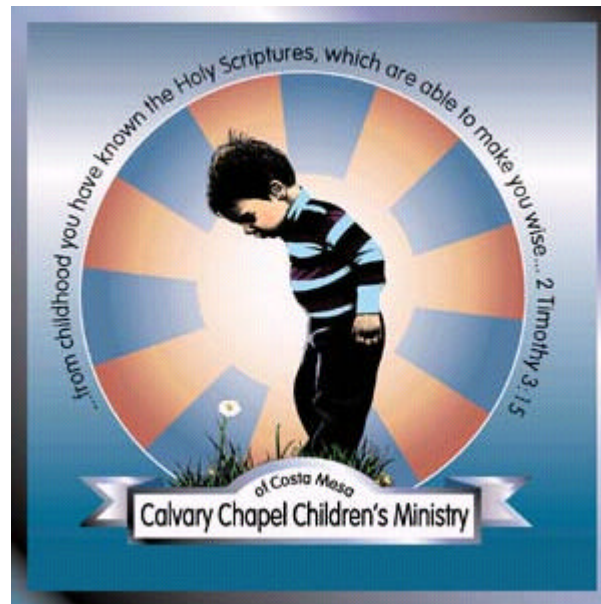


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# CALVARY CHAPEL CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE



## WEEK 1 TRANSCRIPT

### INTRODUCTION & GOALS

PASTOR LARRY ENTERLINE

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### **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

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 hair's 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**

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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.”