



Teaching Basics



Module Type

TEACHING BASICS

LESSON LIST

TEACHING BASICS	1
Part 1	2
1.1 Introduction & Organization	3
The Characteristics of the Orthodox Teachings	3
Lesson Preparation	15
Lesson Application	25
Children of Light Curriculum Overview	33
1.2 Relationships	44
Connection vs. Communication	44
Building Relations: Visits & Calls	54
Disciplining with Humility and Love	61
Teamwork in Service	71
Part 2	83
2.1 Leadership	84
Principles of Leadership	84
Servant Leadership	95
APPENDIX	105
Review Answers	106
Powerpoint Presentations	106

Part 1

1.1 Introduction & Organization

The Characteristics of the Orthodox Teachings

TEACHING BASICS

Introduction: Faith Is Received, Not Invented

Passing on the Orthodox faith to the next generation is not simply an educational task; it is a sacred trust. The faith we teach is not ours to modify, simplify, or reinterpret according to personal preference. Rather, it is a living inheritance received from Christ, preserved by the Apostles, safeguarded by the Fathers, and faithfully handed down through the life of the Church.

Teaching, therefore, is not about creativity or innovation in doctrine. It is about **faithfulness**. It is a responsibility that we must embrace with reverence and utmost care. The importance of transmitting the faith accurately, without adding, guessing, or interpreting on our own, cannot be overstated.

A helpful analogy is the well-known “telephone” or “charades” game. A message whispered from one person to another gradually becomes distorted. Details are lost, meanings shift, and the original message is often unrecognizable by the end. In the same way, when the faith is passed on casually, selectively, or creatively, it becomes altered. Over time, even small changes can result in serious theological distortions.

For this reason, Orthodox teaching insists on returning continually to the **source**:

- Holy Scripture,
- Holy Tradition,
- the teachings of the Church Fathers,
- and the lived life of the Church.

Only when teaching remains anchored in these foundations can the faith be transmitted in its fullness, purity, and power.

What Are We Passing Down?

When we ask ourselves what we are teaching our children, the answer is clearly proclaimed every time we recite the Creed. We pass down faith in the Church that is:

- One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

These four marks are not abstract descriptions of the Church alone; they are also the **defining characteristics of Orthodox teaching itself**. Every lesson, explanation, activity, and example should reflect and preserve these four qualities.

Orthodox teaching, therefore, is:

- **One** in doctrine and faith
- **Holy**, leading to sanctification
- **Catholic**, universal and complete
- **Apostolic**, rooted in what was handed down

We will explore each of these characteristics and explain how they shape the way we teach.

One: Unity of Faith, Teaching, and Doctrine

Orthodox teaching is characterized first by **oneness**. This oneness is not merely emotional unity or friendliness, but unity in **faith, doctrine, and confession**.

St. Paul repeatedly emphasizes this truth. In the book of Romans, St. Paul writes to the Christians believers in Rome. They consisted of both Jewish and Gentile Christians, which led to some divisions and tensions within the community. Seeing this tension, St. Paul urges believers to share not only love, but also a unified understanding of the faith:

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 15:5–6)

And again, to the Corinthians, who were also divided:

"That you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10)

Unity, therefore, is not achieved by ignoring doctrinal differences. True unity requires **shared belief**.

Unity vs. Mere Tolerance

The purpose of teaching is precisely this unity. People might ask,

"Why can't we all be friendly and loving towards all Christians and consider ourselves one?"

The answer lies in the definition of being one in the context of the church. We can be one in many aspects, but what do we mean in the church when we speak about this oneness?

The question of why we cannot be friendly and loving towards all Christians and consider ourselves one is a complex one. On the surface, it seems like a simple matter of practicing love and acceptance.

The Orthodox Church affirms that we must love all people, respect all individuals, and treat everyone with kindness. However, **love does not require doctrinal compromise**. Being “one” in the Church means sharing the same faith as it has been received—not merely agreeing to coexist.

Differences in beliefs about salvation, sacraments, priesthood, and worship are not minor disagreements. Some beliefs are fundamentally different and cannot be reconciled.

For example, some denominations believe that salvation is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ, while others believe that good works are also necessary. These are two fundamentally different understandings of the path to salvation, and they cannot be reconciled. This does not mean that we cannot be friendly and loving towards people of other denominations. Of course, we can and should strive to be kind and respectful to everyone, regardless of their beliefs. However, we must also be honest about the fact that there are some fundamental differences between different Christian denominations, and these differences can make it difficult to achieve true unity.

Oneness of faith

These beliefs shape how we understand God, salvation, and the Christian life. For this reason, the Church insists on unity in truth, not unity at the expense of truth.

As Saint Jude exhorts:

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for **the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.” (Jude 1:3)

This means that we must be faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ and defend the truth against error. We cannot simply be nice and friendly and make everyone feel good. We must also be willing to speak the truth, even when it is unpopular.

Orthodox teaching preserves unity by faithfully transmitting this one faith without addition, subtraction, or reinterpretation.

