

Train up a Child-First Grade

Introduction

Oswald Chambers- “ The measure of the worth of our public activity for God is the private communion we have with Him.”

-You can't give out more than you take in. You can't give out more than you possess. Any ministry of any lasting value will be the over flow of a Christ-filled life.

-Paul wrote to Timothy “ The hard-working farmer must be first to partake of the crops.” II Timothy 2:6. In other words, in all of Timothy's activity, he was to remember to take time to feed himself. He couldn't feed others effectively until he himself had been fed first.*

-”A message from a mind reaches a mind, a message from a heart reaches a heart.”

-We all need to take in before we can give out. Begin by communing with the Lord, sitting at His feet. Ask Him to indwell you and equip you to minister to your kids.. Only then will your lesson plan come together. Read through the chosen passage of scripture for yourself and let the Lord minister to your heart. Allow Him to bring to your attention that one truth He wants to teach you, as well as your students.

-Then as you plan your time, realize that each minute, ministry is taking place, from the greeting at the door, to the waving good-bye. Prepare your heart to be in a ministry mode and not just teaching. (Example of Laurie's first week in our class. I had my “agenda”, the Lord's love washed over me and I needed to set that aside and go sit with her and talk . Be sensitive to that.)

Class in 4 Parts

I Arrival & Opening activity

a. Be prepared! Have room ready-papers on desk, music playing, greeter at door, name tags. Sets the tone for ministry to take place.

b. Welcome-greet each child by name, peek at list or say, like Bob does, “Here's ‘Pumpnickel’. Get at eye level., point out smile, hair, clothes, Bible, whatever. Let them know they are welcome, loved & valued.

c. Word Search & Coloring Paper. Important to give choice. Tips:Boys who hate coloring (girls love it!) Give them a challenge, “I bet you can't find this word, I've been looking all over for it. “ Let them work together. “Ooohs & Aaahs,“ stickers for completion.

II. Prayer & Worship

a. Give 2 rules, welcome newcomers (show map if far), explain sticker charts & treasure chest.

b. Prayer- Circle is best. “Who's listening? Never busy, sleeping, etc. Talk about prayer a little. Take requests, Write down if needed. Ask about previous requests Let them see God hears & answers....” Zack, I see your cast is off....How's your baby brother doing?”

b. Worship

Again, the Lord is listening. We are worshiping Him, it blesses & pleases Him. Start with fun, action songs:When we all pull together, Father Abraham, I May Never March....Move into quieter worship & into sign language and end with

that. "Let's worship the Lord with our hands.(Our God is an awesome God, Jesus Loves me)

c. Tips. If kids get too wild, silly, " Whatsoever things are of Good Report!" Praise those who are singing well, tell how that pleases His heart. May offer stickers.

III. Bible Time

a. Always have the Bible in your hand. Talk first about it & how you love it and how what you will be teaching is from the Bible. It is true, really happened, is God's Word, etc.

b. Tell Bible story with a visual.

c. Ways to teach Bible

1. Flannel graph

2. Skits-using props, simple costumes

3. Puppets

4. Story cards

5. Filmstrip

6. Visual/auditory aids-eg. rain stick, flashing lights for flood

(Ask the Creator for creativity. He has a bountiful supply.)

IV. Personal Application/ Memory verse & Closing Prayer

a. This comes from your communion with the Lord

b. Again, a visual, something that takes it out of Bible days & brings it to their lives. Something they can relate to understand, and apply.

Holidays

Christmas- Birthday Party for Jesus: Cake, Kids give a "gift" to Jesus

Thanksgiving- Journal of Thanksgiving

Bible Stories/Truths Each Bible story/passage should have an aim. The purpose here is to reinforce that; make it applicable, relevant, understandable. Here is just a small sampling of ideas.

1. The Armor of God- Have real armor, have kids put it on as you explain each, do "hot potato" game with armor.

2. Forgiveness- Stains on t-shirt

3. "All things work together for good"-story of Joseph. "Warheads" candy.

4. Creation- seeds after its kind-cut open fruit.

5. Faith, trust- falling back into arms.

6. The protection of obedience- umbrella, beanie babies.

7. Man looks at outward appearance, Lord on heart. Drawings with Dry Erase- curly hair, straight hair, no hair. Big teeth, little teeth, no teeth. Clothes, Cars, Toys- each time asking, "What does God look at?"

8. Good name- look-up meaning of child's name, write name and kids color it

9. Bible Quiz- 2 teams, to test truths taught, ?'s, pictures, correct wins point or throw water balloon, etc.

10. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Ask questions Is _____ too hard for the Lord?

11. The Lord was with Joseph. The Lord is with _____. put in your name.

12. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many.....
How can I be faithful?
13. Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you. What makes you afraid?
14. Puzzle- put pieces of large puzzle on floor. It looks like nothing to you, but I know what it is because I've seen the completed picture. God sees
15. Potter and clay. Bring in Play Dough.....

Ways to teach Memory Verses

1. Balloon pop
2. Stuffed Animals
3. Erase 1 word at a time
4. Musical chairs
5. Hot potato
6. Hand Motions.

Closing Prayer

- a. As you close in prayer, give an opportunity for response to lesson, repentance, salvation, etc.
- b. Remember, this may be one child's only chance to be in church or to accept Christ. Be sensitive and obedient to the Holy Spirit's Leading!!!!

VI The Long Winded Sermon

- a. Always have a "Just in Case" activity for those overtime services.
Examples: Pretend walk, Musical Hot potato, Bible Quiz, Mix-up Bible Flash Cards and put in order, let Kids do flannel graph, do Interviews with microphone.

VII. Other Issues

- a. Discipline

Motto: "Whatsoever things are pure, lovely, of good report, think on these things." Phil.4:8. Focus on the good behavior, give praise & attention to them. For the extreme case that you just can not ignore, pray and ask the Lord to show you what need is behind the behavior. (Divorce, neglect, learning disability.) They may need to be your "Helper " for the day. One of your assistants may need to sit by them and love on them. Think on this. If they're like this in 1 hour of church, they are likely to be like that at home and school. You may be able to provide them with the one place in their little world where they are loved unconditionally, not labeled, ostracized, rejected. Love those ones that need it most and deserve it least.

There are problem kids, but fewer discipline problems will arise in a classroom that is well-planned, structured, fun, exciting, understandable, and bathed in prayer!

*excerpts taken from Greg Laurie's devotional, "Every Day With Jesus".