired of the store running out, I'm going to grow my own apricot tree, so that when it gets big, I can pick the apricots off and make my own apricot jam. That way, I'll never be out of apricots. So, watch this. This is a beautiful seed, you guys. It's sort of big...
(Laughter)

Female: Is that an apricot?

Dalton: What? Yeah, I want to grow and apricot seed, because that's my favorite, favorite jam of all time, is apricot. And this has got a great seed. Look how big it is. See? Isn't this a great seed?

Male: Teacher! Teacher!

Dalton: What?

Male: That's the wrong kind of seed.

Dalton: Well, it's a nice looking one.

Male: It's not a...

Male: It's green and all.

Female: That's an avocado.

Female: You're going to grow avocados.

Dalton: Wait. Well, wait a minute. I'm going to dig a hole when I get home. I'm going to put that seed in there, then I'm going to cover it up and make sure it's good and then I'm going to water, and pretty soon in about two weeks, there's going to be a little apricot tree, isn't there?

Female: No.

Dalton: No? Well... but I want an apricot tree. What kind of tree is going to come up then?

Female: Avocado.

Male: Green avocado.

Dalton: An avocado. I don't want an avocado. Well, I guess I'll just have to plant a different type of seed then, because I don't like avocado jam. So I'm going to

take this seed here, it's a little bit smaller, but I'm sure it will work and I'm going to cover it up with soil, and I'm going to water it, and then before you know it, I'll have an apricot tree. There'll be a little plant coming up and...

Class: No!

Dalton: No?

Female: That's an apple.

Dalton: That's an apple seed?

Female: Uh-huh.

Dalton: But I want an apricot tree.

Female: That's not it.

Dalton: You mean if I plant that... you mean if I plant this seed, an apple tree is going to come up?

Female: Uh-huh.

Dalton: Oh, well. Now this sort of looks like an apricot. It's a little bit bigger, but it sort of has the same colorings, but I'm going to do something different this time. When I get this seed out, and I put it in the ground, I'm going to do something different. I'm going to cover it up. I'm going to dig a little bigger hole there, and put it in there, and I'm going to cover it up, and this time after I water it, I'm going to stand over it. I'm going to say, "I hope it comes up an apricot tree. I hope it comes up an apricot." And you know what? It'll come up an apricot tree.

Male: Noooo.

Dalton: It won't?

Male: Unh-unh.

Dalton: Well, wait a minute now. You're telling me that if I plant an avocado tree... or seed, the only thing that'll come up, is what?

Class: Avocado.

Dalton: An avocado. And if I plant an apple seed, the only thing that will come up, is what?

Male: Apple.

Dalton: An apple. And even though I plant this plum seed, and I stand on it and I wish, and wish it will come up an apricot tree, what's going to come up?

Class: A plum tree.

Dalton: Plum? Huh. This is sort of like a rule then, isn't it? Sort of like a law? That what ever we plant, that's what's going to come up? You guys are right. You know what? God has established this rule, when He created the earth. You can read about it in the Book of Genesis. This is one of God's rules, and it's a physical rule, or a physical law that what ever kind of seed we plant, that's the only thing that can come up. You know what? God has other kinds of rules. He has spiritual rules. And just like you can't break a physical rule, you can't

break one of God's spiritual rules either. Let's read about one of them, okay?
I'm going to read again from, again, what's this?

Class: Bible.

Dalton: And what is the Bible?

Class: God's word.

Dalton: God's word, and it's true and there aren't any mistakes in God's Word. Okay. And this is what it says here. It says, "Be not deceived",... do you know what it is to be deceived? It means that you believe the lie and not the truth. So God is saying, don't believe a lie, believe the truth. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." That means you can't make fun of God and get away with it. Or you can't break His rules and get away with it. So "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever man sows, that he shall also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life." Now that's one of God's spiritual laws. Just like you can't break his physical ones, you can't break his spiritual ones either. Now let's see, it said, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall also reap." Do you kids know there's being things sown into your mind everyday?

Female: No.

Dalton: Do you know that? They're seeds being planted in your mind and in your heart. Yes, sir.

Billy: No.

Dalton: It's through the things that you listen to, through the things that you watch on TV, the things that you read, What you hear your friends tell you; those are seeds and they're coming into your mind and into your heart. And whatsoever we plant, that's what we're going to reap. So it says, "He who sows to the flesh, reaps corruption. That means death. "He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life." What does it mean to sow to the flesh then? Does anyone have an idea? Let me give you an example. If I come home from school, and I throw my book bag down and I go get a peanut butter sandwich and my mom's not around, so I turn on MTV, and I'm listening to this sort of worldly music, am I sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit?

Male: What?

Class: Flesh.

Dalton: Flesh, that's right. What if I come home from school and I think, well, you know, it's so quiet now, no one's here, I think, "I'll take a little time to read God's word, oh yeah, praise the Lord." Am I sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit?

Class: Spirit.

- Dalton: How about if I come home and I think, “Oh my friend, he didn’t have a very good day in school today, and he doesn’t know Jesus. Lord, I really want him to know You. Lord, will You touch Billy’s heart, and let him know You and love You.” Is that sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit?
- Class: Spirit.
- Dalton: Yeah, that’s right. So, what do you guys want to sow to? Do you want to sow to the flesh?
- Class: No.
- Dalton: Do you want to sow to the Spirit?
- Class: Yes.
- Dalton: Yeah! Let’s say this together now. I want you to repeat after me. Be not deceived...
- Class: Be not deceived...
- Dalton: ... God is not mocked.
- Class: ... God is not mocked.
- Dalton: ... but whatsoever a man soweth,...
- Class: ... but whatsoever a man soweth,...
- Dalton: ... that he shall also reap....
- Class: ... that he shall also reap....
- Dalton: ... For he that soweth to his flesh...
- Class: ... For he that soweth to his flesh...
- Dalton: ... shall of the flesh, reap corruption....
- Class: ... shall of the flesh, reap corruption....
- Dalton: ... But he that soweth to the Spirit,...
- Class: ... But he that soweth to the Spirit,...
- Dalton: ... shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life.
- Class: ... shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life.
- Dalton: That was good. You guys are good.
- Male: I think that’s Galatians 6:7 and 8.
- Dalton: You’re right. Now that took a little bit longer. That was about ten minutes. And again, that’s about all that you’re going to have available to you to really get the Word into their heart, to keep their attention. And again, what were we trying to do?
- Male: Engage them.
- Female: Come down to their level.
- Dalton: Engage them. Get them involved. Get their attention, get their focus on what we’re going to tell them. Okay? And we do that by using objects, and letting them say, “Oh teacher, if you plant this, an avocado seed... you can’t get an apricot.” See, they understand. So you’ve taken a principle, or one of God’s laws... physical laws... that they can understand. And then they’ve tried to

move it to a spiritual law to give them the same type of understanding. That we can't expect. Remember when I stood over the seed? And it was a plum seed, but I was going to hope, and hope that it came up an apricot tree. See, the law can't be broken. Even though we, "oh, I want to be spiritual, but, gosh, oh gosh, I just want to see this next episode of MTV." See, you can't do that. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall also reap." So these are the ways... there's many other things that you can do when you get into your classes. When we do John chapter 15. "I am the true vine, ye are the branches." We have clusters of grapes. And we let them taste it. Well, how did this grape get to be so juicy and sweet? Well, when it was out in the vineyard, did it jump away and run around the vineyard, then come back? No, it stayed attached to the vine, because that's where it's nutrients came from, and that's just like us. When we stay attached to Christ, we'll become sweet and juicy and everything that a grape should be. So use things like that. Okay. Now, that's just some of the ways of doing a Bible study. There are portions of scripture when you might just have to lecture them. Okay? But we do have things to supplement that. Flashcards, flannel boards, and things like that. Again, first grade. As you get into the older grades, you might just want to maybe pass out an outline or something, and just talk with them; but on a first grade level, it's really effective if we get them involved and draw them in. Now, when does ministry start? Is it when I open God's Word and we begin to teach from it? No. Your ministry to the children will begin somewhere the week before. And it will begin in your personal time with the Lord, and spending time in His Word. Your ministry time with the children will just be an outpouring of your time spent with the Lord, your commitment to Him. Okay. During that week, you're asking Him, "Lord, who do you want me to share with the children? What portion of scripture should I really bring forth?" And sometimes for me, it's in my quiet time and personal reading. I think "Oh Lord," I'll get an understanding of something and "Oh Lord, that's so good." Then I think, "Oh Lord, can You help me take that to the kids?" You know, "I'd like to share that Lord? How can I do that so they'll understand it?" Okay. So it starts before you even come to class. Okay. Then it starts at being prepared. We had the coloring sheets and the word searches and the pencils, and the room was all set up. There was music playing and everything. Then it starts when the first child comes in through the door. Greet them just the way you would expect... how would Jesus greet a little child if they were coming to Him? He said, "Suffer, little children, to come to me. Forbid them not, for such is the King of Heaven." So greet them with a smile, and with a hug and kind words, "Oh, I'm so glad that you're here. You came back. You know I'm so glad to see you. How was your day today? How was your week?" Then get

them started. “Would you take a coloring sheet or word search, whichever one you’d like to begin with? And remember write your name on it before you start.” Because you greeted that child, you’ve welcomed them, you’ve loved them. Now he’s going to sit down because you’re going to have 30 more coming through the door. And when you’re halfway through and the classroom is half filled up, you don’t want chaos to be going over here. But, if they’re focused in on something to do, then there’s not going to be the loudness and the rowdiness, because one time a little girl or boy’s going come to the door and they don’t want to come in and they might be shy. If they look into your classroom and there are pencils thrown and paper airplanes, they surely don’t want to come in then. But if they look in, and everything’s sort of quiet and peaceful, and there’s music playing and you’re smiling at them and greeting them, they’re more likely to come into your classroom without tears, without mom pushing them in. Okay. Now, so, they’re all working on something and now it’s about time, you know, they should all be here by now. Okay, then you start just going around the room talking with them. Encourage them, “Oh, do you need help with that? Jesus, yeah, right there. Wow, you found it.” Really encourage them, and make sure you talk with every child. We hug them, we touch them, we encourage them in everything. Half of my kids I teach Monday nights and Wednesday nights, half of my kids come from single parent homes. Half of those kids that come from single parent homes, are with their dads. You wouldn’t think that, but it’s about even. But we just don’t know what the child has gone through that day or two or three days before that. So we want them to, when they come to the classroom, know that this is a safe place, this is safe, this is a loving place. This is different than what I experience out in the world. They might not remember the greatest Bible study that you’ll give, but they will remember that they were loved, that they were accepted, that they were encouraged and it was all done because of someone named Jesus Christ. Now you’re going to build a relationship with them, and that’s great, that’s good. But what we really want them to know, is that this person, this person is Jesus Christ, is God, and that He loves them, and He’s not far from them. They’ll believe and accept Him into their hearts. He’ll just come in and live right with them, they’ll never be without Him. You’d be surprised what happens. I had a little girl come in, and she came in with all smiles and everything. And this particular night we broke up, I have two helpers in my class on Monday night, and we broke up into prayer groups and she was the first one to pray. And she says, “Oh Lord, thank You that my mommy’s with You in Heaven now.” Two days before she had just lost her mom. But to hear this little girl pray she knew where her mom was. She understands fully that her mom was with Jesus in Heaven. But there are others

that come in and you get to talking. They've been coming, and all of a sudden you look at them, and you know something's wrong, they're not their smiley self, they're not their outgoing self. And when you get to talk with them as you're going around the class, "Oh, what's wrong? You didn't bring your smile to class today. Is everything okay? Well, what happened? Is something wrong at home?" "Well, my dad left. He's not going to live with us anymore. (sighs)" Or "I was at school today. My teacher yelled at me." You know, there's all kinds of things. You're there to minister to them God's love before you even get to the Bible study. Then you do your Bible study. Okay. After we do the sand, we do crafts. Usually in the winter months, we do crafts because it's too cold and it could be raining and we don't go out in the field until summer gets here, but when summertime comes, we go out to the field and have a lot of fun. Okay. But after the sand study, then we do a craft. And this is the craft. It's just a little baby jar. They paint the lid and we fill it up with sand. Then they glue the scripture verse. "How precious are Your thoughts towards me, oh God." "How great is the sum of them? I should number them, they'd be more in number than the sand." So they can take that home with them, and put it on a shelf. Every time they look at it, "Oh yeah, the sand! Yeah. God's thinking about me. Precious thoughts." So we try to do a craft that reinforces the Bible study. When we do the seeds, we have little styrofoam cups with planting mix, and we plant seeds and they take it home, and usually it's pinto beans cause they really work. If you plant a pinto bean seed, it's going to come up, and they're going to see something and then they come back, "My beans are coming up!" And they're so excited. So we try to use a craft that reinforces whatever the Bible study was for that period of time. Okay, now the Bible study's over with, but Pastor Greg has gone long. It's already ten minutes after nine, I mean the parents aren't coming! What are we going to do? Well, we usually take a video in, and just for cases like that because we don't want to lose control of the class, so then we'll begin the video until their parents come. Okay. Or we'll have a puppet show. The fellow helps me, Brian Moreno, he's just so great with puppets, That's his calling. He can do voices that I've never heard of, and the voice fits the puppet figure, and the kids just love it. "Are Luke and Muffet here tonight?" Well Luke is the alligator, and Muffet's the panda bear. See? And the kids love that too. Okay. Bible study's over with, now the parents are beginning to come to pick the children up. With the same love and smile that you had for them when they came through the door, give them that same farewell greeting, "Oh, it was so good to have you in class tonight. Now, if you don't come next week, Billy, I'm going to miss you, so I hope you come. Okay? Remember, Jesus thinking about you Billy."

Billy: Yeah.

Dalton: If you could count the number of thoughts, what would there be more of? The sand? The sand. So try and send them back out into the world with a lot of love, and a lot of encouragement. Invite them back to your class again. Now you're starting to clean the room up and everything. You're thinking about what went on in the class, and you think, "Oh yeah, oh Lord. I just... Lord, be with Billy." Then a lot of the teachers will take the sign in sheet; and when they come back to the office, and when they're putting things away, they'll just run it through the xerox machine. And they'll take it home with them, and then through the week, if they have time, they'll pray for each child in the class. Think, that's really great. And, so again, God's given each of us different personalities, and this is just the way the Lord has shown me to do the class. He works with whom He's created with our abilities and He enhances them and it's all His work anyway. So, you might go into an older range class, and as your trying to serve the Lord, He might show you a different way. This is just the way the Lord has shown me. Any questions? Yes sir?

Male: Well, after I pray about what the study will be about, and the crafts, do we bring whatever... you know...

Female: ... the materials...

Dalton: ... the materials...there are a lot of the materials in the office. The construction paper and the felt, the glue and the staplers, popsicle sticks, and all these kind of things are in the resource center. Okay?

Male: All in the resource center?

Dalton: Okay, Larry will take you down there sometime in this whole thing for your walk through it and see what it is exactly, and what's available. There are books of craft examples on the bulletin board. Now, because we are approaching Easter, there are several Easter crafts that are up there, and we have just completed an Easter craft seminar which was held two Saturday mornings ago. All the teachers are invited to that, to get ideas for crafts for Easter.

Male: And if the Spirit puts it on your heart, like to... like certain ages, say you wanted to teach on the miracles of Christ...

Dalton: Uh-huh.

Male: ... or you know, for the middle aged or third through... third graders, or sixth graders, you know, so you just let the Spirit of God guide.

Dalton: We've really got a lot of help there. There are the curriculum booklets...

Male: Yeah.

Dalton: ... it goes all the way through the Old Testament now, doesn't it Larry?

Larry: Oh,yeah.

Dalton: It just has your coloring sheets, there, your word searches, all kinds of things that... yes?

Male: Okay, for first graders, after the Bible study what do you do with the rest of the time? Going back to the...

Dalton: Okay, if it's the winter months, we like to have crafts that reinforce what the Bible study was...

Male: Also the little craft shops and what.

Dalton: Yeah, then we go "okay, let's go back to our seats and start the craft. Okay. Uh-huh?

Female: Do you have to come up with your own curriculum...

Dalton: No.

Female: ... or crafts or...

Dalton: No.

Dalton: Okay. Anything else about first grade or what you saw tonight?

Female: Are the classes usually this big?

Dalton: Yeah.

Female: There's some that are bigger.

Dalton: Monday night in the summer time, runs about thirty to thirty-five. The winter months run about twenty-five, Wednesday nights about the same, and Sunday mornings, it just depends, some about thirty, maybe for the average class.

Female: Is there always a minimum of two teachers per class?

Dalton: Well, sometimes there's only one, because maybe the teacher might be sick, but I would say for the most part, there's two teachers in every class. Yeah, and we have three on Monday nights, and Wednesday nights, we have three, sometimes two. You guys are great first graders.
(Laughter and clapping)

Pastor Larry: The learning level chapter. I've got an overhead of kind of a staircase looking diagram, and we are going to be dealing with, and covering, the aspect of learning levels; very, very important, and I believe, many times overlooked. We can have a tendency to go in and think, "Well, I'm just going to talk. I'm just going to share" and never know where we're going, never really understand developmental stages, never really understand the different levels of learning. What I'd like you take a look at right now, is in your Bible, James 1, verses 22 through 25. "But be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he's like a man observing his natural face in a mirror. For he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Word, this one will be blessed in what he does." Learning levels, understanding what we're trying to be, as we study and learn the Word of God. The goal should not be only hearers of the Word, but the goal should be doers of what we've heard. And so, when we develop the learning levels and look at them, keep that in mind, what we want to establish is not just hearers of the Word, but doers of the Word. And that will kind of help you keep in line, and track with what I'm going to try to convey this evening in this class, because we'll be going from place to place in the ideas of the five levels of learning. And you may be going "Ah, where are we at? I don't understand this at this point. Just hang on and keep in mind the goal that we have, is to be the doer of God's Word, not just the hearer. Before, I believe, anyone gets involved with teaching God's Word, they need to understand a little more clearly these levels. Now if they don't understand them, it doesn't mean that they can't teach, but it's very helpful to understand them. And by understanding them, what it does, it helps you see what the Holy Spirit is doing, how He's guiding the class, how He's moving in and out and doing different things, and drawing the kids with questions and bringing to your mind certain things that you weren't planning on talking about. And so, when you're able to identify these levels, you're able to see clearer, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and that's why I think they're beneficial. It's important to understand. And we're going to take a look at that first one, the Rote Level. The rote level, is the ability first to repeat, without thought of meaning, the ability to repeat, without thought of the meaning. We're just saying something because we've memorized it. That's what this level is that we're going to be taking a look at. The ability to say something, without thought of meaning. Now, we're going to attempt, on this level of learning, to learn something. I'm

going to put it on the overhead here. If by chance you do have the gift of interpretation, please keep it to yourself for a few minutes, but if you don't, we are going to learn what this says, how you would say it. That's really simple. "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da". It's really easy. And so tonight, that's what we're going to learn. And when you leave the class, you're going to be able to say "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da". All right? So we need to start practicing it together as a class. Now, I need to tell you before we go any farther, that I had a difficult time in learning how to say "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da", but I did it. And by doing it, I had experienced the learning level on that first level, the rote level of learning. To be able to say something without the thought of meaning, that's the rote level of learning. All right? To help you out a little bit, phonetically speaking, it looks something like this. So you need to kind of take a look at that, maybe write it down. I don't know if you're going to have time to write it down, because we are all going to learn that tonight. I want you to be able to, when you leave class, if you have to go to the market or go to gas your car up, if anybody's around, I want you to be able to say it to them. And just turn to them and say "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da". It'll be a tremendous experience. All right.

(Laughter) Are we all ready? I can tell it by the faces. Everybody's like "yeah, I know I can do this." Now understand, you really need to learn this, because I may... well, let me put it to you this way. Past classes, I have this urge to have people help, and I may pick on you, and so now your hearts are pumping and we're going to learn this all together. So right now, we're going to do this together. Okay? On three, I want to say this, and I want you to say it also. One, two, three... (everyone saying "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da"). Ah, we're getting there. It was a good first time. There were a few mouths not moving, so I'm not sure if it's a different way of communicating. Let's try it again on three. One, two, three... (everyone saying "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da" again). That's not so hard. You're starting to get it. I'm hearing that. Let's do it again on three. One, two, three... (everyone saying "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da" again). Anybody feel brave yet?

Female: Brave?

Pastor Larry: Anybody want to try it without the whole class? Okay.

Male: "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da"

Pastor Larry: Very good! All right. Yeah. (Clapping) Okay. Let's say it on three. One, two, three... (everyone saying "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da") Good. Good. If, and I won't go on any farther with this, if you are able to say ("Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da"), you have just learned on

the rote level of learning. It's the basic level of learning. You may say "Uh-huh, right. What is this? I've learned what?" That's not the point on this level. The fact is you have learned something on the rote level of learning. Why is that important? Why is that important to understand? You could spend a lot of time in class, and teach your class, and have them memorize a scripture. You could take John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son"; how special of a scripture. And if you leave them with just the memorization, and you're all excited as they walk out the door, able to share that, if you haven't gone any farther, what they will be walking out the door saying is "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da". And that's what it would mean, as you understand that now, possibly to a little one who is saying, "For God so loved the world". Do we want them to walk out of class not understanding that? Maybe they don't have a concept of God. Maybe their concept is "there's a God in each of us. And you can be a God." Maybe they don't understand what love is. Maybe they come from an abusive background and you're saying, "love", and they're going "what's that?" And as they walk out and you're so excited... you're hearing "For God so loved the world" come out of their little mouths, but all they're saying is "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da". That's it. Now that's not very much to get real excited about, even though we would, because we would hear words that are familiar to us. It's kind of like in situations where you'll hear... oh in a classroom, you may ask a student what faith is, and they may quickly respond to faith as "...the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." Then you go "Yeah, I understand that, verse 11:1 says that. but what is faith?" You can keep pressuring, because it's not really what I'm looking for. And finally they would say "well, that's all I know. I had to memorize that to go to camp last year." And that's as far as it goes, and that's the rote level of learning, and we can be mistaken so much of the time in our teaching, thinking that we're "Wow man, we're really on the mark, we're really doing what we need to do", and that's it. Now God has promised that His Word will not come back void, so there is the point where we have to go for it; but if we stay at that one point, we miss the blessing to see what God can do. And He'll bring somebody else along to start explaining what that means, so that they understand it. So His Word won't come back void, but we miss the blessing, to see when a child starts realizing that God loves them, and as we just heard, thinks about them more than the grains of sand on the face of the earth. And all those thoughts are for the good. And we miss the blessing of watching that child light up, watching the healing take place,

because we thought that was it. The next level of learning on our little chart there is the recognition level of learning, and that's the ability to recognize a Biblical concept. It states what it is, the ability to recognize a Biblical concept. Now what does that mean? To recognize? Well, if I was to tell you at this point in time, that "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da" is Korean and says "God is love", you now have some information. And you've taken that information now, and moved up the ladder of learning to the recognition level. So it would be something like I could say "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da" I'll give you two choices, a multiple choice. "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da", means the cow jumped over the moon or God is love. That would be the extent of your understanding of that point, in time. You would be able to say, "yeah, God is love." Or I could give true and false, "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da" is Korean, True or false? They could recognize what it was, that's it. At this level of learning, we largely will not see much change in a life, but it's also... these levels are all important to establish as we're teaching. Don't get me wrong, as I'm talking about one level being lesser than the other. They all lead. You have to become the hearer of God's Word in order to know what to do. So there are important aspects of being hearers, having ears to hear what is being said. And these are the stages of having those ears to hear. To be hearing, so that in turn, we can be obedient, and be doers of the Word. All of the teaching, in this regards, really only requires the student to have that ability to recognize those things that have been taught. So it's important. Now, to give you a little more explanation on the recognition level; if, hypothetically, we had a fourth grade class, and that class had been studying the gospels and salvation, and what it meant to be saved; after the class basically had their Bible study, what you would probably have as far as interacting going on, would be, maybe the teacher would ask some questions and say, "what do you think? Which one is it?" And I'll give you an illustration of three different things after the gospel had been studied. Number one, can a person get to heaven by always obeying parents and being kind to friends? The teacher would put that out, and if they had truly understood what the Word of God had to say about what it meant to be saved, they would be hearing "No. No, that's not it", because they have the ability on this level to recognize what the truth is. Or, can a person get to heaven by coming to church and reading the Bible everyday? Now, that's a little bit closer. That, has some of the characteristics of what you would see a Christian do. That's not what's going to get him to heaven, and so the class would be saying "No. No. Absolutely not." And three, can a person get to heaven by

believing on the Lord Jesus as his Savior from sin, because He died on the cross to take the penalty for our sins? And at that point, the class, if they were listening and the appropriate study was done, say, “Yeah, that’s it. That’s it.” That’s the recognition level. Now as you can see, a person that has just learned at that level, it’s not going to be a tool, for the most part about what he studied or what she studied, can go out and touch another life, because they can’t even explain it. All they can do, is when they’re in a conversation, go, “Yeah, that sounds right. Yeah, I think that’s close.” Now that’s the recognition level. Moving up the ladder to restatement level, the ability to express or relay a concept basically in your own words. Again, what the title of that level is, is restatement and what it’s saying is that the student has come to understand the concept enough to be able to restate it. Looking at, again, what we were talking about; hypothetically, if a fourth grade class had been learning about what it meant to be saved, what you find being asked in that class, at that point, to get them to a place of restatement, after they had studied the lesson, after they have got the facts of what it means to be saved, hypothetically, the teacher comes into the class and says to the class, “Class, I have a little boy that lives down the street from me and we were talking the other day and he said that he was going to be confirmed in his church and he said that the Bishop was going to anoint him with the Holy Spirit, and with the Holy Spirit to help him, he was sure he could be good enough to get to heaven. Now, the class is sitting here going, “Okay, there is a problem here, because we just studied what it is, that we need to believe and receive.” And what the teacher is trying to get now, without giving information, but literally giving not correct information, to get the student to be able to restate. Then you explain it. How would you explain it to that little boy, what he was saying? Now at this point in time, you’ve got to understand what was taught. You have to understand the terms. You have to have some relationship with what the teacher had been teaching, in order to restate it. It’s interesting, sometimes many people will stop and critique, is a nice way to term it, people, that are up front teaching. It’s a really easy thing to do. “Oh, they said the wrong word.” You know, “Oh, they didn’t mean that, I’m sure, they…” When we come to the state of having… to have the ability to restate something to teach someone, it takes a grasp… an understanding of what it is. It’s not a simple way to learn. It takes some time. It’s takes some diligence on behalf of ourselves, and so at this level of restatement, we can start seeing possible change in our life, because they start being able to express, and the only way they can express, is to have some form of understanding. Now, unfortunately, what I find talking

with many people, these first three levels are where much teaching takes place, and it never goes beyond them. I'll give you an illustration: in a class, the teacher asks a question, a student responds and explains that they can restate it, the teacher's excited and the teacher says, "They're getting it" or "They got it." Well, they haven't gone from the hearer to the doer yet. And we prematurely get excited about hearing the parrot. "Oh, the right answer. Well good! I must be a good teacher. They got it!" Did they get it? What proof do we have at this point that they got it? They have the ability to restate. And this is a very important thing to understand at this level. Because in the classroom, in life, in your life, in my life, we can fool ourselves or be fooled because we know. We have to know to be able to restate it. Paul talked about the Pharisees, he said, in II Corinthians "You know, you know." He kept on saying, "You know" because what they were saying, they did know. but he went on to then say, "But you do not know, you do not know." He was saying, with the aspect of the knowledge that was transferred to their life, they were not doing what they were saying. And it's important to understand, that just because we can rattle off some scriptures, and give our viewpoint, and give our opinion, it doesn't mean it's active in our life. And we can make a great mistake in assuming that there are spirituality levels in our life that aren't there, or in our own children, or in the classroom. So it's important to understand the rote level, to understand the recognition level, and then the restatement level. Yes?

Male: These learning levels are almost, I mean almost spiritual levels too, from a standpoint.

Pastor Larry: It applies totally in the spiritual realm of again, from being a hearer to being a doer. And as we move to the next level, which is the relation level of learning, the relation level of learning is the ability to relate the Bible truths to life, and see and understand the appropriate relationship to what we should be doing because we understand that truth. Yes?

Male: Is this part involved in teaching, or does it exist for a future craft application or something that they practice in their life?

Pastor Larry: Good question. Many times we get confused and go "Okay, now I'm going to sit down and do a lesson plan, and I'm going to put rote level, and I'm going to it go through that and I'm..." No, this is not that kind of a thing. This is something that, with the understanding, you will see things take place, or you will try to move when you have that student, that has memorized that scripture and they are able to recognize and restate what that scripture means. You'll be able to guide them and move them through, instead of staying back. You wouldn't be as excited that they

memorized the scripture. You will not apply this in a sense that you're going to create a lesson plan through it, or figure out your lesson by it. No. And right now, you're at the place, where, if you were studying some physical form of self defense, we'll say, and the teacher was trying to tell you, "No, you've got to learn this right now. You've got to do these forms and these exercises for a future time that you will just flow through this. You're at that stage where it may not make a lot of sense, but as you get involved in teaching, and you start seeing what this really transfers in the classroom, then you'll start understanding, and all it will be is head understanding. It's just going to be to understand what's happening in class. All right. So now, we're at the relation level. At this level, the Word of God is more than information, it is a point of contact with God Himself. The crucial issue in bringing us information about God through personal experience with God, is that of response. We have information, we've heard it. Now we need to understand, "What does that mean to my life?" We understand it. Now, back to this hypothetical class on the gospel... let's say it was being taught. On this level of learning, what would take place is, you would see a student, or hear a student, or the question would come about... the student may say something like, "Oh, that's what it means to be a Christian. Wow, then that means my dad's not. Or maybe that means I'm not." They come to understand to see how it relates to them personally. That's the relation level. There may be a time when you've been studying in class about forgiveness, and one of the students go, "Ah man, that means I got to forgive my brother, or my sister. Ah, I don't want to do that." That's where it's at, it's like they understand what the Word of God is asking them to do or to be. Relation is relating to life experience, what that truth is. How many times have we been in the sanctuary and God has spoken to our hearts and we go, "Yes, I receive that, I understand that." Now, what we have is a choice, which brings us to the next level. We stay at relation level, understanding what our choice is, and we can choose either to obey or not. If we do not, then we stay at the relation level, we understand what it means. If we choose to obey, and we say, "Okay Lord, there's an area in my life that You want to clean up, I give You permission to that. It's okay. I give You my will. Take that area and make it right." It's our will. At that level, at that point in time, we have come to the realization level, and that is, we've been willing to do it. A child in the class, a student in the class, is studying the gospels. At that point in time, they would say, "Well, you know, I've never done this before, and I haven't given my life to Jesus Christ, and I understand that the Word of God says that I need to do that. I want to do that." Now, this

is an important understanding. Just because that student said “I want to do that”, they haven’t transferred yet. They’re still on a relation level, that fourth level. This is what transfers them. “Teacher, will you pray with me now? So that I can give my life to Jesus.” And the teacher says, “Yes.” And they pray, and they’ve experienced the realization level of learning. They have taken it on themselves. They have realized and received and they’ve accepted. How many times in class, we miss that opportunity. You may be studying what it means to be born again, and all you get out is head knowledge, rote level, recognition level, maybe restatement level and that’s it. And the next week, you go on to a new lesson, or you got it out and you ask “Does anyone want to give their life to the Lord?” And the parents come to the door, because church is over with, and you say, “Well, church is over with”, or a student says, “Yes, I do.” And their parents are at the door, and you go, “Well, your parents are here, go home and do it.” It may never happen again. When we gather together in the Body of Christ, it’s so important to take inventory and action there, because the minute you walk out, all kinds of things can occur, and it never gets resolved, and the work of God just lays there. It’s a lesson for us to learn too, when God is speaking to our hearts, take action at that point in time. It’s a special, special thing to hear from the living God and we treat it sometimes flippantly. It’s very important in class to understand these levels, because what a pity, what an unspeakable thing, to allow a child to come to the door as Jesus is knocking, and because we’re too busy, or because we don’t understand what’s going on, they never go through that door. I’d be saying, “Excuse me for a minute. Could you close the door. We’ll be two minutes. We’ve got something really important going on right here.” Sometimes they won’t understand, but that doesn’t matter. Our heavenly Father does. He understands. And you take that opportunity, and you lead that little one to Jesus Christ, that’s really important to understand. This ministry, as we’ve covered before, is an outreach ministry, it’s an evangelistic ministry, it’s missionary work We want to see these little lives transformed, so that they don’t have to go through the crud that some of us had had to go through so they can have God dwelling in them. So it’s important to understand, and have some kind of concept of the learning levels. It’s not going to make or break, but it will help you to see, as I said earlier, what the Holy Spirit is doing. And, it is awesome to be able to be in tune with the leading of God. It’s exciting. When people look for fulfillment, they look for different things in doing and being, and man there’s nothing like seeing God work. And being able to identify, to go and look at what He’s doing, and know what the next thing is going to

be, because you've seen it before. And God's desire in this subject of salvation, is that not one would perish, but that all would come. A high percentage of the kids should have "Today is the day of salvation" written on their T shirts as they walk in. This is the time to disciple, to train up, in the ways of the Lord, not when their eighteen, not when their sixteen, but now is the time. C.H. Spurgeon has stated "Scriptural knowledge is wisdom when it influences the heart, when it rules the mind, when it effects the daily life, when it sanctifies the spirit, and when it renews the will, that's what scriptural knowledge is (this is not in your training book)." It influences our heart it influences and rules over our mind and it effects our daily life. That's when we know we received, not because we can memorize, not because we can quote scriptures, point fingers, adjust other people's lives, but when we ourselves have our daily life transformed. When the students themselves have their daily lives transformed, how important it is, that we allow God to speak to our hearts, and then we become not only hears of the word, but as James says, that we become those doers of His word. It is truly important that we receive and understand that. And I would like now for you to turn a couple of pages in, so that we can find out whether you went from the rote level, to the recognition level, to the restatement level, to the relation level, on to the realization level in this class. And we are going to do a little self test, levels of learning, with that little guy up in the right hand corner, with the question marks all over his head, wondering what is this learning level thing all about. What I would like you to do, is take a few minutes now and go over, and look at one through ten. Look at that page there and I want you to, in that little slash before the number, write in whether it's level one through level five. To give you an illustration of what I'm saying, is on number three it states, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep." You would, I pray, put a one there or write out rote level of learning, because that is just repeating something without thought of meaning. So go through all ten and try to figure those things out. We'll take a couple minutes, maybe three minutes doing this.

Male: Where's it at?

Pastor Larry: It's in the learning level section... right there. Oh, some of them may have a little hand with a pencil in it. So you may want to take a look at that. The other ones have a little guy with question marks around them. There are two different pictures. Take about one more minute. We're in to speed-reading in this class. Okay. Let's take a look at number one. "That you should consider it all joy when you encounter various trials, because it's for my own good." What do you think that is? What level?

Male: Three.

Pastor Larry: Three?

Female: Four.

Pastor Larry: Four. Three? Two?

Male: One.

Pastor Larry: Any five so we can kind of complete this here? Well, what's happening here? I should consider all joy when I encounter various trials because it's for my own good. It's a statement. Now you may be thinking because he says or they say it's for my own good, but we really don't know that that's the direction they're leading or whether they're going on to any further step, but it's basically a statement and it's level three. Number two, John 13:34, "That you love one another as I have loved you, that means that I even have to love my sister." What level is that?

Female: Number four.

Pastor Larry: Two, four?

Female: Four.

Pastor Larry: Four. Four's are out doing the two's. Do we hear anymore two's? Well, two is recognition, that you love one another... they are recognizing "That as I have loved you. That means that I even have to love my sister." Sounds like to me, when they say "that means I" is relating to ones life, therefore it is level four. We did number three, which is the rote level of learning. Let's go to number four. "The Bible says to forgive one another. That is why I need to forgive him."

Class: Five. Four...

Pastor Larry: Five. Four.

Class: Four.

Pastor Larry: Four. Can someone explain to me why it is five?

Male: Because he's doing it.

Pastor Larry: Because he's doing it?

Male: Because he's doing it.

Pastor Larry: Because he's doing it, huh? Interesting. "The Bible says to forgive one another, that is why I need to forgive him."

Male: Because he realizes that the Bible says that's what he needs to do.

Pastor Larry: He what? He related it to his life. He related it to his life, but the realization level is what? Wanting to do it, is not doing it. Here he wants to, I think, maybe, or may, but there's no understanding that anything's happened.

Male: Illustration please.

Pastor Larry: He could say, “The Bible says to forgive one another, that’s why I need to forgive him, but I’m not going to.” We don’t have that understanding. So at this point, with what we have down there, it’s level four. Yes?

Male: It didn’t tell you if he actually forgave him.

Pastor Larry: Exactly. That is why I forgave him. Transferring it, that’s important. That is why I did it. All right. We’re getting it. Number five. “John, you shouldn’t swear, the Bible says so.” Two, three?

Female: Three.

Pastor Larry: Three. This is good. I usually have spans from one to five on almost every one, so you’re getting it. The reason it’s not so bad to be that close, because sometimes it’s hard to tell from the one level to the next. Now when you’re jumping from one to five, that’s a whole different story, but if you’re doing it two to three, that is understandable because sometimes there are indications that we might read into it. But on this one, it’s a restatement. It’s level three. Number six, “I pledge allegiance to the flag”... oh good, good, good. You’re good. Number seven. “It was such a blessing working three hours at the Children’s Hospital yesterday.”

Class: Five.

Pastor Larry: That was so powerful, nobody dares to say anything else. Right. It’s five. Why is it five?

Class: Because he did it.

Pastor Larry: Because it was such a blessing. He did it. He did it. That’s what’s important. Number eight. “It has been said that Jesus loves me.”

Class: Three.