The passage from Ephesians 4:5-6 further emphasizes the importance of unity in the faith. It speaks of one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all.

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Ephesians 4:5-6)

This is the ideal that we should strive for, but it is not always easy to achieve.

How to stay one in teaching?

The true church of the Lord Jesus Christ stands apart as unique and distinct. It is not simply any faith or religious organization but the embodiment of the one true faith. The phrase “THE Faith” holds significant weight, emphasizing the specificity of this belief system.

If Orthodox teaching is truly **one**, then it cannot be drawn from multiple competing authorities. Unity of faith demands **unity of source**. From the beginning, the Church understood Holy Scripture as the written witness to the one faith revealed by God.

Scripture is not one source among many; it is the **common foundation** that unites the Church across geography, culture, and time. This is why Saint Paul warns against “another gospel” and insists that the Church “speak the same thing” (1 Corinthians 1:10). Without a shared biblical foundation, unity becomes impossible.

However, Orthodox teaching does not approach Scripture as isolated individuals. The Bible is not interpreted privately or creatively, but **within the Church**. Scripture belongs to the Church because it was written *by* the Church and *for* the Church. When teaching departs from Scripture, or uses Scripture selectively or out of context, unity fractures and confusion enters.

Therefore, an Orthodox teaching **must be biblically rooted**, not as proof-texting, but as faithful continuity with the revealed Word of God as received by the Church. A lesson without Scripture may sound inspiring, but it cannot preserve the oneness of the faith.

Holy: Teaching That Leads to Sanctification

Orthodox teaching is not only correct—it is **sanctifying**. Its purpose is not simply to inform the mind, but to transform the individual.

Saint Paul describes Christ’s purpose for the Church:

“Just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but **that she should be holy and without blemish**.” (Eph 5:25-27).

Holiness originates in Christ Himself. Through His sacrifice, we are cleansed and set apart. Yet sanctification is not a one-time event; it is a lifelong journey of growth, repentance, and transformation.

The goal of this sanctification is to present the church to Himself as a glorious church, free from any blemish or wrinkle.

Teaching the Mysteries of the Church

Orthodox teaching always directs believers toward the **Mysteries (Sacraments)** of the Church. Through Baptism, Chrismation, Confession, Eucharist, and the other Mysteries, believers participate in the life of Christ and are continually renewed.

Teaching that does not lead to sacramental life, repentance, and spiritual growth falls short of Orthodox holiness. The goal of teaching is not simply moral improvement, but **communion with God**.

Holiness Requires More Than Information

Orthodox teaching is not merely about conveying correct ideas; it exists to **sanctify the hearer**. If teaching does not lead toward repentance, transformation, consecration and communion with God, it fails its purpose.

Holiness is not theoretical. It is lived, embodied, and experienced — especially through the **liturgical life of the Church**. This is why Orthodox teaching is inseparable from worship. What the Church believes, she prays. What she prays, she lives.

Teaching that is disconnected from the liturgy risks becoming abstract and moralistic. By contrast, liturgical teaching forms the soul through:

- repetition,
- reverence,
- posture,
- fasting,
- prayer,
- and sacramental participation.

The Church does not teach holiness by lecture alone, but by drawing the faithful into a holy rhythm of life. When a lesson connects to the Liturgy, the Psalms, the Feasts, or the Mysteries, it ceases to be mere instruction and becomes formation.

For this reason, Orthodox teaching **must be liturgical in spirit and direction**. Even when taught outside the church building, it should point back to the altar. Teaching that does not lead to worship does not fully lead to holiness.

Catholic: Universal, Complete, and for All

In the Creed, the word *Catholic* does not refer to a particular denomination. It comes from the Greek *katholikos*, meaning **universal, complete, and whole**.

Orthodox teaching is catholic in three important ways:

1. It is offered to all people
2. It preserves the fullness of the faith
3. It transcends culture, language, and time

Christ commanded His disciples:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
(Acts 1:8)

The commandment given by the Lord to His disciples in Acts 1:8 serves as the cornerstone of this catholicity. Jesus instructs His followers to spread the Gospel message beyond the borders of Judea and Samaria, reaching to the remote corners of the earth.

The Church did not tailor the faith to fit cultures; rather, the faith transformed cultures while remaining unchanged. Orthodox teaching today must reflect the same universality—accessible to all, yet uncompromised.

The Church's liturgical life, saints, and traditions reflect this catholicity. The same faith is lived across generations and continents, uniting believers into one Body.

Universality Proven by Lived Witness

Orthodox teaching is catholic — universal, complete, and shared by the whole Church. But how do we know that a teaching is truly universal and not merely local, modern, or personal?

The answer is found in the **lives of the saints**.

The saints are not optional illustrations or inspirational add-ons. They are the **living proof** that a teaching belongs to the Church everywhere and always. What the Church teaches, the saints live. A doctrine that cannot be found embodied in the saints is suspect.

The saints span centuries, cultures, languages, and circumstances — monks and martyrs, bishops and laypeople, men and women, young and old. Yet they share the same faith, the same sacraments, and the same spiritual struggle. This unity across time is the clearest evidence of catholicity.

