Discipleship

Discipleship Skills: Teaching Sunday School—Preparation

1. Introduction
   1. Importance and Opportunity
   2. Goals
      1. Lead the Sunday school class to understand the Scriptures better
      2. To help each other discover ways to live out the teachings of Scripture
      3. To challenge and inspire the class to love Christ and serve Him
2. Preparation
   1. First things
      1. Requirements: desire to know God and serve Him, sincerity and integrity: You have to really be interested in finding the meaning in the lesson for yourself and making it part of your own life before you can hope to lead a class. You have to study the lesson for your own benefit and then reproduce that study for the class. Ask God to lead you in your study and open your eyes to the meaning of the passage.
      2. The need for authentic discovery. It is out of your personal inspiration that the lesson needs to grow. If you don’t find something to be personally excited about, you won’t be able to teach effectively. You have to dig and think until something emerges that you feel energy about. (Google will not cut it)
   2. Three steps for personal preparation
      1. Observation—What does the text say?
         1. Who is talking? Who is the audience? When is this being written? Why did he use the words that he did? What is the historical setting? What is said before and after the passage? What is repeated or emphasized?
         2. Look up unfamiliar words or phrases
         3. Read it in more than one translation
      2. Interpretation—What did the author mean?
         1. What was the message in this passage for the original audience?
         2. What light does the context surrounding verses/chapter/book shed on the meaning?
         3. What timeless truth is presented here?
         4. Methods
            1. Read it carefully and repeatedly
            2. Read it in various translations
            3. Paraphrase it
            4. Read reliable commentaries
         5. Review of Principles of Biblical Interpretation
            1. Principle 1: Interpretation must be based on the author’s intention of meaning and not the reader.  “What was the author trying to say?”
            2. Principle 2: Interpretations must be done in the context of the passage.
            3. Principle 3: Interpret the Bible literally (or normally) allowing for normal use of figurative language.
            4. Principle 4: Use the Bible to help interpret itself.
            5. Principle 5: Interpretation must be distinguished from application.
            6. Principle 6: Be sensitive to distinctions between Israel and the church and Old Covenant and New Covenant eras/requirements.
            7. Principle 7: Be sensitive to the type of literature you are in.
      3. Application—What does it mean to me?
         1. What response did the author seek from the original audience?
         2. What do I have in common with the original audience? And where does this passage touch my life?
         3. What am I going to do about it?
   3. Practical steps
      1. Read and study the passage until you thoroughly understand what is being said.
      2. Pick a particular focus or theme. Ask: What is the main point of this passage? And then make sure the class spends time on that. Don’t plan to just go verse by verse through a passage and try to explain one verse at a time—unless you’re in the book of Proverbs; the rest of Scriptures are not written that way.
      3. Don’t over-rely on the little book; there is some helpful explanations and commentary there, but it will never teach the lesson for you. Your own thoughts and questions will be more authentic than just trying to lift them from the book.
      4. Write down some well-organized notes. Develop a plan on how to lead the class through the process of observation, interpretation, and application. Develop questions and write them down to present later in class, as well as the points that you want to make about the lesson.
      5. Have a plan for how to wrap up the lesson and bring closure to it.