Pastor Larry: “It has been said that Jesus loves me.”

Female: I think it’s great to know that Jesus loves me.

Pastor Larry: “It has been said that Jesus loves me.” It’s a recognition. This is only a recognition. Now, for the sake of people getting in a fight, I can accept the possibility that it goes over to three. All right? So, is that making peace or what? Okay. Number nine. “The Bible says to forgive one another, that is why I forgave him.”

Female: Five.

Pastor Larry: That is why I forgave him. All right. “Jesus said to love my neighbor and James said that true religion will take care of orphans and widows, so I will drop by the rest home this afternoon and see if they need any help out there.”

Class: Four. Five. Four. Five...

Pastor Larry: So I will drop by. Okay? Well, let’s just put the scenario in this. He was riding on his bicycle and past the park and some buddies were playing baseball, so he never got there. It’s four, because he hasn’t done it yet. He

has good intentions, but he hasn't done it. And that's so important. We talked about that a few minutes ago. You may have a student that has good intentions. They say "I'm going to go home and do it." If you have any possible way to deal with that in class, deal with it. Or you may be witnessing out in the streets, and somebody says "Oh, that's really good, maybe I'll do it at home. No way, sit down. Let's talk." You know, when you can recognize and understand what's going on, God is able to do things... it's just awesome. And so that's why we take the time this one session to look at the learning levels. If you haven't quite got a hold of it, don't get frustrated, but maybe read over it some more and ask the Lord just to talk and minister to you. Yes?

Male: If number seven says... instead of saying it was, if it said it is, would that be a two or a three?

Pastor Larry: Okay, number seven. It was such a blessing working three hours. It is still would be because it's basically making a statement that it was done.

Male: So it would be a realization

Pastor Larry: No, it was ... well, I see what you're saying. It is such a blessing working three hours... well, that's a tough one, it's in between, because you have to get more information on that, and that's why we've set these up, so it's not so difficult. But it could possibly be transferred that way. But then again, we don't know, it's some previous knowledge because they did it. It's still going to give the idea that it was done. The point is, the difference between the last two levels. The relation level and the realization level is... it is either done or it is not. Just because they understand what to do, doesn't mean it's done, and it can be so close. And it's important for us to understand that because we can say, "Yes Lord, I'll do it" after he has just spoken to our heart so heavily, so purely, so kindly, so softly, "Yes Lord, I see what You're saying and I need that, yes, yes, yes." And go on and do our own thing. And we can interpret that as repentance. I didn't quite make it. And so these are really important truths to understand as you're attempting to teach the children. Let's pray.

Closing Prayer

"Father, may these trues penetrate our hearts, not only to be hearers of Your Word, but also doers of Your Word. If there are areas that we have touched on by Your Holy Spirit, You have spoken, may there be the doing of those areas. Help us Father. Help us to understand these trues and not only in our own lives, but to be able to communicate and understand what You're doing in the classroom. Again, we thank You for Your Son, and we pray this in His name, Amen."

Opening Prayer

“Father, we thank You for what You have done through Your Son, how we have access to You. That we have forgiveness for our sins, we have fellowship with You. May we not take that for granted. We ask that You would come and be with us, work among us, speak to our hearts. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Leading A Child To Christ

This particular class is one of my favorites to watch, because I get to do a lot of watching once we get going with this. It’s fun to see the interaction that you will be having while we are doing this. After we get done with this portion of class, we are going to be breaking up into groups of two, for the purpose of practicing what we are going to be talking about, and that’s “How to Lead a Child to Christ”. So, I would recommend you take notes, you listen, and put yourself in the place of having to communicate what we are going to be talking about in the next few minutes.

The first page that you have with you, you will find in the last chapter of your Training Manual. That first page lists plans for presenting salvation. So, if you can turn to that, there are one, two, three, four, five different options on this page, which refers to the fact that you can share the Gospel using God’s Word in different ways. And what is really important, is that you become familiar and comfortable with presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the children, or to anyone. That’s going to be extremely important. So as we go over some of these points, you will want to be making some notes and putting yourself in the place of leading one to the Lord.

Now the first thing that I recommend people do, is to memorize the scriptures that they are going to use. The second thing is to take those scriptures, and to find the first, and to put on the front somewhere of your Bible, plan of salvation and then the scripture reference that you start with, so that you always have a key in your Bible to share. And go to that scripture and write the reference of the next scripture that you will want to share. And go all the way through your Bible that way so that when you move to the next scripture, you will have the next one that you need to talk about, once you have addressed the issue that you want to talk about at that point. And it’s easy just to keep moving along. Now why is that important? One of the reasons it’s important, especially with youth, with the kids, is that they need to know that it’s coming from the Word of God, and it’s not just someone saying “Now this is what it is.” So if you just memorize it and you start sharing it, they aren’t quite certain or sure where this may be coming from. But if you go to the Word itself, and you open the Bible up, and you have it right there, and you even say, “Hey, do you want to read it? Here, read this scripture. What does it say?”

And you talk about it. It's that simple. It's not difficult. Sometimes we make it much more difficult than it is. It's very exciting when it comes down to it. You will have people that will reject it. You will have people that will just fall, just hand and foot, going, "This is it? Why hasn't anybody told me this before? This is awesome. Yes, I want to follow Jesus." And you will find that in class, too. The enemy comes in with fear and says, "You don't have all the answers. Don't open your mouth then." And it's true, we don't. But we can find what God has to say about very specific aspects of the plan of salvation. So on that page, Plans for Presenting Salvation. It's just something you can look over.

The Roman Road

We will be going this evening basically off of the Roman road, dealing with scriptures from the book of Romans, with one variation of that. You have a page there. What does a child need to know, to appreciate Christ's death and receive him as Savior? These basic facts should be emphasized. We are going to go over that real quickly. Number one, God loves all kids, including me, including that student that you are talking to, and they don't have to earn his love. He loves them. The scripture reference for that would be John 3:16.

Number two, I've done wrong, and this wrong, called sin, must be punished. The reference for that would be Romans 3:23. Number three, Christ died to pay for my sins. These are some real basic concepts, and yet if you haven't been shared with, pertaining to these things, and you hear that for the first time, it's not so basic anymore. These are words of life that can lead to that. The scripture reference is Romans 5:8.

Number four, I must accept Jesus as my savior to receive God's forgiveness, Romans 6:23. And five, when I do this, I become God's child, Romans 10:9. When you are sharing the Word with the children, the plan of salvation, it's extremely important to be clear and not to confuse, to know what you are saying, to know the words that may be a little bit too big for the children to understand. As we've talked about in the other classes, if you are speaking and sharing with a four or a five-year-old, talking about being born again may not be the best term to use. Because again, as we've shared, they aren't quite sure about what being born means at this point in time, and they can deduct, "Well, if I have to be born again, I don't understand how I'm going to get back inside Mommy." And, "No, I don't want to do that. That just seems too difficult, and so, no, I don't want to ask Jesus into my heart." And that's how they will deduct some of our terminology. Accept Jesus into my heart, again, we talked about that, knowing that, "Well, Jesus must have been so tall, and my heart is so big, and there's going to be a problem there, too. No, I don't want to do that." And so, when we are presenting the plan of salvation, we need to think through the age that we are talking to.

What is age appropriate? Now those terms would be no problem with someone a little bit older than four, five, six years of age. And there are many ways of presenting the Gospel. But some of these that we just talked about, they need to understand. There is sin. They have sin. They can ask forgiveness. They can receive Jesus Christ. They need to understand these things, and it needs to be clear. There is not a more important understanding in the universe than how to be saved. And yet, how much time do we actually spend in preparing to be a vessel used by God? That's the other exciting thing about preparing yourself. God tells us that He desires that not one would perish, but that all would receive Him, receive that gift. Therefore, it tells us that He's looking for vessels to use to bring people to Himself, vessels that are prepared, vessels that know His Word, that know how to present in an adequate manner what He wants those to know that have never known Him before. So it's very important that we prepare. You may find yourself sometimes feeling like, "Well, my life is just not really clicking." Go share your faith sometime with someone. What that does, when you see new life come, it causes you to remember when you became new in Christ. It causes you to realize the work that's going on. So it's important that you are ready. And then, if you are ready, plan on being used. Plan on God bumping someone into you that needs to know about it. "Well, I don't really know why I'm talking to you, but, you know, I've been wondering about God these days." It's an appointment that God has made with you at that point in time, because He will use that opportunity, when He finds vessels not only prepared, but willing. Romans 3:23, and I guess we can look to the first page that we've got there, the first page of the last chapter.

The Bible says that "...all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God", Romans 3:23. Now, you can look that up in your Bible. We don't have it all written out there, but it says all have sinned on your handout. It's important for the children to know that that means everyone. The word "all" means everyone. They need to have it defined, what we are talking about here, having fallen short of the glory of God. Now that depends on the age range that the child may be that you are presenting. You don't have to get into, that they missed the mark, what to miss the mark means, and all those different things when they're very young. The fact is that God has a standard, and we've all sinned. We have all not met that standard. As they get older, you will have to become more knowledgeable in what you are going to be sharing, and how you would. Romans 5:8, "but God demonstrated His own love towards us in that while we were yet still sinners, Christ died for us". Christ's death counts for everyone. Again, that's important for them to understand. That there's not some that He died for, but He died for all, because the enemy will come in and say, "Well, yeah, He died for those kind of people or that kind of a person, but not me." It's important that they understand that "all", again. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". God loves us so much that He gave

His only begotten son. And you have to be careful, too, in starting to explain that to a child. Well, what do you mean, He gave His own son? And you start defining. And to a child it can scare them, because they can interpret that, as He killed His son. And that may be very difficult for them to totally comprehend. And again, as we talked before, the act of coming to know Jesus Christ, is the act of the will. Not as much the intellect as the will. Saying, “I am willing to follow Jesus.” Because the Holy Spirit is already talking to the young ones, directing them, saying, “Yes, this is right, this is what I should do.” And we don’t want to hinder the leading of that. So there are different things that you need to be aware of when you are sharing. I’m not saying candy coat or cover up, but be wise with how you do share it to the youth.

Why is it important that they understand this? Romans 6:23, because the wages of sin is death, and if they don’t do something about that, death is what they’re headed towards. But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Sin equals death, and you can explain that in different ways. That’s eternal separation from God, otherwise known as hell, or, life in Christ, eternal life, that’s Christ equaling life, and that can be referred to as heaven. So it really depends on the age appropriateness, how you would communicate and what you would say.

How can I have eternal forgiveness and be saved? So important for that to be understood, eternal forgiveness and being saved. Romans 10:9, “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”. A confessing, an identifying with. These are all very basic elements, but are very, very important to be prepared to be ready. We talked about the percentage of those youth that give their lives to the Lord. Between the years four and fourteen, 85 percent of all commitments made will happen in that age range, or thereabouts. That means there is going to be a lot of opportunity to see the little ones come to know Jesus Christ, and we need to be prepared for that. So we have covered those things that are important for them to know in regards to the Word of God, and how that brings them to that place of making a decision.

One thing that is really important, is that you don’t get this idea that there is just one formula, there is just one way to do it, because there’s not. And you need to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, using his Word, yes, that is the one formula, if you would, that God’s Word is presented, and that the kids know, that that’s where it’s coming from. It’s not coming from me or you, as much as it’s coming from what God has established. And that’s important to understand. Always using those scriptures, always pointing to the scriptures. It’s also very important that the children understand, that this decision is between them and God. Because in the younger age, four, five, six, there is a tendency to want to please the teacher, and we don’t want them to make a false

proclaiming, because they just like you as the teacher, they just want to please you. So it's very, very important that they understand that this decision is not between you the student and me the teacher, but it's between you and God, and you need to understand that. And, "I'm just telling you what God says here in His Word, but you need to decide. I will pray with you if you want me to." But if you try to convince them, you are stepping out of bounds. You share the truth, and let the Holy Spirit do His work, in convicting and drawing and bringing to the truth. And that is very important to understand. It's based on God's Word, and it's not based on your words.

Once you've shared it in class, whether it's through Bible study, whether it's just going forth through the scriptures in a brief manner and sharing it, if children do then receive the Lord, it's very important to somehow go back over the information, so that they are in agreement with what they have just done, and they understand what they have just done. That might be through tracts that we have in the office, it might be through a sheet of paper that you have created and designed on your own computer. However it may be, that they understand, and you are sure that they understood what just took place, that's important. And then the process after that, is that of discipling, teaching them to grow, how to grow in the Word, to daily be in the Word, to daily spend time with the Lord, to daily be in prayer, to share their faith. And that's the progression of the class. Once the child has come to know Jesus Christ, then our place is the discipling, building them up in Jesus Christ. It is so fun; it is so exciting. Did I share with you in a previous class, about the first grade class, and how a lot of the kids came to know the Lord? It's something that many times we aren't prepared to receive. People will talk about, "Oh, yeah, on Monday night there must have been fifty people that went forward." They can't comprehend what's going on with the children, the hundreds, week after week. We need to be ready; we need to be prepared. And it's one of the most exciting parts of class, to watch those little ones raise their hands, and see tears come down off their cheeks, because they've just given their life to the Lord. They've met their Creator at such a young age, and they know it, and they receive it. And our obligation, our responsibility, is to know how to lead them, as God would lead them, to Him, to draw them unto Him, not to us as teachers, not to us as a church, but to Jesus Christ, their Savior, their Lord. And then disciple them. I just love it.

And so, what we are going to do is practice this. We are going to break up into twos, and one person will lead the other person to the Lord, and then, altogether at the same time, we will switch and do the reverse. Now, there's one thing that happens, that many times people are not prepared for. They have prepared how to lead, and they give the scriptures, and the student says, "Yes," and then it's almost like, "Okay, uh, what now?" And it's really simple, but if we aren't prepared for that, it can be kind of frustrating, kind of, "I don't know what to do. They said yes. Well, I guess we pray. Well, how do we pray?"

And that's what you do. You pray, but you go back through what you've established. You go back through the scripture, and you have them repeat after you. "Father, I understand that I have sinned." And they repeat that, "I have sinned." And go back to, "And I understand the wages of sin is separation from You, and I don't want to be separated." And you just lead them right back through in a real brief manner, what you spent maybe 10 or 15 minutes dealing with. And that's all it takes. So, I want you to experience that also. You are going to have about 10 or 12 minutes to share with a partner, and when you get done sharing and leading them to the Lord, I want you then to pray with them. Now, this is not an exercise of combative experience. This is an exercise as a child most likely would do, and they would sit there and they would listen, or if they had a real question. "God really loves me? I don't... why would God love me?". You can briefly share, but they are not going to be, "Yeah, well I can't see God, and how can you know?". And to come up with the evolutionary process really doesn't quite fit in with the model ... you aren't going to experience that for the most part when you are sharing with a youth. Again, because they aren't necessarily dealing in the realm of the intellect, even though it is intellectually being communicated, and it is important that the Word of God is established, but the issue always is our will. Are we willing? We don't understand the universe. It's not an issue of something that's blocking me from receiving the Lord, because it's so founded on fact. It's because I want to stay a sinner. I am not willing to change. Because the evidence is there, plenty of it. And the same goes with the children, but it's at a very early stage where they don't have that many walls up. So don't try to confuse your partner. Don't try to make it difficult. This is an exercise that you can just see what, if you haven't done this for a while, if you've never done this before, you can see what goes into it. It sounds simple, but it takes some real time and practice at being able to do it. And so we are going to do that. And what I want you to do now, is team up with one other person. You can turn your desk, just as long as you get them back to where they were, to meet up with them. And let's take about two minutes to get situated. I don't want you to start until I tell you to. So go ahead and do that for the next two minutes.

(Everyone talking)

Okay. What we want to do now is... I hope everybody had the opportunity to pray. If not, I don't know where your eternity will be, but... (Laughter) You'll have to take care of that after class. We are going to do the same thing. There have been a few good comments that are worth sharing briefly, and that is you need to get scriptures that you feel comfortable with sharing and explaining, very important. But if you don't go through this process that we are doing this evening, you may not ever get that feeling of comfort. God's Word has got it, I mean, it's there. It's for us to be able to communicate it effectively. You don't have to use these scriptures, these are just possible directions of

presenting the Gospel. You may have others that you feel much more comfortable with. The point is, be comfortable with presenting the Gospel. Alright? So what I want you to do now is reverse roles, and those who were receiving now can share their faith and lead the other person to the Lord.

(Everyone talking)

Alright. You've had the opportunity now, to see that even though it is fairly simple, it can be complex. To communicate the truth in a clear and simple manner takes some practice. If you were frustrated, just pray and ask God to continue to work, because this is so important. It's like anything else, when you do something for the first time, it will take some repetition, it will take some practice, it will take some analyzing, "Okay, well, I felt strong with communicating this aspect, but this one really needs some checking out, and figuring out what I can say." But if you don't attempt to do it, then what you will do, is you will be hesitant all of your life, not just in class. And what an opportunity, just to consider the missing of the opportunity. With just a little bit of effort, just a little bit of evaluating and examining.

Now, you have some questions in your own mind, you know. How will I, how can... and now is the time to pray and say, "Okay, Lord, lead me in those directions. Give me answers, so I can effectively communicate Your truth, Your Word." It is simple, but it's not so simple to do. To be prepared is what our heart's desire should be, to take every possible opportunity. As we should be desiring to do God's will, His will is, as we said, that not one would perish. So this has been a good time, a good exercise. It's always fun to watch you interchange with sharing this. And the real joy of remembering us doing that, of what that's all about. And so I want to encourage you, don't stop at this point, but continue to go in that direction. Find, I don't know, somebody at your home, or somebody that you feel comfortable with. You may have a dog or a cat that you can sit up on the couch and share with. (Laughter) But go over it; feel comfortable with it. You may have a trained parrot. Anyway, that is what it takes, just doing it. So this is ending at this point in time, the class on presenting the Gospel, the plan of salvation. Again, this was your first opportunity for many of you, and you need to continue to persevere and push through those areas that you may find yourself weak in. And the Lord will reveal that and show that to you. Okay, great.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

The chapter we are going to be taking a look at, is Study Methods. I believe it's the red tab in your notebook, I think. We are going to take a look at... now the first part of that is learning levels. That we've already covered, so it will be a few pages in. Okay. Let's stop just for a second. Alright, the very last page. Well, I'll have this on the overhead, and you can go off of this on the overhead at this point in time, if you find that it's not in your book. We are looking at Revelation 3:20 when we get to that place. So the three questions you can write on the back of a page that you have there, because you are going to be doing some writing anyway. I'm going to be putting some other overheads on that you will have to be copying. Okay? So, I just wanted to get that before we got this going. We are going to be looking at a very simplified way to study the Word, based on the inductive study, but it's very simplified. If you've gone through an inductive Bible study process, this is much simpler, because we are doing this with the students. We have this being done in third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes at this point in time, with teachers using this method to actually study, to even teach the younger ages. As they are communicating, it gives them some lesson plans, as far as dividing the Word of God.

Many times, people question whether this can actually take place in the children's ministry. Can the kids really get a hold of what are the facts, and what do those facts mean, and what do they mean to them? And the answer I find, time-in and time-out, is that it is possible. It does take some practice, it does take some time, but it's well worth the benefit. There was a time when, in my home, we on different occasions would go through, and do the Bible study in an inductive manner. And we were sitting at the table dealing with the scriptures in Matthew 24 that deal with the return of Jesus Christ. As we were studying, as we were looking at it, one of my sons asked if it was alright for him to share what he thought at that point in time, and we said, "Sure, you know, go ahead." And he said, "Well, you know," and again, I need to say at this time he was around 10 or 11 years old. He said, "I look at it this way. What we just read, how the sun and the moon and the stars all were darkened, the whole sky was pitch black, preparing for the return of the Lord, and I think God orchestrated all this, and I think He had it all planned. It was like a light switch. He turned it off, turned this off, turned this off, and it was absolutely dark. Because the scripture says, that Jesus is the light, and the scripture says that every eye is going to see Him return, so that's how it was kind of probably worked out. And when He approached the earth, He illuminated greatly, and everyone turned and every eye will see." And my wife and I were kind of going, looking at each other, saying, "What was that? That's really interesting." And we were pleased. And he saw that we were pleased. And something very important took place at that time. He experienced the reality that the Holy Spirit does not just speak to the parents, but that He desires to speak to anyone that has ears to hear and will receive what He is saying. And we saw that in our

son, as he realized that God had spoken to his heart, because we bore witness with that possibility. And it was a situation where we had looked at the scriptures to see what the facts were, then we talked about what those facts mean. And we went through that whole process. And maybe the first time it didn't work that readily. Maybe there were some hitches in it. But as time went on, it became easier and easier and easier to do. It's a method of study that we try to make as simple as possible, that the students would be able themselves to study. But another important thing took place at that time. The experience, what he heard the Lord say to him, thought the Lord said to him, took him from the intellectual aspect of the Gospel, the Word, to that of the heart. He sensed it in his heart. We so easily hide behind words. We'll memorize scripture, so that we don't even have to answer to what the scripture is actually saying.

And our goal of teaching always should be, as we talked about in the learning levels, is to bring them up that ladder of learning, to that place where they want to take it themselves, where they experience the love of God, where they experience his forgiveness, where they experience the joy of the Lord. Not just giving them information. We have to start with information, that's the starting place, but we want to bring it to the place where it's heartfelt and they act upon it. He realized, at that point in time, that he didn't have to wait to hear from God until he was 18 years old or 21, but that at that point in time, God wanted to speak to him. And it was an awesome time in his life. It was an awesome time in our life, seeing that take place. And we want to see that take place in the class. We want them to become a part of the whole process of studying, and learning and understanding what God would have them to do. So we are going to do that.

We are going to break up into groups of four approximately. If we can stay at four that would be very good to interact and help each other. I'm going to be sharing with you different principles and directions to be thinking on, as we cover each of the three questions, and I want you to interact and to talk to each other, and to help each other go through this. This may be the first time you've done anything like this, and you are just going to need to hang in there and work through it. You may have gone through a major inductive way of study, which could even be a hindrance to what we are doing, because this is so simplified. This is not going to be really time-consuming. So you need to take your time, and just work through all this. I will be putting the overhead up. We will get these pages to you, if you don't have them. We will be having these in the training manual for you to find, to be able to use. So at this point, what I want you to do, is take a couple minutes and break up into groups of four. You want to turn your desks towards each other so you can interact and talk. As much as possible, just four in a group.

(Everyone talking)

Okay. We are pretty well set. Step one. We are going to go through three steps. Each step we'll be covering, on your outline or if you've written that up there, I've taken it down at this point. Number one should be, what does the passage say? What does the passage say? And the scripture that we are going to be looking at is, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20. That's what we are going to be looking at. And number one, what we will be wanting to establish is to list the facts. So when we look at number one, we are going to take a look at the scripture, Revelation 3:20, and we are going to set out the facts in an outline form. One, two, three, four, five.

Now, when I say the facts, basically what we are doing, is we are reorganizing what is said in the paragraph, the scripture, into an outline form. So if you are familiar with paragraph outline form, that should make it a little bit easier. What I'm saying here, is you are going to take the first line of the paragraph, and make that into one. Then you move to the next part of the sentence structure in the paragraph to two, to three, to four. However many it takes to layout what you are trying to say. So what you want to do is list the facts. You will try to make this hard. Trust me, that's the thing that you normally will try to do, is to make this very difficult. You are going to practically rewrite what that says, but in outline form. If you find that you've left something out, which will change the meaning, it's wrong. If you find that you've added something that is not in there, you will find that you are wrong. List the facts in one sentence. This is the literal aspect of this study. You want to be very literal. You do not want to change the meaning.

Now there may be something, such as we get into, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," there may be something that's not in there that you can insert in there, but it doesn't change the meaning. What do I mean by that? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." You normally will not just take one scripture and look at it, you will look at the scriptures before and the scriptures after to put it all together. And by doing that, you would come to the understanding that the person that is saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," is Jesus. Now that will not change what the scripture says. It will help understand more fully what it says, but you will not add something. If you did not know who that was, you would not say, you know, "Matthew is standing at the door and knocking." That changes the meaning of what that scripture is. So do you understand that part? We don't want to change anything. You want to list the facts. You do not want to spiritualize anything here. You want to be very literal about this. Read through it and set out what you would have there in an outline form, basically just reorganizing that. As we get going, I will give you some examples so that it will help you understand what we are actually doing at this point.

So what I want you to do now, is go ahead and together, attempt to go through and do number one. Do not go to number two. We will do that together. There is a reason for that, and I will explain that in a minute. Only do number one, listing the facts. What does the passage say? Okay. So let's go ahead and do that. Help each other out. And I will be sharing a little bit more about this in a minute or two.

(Talking)

Now, what we are going to do is go to step two, what does the passage mean? The reason we are going in steps, is because it's really easy, I almost want to use the term "to cheat" even though it's not cheating, but it's real easy to jump to all three, and really not have to answer the question. You don't have to really touch your heart. If you can take the first and establish what the facts are, and then take a breather, maybe wait for the next day, and come back and do step two, what we are going to do, and that's to find out what those facts mean.

Now, on the first step, it was important for you to establish exactly what was said there, because we don't want to change anything. And if you have something different than the rest of the people that you are grouped with, then there is a problem. Step two, what does the passage mean, is the part where we do apply and look for the spiritual application. We want to find out why the Holy Spirit had what was written penned. What was the reason for that? So it would be the lesson part of that scripture. Why is it important for us to know this? And so, we want to look for those facts that would lead us to an understanding of what the meaning of it is.

Now in every exercise of Bible study, there is a key element. And that key element is, in the natural we are clueless. Therefore we need the Lord to lead us into the truth. Therefore we need to ask the Lord to lead us into that truth. And after I get done explaining step two, it would be good for you in your different groups to pray and ask the Lord to lead you to understand more fully what those facts are for. Do they apply to my life? Do they apply to a neighbor's life? Do they apply to a friend's life? What is so important about those facts that we just established in step one? Is there something that I should follow, or is there something that I should forsake? Or is there something that I should avoid, or maybe something that I should obey? We are looking for the lesson aspect of what those facts mean. And we do not, in this step, want to personalize it. It's like you want to read the facts, step one, step two, you want to say, "Okay, Lord, if I were to share these with my neighbor, what would I say to them? That's what we are looking for. In class, if I wanted to share that with a student, what would I share with them? Therefore, you have to ask the Lord to lead you to understand.

Now, you are going to have different things come to your mind, than maybe someone else in your group. It doesn't necessarily mean it's going to be the same. Now, something that we've been taught here and learned here: if it's wild and crazy, it's most likely wrong. If you've interpreted something that's just way out there, then most likely it's not what God was trying to intend. But, it's no different than when you go into the sanctuary with a hundred people, or a thousand people, and you leave the sanctuary and you were ministered to by the Holy Spirit, and you are talking to a friend, and you are saying, you know, "Oh, that scripture really meant this to me. God really spoke to my heart about it this way". And that friend says, "Oh, no, no. I got this from that." And you may hear that throughout the entire grounds as people have been ministered to specifically because the Holy Spirit, because God ministers to our needs specifically. Therefore, you want to encourage one another as you are doing this method right now, step two, and realize that God may even want to use somebody in the group to even speak to you tonight about something. It's hard to say. But He can speak many different applications about the truth. The truth has been established in step one. These are the facts. So what I want you to do now, is seek the Lord and find out now what do those facts mean. Ask God to give you the spiritual understanding of those facts. All right? Let's do that.

(Silence)

The next step, number three, what does the passage mean to me? Basically, all you are doing is going back to step two and putting it into a question form. You are going back to step two, and putting what you've got written down there, what does the passage mean, into a question form to yourself. So now you are applying it to your life. And it's at this point in time, often that we hear the voice of God, that He speaks. I have people come and say, "You talk about hearing God's voice. I don't understand that. I don't get that." And I usually will find my Bible on my desk and say, "Hey, He has spoken. Look at all these words. We just need to hear." And at this point in time, if we have done this in an honest manner, and we ask the question now to ourselves what that application was, many times that's when God touches our hearts. I mean, He can even do it right now as we are doing this exercise. It's important to understand that this time, step three, we are still before the Lord. This may be nothing that you want to share with the rest of the group. He may want to speak to you right now about just this scripture. So go ahead and do that. Take a few minutes. Put what you've got written down for number two, what does the passage mean, now in number three, what does the passage mean to me. Write it out in question form to yourself. Let's go ahead and do that and take just a few minutes to do that.

(Silence)

In step three, what does the passage mean to me, going back to what does it mean, those who respond to His voice will be able to fellowship with Him, and Jesus will fellowship with us. Putting it into a question to me, do I fellowship with Him? Not just having a bunch of facts, Jesus stands at the door knocking, and if you open the door and let Him come in, He will dine with you, and you with Him. And gee, that's great, I memorized it, now I can go to camp. But taking a look at what it says, and how it relates to our life is so important. We covered that last week when we looked at the learning levels. If you've taken the time to look at the scripture, and you are ready to go in the class, and you are walking into class, there is a difference between those who have studied and prepared, and those who haven't. Those who have, will have something to say. We have a choice. And they may go in there saying, "I have to say something," or "I have something to say." And many times we get caught in this aspect, "Well, I've got to figure out what to say," because we haven't taken the time to prepare. Because when we have, we will not be able to wait for that time to get into class to share what God has spoken to you about. It's exciting when the living God has spoken something that you are to deliver to someone else, and you find you just can't wait. "Oh, I wish it was today instead of tomorrow," or "I've got to wait three more days, well Lord, this is so awesome." Or you come into class, "Well, I've got to say something here." And that's the difference between studying God's word and being the person that is to deliver it to whoever it may be. We've had this up before, but I think it's definitely worthwhile to take a look again.

A sentence from the mouth of God will have more permanent power over a Christian man, than the best composed of human statements. God's Word is living and powerful, and has power to enter the heart beyond that of any other words. The words of the Bible strike and stick. How important for us to realize it's not what we have to say, it's what God has to say. It's what His Word has said already, that we take and look at what His Word has said. So many times we talk about different aspects of the Bible, and don't let the Word of God speak for itself. And this is one of the approaches that we have found, that enables God to speak clearly what he's trying to say.

When we are looking at the levels, going from the rote level and the recognition level and the restatement level and the relation level and the realization level, sometimes the questions were: how do I incorporate all that understanding into just reading the Bible and teaching the Bible, so that I can bring them from that rote level all the way through to the realization where they take it upon themselves? This is one of the approaches that will allow that to take place. As you see what's going on, if you want to, you can sit down and you can identify the different levels of learning that transpire from step one, step two, to step three. This is an option for you to be able to do, to teach God's word through all those levels, bringing the student to the place of realizing what the scripture says, what it means, and then what it means to them and that they have to respond to that. If you do

not have a consistent time with the Lord, I would challenge you to start doing this. Start doing this method of taking a scripture in the morning, and just looking at it, and let God speak to your heart. Or if you are having a consistent time with the Lord, but it's kind of stale or it's just not happening, try doing this for about a week. And by the end of the seventh day you are going to find some interesting things taking place. It's awesome when God speaks to us and we hear it. That's what we've been created for. We block it out so many times, but you've experienced this, or I pray that you have. When God has spoken to your heart, it's like, "That's enough. That's enough. That's it." And it may not even be addressing the issue that you were asking for. I've had that happen. Pacing around a park, spending time with the Lord, needing to have an answer. I must have this answer. There is a deadline. And I'd pace, and then I'd read the scripture. And before I even realized what I was doing, I was manipulating God. "Oh Lord, I'll read the Word. Oh Lord, I'll pray. Oh Lord, I'll walk. Just answer me." And He doesn't want that. And that particular morning I remember, a number of minutes, 45 minutes into this whole routine of mine, I heard, "I love you." Now I wasn't asking to hear that. I needed some direction. But after He said that, I couldn't care less about the direction. He touched my heart. And that's what the scripture is for.

The scripture is to lead us into fellowship with the Lord. It's not to cause us to feel like we know all this information, as much as it is we know Him. And we can fall into that pit fall, of teaching the kids information. And then Paul describes what happens, and that is they get puffed up, because that's all knowledge does is puff up. And then, as we talked about in the learning level section, they walk out of the class going, "Ha Na Neem Mun Sa Rang Eem Nee Da", and they don't even know what they're saying. This is a process. This is a method by which we can take the class, the students, through to cause them to hear God's voice. If they don't want to, you can't change that. But many of them do.

Now, when you are doing this method and you are studying, it's not going to be this complicated, because it's only going to be you and the Lord. There won't be distractions. So understand that. But I want to encourage you to practice this. Find it in a scripture, maybe even in this training session, and if you do it, turn it in. I'd like to see it. And just take a scripture and break it down, and then let God speak to your heart. But I want to encourage you to do that, because it will, for those entering in teaching the older age, it would be very important, but those who are teaching the younger age, you are going to have to share something. And are you going to walk into class going, "Well, I've got to share something," or are you going to walk in with something to share. It is simple. It is not that difficult, but you have to persevere and push through it, and go through that training process. Let's pray.

Closing Prayer

“Father, again, we thank You for Your Word, how it leads us and guides us and directs us. Speak to our hearts, Lord, continue to speak. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.”

John: My name is John. I teach here at Calvary Chapel. I am a kindergarten teacher, and I also work with Larry in the leadership, under Larry, he's my director. He's the one who keeps me on the straight and narrow, outside of Jesus himself. What we're going to be doing today, is we're going to be going through a class, a kindergarten class. I'm going to bring you guys through a start to finish class, as if you had come into my class. And what I would like to do is kind of give you guys a basis of a structure. Now don't get me wrong. It's not the structure. I'm not telling you that my class is it, you know, you should go with whatever I've got in my class. It's just something that the Lord has given my wife and I, and it's worked really well for a lot of years. And so hopefully, what we can do is maybe put some tools in your hands that you can take into a class, if the Lord leads you. And so we'll go from there. So to start off, I'd like to start off with prayer. So if we'd kind of stop for a moment, and let's open up. "Father, I just want to thank You, God, that it's You, Lord God, that provides all of our needs. And God, we just confess to You now, that we are in great need of You. Lord, we pray that we would decrease, and that You would increase. And that God, that You would come, and that You would speak to us tonight, that You would teach each one of us, Lord. Lord, we pray that You be glorified. Open our hearts and minds to all that You desire. In Jesus' name. Amen." So what I'd like to do is, I'd like to ask for three volunteers. We have John and James and... I need one girl. Okay, and what's your name?

Karen: Karen.

John: Karen. Okay. If I can get John, James and Karen to go on outside the door, go on outside the door, I'll tell you what we're going to do here. What I'm going to do is, I'm going to show you what it would be like if you were guys coming into my class, what it be like to be greeted by myself or my wife. As you guys came in the first off, the first thing you guys, most of you heard, some of you didn't because I got here a little bit late, but you heard music going on. And you're thinking, "Well, John, that's worship music, that's really mellow for a kindergarten class." Well, I teach second service Sunday, and I use mellow music when they come in. Because usually when they're coming in to my class, they're all jacked up on sugar and all sorts of other things. So I want to bring them into a mellower atmosphere. So I use mellow worship music in my class when I start out. And also, each one of you have this, it's a color sheet. And so it gives them something to do as soon as they get into the room itself. It gives them a beginning activity. This is really good, because if they're coming into a class that has nothing in there, usually what will happen is they'll

wander into that class, and they're going to find something to do. And usually it's going to be something that you don't want to do. So, what we're going to do, is I'm going to invite our kids in right now. And what I'm going to do is kind of go in and out of the class situations. So you guys will be kindergartners and then you'll be adults, because I'll be explaining different things in my class. Okay, starting out. Okay, guys, come on in. "Karen, hi Karen, how are you doing? It's so good to see you. Hey, what happened to you last week? Were you sick?"

Karen: Yeah.

John: "Oh, well we were praying for you, Karen. Hey, you know what? Now Karen is always in my class, so. Karen, would you do me a favor? We have a brand new girl over here, and she's kind of sad. Would you sit with her and kind of help her out when we do our worship and stuff?" Okay, why don't you come on. And I'd come over and I'd introduce her. Like, say this brand new girl came in first off. She doesn't know anybody here. So I'd make sure that I introduce somebody to her, so she would get a friend right away. So why don't you have a seat Karen. All right. "Hey, John, what's up, buddy? Oh, man, give me a hug. All right. Hey, buddy, how was your week? Oh, man, I've been looking forward to seeing you this week. Well, come on in, pal. You can sit right over here. Hey, what's your name?"

James: James.

John: "Hey give me five, buddy. All right. Hey, have you ever been to kindergarten class before?"

James: No, my first time.

John: "Never. Okay, well great, James. Hey, I'll tell you what. Why don't we come on over here and I'll sit you next to John, and he'll help you out with doing some coloring and stuff, all right?"

James: Okay.

John: And a lot of times, too, when brand new kids come in the class, I'll kind of explain a little bit of the class. I'll explain kind of the process of things that we do. You know, first we sit down and we color, and then afterwards, after all the kids are in the class, then we start doing our worship, and we pray, and then we have Bible story and puppet shows, and all sorts of things. So it kind of gives them an idea, and something to look forward to. Okay. So after I get all the kids in my class, they're sitting down, they're coloring. We have some kind of beginning activity. Now, your beginning activity doesn't have to necessarily be a coloring sheet. It could be puzzles, it could be certain types of toys, it could be books. Whatever you have, as far as your beginning activity, make sure

that it's directed towards your Bible verse or your Bible story. Because a lot of times what will happen, is you'll get a child that will come in, and that's the first thing that they'll do, and that's the last thing they'll remember. You know, because I don't know about you, but I've got young children, and sometimes they'll just, they'll get flighty, and they'll pick up a few pieces, and then they're gone. And so if everything that you do in your class, if it's focused towards your Bible story, or focused towards the verse that you're teaching, then hopefully, they'll walk out of that class with something that the Lord has laid upon your heart, okay, so some type of beginning activity. Okay, after our beginning activity, what I'll do is go around and ask for all the brand new kids. "Who is a brand new kid in our class? Never ever been in our class before. Raise your hand if you've never been in our class." So, come on, a few of you raise your hand. You're supposed to be kindergartners. "Hey, what's your name, pal?"