For example, repentance, confession, fasting, veneration of saints, Eucharistic devotion, and obedience to the Church are not regional customs. They appear consistently in the lives of saints from Egypt to Rome to Ethiopia to Syria.

Therefore, an Orthodox lesson should always ask:

- *Who lived this teaching?*
- *How did it shape their life?*

Teaching that cannot be traced in the saints risks becoming theoretical rather than truly catholic.

Apostolic: Words founded in Christ and the fathers

Orthodox teaching is **apostolic**, meaning it is grounded in what was handed down from Christ through the Apostles. The foundation of the Christian Church is built upon the teachings of the Apostles, prophets, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Chief Cornerstone.

It is significant to note that the Lord Jesus Christ did not personally write a gospel, but His teachings and principles were passed down through oral tradition and later recorded in the writings of the Apostles and evangelists.

St. Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, emphasizes the importance of continuing in the things that Timothy has learned and been assured of. St. Paul commends Timothy for his faithfulness to the teachings he received from childhood, which were based on the Holy Scriptures.

“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim 14-17)

St. Paul's praise for Timothy's faithfulness serves as an example for us to follow, reminding us that we too should strive to remain steadfast in our faith. The example of Abel, who offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain by faith, demonstrates that faith existed centuries before the written commandments. Abel's faith and knowledge of animal sacrifices were likely passed down from his father, Adam, who received them directly from God. In the book of Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 6, we read about the faith of Abel: "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."

This verse raises several intriguing questions, one of which is: where did Abel get his faith? Abel lived approximately 14 centuries before the written commandments were given to Moses. During this time, there were no written instructions or explicit laws governing religious practices. So, how did Abel acquire the faith that enabled him to offer a more excellent sacrifice to God than his brother Cain?

The answer to this question lies in the relationship between Abel and his father, Adam. Adam, being the first human created by God, had a direct and intimate connection with the Creator. It is reasonable to assume that Adam received divine instruction and revelation from God Himself, including knowledge about the importance of faith and the practice of offering animal sacrifices. As a son of Adam, Abel would have been raised and nurtured in this environment of divine revelation. From his father, Abel would have learned about the nature of God, the need for worship, and the significance of faith in God. Adam, having experienced the presence and glory of God, would have passed on these precious truths to his son, instilling in him a deep faith and understanding.

Similarly, St. Paul's reference to Jannes and Jambres, the two witches who resisted Moses the Prophet, illustrates the concept of tradition in transmitting information.

“Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith” (2 Timothy 3:8)

While their names are not explicitly mentioned in the books of Moses or the rest of the Old Testament, St. Paul knew about them through oral tradition. This highlights the significance of tradition in preserving historical accounts and religious teachings.

The Orthodox Church does not separate Scripture from Tradition. Scripture is the heart of Tradition, and Tradition is the living context in which Scripture is understood. Orthodox teaching remains apostolic by faithfully preserving both Scripture and Tradition without contradiction.

Faith That Is Handed Down, Not Reconstructed

Orthodox teaching is apostolic because it is **received**, not reinvented. The Apostles handed down the faith to the Church, and the Church preserved it through the Fathers.

The Church Fathers are not merely early theologians or historical commentators. They are **authorized witnesses** of how the Apostolic faith was understood, lived, defended, and explained. To teach without reference to the Fathers is to sever teaching from its lineage.

The Fathers safeguard this continuity. They protect the Church from novelty disguised as insight. They ensure that Scripture is interpreted according to the mind of the Church, not the imagination of the individual.

Orthodox teaching, therefore, must be patristic — not by overwhelming students with quotations, but by ensuring that every lesson aligns with the consensus and spirit of the Fathers. Even a single patristic reference anchors a teaching within the apostolic stream.

Teaching without the Fathers risks becoming modern opinion rather than apostolic faith.

What Makes a Teaching Truly Orthodox?

An Orthodox teaching is not defined by tone, aesthetics, or intention. It is defined by **content and continuity**.

A teaching is Orthodox when it is:

- **Biblical**, preserving the oneness of the faith
- **Consecrating and liturgical**, leading to holiness
- **Confirmed in the saints**, proving its catholicity
- **Rooted in the Fathers**, ensuring apostolic continuity

If any of these elements are missing, the teaching may still sound Christian — but it is no longer fully Orthodox.

This is not rigidity. It is faithfulness.

Apostolic Responsibility: The Vows of the Church

Those entrusted with teaching the faith carry a serious responsibility. Bishops and priests make solemn vows to preserve and teach the Orthodox faith faithfully. Servants share in this responsibility.

At ordination, priests vow to:

- remain steadfast in the Orthodox faith,
- preserve the traditions of the Church,
- teach the people the true faith,

- and live as examples of holiness.

‘To be steadfast in the holy orthodox faith until the last breath, to respect the canons of the Holy Church, and to keep all her traditions, rites, customs, and teachings. I will make every effort to teach the people the true faith, and lead them in a holy and righteous life, and to be an example for them in every good deed.’ (The Vow)

In many churches, servants also sign Faith and Order commitments, acknowledging that teaching Orthodoxy requires accountability, humility, and obedience to the Church.

Bishops, priests, and Sunday school servants all have a responsibility to teach the Catholic faith to children. It is not enough to simply say that we are Christians; we must also be able to explain what we believe and why we believe it. This is essential for the spiritual growth of our children.

For a three-day convention, bishops, priests, and servants leave everything behind to focus on explaining the faith. They do this because they know that it is important for children to have a strong foundation in the faith. They want to help children grow in their love of God and their understanding of the Catholic Church.

Every element, that is, ‘One, Holy, Catholic and apostolic’ is incorporated in the vow. This is the ultimate goal of all orthodox teachings. This is why in some churches, servants sometimes sign a Faith and Order Vow letter: “I will be faithful to the Orthodox Faith until the last breath and respect the laws and teachings of the Holy Church. I will faithfully put my effort to teach those entrusted to me and will lead them in the life of holiness and righteousness while ensuring myself to be a good example to them in every good deed, hidden and manifest.”

The responsibility to teach the faith does not rest solely on the shoulders of bishops, priests, and Sunday school servants. Parents also have a responsibility to teach their children about the faith. They are the primary educators of their children, and they have a unique opportunity to shape their children's spiritual development. Parents can teach their children about the faith by setting a good example, by praying with them, and by talking to them about God. They can also take their children to church, enroll them in religious education classes, and encourage them to participate in other faith-based activities. By working together, bishops, priests, Sunday school servants, and parents can help children to grow in their faith and develop a lifelong relationship with God.

Discernment in Teaching Materials

Orthodox teaching requires discernment, not suspicion, but awareness.

Servants must evaluate:

- lesson content,
- crafts,
- songs,
- videos,
- and activities

If you were a coordinator tasked with reviewing lessons, you would need to adopt a critical and discerning approach. Your primary responsibility would be to ensure that the lessons align with Orthodox teachings and do not contain any non-Orthodox or potentially misleading content.

1. When reviewing the lesson plan:

- Are there any statements or ideas that deviate from Orthodox teachings?
- Do the lesson materials accurately reflect Orthodox beliefs and practices?
- Are there any potential areas of confusion or misinterpretation that need to be addressed?
- Is the reference source in line with the Orthodox Faith?

2. When selecting crafts and activities for the lesson:

- Do the crafts or activities promote Orthodox values and morals?
- Are they age-appropriate and suitable for the intended audience?
- Do they require the use of any materials or tools that may be considered inappropriate or dangerous?

3. When reviewing videos or other multimedia content for the lesson:

- Do the videos or multimedia content accurately represent Orthodox teachings?
- Are they free from objectionable or offensive language, imagery, or music?
- Are the videos or multimedia content appropriate for the intended audience?

These should be things you ask yourself too when you're preparing the lesson, when you're doing your lesson plan, looking for crafts, listening to videos, etc... Keep in mind, sometimes there are things that are not necessarily wrong, but just seeing them should trigger in our minds to emphasize something in orthodoxy.



For example, the statement 'love one another', there is nothing wrong with that! Or, 'Do not judge', likewise, nothing wrong with that. But we then can emphasize that we love everyone but we may not agree with their behavior! There's a difference between love and accepting sin. These subtleties help preserve orthodox teachings. Sometimes, it's not about what is explicitly stated, but rather what is implied or suggested that can be problematic.

In the crown image on the left, the crown is entitled The Lord Promised me a Crown - Saved by grace. This phrase carries profound significance for our understanding of salvation and the relationship between faith and works. At the core of our teachings, we emphasize the importance of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Grace, an undeserved gift from God, is the foundation upon which our salvation rests. It is through faith that we receive forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. However, our understanding of salvation does not end with mere belief.

"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (James 2:17)

"You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"(James 2:19-20)

This passage challenges us to consider the inseparable connection between faith and works. Faith, without the accompanying actions that demonstrate our love for God and others, is dead. Genuine faith produces a natural desire to live a life that glorifies God and reflects His character.

"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works" (Mt 16:27).

This verse further reinforces the idea that our works will be taken into account when we stand before Jesus Christ on the Day of Judgment. Each person will be rewarded according to their deeds, demonstrating the importance of living a life consistent with our faith.

It is crucial for us to be attentive and aware of different teachings regarding salvation. By doing so, we can avoid disseminating unorthodox beliefs that undermine the true gospel message. The crown adorned with the words "Saved by grace" while true, can be misinterpreted due to the heresy of the 5 solas.

There are many other examples of materials that seem at a first glance permissible but contain unorthodox content. A song like 'Here I am to worship' has lyrics "Call upon the Name of the Lord and be saved" that imply the heresy of salvation in a moment. All of which do not remind us of the importance of the mysteries for salvation. Or songs that may not be heretical but do not present the reverence that the orthodox church teaches when it comes to prayer with songs that have exceeding clapping, jumping and dancing. The church has throughout not changed its method of praying and praising. Introducing these novel ideas, though at first glance may seem pleasant, are not in line with the 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic' teaching that we are striving for.