Billy:

Billy.

John:

"Billy, hey Billy, how are you doing?" And I've already said hello to Billy. And what I'll do also is just kind of break it up for the kids. "Hold on, I've got to put my brand new eye goggles on". I'll put my brand new eye goggles on, and I'll start looking around the room for brand new kids. And that's really fun for them, because they start looking, "Hey, that's guy's goofy." So I'll look around, and there's Billy, and I'll say, "Welcome to our class, Billy. And who else is brand new in our class? Are you brand new in our class? What's your name again buddy? Scott". And this is also where I put name tags on all the kids, so I try not to have to ask them what their names are. You know, if I don't remember their name when they walked in, I'll usually wander over and I'll be sitting there trying to scope out their name so I can say their name. Because, even if they see that I'm looking for their name, if they hear it come out without me asking, they're just like, "Hi, how are you doing?" You know? It makes them feel special, you know, because a name is really a special thing. So make sure you have name tags on all your kids. You'll have to forgive me. I didn't get name tags on you guys, so you guys will have to tell me your names. So after we go through all of the kids that are brand new, what I'll do is I'll ask the kids in the class, "Who in my class will raise their hand, and share one of our four most favorite rules in our class?" We have four rules in our class. They're the same rules. They go all year around. They never change, except for maybe we might add a few things depending on what happens in the class that day. But I'll ask them to review those rules. And what I'll do is I'll say, "Who can share one of our four most favorite rules that we always have in our class", so the boys

and girls that are brand new in our class will know what is right and wrong in our class. Now this is really important because now I'm establishing with the brand new kids, hey, there's right and wrong in this class. There are boundaries, and that's really important, we need boundaries, especially kids. "So, who would like to share one of our four most favorite rules? Anybody. Jon."

Jon: No talking while the teacher is talking.

John: "Oh, excellent, you remembered one of the rules, very good." And this gives me an opportunity also to really praise some of the kids that maybe won't talk in the class, that are kind of afraid to raise their hands when I'm asking questions about the Bible verse or Bible story, you know, that are just kind of apprehensive. We go over these rules every week, so they know these rules. They know them good, and they'll usually raise their hand during this time. And I'll usually try to pick some of those, just so I can give them an opportunity to just praise them and lift them up in the Lord. And so, but we have that rule. Raise your hand when the teacher's talking. We have this rule. "Do you guys know why we have this rule? It's because I," who is Mr. John, and then I'll introduce my wife, "Miss Megan," who is my wife, and I'll introduce our helper also, "We're here to tell you guys about God's love for you. Did you guys know that God loves you? Yeah, He loves you. Did you guys know that God loves you even when you're bad? Did you know that?" And some of them will look at me, and they'll go, "Really?" "Yeah, yeah, it doesn't mean that He's happy with what we're doing, but it means that He loves us no matter what. Nothing could take away God's love for us." So I'm kind of explaining why we have this rule. And we have three other rules, and with those rules I'll explain why we have the rules. And one of my most favorite rules is my crayon rule. It's no throwing crayons. I'll ask, "Well, what do we do with crayons?" And they'll go, "Well, we color with them." And I'll say, "But do you know what happens with this crayon? If it leaves your hand, it turns into a supersonic guided missile, flying through the room", and I'll race it across the room. And I say, "What happens if it hit you in the eye? Put one hand over your eye. How many beautiful eyes did God give you? Two beautiful eyes." So I'll explain to them again why we have that rule. It's really important for kids to understand why we have certain rules. If you just tell them a rule, they'll go, Well, that's a cool rule, but it isn't for me. But, if you explain why we have the rule, then they can start applying it to their lives. So after we have our rules and stuff, I'll ask, "Who in our class will raise their hand and ask Jesus to help us to have a terrific day to learn about Him. Who will do that for us? Who will do that? Who will

pray right now for us?” Nobody? Oh, man, we usually have at least six or seven hands. “Hey, all right, Billy. Hey, would you pray and ask Jesus to help us have a great time learning about him? How many of you guys like to have fun in here? Who likes to have fun? Raise your hand. Do you guys like to have a little bit of fun? Ooh, lots of fun, yeah. So raise your hand and your foot if you like to have that much fun.” And I’ll have them raise their hand and their foot. And so, you know, it’s fun. “Now, Billy, would you do me a favor? Would you pray and just ask Jesus to help us have a great time learning about him? But would you do me a favor? Would you pray nice and loud so Ms. Marie over in the corner can hear you? Could you do that for me?”

Billy: Yes.

John: Okay. Go ahead and pray.

Billy: “Thank You Father Lord. We just come before you and we thank You for our teacher, Mr. John. And we ask that He would speak to all our little hearts tonight, Lord, and that we would just have an excellent time learning Your word, and our hearts would be open to hear what You would have to say through Your Holy Spirit, Lord. We just love You and we praise You. You’re such an awesome God. Thank You, Jesus, for dying for us. We just love You. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

John: “Amen, all right, well praise God. Good prayer, Billy”, and I’ll try to make sure that they know that, because some of them will be apprehensive about praying out loud, too. So after our prayer time, what we would usually do, is we would come up here, and we would sit up here on the floor. And I’m not going to ask you guys to do that right now, for just room purposes. But what we do, is we come up here and sit on the floor, and we go through our prayer requests. But first thing, is I would go through our Bible verse. Now, our Bible verse, I’ve got it set up for a game, but I’m going to go ahead and show you guys the Bible verse. And we would go over it. And I’d say, “God is l-o-v-e. God is love. Can you guys say that with me? God is love. What is God? Love. Right.” And so I’d go over this a couple of times, and I would share some application concerning that. And then after our Bible story, or later on at the end of our class, we’ll go through our Bible game. And I’ll kind of explain our Bible game to you. But after this, after we go over our Bible verse, we go through our personal prayer. I’d ask the kids for different things they’d like to pray for. And now this, I kind of give them a general structure as far as our prayer time. And the reason I do this, is because, if you don’t, you’ll end up praying for cats and dogs and goldfish and lizards, and all sorts of things like that, which are really important to the kids, but we

want to direct them into things that are concerning the kingdom of God. And so what I'll do is I'll ask them, "Do you have anybody at home that is maybe not feeling good that we can pray for, or maybe somebody in your neighborhood that you haven't been getting along with real good, or maybe they're not getting along with you, and we could pray for them. Or maybe you know somebody that doesn't know Jesus, and we could pray for them, that God would open their eyes, that they would accept Jesus." And also, I would ask them to pray for our pastor, and what I'll do is I'll ask them who our pastor is, and they'll tell us, you know, they'll say, "Oh, Pastor Chuck." And I'll ask them, "Well, what does he do?" And some of them will go, "Well, I'm not sure", you know, or, "He teaches our mommies and daddies." And so I'll try to get them involved in praying for their pastor and their moms and dads each time we do that, too, because it's important that they know that they need to be praying for moms and dads. Because I don't know about you guys, but being a mom and dad is really tough, and we need our kids praying for us. So we'll go through our prayer time, and I'll usually use about 5 or 10 minutes, sometimes 15 minutes depending on how the kids are reacting. Or if I've got half my class starting to wander around and not really into the prayer time, then I'll try to cut it short. But we want to be sensitive to God's spirit and what He's doing right then, because that's an important time. And so after our prayer time, what we would do, is we would go into our Bible story. And so today, what I'm going to do is I'm going to lead you through a flannel graph, as far as our Bible story. I'm going to give you a lot more than I would usually give my class, so don't get misconceived as to how much I'm giving you, thinking, "Wow, you can teach that much in one class?" You can in some sense, but then not generally. Okay. First thing we need is our Bible. Now, you might think, "Well, that's kind of a funny thing. Of course you're to have your Bible." You know, "you're going to do a Bible story." Well, a lot of different curriculum that are out there have the Bible story written out in a story form, and it's in a magazine. It's in magazine form. And what it is, it's a structured class, and in that structure each week it gives you a Bible story. And those are fine to use as far as the story form, but what you want to do is at least write them down and put them in your Bible so the kids see you teaching from the Word of God. And now, you might think, "Well, that makes sense, but see, a child, when they go home and their mom goes, Well, Johnny, what did you learn today? Well, I don't know. Well, what do you mean you don't know? Didn't your teacher teach you the Bible? Well, no, he was teaching out of a magazine or something." You know, the mom's going, "What, a magazine?" you

know, because she doesn't really know as far as what the curriculum structure is or anything like that. So make sure it's in the Word. Okay. So starting out, the Word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amit'tai, "Go to Nineveh and preach against that great city." "Oh, man," Jonah's thinking, "No way, man, that place is wicked. It's terrible, it's just, it's terrible. No way. I know what I'll do," he thought. "I'll go to Joppa. That's it. I'll go down to Tarshish. I know there's got to be a boat down there... or actually it's the opposite, we're going to Tarshish from Joppa. That's right." And so he went down to Joppa that day, and he got down there, and he's looking around, "Oh, cool, there's lots of people around. Nobody will know that I'm here. Cool." And so as he came down, he saw there at the water's edge some men loading the boat. And he walked over, and he said, "Excuse me, where's the captain?" "I'm the captain," he said. "Well, I'm looking for a boat that's going to Tarshish." "Well, I happen to be going to Tarshish." Jonah said, "Can I buy a fare to get on your boat and go to Tarshish? See, I'm kind of running from the Lord, you see, and I got to get to Tarshish." "Well, you got any money?" "Of course." And so Jonah paid his fare and got upon the boat. And now he went down deep inside the hull, and he found a nice soft place to go to sleep, because, you know, Jonah, he liked to sleep. It was a good place. So he went down there, and he could hear the men loading the boat. "All right, come on, guys, get that cargo on here." And he could hear the boat creaking as they were moving the stuff on. And then all of a sudden he could hear the captain, "Okay, guys, weigh the anchor, come on guys, we're leaving harbor." And he could feel the boat starting to rock like it was starting to move. And so he was thinking to himself, "Oh, awesome, they're starting to leave, and oh man, nobody knows that I'm here. Nobody knows that I'm here." And as they began to get farther and farther out, he could feel the water just moving, just moving, and the boat was starting to just flow across the ocean there. And he could feel it was getting further and further out into the ocean. You know how the waves just kind of start rocking you more and more as you leave the harbor, and they just kept moving further and further out. And he could hear the guys just yelling, "Okay, raise the mast," and he could hear the guys groaning and grunting as they were moving stuff, and pulling the ropes and stuff. "Wow," Jonah just thought, "Ha, I'm there, man, nobody knows I'm here. Cool." And so he just continued on. He just continued on. But all of a sudden he could hear the men, they were starting to yell a little louder, and he could hear the wind (whiiiiish), and he could almost sense, he could almost sense it was just getting dark or something, you know. And it just began to get darker and

darker, and it got colder, and the wind began to blow harder, (whiiiiish), and harder, and harder. And man, I mean it got to the point where the boat was just rocking and moving, and man, the waves began to crash upon the boat (shhuuuush), and the ocean just began to get rougher and rougher and rougher, until it got to the point where he could hear the men and the sailors, they were screaming practically in fear. They were scared. They were totally afraid. And man, they just began to take the cargo and throw it overboard. “Come on, guys, throw that stuff overboard, we’re sinking. Come on.” And Jonah was down there sleeping, and all of a sudden, he felt a kick, and the captain says, “Come on, you sleeper, wake up. Can’t you see the ship is breaking up? Get up and call upon your God, and maybe he can save us.” And so as Jonah came up, and saw the sky was just black, and the waves just crashing, and the men were totally afraid. And the men, they came and said, “Okay, let’s take lots, let’s take lots to see whose fault this is. I know it’s got to be somebody’s fault.” So the men began to draw lots. And they began. One guy, nope, it wasn’t him. Nope it wasn’t him. And then, ooh, nope it wasn’t him. And then it came to Jonah, and Jonah pulled out the short one. And all the men looked at him. They looked, and they were totally afraid. “Who are you? Where have you come from? Of what people are you?” And Jonah said, “Well, I’m a Hebrew, and I, I, I serve the living God, the God of heaven and earth.” And man, you should have seen their faces. “What do we do? What do we do to make the sea go calm?” And Jonah said, “Well, throw me overboard, and it’ll all go calm.” “No, we can get through this. Come on, row harder,” they thought. And they rowed and they rowed and rowed, and they just couldn’t do it. And finally the men, they just, they realized they weren’t getting anywhere, and they just cried out to God, “Oh, Lord, please don’t, please don’t blame us for this innocent man’s blood. Oh.” And they took Jonah and they threw him right into the water. And as he hit that water and began to sink, as he sank into that water, he could see the sea begin to go calm. It grew calmer and calmer as the men and that ship began to drift further and further, and the skies began to get calmer and calmer and calmer. And Jonah could hear the men on the ship crying out and saying vows to God. And at the very moment that Jonah thought he was dust, God provided a great fish who came and swallowed him up. Swallowed him, whole. And down into the water he went. Seaweed, man, was wrapped around his head. Oh man, it was so hot and sweaty in there, oh, and it stunk. Did you guys ever smell fish before? Never like this have you smelled fish. I mean Jonah was inside. It was gross. Oh, it was sick. He spent three days and three nights in the belly of that great fish. How many

days and nights? Three days and three nights in the belly of that great fish, three days and three nights. Can you believe that? Smelling that stinky fish and seaweed wrapped around your head. Oh, gross, man. But there it was that God began to speak to Jonah's heart. And Jonah cried out to the Lord. And he praised God. And he thanked God for saving him. "Salvation is of the Lord," Jonah said. And all of a sudden the fish just started moving, and all of a sudden it was like onto the shore he spit Jonah. Right onto the shore. Could you imagine that? Jonah probably thought it was just like, "Oh." But you wouldn't believe where Jonah was. Right in front of Nineveh. And the Word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time. "God to Nineveh, that great city, and preach against it." Well, Jonah did it this time. "Okay, Lord." And he went into the city, and it was a great city. It says that it would take three days journey to get through the city. "Forty days," he would say, "Forty days, and God's going to wipe this place out." Well, the people, as he walked through the city, the people thought, "F-f-forty days? F-f-forty days?" And word got back to the king, "Forty days and God's going to wipe us out." And the king, you remember, made a proclamation that everybody should sit in ashes, that everybody should repent, that everybody should stop doing evil and start doing good, for maybe God would forgive us. And you guys know the rest that happened. But as you see, the flannel graph is a very dynamic tool. You can bring in the kids, into being right there. And that's our goal, is to bring them into a place that they're not only hearing God's word, but they're experiencing God's word. That they're there, they're right there. And now you're probably thinking, "I can't do that. I can't do that." Well, you know what? Neither could I. But see, as time went on, the Lord began to show me different things. He started me out with one thing, and man, I couldn't even hardly share that one thing. But I knew that's where God wanted me. And so I was faithful and continued to share with that one thing. And then He would show me something else, and He would show me something else. And now after eight years, He's continually showing me other things and new things. So please don't feel discouraged by saying, Oh, I can't possibly share that story with the flannel graph like that. I've never even seen it." You're not called to do that right now. This is just to give you an idea of what is there, what the possibilities are. And I'm going to share a whole lot of other things, some very simplistic things, some things that you can make. Maybe you're thinking, "Well, I don't belong to a church that has this type of stuff. There's no way that I could use that." Well, we're going to show you some other things that you could make, the way you can share God's Word with things around your house. Anyway, after

our Bible story, what I would do is I would go back and I would reenact the Bible story. I would start putting it back together. I would put up here, and I'd be sharing, "Wow, could you imagine that, that Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of that great fish. Was that fish a shark, or was that a goldfish?" They'd all go, "I don't know what it was." And I go, "Well, I don't know what it was either. It was just a big fish." And so, just kind of getting along. And what I do is, I'd say, "You know what, I need some volunteers." And I had asked for volunteers in my class, and I'd say, "You know what? Would you guys do me a favor and, whoever my volunteer would be, would you put this on the board for me, and tell me one thing that you remember about this." Johnny would come up and say, "Well, this was the boat that Jonah got on, and he was headed to Tarshish." And that might be the only thing he remembered. Or he might get up here and say, "It's a boat", and he'd put it up there. And that's okay, because what we're doing here is we're touching the different senses of his learning abilities. First we shared by word, so he's hearing it with his ears, he's seeing it with his eyes. But now he's up here feeling it with his hands. He's like going, "Oh yeah, this is really cool." And he might even stick it up there like that. And that's okay, and I won't say anything. I'll just kind of move it around as he goes back to his chair. And we'll just, I'll have them keep coming up, and we'll just keep putting this thing back together. And as we go along, each one of them maybe will share one thing that they remember about the Bible story. And what you've done is you've just repeated your story. And that's one of the biggest things that you want to learn to do, is to repeat over and over as often as you can, go over the same thing over and over and over. Now, I'm going to show you a game here that you could do the exact same thing, because after our review time, what we do is we go back into our Bible verse. But I'm going to show you how I could review this Bible story also. And what I would do is, we have a church. "Now, how many of you guys have played hangman before? Lots of you. Okay. Well, this is similar to hangman, but we don't play hangman at church because we're not here to kill people. We're here to give people life, right? Jesus came to give us life, right? So we don't play hangman. But we do play 'Build the Church'." And so what I do is I break the class up in three different segments, and say, "Rhonda, what's your favorite cereal?"

Rhonda: Frosted Mini Wheats.

John: "Okay. You guys are the Frosted Mini Wheats. Okay, so we've got the Frosted Mini Wheats over here. I'm just going to put F-M for short. Frosted Mini Wheats, okay. And, oh, I can't..."

Parker: Parker.

John: “Parker. I’m sorry, Parker, forgive me. Parker, what’s your favorite cereal?”

Parker: Cheerios.

John: “Okay. You guys are the Cheerios. And then we’ve got over here, hey, what’s your name?”

Donald: Donald.

John: “Donald, what’s your favorite cereal?”

Donald: Frosted Flakes.

John: “Frosted Flakes. Okay, we’ve got Frosted Mini Wheats, Cheerios, and Frosted Flakes. Okay.” And so what we would do, is I would say, “Okay, starting with the Frosted Flakes, which one of you would volunteer and come up and put this piece on?” And we’re in a game, you see, so now everybody’s getting into this. So someone would come up, and they would come up and they would put this on here, and they’d tell me one thing about the Bible story. “Can you tell me one thing about that?” “Well, that was the boat that Jonah was on”. All right. And everybody would have to clap because in my class everybody claps for everybody. Okay. (Clapping) And Frosted Flakes would get a score. And what I do, is I say, “Which part of the church would you like to build right now? Which part of the church would you like to build?”

Donald: The door.

John: “The door. Okay, we’re going to put a door right here.” I’ll put a little doorknob so everybody knows what it is. “We’ve got a door to the church.” And so we would go through our whole Bible verse like this again, making it a game, building the church, and they’re thinking they’re having a great time playing a game, but what they’re really doing is reviewing the Bible story again. And so it’s totally fun. And so the same thing, with our Bible verse, what we can do is go through our Bible verse, and what I would do with this is I would say, “God is love.” Okay, now kindergartners, most of them are learning their ABCs really good. Most of them know how to spell, and will probably, in this sense, be able to spell out this word really quick. But what I would do, is I would have the same teams, Frosted Mini Wheats, Cheerios, Frosted Flakes. “Now, we’ve got a problem here, guys. We’ve got a Bible verse up here, but we’re missing a word. Okay? We’ve got God is _____, and we need help, okay? So we’re going to start out here with the Frosted Mini Wheats. Who over there in the Frosted Mini Wheats can share one of their ABCs with me so we can start and finish up our Bible verse so we can all know our Bible verse really good? Who can share one of them up there? Anybody? Okay,

we're going to come over here to Frosted Flakes because they don't want to... okay, E, yes, very good, all right. All right. God is E. It's not going to work." Okay, so we go back over, and so you can see. We can go over and over this first section until we get to that word. God is love. And so we finish with God is love. And for that, you can end up, you could go through this and use that for 15 minutes of your class, because what you could do is after you're done with that part of your Bible verse, you could erase that part, and you could do it again. Or you can go back to your Bible story the exact same way. And it's totally fun. And there's a lot of other Bible games out there, and in the back of your notebooks, there are some Bible games in there. We'll go over some of those later on. Okay. So that's pretty much the end of my class, or what you would see inside my class. Does anybody have any questions as far as our class goes?

Scott: Do you have any singing time?

John: You know what? Thank you, because I forgot all about my singing time, very good. Well, we do have a singing time, and that would actually be put into the section about right after our prayer time. So since we didn't have our singing time in the beginning, let's have our singing time at the end. I'm going to share a couple of songs with you guys. So, come on, stand up, because you guys are all tired, come on. Thank you, I appreciate you reminding me of that. We would usually have our singing time right after our prayer time. But a couple of the songs that we do, and I like to share this because it gives me an opportunity to let you guys know different opportunities to share God's word with the kids. But one of them is we do our Calvary finger exercise, and we do this by putting our finger up in the air. Okay, come on guys, put your finger up in the air. Okay, we have a finger up, and we do finger down. Finger up, finger down. Up and down, up and down. To the side, to the side, back, forward, up, down, up and down. And then, man, our fingers are nice and loose, all warmed up, and we do this so we can get it warmed up so we can sing. "Touch your finger to your nose. Bend at the waist, and down and touch your toes. And when you come up, slowly, start to say, say to the Lord, I love You. I love You, I love You. Say to the Lord, I love You. I love You, I love You. Say to the Lord, I love You. Reach your fingers to the sky. Look to the left, and right and blink your eye. And when you turn around, you'll start to say, say to the Lord, I love You. I love You. I love You. Say to Lord, I love You. I love You, I love You. Say to the Lord I love You." Ah, boys and girls, God loves it when we tell him we love him, because, you know what? The Bible says that God loved us first. Yeah, that he loved us first. Hey, have you guys ever been to a baseball game? How many of you have

ever been to a baseball game? Oh, cool. Have you guys ever sang that song, Take Me Out to the Ball Game? Yeah, all right. Well, let's hum that for a second. It goes like this. Hmm hmm hmm, etc. You guys are great hummers, you know that? Well, there's a song that goes along with that. It goes like this. "Take my sins, Lord Jesus. Take my sins away. Thank You, Lord, for forgiving me. Now I know that I'll always be free. So let's root root root for the Savior, for He has done it all. For it's one, two, three strikes you're out, Satan takes a fall." And when Jesus Christ died on the cross for you and I, he did away with sin and death. The Bible says that all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be saved. And so you can take these songs and you can integrate God's word, you can share the gospel, you can share different things with them as you sing these songs. And forgive me for forgetting that, but we go brain dead sometimes, don't we. Okay. You guys sit back down. But so, anyway, we will usually go through about three to five different songs after our prayer times. And it's a good time to do it after prayer, because what happens is the kids are usually, they're starting to be a little antsy, they want to stretch out, that gives them an opportunity to stretch out a little bit, and exert a little bit of energy before your Bible story. Okay, so, now that we've gotten that over. I knew I'd gotten over a little short. But anyway, if you have any other questions now, let's finish off with some questions and we'll go on our break. Anybody have any questions about the class itself?

Male: Do you ever run into a time situation where you either have excess time on your hands or you are running out of time? How do you keep your timing correct?

John: Well, that happens by doing it. Observing right now, as a teacher going into a class, observing is going to help you the most to kind of distinguish what your time frame is, the first thing that you're going to do. Because just going into a class, never observing or anything, it would be hard to set up a time frame because you don't know. And so for myself, I don't really have a set time, as far as I've got five minutes for this and ten minutes for that. I just kind of go along into each situation. I put my Bible story in a place that I know that it won't get inhibited by anything. So I put that right in the middle of my class, and I leave enough time afterwards to do our review time, our review game, or if we have a craft I'll put that at the end of class.

Male: So you have back-up materials.

John: Yeah.

Male: But making sure that Bible study is free.

John: Right. I always make sure that that is in the middle of my class somewhere. Now sometimes it will end up more towards the end, depending on what the Lord's doing in the class. Like I said, you know, we need to be sensitive to whatever the Spirit is doing in the class, but you always want to make sure that they're getting the Word, too, you know.

That's a good question.

Female: How do you use your helpers?

John: How do I use my helpers? My wife, being one of the helpers, they pretty much will deal with the children while I'm teaching. As far as if we have maybe a situation going on with the kids where maybe I've got two or three kids that are kind of acting up, they'll go over and sit with them. Or if I have bathroom runs, they'll take them for the bathroom run. Or if by chance, something happens where I'm drawn away, like say we're in the midst of singing or something, and we have a situation where I need to talk with a child to bring them aside, they'll step in and do worship for us or prayer time. So they're pretty much there to do almost everything, and I don't usually use them for the teaching portion only because that's just kind of where the Lord has it, as far as our class goes. Anybody else have any other questions?

Male: Oh, yeah. Where do you get the material for the songs? I've never heard of these songs before.

John: The songs that I shared tonight were actually songs that I have gotten from other teachers that I'd heard, and had them write them down for me. There are a lot of songs, and if you look in the back of your booklet on the audio/visual, there are some song sheets back there. And so you can pick up a lot of those there. Or on different cassette tapes, like children's tapes, have a lot of fun songs you can listen to and pick them out and sing them with the kids. Okay. Anything else? Okay, well, if there's nothing else, you guys can go ahead and take a break, and be back here at 8:00 o'clock. We'll go through the...

Using The Curriculum

Okay. We're going to take a look now at the curriculum. Using the curriculum Lesson 305 that you've got in your training manual, that is dealing with the seven churches, Revelation 1:20 through 3:22, and we're going to kind of get an idea of how this could be used in class. Again, we have talked about, already, how many different ways and options there are to use the curriculum. The curriculum has been designed so you have the freedom to let the Spirit lead you and guide you. So it's important for you to realize that there's not one set way. And we're going to take a look now at some possibilities and some ways that you can do that. So keep that in mind.

So take that out of your notebook, or turn to that in your notebook and we'll look at that, at this point in time. We're going to look, also, at the word search that goes along with that study, and if you notice at the bottom of the pages, there are little numbers. We've talked about this, but I want to make sure you understand that there's a one slash two, and then there's a three slash six, and those are regarding the age levels that these would be used on. So remember that the one slash two is primarily for a younger age, first and second grade, although if you wanted to, you could use it in a third grade, depending on the level of teaching that's going on. And the three slash six is for the upper age, third grade through sixth grade. And so we're going to look at the one slash two word search, that you find there in your notebook. We've gone over, already, how to structure your class, and we've taken some time to look at that. I want you now to see how we would possibly use this word search in that time, the introduction time, when the students are coming into the classroom, and you're still waiting for everyone to arrive. So as we look at that, you have your word search there with you, the seven churches.

Using the word search, it's a good opportunity at the beginning of the class to introduce your lesson. It's not for the purpose of you just sitting there and having the kids fill that page out and look for letters and look for words, but it's a time when you introduce to the students what you're going to be covering in your Bible study. If you look on that word search, you'll see that the different words that are there pertaining to the lesson, that they're going to be looking for, Jesus, churches, Revelation, repent and many words, that as they're looking to find, you can be involved with asking the students, "Well, what's the word repent really mean?" And you could have discussion going on as they're looking for this, as the students are coming in. So it's not a time to waste. It's not a time just to get the kids out of the way, but it's a time to immediately start in with introducing what you're going to be talking about. There are many ways to do it but primarily what you need to keep in focus, is it's not just an exercise that the student does and you go and do something else, it's something that you need to become involved with, it's something

that you need, yourself, to prepare for. Some of the ways that you would be using it, you are going to need to have done it. If you haven't found the word, then you can't apply some of the principles I'll share with you right now when you are trying to encourage the students of your class to use it. So, first and foremost before you get to class during the week, you need to have filled it out and found those words, found where Spirit was, found where Pergamos was, found where seven was, so that then you can start doing things with the class and you can start encouraging them. There may be students that are having a hard time, and if you know where the words are as you walk through the class at the introduction part, you can just point to one and say, "You know, I'll bet you'll find this word down here in this last sentence, this last line." And then they find it and they're all encouraged and they want to do more. But if you hadn't prepared and hadn't found that word yourself, you wouldn't be able to encourage them.

So some of the ways that you can do it, is you can break the class in half even. You can have boys and girls, or the left side and the right side or however you choose to do it. Then you can make teams and say, "Okay. The first team that comes up with the first four words that you want them to find, they win and in kind of competition style teaching. One thing that we really stress is that you don't leave the kids out who didn't win if there are rewards. That's really important to remember. And the way that I think is very positive, is if you're going to give a class treat, graham crackers or something like that, all you need to do to the winner is say, "Hey, when we give the treats out, you get two instead of one." That way the other students still get their treat, still get their snack and they don't feel left out. But if you just, you know, let the winner get something, then it really lets the rest of the class down. So that's important to remember. You may do a method of just saying, "Okay, you've got five minutes and we're going to see at the end of the five minutes how many words you found, who found the most words." That's one way the kids really like to do it. Or you concentrate on one word, just one word, until they find it. And then when they find it, say it's something... stars or Spirit, really it doesn't matter, lamp stands. If it's lamp stands, then you can take some time and talk about that. "What's a lamp stand?" "What is it referring to in this lesson?" So you're starting already getting them to think about the Bible study that you're going to be addressing down the road in the class, and so it's really an important time to establish the word that you're going to studying. You can educate and teach through the word searches. Don't just hand them out. Use this as an opportunity, as we've talked before, in some of the classes to repeat yourself as many ways as you possibly can. It's really a great way to introduce and develop the lesson that you're about to do. It's important that you need to do it yourself and understand that. Another thing that it really does for you, is it allows you to have control and it allows you to have order in the class when the students are arriving. They're at their desk, they're doing things, and it's very pleasing to the parents to see something like that take place, so that's important for you to understand

when you are doing these word searches. Don't just throw them on the desk and say, "Okay, students, do it", but be actively a part of it. Use it to guide the students in to what you're going to be sharing when it comes time to do the Bible study. There are many ways that you can do it. You can blow up the word search, you can put it on an overhead. As you see behind me, we've got one blown up, and you can take and circle where some of the words are. Right here it says Spirit. So the whole class gets to see what you're doing and it helps those that haven't found that at this point to be able to find it or you can say, "Well, let's look in the left hand top corner. Let's see if we can find the word up there." So there are many ways that you can use this, but the whole point is the educating towards the Bible study that you're trying to present right after this point in time, so important information. This is just one way that you can use the word search, or different possible ways, but see the importance of it. It's just not paper for the kids to fill out.

The next step that I would go to, if I was involved in teaching a class using the curriculum, is I'd move to the memory verse. The memory verse is a foundational place in the lesson. It's a place where you can establish some direction that you're headed. As you remember in the learning levels section, we were talking about the level of learning, and that's that level of memory. That's the level of time when you are establishing a foundation, and then from there, you were able to move in to the meaning behind it, how it applies to their life and so on, in regards to that. The memory verse is important, it's a good place to start establishing where you're headed. Now, we'll be talking about this, in a few minutes more fully, and get more involved with that. But now, I want to show you a video on how to use activities to memorize. I want you to see that you can have your class memorize scripture together. It's not only fun, but they all can remember at the same time, so that, again, you take another step towards what you're trying to teach on.

We had a seminar and Gail Stacy showed many different ways... many different techniques, many different activities, for how you could use to memorize scripture for the class, and it's an important video. The kids love these methods. They love to do it these ways, and so I want you to pay close attention to it. I would advise you to take notes because she has done this and it's going to be spoken to you. She's going to train you in relationship to a person that's experienced in this. And she's going to give you some really minor details of important things to do, and you can overlook them, so please pay attention and listen, and be ready to take notes on this video. It's well worth your time and effort to do so. It will be very beneficial to your classes. So let's go ahead and do that now.

Scripture Memorization

Gail: My name is Gail Stacy, and I teach here. I teach first grade Sunday School at Calvary Chapel, in Costa Mesa. And we're going to play a memory verse game this morning. This is a balloon seminar. We're going to play a balloon game and some other games that we use in our Sunday School class to help kids learn the memory verses. So you are going to be my class today. I'm going to ask for everybody to volunteer very soon. The first game we're going to start with, is the balloon game. What I'm usually doing when the class arrives, is I have my handy dandy little balloon pump. Well, we used to blow them up until I found these, and we just use these pumps to blow up the balloons. While the kids are arriving I'm usually sitting over there blowing up the balloons. The kids when they come, they're all excited, "What are we going to do today?" So that kind of generates the initial excitement. I usually blow up the balloons first and I go ahead and write the words on the balloons, and then normally, I just kind of scatter them on the floor below where I'm going to tape them. I end up taping the balloons up to the wall. You can tape the balloons to a wall, to the white board, you know, whatever your classroom allows you to do. Before we actually start, I'm going to try to give you some helpful hints that I've come up with over the years of doing it. The tape that I find works best on almost every surface that I've ever tried is just packing tape, the clear, wide packing tape. And I've tried Scotch tape before and masking tape and they normally stick for a while, and then while you're saying the verse, it falls down. The kids think that's really funny and it's okay for a little while but once three or four of them starts falling down, you've kind of lost the whole rhythm of the game here. So what we do, I usually plan all these games from setup to go about half an hour each. So I set, we set aside a half an hour of class time to play memory verse. So when I'm ready for the game, I ask for volunteers for the balloon game. So what we normally have in our classroom is about 30 kids. I try to have about 15 balloons, 15 words, numbers from the memory verse, if I'm going to have the kids pick the balloons up. Fifteen words, for the first graders and the younger ages, I don't want to really have more than that. So I usually have about 15... you can put more than one word on a balloon if you want to. One or two words are fine. Then when the kids... they each have a turn... if you have 30 kids, let 15 kids take turns putting one balloon up at a time, that gives 15 kids a turn. Then after we've had enough there, we've learned it and we start popping the balloons. So another 15 of the children get to pop the balloons so that way everybody

gets a turn. Say you have 31 kids and one of your children is not going to get a turn because there's not quite enough balloons, to prevent that from happening you can add extra things. You can make extra balloons with a colon, a comma, or a period or a picture drawn on it just so there's only one or two children who don't get a turn. So you kind of stretch it out, because they all want a turn when you're working with the balloons. So, what I'm going to start with, we're ready to play our game, we're going to learn a memory verse today and I just kind of get to tape all this stuff here. I'd just like a volunteer and I need everyone to volunteer. I would like a volunteer to come up and find the first word of our memory verse and the first word is "He". So who can come up and find the word He? Can you? Are you Keith? Okay, come on up, Keith. And is "He" all the way over here? We're going to use just a lot of balloons here right now. Now, according to your class size... I'm going to also show you, for the older children... sometimes if it's a longer verse I really want to use, and say there's more fifteen balloons, or maybe I'm running short on time, sometimes I'll go ahead and put the balloons up. If you put the balloons up, be sure to place them low enough, where the children are going to be able to reach them and pop them. Otherwise, we're going to let the kids pick them up, at their level, so I'm going to... I'm going to put this tape up here, and if you could stick this balloon so the word is showing right on that tape. Right. Okay, everybody say... what's the word he put up?

Class: He.

Gail: Right. And then I need another volunteer. Come on up. Both of you boys can come up. Why don't both you boys come up. I'm going to put... all right our next group... if you can put that to a word facing this way, or can you read it back... I'll help you just a little bit... all right! What word did he put up?

Class: Will.

Gail: Yeah. Here you go. Are you ready? Hold it out. I always try to remind them to put the balloon up with the word showing. Wow, you're tall. What is this word?

Class: Heal.

Gail: Okay, let's see all the words we have so far. Ready? Begin.

Class: He will heal.

Gail: Very good. Another thing I also do, especially when the children are putting up the balloons for you, I always have an extra balloon, at least one extra, because if they've got it turned the wrong way when they put it up, when you pull this off of there, almost always will pop. So rather than have to stop your game, blow up another balloon, if you have a couple

extras. It's much easier. Let's see. Who else would like to come up next? Okay, come on up. It's a good thing I have an extra balloon here. Oh, here it is. Oh, I found it. This is our last word. You want to help? All right. And I have a piece of tape already cut and I usually... I find the edges of the tables are the best. If you have a chalk tray, that works good. That way they're already to go. And this is right here. For a while, I put the tape on the back of the balloons. That works too. And then let the children put them up. But, then you kind of lose your control or where they're placed. So this way, every once in a while, you risk having it turn the wrong way, but at least you'd have a little bit more control. You can put that one right up there. Yeah. All right.

Class: (Clapping)

Gail: What word is this?

Class: the

Gail: Okay, let's see. Let's read it together, and say the word that I point to. Don't go ahead. Some of the kids like to... they can read real good and some of them can't. The one's that are good readers want to just zip right through that verse. So I just tell them "let's stay together." Ready? Begin.

Class: He will heal the...

Gail: What is he going to heal? Who do you think? Who else wants to come up? Wow, you did a good job. I'm glad you're coming up. Now it's much easier to get kids to volunteer and do this...

Class: (Laughter)

Gail: Wow. This is a long one. You can use all different shapes and forms and we're going to put this here. See if you can reach that one. Right. Right. What... this is a really long word. What is it? Everybody say it.

Class: Brokenhearted.

Gail: Alright, we got that to stay there. All right. I need another volunteer here to come up and put our next balloon up, maybe even two volunteers this time. Do we have two volunteers? Oh right here, all right. All right now, we're going to be popping these balloons later, but right now, we're going to stick them up. What's this word?

Class: And... Bind

Gail: When you put that up, make sure the word is facing your class. Very good. When you put your balloons up, make sure the words are facing out. Wow. You know what? I think we better say this verse again. See if you guys can do it. Are you ready? Are you ready?

Class: Yes.

Speaker: Okay, again.

Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind

- Gail: Well, we better have the next word. See what's next. Who else would like to help me? All right. What word is that?
- Class: Up... Their
- Gail: Great. Now I try to say it after every balloon's hung up. I'm not doing that this morning. Usually we'll say it after every single balloon goes up. We say it as a verse. Again, and again, and again. And... so far, you said that there's four, five, six, seven, eight times so far. Now we have another word to go up. Who else would like to come up? Let's see some more volunteers. If you find your class is running out of time, you can take two at a time, to kind of pick things up. Did you want to volunteer?
- Male: Sure.
- Gail: Come on up. Let's go over here. There you go. Can you read that?
- Male: Their.
- Gail: Their.
- Female: Their.
- Gail: You can read it. You did a good job, didn't you? Now you can put the balloon here. All right, you put it with the words facing out and everything. Good job. Okay, let's say it again, because we have a lot of words up here. Ready? Begin.
- Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds.
- Gail: What Book in the Bible do you think this is in?
- Class: Psalm
- Gail: Okay. Who would like to put the word Psalm up on the board? Here we go. Everybody say this word.
- Male: Whoa.
- Gail: See, that's good. And I also have extra pieces of tape too. Hey, good. There may be something wrong. Sometimes you have to use a couple of pieces. What's this word again?
- Class: Psalm.
- Gail: And we're looking for a number. Just underneath it, they're running away from it. Okay? Let's have three volunteers come up. All right. Mom's going to come up this time. What number is this that she's going to put up?
- Class: 147..
- Gail: Wow, very good. That's a big number. Nathan, can you put that up there? All right, let's just say this part.
- Class: Psalm 147.
- Gail: Very good. And then, if I need any extra turns, I have little colon, that goes in between here. And we've got one more balloon. Who wants to put the last balloon up? Do you want to? What was this number again?

Class: 147.
Gail: Okay. Ready? Be real careful to make that three can be seen. Good job, what number is it?
Class? 3.
Gail: Right. Wow. You think you can say the whole thing together?
Class: Yes.
Gail: Ready? Wait a minute. You think you can say the whole verse?
Class: Yeah.
Gail: Ready? Begin.
Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and find out their wounds. Psalm 147:3.
Gail: Yes, you can say verses. Let's see. I am looking for...
Female: Popcorn?
Gail: ... what we use to pop the balloons in our class is a little push pin like these on the bulletin board. And you give the kids something, you know... pretty good to hold on to, and it works fine. You can use the pencil or something, but then you risk kind of marking on the wall. So this really works best for our class. Yes?
Male: You know, with kindergarten, what we do, we'll take a pin like that, stick it on to the end of a yard stick, and it gives them a little distance from the balloon.
Gail: Great idea.
Male: Some of the kids are afraid to pop, but if they have the yard stick...
Gail: Exactly. Take a pin like this, put it at the end of a yard stick, and you mentioned that younger children are fearful you know, they don't have to get close to it, that's a great idea. Okay. Now, we are going to ask someone to come up and pop one of our balloons, any balloon you want, any number or a symbol. And I think we can say it with that balloon missing. Yeah. Here we come. Now what do you think she's going to pick? Very good, that's a good pop. What was here?
Class: And
Gail: And. Okay. Let's try saying it... can you say it with that one balloon missing? Can you remember?
Class: Yeah.
Gail: Let's try it. Ready? Begin.
Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind out their wounds. Psalm 147:3.
Gail: Good job. Oh we got lots of volunteers now. Any balloon, word, number, whatever you want. That was the longest word in the whole memory verse....
Male: All right.
Gail: ... can you remember that?

Class: Brokenhearted.
Gail: Okay, what was this one?
Class: And.
Gail: Very good. Let's try saying it again. I'm going to keep listening and see if you can say those words. Ready? Begin.
Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds. Psalm 147:3.
Gail: Very good. Come on up. I wonder what she's going to pop. Boy the pop's getting bigger and bigger. It was wounded... oh, what was this word?
Class: Wounds.
Gail: Can you remember that?
Class: Yeah.
Gail: Okay, what is it?
Class: Wounds.
Gail: What was this one?
Class: Brokenhearted.
Gail: Very good. And then we'll say the verse again. Let's check... why don't all three of you with your hands up, come on up. We'll go ahead and pop three balloons. Again, if you're running towards the end of your class time, you know, you can kind of do two or three turns at a time... I don't like to do more than three, but... for today, we'll pop a few. You pick one. Wow, what word was that?
Class: Heal.
Gail: What was it?
Class: Heal.
Gail: And what was this one?
Class: Wounds.
Gail: Ah, what was it?
Class: Wounds.
Gail: It was a little tough on that one. Okay. Which balloon are you going to pop? Whoa. What word was this?
Class: Their.
Gail: Ask what word it was every time they pop.
Class: Oooh.
Gail: That's good. What was this?
Class: Psalm.
Gail: That's the Book in the Bible, this verse is found in, very good. Oh, we've got a lot of balloon's missing, can you say it? We have to say it. I don't know if we should pop anymore cause maybe you won't remember.
Class: No!
Gail: You can remember?

Class: Yeah.

Gail: Well, I'm going to listen real close. If you can remember all the balloons that are gone, we'll pop some more. Ready? Begin.

Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds. Psalm 147:3.

Gail: That was great. Okay, let's do three more again. All three of you stand up. Come on, come on. Stand up. Wow, that was wonderful. What word was that that she popped?

Class: Will.

Gail: You guys are good. Oh, what's she getting? What word did she pop?

Class: Bind.

Gail: Bind, very good. Whoa, that was a little pop. Great big number, little pop. What was this number again?

Class: 147.

Gail: That was a little pop.

Male : Whoa.

Gail: Okay, must be brokenhearted, and, what was this word?

Class: Heart.

Gail: Heart. Yeah. We only have four balloons left. Can you say it?

Class: Yes.

Gail: Do you want to pop some more balloons?

Class: Yeah.

Gail: I don't know. If you guys can say it, we'll pop some more. Okay. I'm going to be listening very closely. Ready? Begin.

Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds. Psalm 147:3.

Gail: That's so great! Coming back, Katie? Come on. And again, I wouldn't... in this class it wouldn't be more than two at a time, but for today's purposes, we'll go ahead and do the four turns here. What is she going to pop this time? Oooh, what word was that?

Class: He.

Gail: That was the first word in the verse. How we going to remember how to get started? Can you remember that?

Class: Yeah.

Gail: He. Again. Cause, I don't know. Whoa. That was a big balloon and kind of a small pop. Ready?

Female: Oooh, we caught it.

Gail: Go ahead and pop one. Very good. Oh, the balloons are all gone. Are you going to be able to say it now?

Class: Yeah.

Gail: Oh, probably not. Can you say it?

Class: Yeah.

- Gail: I'm not convinced yet. Maybe a little more...
- Class: Yeah.
- Gail: What was the first word again?
- Class: He
- Gail: And what was... tell me what the numbers were again?
- Class: 147:3.
- Gail: I tried to really key in on reminding what the first word is and what the numbers are, cause they seem to be the hardest. So I try to review those as we go through the popping. What word did they pop and what was the number again? What word did they pop? What was that first word again? So they can always get started. You got to remember how to begin, and to end with the numbers. So, are you ready? Let's try again, one more time through. Ready? Begin.
- Class: He will heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds. Psalm 147:3.
- Gail: Oooh, yeah, (clapping). And then read it at the end of our class and then... if the parents haven't started coming yet, then we give them an opportunity to say the verse by themselves. You know, would you like to say the verse by yourself and they start raising their hands. They like to do that very much. So back to the balloon game and... it's not the time. Any questions? You know, that's when we can use that space of time and relate it to stories or play games, the words, you know, all kinds of things. So, it really worked out great. I've also used this before. What we do, if I write the word, each word in your memory verse on a piece of construction paper, you can put it on... tape it on the wall. If you have a chalk tray or a bright board tray that's long enough, you could take and stand them up in the tray, in the front of the tray. Or if you have a long cabinet or table or something, you can just stand them up on the table, on top, and have the verse spread out. Anyway you can think of. But they need to be on pieces of paper and what we're going to do is take away one piece of paper at a time and put it in our surprise box. You can use different sizes of paper. Again, I've done this box with the smaller pieces of paper. When you make your box, please keep in mind that hands need to go in here and they can drop the papers in. Later we're going to take the papers out and reconstruct the verse. So you have to make the hole big enough so the hands can get in there and pull out each of the words to the memory verse. So we're going to use this box today and we're going to say this verse all together now. After we say this verse, I'm going to call on a volunteer to come up and take one word down and put it in our box. So, let's say it together. Ready? Begin.
- Class: Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you. Psalm 56:3.

Gail: Good job. Who would like to come up and take one word down? It seems like part of the scene, to give you an idea. How about you? You had your hand up first. You can take any word or number down. Oh, good job. Now, before you put it in the box, I ask them or I do it, to fold the tape over the top, so that it doesn't stick to the other papers when they're together. So you take it up, fold the tape over, we'll get more tape when we're ready to put it back together. What word did he take?

Class: Whenever.

Gail: The first word. How are we ever going to remember how to start saying the verse? What's it again?

Class: Whenever.

Gail: You have to help me remember, because I always forget, and that's really true. How about you? Do you want to come up and pick a word? We'll pick one more word and then we're going to say the verse. Oooh, what word was there?

Class: Afraid.

Gail: Try to remind them to fold the tape over. Okay. Let's say it with those two words missing. Can you say it? Ready? Begin.

Class: Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you. Psalm 56:3.

Gail: We would keep going on and on until each word is off the wall, in the box and we've said the verse with the words completely gone from the wall, the chalk tray, table, where ever you tried to set up. So pretend that all the words are off, and we've got this verse memorized. What we want to do now, is put the verse back together. So let's see if we can. I'm going to ask for a volunteer to come up and take one of these words out, and see if you can find the place where it might go back on the board. Now when all the words are off, it's going to be hard. If they pick a word that's kind of in the middle, it's going to be hard to know exactly where to tape it. But we're going to put the words around it, we might have to scoot it around a little bit when other words come out that's good. This is one reason why if you have something to put them on, a table or tray, it really does work a little bit better. It's easier to manipulate the pieces of paper, because you could scoot them over here and there. It'll be easier. Oh, one more thing. Sometimes you can get real creative and make the words on pieces of paper that relate to your story. You know, this is for Noah's ark, that we did the work on arks. See? You can kind of do whatever you want. You can get real creative. Again, if you want to have every child have a turn, maybe you're just one or two short, you could draw a picture, you could put commas and periods on separate pieces of construction paper just like the words. So, I need a volunteer. One of you girls come up. I would like

you to reach down in here and pull out one word from our memory verse. Now, I'm going to give you a new piece of scotch tape, and you'll be putting it up on the word board and taping it. Get another piece of tape out and tape it up. Can you read that? All right, good job! Okay, let's try saying it, after he put it up there. Ready? Begin.

Class: Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you. Psalm 56.:3

Gail: And again, this is a great example, when you're taping them up, for the children, before they get there, be sure to tape them low enough where they can reach them. Do you want to reach in here and pick a word, and see where it goes? And if they can't figure it out, we'll help them. Sometimes it's really hard, you know. So we might have the class say "Help us find out where it goes, because we can't really tell." See, very good and that's good enough. Wow, this is such a good verse. Let's try saying one more time. All the words are back up. We put it back together. Ready? Begin.

Class: Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you. Psalm 56:3.

Gail: So that's a fun one, and they like that one. Another thing you can do, if you look over here, it's just the same method with another variation. You can think of all kinds of variations, I'm just giving you a couple of ideas. Put the verses on stuffed animals. Not the word. Now on this one, I combined words so that the verse would fit on the number of stuffed animals that I had. The younger children really like this a lot. You can ask your class, or maybe send a letter up that says, "We're going to do our memory verse with stuffed animals next week. If you would like to bring one stuffed animal, your favorite, then maybe we can use it in our memory verse game". So, they can bring stuffed animals. The way I do it, I take the paper hole punch and just punch a hole the top of the paper with the word on it, just get a piece of ribbon and I tie it around the stuffed animal. That way you're no, hurting the stuffed animal in any way. For the stuffed animal, it's ideal if you have a wall for them to lean up against. That isn't always possible. The last time I did this game, I didn't have, and so it's hard, some of it, it's not going to work. So some of the things I put props behind them to hold them up, that they could lean against. Or I took some of that packing tape, and I put a piece of tape right around here, our little bear, taped his hands to it, and he sat up just fine. So you're going to have to get creative and just... you probably didn't expect that when you do the game, because if you don't have a nice long wall, table, or cabinet, you're going to have to deal with that, so I would always think. You could always have kids hold the stuffed animals in the front of the class, but if you have fifteen or twenty kids standing up, who's going to be out there to read the

words? I don't think that will work. So you really need to have a back for them to work. So the stuffed animals are in here, and maybe you ask the kids to bring some from home. Always bring just enough, just in case they didn't bring one, or they weren't there last week, or you have different kids each week. Whatever, have enough stuffed animals to do the game yourself, but if they bring theirs, that's great. You say the verse all together exactly the same way we've done the balloons. I usually ask a child to take a stuffed animal and kind of sit at their desk with them. So they come and pick up a stuffed animal and take it back to their desk, and they take care of this little baby here, while we say the verse without it. So we say the verse without all the animals, repeat the whole thing, and then if there's time, then you try and reconstruct the verses back together, just like we did with box. You can reconstruct it. Another idea, if you're thinking about missionaries and you want to do a food drive, you can tape the words to the can goods. Have the kids bring can goods for the missionaries, then after your memory verse is over, you could make a donation to whatever project your church is involved in. Mexico ministry, or the homeless, whatever. They can bring food for that. That gives you some ideas to start with and just kind of let the Lord work on your heart and let your imagination go and it's really been a blessing.

Lesson Preparation

Pastor Larry: That gives you a real good idea of a neat way to memorize scripture. She gave a lot of ideas, and it is really fun to do. The kids enjoy it. You cannot really have the perspective of how loud that really was when those balloons pop, it's loud. And when it popped and it's loud, the kids love it. It's like, "Noise, yeah, this is good", and to watch and memorize so quickly and so easily, you can make it more elaborate or less elaborate. One thing that I want to go over again that she was talking about, is you don't need to use balloons. You can just use lines and put the words in on the board in that order and erase those. That's a real quick mobile kind of thing. It doesn't take the preparation to do it. Speaking of preparing, again as we were talking about the word search, having to be ready for it, you also, if you're going to do the memorization in this method or any other method, you need to be ready for it. If you plan on coming to class and preparing for it in any respect, there can be a problem. Now with the balloons, what does take place many times, we didn't cover that part on the video, but there's a little pump you can buy for a few dollars, that pumps the balloons up and you can have the kids help you pump the balloons up, in certain ages and they can be doing that as they're coming into class, and blow up fifteen balloons real quick and tie them and you can write the word on it. Usually the assistant will do that because it takes time. So you need to understand that there is preparation that goes on. She didn't just walk in to a seminar or to a class of hers, and all of a sudden she's ready. It takes time to prepare for these things and so that's not something that you necessarily want to do every week. You know, maybe once a month, maybe every six weeks to keep the newness of it. But it's definitely a good way to help the kids memorize. So now, moving in, they've got an idea from the word search, the different words that they're going to be covering in the Bible study. I already established that in the opening. Now they've got the memorization down of the scripture that may be talked about, may be studied more in depth, not necessarily, but that still is the possibility. And then you go to the part where you want to look at the word, and what we've been talking, about up to this point was something we looked at in another session, but the first, we're talking about the greeting, the introduction, which would be the word search there. Here it's got prayer time and worship time, but now what we're going to look at is this section of what's up here on the overhead and that's the Bible study time. We've started laying some foundations in class for the purpose of moving into the Bible study time. Now there's

something that's very, very important for us to understand because we're spending a lot of time on curriculum. You can get this idea, and we've talked about this, but I think it's important to say it again. You can get this idea that this curriculum is the answer. It's not. And we've said it before and I'm going to say it again, this is the answer right here. And we want to use the curriculum to support what's going on right here. And if your attention is so heavily on the curriculum, you're missing the point. It needs to be heavy on the word of God. And what we've tried to design the curriculum to do, is to be able to allow the kids at their age level to slow down and to take a look at what's here, what's written here in God's word. So that's important to understand. All these things can be used in a different way than we've shared in this session. That's important to understand. We don't want unnecessarily to have a certain pattern for every class, because we have many classes. We have a lot of options and it's great when you have three or four classes per age. The personalities of each of those teachers can be different, and will minister to those kids in a different way. And so we're able to minister to most any kid because there's so many variations of how it's going on. You will not go into one class and it will be identical to the next and the next and the next. What needs to be identical in each class, is that the word of God is being studied. And that's so important to understand and not to forget. And so what we would do at this point in time, we may pray and open up... in the Bible study time and ask everyone, "Okay pull your Bible's out. We're going to take a look at the Bible and whatever the scriptures are that we're going to be studying for that week, and this particular week it's Revelation, on the top of your Bible study sheet of the curriculum page, Revelation 1:20 through 3:22. That's a lot to cover in a class, but we're going to look at that, and we're going to examine some important truth in this Book of Revelation". And so you would start out this way, and I'm going to come in and out of actually doing the teaching in a class and trying to explain to you, so you just have to follow with me. One minute we may be doing exactly what we would do in class and next I'll be explaining to you some things. But what I would probably start off with and like I said, there are so many ways and we're going to cover some different options as we get going with this course. There are so many options to choose to go in direction of study. What we're going to do though at this point, is I've already handed out seven portions of scripture to some of you and I want you to go through and I'll tell you in order when and when to share. But I'd be asking the class at this point, "Okay class, we have seven portions of scriptures that we need to look at." And

what that is, is all the way through this whole big piece of scripture. I most likely wouldn't necessarily myself read it, although I could. I don't necessarily have a student read it all, although I could, but breaking it up into different people reading it is the best way to do it. You'll always have volunteers. There will always be people willing. I want to underline and stress this. Don't force anybody to do read. This is not the place to do that. We're studying the word of God, it's a Bible study, we're not in English class trying to make everybody able to read. So take volunteers, and for some reason, if there's only five that volunteer and you need seven, say "Well, if there's nobody else, I can read one or would somebody like to read two or..." You can get enough. Most of the time though, you don't have that as an issue, so it's important for you to understand. What I want to do at this point, is go ahead and we'll just start off with number one on those sheets of paper I handed out to you that we're going to be reading, go ahead and do number one and when number one's done, go to number two, and so forth. So let's go ahead and do that. Whoever's got scripture number one which is Revelation... what is that? One?

Male: 1:20 through 2:7.

Pastor Larry: Okay, go ahead and read that.

Male: "The mystery of the seven stars, which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars of the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands that you saw are the seven churches. To the angel of the church of Ephesus write: 'These things says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil and you have tested those who say they are apostles and they are not, and you have found them liars; and you have persevered and you have patience and have labored for my name sake, and have not become wary. Nevertheless, I have this against you, that should have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, repent and do the first works or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstands from it's place, unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of Nicolaitans, which I also. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches; To him that overcomes, I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.'"

Pastor Larry: Okay now, before we move on as I said we were going to do, depending on the direction you may be going in the Bible study, and I'm going to take at this point in time and go in a certain direction. I may be bringing out some important factors at this point in time, such as, who is writing

this? Who is the author to this? And so I want to go back and take a look in the portion of scriptures and it says, “He that holds the seven stars in his right hand who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.” Now that’s who wrote this. That’s who is speaking this forth. Now keep that in mind class. And that may be the direction and we’ll move on to the next. So let’s move on to the next. Let’s go ahead and read Revelation 2:8 to 2:11.

Female: “And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write: these things say the first and last, which was dead, and is alive. I know your works and tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which you shall suffer. Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried, and you shall have tribulation ten days. be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that over cometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”

Pastor Larry: Okay class, now we were just talking about this portion of scripture. Who is the author to the church of Smyrna here? And it says here that these things says the first and the last, who was dead and who came to life. So that gives us some more understanding about the person who wrote this. So let’s go on to the next scripture.

Male 2: “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things says he with the sharp two edged sword. I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; and you hold fast my name, and did not deny my faith, even in the days where Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immoralities. Thus you also have them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto you quickly, and I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him that overcomes, I will give some manna to eat, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone, a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

Pastor Larry: Okay, good. Again, now who was the author of the letter to Pergamos? We’re told here in the twelfth verse that these things says he who has the sharp two edged sword. Now, you are reading a lot of scripture here, and you can at some point in time... the kids are going to start wandering... so there is a point in time where you have to recognize that, and give them a

challenge. And so the challenge would come as this, and I am going to show you on here. This is the page blown up. “Class, what I want you to do now, up to this point, is go and underline the name of each of the churches that we’ve read about already.” And so all you are doing is keeping them involved, and here it says, ... where is it here? Ephesus, okay. There’s one, Smyrna. All right, there’s one, Pergamos. So those are the churches that we’ve talked about so far. Again, that’s what we want the curriculum used for. To keep them focused. To keep their attention, because they’re going to kind of be moving. Now they’ve got a project in their mind and probably a third of them are already going to go through the rest of them and start marking them on their page, just because they know, well their teacher’s probably going to ask them to do all of them. So that’s what they... that’s what you would do as you get going and you would just go ahead and have them go through and look at it. Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and that would cover it. So how many we have here class? We got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. What are we doing? We’re talking about seven churches. And so we’re using the piece of paper that’s called curriculum to help them focus in on what the scripture has to say. And actually right now, I don’t think we’re going to have the rest of you read this off, because I think you’ve got a really good idea of what we’re talking about. We would then go through the rest of the scripture, doing the same thing, setting them up... first of all, that they’ve read all of it. They aren’t just jumping around, but they’ve read the entire amount of scriptures that we’re going to be looking at. And we’ve established the fact that there’s seven churches that were being talked about. And we’ve established the fact that there was an author. Someone that was talking to these churches and you could go back through and look at it. Thyatira, these things say the Son of God. You have any other description of who was the author that was talking about this. And to Sardis, these things says he who has seven spirits has the seven spirits of God. That’s in chapter 3 verse 1. And chapter 3 verse 7, the letter to the Philadelphia, these things says he who is holy. Oh, Son of God. He’s holy, and we’re starting to build a picture of someone. And they may not even be aware at this point. They may not be sure. Laodicea, that’s chapter 3 verse 14. These things say, the Amen, the faithful, the true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. And so now what I’ve got is the whole scripture covered to establish what we’re going to do and how we’re going to do it. And then from there, we start moving on into different aspects of... and in this approach, I’d be looking at Jesus Christ himself. There’s a lot of things that you can cover in scripture. I could take in this portion of

scripture and do it for a month easily. I mean more, but time doesn't allow many times, and so we want to give them an overview of what's going on. And so I may turn to the idea, specifically in the respect that Jesus was the author and Jesus was telling us about himself. And so we talk more in regards to that. We go back to, it's the same Jesus that was standing at the door knocking. Now here's where it starts tying in, if you had done with your class the three point study method, or if you did it at home... as you remember what we were doing, you now have a lot more information about just that one scripture itself, you have more than you can comprehend that you could actually use in class as your main thrust of the lesson, let alone go through everything that I'm showing you right now that you can go through. So you establish what you're doing, what you're reading, and then you go from there. Now if you wanted to say, not look at so much at once, or if you wanted to introduce that one week, then go back and start looking at some of the churches, you could do something like that. The way we've got it set up is again, as you're doing the Bible study, number one is true or false. It's only for the purpose, again of keeping them hooked in and you want to use that. So when you're read that first portion, you go back and the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. And so you want to go back through and go "okay, what is that class?" And some... "well, I... I don't know... I... I"-- well, let's go back and read it, because they weren't paying attention or they weren't applying themselves. "Yes, it's true class" and so you have it circled and you have them circle it, and then you go on to the next one. Now if you look at some of the things we've got written when there's faults in the curriculum, there's only a little change. And many times they'll say true. And the reason we've done that is so they have to go back and really look at what's been said. So here on number two, Jesus said to John, "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write: I know your works, your labors, your patience, and in that, you cannot bear those who are evil, and I have nothing against you." Revelations 2:4. One word changed. And many times will change a number, which is very difficult to the six churches. So they got... well, yeah. Yeah. There was a lot of churches. That's true. And then you go up and you say, "unh-unh, that's false." And they go, "false, what? No way." Let's go back and read it. What that is doing, is helping them to concentrate, helping them to think through what you're trying to study, and that's all it is. But we're going back to the word of God. We're going back and looking at always the authority, and they get trained this way, because you go back and evaluate and examine what the word of God has

to say. And so they're building a pattern that is so important for us all to have. When somebody says something, well, let's go back and see what the word of God has to say. And so they're able to do that. Now if you, for whatever reason wanted to change the flow of what's going on, you may want to just look at one church. And you may want to pick out one, the church of Philadelphia. Class, let's take a look. And you read that portion of scripture and really examine that particular church. And you start looking at the aspect of who the author was and who wrote it and you would come and see that it is He, who is holy, it's He, who is true. And at that point, you could start considering the holiness of Jesus. The fact that he is truth. That can be so important for the children to understand. What is truth. And what in the world is this word holy? "Does that mean they got a lot of holes in his clothes?" And you can start looking closer at what that actually means. Now for the sake of and for the purpose of this class, I've pulled out a commentary from my shelf and looked at a section of scripture out of G. Campbell Morgan's commentary just to read through this, and I put this, what I'm going to be sharing with you, together really quick. And what I'm going to be sharing with you, I could spend a lot more time with it, but I just want to show you that it's not as involved as sometimes as we think it can be. Many times it is a lot simpler. But I'm going to read some things that I picked up out of the book and maybe go through a little bit and maybe explain it. He declared himself to be God, in this scripture, being holy and being true. Holiness is an essential attribute of deity. "Whoa, attribute. What's that teacher?" "Well class, an attribute is spoken of when you speak of God. Like we would speak of a characteristic of us." "Huh? I don't get it." And you're going through, and you're starting to explain some of these things. "Well let me explain it this way. You may love a little bit in your life." "Yeah, once in a while." "You may be kind once in a while." "Yeah." Okay, and you go through all the different things that they maybe in their character. Attribute is spoken of in regards to God because an attribute means that it's... when God is a God of love, that means everything that He does, has to be done from the perspective of love, not part of Him. His attribute is, He is love. So as we may love a little bit, God loves totally. But not only that, God is long suffering. Now we may suffer a little bit, but God is totally long suffering. Therefore, everything God does, He loves totally in the same sense He's long suffering totally. And the class is not starting to act like you're talking about eternity, because that's exactly what's going on. Your mind cannot comprehend how a person can be this way. Therefore, you can say, "And you're right, a person can't be this way. We're talking about God

now.” And you can talk about, that God is the great judge and everything He does will be done through these great attributes that will be truly holy, truly pure, truly of total truth love. And so now, all of a sudden you start going “and this guy called God is going to be judging? With this kind of judgment? Wow, maybe that’s why He tells us not to judge, because we don’t have a clue sometimes. Sometimes? We don’t have a clue ever. And God will judge righteously and you can start looking from that standpoint of God as you’re looking at just one church, the church of Philadelphia. There’s so many directions you can go. In the Old Testament, Jehovah refers to himself as the “Holy One”. That’s in Isaiah 40. On a number of occasions, He says, “I am the Holy One.” Peter testifies of Him as “The One who did no sin.” Holiness is what Christ is in Himself, in His essential character. That’s who is He is. Because He is holy, every word He’s ever spoken, everything He ever did, was perfect. And you start talking, and we’re just totally looking at God. We’re looking at Jesus Christ. John testifies that “in Him is no sin”, and Paul adds that “He knew no sin”. We’re talking totally perfect, holy, Jesus Christ. And so again, you’re just reiterating some things. Now, the Lord speaks of Himself also, that He is true. And for some kids, that’s going to be extremely important. I know for me as a youth, I felt like everybody was lying and deceiving and all of a sudden, somebody came and said, “You know, you can trust Jesus.” And I went, “Yeah, right.” And all of a sudden as time goes on, I started seeing that what he claimed was what he was, trustworthy. And I stand here today, many years later, saying “He has never once broken His word to me personally.” And He is trustworthy. So now we’re going to look at that and we’ll get, He is true. G. Campbell Morgan distinguishes between being holy and true. He says that as the Holy One, Christ, is right in character. As the true one, He is right in conduct. He could not be different in His actions from what He is in His attributes. This is important. When character is right, conduct will be right. In the world today, we’ve got it totally reversed. When character is right, our conduct will be right. Character is an issue, an important issue. So you could see how you would look at just one church and it doesn’t take as much time as it seems it would. You’re going to have feedback from the students, especially if you’re studying this particular book, and we’re just using this as an example. The book of Revelation is loved by the kids, because it’s relevant to their time. They read it in the newspaper. They read of the events taking place. You know when I used to read it, talking about a guy hanging on a horse and flying through the air, I used to think, “C’mon...” Well they see it in comics now and it’s relevant and they want to know.

We've got a first grade class going through it right now. A fifth grade class going through it, and many of the churches that are smaller that can do this, they have their entire ministry go through each book. And I know of a particular fellowship around here, that first through sixth grade went through the Book of Revelation together and it was awesome, because God promises a blessing for those who read it. And he blessed that Children's Ministry in ways that they couldn't even comprehend. Okay. Now I chose to go over the using of the curriculum the way we did, before we actually look at using the new curriculum page. So up here, we have using the new curriculum page, which in your chapter. It's there, and it kind of explains a little further in how you're going to use it, but it's the things that we've been talking about, the memory verse, true and false, circling the correct word, fill in the blank. There are some things I want to bring to your attention, though. When you come to, and here is the actual curriculum itself, fill in the blank, or true and false, or whatever it may be, if it's a multiple choice, we want you to do one at a time, so as class, you do number one. You stay together, you encourage the class. Do not move on, because what starts happening with the curriculum, is people start using this like some kind of a test and then if they fill everything in, it's done. And then you start to lose their attention at that point. It's not for a test, it's for a guide. It's for the purpose of looking as we've said, at the scriptures. So you want to keep each area that you're looking at in unity and in harmony, and thinking about it so the Lord can speak to different people, to different students, and you can have interaction taking place. If you've got the kids, and they're going "Okay, I need to fill in this word here, and I need to fill in this word here, and this here, and here, and here, and ah... I think this is... I'll just put that there. I've got to get it done here and... I'm done teacher." It's like, "What are we done with?" And sometimes that can be done that way. Now again, there's different ways that you can use it. I know that there is a class that the teacher hands it out and has them go through it in almost the manner that I'm saying please don't do. But, I'm open enough to whatever the Lord would have, and they feel really comfortable in doing it that way, and they actually use that page the same way they would use the word search page as kind of getting them understanding what's going on. Then they sit and they talk about it. There's another method that is used, and you don't use this actually during your Bible study and you saw a demonstration of that, the last part of it, and they use it here. They use it as a game, and that's also in that same chapter that you can look over and read over. You saw that take place. And the way they do it, is they do their Bible study, they talk about it,

they've got the Bible out, they're looking at it, and then for just a reminder, to going back over it, then they'll use the Bible study itself as a game. So there are different ways. There's not necessarily a set rule, but I like to see, if at all possible, this be used and you go through all the scriptures together, so it gives you a way to control where they're all at in their thinking. And I find that to be, as a whole, that works out to be a whole lot better. Now, as time gets better, some of the teachers will branch out and do a little bit different things, because they're getting used to the class, and everything that's going on in the class. So, those are just things that you need to be aware of and understand in return. This page here, we haven't looked at. It's in your book. An example of a lesson preparation. Now, I want to take a brief look at that, because it is something that can be helpful to you. It should be somewhere in your notes, in that chapter there. It's not an absolute. You don't necessarily have to follow this pattern, but what I have found when people have followed it, it makes it easier for them to stay consistent in studying the scriptures. If you wait for one day, and try to do it all in one day, sometimes you lose out and don't get the full benefit. If you wait till a day or two before you're supposed to be teaching, you many times will lose out and not get the full benefit. There are times when, let's say you teach on Sunday, and you immediately on Monday start preparing for the following Sunday, and around Wednesday or Thursday, the Lord's really impressing the direction it's going and you happen to be in a store, and you happen to see a two dollar item and go "Oh, that would be great to illustrate." Now that's one method. Or you could be in that same store on that Wednesday and see that and on Saturday night, around nine thirty you're preparing for your class and you remember "Oh, it would be great to get that... they close at nine, and I... and that happens a lot. So, the earlier you get started in what you're going to be teaching on, the more the Holy Spirit can minister to you throughout the week in ways that you can more efficiently share it. So here's a three day example of preparing. And this is based on doing that, in very simplified inductive method. And the first day it goes through, and you pray and ask the Lord to speak to your heart about the scriptures that you're looking at. Number two, read your Bible, the passage that you're going to be looking at. Number three, find out what it says. If you find a scripture that you want to cover, you just check out what it says, the way we were doing it on the inductive study. Just that one day, you don't go beyond that. You may check out the Haylie's Handbook and see if there's some historical facts.

Female: Now are we going to have the numbers of the assistants... like if this is...

Pastor Larry: Yes.

Female: -- the teacher planning this...

Pastor Larry: Yes. The teachers and the assistants should be in communication, and most of the time that comes naturally. You know, it turns into friendship or it may be husband and wife, or however it may be, but yeah. That is important to be communicating with your assistant teacher or the teacher, which ever it may be. The second day, you'd go through and continue to read and you would be checking out why these facts are recorded. The third day, the same thing and a few more things are added and what does that passage mean to me. You can incorporate, many times, your lesson and the direction you're headed when you're doing an inductive study. You can incorporate that with your quiet time with the Lord. So many times people get this idea "Well, then that's cheating. I can't have an enjoyable quiet time with the Lord and in the same process be getting my lesson for class. No, I have to set a time aside to do my class. I have to set aside a time to be with the Lord." And many times, God can use both. You see people get so much done in a given day. There's twenty-four hours a day, no matter how you look at it, twenty-four hours. And in some lives, it seems like there must be seventy-two hours in that day, because they're getting so much done. In other lives, you may think it's an eight hour day. There's twenty-four hours, and it depends on how we use that time. What are we told to do? Redeem the time. So it's all right to combine the time and it's a good thing. It creates consistency for you and you may want to enter in and consider doing something like that. We have Pastor Chuck's tapes that coincide with the three hundred and twenty-five Bible studies that we have written. They're in the room 101 for check out purposes. The following week, if you're going to be doing a certain lesson, you can grab his tape and keep it for a week and listen to it and then bring it back in the following week, and it gives you some information. It's like what I just said earlier, pulling off of my shelf a commentary. You know, you're driving somewhere, put that tape in, and you're hearing for the purpose of being in agreement with what is being taught here too, but you're also being taught yourself and ready to go many times just by listening to a tape and seeing the direction and adding to that. And I highly recommend doing that. You know, I highly recommend doing that at the beginning of the process, because not all the time will he be covering some of the things that you feel led to cover in that particular scripture. I don't know if you've ever... you know, you've studied all week, and you go to the evening study, and you're ready for him to cover a certain thing because it's there, and the Lord doesn't lead him to cover that. He may have

covered that years back, or whatever. He's hitting on different things, and so that may have happened too sometimes, when you're listening to a tape. The Lord may be giving you a direction already, but many times, as that direction goes, there's a lot of information that can be gleaned also in regards to listening to the tapes, so that's just something for you to be aware of. That you have, to think through, to be thinking about how you're going to do that. Now, we have a coloring page in each of the studies. Sometimes we're asked, "Well, what about crafts and the different things?" We don't necessarily push crafts, although there are different times in the year that I think crafts are good, that can reinforce the lessons. And that's when we think the crafts are great, is when they reinforce the lesson. But as you get going, as you have already started to see, by doing just a few things as we have been doing this evening and looking at, it can take a long time to be doing a study in a Children's Ministry class if you're preparing for it. But if you want to do a craft, there are ways of doing it that... here's one. There's a coloring page. It's Jesus knocking at the door and it was just created to where it's hard paper, and the question is "Am I going to let him in?" And so it's a simplified craft that reinforces the lesson about Jesus standing at the door knocking. So there are ways that you can turn a coloring page into a craft if you so desire to do that. In a four year old class, this was the coloring page. Jesus' miracle turning the water into wine, and so what they did, was, if you see this on the back, they made a little circle, cut out one of the pictures, and now we have water. But when Jesus came... I don't know which way it goes... he turned it into wine. Now that's not really that involved, but it reinforces what the Bible study was, and it's very, very important because many times, crafts just waste time. And we think we've got to do all the... you know, the truth of the matter is, crafts are for the parents. Because for some reason, it says something was done in class. And if something is being done in class, then I don't think that we should depend so heavily on crafts themselves. Kids like to do crafts. There's nothing wrong with doing crafts, don't get me wrong if it's reinforcing the Bible study that we're doing. Now, there's obvious motor skill improvements and things that are going on as crafts are being done, but as a whole, we have an hour, hour and a half to study the word of God, and I don't want to take so much time in doing something that's not relating, and is not going to come back in fruit that is pleasing to the Lord. Here's an example somebody did. Again, it was a coloring page. Alright, and they're in prison. They're in jail. And so all I did, was they put a door on, because there was an earthquake and they got freed, and so... and it was simple. It was really

simple. A way to reinforce what is being taught. Again, we don't disagree with crafts, but we want to make sure that they're reinforcing whatever the lesson may be that's trying to be studied. We do have craft seminars twice a year and you end up having approximately fifteen ideas at each seminar. If you really like doing crafts, and some of them are really good ideas, but that's something as the Lord leads. Our primary focus, is a desire that the word of God be taught, that the kids are understanding. And crafts can reinforce that understanding and there's nothing wrong at that point in time with them. I have to say this enough, so that I feel comfortable that everybody heard what I said. Crafts can be a waste of time, and we don't want crafts for that purpose. So, I think that we've covered that enough. We've gone through different aspects of structuring a class. We talked about this at a different session, but this page here, one example of a possible class structure and this session we have gone through quite a bit of that, without actually referring to it. Hopefully, with some of the sessions giving you a better idea of the direction that you can take. We are not going to sit here in any class, and say this, and this, and this, and this is what you need to do in this order, in this period of time, and always the same way. If you're looking for that, planning on that, look no more. It's been solved. Because we believe God wants to use each individual personality in a special way. He has created you for a special purpose. And it's not necessarily that you fit into the style that God would use me in teaching with. I had to get that cleared up along time ago, because I knew God was calling me into the ministry full time, but I kept on looking at my Pastor, going "There's no way, I can do what he's doing." And it hindered me so long, and I don't want to put anybody into this mold that you have to be a certain way, but I do want you to understand, I want everyone to understand, that the word of God must be taught in class. And we must spend much time with that, it's very, very important. Are there any questions pertaining to using the curriculum? Anything that you may not be clear of that we've talked about this evening in regards to it? This would be the time to ask. We have covered a lot.