By asking yourself these questions and critically evaluating the lesson materials, you can help preserve Orthodox teachings and ensure that the lessons are both informative and edifying for the students.

Orthodox Emphasis

Because children encounter many ideas outside the Church, Orthodox teaching must sometimes emphasize what makes our faith distinctive.

For example:

- Repentance includes confession before God in the presence of a priest.
- Baptism is participation in Christ's death and resurrection.
- The Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Saints are living members of the Church who intercede for us.

These emphases do not exist to oppose others, but to preserve the fullness of Orthodox life.

In other words, a Sunday school lesson may imply to repent whenever you do something wrong. This statement is entirely accurate. However, since we are aware that other denominations do not share our belief in confession and priesthood, we must clarify this point when teaching children about repentance. We emphasize that after repenting, it is essential to go and confess in front of God in the presence of Abouna. By doing so, Abouna will pray for your absolution, and all your sins will be forgiven.

The following table is a table with subject that often require additional emphasis to the Orthodox teaching.

Challenges	Emphasis in Sunday School
Sign of the Cross	Teach the kids the power of the cross, making the sign of the cross.
Saved by Grace ~~alone~~	We teach the kids that we have to do good works, and living in the sacraments. Grace is provided through the sacraments
Priesthood	We teach the kids that we believe in the sacraments, in confession in front of a priest
Baptism	Emphasize by immersion not sprinkling, infant baptism applicable.
Veneration of the saints	Teach the kids to ask for the intercessions of the saints in their prayers.
Communion	Teach the kids that the Eucharist is the Real body and blood
Early church fathers, Holy Tradition	We teach the kids to read commentary but not anything written. We use early church fathers, Holy Tradition
Pictures and Icons	We teach the kids to light candles in front of the icons, to ask for intercession of saints, etc.



Review Questions

1. What does it mean that “We believe...in one Church? (A: One = meaning the one union in faith, teaching and doctrine.)
2. True or false: When Bishops are ordained, they take a vow to keep the Orthodox faith. (A: True)
3. What’s wrong with this statement: The Lord Promised me a Crown - Saved by grace alone.? (A: We teach that we are saved by Faith and Works)
4. Non-Orthodox Teachings can come in many different ways: mention two. (A: Is the lesson in line with the Orthodox Faith? Is your reference source in line with the Orthodox Faith?)
5. In teaching about Communion, what should be your emphasis? (A: the Real body and blood.)



Books & References

1. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 2 April 2024,
<https://www.copticchurch.net/pdf/theology/comptheo.pdf>
2. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 2 April 2024,
<http://www.suscopts.org/pdf/copticchurch/rituals2.pdf>
3.  1. The importance of teaching and sound doctrine - Bishop Raphael , accessed 2 April 2024,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kd6uo3YzB5M&list=PLrPOoPYxJj_Ecd1shqglAg6JBROxP5cgH
4. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 2 April 2024,
<https://www.suscopts.org/q&a/index.php?qid=185&catid=144>
5. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 2 April 2024,
<https://www.orientaltrading.com/god-has-promised-me-a-crown-craft-kit-makes-12-a2-13742857.fltr>
6. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 2 April 2024,
<https://www.suscopts.org/q&a/index.php?qid=139>



1.1 Introduction & Organization

Lesson Preparation

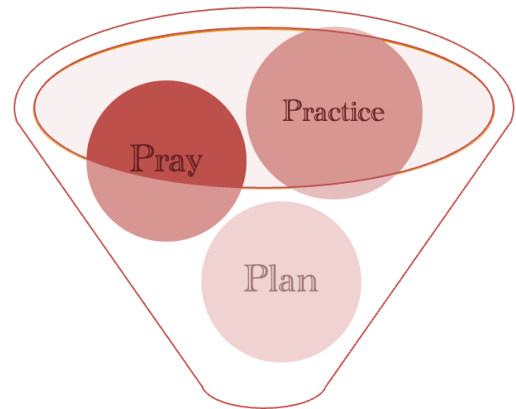
TEACHING BASICS

Lesson Preparation – The Three Components

Throughout service, the servant will hear the following 3 terms: Lessons plan, Lesson Preparation and Lesson Application. It is essential to differentiate among these concepts, especially distinguishing lesson plans from lesson preparation. While related, they represent distinct aspects of the teaching process.

Lesson preparation refers to the complete list of activities that needs to be undertaken in order to ensure they are adequately equipped to deliver a specific lesson on a given day. It encompasses a wide range of tasks that go beyond simply gathering materials and writing a lesson plan. Lesson preparation involves a holistic approach that integrates prayer, practice, and planning.

Effective lesson preparation is essential for quality teaching and student learning. It enables servants to be well-equipped, organized, and confident in their ability to deliver engaging and impactful lessons. By incorporating prayer, practice, and planning into their lesson preparation routine, servants can create a conducive learning environment for the Holy Spirit to work. We will go through them one by one:



Prayer

The first component is prayer. This allows God's guidance in preparation of the lesson and classroom. Secondly, it allows for God to help the attendees open their hearts. The servants can ask the Lord for more support through prayer, as well as can ask for spiritual growth, as the students are not the only ones hoping to learn.

Before you start working on your lesson, pray everyday for God's guidance in what you are going to say. Pray for Him to open the hearts of the kids. You can prepare the most amazing lesson and really cool games and activities for them but they do not benefit from it. Perhaps they will not show up at all. Only God can work in their hearts, we can solely do our part only. Pray for the servants in your class to be able to support the service. Next, pray for God to teach you through the lesson as well. Serving in Sunday school is not about teaching, as we are not teachers, but this service is a blessing and a way for me to grow in my own spiritual life. Ask God, what do you want me to learn? What is the message that you are sending me, personally?

Prayer is a vital aspect of lesson preparation, as it provides servants with spiritual guidance, wisdom, and strength. Through prayer, servants seek God's assistance in understanding the needs of their students and in delivering lessons that are aligned with their spiritual growth.

Practice

The second component is practice. Practice is another crucial component of lesson preparation. It involves servants rehearsing the lesson content, practicing teaching methods, and anticipating potential questions or challenges they may encounter during the lesson. By engaging in practice, educators can refine their delivery, address potential roadblocks, and ensure a smooth and effective teaching experience.

Yet, though practice is an essential component of lesson preparation, it goes beyond simply rehearsing the material. It involves servants actively engaging with the content, reflecting on their own understanding, and applying it to their personal lives. By practicing what they teach, servants not only reinforce their own knowledge and skills but also become more authentic and relatable role models for their students. Additionally, practicing the material helps servants identify potential challenges or areas of confusion that students may encounter, allowing them to anticipate and address these issues effectively.

For example, practice is not just in the literal sense, but also in virtues taught, such as thankfulness. The servant that teaches it, must practice it. Similarly, when it comes to the liturgy, importance of communion, coming early, etc. – the servant is to be their example. This cannot be stressed enough; the kids watch servants more than they listen to them, such as during liturgy and other times. When a servant tells them to come early to liturgy but then they see them walking half-way, what kind of message is that giving them? Or, perhaps, they are told they need to speak softly and not shout but they are yelled at during class. What message is that giving them?

Lesson Plan

The final aspect of a lesson is planning. You must have a lesson plan document. As previously mentioned, "lesson preparation" and "lesson plan" are two distinct concepts. Both are related but are not the same thing. Lesson preparation means all the things that you have to do in order to be prepared to teach the lesson that day.

Planning is the foundation of lesson preparation. It involves developing a structured and coherent lesson plan that outlines the learning objectives, materials, activities, and assessment strategies for the lesson. The lesson plan serves as a guide for servants, ensuring that they cover the intended content and engage students in meaningful learning experiences.

When forming a lesson plan, there are two questions that must be asked: what will I teach them? And, how will I teach it? This is what you will be explaining in your lesson plan. We will try to answer both of these questions throughout the remainder of this section.

What will I teach them? The Curriculum

Below, there is a sample curriculum lesson plan, particularly for grade three, to

Objective:

❖ Always remember the good things that God gives us and thank Him for it.

use as a template for future lessons the reader must plan. Note the neat order of each section, as well as how concise it is, allowing the speaker to elaborate on their own time, should they be presenting. Additionally, there are many commendable Bible verses listed, which is good for those who wish to search them up during the lesson, save them on their phone, write them down, etc.

Recall the first of the two key questions to ask oneself: what I will teach them? This is somewhat easy because there is a diocese curriculum for the whole southern diocese and all the churches follow this curriculum. You can find this curriculum on the diocese website: www.suscripts.com/ssc. Pick your grade, and download the Sunday School Curriculum.

Just as is shown above, the outline should contain the following items:

1. Objective – What are we trying to get them to learn about today?
2. Memory verse - This is the verse that the kids will memorize for that day.
3. References - These are typically a reference to the Holy Bible, (where is this story located within,) or could be references to other books that talk about this subject.

Jesus asked and said: where are the other nine lepers that were healed? How come they did not come back like this one to say thank you. He was happy with the one that came back to say thank you.

 - ❖ How many lepers did Jesus Christ heal?
 - ❖ How many came back to say thank you?
 - ❖ How many did not come back?
4. Introduction – This is meant to get the kids excited about this subject, or try to bring it down to their level.

Conclusion:
We must always thank God because He has given us many great gifts.

Applications:

 - ❖ We have to thank God in all our prayers.
 - ❖ We have to also say thank you to others whenever they are trying to help us or give us anything.
5. Lesson outline – This is the actual story or lesson that we need to teach them.
6. Conclusion and lesson application – These components summarize what is said, as well as provide a practical application.

Recall, once again, the second key question to ask: what will I teach them? Below it will be broken down into sections, allowing for a good flow, as to not overwhelm both the servant and the students.

Part A: Basic Information

In an effective lesson plan, the initial phase plays a pivotal role, setting the stage for a captivating learning experience. During this crucial stage, the teacher's responsibility is to create a conducive environment, capture the students' attention, and provide a solid foundation for the lesson to unfold.