Opening Prayer

“Let’s pray. Father, let me just thank You for each person here today, for their safe delivery here, and we just pray that You, Your Spirit overflows in here this evening and across the whole grounds, Lord. That You would just minister to each person here, that You teach, instruct, and guide, Lord, but most of all that You reveal Yourself more fully to each person here tonight. We thank You Lord, for the work that You’re doing on the whole grounds here, Lord, and that the work that You want to do in this class tonight, and Lord, the work You want to do in each persons life. We pray Lord, that this is a blessing to You Lord, and that it’s pleasing in Your sight. And it’s in Jesus’ name that we pray. Amen.”

3rd Grade Class Introduction

Good evening. My name is Jeff, and as Larry was saying we teach the third grade. I know a couple of people in here, and we have been teaching in the Children’s Ministry for eight years, about the same time Larry came on staff is when we began teaching the Children’s Ministry. My wife and I began teaching first graders and it was a blessing, and now some of those first graders are now in junior high, and it’s really amazing to see some of them are taller than me. And it was a blessing in the first grade and we loved it. It was fantastic, but at one point I had the opportunity to sub in the third grade class and realized that I was in the wrong age. It was the third grade that my wife and I were called to be in, and I’ll give you some of the reasons and some of the things we’ve learned over the six years that we’ve been in the third grade. If you look at your handout, it begins with the front page here. If you did not get one, there are still some up here in the front there.

The third grade introduction, it begins with the minister, the age we were called to the third grade ,and the first thing that became really evident, was that our third graders were just like our first graders except they had the ability to read, and that opened all kinds of doors to us. Being able to read together through the Bible has been a blessing, their ability to interact to have conversation. The questions that they ask are a lot more sophisticated, and have been a delight to tackle. And yet, they are still so open and their hearts are still so soft and ready to receive God’s word; and they are still open to doing things like worship, where it gets a little tough in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, because they’re looking around to see if their fellow students are worshipping as well. In third grade, you’re really not going to run into that problem. It’s a good study age for worship, and yet they’re really soft; it’s so neat. The commitment that’s asked of the people that come into the children’s ministry is really, it’s an amazing thing. It’s a privilege to serve the Lord. And it’s a privilege to minister to his children, and to teach His word. I remembered as a new Christian, one of the first things I heard Pastor Chuck share, was what a blessing it is to teach and what blessing it is to teach God’s children, and if you’re able to teach His children, you

can teach the adults, they get easy. And really, that was my first hint of a calling to the Children's Ministry, and He confirmed and confirmed and confirmed.

But what we've learned is that we are, as teachers, we're the Pastors to the children in our class. To that core group in our class, we're their Pastors. We represent the same thing that our senior Pastor represents to us in the Sanctuary. And we also represent God. We are God's representatives, as Moses was, a representative to the people of Israel as they were in the wilderness, we're also his representatives in the classroom, and so our behavior and our actions in the classroom reflect that. And the examples of commitment that I go by in class, are patterned after the Lord. What was His commitment? Did He ever miss an opportunity to serve? Did He ever miss an opportunity to heal a broken heart or a broken body? He was always there, and he never was in denial. And our second example that I patterned my commitment after, is the Senior Pastor, Pastor Chuck, and I've asked myself, "How many times has he missed teaching on a Sunday morning or a Thursday night or whatever night he may be teaching, other than the reason being is that he's out of the country. You know, you've seen him up in the front with a cold, very sick. Whatever our commitment means, to be a serious, something like "I'm tired. I'm tired on Sunday morning. I was up late last night." Can you picture Pastor Chuck missing a Sunday morning for the same reason? And so if you ever get that attack on Sunday morning, and you will get those attacks, like, you can't make it, the garage door's stuck or my car's stuck in the garage, would that keep Pastor Chuck from coming? He'd find a way. And so the enemy will be very tricky on keeping you from coming. But you know, you just really need to pray and overcome, and the same thing with this class, I know that sometimes it gets difficult to get here and, it all comes down to the things that are keeping me from coming. The same kind of attack is coming. The enemy is upset about you coming into the Children's Ministry and so he's coming after you. Just pray and have victory and come on in. And our commitment has to be the same to whatever class. It has to be as serious as it is to Pastor Chuck to be here as our Pastor. It has to be just as serious to you, as a teacher in the classroom.

Also as a Minister, what is going to be your main tool for ministering to God's children? And that is the time that you spend with the Lord. I remember as a new Christian, the first thing that I noticed, coming into the sanctuary, was that the person up in front, and I had no clue as to who Pastor Chuck was, the first thing I noticed was that this man obviously knows God. He obviously spends time with God and I want to know what he's learned by spending time with God. And the children in your classroom should have that same desire for the same reason. "My teacher obviously spends time with the Lord, and I want to know what my teacher knows by spending the time with the Lord, and I want to grow the same way." As teachers in the Children's Ministry, the training process, which develops your in class is always going, it's ongoing. We're on letter B, by the way. The need is always there. It's an ongoing and growing and building process in developing your class. Our class does not resemble a lot what it looked like eight years ago, because over the past eight years, we've gone to seminars and anything that was

shared inside, on the grounds, or even other things; avenues that we've pursued, to build, and to build up our class. The seminars, the first one we went to, was a discipline seminar. I saw that as a great need in my class, and so we picked up a tool there. The story telling seminars, we picked up a tool there. We picked up a lot of tools there. And we've been to three story telling seminars, and each time we pick up something new. Just because we've been to it before, doesn't mean you're not going to pick up a tool the next time you go, and so, it's just a growing process. Never consider any opportunity to be a waste of time. I was listening to a tape where there was instructions for those that were training to be Pastors, and the advice was given, if you're given the opportunity to teach, take it. Take that opportunity, because you're going to learn from that experience. And the same thing is true with the seminars, if you're given the opportunity to be given an additional tool for your class, take it; you can use it. You'll find it helpful, believe me, in times where you're going "Praise the Lord, I had that tool with me."

Okay. Letter C on the introduction, is "Know Your Children". The third grade is an interesting time; it's a time of tremendous growth. They come in fresh out of second grade, small with their hands, and they have no clue as to what third grade is about. And it's so neat to get them that way, because they're just ready for whatever you say. That's the third grade, and it's a time where they're going to grow a lot, physically, and where they're going to grow spiritually, Lord willing. And where there's a lot of academic growth, they're being taught things in school, and so you'll watch them as they're able to read at one level, and by the end of the year, they're reading at a different level. They're able to do different things at the end of the year than at the beginning of the year. The third grade, like any grade, has a mid-line, the average. And there's an average physical place, an average spiritual, and an average academic place. The idea is know your children, to know your class and where they are in those areas. You don't need to concern with how tall they are, but what your class is able to do, with crafts. Can they cut? Are they a class where they struggle with cutting paper? Are they a class where they struggle with spelling? And so part of the process, is you get to know your class. And yet, you know that each person is an individual, and so you learn who they are individually. The class itself is unique. I haven't had the same type of third grade class two years in a row. One year I'll have a class where they're so far ahead of everything I've been able to teach up to that point, that I'm having to get deeper and deeper and expand a little bit farther using the advanced curriculum or whatever it may be, and another year, I'm having to use the lower age and be very slow and simplistic, but the idea is, either way, that they're ministered to. That they know what is being shared, that they know God loves them. By the time they go out the door, they're sure of that, or at least they've been told it, and that's the idea. We want to get God's word in, and at least let them know that God loves them.

The Core Group. The question is, who is your core group? In the first section here, the introduction that you went through already, there was a graph where there was a small circle, and it said "Core Group", and a larger circle around it and it said "Irregulars", and then a larger circle

that said “The Visitors”. Now your core group can be two people, if those two people are here week in and week out, or it can be twenty people. It just depends on who that group is week in and week out. And that’s the group that you really need to find out where they are. Because your visitors are going to be ministered to, but it’s that core group that you’re really going to see every week, and that’s the level you want to do things at. I remember, again, as a new Christian, in fact it was at the retreat where I gave my life to the Lord, that the first thing I found out was, why are we singing for a half an hour at the beginning? I couldn’t figure that out. “Another song?” And it just took me a couple of times to realize “That’s the format”. I adjusted to it as a visitor and then you know, as the week was going on, I realized what the format was, and I was able to handle what was going on. I just took some time to do it. I remember thinking, “You know, this isn’t designed for someone who’s coming up here, who doesn’t know the Lord”, and I thought, “That’s... there’s something wrong there.” But I realized as it went on, there wasn’t anything wrong there. I was getting fed and three days into it, I gave my life to the Lord. And it was a blessing. And really, in your classroom, you’ve got to take that same thing at heart. You’re going to know there’s visitors in your classroom, but the direction your class has to take in general, has to be for that core group. And the visitor, the irregulars, the one’s who are coming every other week because of broken homes, or whatever, they’re going to get used to your format and they’re going to get fed. I found it interesting last week, I asked a little guy, who was apparently not paying a lot of attention to what was going on, I asked him what was the answer to the question, and he gave me the question back. Even though he wasn’t necessarily paying attention, he heard what I said. So it was going in, and I thought that was interesting. It went in even though he wasn’t necessarily paying attention. That word isn’t going to come back void, even though he was kind of looking somewhere else. And the same thing with the visitors, they may struggle with what you’re saying because they’re a visitor, but it’s not going to come back void. I remember in prayer one time, a little girl praying this prayer, that was the most beautiful prayer, and it was right when we got our whole new class. And it was the most beautiful prayer I’ve ever heard a third grader pray, and I thought, “Lord, please let her come every week, please.” And she came up about half way through the class and said, “I’m just visiting. I’m on my way down to Mexico, then I’m going to go back up north to my church.” And I’m thinking “Oh, okay.” And our little regular boy over here is doing his thing going, “Wee wee. You know, I’m going, “There’s my regular over there.” And yet, I’ll tell you the blessings come when that little regular, who’s kind of a struggle, the day that he raises his hand, and says, “I would like to read today”, and you just praise the Lord. Or the day that he wants to pray. And he prays “Lord, thank you for this class”, and you just go, “Oh, thank you. I’m sorry I was ever thinking anything about him”. Or, I’ve even had the privilege to be down at the beach and watch someone who’s apparently been in struggle, get baptized, and you just go “Oh...”, it is so awesome, so awesome. So your core group is who you need to minister to week in and week out, not forgetting the others, but your general focus has to be on your core group.

The last thing on the introduction here is, it says “Be Sensitive.” One thing that people tend to do, is feel a freedom as the children are getting older, and the third, and the fourth, and the fifth, and the sixth grade, you may feel a freedom to share something that is an issue. And what I mean by that is, it says, what I’ve written down here is, teaching God’s word at the third grade level does not mean that we should expose the children in class to issues that we feel a third grader should know, or a sixth grader, whatever. As an example, there has been, I had to take the phone call the next day, an example of a teacher sharing that there is no Santa Clause. I hope no one in here is surprised by that. I know I’m taking that for granted, but it was shared in a fourth grade class and you would think, “Okay at fourth grade, that probably is an issue”, but a fourth grader was in there where that conversation had never taken place between the parent and the child. And it was kind of hard, because it was on Christmas morning that that was shared. And then you can draw it out farther. “Okay, if your parents are telling you that, then your parents are doing this to you”. And so this child’s getting devastated in the classroom on Christmas morning. And you know, the teacher felt, “Well, it’s an issue that a third grader or fourth grader can handle”. And it wasn’t. Our place here is to support the family. That lesson should have been , “This is what happened when Jesus was born” , and going through the Bible and just completely stay away from the Santa Clause issue. It’s not our place here to deal with it at all. Another issue might be abortion. If you’re reading through how the babies are placed across the alter of Baal and the babies are dying, to go farther and then to explain “It’s just like when... “ and go into that issue, even if it’s a sixth grade class, those parents may not have talked with the children about that issue at all. And so, it may be fifty percent of your class is going home now with a new issue that we weren’t here to introduce. Our place here is to teach God’s word to these children and to teach them that God loves them, and that’s what we’re here to do, and to support the families spiritually. Support, but not introduce these other issues. And so if you stick to God’s word and teach God’s word, then you and the children our going to be safe. Does anybody have any questions about that?

Question & Answer

Male: No, I have a comment.

Jeff: Okay.

Male: So it’s important that we should always keep that in the back of our minds so we find ourselves trying to almost say something that’s not in God’s word or that you know, you find yourself talking with the children saying different things that might touch on the subject of sin maybe, “Oh, I used to do...” well, wait a minute now. I’m in a mess. I’m not going to tell the child what I used to do when I was a sinner, that it might because a problem.

Jeff: Yeah, it’s not necessary to share that, maybe just, “I was a sinner. I gave my life to the Lord.” You don’t need to expand on things like MTV and say “this is going on MTV...”. It’s just not necessary. Teach God’s word and you’re safe. Yes?

Female: What if it's around Christmas, and your teaching on the birth of baby Jesus, and what if that child asks you "Is Santa Claus real?"

Jeff: If a child were to ask me if Santa Claus is real, and that's happened, I'd say, "You just need to ask your mom or ask your dad." Take it home. It's not our place here to say "yes" or "no" because there are others in the class too, and I don't want to send that issue home with you.

Female: Uh-huh.

Jeff: And it's just got to go home. You know, "Just ask your mom." You know if that child is going to ask that question here, and wants to ask that question at home, home can answer it.

Demonstration of Class Structure

Let's move to the example of a possible class structure, and this page can be found in the curriculum section, but I've got it here just for convenience sake. Okay. In a third grade class, as in all classes, the greeting is an important time because it's important for your relationship with the parents, and for your relationship with the children. The parents are basically entrusting the spiritual feeding of their children to you for one hour. Whether it goes in the direction that they want it to go or somewhere else, is clearly up to and it should go right in the direction that God's word directs. They're entrusting you, and because they're entrusting you, they need to be comfortable with you and it's important for you to greet them. To say "Hi", at least say "Hi." You may not know their name right away, but say, "Hi, I'm Jeff. My wife's name is Dawn, and these are our children, and nice to meet you." And it becomes... my wife is the one who sits at the sign in table and does the sign in. She knows the parents better than I do, but it's important that one of us does because she does that sign in process and then I take the children from there and bring them to a desk. If they don't have a Bible with them, I get them a Bible, if they need crayons, if they're choosing to color, I'll get that for them. It's just an important time for the relationship to develop between the two. You're only going to see the parents two times during your class, during the sign in and the sign out. And what your classroom looks like at that time, is what your parents are going to anticipate is going to be happening. If kids are running around, they're going to go the sanctuary thinking "Oh no, that's probably going on right now, kids are running into walls and bouncing off of them." So you want that time to definitely be structured. Because we want it to be structured, we have activities for them during that sign in process. We'll get to that a little bit later.

I've noticed as I have become a parent, that it's important for me to get to know the parents, the teachers of my children. And I didn't realize how much you love and respect the teachers of your children. And so, I love the teacher's of my children. I always pray for them, and that's going on for you too, as a teacher in class. Parent's are praying for you and the class, because you're interested in their children. This time is important because you want to let the children coming in know that they're welcome in your class. I've noticed a lot of times, they're excited. They've been waiting at least a couple of days to come in and share something with you. You know, kids will come and they're wanting to talk, and talk, and talk, and talk, and they've been saving something up to share with you. And so it's a blessing that they want to do that and you can't go "Okay, just a moment." You got to take that time with them, especially if you've been praying at home for them during that week. They want to know that, and you want to know how it's gone during that week. So it's an important time to spend. During this time, when I take them to their desk, we have introduction activities, activities that are provided through the curriculum, such as coloring pages, an appropriate coloring page for the study. If I'm doing a study on Noah, I don't necessarily want to have a coloring picture of Paul in Ephesus. You know, I want to have that coloring picture that goes with the study. That way, as they're doing the coloring, they're already

starting to get ready for the Bible study. Coloring in third grade, you ask? Yes, there are kids that are not really comfortable with reading, and so our other activity will generally be a word search and if they're uncomfortable with reading, they're going to be uncomfortable with that word search. And you want to have something for them to that they are comfortable with. So in our class, we provide both. A coloring page and a word search page to provide them with something to do that they're comfortable with, where they're already taking in the study. I've had the opportunity to teach sixth graders before and a sixth grade mom came up and said, "My daughter's not reading yet, you know?" I said, "No problem." I had coloring pictures in that sixth grade class and it's a blessing. It's just good to be ready for any level of child coming in there. The word searches, again, they're developed to give the children the opportunity to begin getting ready for the Bible study that you're going to share with them by highlighting some of those words that are going to be appearing, and there's different levels. I've had in the third grade class, two years ago, a class where they were able to do third through sixth grade word search in no time. And they're like "Make them harder." "I can't make them harder." The letters are like so tall, and... but they were able to blaze through them. And at the same time, I was teaching the sixth grade class and the sixth grade class was like "these are too hard", and so I was bringing them the first and second grade level. It's part of knowing your children and it's a part of realizing where the flow is for that class. You don't want anything to be frustrating for them, where they're just struggling, "I can't do this." You want it to be a blessing and not particularly challenging to them. Something where they're able to absorb what it is that you're going to be sharing with them. The crossword puzzle that is also available with many of the studies, is the Bible study reformatted into a crossword puzzle, so the same question that would appear as question number two on your study, is question number two on your crossword puzzle, except it's formatted into a crossword puzzle. So by the time they're done with that crossword puzzle, they've already done the Bible study and they don't know it. They've already gone through what you're going to share with them, and boy, are they prepared. If you're going to do a craft in your class, the point of the craft should be to support your Bible study. If you're doing a Bible study, again on Noah, do you want to bring in a pinecone and put peanut butter on it and go "This is a nice Christmas ornament"? Well, probably not. It's not going to support your Bible study real well. So the idea would be to again, develop a craft or there are many that are already developed here for you, that is going to support your Bible study. The craft, though, should be limited to about ten or fifteen minutes. You don't want your craft to take fifty minutes and leave you five for worship and five minutes for your Bible study. That would be a problem, because you didn't get a lot accomplished, other than they went home with a nice craft. And a lot of them, you're only going to have that one time. You know, you may have that visitor that one time. You want to share with them what God's word says.

I have a couple of examples of crafts. This one is from our Christmas craft seminar. And this, it came out nice, but it's really, really easy. It's a toilet paper roll wrapped around with construction paper, with a couple of beads you know, glued on it. And a couple of little leaves

there, very easy. And this craft didn't take more than ten minutes in a classroom, and that is primo. Again, one of the most popular Christmas crafts that we have is this: three popsicle sticks glued to a piece of paper, and then glued beads, and this popular with the teachers and with the kids. For the same reason, it's simple, and yet it's really nice. They really like to take it home. And you've kept down to ten minutes. This is from this years Easter craft seminar. This is foam sheets, two different colors, and a magnet stuck on the back. I don't know if there's anything in the middle here. It'll stick to your refrigerator and it took, in class, at the most, ten minutes. And all it is, is you go in there and you got some pre-cut stuff and you give them some glue, be careful, and you're done. And in ten minutes, you take them to their class, you take them to their desk and you have that set up for them. As the early ones are finishing, have them work on a word search, while the later ones, who come in a little bit later are doing their craft. So you don't want the first ones to get done and "Oh , Billy's got some extra time and there's going to be some mischief", you know, start going under the desk, "Oh, what's under here?" You want them to have something to do all the time, so have multiple things for them to do, for those early ones.

Does anybody have any questions on the introduction activity? Okay. The prayer time. It's a time where we get right down to it, where they know, "Okay, we're going into the presence of the Lord and this is where we're going to start communing with God. Give them the opportunity to the opportunity to open prayer, I have begun doing this in my class. Usually it's the same one. He likes to open in prayer every week, and he opens in prayer and then, "Okay, next one? Would anyone else like to pray?" And if someone else likes to pray, and it could go on for a little while and then I generally close the prayer. It's a neat time, and it is an extremely serious time. By third grade, they're usually not praying for their dogs anymore. They're praying for Grandma, who's sick, or Dad, who's smoking, or Uncle, who they have been praying for at home, to come to know the Lord. And it's an intense time and like I said, I heard that one prayer coming from that little girl and it was beautiful. We have prayer request forms. They, I believe, are the next page in your handout. Prayer request forms, we leave sitting by the sign in sheet, or you can ask "Does anyone want a prayer request form?". They write their name down, the date, and it asks the question, "Would you like us to pray with you, with the class, or at home for you this week?", and then a place for them to write their prayer request. Some of them want you to pray right there with them. Some of them want to pray during the class time, and some them, most of them, want you to pray at home during the week. If you do that, and if they do ask you to pray for them, you remember to pray for them and it's a good idea the next week to ask them how it went. And that does two things. One, it let's you know what the Lord's doing, and it also let's them know you are praying for them.

The worship time, third grade, they understand that this is not just a time of singing, but that this is a time that is supposed to be for worshiping the Lord. They realize that concept by the third grade. And a lot of times, it's the only time during the week that they are involved in worshiping

the Lord. There are different ways that you can do that. I happen to know the guitar, so I'm able to do that, but if you're not using the guitar, you can sing acapella, if you're willing to do that. There's also sing-alongs, which is a tape that's a split track tape, where if you play it in stereo, you get the voices and the music, and if you shift it over to one speaker, you'll get only voices, and the other speaker is only the music. So you can play just the music and sing-along with that. There are different things that you can do to have that time in class, but it is an important thing to have worship in your class. The third graders, I've found, they like to sing songs they've been singing since they were little. It's fun and it's familiar to them and they know from experience the signs that go with some of the songs, and so some of the kids will come up and they'll do the hand signs that go with the songs, and it's really good. What we do in our class, is we start with those songs, and then they also are wanting to sing the adult songs because they understand that worship can be deep. So we move from the younger songs into the older songs in our class, and worship time tends to be really, really good. We start with a song, and we start with it every week. It's called Pharaoh, Pharaoh. It's based on the music from Louie, Louie. And what that does, is it's got hand signs in it and it's fast, and it's fun, and it goes through the experience that Moses had, as he leads to the people out of Egypt. And it accomplishes a few things. It's fun, it breaks down the barriers for those who haven't done worship since kindergarten. Or, there are those who have not had that experience, and it breaks down that barrier, so they're "Hey, this can be fun." Plus, if they're getting it week after week, by the end of the year, they know what Moses did. They know what the Lord did through Moses and they can tell you, "You know that Pharaoh's army did the dead man's float". So that's a song that we use and it's very effective to start with the fun songs and then move in to the deeper songs of worship.

We get to the Bible time from there, and this again, may be the only time during the week that they're going to read the Word or hear the Word. They may not be doing that at all at home, and so you want to be clear. You want to be simple and you want to be thorough. You know, I'm constantly asking "Are there any questions?" And we read directly from the Word. At third grade, they're able to receive directly from the Word. You don't have to do any paraphrasing. In the New King James, it's clear enough and they're able to receive that. But what you need to do, and this is a hard thing for an adult, is not take for granted their vocabulary. You can be sharing and using a word, and using it, and using it, and then go, "They may not know what righteous means, or they may not know what sin means, or they may not know what a manger is." You know, you can take for granted, well... "and they laid him in a manger." Okay. They have no clue as to what a manger is. Or you talk about a throne room. He was in a throne room. Well they're going, "What is a throne room?" And that's where the visuals come in place and you've got a throne room here and you're able to give them, at least some concept of what it is. Third graders are also very open to volunteering to read, because they're learning how to read and they're getting pretty good at it. It's really not a problem to call on volunteers in the third grade. "Who will like to read?" And, I usually give them about two or three verses, because some of them, although they like to volunteer, are reading kind of slow and it can take a long time if you

give them too many verses. So, about two or three verses, and you never, never want to go “Rhonda, you’re reading today.” Rhonda’s starting to sweat. “Oh, I don’t read”, and you don’t want to frustrate anybody and they’re in there, and they’re, Lord willing, open to receive, but if you put them on the spot like that, they’re going to shut down. And they’re sweating. My wife will do that very thing. Her hands will get clammy, you know, “Oh no, he called on me to read.” Her throat starts to get dry, and it’s “I don’t think I can.” And it’s the same thing with the children in your class. You don’t want to put them on the spot. You’re going to have plenty of volunteers, so you really only want to call on them. Some of them will say, “Do you want me to stand up? Sit down? How do you want”... whatever your comfortable with. If you want to stand up and read, that’s fine. If you want to sit down, that’s fine too. There’s no rule for how to read in our class, as long as they’ve volunteered. Once you’ve given your Bible study, once you’ve shared, then the idea of retelling your study visually, is to reinforce. If you’ve given your children a coloring page or a word search and now you’ve done your Bible study ,or you’ve done your crossword and then your Bible study, they’ve already gotten the lesson twice, basically.

Visual Demonstration

Now you’re reinforcing visually. They may have struggled with the idea, “What is a throne room?” And here’s a throne room here. “And who do you have here? Anybody? Moses, right. And this would be?”

Class: Pharaoh

Jeff: “Right. And this would be?”

Class: Aaron

Jeff: “And what’s going on here?”

Male: Dropped his staff down...

Jeff: “Yeah, he’s dropped his staff down and it’s turned into a snake, and the Pharaoh’s helpers threw down their staffs and then what happens? What happens to these ones here? They get consumed by Moses’, Correct?”

Okay. So you’ve got a visual. Perhaps they had no clue visually of what you were talking about when you’re talking about a staff being thrown and then it turning into a serpent. We have recently watched, last night, as a matter of fact, The Ten Commandments. And as that was happening in the movie, my son’s going, “Oh did you see that?” He’s heard the story before, but as he’s watching it visually, it’s “Oh, did you see? Wouldn’t that be cool?” You know? And so the idea is that you want to make it more clear in areas where it may not be. A third grader does not necessarily always require a visual. In fact, as they get older, they require it less, but they enjoy it a lot and it’s only going to make your study more clear. The flannel graph, which is what that is there is colorful and it’s able to captivate and illustrate, and if you’re gifted at using it, it can be an extremely effective teaching tool. Another very effective tool is flashcards, and we

have these available down in the office. The flashcards, I think, they're like nine by twelve. This would be an example of one here, right there. And again, the idea here is to retell the story using a visual, giving them some idea of what has happened visually. What I find to be effective, because I'm not too totally talented with using flashcards or flannel graph, is that I'll put a couple of things together so that it combines things. I might take this here, which there's plenty of these down in the office, and all this is, is a piece of fabric, with a hole cut in it, and throw it over my head. You can take another piece and throw it over my head. In fact, one year I was Job, and I had to make myself bald, now that's getting easier as the time goes on, but at the time, I needed some help and so I put something on to make me look totally bald. And I took the packing plastic bubbles and taped them to my face for boils and they're "Ugh, you know, and doesn't that hurt?" And there's one on the end of my nose and one in my ear, and for months they were calling me Job. But now take something like this and just throw it over you. Instantly you become a character, and the idea is, when you get your pictures back from the developer, I just use these and go, "You know, I was at a wedding, and when I was at the wedding, they were passing out the wine and all of a sudden it was all gone. It was all gone. And they came to Mary and Mary came to Jesus and Mary said, 'You know, they're out of wine, can you do something about it?' And Jesus said, 'Why are you coming to me?'" And then you know, you're retelling the story as if you just got your pictures back from the developer. Okay. And that's the way I intend to use it, because otherwise I'm going "Uh-huh", you know, and I'm not that good at it. If I can get the idea of "I was there", that's what I'm trying to create. "I was there and these are the pictures I got back from the developer." Or you can do the same thing with the flannel graph. "I was there and this is what I saw. And this is how it happened. And this is... oh, when the snakes came, I was running, because I didn't know what was going to happen next." Okay. And the idea again, is to just visually get them going, "Whoa." Now one of the things that you'll run into is sometimes you can get too visual. If you're Goliath and you're yelling too loud, and you've got three year olds in there and they're "Ahhh". We did a puppet skit for three, four, and five year olds in the fellowship hall, and it was on the Good Samaritan, and I had to make the robbers look a little bit mean. So I put some eyebrows on the puppets that were, you know, looking kind of mean. And after the story was over, the kids were kind of up in the front, right next to the stage, so I struck one of the characters out and he was talking to them. The kids were all "Yi, yi, yi, yi", and then somebody else that was there took one of the bad guys out and went like this and the front row went like "Ahhh", you know, they were just... they were grabbed. They thought this guy was coming after them. So you can get too graphic, you know. So when Goliath comes out, you have to be kind of careful. Filmstrips, again, are another resource that we have. They're kind of hard to get a hold of. In fact we tried and it's really hard to get a hold of new ones, but because of our library that's built up over the years, we have a lot available to us. It's a good resource, because you take and project from this side of the room to this wall and it's a big visual aid. And it retells the story again. So you've got that visual aid coming in there. Any questions on visual aids for third graders? Okay. The next part of our outlines says Do the Bible Study Page.

Question & Answer

Jeff: Yes?

Female: Do you have enough flannel graphs for all the classes, or do you have to plan in advance for them?

Jeff: We have, down in our resource room, about seventy different stories that are pre-put together. Yeah, they're put in seventy different boxes, and then we have four additional boxes where there's just a lot of different pieces. It says General Throne Room. Anything you might find in the throne room or general river or general desert scenes, and so, if you're still lacking in a study that you want to do, you're able to put it together using one of those general boxes.

Female: That's what I'm asking you, do they have enough boards.

Jeff: Yeah, we do. Yes. Yes?

Male: How about getting them involved with some of the drama you're talking about acting out?

Jeff: You can do that. I've tried. I've put them in their hands. The only problem I run into, in getting them involved in the drama or in using flannel graph pieces, is I haven't figured out the best way to do it, because they get kind of silly. You know, Moses will be flying. Or in drama, they have a hard time taking certain characters and accurately representing them. But it can be fun, and if you can do them right, it will be good. I know in some of the younger age classes, like the four year olds, they will put masks on them. They will make masks as their crafts, of lambs and then they will pretend they're lambs and the teacher's the shepherd. You can do that. You just have to think through it pretty far to do it.

Curriculum

Okay. Doing the Bible Study Pages, which is the curriculum that we have developed here, there are a lot of different ways that you can use it. Some of the ways that we've come up with, are using it during your Bible study. You know, you're going through the curriculum at the same time. You've got the Bible open and along side of the curriculum, which is a verse by verse curriculum touching the main verses in the study, and you can be doing this simultaneously. Also, you can do it as a reinforcement. You've done your Bible study. You've retold it visually, and now you're going back and you're using the curriculum, you're going through, again the study using the curriculum that's available to you. You can use it to reinforce by using the curriculum as a game, and I'll show you how we're doing that in our class from time to time. You can also use it in another way that the Spirit might lead you to use it in, whatever is most effective for you, whatever the Spirit lays upon your heart to reinforce using that curriculum. And again, it will be shown in the "Using The Curriculum" section. It will be shown in depth on some of those ways of using it.

We also have memory verses, which are included in the curriculum, and there are different ways of getting them to memorize the memory verse. You can have them do it at home, and what I've learned is that it can be difficult for them to learn it at home, because generally they're busy at home. They're doing homework from school or whatever. They're doing memory verses from school and they're at home very busy, and the fruit, you know, you just have to look at it. See how much of your class is memorizing it at home and if it's a good way of doing it for you in your class. Some classes are different and it may work well. Or you can memorize the verse in the class. There are games that are set up for memorizing, laying the verse out on the board, and then the whole class says it and you erase one word and see if the whole class say it and fill in that blank and then erase another word. And you can make a game out of it. The idea would be by the end of the time that you've allotted, that that verse is memorized. I've seen where, in a first grade class, they've put hopscotch on the floor and there's a word in each box and as they put each foot down, they say the word to the verse. By the time they get to the end of the hopscotch, they've said the whole verse and they come around and they do it again. There's different ways of memorizing. The idea, here again, is that you're getting them to memorize that verse. You can also, and the way we like to do it is, we're repeating that memory verse throughout the study. And the memory verses were selected because they were kind of encompassing that whole study. You know, memorizing that verse is a very, very good thing. Devotions are something you can encourage them at home to be either looking at that memory verse everyday, or you can be giving them portions of next weeks lesson to look at everyday. The idea would be to encourage them to spend time with the Lord everyday. And that would be the reasoning for that.

The Closing Activity, Letter (G). You always want to be prepared for spare time. If the service runs long and you're going "I'm done. Oh no." And they're still sitting down outside. "Oh no." It's still going to be five or ten minutes before somebody comes, and you've got nothing to do. You're going to feel like the King of Jericho, as Joshua and the Israelites are marching around Jericho and it's like "Oh no." It gets crazy when you get caught with nothing to do. So there have been games that are developed and Bible bingo, which hopefully you've taken a little bit time and created a bingo board that would relate to your Bible study or the section, you know, the Book of Acts, which is what you've been studying in, or Bible baseball. The same kind of thing where you know, when they get a question right, you know they move to second base or whatever. Just have games that you're able to reinforce the study. Sword drills. Again, for an older age, would be where you'd be able to get them to look into the Bible as quick as they can and look for specific words within a scripture that you give them using the curriculum again, as a game. And, at this point we're going to take a look at using the curriculum as a game. Turn a couple pages here. This also can be found in your "Using Your Curriculum" section of your notebook. The Using the Curriculum as a Game, the idea here is to get them to be looking through the Bible to look for a specific word that's found in a specific section of scripture, and at the same time, be going through the curriculum. So it says, "The following is one possible way

to reinforce or the Bible study in class”. After having already completed the Bible study using lesson 305, which is the lesson we’re going to use here, the seven churches, ask the children to keep their New King James Version Bibles open to the Book of Revelation, chapter 1 verse 20 through chapter 3 verse 22. Then we’ll go over the rules in our class every week, because of the visitors that we may have and they’re totally unfamiliar with the game. The rules would be that the class is divided into two teams, the boys against the girls, and that you would take a word from the study. We generally will not take too big of a section for them to have to look through, ten verses, maybe. “And you’ll find this word somewhere in Revelation chapter 3, between the verses of 14 and 22. And so, if you have your Bibles with you. Do you have your Bibles with you? Open to Revelation chapter 3, read between verses 14 through 22”, and then I will look and I’ll find a word in there, and I’ll say, “Okay, this word has five letters in it. One, two, three, four, five. Two, three, four. I don’t put a one or five there, because they’re clever enough in third grade to figure out that if they choose number one or number five, then the word they’re going to look for is going to start with that letter. And they’re going to zoom right through it, and the game ends way too fast. Or they’ve also figured out, if I pick number five, I’ll just get the one that ends in the letter Z. So we leave those off and then go to letters two, three, and four. Okay. Call on a volunteer, from the first team. We’d have the Bibles open and I would say,

Demonstration

Jeff: Okay, girls. Please, one of you read Revelation chapter 1, verse 20. Are there any girls who can do that for me? Girls? Ladies? Anybody like to read verse 20?

Female: I will.

Jeff: Okay.

Female: “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches.”

Jeff: So girls, ladies. Number one would be a true or false question? It reads: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands, which you saw, are the seven churches. Would that be a true or false statement? Ladies? Anyone?

Female: False.

Jeff: False. How many ladies say false? How many ladies say true? (laughs) The correct answer is true. It is, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

Female: Candlesticks.

Jeff: Candlesticks, right. Lampstands and candlesticks would be the same. Okay. So then what I would do is I would write the answer to number one is true. The reason I write that on the board, is because again, there may be some that are not reading, and they don’t necessarily know what the word true looks like until you put it on the board and then they go, “Okay, I see that word right here” and then circle it. Again, if there’s a fill

in the blank, I write out the word as it's spelled and the same thing. Okay, now let's assume that the girls got the answer to number one right. Okay, then I would say "Okay, please choose a number ladies. Which number would you like me to choose up here? Two. Okay. Number two is an "O" Okay, so then you would look between verses 14 and 22 in chapter 3 of Revelation, and see if you can find a five letter word where O is the second letter. And you have ten seconds to do it. And then the boys", this is the boy's favorite part. They would go "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one." Okay. Do we have any guesses?

Female: Could.

Female: Mouth.

Jeff: Okay. Could. Mouth.

Female: Vomit.

Jeff: Vomit, oh there's a good one.

Conclusion

And then from that point, we would go "Okay, we've got three choices here." And then you would vote on it. You say, "Okay girls, how many girls would say could?" And the girls would say "Nah, nah, nah." "How many would say vomit?" And they'd all go "Ugh..." "How many of those would say mouth? Well the correct answer is none of those." So then the boys would get their turn. You know, we usually give them a rousing "Eeee." Okay, and then the boys would go to number two. "Okay boys, chapter 2, verse 4", and if they were to get it right, would then have the opportunity to choose the next letter or which ever one it is. And this is a "C". Now the correct word is voice. Okay. But that's the idea, is, they're going through the curriculum here and at the same time, they're reading between verses 14 through 22 over, and over again. And they're reading, and they're taking it in, verses 14 through 22 over, and over again, and don't even realize that they're taking all that in, and having a lot of fun.

Question & Answer

Jeff: Yes?

Male: Could you use the memory verse?