In the “Children of Light” curriculum, each lesson is part of a building block which is itself part of a theme for the year. By reviewing the building block at the start of each lesson, the servant ensures the student is up to date and sees the vision of the year and lesson. The underlying principles of the lesson plan to be presented for an effective lesson can be encapsulated as follows:

1. Building Block Review:
 - The lesson begins by clearly stating the date and providing a sense of time and continuity for the students within the building block. Connecting the lesson to the students' prior knowledge and experiences can help make the learning process more

meaningful. This helps them situate the lesson in their minds and understand its position within the broader curriculum.

- Next, the teacher introduces the lesson title, which serves as a captivating hook. A well-crafted title piques the students' curiosity, generates anticipation, and hints at the main theme of the session.

2. Memory Verse:

- To set a spiritual tone and reinforce the lesson's message, the teacher introduces a memory verse related to the theme and the lesson.
- The students are encouraged to repeat the verse after the teacher, fostering active participation and creating a sense of shared purpose. This practice also helps the students develop their memory skills and strengthens their understanding of the lesson's central message.

3. Creating a Comfortable Atmosphere:

- Recognizing the importance of a conducive learning environment, the teacher takes a moment to ensure that the physical setting is comfortable and conducive to learning. This includes arranging comfortable seating, ensuring appropriate lighting, and maintaining a clean and organized classroom.
- To establish rapport with the students, the teacher greets them warmly and creates a sense of community. This can involve a friendly smile, a personalized greeting, or a brief exchange about their day. By doing so, the teacher demonstrates care and sets the tone for a positive and respectful learning experience.

4. Grabbing Attention:

- The initial phase presents an opportunity for the teacher to captivate the students' attention and set the tone for the lesson.
- The teacher engages the students with an intriguing question, a thought-provoking quote, or a captivating story that relates to the lesson's objective. This approach stimulates the students' curiosity, ignites their imagination, and makes them eager to explore the lesson further.

5. Establishing Objectives:

- To provide clarity and direction, the teacher briefly outlines the learning objectives for the session. This helps the students understand the intended outcomes of the lesson and what they are expected to gain from the experience.
- Clearly stated objectives serve as a roadmap for the learning journey, guiding the students' focus and enabling them to measure their progress throughout the lesson.

6. Transition to the Next Phase:

- Once the introduction has been successfully delivered, the teacher smoothly transitions to the next phase of the lesson.

- This transition is vital to maintain the flow of the lesson and prevent abrupt shifts. The teacher provides a natural segue that connects the introduction to the main content, ensuring a cohesive and engaging learning experience.

By meticulously planning and executing this introductory stage, the teacher lays the foundation for a productive and enjoyable learning experience. A well-crafted introduction establishes the context, grabs attention, sets clear expectations, and creates a positive learning environment, all of which contribute to the success of the overall lesson.

Part B: The Lesson

In the previous discussion, we highlighted the comprehensive structure of a lesson plan, which consists of several key sections. The first section focuses on the objective, addressing the spiritual growth of the participants. This is followed by the introduction, which serves as the initial engagement with the topic. The core lesson constitutes the central content of the lesson, delving deeper into the subject matter.

After the core lesson, the practical application section is crucial, as it enables the participants to connect the lesson's teachings with their daily lives. Visual aids play a significant role in enhancing learning and retention, so it is recommended to incorporate relevant visual materials into the lesson. Depending on the age group, there can be additional elements such as take-home activities or simple crafts. These creative aspects actively involve the participants and provide a hands-on experience that reinforces the lesson's message.

By thoughtfully incorporating these sections, we create a structured and engaging learning environment that caters to different learning styles and age groups. This approach aims to foster spiritual growth, promote understanding, and facilitate the practical application of the lesson's teachings in the lives of the participants.

Part C: Take Home Component

This may be in the form of homework or Bible study, once again, depending on the age group. Now, the lesson plan template is complete. However, remember we said as part of preparation....what are the three things we need to put into preparation? Prayer, practice, and planning. Therefore, if it is your turn to teach, you will go to the curriculum to see what you will teach, read it, and then you will start preparing a lesson plan, filled with a multitude of prayer, practice, and planning.

Visual Aids

The human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text. Visual aids have been found to improve learning by up to 400%. This is why visual aids are so effective in learning, as they can help students to retain more information and understand concepts more easily. There are many different types of visual aids that can be used in Sunday school, including pictures, movies, role play, and 3D models. Each type of visual aid has its own advantages and disadvantages, so it is important to choose the right one for the particular lesson being taught.

If I showed you the picture of the circle, then in one second, you would have known exactly what I was referring to, whereas trying to describe a circle is much more difficult, especially to those who have no

prior knowledge of one. Here is another scenario: I describe something in words and you picture said image in your mind; ‘I was on vacation last year with my family, we went to this beautiful beach! It was filled with soft sand, sparkling water, and beautiful palm trees! It is a place I would definitely visit in the future!’ As you can imagine, it was no trouble to develop that mental picture. However, if I asked you to tell me about such a place following my description of it, it is likely it will be much more challenging.