Jeff: Yeah, you could use the memory verse. There's no reason why you couldn't. Sure.

Does anybody have any questions? The idea is to get them to be reading through, over, and over again, having fun, and you're going through the curriculum at the same time, reinforcing again. So if you have, as you came into class, given them a coloring page, or a word search, or a crossword puzzle, they've done the study once. You've given them the Bible study, you've done it twice. You've given them a visual reinforcement, flannel graphs, flashcards, filmstrip, whatever, that's another time. You've now gone through it here, using the curriculum as a reinforcement, that's a fourth time, and if they're reading through it, however many times they're reading through it, you know,

they're going through five, six, seven, eight, nine times, there shouldn't be any reason why when their parents come to pick them up, when their parents say "Oh, what did you do in class?" They say "I don't know." There shouldn't be any reason for them to say "I don't know." And if they do, it's not your fault. Looking up at your window, you may call for volunteers to help clean up. You're not going to run into a problem with volunteers, "I want to pick up Bibles, I want to pick up pencils", that's not a problem at all. The sign up time needs to be orderly and it needs to be, you need to be careful. You need to be sure that everything is picked up and that nothing is left behind. You also want to make sure at the door, that the parents that signed them in, are the ones who are signing them out. And my wife is again, at the table taking care of that part. We're doing the sign in process in reverse. I'm taking them from their desk over to the sign out table, and then my wife is saying "Goodbye" to the parents and the children, and they're on their way. Okay, so it's basically sign in, just reversed, and it works really well and you want to say "Goodbye" to each child, hopefully by name, if you can. And my wife has an advantage, because she's got that sign up sheet right there, so she can see their names right there if I miss anybody. And again, the idea is to you know, bless them as they go out the door, and hopefully the whole class has been a blessing to them and hopefully, you've been able to minister to them, you've given them God's word and everything's gone that direction. Does anybody have any questions? Yes?

Male: Do you ever use the name tags?

Jeff: I haven't in my class, but that's because I don't like to wear them myself. And that would be an issue. I'd have to wear one myself, if I asked them to wear one, so I don't. But there's no problem with doing that. They do that a lot in other classes. I just generally don't do that in mine. I know that there's a third grade class, that they bring in name plates and put it on the desk every week. And they've got quite a selection. As new ones come in, they just make another one for them and they bring them all every week. And it works really well. When those children show up, they pick it up and take it to their desk and there's never a name problem in there. That works out really well. Any other questions?

Male: As far as the same parent, in the child work group, the mother and father have come to the church that evening, but just the father has come to bring the child in, and the mother's out talking to someone and the mother comes for the child, and it's not the same parent...

Jeff: If they know that is going to happen ahead of time, we just ask them to put both names down.

Male: Oh, I see.

Jeff: And that should take care of that.

Curriculum

In this session, we are going to be taking a look at using the curriculum. That's the chapter that you'll want to look at in your training notebooks. Now, we are not necessarily going to be doing the "how to's" of using the curriculum in this session, it's more of an introduction, more of an understanding of what the curriculum is. In our next sessions, we'll be covering the "how to's", different ways, different methods of using the curriculum. So we're going to take this opportunity, first to cover what it is, and the purpose behind it.

So if you would turn to that first page, I've got it on the overhead at this point. It says, "Calvary Chapel's Children's Bible Study Support Curriculum". And what I'd like you to do, is underline, circle, highlight, whatever you want to choose to do, the word support in that title, the word support. There's a reason for that and we will touch base with that in a few minutes. This material supports studies given in the New and Old Testament and we use the New King James text for it. It's currently designed to be used in first through sixth grade, but can easily be adapted to the junior high age level. I personally think it is very appropriate for the junior high level, because there's a lot of interaction or can be a lot of interaction, and there's nothing more that the junior highers love to do, than to give their opinion. And so it's really appropriate for that age, but we have designed it primarily for first through sixth grade. The curriculum is designed as a verse by verse approach of studying the Bible with the children. There are many ways to study the Word, but what we wanted to do is go back to the open Bible, to having our Bible before us on our desk, opened, and having that as our main text. So for you to understand that, is very, very important when it comes to this curriculum, because there are many kinds of curriculum that have been created, which some of them... or a large portion of them will tell you what to do X amount of minutes throughout the entire class session. They'll have crafts involved. They will have all these different things taking place. This is not that kind of a curriculum. This is a support system for the Bible study, for the activity, and some of the things that have been referred to in the other classes that you've seen already designed, so that you can support a lot of what you've just heard. You can support what the study is, through a word search, through a crossword puzzle, through a coloring page, through the Word itself. It's extremely important to continue to repeat throughout the entire class session, as much as possible. And so we've tried to create something that would be to a benefit to all the teachers, knowing that He uses our personalities. Knowing that God teaches through us in different ways. We all should have the same goal, and that is to teach God's Word, but there may be different possible ways of doing it, which we will be covering it in sessions to come. So we've designed it in that sense. There's a lot of flexibility with it. There are currently at this point in time, and probably for some time,... we don't have any plans to write anymore of the first through sixth grade of the Bible studies at this time, but we have a hundred and sixty-three studies from the Old Testament, and a hundred and sixty-two from the New Testament, going from Genesis 1 through Revelation. A lot of studies, three hundred and twenty-five studies. In order to do one study a week, it would take

over six years to do it. And yet, when you get involved and look at the curriculum, you are going to go “Well... but this isn’t in there. And this story isn’t in there. And that story’s not in there.” We didn’t rewrite the Bible in the Children’s Ministry’s curriculum. There will always be gaps, but for the most part, most of the curriculum has been written and done, in two year cycles. Do a lot of repeating in those two years, so you don’t come close to three hundred and twenty-five options of study. So there’s a vast amount of information that can be used and again, of course, you’ll find that there are those stories there that you would say are missing. They’re good stories and of course, there’s many, many that we could not cover, but it’s a good foundation for which we have used as a platform to use verse by verse study in the classroom. Some of the teachers in the classroom, who have the ability, have a computer, understand what we’re doing, have gone on and written more that they’ve used in the class. And I’ll explain that in a little bit, a little more. Once you understand how the curriculum is set up, it’s really easy to do yourself, and there’s no limitation at that point, if you have the ability to use a computer.

Now in that outline that you had in that last session, basically that was dealing with possible classroom structures. What the curriculum has been designed to cover, is the Bible study, is the introduction to the class, the opening, the closing, but it does not have crafts in it. It does not take into effect activities. Therefore, we here at this church, will do a lot of support seminars. After the Children’s Ministries training class is completed, there are a lot of seminars that we do throughout the year: story telling seminars, activity seminars, game seminars with Biblical foundations. So we will do a lot of the training to add to this curriculum, so there are an ample amount of things that you can do. There’s so much, that most of the time some of the teachers can never really get to everything that they have available to them to actually do them in class. And that’s how we want it to be. We want the teachers to have that support, to have so many things that they can do, that their biggest concern is having enough time to do it. There are ways that we have used the curriculum in. Designing crafts, which we will look at in another session on actually using the curriculum. This is the curriculum here, in its entirety, first through sixth grade, the blue binders, the New Testament, the red binders, the Old Testament. And I’m going to grab one of them and kind of show you real quickly how we’ve set them up for the use. There are some important factors for you to be aware of as you are using it. This happens to be on the Book of Acts, and the way it is set up, in the front of every book, we have the complete studies of The New Testament listed, so you can go to any book and find where they’ll be located. But it’s set up this way, where you’ve got your title page and then behind each of the title pages will be the coloring page, and then you have the first Bible study, which if you look down and the bottom corner, there’ll be a 1/2, signifying first and second grade. All right. That’s what that represents. Then the following page will be again 1/2 on the bottom for the word search, and it’s for the younger age. And then you’ve got the Bible study, which is 3/6, which covers basically third through sixth grade. We have not broken it down any more than that, because what we’ve found many times is there’ll be a crossing over, depending on what church, depending on how much the Word has been taught. Sometimes we’ll find third grade classes wanting to use the first

and second grade level. We'll find the word search is being mixed around from different ages, and so it's only a help for you. You've got the older age word search and that's how it's set up. Now one of the things I want to bring to your attention, the way we have it set up right now for the teachers here, and that may be changing, but the teachers get the copy of this and have it photocopied in The Children's Ministries office. That means you're opening up the binder, you're pulling out a sheet, and we may have fifty people at a time trying to get some things, and we are in the process of changing this system, but right now, this is what's going on. So somebody can go "Okay, oh there's Acts. There's the Book of Acts", and they can run and grab it, and they can flip it over to here and have it open, and you'll come back to it with this page in your hand, and you'll sit it over here, not knowing what's going on, close it up and put it back on the shelf. There are numbers on here that will help keep you from doing that. They are down in the corner of each page. What those number systems are, is you'll take the Bible study, which this Bible study is 245, and we letter it after 245. First page, 245A. 245B, C, D, and all the way through. And also, we can expand what we have for resources in this curriculum book. And we have done that in many situations, where there will be different things that relate to the study, but they weren't based on the curriculum. They're good ideas, and so we'll insert it, put a letter in behind it, and now we have more resources we can use later on down the road that wasn't based on the original curriculum that we did. So that's important to understand because if you don't do this when you're pulling it out, the next time a person comes to Bible study 245, and goes for the Bible study and it's not there, where do you look? You have your choice, right here with these books. It's somewhere in those books, and it may not be found for weeks, and you need to be aware of that. So please, be aware of that. The other thing that you need to be aware of is these sleeve protectors. You do not take the pages, the paper part out of the sleeve protector, it's able to be photocopied. Sometimes people forget that, and it's a hassle putting them in and out and sometimes they get mixed up with what they copied and we end up having a clear sheet with a number on the bottom, without the page in it. So you can photocopy through these, it's important to remember that. Another thing I want to bring to your attention, is on the gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

Let's go ahead in that chapter and take a look at the actual curriculum index. Calvary Chapel Children's Ministries Support, you'll see a list starting with number one. It's in that same chapter. Keep turning the pages and you'll find it in there, because I've got one of the training books in front of me. So just keep looking. Okay, it's after the actual curriculum itself, the coloring pages. You'll come upon lists that start with Genesis. Just keep turning until you run into it. It's past the curriculum itself. I'm seeing you get to it now. Now this is a list in your training manual of all of the stories that you have here in these folders, okay? Let's just take a look at that. We're looking at Genesis, and if you look at the scriptures reference, you'll notice that basically we're going through chapter, after chapter, after chapter. It's not every single verse. There's absolutely no way that we could write something like that. So what we've attempted to do, is hit on main subjects, main themes in every chapter in as much as we can, but

there's limitations to all of that. Exodus goes on to the next page. Then you get to Numbers and you can see for yourself there are gaps. Take for example, I Samuel. The first chapter is twice, second, third, fourth, but then you've got a gap between the fourth and the ninth chapter. And we have had people that have gone on and written those gaps for their class so they can cover that Book completely. So you can do that, once you see how it's done, as I said before. Turning that page, we move into more of the Old Testament, and the following page, more of the Old Testament. And now we're getting into Luke, into the gospels. This is very important for you to understand, or you will just think you're losing everything upstairs. When you go to the books, we have written the gospels in the order chronologically. Not by the numbers, but chronologically. That means, in the order of the events from the beginning of the gospels to the end of the gospels. The reason we did that, is the gospels are constantly crossing over, sharing sometimes the same things and so we had to devise a way that we could get the stories, but we wanted to not repeat them. So what we did, was we went through chronologically and put them in order. So if you look at this, you've got the wise men in Matthew, and then you jump over to the Boy Jesus visits the temple, it's in Luke. And then you get to Mark, Matthew, and John, and Luke, and Mark, etc. Now, the reason you need to know that this is in chronological order, is because when you take one of the books and you open it up and you go to the title page... that title page here says, "203". Now the natural thought would be the next title page would be 204, but that's not the case, because it's been written in chronological order. The next title page happens to be 215. And so your first thought is "Oh oh. There's a whole lot missing. Where did it go?" And so the way you keep from having that problem in your own mind and being frustrated, not being able to find it, is you always start off with the list of Bible studies, then you look for the Bible study itself that you want. Yes, you go to the title page, we'll say, the wise men. You find the wise men at the number 170, that is not as important as knowing it's in the Book of Matthew. So what you do, is now you know that you need to go to the Book of Matthew, and you're looking for Bible study 170. You may come up to ones before it and gaps, so I hope that's understood, because it can create frustration. Does everybody understand what chronological order means? Okay. In events and therefore the numbers in the gospel, the books of the gospels will not go in sequential order. You'll find them out of order for that purpose. Now, that is only in the gospel. When you get into the Book of Acts, or you get into all the other ones and they're in order. So you will know when you... there's the Book of Acts. I open it up to a cover page... a Bible study cover page 245, the next one will be 246. If it's not, then it's lost. And so the only place you have this issue is in the gospels, for the purpose of us to being able to cover as much as we could with the gospels. I have spent too much time in regards to this, but it's important because there's always that confusion. If you still have that confusion and you're still wondering about it, talk to me after class, because I don't want to really spend any more time on it. But this is the list here of the possible Bible studies that you can use.

Many of the teachers will pray about and find a book in the Bible, and in the Bible study curriculum and go through that book with their class. We are not telling them what to do, in

regards to what to study. We have a number of classes doing, at this time, the Book of Revelation. We have a first grade class doing that. We have a fifth grade class doing that, a sixth grade class doing that. The Lord promises a blessing for those that will read that Book. And it has been a blessing for those classes. I've talked with many churches, that their entire Children's Ministry has gone through it, first through sixth grade, used the Book of Revelation, and they have seen wondrous things take place in their body. So there's nothing to be fearful of, but it is there for our use in teaching God's Word. But I thought it was important for you to understand that pertaining to the chronological order.

We are, as I said, possibly going to go to a little bit different system of copying, but right now, we are still having the teachers copy off of what they need in the office. Many times they will come in early, in the sense of maybe early in the week, where they can miss all the rush. It can be very frustrating waiting to get to the copier when you know you have to get to class and you have a time schedule. So, I recommend that if there's opportunities during the week, that you have to come in and prepare, to do so because you'll be much more relaxed at the time when you are going to be doing a whole lot more to get ready for your class.

Now, real briefly, there are those who will probably be listening to this video, watching this video, that do not have this curriculum in their church, and are wondering how they can get that. We have an order form that you can receive from Calvary Distribution and their fax order form is 714/641-8201, and you would basically, either through fax or through contacting Calvary Distribution, which can be done through contacting Calvary Costa Mesa, and they will transfer you over there. They will send you out a packet explaining what the curriculum is, so you can see it and there'll be some more explanation for what it is. It will go through and explain the outlining of it, putting it together because it doesn't come this way. It comes in one stack and then binders and then you have a choice of whether you would purchase the binders or you'd purchase different aspects of it. So the order form would be sent to you also, in case you're interested in purchasing that. It would give you an idea of exactly what is involved with the curriculum, so that is important for you to know. You can also call our office, but for the most part, we refer you over to Calvary Distribution for the purpose of that. Now we are working on a project right now, and that's why this class is being video taped. That's why all the classes have been video taped. We are attempting to put all this on a CD, and onto the internet, so all the training that's going on for the curriculum, and the curriculum itself, is going to be put on the internet, and on CD's for PC's and in Macintosh form, for the purpose of having the reference material to help in Children's Ministry classrooms, and in the leadership of that. The reason I'm sharing that at this point is because you can have access to the curriculum through that real easily, but it'll probably cost you more to download and to copy it off than you would be purchasing it for from Calvary Distribution. We have just a charge for the cost of the material to produce it and so with one phone call can get you the entire... well, I don't know how many pages, but hundreds, and hundreds of pages. You see right here what it is. You can get that and

then use the CD for any lost studies, download it. It takes forever to actually print that off. So my recommendation for people, cost effective wise is, to go ahead and purchase it directly through Calvary Distribution. This may be viewed somewhere that there's no way to get to Calvary Distribution, so download it, use it, have it, free. It's just the cost of you printing it off, so that's important to understand. That is up and coming, we think in just a few months that will be taking place and hopefully that will be a support to other Calvary Children's Ministries. And we are truly excited about that.

Okay, back to what I have on the overhead. I think we probably covered a lot, but I'm going to look back over that page to make sure if there's anything that we've missed. Each page is designed to support specific areas during class time. Again, we've had a "how to" class. A third grade "how to", and he has gone over a lot of the individual things that we would like to see take place in a classroom. That's the possible way of structuring a class. So I won't take a lot of time in doing that. I will only highlight a few things.

The coloring pages, the activity pages can be used in signing in and signing out times. I like to challenge people to understand that the coloring pages are not just for the little, little kids. They aren't just for the first grade, or the second grade. They're for all the ages. Now the more options you can give to a fifth, fourth, maybe sixth grader, the better. We had a situation in a sixth grade class where a teacher brought in coloring pages along with word searches, crossword puzzles, and again, we've already addressed that we want those things to reinforce what the lessons are going to be. So the coloring pages are about what we're going to be studying in class. The word search is about that. They brought in, on a consistent basis, coloring pages to sixth grade, and a lot of sixth grade, fifth grade teachers overlooked this. A parent came up afterwards and thanked the teacher for having coloring pages there and the teacher was kind of shocked. "Well, sure, that's great. We want to minister to your kids." She said, "No, you don't understand. My daughter can't read." Sixth grade class. "My daughter can't read and she's always having to disguise that when it comes to classrooms, and you saved face for her. She's able to color. You bring in colored pencils. The older age, sometimes they like that more than the crayon kind of thing. And I thank you for that." We need to understand that the kids are at different age levels doing different things, and there are difficulties and we don't want to offend the child. We want to support any way we can through God's word. So I encourage you, even for the older kids, to take coloring pages in. "You know, the whole class won't color because the kids really like word searches. They really like to do the crossword puzzles", but if they can't do that, then they don't have to explain to somebody, why not. That's another thing to be aware of at any age. If a child turns the page over onto the blank side and starts scribbling on it, there may be a reason why they're doing that. It may not be just not to do the assignment, so to speak, maybe because they can't read. They don't know what that word is, to find the word would be very difficult. So be sensitive to that. Some teachers take real offense that the child turns the paper over and starts you

know, doodling and doing those different things. There may be a reason for that. So be sensitive to the needs of the children.

A memory verse is included in each of the lesson and again, we'll be covering more of the "how to's", but that memory verse is not the absolute memory verse. We have a memory verse set aside on each of the Bible study pages, but you're welcome to use any other verse. You don't have to use that memory verse, so it's important. The flexibility of this curriculum is what we're trying to convey, and will try to convey over the next couple of sessions. The curriculum is not designed to be a graded test. I don't want to see people handing out... and there are still a few teachers that are attempting to do this, and I don't want them hand out and "Okay, go do it." The purpose of it is to allow the student to slowly go through the Word. And we'll see the purpose of that when we do the next session. But it's important to understand, and I will explain that more, when we're actually involved on the "how to's" of actually using the curriculum. But it's not designed for a test. I mean, do you want the student to walk away? "I flunked Bible. I don't like God anymore." You know, we want to give them an experience, that is not a failure experience. We want them to come away with understanding of how much God loves them. Not that He's a judge and "He graded me wrong, and He should have graded me on a curve instead of..." "You know? We want them to use that for the purpose of learning what the Bible has to say, not a test. They probably have enough tests in their life, they don't really need to have anymore. Again, it does not cover the entire class. It might be scary to some, and yet many of the classes are finding they're spending so much time in the Bible through this, that they aren't really having to do a lot more, even though there are occasions where that has to take place. There's this thing about ministering to kids that many times we overlook. It's like, "You really can't teach them the Bible, because they'll be bored." No, the Bible is not boring. The Bible is far from boring. Using the key to the boredom, is us, we make it boring, but the Bible is not boring by any means. And so it's important to understand that we can teach God's word for quite some time in the classroom. I read different books, and they say, "Okay, age appropriate. You can only have X amount of time for this age of a child, and X amount of time for this age of a child or you won't keep their attention." Well, yeah, if you're boring them, you won't keep their attention. But I've watched three year old classes pay attention for forty minutes to pure Bible study. Now that's unheard of because it's supposed to be three minutes. "Really?" That's what the books say. Well, if we don't show a flannel, if we don't get involved and act like we believe, hopefully it's not an act, and teach like we believe, well, they will be bored, and you will only keep them for a few minutes. And as you know, there's a point to every class and to every age level and you have to be sensitive to that, and some weeks they aren't willing to stay with you for that long and you have to continue to move through it. But it's important to understand that we're here to teach the Word of God above all. That's what's going to change their lives. That's what we've attempted to do in writing this curriculum, so it'll be a support to the teacher.

Down here you read that there is no lesson planner. If you've ever been involved with curriculum before you know that there's the lesson planner that tells you what to do, what not to do, when to do it, when not to do it. That's not there. That's why some of the things that were shared in the how to do a third grade class of every key. He went over a lot of things, of different ways of presenting and creating a classroom structure. Those aren't the only ways though. In some of the other how to classes, you'll get other ideas and we'll have some more coming up from this point on, so that's important for you to understand. What we're basically asking you to do as teachers, is to listen to God, to hear what He is saying through His Word, and then share it with the kids. We do not want to tell you what to say. I believe with all my heart that if you're waiting on the Lord, because of His great love for the children, He will tell you what to say. He has written His desires, what He wants us to know, what He wants the children to know in the Word. And it's as simple as having ears to hear, and to take some time and go "Okay Lord, what do you want me to share?" Now it's not what idea, but what scripture? Because what He wants us to share, is allowing Him to speak and that's so important, not for us to have a platform, not for us to be able to share our real important things. We are vessels for the purpose of allowing God to have a platform to speak through, His will be done, His desires, His Word. And this curriculum has been designed for those purposes, in order to allow God to speak. And so the easiest way to allow God to speak is read His Word, look at His Word, give Him the time, give Him the opportunity to change the lives of the students, that's the key. It's so simple and it's so easily missed, because we think, for a while, we've got something to say. It happens for a short period of time, because after a while we realize, "Well, we said everything that we knew to say. And now there's a lot of time and there's more classes to come. Now what do I do?" We don't have as much to say as we really think we do. So let's just stick to God's word, sharing from what He has said, and therefore we pray that the curriculum is a support for the purpose of doing that. If something has to go, between the Word of God and our curriculum, it's our curriculum. The Word of God is the reason, It's the primary reason for it. The teacher has to be able to systematically go through what God has to say, and should be used in that manner for that purpose. And that is important, and we'll probably be talking more about that in the upcoming classes pertaining to using the curriculum.

Pastor Chuck Smith

All right let's turn to Nehemiah, chapter 8. "And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the Water Gate; and they spoke to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had commanded to Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, both men and women and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood up on the pulpit of wood, which they had made for that purpose and Mat-ti-thi'ah, Shema, Anai'ah, Uri'ah, Hilki'ah, and Ma-asei'-ah were standing on his right hand; and Pedai'ah, Mish'-a-el, Malshi'jah, Hashum, Hash-bad'-danah, Zechari'ah, and Meshul'lam were standing on his left hand. And Ezra opened the book", verse 5, "in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered 'Amen, Amen' with the lifting up of their hands; and they bowed their heads and they worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. And also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebi'ah, Jamin, Addub, Shab'bethai, Hodi'ah, Ma-asei'ah, Keli'ta, Azari'ah, Jo'zabad, Hanan, Pelai'ah, the Levites caused the people to understand the law, and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly, they gave the sense and they caused them to understand the reading." Now if you don't know what expository preaching is, that's it. It's reading the word of God distinctly, giving to the people the sense and then causing them to understand. This, of course is the hallmark of the Calvary Chapels. The emphasis on the Word of God, reading the word of God distinctly, causing the people to understand.

In preparation for a service, I take the text that I'm going to be speaking from, and I read it in its context, probably twenty-five to thirty times, at least. Just reading, rereading, meditating, reading, rereading, meditating. I will often, then sort of jot down thoughts and ideas that come to me as I am reading and rereading the text in its context. By the time I've read it twenty-five or thirty times, I've got it pretty well instilled in my mind. Then I begin to think of passages in the Bible that might illustrate the basic teaching or truth of that text. I look for, "What is it seeking to say? What is the major thought?" I study the words, the key words of the text, and then I start thinking of Biblical illustrations. I've discovered that the finest commentary I have ever read on the Bible is the Bible itself. You can't beat it. It's a fantastic commentary on the Bible. And then I try to think of something that may have happened in my own life, in my own walk with the Lord where the truth of this text was made real to me, how I found it applicable in certain situations in my life. I seek then, to give the sense of the text. "This is what it's saying. This is what it means. This is how you can apply it to your life, to your circumstances. And this is how it happened in the Bible. This is the way it worked there."

For instance, Steve was sharing with us this morning, the fourth chapter of Romans where he talks about Abraham's faith. One of those four points of the faith of Abraham, was that he staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief. Now as I came across that and I was trying to prepare a lesson out of it, I thought "Where in the Bible do we have illustrations of people who have actually staggered at the promises of God. Now I know I have staggered at many of the promises of God. That one promise, "I shall supply all your needs, or the Lord will supply all of your needs according to his riches and glory by Christ." Man, I've staggered at that one. And where in the Bible do we find example of people staggering at the promises of God? And I got to thinking in the Old Testament, at the time of Eli'jah the Prophet. When the city of Samaria was under seized by the Syrians and they cut off all of the supplies, people were beginning to starve to death. They were selling the jawbone of a donkey for sixty-five pieces of silver, a quarter of a cab of a dove's dung for five pieces of silver. They were really hurting. When the ladies came to the King and the one lady cried, "King, help me. I want justice here." And he said, "What's your problem? I don't have anything." He said, "Do you want me to sweep the barns and see if I can find anything. I don't have anything myself. I'm hungry too." And she said, "No, this woman, my neighbor and I made a covenant yesterday that we would eat our babies. And so we boiled my baby and ate it and now she's hidden her baby. Make her produce it, so we can eat it." And the King tore his clothes, and he said, "God help me if I don't have the head of that Prophet Eli'jah", as he sought to blame Eli'jah for the problems. And so Eli'jah was sitting there in his house with his friends and he's sort of a character, I like Eli'jah. I admire him. I wish I had more of the sensitivity to the Spirit as he does, or did. Because he was the kind of guy you'd be sitting in there talking with him and then he'd go "Huh, wow. Far out. I can't believe it. Unreal, you know. What's going on? You know." And the Lord will be showing him something. He was so tuned in, so tuned in that he was surprised when the Lord didn't show him things. Now I'm surprised whenever the Lord shows me something. A couple times in my life, the Lord has shown me something. Got so excited, I lived on it for months you know. "Oh, the Lord... all right... you know!" All excited because the Lord showed me something. Rare, rare, but this guy was surprised when the Lord didn't show him things. So here he was sitting with his friends and he starts his old far out thing, you know, "Unreal. I can't believe it." You know. And they're like, "What's going on man?" "Oh, the King, he's sending a guy down here to get my head. Can you believe that? Now as soon as he knocks on the door, open the door and pin him, and hold him fast because the King is right behind him with a Prime Minister." So here's a knock on the door, and Eli'jah's friend's open the door, and they pin the guy, the messenger, and here the King came riding up with this Prime Minister. And he said, "Okay Eli'jah, you've troubled Israel long enough. Your time has come." And Eli'jah said, "Wait a minute man, you're the one that's trouble Israel. You're the one that's brought in the worship of Baal and the false gods. It's not me, it's you. But don't worry, tomorrow by this time, in the gate of Samaria, they'll be selling a bushel of fine flour for sixty-five cents." And this guy, Prime Minister on whom the King leaned, said, "If God should open windows in heaven, could such a thing be?" What happened? He was staggering at the promises of God. So I look for a Biblical illustration and as I

say, the Bible is a great book for illustrations. It's a great book for commentary. And so finding the scripture, giving the sense, giving the illustrations, you open up the scriptures to the people.

Now I notice here that the people were very interested in what God had to say. The people were standing from morning to noon time, listening to them, as they gave them the scriptures, gave them the sense and the understanding, "Here you are, kickback." Now, if we had the things scripturally, I'd be kicked back here and you guys would all be standing. Here they were standing from morning to noon, attentive to the Word of God, listening to the teaching. Don't give me that business, "Well people aren't interested in the Bible. They are very interested in the Bible. The problem is they have a hard time finding a place where the Bible is being taught. They go to church and they hear all about psychology and the latest kind of concepts of psychology. Or, they go to church and they hear all about philosophy, "Well, Socrates said, and Aristotle said"... it makes you sound very brilliant. "You can quote Socrates, wow!" But they don't need to know what those guys, their own contemporaries put them down. y don't need to know what the philosophers had to say, they need to know what God has to say about life. Many of those people that they're quoting... the psychologist... have you even met a psychologist that was really, you know, had his feet on the ground? Solid? Was a well balanced person? I had a psychology professor tell me, "Be extremely careful when you choose your psychologist because most of them have severe mental problems. The reason why they have their degree in psychology is when they went to college, they had all of these personal problems, they were trying understand themselves, and so they took every psychology course that was offered in the college. When they got ready to graduate, they found they had a psychology degree. So you hang up the shingle. Their lives are so often messed up and yet they're trying to tell you how to live. They've been through five marriages, but they're gonna counsel you on how to get along with your wife. People don't need to know what psychology has to say about life, they're still trying to find out themselves. They need to know what God says about life. And when they come to church, they need to know what God has to say.

Now as I read down in the eighth chapter, as God's word was being read, they came across the passage that talked about how that their fathers had built these little booths to celebrate God's preservation through their forty years in their wilderness. And they hadn't done this for years. And so they decided, "We're all gonna build booths. It's the seventh month. It's the time for the feasts of the tabernacles and so they built their booths and they began to institute again the prescribed worship of God. In other words, the Word of God brought obedience in their hearts. And so our tasks, as even in the times of Nehemiah, when they gave them the Word, they then gave them the sense, and then they gave understanding to the Word. I do notice that it was only the adults and those that had understanding. That is, they didn't have the little kids around distracting. A lot of times I get in trouble because we don't allow babies in the church, but notice here, there was only those who were able to understand. Why bore a kid to death. If he can't understand it, then put him in a class where he can understand it. Let church be an enjoyable

experience to him, not a bore, where he is going to sit there and fidget and you know, keep his parents from being able to concentrate and just keep things in a constant turmoil. It used to be, we had our family devotions at home and our littlest daughter would say, “Time for family commotions.” And so often when you have the little ones, that’s what it becomes, commotions, rather than devotions. And so, I just saw that as sort of an interesting side light to the teaching of the Word. And so, we have a task. People are hungry for the Word of God. If you will really study it, get an understanding of it, and then expository teaching is just the reading of the scriptures, giving the sense, giving the understanding of what it means, and people want to know. They’re hungry to know, and I have been observed that in every Calvary Chapel where we have one of these mega churches, it’s where a Pastor has been there for over five years faithfully teaching the Word of God. Every one of the Lord’s churches, and we’ve got a bunch of them, there is that one common aspect to that church. There is that solid strong teaching and applying of the truths of God’s Word. That’s the key for success. And so we encourage you to follow the example. And as you go, become a Bible expositor, teach God’s Word. As Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” As has been pointed out to us on several occasions. Shall we pray.

Closing Prayer

“Father, we thank You for Your Word, a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path; Your Word that gives us power over sin, Your Word that helps us in the hour of temptation, Your Word that brings us rejoicing. Even as the people went their way rejoicing, because they were convicted of their sin and they forsook their sin and in finding the forgiveness, found great joy, Lord, we thank You that that’s the effect of Your Word. Conviction followed by the forgiveness, followed by the rejoicing, as with David, “Oh how happy is the man who’s transgressions are forgiven.” And so Lord, as we’re here right now, we want to make a fresh commitment unto You, that we will to the best of our ability and the enabling of the Holy Spirit, go to those flocks that You’ve called us to minister to, and we will be faithful Lord, faithful shepherds who will feed the flock of God that is among us. Use us Lord to teach Your Word unto the people. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.”

Pastor Jon Courson

Two years ago, Ministries Magazine ran an article on Pastoral burnout. And they talked about how for the first time in recent history, more men and women are leaving the ministry than going into it. And the reason is, burnout. They pointed out that the average Pastor now stays in the place of ministry where he's serving for two point seven years. And then he moves on or gets out. Why? Burnout. Now if that's happening in the so called professional clergy, burnout, man you got to know it's got to be taking place in the laity. People like you, who are serving the Lord, giving yourself to tending the kids, people like you all across the country are also leaving the ministry, leaving their place of service because of burnout. Why? And how can you keep yourself from turning to burnout? Well, turn with me to the illustration of ministry burnout in the Book of Leviticus, chapter 10, page 139, if you have the anointed version. (laughs) Leviticus, chapter 10.

Now to set the stage in chapter 9, man, revival was happening. The tabernacle had just been constructed. The work completed. And the Lord sent down fire from heaven to ignite the sacrifice that was on the altar there. And man, the people were thrilled. They were elated, as you would be if you saw fire coming from heaven and igniting the sacrifice so powerfully. And the people were just going crazy. It says, "Moses and Aaron went in", verse 23 of chapter 9, "to the tabernacle and came out blessing the people. The glory of the Lord appeared to all the people". The chabod, the glory, which means the weight, it was heavy; the substance, the reality, the tangible, visual presence of the Lord was seen, you see. "And there came out", verse 24 of chapter 9, "a fire from, before the Lord and consumed, upon the altar, the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted". There was a Pentecostal happening, man. "And then they fell on their faces", in Episcopalian liturgy. They shouted "Wow" and they fell on their faces in awe, you see. These guys were excited. Then the story goes on. "Nahab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer", little incense pot, "and put fire therein and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not". Nahab and Abihu were excited. They were part of the revival. They were seeing the glory of the Lord descending. They watched, the people shouting, "Hallelujah" and falling on their face in awe before the glory of the Lord you see. And they said, "Man, sign us up for ministry. We want to get involved in this thing. This is hot", as they saw the fire come down. And they grabbed their little incense pot, and they said "Hey, we're going to be a part of the ministry team", thrilling and exciting you see, and they lift the little incense pot, and they were right in the middle of the happening when, verse 2 of chapter 10, "there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them and they died before the Lord". Talk about burnout. (Laughter) I mean, is this the ultimate illustration of burnout or not? (Laughter) I mean, here they are, signing up, to serve in Sunday school, excited to be a part of the ministry and they grabbed their little incense pots and "boom!", fire comes down from heaven and they're crispy critters, literally. Burned out. What's going on? They just wanted to be part of the revival, seemingly. It seemed to be the great thing to

do. The hot place to be. “Hey, serving the Lord man”, but fire came down from heaven and devoured them. Interesting then, Moses said to Aaron, verse 3, “This is it that the Lord spoke saying ‘I will be sanctified to them that come nigh to me, and before all the people, I will be glorified’, and Aaron held his peace”. Put yourself in Aaron’s sandals. Here you are, the high priest, you see your two boys seemingly zealous in service, wanting to be a part of the revival, fire comes down from heaven and consumes them. Your two sons, now dead. And Moses comes to Aaron and says, “this is what the Lord meant when he said ‘I will be sanctified. I will be glorified.’” In other words, Nahab and Abihu, these sons of Aaron, were serving in a way seemingly that drew the attention to themselves, you see. The glory wasn’t going to the Lord.

The people weren’t focusing upon the Lord. This is what the Lord meant in verse 3, Moses said to Aaron very straight forwardly, “the Lord said, ‘I will be sanctified. I will be glorified.’” And Aaron, who knew his sons, knew their candidacy, evidently wanting to draw attention to themselves, held his peace, you see. Evidently, these were guys that were filled with pride, kind of like Muhammad Ali. “I am the greatest”, Ali said. True story. Ali was on a jet plane, flying to the thrilla in Manilla. And as the plane was ready to take off, the stewardess came down the aisle and said to Muhammad Ali, “Mr. Ali, fasten your seatbelt.” And Ali looked up at her and snarled “Superman don’t need no seatbelt.” And she looked back at him and said, “Superman don’t need no airplane.” (Laughter) Evidently Nahab and Abihu had somewhat of the Muhammad Ali mentality. They thought they were hot. They turned out to be. “I will be sanctified. I will be glorified.” But wait, I know that’s not you. That’s not us. Certainly today, there’s something else though, that strikes a little closer to home perhaps. Not only were they offering their incense in such a way, but it seemed to be drawing attention to themselves. But the Lord tells us here in chapter 10, that the problem was, they were offering strange fire. Verse 1, “strange fire”. Now, pray tell. What is strange fire? What does that mean? That they took their incense pots and they lit strange fire to release the aroma in the presence of the congregation. What does that mean? Well, I’ll read to you a few pages over from chapter 16, speaking of what was supposed to take place in the igniting of the incense. “The priest shall take a censer”, verse 12, “full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord...”. And his hands? “...full of sweet incense beaten small and shall bring it within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony that he died not”. In other words, verse 12 and 13, tell us very directly that the fire that was to be used to ignite this incense was to be taken off the altar, and only the altar. The altar that had ignited when fire came down from heaven in chapter 9, as we saw previously, that was the fire that they were to draw from, but what happened to Nahab and Abihu? It would seem though, in the excitement of wanting to be in the action, engaged in ministry, they lit their own fire. They grabbed their Bic. They struck a match. I don’t know. Whatever, but they grabbed their own fire. They lit their own fire, and consequently it was not fire from off the altar. Thus, they violated a very essential stipulation and they burned out, you see.

Now, brothers and sisters, co-workers, fellow laborers in the lard, you're going to burn out. You may have heard an exciting presentation, by some minister about being engaged and serving children. You may have read a book or an article upon the importance of serving kids and the opportunity that you could have in serving them, you see. But I'll tell you truthfully, you may be excited about being a part of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, or Downey, or Golden Springs, or where ever you might be from, and say "Man, I want to be involved. I can't wait. I'm fired up". But you'll burnout if you're offering strange fire, fire that is not from off the altar. "What do you mean, John?" Some people are saying "Man, I'm fired up, because I just want to see people blessed. And I've got this burning passion inside of me, because I want to see the sixth graders blessed or the junior highers do well. Or the first graders excel", you see. But what happens in your desire to see them excel when you see them not do so well? They don't seem to be taking in or receiving from you in the way you thought they would or should. They're goofing off in class. They're acting up week after week, and finally you say, "I'm tired of these rascals, these squirrels. Who needs it?" (Laughter) "They're not receiving from me. They're not responding to me. I'm out of here man. That's it." Burned out. Because people will not, whether it's junior highers, or third graders, or pre-schoolers, or adults, or in the rest home ministry, I'll tell you the truth, people are not going to respond to you always in the way you thought they would, in the way you hoped it would be. It's not going to happen. There's spiritual warfare going on, the enemy is distracting, the enemy is hindering, derailing, and causing all kinds of problems in ministry. It's a war that we're engaged in. And if you're doing it just to see people do well, and that's your sole motivation, hey, you're going to burn out. "Well I just want to see kids get saved", that's what some say. "I just want to see them open up their heart to their life to Jesus Christ." But what happens if you find yourself in a situation like Jeremiah, who preached for forty years and how many converts did he see? Zero, zip, nada. And if your goal, if your fire, if your passion is to see people saved, what happens when, week after week, they don't respond to the invitation that you'll give them? You'll burn out. Others say, "It's just something within me. I need to feel fulfilled. I need to be involved. I have this desire inside to do this". Well, that will see it through for a month or two. But then what will happen, sooner or later, you'll find something else that seems to be more fulfilling, more exciting, like golf. (Laughter) And you'll say to the Children's Director and Youth Pastor, "Look, I've done my time. I'm out of here. And now I can't wait to go down to the course and tee up Sunday morning", you see. All kinds of reasons that people get involved initially in children's work, in ministry. And that's why they're falling like flies and burning out so badly.

Only fire that is from the altar can be used to ignite your censer, your incense pot. "And what does that mean, John? Fire from off the altar?" What does the altar speak of in typology? The brass altar speaks of one thing specifically. It speaks of Calvary, the cross, where the fire of God's wrath is poured out upon the Lamb of God who absorbed the heat and paid the price for my sin. He paid for me, and when that becomes real to me and burning within me and it's no longer an issue of serving, because of wanting to fulfill something inside of me, or to see people

saved even, or kids do well. All those things are secondary. In II Corinthians chapter 5, Paul said “It’s the love of Christ that constrains me, that motivates me. The love that Christ has for me. What He did in place of me. How good He’s been to me. That’s what motivates me in ministry. And that’s it. So regardless of how people respond to me for the fulfillment I might or might not have internally, that is not the issue. It’s what Christ did and does”. Two things here. I stay on fire day, after week, after year, after decade in ministry. I stay on fire and don’t get burnt out when I see truly what He did for me on Calvary.

Number one, when I see truly what He did for me, when I really get it, and focus on it, looking on to Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith. My Savior, when I see what He did for me on the tree, I see Him hanging there, crying out “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” “Eli, Eli, la’ma sabach-tha’ni”, And I realize He’s hanging in there for me, pinned to the tree for me. In Psalm 22, He quotes and interestingly enough, in Psalm 22, as He quotes that Psalm “My God, My God, why has God forsaken Me?” As you work through this Psalm, write down around verse 5, He say’s “I am a worm and not a man.” What did he mean by that? Think with me on that. Listen carefully. Paul says “Great is the mystery of godliness. That God became a man and the man became a lamb.” “Behold” John the Baptist said, “The lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”, God becomes a man in Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ is the lamb. But wait, the lamb becomes a worm.” The word worm there in Psalms 22, “I am a worm and not a man.

The word tolaith, t-o-l-a-i-t-h. It blows my mind. It intrigues me greatly. For you see the word tolaith, is a word in the Hebrew that’s translated in two ways. Number one, worm, and number two, scarlet. Isaiah says, “Though your sins be in scarlet, they shall be” what? “white as snow.” The word there is tolaith. When you go through the Old Testament and you read about the scarlet colors in the tabernacle and on the garments of the priests, the word is tolaith. Worm or scarlet. Why? Because in Bible days when they wanted to make something that had a scarlet color, when they wanted to dye cloth, color cloth, they couldn’t go to the grocery store and buy cloth dye. So they would take the tolaith, this little worm... they would gather the worms up and put them into a container and grind them. Then they would take the cloth and they would dip it into the ground up tolaith, and the cloth would take on this scarlet color. But the interesting thing to me about the tolaith is this: the worm that made scarlet color, when that worm wanted to reproduce itself, it would climb up the trunk of a tree, go out to a limb, fasten itself on a limb of the tree, reproduce and die in the process, leaving a small scarlet spot on the limb of the tree. Jesus Christ said “I am a tolaith” as he was pinned to the tree of Calvary. What was he doing? God became a lamb, became a man, became a worm, where he was pinned to the tree, the limb of the tree you see. Doing what? Purchasing John Courson’s salvation. Me! He was thinking about me personally. He took every one of my sins, specifically, and he died on the cross there for me, that I might be birthed.

They stuck a spear in His side, and out from that gash in His side came blood and water. The fluids of what? Birthing. The water breaks, the blood flows when a child is being born. Something was being born. What? You and me. Born again. Adopted now into His family. He wasn't just dying generically for the world brothers and sisters, you were on his mind, you were in his heart, your sins were being atoned for individually, specifically, personally. You. "Come on John, that's insanity" you might say. How could He accomplish that with just a few hours on the cross? How could He think of each of us and die for every sin that we've done? Herein lies a great mystery. We are told that Jesus Christ, the lamb crucified for the foundation of the world. We are told that when we see Him, we shall see him as a lamb having been slain. I do not fully understand, I cannot possibly apprehend or comprehend what that means, but I know this: the sufferings of Jesus, the work that he did far transcends and exceeds anything that we have, even an inkling of understanding about on this side of eternity. When we get there and realize what he did for me and you personally, we will fall at his feet and cast whatever crown we have for Him and say "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power. Lord, we didn't get it. We didn't understand fully. We saw through a glass darkly, but now Lord, we see clearly what you did." Wow. The cross, fire from the altar, Calvary.

What if, you died today, and you go to heaven, and the Father takes you on a guided tour of the cosmos, and you're cruising around and you're saying "Wow, this is great Lord, the surfing, skiing, incredible. Man, skiing down Mt. Zion, and water-skiing on the Crystal Sea, talk about glassy conditions, it's exactly... oh Lord, this whole thing is just ooh..." "and you're just totally amazed and deeply blessed, and the Father continues the tour of all these great things which just blow you out. And then He takes you to the far corner of the universe, and He says, "Look at that planet over there." And you say, "Hey, that's..." "and you zoom in closer. "Wow Lord, neat. A planet that's totally inhabited by dogs. That's great. That's just super. That's... wow. Let's go someplace else." "No, no. Look closer." And so you closer. You zoom in a little tighter and you see that that planet, inhabited by dogs is not so cute, not really. The dogs all have their fangs bared. Saliva is running down their mouth. They're bloody, and devouring, and fighting constantly, crazily, wild eyes flaming from within them you see. "Oh Lord, that's terrible. That's sick. What's the deal?" "The whole planet", He says to you, "has been infected with rabies." "Oh Father, wow, that's sad. Wipe them out." "Well", He says, "you see, I really love those dogs." "You do?" "I really do." "Well, okay. Help them out." "I want to. I've got medicine for them that will totally and completely heal them." "Well, give it to them Father!" "Therein lies the problem", He says to you. "You see, I'm so big and awesome, and holy, and powerful, that they don't even acknowledge me. The only way that I can really speak to them and make this medicine available for them is if I send somebody to live among them and become just like them. That's why I brought you here. "Let me get this straight," you say. (Laughter) "Those dogs that are sick and bloodied and fighting and devouring each other, you care about? And You have a medicine to help them? "Uh-huh." "And You can't really connect with them because You're so awesome and big?" "Right." "And somebody's got to become like them to relate to them and

share with them?” “Uh-huh.” “And that’s why You brought me here?” “Yeah. I want you to become a dog.” “Wow.” “And not just any kind of dog. We’re talking Chihuahua.” (Laughter) “You mean, You want me to become a Chihuahua?” “That’s right. Humble and meek, and the lowly of mind. And there’s something else. When you talk to them, they’re not going to listen to you. In fact, most of them are going to be viscously antagonistic toward you. In fact, they’re going to sink their fangs into you and rip you apart and wipe you out.” “I’m going to become a Chihuahua, and tell these people that You have medicine for them, that You care about them, but they’re going to turn on me. They’re going to sink their fangs into me, they’re going to shred me...” “Yes.” “They’re going to kill me.” “Yes.” “But, but,... but after that, I will resurrect you from the dead.” “Whew.” “But it’s not that simple you see, you will then be resurrected a glorified Chihuahua forever. (Laughter) You will be resurrected and glorified, but you will remain a dog throughout eternity.” What if really that happened to you? I would say, “Father, I appreciate Your compassion but...(Laughter) You’re barking up the wrong tree, quite frankly...

Oh Father!” Brothers and sisters, listen. That’s what happened to our Lord, our leader, our love, our hero, our king, our friend, except for, the step Jesus Christ took down, to become like us; to dwell with us and die for us and remain like us, for He still is totally human. A hundred percent God, yes, but a hundred percent man, He’s locked into His humanity. He is our faithful, compassionate high priest, we are told in Hebrews very clearly. The step that He took down to become like you and me, is a step far, far more radical than if you became a Chihuahua. And when I hold the bread and ponder the cup, and remember what He did for me, the tolaith, the scarlet worm, coming to dwell among us, to die for us, I get fired up inside and I can’t help then, but say “Lord, what can I do for You? In light of what You did for me, what can I do for You?” That’s why Paul said, “It’s the love of Christ that constrains us, not love of people, not caring about the lost, as good as those things might be, but that is not the primary motive, it’s the love of Christ. Jesus loves me. Look what He did for me.”

Number two. I cannot help but be on fire when I see what He did for me, and secondly, when I see how He still loves on me. Not just what He did on the cross, and that’s enough, believe me, but how He still loves me. How good He is to me, right now. His love for me, you see, it’s the love of Christ that constrains me. A lot of you know, a lot of you are aware of the fact that Jesus died for our sins. God does care about us. For Romans 5:8 says, “God demonstrated His love for us while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” When did He die for you? When did He fall in love with you? Not when you were going to church or studying the Bible or teaching in Sunday school, He loved you when you were a rebel, a sinner, when you were at your worst. So don’t you know, if He loved you when you were at your worst, when you could care less about Him, that He loves you now.

It will be like, if the first time I saw my wife Tammy. Let’s say I went up to the door and knocked thereon and she came and opened it wide and there she was, cold cream on her face...

(Laughter) curlers in her hair. An ugly blue fuzzy robe wrapped around her body, cherry bon bons dripping from her chin... (Laughter) soap operas blaring in the background, and I look at her and her blue fuzzy robe, curlers in her hair and cold cream on her face and bon bons running down her chin and I say “I love you... (Laughter) I want to spend my whole life with you. I’m going to pick you up tomorrow. We’ll go to the chapel. We’ll get married and we’ll go off to Maui.” “Okay”, she says. The next day I show up and the cold cream is no longer on her face. The curlers are no longer in her hair. Her hair, flowing beautifully, her face, shining. Glowing, really. The robe? No, a white dress, and she looks primo. And I say “Wooooow! I loved you when you were dog bait... (Laughter) I loved you when... and now look at you! Oooh, let’s go!” And off we go you see, on our honeymoon to Hawaii.

Do you know when God loved you? When you were dog bait. He looked on you and said, “I choose you to be my bride. I love you so much,” so don’t you know... everyone who’s in this sanctuary... don’t you know, that if He loved you then, when you could care less about Him, when you were caught up in your sin, He chose you then to be His bride. Don’t you know that He loves you now, now that you’re trying to walk with Him? Can I ask for your patience? I’m almost done. You’ve got to see this, if you’ve never caught it before. The implications for your ministry are radical. How did He love you? Oh you know the passage. Turn there quickly, if you can. I Corinthians 13. The classic chapter on love, I Corinthians 13. How often I’ve read this passage and been so blessed, but at the same time, so bummed. I go “This is what love should be.” And you know, that man, it describes the kind of love that we should have for the kids that we’re working with, for the people that we’re connected to. This idea of love, man, love is the key. If you give your body to be burned, speaking of burning out in ministry, Paul says, “But you don’t have love”, verse 3. “It’s nothing.” You can burn out man! “But if it’s not motivated by love, it’s nothing.” Then he describes love. “Love suffers long and is kind. Love envies not. Love vaunts not itself up, is not puffed up and does not behave itself unseemingly, seeks not her own, rejoices not in evil, but rejoices in the truth. Bares all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never fails.” And I say all outstanding, “But it’s not me. Oh, I’m better than I was maybe a decade ago, but I fail still so miserably.” Listen carefully.

Look at this passage through a different set of glasses. Love. Agape. What is love? I John 4:16 says what? “God is agape. God is love”. This passage speaks to me about how God loves me and you, right now, today. God loves you and suffers long. Verse 4. He’s not going to turn his back on you. He’s not going to wash his hands of you because you failed to pray, to be the man or the woman that you should be, because you haven’t been studying as hard as you could, because your motives have been mixed, because you’ve been struggling with some problem. He suffers long. The word long in the Greek means long. (Laughter) God loves me and He suffers long and I see Him there again on Calvary. And as they were cursing Him and spitting on Him, making fun of Him, and shaking their fists at Him, what did He say? “Father, forgive them. They don’t get it. They don’t know what they’re doing.” How many of you today have spat on Jesus Christ,

or shook your fist at His face, or cursed Him? Made fun of Him? I dare say none of you have. But those who did, He suffered long, even with them. “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they’re doing.” That’s the way God loves me today. He suffers long.

He’s kind. Verse 3, God is kind to me. How kind? He makes Santa Claus look like the Grinch who stole Christmas. What do you mean John? See this thing about Santa Claus, what is the deal? Simply this. People innately crave and desire and wish that there could be someone who was benevolent and jolly and fun to be with. Who would give good gifts to children. Oh the heart of man says, “Would there be? Could there be? Oh, I wish there was someone who was wise and yet jolly, generous”. It’s man expressing his desire to know the heaven above. You see, the heavenly Father makes Santa Claus look like the grinch, because Santa Claus is making a list and checking it twice, going to find out who’s naughty or nice, but with us, Paul tells us that the hand written list of sins against us, the list of our naughtiness was what? Blotted out by the blood of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh. The everlasting Father, dying for me, you see. So now, He says, “If you being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give good gifts to His? He’s kind, fun to be around, generous and gracious. And the list that was written against me, wiped out. God, He suffers long with me. God is kind to me. God envies not. He’s not co-dependent. He doesn’t smother me, because God’s love is completely fulfilled in the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit. Did you know they got along fine before we were created? God was not in heaven saying “Man, I’m lonely. This is a bummer for zillions of years. I got it. I’ll make people. That’s what I’ll do.” That’s not it folks. Father, Son, and Spirit, living together in perfect harmony, this mystery of the Holy Trinity, fulfilled completely. What does that mean? That means, even as I Corinthians 13 says, “God’s love envies not”, He’s not smothering me. He loves me. He embraces me. He avails himself to me, but he doesn’t, in the truest sense of the word, need me. He doesn’t smother you or me. He’s a loving Father who enjoys us greatly. Time doesn’t allow, but go through this list in I Corinthians 13. Would you please? Sometime soon? And ponder and meditate on, this is the way God loves you.

In fact, in John, chapter 17, ... don’t turn there, I’ll just read it to you. Jesus said this as He was talking to the Father. “Father, I in them, and Thou in Me, that they be perfect in oneness, that the world may know that You have sent Me, and that You have loved them even as you love Me.” John 17:23. Did you catch that? “But it might be understood Father, that You love them, as much as You love Me.” Jesus said to His Father. “How can that be”, you say? “He’s the only begotten Son and we’ve been adopted.” True. In our area, a few years ago, two boys signed up for Little League. They went to the Registrar and the Registrar said, “Hey, what’s the deal? You’re Jeff Smith and you’re Steve Smith?” “Yep.” “And you’re both eight years old?” “Yep.” “You were born in April and you were born in July?” “Yep.” “That doesn’t make sense. You’re both eight and you’re brothers? What’s the deal?” The guys said “Well, we’re not totally brothers, one of us was adopted.” And the Registrar said, “Well, which one?” And Steve said, “To tell you the truth,

we asked our Dad, and he just said, ‘he adopted one of us, but he just loves us so much, that he forgot which one he adopted.’ We don’t know.” The Lord chose me. The Father chose me to be a joint heir of Jesus Christ, to rule and reign with Him, to be linked to Him, to be intimate with Him as His bride. He loves me, and He loves you. Now what does that do? As I read through I Corinthians 13, I say “Lord, You love me truly. As I look at the cross of Calvary, I marvel at what You did for me”, and I realize He loves me. And I go into Sunday school. And if they’re acting up, if they’re not listening or responding, you know what? That’s not the issue. Ever been dumped before by somebody you cared a bunch about? Man, you wake up in the morning the day after you’ve been dumped, and you get into your car and on the way, you’re yelling at everybody in front of you, or behind you. You walk in the office and your co-workers and colleagues look at you and they say, “Ugh, stay away from him or her today.” You’re mean and irritable because you’ve been dumped. You’ve been rejected and it just comes out. And, everybody says, “Stay away.” Contrast that though with the first time that special he or she looked into your eye and said “You know, I’m in love with you.” Wow. The next day you get into your car and somebody cuts you off... “God bless you”... (Laughter) You walk into your office and your boss says “There’s going to be a lay off, you’re fired.” “That’s okay, don’t worry about it. No hard feelings.” When you’re in love, when you’re being loved, by someone who is lovely, it just gushes out of you. When you feel like you’ve been dumped or rejected, not accepted, you become grumpy, and mean, and irritable. I challenge you today, in this first session, to a very simple and significant proposition. Do those kids know when you walk in to the class, Sunday, after Wednesday, or whenever you’re with them, they might be acting up, or squirreling around, or not responding, but do they say, “Wow, look at the glow on him or her?” Even if you have to share with them some pretty significant stuff. Even if the law has to be laid down... the children of Israel said to Moses, when he came down with the law they said to him the second time, “What ever you say we’ll do.” The kids, the ultimate Sunday school, three million children said to Moses, “What ever you say, we’ll do.” Why, pray tell? Unbeknownst to Moses, initially when he came down, he had spent, you see, forty days in the presence of the Lord. And it says, “He didn’t eat a thing.” It wasn’t because he was fasting, it was because he was in love, and he forgot to eat. Ever been so radically in love, that the meal before you, is insignificant? That’s what happened to Moses, he was just in love, amazed at the beauty, and glory, and love of God. And so when he came down with the law, what happened? His face was glowing. And the kids said, “What ever you say teacher we’ll do.” If he had come down snarling and barking, the kids would say “Legalism.” But he didn’t come down snarling and barking. Like C.H. Spurgeon said to his students, there at the metropolitan tabernacle, he said, “Men, when you preach on heaven, let there be a twinkle in your eye, and a smile on your face, and a glow from your skin. When you preach on hell, you’re normal face will do fine.” (Laughter)

And I say to you, When it’s the love of Christ that constrains you, when you see what He did for you on the tree, and when you see the way He loves you today, I Corinthians 13. For you, personally, you can’t help but go into that class, even if you got to lay down the law. But they’ll

sense man, “He’s in love with God or she’s in love with the Lord”, and there’s something radiating from them that allows them to say, “Whatever you say teach, we’ll do”, even if it’s issues of life and death. Or, I think of a greater than Moses on another mountain, the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus, He was glowing. What was He doing? Luke tells us He was talking to Eli’ jah and Moses there on the mountain, about His death. But what did Peter say? What did Peter say on the mountain that day? He saw Him glowing and he said, “Lord, it’s good for us to be here, even though you’re talking about death. Let’s build three booths. One for you, one for Eli’ jah, one for Moses.” Even when you’re talking about things that normal seem heavy, and depressing, and discouraging, if you’re glowing, your kids will look at you, and say “I’m glad I came today. It’s good for us to be here. It’s good for us to be here. Let’s camp out teacher, let’s stay longer”. But if you’re not glowing and you talk about issues of life and death, man, their reaction will be totally different. You see, it’s so simple, the love of Christ will keep you from burning out and will cause you to glow, and cause the people that you’re with to be warmed up. How do you do that? Spend time with Jesus constantly. Keep your eyes on Him, talk to Him, walk with Him, celebrate communion. Meditatively, appreciatively, marvel at the love He has for you, as you study through the Word. You see, the love of Christ will constrain you and you’ll never burn out, you’ll just burn bright. And the kids will be warmed up. You watch. You wait. You’ll see. Shall we stand?

Singing

Purify my heart, let me be as gold, and precious silver. Purify my heart, let me be as gold, pure gold. Refiner’s fire, my heart’s one desire is to be holy, set apart for You, Lord. I choose to be holy, set apart for You, my Master, ready to do Your will. I will serve You, because I love You, You have given life to me. I was nothing, until you found me, You have given life to me. Heart ache, broken people, ruined lives are why You died on Calvary. Your touch is what I long for, You have given life to me. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full Him and his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.

Closing

May you never burn out. May you always burn bright as you take the fire from off the altar, focusing on the love of Jesus Christ for you and letting it be radiated and reflective from you. And thanks for letting me share and God bless.

Opening Prayer

“Father, we come to You again, in total need. We need Your strength. We need Your wisdom. We need for You to give understanding. So tonight as we look at discipline, I would pray that You would speak to each of our hearts in very personal ways, in ways that You want us to understand Your love for us. So we thank You for allowing us to come together again, and ask that You become a part of all this. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Introduction To Classroom Discipline

Tonight we’re going to take a look at discipline in the classroom. It’s interesting because there’s all kinds of forms of discipline, different ways, different concepts, different ideas. And the first page that we’re looking at is the introduction page. It’s one up there. It’s just a small introduction. If you want to write some notes up there, there’s not much room, but many times discipline is a very confusing matter. “Am I doing it the right way? Is there such a thing as the right way?” We’re told and taught much about relativity. Everything relates to the situation at hand and all these different aspects of, and if that’s true, well then, is there a right way or a wrong to discipline? And if it is relative, then each situation is gonna be totally different. And so we get kind of checked on that one.

There’s different degrees of questioning what the Word of God has to say about discipline, usually through the secular world, but not all the time, but we find ourselves being concerned. “Maybe I’m doing it wrong”, and then that kind of leads to, “Maybe I won’t do it at all.” Or “I’ll do it second rate, just to be safe.” There’s all kinds of feelings that go into it. “If I discipline, maybe it’ll make the class feel bad, or me feel bad”, and the concept of discipline is many times not understood in its entirety. When we think in terms of discipline, many times what we’re thinking is corrective discipline. We’re thinking, “Okay, somebody’s done something wrong, now what?” And that’s only a part of discipline. And so we’re gonna be looking this evening at different aspects of discipline.

Some of the things we’re gonna be looking at is why our heavenly Father disciplines us? Some thoughts on Ephesians 6:4, “Provoke not your child.” Results of discipline. Why do children misbehave? A very important aspect to understand, the difference between discipline and punishment. Guidelines for discipline, preventative, and guidelines for discipline, corrective.

Steps to discipline in rules. Now, when it comes to discipline, one of the things that you find as a common denominator, if you look it up in a dictionary, you would find the word training, in many aspects of what discipline is. That is very important to understand, because many times we think it just happens. A child is just born good. And yet that’s not true. And many times we get confused in the fact that we do need to do things in regards to training. If you would think about

training in any area, it would be coming to be disciplined in a certain area and have knowledge and know how, to train one in a certain direction. The same for discipline. The reason that's important, and we'll look at it a little bit more later, is when you see a student, a child doing something that is not acceptable, the first thought is "Well, maybe they need to be trained properly. Maybe they haven't been trained." And again, we're gonna cover quite a bit. You can use that, what I just said, to terrorize a parent that has a three year old. A three year old needs to be told over, and over, and over, and over again. A three year old has an attention span of about three minutes. And so an hour later, "That must have been a week ago that you told me that I wasn't supposed to run in the house." And then we can think, "Oh, they're being disobedient." And yet it's important also in discipline to know age appropriateness and not to put on a three year old, the same discipline as you would put on a sixth grader. So that's important for you to really keep in mind as we're doing this. So discipline is training.

There was a study done out at USC, and it was very interesting. They took an elementary school, and they observed the playground. It was all fenced in and they watched the recess time, and then... I don't really know how long it was that they observed them, but we'll say a week. They took the fencing down and didn't tell anyone what that meant. And they continued to observe, and what they found was when the fence was up, the kids played all over the playground in this large field area. When the fence came down, they would almost huddle in the center part of this large playing field. They weren't certain what their boundaries were. Then they put the fence back up, and again, the kids were all over the playground. What they were trying to achieve in this study, is to show the importance of boundaries. We have been sold a bill of goods that is not so good. That the freest we will be is when we're free. That's totally contrary to Biblical thought.

The scriptures point out so many areas in our lives that we have borders for our safety. And when we are functioning inside those borders, is when we are the freest in our life. I'll give you kind of an illustration, and it breaks down in many ways, but in Southern California, our speed limit now is 65. You can get on the freeway and do 65, and you're fine. If you do 70, 75, for sure 85, and you are going to be doing something when your speed limit reaches 85. Most likely, you're going to be looking for any possible place that a highway patrol man could be hiding, or parked behind a bush, behind a sign, off ramp, on ramp. At that point in time, if you can relate with this, you'll realize that you start giving that freedom over basically to the highway patrol, and the minute you drop your speed limit down to the acceptable speed limit, you're fine. You don't really have to think about it. You're not watching out, "Where I can get caught or trapped?". And in the same sense, our life has sets of rules, Biblical rules, and when we are inside those guidelines, we are the freest. And the point that I'm trying to stress, is it is so important to understand that borders are not a bad thing. Borders in the realm of what God would have us to do, are very good, and very important.

I can't imagine what would happen if we had no stop lights, and everybody just kind of at will, did what they wanted to do. You know, it's important for us to have guidelines. Signs are very important. If we had nothing that was posted, we wouldn't know where certain things were if we drove into a new community. So they're important to have, these kinds of borders. That covers what I was trying to convey in the introduction part of this, because I believe it's really important.

Going to number 2. Why discipline? Why does our heavenly Father discipline us? I'd like to take a look at Hebrews 12. Very important. If we are to represent Jesus Christ, then it's very important to find out why our heavenly Father disciplines us. Starting in verse 5, "And have you forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons. 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, or be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him. For whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.'" Right there we start off with the reason why our Heavenly Father disciplines us, because He loves us. Now I don't know how many of you this morning woke up and said, "Lord, please discipline me today", probably not too many of you. It's not a common thing. Verse 7, "If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there, whom a father does not chasten. But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us and we paid them respect, shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them. But He, for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful, but nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness by those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen the hands which hang down and the feeble knees. And make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed." In verse 10, it tells us that, "We become partakers of His holiness". Discipline is important. Discipline from the Father identifies us with the Father. How important that is. And then in verse 11, "It yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it". Wanting to become more like Jesus and yet we don't often think in terms of discipline. "Lord, train me, correct me, teach me." How important it is. What you need to understand in this aspect of why our heavenly Father disciplines us is, because He disciplines us in love, we need to discipline in love.

We're gonna cover the difference between discipline and punishment in a few minutes, but if we're disciplining not in love, then we are not disciplining like our Father in heaven does. And none of us would want our Father to discipline us in His wrath. We'd be no more. How important it is when we are involved with disciplining, that we are representing our Father in heaven. And that transfers into the classroom for us to really be thinking on that we've been trained by. You cannot discipline apart from love. You should never discipline apart from love. Moving on to number 3. Why do children misbehave? Proverbs 22:15 tells us that, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child". Now there's a second part of that scripture, but right now

we're trying to get a concept of why do children misbehave. Sometimes we overlook this. We want the kids to be something better than we. We put standards on the kids many times that are greater than standards that we're willing to handle. "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child". Yes, there's a training up process, but don't be surprised when a two year old, a three year old, a four year old child does foolish kinds things. It's bound up in their hearts. We don't leave them there. That's the process of lovingly disciplining them and caring for them. Now when we see a sixth grader, or an eighth grader, or a tenth grader doing something that a three year old normally does, yeah, I think we should be a little bit concerned. Somewhere along the line, the training process has not taken root. But foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.

Number 2. Ignorance of the rules. They don't know what you expect. Now many times we have this idea that, "If I think it, they think it. If I understand it, they understand it." And that's not true. And there can be different sets of rules for different circumstances and places of being in a classroom, in a playground, in the recreation hall, wherever it may be, you're gonna have different standards, therefore it's important to set a standard in the classroom and go by that standard.

Three, frustration. Children misbehaving because of frustration? What do I mean? The best example that comes to mind, I find for some reason that when we become teachers in the classroom, teachers in the sense of Sunday school, we also try to become English teachers and therein lies the problem of frustration. We tend, without realizing, to try to force all the students to read. We want to make sure that they can read. No matter what grade. If you experienced difficulty as a child in reading, you'll know what I'm talking about. Or you can talk to a parent who has a child who has difficulty in that, and they'll give you insight. It is so frustrating to be asked to read when you know your peers are going to laugh at you. My suggestion is, don't force anybody to read in class. You'll always have enough volunteers. But we can do things, because we aren't sensitive to their needs. That causes frustration and then they'll act out. Important to understand.

Number 4. Now I know this will not relate to any of your classes if you do come into the children's ministry. But a major reason for misbehaving is boredom. They're just plain bored. They're being trained too high, too old, or too young. You can teach a kindergartner like you'd be teaching a fourth grader and lose them. And you can be teaching a fourth grader like a kindergartner and lose that fourth grader. So you need to come to know the age appropriateness, and there's all kinds of books and we have a section in here, not really involved, about age appropriateness. The best way is to be observant, to watch, to listen, be around that age. And if you're willing to listen to what they're saying in their conversation, you'll know the kind of vocabulary that you should be using around them. You'll know their attention span and so on. So being aware of them.

And the fifth, why do children misbehave? It's home related problems. I think sometimes we forget that the world is way beyond the hour and a half in class, and we try to get them hooked into our thing for that hour and a half. They've got a lot of things they're carrying into the classroom, a lot. And it's important to realize that when they come through that door, they may come through with an attitude. It's not an attitude for you. You just happen to be the authority right now. They may have just been in a big fight in the car. They may not have a Christian parent, and they just struck them across the cheek. It's really hard to know what's bringing them in. And it's so important for us to remember that there's only so much that we really can do and we need to be sensitive to the needs. Usually if, and you've heard this, if you throw a rock into a path of dogs, you know which one you hit, the one that's yelping. The same thing happens, when a child comes in the class, and they're coming in with an attitude, there's an issue in their life. There's a reason. They may have caused it. They may have not. And the most important thing for us to understand is to love them through it. Now, we'll cover this evening, when we have to stop at the point of interrupting the classroom time and when we need to ask leadership to step in that classroom to work with that child on that given day. There is a point in time for that, so that we can truly minister to that child, but it's important to understand the whole related problem can be heavy duty in ways that sometimes we can't even comprehend. Sometimes the kids handle it so much better than adults, and so we assume that, you know, it can't be that bad and then they share with you the loss of a parent, you know, due to a car wreck or whatever it was the night before. And, you know, it gets pretty heavy.

You have to be careful, though, when it comes to prayer time, the younger ages are going to love... I mean they all love to pray if they're trained to pray. But the younger ages, four year old, five year old, they can give some wild stories, really wild stories. I was told one about two weeks ago, and it was good to hear because I know that this is truthful because, well, when my wife and I were teaching a kindergarten class, we had a child pray for his uncle and really was upset and really was showing that he was upset. His uncle lost his leg and it had to be cut off is what he says and, man, we were like "Oh, okay." You know, trying to be as sensitive all hour with this child as we possibly could be and his mom came to pick him and we pulled her aside and asked if there was anything we could do. She looked at us like really strange, you know. We said, "Well, we heard about the uncle." And she looks at us. "What do you mean?" And so we explained and she is... her eyes were so... she goes, "Nothing like that has happened. That didn't take place. I don't even... I don't know." They can imagine things and they so much want to pray that you have to be careful with what you're hearing. A real life situation around here again it took place, if I can get it straight. It was an older age class, which makes it even worse, because they kind of can relate and they were praying for mom and dad because mom and dad were always in fights and mom swore all the time. And so here the parents are coming to class and the teacher has this information and we highly recommend that you just pray because you don't know what it really means, okay. If there are occasions of abuse, you do need to bring it to me if you think there's an issue but to me personally because even that can be very confusing

and it can destroy homes if it's done wrong. So keep that in mind. So they started talking, and I won't go into the whole story, but what they found out, was the mother always said, "I swear." "I swear you kids," you know, and she used the word swear. She did not swear, as we are understanding it. And so for almost the whole year the teachers just, you know, had been praying a storm up for this family. They looked to be like a really nice family and, well, I guess she was swearing but not the way the teacher was interpreting. So when kids are praying, you need to be understanding. Sometimes you don't have all the information. Sometimes they're communicating something that's not necessarily true. If you have a question, in that regard, then see me. A lot of times we can clear up things and get to issues that will take care of it. But it's always interesting.

All right. Moving on to the next page there. Do not provoke your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. What I would like you to do, is list four ways the children can be provoked to anger. I'd like you to list four ways that you can think of. If you can think of more, that's fine too, and we'll take just a minute or so and take a look at this, because it is very important. Go ahead and list those now. Okay. We're going to talk about a few of them. I'm sure you've come up with some.

Number 1, that's very difficult for children to deal with is breaking promises. Basically being built up and then let down is what they're going through at that point. It's very, very important, that if you say something to a student that you're going to go do, you write yourself a note, because it's really easy to forget and it's not that you've tried not to do it. But you can forget so easy with so much going on and say, "Oh, okay." I've had experiences when I was teaching the third grade where a student would ask a question and I didn't know what the answer was and I would commonly say, "Well, you know, I don't know but next week I'll try to have the answer." And I remember coming back one of those times and said, "Hey, I think I've got it. Let's talk about this." And the student looked at me like, "What are you talking about?" Then he remembered that he asked the question and, yet, you could see in his face like, "Wow, he followed up." And it's very, very important that if you promise something, you say something that you back up your word with that.

Number 2, speaking harsh words. There's really no reason to be doing that. If you find yourself speaking harshly, you've probably have bypassed some real important issues of training and waiting on the Lord.

Question & Answer

Pastor Larry: Anyone else have something that they'd like to share?

Male: Improper teasing. Not that teasing is necessarily wrong, but over doing it.

Pastor Larry: Right. That is really an adult thing. That constantly teasing wrongfully, and that's a real borderline, because a lot of times adults think that they aren't teasing wrongly but kids hate to be teased.

Male: Taking your anger and directing it towards the kids instead of leaving it outside.

Pastor Larry: Directing your own anger towards them. Yes?

Female: Not giving the children a chance to share.

Pastor Larry: Yes. Now, there's a fine line on that one too. Ignoring the children when they want to share. The reason there's a fine line is, because they still need to be trained when the proper time to share is. You really have to do that with a three, four and a five year old. When it's Bible study time, they'll share through the whole Bible study. And so you need to say that, "We'll save that until after the Bible study is done." As they get older then you have more interactions sometimes, but again being sensitive of them. That's good. Any more?

Male: Too overly critical and having too high standards and expectations.

Pastor Larry: Yes. Being too critical.

Male: Also, you know, after a while once you enter a class you will probably notice some people should not sit together. So maybe creating like a seating chart and not allowing certain kids to sit together. That would kind of take them to an anger point, because you're not allowing them to sit by their buddy or making them sit by somebody they're not used to.

Pastor Larry: That would be under the judging them from their past and not having a free day, a new day, and that's exactly what goes on many times in class.

You know that is your major issue many times in class. Friends. Maybe they don't go to school together. When they get to see their friend once a week. Maybe they get together during the week. It's hard to say. They come in and they're going to talk, talk, talk. And one of the best ways to deal with them is to give them the time when it's all right to talk. Let them understand that. When it's not right during Bible study or whatever it is, there again there's Bible study that can be interacting and so the kids will be talking about the Word, but not to each other. You need to train them. But if the minute they come in, there's three friends and they're always talking and by the end of the class, you've got to split them apart, when they first come in, you go, "Okay, I know what this one is. Every week you're over there, you're over there, and you're in the middle," it doesn't give them an opportunity, it gives them no grace, it gives them no possibility to be trained, and so prejudging from past experiences, and it's important that we are careful with that.

One thing that we haven't covered, before we move on that is very, very important to understand and that is being inconsistent. Being inconsistent will drive kids whacko. It just is a tough thing to deal with. One week you say one thing and this is the way the rule is this week, next week it's a new thing and nothing was informed or one week you allow certain things to happen, the next

week they can't do that. So it's important to be consistent, it's very, very important. Inconsistency will tear down any form of discipline that anyone has, because there never was a set pattern or a habit or training that can take place, because from week to week it's different. We'll cover that a little bit more in a few minutes.

The difference between discipline and punishment. The purpose of discipline as we've been talking about, it is to train for correction and maturity. The purpose for punishment is to inflict penalty for an offense, for something that was done wrong, big difference. The purpose for discipline is for future correct deeds. The focus for punishment is for past misdeeds, something that they've already done. They aren't in that groove of training, or let's get them out of our hair, let's get them quiet, so we don't have to hassle with them. Big difference. It does take more time to discipline than it does to punish. It does. Not in the long run. In the long run it takes much less time because as they mature and grow, then that consistency is there and you aren't being challenged in the same manner. Attitude for those that have been disciplined, love and concern on the part of the teacher, or punishment would be anger and frustration on the part of the teacher. And the resulting emotion for those that have been disciplined is security, and for those that have been under punishment, fear and guilt and anger. They're so similar sometimes.

I know I'll go home and I'll be exhausted and it's so easy to sit down in the chair and there's four children running all over the place ranging from 3 years old to 16, and that can look sometimes like a zoo. And a couple of them are going at it, and it's just easy for me to yell, "Just be quiet." And when I yell, I don't usually say, "Just be quiet," you know. Yeah. I know. The sins will be exposed. It's really sad, that that can still happen and yet it doesn't do any good. It doesn't really show the love of the father. What I need to do is get up out of the chair... oh, that's awful. I've got to get up and get out of the chair. I just got in the chair. Don't you understand this? And it's something that we have to pray and pray and pray and ask God to help us through. But discipline in the long range as I see our 13 and 16 year old has paid off. Now, they get upset because I just tell them I've improved. God's really helped me, because they feel I yell more at them than I do at my two little girls. But how can you yell at your two little girls. I mean precious as they are. So I explain they are monsters and their sisters are, but really we need to just be constantly seeking the Lord in his wisdom in the area of discipline. "Lord, help me to do this. Enable me. Give me Your wisdom." We are not perfect. There's not one in this room.

And when it comes to discipline, because it has different facets of it, it's always a challenge. It always will be. But if you think in your mind whether it's in the classroom or at home, if you think in your mind that this is long range, this is going to pay off down the road, they're going to get out of the three year old stage. They're going to be 16 some day. I'm not sure which is better, but we can look to their growing up and their maturing, and it's a blessing to see that when discipline is taking place.

The next idea is very, very important. No teacher or helper will, under any circumstances, spank a child; for no reason. If for some reason you think that you've got to have the motion behind the seat of a child, you need to think again. We don't even want it to look like there's a possibility of this in the class. To date, I've only asked one person to leave, for that, and it was really a spanking, but it looked as if that was what was happening. And I tried to be very clear in this class. I don't question it. If somebody comes up and says, "you have a teacher that struck my child in seat", and I have another teacher in there that says, "Well, yeah, it was kind of like a tap, but there was discipline in the attitude". That's it, God's not calling that person in the ministry any longer, not this ministry. We need to make sure that the parents are absolutely comfortable with the care that's going on when they're being taught the Word of God, and there's no question about it. And there are times that I have to adjust, and there's times that I have to talk with people. It's a part of this. It's a lousy part of this, but it does happen. And it's important for you to understand it. Just nothing like that, you've gone way beyond at that point. There's no reason for that. Now, I'm not gonna get involved with whether it's a Biblically sound way or not. We're talking about in the classroom. We're talking about with other people's children, and that's important.

One of the reasons we're very tight on observing, we want people to clear it, it's because years ago in one of the nursery classes, we had a situation happen where the mom wanted to watch her daughter, and so she was in, it was either a three or four year old class. Before the teacher could do anything, the mom had seen something that she didn't like her daughter doing whatever it was, and took her to the corner of the classroom and spanked her. Well, people were walking by and all of a sudden "The nursery spans, oh no!" You know, it's like "My kid's in there." No, it was a parent observing and since then we have changed some policies in regard to those that are coming in, because she didn't know we had a hard stand on something like that. So it's important. What we look like is extremely important. Not to look like something that we aren't, but it's important that we don't portray something that we aren't. So I think I spent enough time with that. I usually do, because I think it's important for you all to understand that, and to know what we think about that.

Preventative

Moving along to the next page there. Guidelines for discipline. We're gonna take a look at the preventive. If discipline is training, for future deeds, then discipline can be termed preventative. Begin your class with prayer. How important that is. That's about as preventive as you can get, asking God by His Holy Spirit to come and be a part. We can get so busy and forget about it. "I don't have time to pray. I got to get this thing going." And pay a price that we don't even realize we're paying.

Number 2. Purpose in your heart, to love them. Now how's that discipline? Because you're gonna have unlovables come in your class, and they're gonna get a hold of you in a way, that if you don't purpose in your own heart, you need to love them, and that you've already lost, and discipline will become a problem, an issue. Purpose in your heart to love the unlovables. Very important. I remember many, many years ago, I was not a Christian, I was in the fifth grade Sunday school class, and I was labeled as one of those unlovables. And I did things to that teacher that were not kind. I'm choosing my words because I can live it out right now what I was doing and he should have removed me permanently from the classroom for the remaining of the year. But he purposed in his heart to love me. And at that time, without going into it, I needed somebody to purpose in their heart to love me. I was in major turmoil, and as a kid, I wasn't reasoning it out, I was just going for it. And so it's important that we purpose in our heart to love the unlovable. And by the way, that fifth grade teacher of mine, was the major cause for me to seek out Jesus Christ when I got to be older because he showed me true love, when there shouldn't have been any love. There should have been a lot of anger, a lot of resentment. So God can do a lot when we purpose in our heart to love. Three clear rules. Weekly remind students. And we'll cover that a little bit later.

Number 4, know what you're gonna be teaching. That is so important that you do. If you think you can come in here, and just on the spur of the moment, come up with something that will not bore the students, you're wrong. A pit fall is, once in a while you'll find yourself in a place where you had no choice. I mean, your week was just horrendous and you didn't have the opportunity to prepare, and you go in the class and God will bless. He will bless. But then you get this idea, "That was easy because I didn't have to prepare and God really blessed." But He knew your heart, He knew your circumstances, and so you'll try it the next week. Well, no, you won't prepare and you'll go in there and... well, you do it just once and you'll understand what I'm saying. That's not really the way to have an active class that is being ministered to. Know your curriculum. We ask that you arrive in the class early, as much as you can. Twenty minutes, if at all possible. Fifteen to twenty minutes and be there, be set up, and be ready, very important. If you aren't ready, and if you aren't set up, when that first student comes through, then you've lost some really valuable ministering time. Just talking to a few kids at the beginning can be very valuable, because once your class gets full, you don't have that same kind of attention that you can give. Don't play favorites.

Number 5 You can play favorites two different ways. With those that are good and kind, and those that are troublesome. You need to be aware of that. And we'll talk about that in a little bit. Involve your students. Don't just preach at them. Get them involved.

Number 7, learn to read your group. What I mean is, if you're in a first, second, third grade class, or something like that, it doesn't really matter what classroom, and you're doing a craft, and the

class is starting to get really loud, there's something to do with levels of sound, that if it gets going, it's hard to get them back. It's hard to get the students back. They get really wound up.

We had a situation in a class a number of years ago, where the class was out of control and the teacher was really bummed and couldn't figure out why, so we observed the class. After observing him jumping up on the desk leading worship, and just going wild... I mean they were having some good worship, but he was up on the desk, just wild as could be. He'd come back down and he never could regain control of his class. He got them so wound up, that they were out there. And you can do that with worship music or not worship music when you first come into the class. I know in some of the demonstration classes they've had the tape recorders playing and you can get some guys that are really fast beat and go for it, and the kids will be calm when they come in. All of a sudden they pick up that beat and before long, they're ready to go. Or you can have praise music you know, and keep them in the flow of things. I can go into a class usually, and probably within five minutes have it so out of control, in a way that it would take at least a half hour of an experienced teacher to get them back in control. Because they get hooked into things and as much as you try to get them back in control, many times it's the teacher that will allow them to get out of control, not realizing that a really neat song, like Father Abraham will do that. You know Father Abraham? Usually what happens is Father Abraham is the last song in the worship time. And then Bible study time. Well, the kids are running, you know, turning, this and that, they're ready to go and you can't get them calm to do a Bible study. So we have to be very, very careful with what we are doing. You may want to do Father Abraham at the beginning of the worship time, so it gives them time to calm down and to really worship in song. But you need to be aware.

Learn to read your group and what's going on. Learn the names of the students. There are ways that you can do that. One of the easiest ways to do that is you have a word search or a coloring page when they first come in. Have them write their name on it, or you can sit there and write their name on it. And you walk around and you make comments of them coloring or words defined, or whatever, and their name's right there. And they feel like, "Yeah, they know who I am." "Hi James, how are you doing? So you're not going, "Hey, what's your name? Hey you". "You keep asking me what my name is every week?" (Laughter) So there's all kinds of ways. Some people do name tags and little name badges on their desk. There's just all kinds of ways that it can happen.

We once had a teacher in the three year old classes, we have sign in, sign out sheets, and they look something like this, where the parents will sign in the student's name, and then the adult's full name, and so by the time the class starts, you've got all these names here, and so the teacher would take this and sit down in the front and have all the kids come down in the three year old class and start going through the names. "Hi Jennifer. We're so glad you're here Jennifer." Well Jennifer's number one and "Why don't you wave to everybody and let them know who you are."

Well, the teacher doesn't know who Jennifer is either. And so when Jennifer waves, then the teacher can start remembering "That's Jennifer." And you go all the way through the list to introduce them and find out who they are.

So there are all kinds of ways, especially if you have a hard time remembering the kids' names. I guarantee you'll have about four or five names that within the first 10, 15 minutes you'll remember right off, because they're active go-getters. But, you know, sometimes we play favorites because the quiet ones are just quiet and you don't pay attention to them, and that's terrible. Just because they're quiet, you know, well, they're good; and if you're quiet, it doesn't mean that you're good and if you're loud, it doesn't mean that you're bad. We have this idea somewhere because quiet means I don't have to hassle with him and loud means I have to hassle with him, but that doesn't say anything about the heart. The heart can be as wicked and deceitful in either one of those. So learn their names.

Number 9 be prepared. It's very important to have eye contact for a couple reasons. They feel like you mean what you're talking about, and that you care about them. And the other is if you don't have eye contact, they could be doing all kinds of things that you have to pay a price for later. They can be getting in the desks. They can be, you know, doing different things that you don't want to experience. So if you're watching them, and sometimes on the older age classes it's really good to be walking up and down the aisle. Walk around the whole thing. That keeps the hands out of the desk, because we share with the school. And that's something that's very important. It creates a lot of frustration. It's a hard one for us to overcome, because some of the kids in school, a good percentage of them, are also in the children's ministry classroom and they set each other up. And don't allow the students set you up either because there are those times when you can be set up.

We had a situation where the teacher, this was about four years ago, they had their marker pens in a certain place in the cabinet... only if somebody told one of our teachers they would know where they're at and one of the students that went to school there in that class said, "Well, you know, we have some marking pens that we can use in this class," and the teacher said, "Well, what... where are they?" "In the cupboard." "Oh, no. We're not allowed in the cupboard. We have our own things." And "Oh, no, no. I've heard my teacher say 'Any time the children's ministry wants to use their stuff, they can use it.'" "No. Really?" And she convinced her. So nothing would have been found out about this, but the teacher put them back into the wrong cupboard when class was over with, and so the day time teacher came in the office and said, "You know, I've got proof that your teachers are using our stuff and aren't supposed to be." "I don't understand." And so piecing it all together, we found out that there was student in the class that was telling one of our naive teachers that it was all right and it kind of changed things, that one point in time. But you just need to be aware that sometimes they'll do that. They think it's funny.

Number 10, avoid inconsistencies. Be as 100 percent consistent as possible. Inconsistency is often that which is challenged the most. And that's why in the long run, if we're willing to discipline consistently over time, less and less challenging takes place. If my older children know that when I mean no, there's no way around it, they may go, "How about this time, dad?" And I'll just look at them. "Okay. Okay. Okay." If they know that my no is a thing that's negotiable, then they'll start asking, and they'll come up and give me a back rub or foot rub and, "Dad, you know, what do you think about this," and "I know we haven't been able to in the past but, you know, I think this would be a good..." That's where you have to start working. When you're inconsistent in that yes or that no, and the same thing happens in class. If you have certain rules and those are the rules in class and that's it. No, that's it. "But just this once?" "No, not this once." It's firm but it's protection. That's it. And you'll even hear when it's that consistent a student will come in for the first time and they'll start asking another student, "Well, why don't we get them to..." "Oh, no. It's not allowed in this class." You didn't have to deal with it. I love it when I hear that. That's fun. I'll hear my boys at home, they'll go, "Well, let's see if we can pull it this time." You know, they look down the hall and they can't, you know, they don't know I'm there. The other goes "You know he's not going to budge on this one." You know. So you can hear those different things once in a while. Being inconsistent. Very, very important that we're consistent as much as possible. Now that statement is a... yeah. It's a kind of thing that creates... can create depression, can create a second guessing of one's ability to do anything right. None of us are as consistent as we should be, and that's why we need Jesus. We need Him desperately. We need the empowering of the Holy Spirit daily. Moment by moment when we think we've got it wired, look out, because we are in absolute need. Yeah, inconsistency is tough. We need God to enable us to be more consistent and that's the bottom line, God's enabling. So don't let the enemy start nailing you up, "Oh, I told you so, just been telling you that for years" and, you know. Pray and ask God to help. Keep in mind that if the children are busy, secure in your authority and love, sure the of the classroom rules and are interested, you'll have fewer discipline problems. That's so important for you to understand. The way to have very few discipline problems is having a class that's moving, that they enjoy, that they're learning about God and His love for them. Very, very important.

I took a vacation a time back, and we went somewhere where we usually attend the church out of state, and some friends live in that area. And there was a need for someone to go teach two and a half year old through four, I think it was four, maybe five class and there's about 17 kids there and so I suggested that the husband and I would go and do that, so that the wives could go to the study that they wanted to go to. And so we did. The average age was about three and a half. They were so hooked in, I didn't believe it was lasting as long as it did. We did two separate Bible studies in a period of about an hour and 20 minutes and the first one was 20 minutes, the second one was 17 minutes. You don't keep three year olds attention for that length of time on anything unless they're enjoying it. Now the books say you can't do that. The book say three or four minutes is all the attention that you can have, but the book didn't work in that class for some

reason. It was almost 40 minutes that we had the kids just totally hooked in. Now, that was too much and I don't suggest we try that too often. That individual had quite a bit of experience and I too and so after the 17 minute second part which is the part that I was doing, we lost them. They came unglued. So it's not necessarily the kind of thing you're shooting for to keep them, you know, one spot as long as you can. Point in sharing that, is that they will sit if they're enjoying it longer than the book tells us if they're enjoying it, if they're hooked into it, if they're being ministered to by it, and that's important to understand. Get to know the children. And you can read through the rest of this.

Corrective

Okay. We're dealing with discipline in the classroom and we've just completed guidelines for discipline A, Preventative. And we're taking a look now at B, Corrective. And we've gone over the difference already and it's important to clarify that in your own mind that there is a preventative and there is a corrective. Well, we're going to look at corrective at this point in time. Number one on there says, "Pray and ask the Lord for direction." Now if you remember back to the preventive, we also said pray. But that was a prayer for preparation and understanding. This is a prayer, that now you're having to deal with issues that are going on in class and you need God's wisdom. You need to understand what He would have you to do, and how you can best represent Him in discipline at this time. And so very, very important, do not overlook the praying for. And that means you have to be patient. That means you have to take a second and hold back on addressing it and just say, "Lord help. I need to deal with this. I need your direction. I need your wisdom." So number one is extremely important in the whole process of corrective discipline.

Again, I want to remind you that this is discipline in the classroom, and we take a little bit different approach to discipline in the classroom. It's not quite the same as what you would have at a home where you have more consistency, not that you have wildness or craziness in a classroom either, but I believe you do it a little bit different, because they are not your children and you're only there supporting the family and the home and, therefore, we have to do it a little bit different. Number two, discipline the action, not the child. That's important to remember. So many times you can get so personalized in this and you start talking at the person, at that child. Yes, you need to address that child but you need to address them in the fact that your love and the Lord's love and that the action that's going on, the things that they are doing are not correct, it's not pleasing to the Lord and take a look at that. So that's important to remember.

Number three, try to be aware of as much as possible. It's easy to miss the cause and see the effect. And that is so important. So many times you are coming in, in the middle of whatever took place and so you need to cover all your bases and check out everything that's taken place up to that point, and that may take a few minutes to do.

Number four is to reinforce love after discipline. Again, we talked about earlier that without love you are not really disciplining, but you're punishing and we aren't talking about a punishment system. We're talking about discipline. And we talked about the reason God disciplines us. He disciplines us because He loves us. Therefore, we need to be involved with that same kind of discipline, and so we need to reinforce the love that we have for that child, and the love that God has for them and that's very, very important, because you may have to lay down the law at times and they need to understand there needs to be order, and there needs to be a willingness and a cooperation but you're glad that they're there. Let them know you're pleased that they're there and take a look at how our Father treats us, and how many times we do things that are not acceptable, and He's not like, "Hey, get lost". We aren't treated roughly or mean, but we're treated with His long suffering, with His grace, with His mercy, and so you just need to keep that in mind as you're involved with doing active discipline of a corrective sort.

Number five, discipline privately, compliment publicly. Again, here we are fortunate we have two teachers in a classroom, sometimes more. And that makes it realistic. That makes it possible. But even here, you may find a situation where you're in class alone. The teacher may have had to step out. The teacher may have gotten sick, or a number of other reasons. And you find yourself in class alone, and it's going to be impossible basically for you to be involved with disciplining on a private manner, because you no longer have the capacity to take them to the side and talk with them while the other teacher is involved with the class. And so they need to become aware that you don't want to embarrass them in front of their peers and their friends, but it may have to take place because you're the only one there. And that is a situation where it's acceptable. But you have a capacity and means to discipline them privately, you need to do that. Take them to the corner and talk with a low voice to them or take them outside if you have capacity to do that. Here we have different leaders that may be able to come in and help out and support in that. I know that, years ago when I taught a third grade class, I was the only one that taught the class. I never had a helper or a co-teacher, so I had a pretty well accepted standard that if there was an issue in class, I would be talking to them in front of the class, and that did help, because most of the time the kids didn't want to have that embarrassment so, again, discipline privately when it's at all possible, compliment publicly.

Six, never yell at a child. If you get to the place where you're yelling at a child, you have missed a whole lot of concepts. You've missed a whole lot of what we've already talked about, because you've come to the place where you're saying, "You know what? I can't take this anymore," and then you yell. Well, if you can't take it anymore, that means there are past times when you were missing the issue. You didn't deal with them directly so you need to understand that first of all, there's no place for yelling. And if you find yourself in that place, you need to pull yourself. You need to call them to our office and get somebody down here in class to take your place, because there's no reason for you coming to that place and really feel like, "I'm going to strangle this

kid,” or yelling at them, no reason at all. So you keep that in mind. It will be a good barometer for you to be able to tell where you’re at, and where you need to be when you’re in class.

Seven, know all the facts. Very similar to three. That tells us to be aware of as much as possible, but you need to know what’s going on before you make any decision or discipline action. So talk to the students around. They’ll usually share with you. They’ll usually tell you what took place and what was going on.

Number eight, don’t over react again. Psalm 6:1 said, “Oh, Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger.” There’s no reason to over react. You can start taking it so personally because you think it’s your class. This is not your class that we’re talking about, it’s God’s class. He’s put you in it as a vessel to touch those lives, to minister to those lives, to allow God to minister through your life to their life. And so you need to realize that He needs to stay in control of what’s going on, and that’s very important when it comes to corrective discipline.

Number nine, a time of silence, putting your head on the desk. Now, what do I mean by that? There may be times when you are doing a craft, they don’t necessarily have to be quiet. There may be times when you’re doing some kind of activity and you’re enjoying yourself, and they’re enjoying themselves, and you kind of track of what’s happening and how loud it’s getting in class and they may have their outdoor voices on and need to get those indoor voices back, and you realize, you know, “I’ve talked to them a few times and told them to quiet down but they’ve gotten beyond that level. So that’s the time that you say, “Okay, class. We’re going to take some time. Put your heads down on the desk and I don’t want anyone to talk”. Now, I need to share this too. Sometimes you, as a teacher, as an adult, may say, “We want you to quiet down. Okay?” “I want you to quiet down” means relatively nothing to one of these students because it’s a relative term. “Well, I’m not screaming as loud as I was before,” or “I’m not talking as loud.” So what you need to say is “Stop talking.” They understand that. That’s not the same as quiet down and many times we think it is, but it’s not. So just tell them that they need to put their heads on the desk and stop talking, and the time will start when the last person stops talking and it may only take 15 seconds. It may take 30 seconds. It may take a minute. But the point of that you’re trying to establish, was to break the flow of what was going on, and again, get control again of the class. If you are not preparing for your class, then they’re out of control all the time, this does not work. You can have them put their heads down on the desk for a few minutes, and they’re going to be back finding something to do, because you have not prepared for your class. Don’t try this approach. This won’t work, and remember that you need to be preparing. I’m going to bring that up again because I find that the best discipline is a well prepared class. A class that’s age appropriate. A class that the kids are enjoying. If the kids are enjoying what’s going on, they aren’t going to mess around as a whole. You may have one or two that, does that but as a whole, they will not. And so when you’re having a discipline problem in class, a good thing to do, is to

check out how you're teaching. Whether it's age appropriate. Whether you're preparing enough to excite the kids and to get the kids involved with that lesson.

Ten, minimize classroom disruption. Continue to talk and to share your lesson, the Bible study whatever is going on, and walk around the class. I find that as a very, very excellent way to control a class. If you stand in one spot as I'm standing right here, the kids have a tendency to get bored just watching the same spot. So if you're moving among the class, as you're walking around the class, if a child is doing something they're not supposed to be doing and you come close to where they're sitting, then they're going to stop and they're not going to be as apt to start messing around and doing different things, and so it's a good approach. Go stand on the side of the room. Go stand at the back. Stand in the front, to the left, to the right. Never necessarily stay in one place at one time. So it's a good way to stay in control of the class.

(B) Pause at the desk and place your hand on the desk. If you have one student that keeps responding or not responding to you and acting up, all you need to do is walk up to their desk and put your hand down onto the desk and just continue talking. You don't have to look at that student. I tell you, with your hand on that desk, that student right now is saying, "You know what? I don't want that hand on my desk." And they're thinking all this through their mind. "I'll do anything to get that hand off my desk." And they feel the pressure of that. You don't even have to say anything. You don't even have to address them. You just quietly take your hand off and walk on. That's a good introduction to, "Hey, stop doing what you're doing." Maybe the next time you might have to say something to them, but maybe you won't have to say anything again. Again when you do something in a class with one of the students, the whole class sees that. And I guarantee the majority of the kids in class don't want to see your hand on their desk, and it's so small and so ridiculous in the sense that it doesn't do anything, but it is an effective way to try to get your point across that you don't want them doing what they're doing.

There may be a student that's tapping a pencil or toy or some money, you never know what it's going to be, and basically you need to say, "You need to put that back into your pocket, or the next time I'm going to have to remove it from you." Now, I don't encourage you to remove objects from the students primarily because you'll forget to give it back to them, not that it's so bad. But if you do take something from someone in the class, make sure you give it back to them before that class is over with. If it's a kindergartner or a first grader, you crush him, not to have it all week long. That's their favorite toy. So make sure if you're using that method, that you give it back to them. But I highly suggest that you just warn them and tell them to put it back in their pockets so you don't have to do that. Many times that will work.

(E) try a pause during class, and a gentle, "Shhhh." Not, you know, "Grrr", or "I'm going to tear your head off if you're not quiet," but just a gentle, "Shhh" and sometimes that's enough and that's all it takes.

(F) call a child by name and shake your head. You can just say, “Billy, don’t be doing that.” Or you don’t even have to say anything. Just say, “Billy,” and shake your head and they know what you’re saying. And you don’t have to be mean looking but just make them aware of what they’re doing and that it’s not acceptable. And many times that’s all it takes. Do you warn the child that if you need to speak to them that you’re possibly going to have to separate them, if you have to continue to talk to them? Now that’s one of the big issues that we find in class. The kids are friends. They may not see each other all week, and so they come and they just enjoy each other. They’re thrilled to be together again and so they want to talk and talk and talk and it’s a challenge that you have to try to establish the right time to talk in class and the right time not to talk in class. So that’s important. But there are those times when you have to separate the students. Now, you may have the same kids talking and you may separate them every week the same students. I highly recommend that you still every week give them a chance. Don’t, as soon as they walk in the door, say, “Okay. You always get separated so I’m going to separate you now.” Give them some grace. Give them a chance to grow and to learn. You would want the same for you. That pretty much covers H also. I ask the child to sit in the chair in the back better known around here as a time-out chair. Again, if you use it as a chair that’s for troublemakers especially in the younger age, kindergarten, four year old class, a first grade class, then it creates more of a commotion. But if, with the younger ages you tell them it’s your time-out chair and you explain to them, “You know, I don’t want you to get into trouble and so what I’m going to do is have you come back here and sit for three minutes in this time-out chair so that you don’t get in trouble,” what it does is it helps them think through. You can pray with them and hopefully they don’t go so far and get so wound up that they do get in trouble.

Now something to remember for time-out, I highly recommend that you do not sit a child any longer than their age per minute, and what I mean by that is if a child is three years old, don’t have him sit any more than three minutes. If they’re four, four minutes. If they’re five, five minutes. You know, once they get in the school age then there may be a little bit of variation there. But the younger age, if you sit a three year old longer than three minutes, then they don’t remember why they’re sitting there. And so that’s important for you to remember if you do use the approach of a time-out chair.

(J) a child should always be assured of the teacher’s love. Again, we have covered that and how important that is. (K) to assure them that you enjoy having them in class. Again, that goes all the way back to disciplining the action and not the child. So that’s just another way to reiterate some of these things. (L) you basically asking if they’re ready to rejoin the class. (M) if the child cries, you need to reassure them.

There was a situation in class when my wife and I were teaching a kindergarten class, where we kept working with this youngster, and he just wasn’t going to give in. He wanted to do his own thing and for about 25 minutes it just wasn’t happening. And it was during the Bible study time

and I told him that the next time we had to address him, he was going to have to go sit in the time-out chair in the back. And so that time came and I told him he needed to go and the minute I said that, he starts crying. That's the last thing I want to take place. I'm not trying to offend a child. So I walked over to him quietly and knelt down and said, "You know, I understand now that you understand what I mean, and I think you're probably willing to do what we're talking about and that's to be quiet and to be orderly and if so, you don't have to go back there and sit." And he's going, "Yeah, yeah." And so at that point, we established what we wanted. Now, I could have taken him, picked him up, put him back there, but what good would that have done. It wouldn't have done any good. So you have to be careful and you have to consider the kids are very sensitive, and reassure them of your love.

On the handout that we've got here or in the training manual, we stop there, but there's an end. I want you to write in there, "There's an end. Take care of the little things, and the big things rarely happen." All right? That's important for you to understand. "Take care of the little things and the big things rarely happen." If you see a child come in with gum in their mouth, it's a good idea to put it in the trash can, otherwise you might have gum in the hair, in many heads of hair, and so on. So when you see small things occur and you go, "Well, that's not a big deal," don't say that's not a big deal, because over the course of a class, that can become a very big deal and you need to take care of those little things and then rarely will big things take place after that. So that's important for you to understand. This is basically covering the corrective aspect of discipline. There is much more, and as time goes on, we'll develop more and, as you are in class, you need to ask the Lord, as we said early on with number one, pray, and ask for His wisdom. Every situation is a little bit different. So it's important for you to keep in mind that you need to seek the Lord when it comes to discipline. Okay. That covers the preventive and again, discipline goes on and on and on, and there's so many aspects of it. This is just an introduction to it, giving you some ideas and some things to think on.

Discipline

The next one is steps to discipline. This will be here in this ministry. Step one, the children's minister will talk to the child in private. Be sure to explain what he has done and why his behavior was wrong, and then pray with the child. So you're using just wisdom, letting them know what you're expecting. Number two, use appropriate steps to use appropriate disciplinary action: time-out, separate, all the things that we've talked about and more that the Lord will guide you through. If, by step two, you find yourself losing the battle and that may be 20, 25 minutes into this whole thing, it's time to go to step three and that's call the children's ministry office and that's extension 206. Either I will come in, or a family leader will come in and have a visit and sometimes that is all it takes. Sometimes we deem it important to remove the child at that point in time and bring him to the office.

Consistently everybody around here has come to learn that Larry has an office somewhere on these grounds and have been informed, so that when they were in first grade or fourth grade or sixth grade, they may not know who Larry is but they usually know that he's around and that he has an office. And a kindergartner doesn't really have a clue of who Larry is or where his office is and prefer to stay in his classroom because that's got to be safer. So it's important to use this for control but if a child is really out of control, we don't feel that that's your place as a teacher to have to deal with him in that state. You've done everything you possibly can to work with them, now it's time for us to step in. Sometimes that's all that will work and we will, in the best of our ability, minister to that child the way they need to be ministered to. And I don't mean that kiddingly. It's a hard kind of a thing to minister love and discipline when a child is acting out a certain way. We usually kind of find out all kinds of interesting things that happened at home or has happened in their life. And there's no place for an entire class to be disrupted because the child's having a hard time. And so many times they need one on one help. And we pray. We try to do everything we can. Sometimes we can't even get that far. So you don't be the brave teacher once you've gone beyond trying to keep control and go, "Well, they'll think I don't know what I'm doing." It has nothing to do with that. It has nothing to do with that at all. You need to use the support. The kids know it's there.

I don't know if John, whether he shared this or not, but last week when he was here, we had a thing going about five years ago where if you had a student that was really acting out in his class, he'd give me a call. But when he went over to the phone in his classroom, he'd talk very openly. He'd say, "Larry," or however he'd want to address me, he's say, "I am having a problem in this classroom with a student and they don't want to follow directions. Do you have time to come over here?" And we'd already set up what this is all about so I'd say, "Sure. Be right there." And we can be almost anywhere in 15 seconds around here. So it really surprised the kid. Here comes this guy full of beef standing in the doorway, not smiling, saying, "John, your class looks to be very well behaved. I don't understand. But, John, you know my rule that if I get called back twice, I don't go back empty handed. One of these kids is coming with me." And I left. Well, for the most part at that point, I mean by the time I get to the class and we did that maybe three times but it was when the student was really out there, by the time I get to class, they're perfect. They're just perfect and usually I don't have to come back. Once in a while I do, but that same idea for any class of the younger ages, first, second, third grade, you get a family leader or somebody in leadership in the doorway, and the chances are a lot better for them in class with the teacher that they know, than this person they don't know, going who knows where. So usually by the time we get to the class, you're doing okay. And so for your benefit as teachers, you want to use that support. It's very, very important. And step four, if that isn't working, then it's time for myself or the family leader to step in and talk to the parent. We prefer that you didn't although sometimes there's no option and you have to.

When you are talking with a student's parent, there's something really important to remember. In everything, remember that that student is their child. Never forget that. It's not your student. That student is their child. And if you start off saying... you don't have to say anything. Just give a look, "Your child has been so disruptive to this class," you're not going to get the ear of the parent very easily after that point. Now, you may be right, but as far as that parent concerned, you've got a bad attitude. "What are you teaching for? Have control to at least tell me what's going on". And the proper way and the real way and the truthful way is, "You know, we are having some situations where I'm not totally sure what to do. And we've tried different things, but you being the parent," and this is valid, this is truthful, "I thought maybe I needed to talk with you, because I'm sure you have understanding that I don't to help me to be able to be a better teacher and to work this out with your child, and so I just thought we needed to talk." And that's if you have to speak with a parent, because they can become very defensive, very defensive. They haven't been to class and the truth of the matter is, the kids can play people real well.

I had that happen in a class that I taught and I learned the hard way. For three months this kid tortured me. He just put me through it and I was a new teacher and I was just going to show my love and he just, all hour long, he raised havoc in the class and finally I couldn't handle it anymore. Two and a half months down the road I talked to his grandfather. He had custody and was caring for little Bobby, who's no longer little. He's probably graduated from high school by now, but the next week Bobby came back to class and Bobby became my best student the rest of the year. Not only best, favorite. He was so helpful. He was like... What happened? I never had the nerve to ask the grandfather what he had done. I mean he just was... and I was being played for a sucker. I wasn't being the disciplinarian that I needed to be. I wasn't being wise and Bobby had total potential to be a super kid. But why be a super kid. He didn't need to be, you know. So it's important to work through and to be wise when you're talking with the parents, they can many times, they'll look at you like, "Are you... what are you talking about? My child?" And they may really be puzzled because that may not be their character. And I've seen some good kids act out in children's ministry classes, and it's hard to convey that to the parents. So when you're talking to the parents, understand, it's their child. And something at this point, I may have already shared, but please, it's worth sharing again.

There are situations where the children have learning difficulties. People have labeled in all kinds of manners, I won't put any labels on, but they're active. Some people would call them hyperactive. It's really a hard thing when the teacher who just became aware of this from the student because they just started coming to class goes up to the parent and says, "You know, I've noticed that your child is really out of control and has some real issues and some real problems here and I did see a program once about this kind of a thing and..." You're talking with a parent, first of all, that lives with that child, and just because you as a teacher has become aware that there is some activity level that may need to be worked with, be careful about becoming a

doctor in class and trying to prescribe the needs. I happen to think it can be very brutal to the parent. If there are areas of need that we need to deal with that's fine, but don't talk down to a parent. The parents are probably very aware of the issues in their lives. Many times it doesn't have as much to do with lack of discipline as most people would like to believe. I have been involved in areas of learning difficulties and, believe me, there's a reason God told us not to judge, because we don't have all the information. Many times we think we do and the best thing you can do in class is not to judge. Make sure, yes, that you can control the behavior so that you can do what God's called you to do. But be very careful about becoming a professional, prescribing, telling what needs to be done. I'm sure the parents are aware.

Rules

Next one, rules on rules. Very, very important to keep some clear, simple rules. Three or four, five. It doesn't really matter how many. Don't go out and just make rules for the purpose of having rules. Make sure that there is relevancy. That's number two. That they're relevant to the class and they're needful so that you can maintain those borders. Number three, make the rules meaningful. Sometimes it helps to think through with the class, but many times the class will give you more rules than you'll really want to deal with. And make the list positive. Now, what do I mean by making the list positive. If discipline is for the purpose of correction in the future, if it's for the purpose of training, don't, the word don't, probably should not be found in it. The word that you would want to find is, "We follow directions." Not we don't do this or that, but the rule is we follow directions in this class. And that's what I mean about making them positive or making them so that they're a training platform, not an after the fact kind of a thing. "We don't talk without permission" would be one where you could say it but better would be, "We raise our hands to speak. That's what we do. That's what we want you to know what we do." And, "We stay in our seats unless we have permission to leave" instead of, "We don't get out of our seats." You can say, "We don't hit others" or, "We keep our hands to ourselves." And you have to pray about the rules that specifically are needed, and from year to year you may have to change those rules. You may start off with three real basic rules and then, important, at the beginning of each class go over the rules so the students know what you expect. They aren't guessing at that.

Now if you have rules, it's very important to have the consequences figured out, because if you don't and they break the rule what do you do? And you usually don't have time to figure it all out right at that point in time. So natural consequences are usually very good for establishing rules. What do I mean by natural consequences? If a student is mishandling a pencil, that means that student does not have the responsibility level to use that pencil. So you remove the pencil from that student, saying that we will try it again in 10 or 15 minutes if you are able to control yourself. If a student continues to talk out, the student needs to be aware that they are no longer allowed the freedom to talk. They can only can talk when they raise their hand or whatever it may be. Natural consequences are very good ways of coming up with what happens when they

break the rule. Very important. You will find yourself in the middle of that time just frustrated because, “Yeah, yeah. They broke it. Yeah. Oh. Now, what? Now what do I do?” So beforehand it’s probably a good idea to pray and ask the Lord what would be a reasonable natural consequence. They throw crayons. Well, they obviously don’t know how to use crayons. You can step back and say to the kindergarten class, “You can only get crayons from me now. And so when you’re done with your one color, you come back and get another one from me as the teacher.” And if that doesn’t help, then, “You can’t use the crayons. You just have to sit there.” You know, again, for a five year old, you don’t want to make it long. You want to give them the opportunity to work through it. So those are some ideas on rules. Very, very important. If you choose not to establish rules, you will, well, I don’t know how long it will take, but you will establish some rules eventually. You will find yourself going, “Why didn’t I do this in the beginning. It makes it a lot easier. Letting them know what the rules are, the ground work for when they come through the class. Very, very important.

Discipline in the classroom has some similarities to the home, but not always. You have to remember that they are the parents’ kids, children. They aren’t ours. We have been entrusted to care for them to the best that God enables us to do that. To love them. I would rather see a teacher lean to the grace side than the law side. We’re talking an hour, an hour and a half into the classroom, and probably the greatest thing that can happen in the class is the students experiencing the love of God. The love of God will mark them for life. They can’t outrun His love and if you’re a person that walks through the class and says, “You know what? I may make some mistakes but I’m here to love them. I’m here to do what God would have me to do,” you’re going to find yourself being fruitful in the ministry of ministering to the kids. God’s love covers a multitude of sins. It’s just that simple. We aren’t perfect. We do make mistakes. But there’s never a mistake in His love ever. Let’s pray.

Closing Prayer

“Father, we thank You for Your love and Your grace and we ask, Lord, that You continue to reveal that to each of our lives. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Last Thoughts On Rules

Okay. We’ve got a page called rules in your discipline chapter, and we’ve gone over the rules themselves but this is just a work sheet that if you want to, you can go ahead and the first two on here as rules established or to, “Love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. This is the first and great Commandment. The second is like it and that’s number two, that you should love your neighbors yourself”. And then you can just continue to list different rules that you may want to have in your class and that’s all this is for. It’s just a little hand out, a little work sheet that you can use or not. So just something for you to remember.

Okay. And another page in the discipline chapter that I want to bring to your attention that we do not cover, but it's got some excellent scriptures for you to look over. The title of it is Scriptures on Discipline and it goes over purpose of discipline, true love, benefit of discipline, and it has different scriptures that would be good for you to look up and so, again, we're not covering this but I would advise you, encourage you to take some time to look up these scriptures and read them. Very important scriptures on discipline.