Thus, once again, this emphasizes the importance of visual aids. It is easier to show the children a photo, etc. than to spend so much time and so many words to describe it. And in the end, they might not even get what you are trying to describe or have a completely different picture in their mind. For instance, a few weeks ago, a servant spoke to us about incense and about the censer. If we were to words things to the kids, they probably would not even know what a censer is. Consequently, there are two choices: the servant can try to tell them that it is this round thing with long chains that Abouna holds during the holy liturgy, while smoke comes out of it, or he can show them a picture and they will know exactly what is being referred to. Which one do you think will be easier, as well as more effectively retained in long term memory?

Another visual aid format is movies: children are typically presented with a film depicting the lesson being taught. It is important to note that this is not an excuse to refrain from providing children with direct instruction. While it is beneficial to incorporate videos or other forms of media, these resources should not supersede storytelling and practical hands-on activities, which are considerably more effective for educational purposes.

As mentioned previously, pictures are a simple but effective way to illustrate concepts and provide students with a concrete image to remember. They can be used to show objects, people, places, or events. Movies can be used to tell a story or to provide a more immersive experience. They can be especially effective for engaging students who are struggling to read or who have difficulty paying attention.

If deemed appropriate, role-playing can also be incorporated into a lesson. This entails enacting the story in class. The teacher can either assume the role of the characters or have the students act out the story based on the teacher's narration. Either way, it will serve as a visual aid, and a core memory that will become much easier for them to retrieve later on, leading to more effective learning.

One can also build 3D models, use puppets, or begin other competitions/ activities that will keep the children engaged and more eager to learn what is being taught to them. No matter what type of visual aid is used, it is important to make sure that it is relevant to the lesson being taught and that it is presented in a way that is engaging and easy to understand. Visual aids should be used to supplement the lesson, not to replace it. Servants should also make sure to give students time to process the information and to ask questions. When used effectively, visual aids can be a powerful tool for teaching and learning. They can help students to retain more information, understand concepts more easily, and develop a deeper appreciation for the subject matter.

Gentle Reminders

Always write lessons, games, etc. in your own words, and read the tips in the template, if provided online. Furthermore, make sure that what is being taught is accurate, as well as capable of getting the kids engaged. Finally, remember to add a lesson application: what did we learn from that lesson, and how can we use it each day?



Review Questions

1. What are three kinds of visual aids? (A: Videos, pictures, and role play.)
2. Give one statistic on visual aids. (A: They improve learning by up to 400%.)
3. What are the two questions you have to ask yourself when planning a lesson? (A: What will I teach them? How will I teach it?)
4. How does one find the curriculum on the diocese website? (A: www.suscopts.com -> Resources -> Sunday School Curriculum -> Pick your grade, and download the Sunday School Curriculum.)
5. What are the three things needed for teaching? (A: Prayer, practice, and planning.)



Books & References

1. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 12 June 2024, [stmarycoc.org/shared-files/1525/?How to Prepare a Sunday School Lesson7925.pdf](http://stmarycoc.org/shared-files/1525/?How+to+Prepare+a+Sunday+School+Lesson7925.pdf)
2. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 12 June 2024, [Guidelines to Successful Service – Literature – Resources \(suscopts.org\)](http://www.suscopts.org)



1.1 Introduction & Organization

Lesson Application

TEACHING BASICS

How Will They Apply the Lesson in Their Lives?

Indeed, the objective of Sunday School goes beyond spreading historical information about Christianity. Its primary focus should be to foster an engaging and dynamic learning environment that enables children to establish a personal connection with God. As servants, it is crucial to reflect on how each lesson contributes to helping children not only acquire knowledge about God but also develop a genuine and meaningful relationship with Him.

To illustrate the distinction, consider the difference between knowing about someone and truly knowing them. For instance, you may be well-informed about the President of the United States—his name, family, achievements, and so on—but this does not necessarily mean that you have a personal relationship with him. In contrast, you may have a friend named John whom you genuinely know because you engage in conversations, understand his preferences and dislikes, care about his well-being, and have the freedom to communicate and spend time together.

Similarly, the goal of Sunday School is to cultivate a relationship with God that resembles the latter example. We want our children to develop a deep and personal connection with the Lord, one that is characterized by open communication, genuine care, and a desire to follow His guidance. Rather than merely imparting knowledge about God, our lessons should aim to foster a living, breathing relationship that will guide and sustain them throughout their lives.

Ultimately, our overarching goal is to guide our children toward the heavenly kingdom, a destination of eternal peace, love, and happiness. To accomplish this, we must provide them with a clear roadmap, a spiritual compass that they can rely on throughout their lives. This involves nurturing their spiritual growth and deepening their understanding of the loving, caring, and compassionate nature of God.

By fostering a strong spiritual foundation, we empower our children to develop meaningful connections with God and to align their hearts and minds with His divine teachings. This includes instilling in them a profound understanding of what brings joy to God and what causes Him concern.

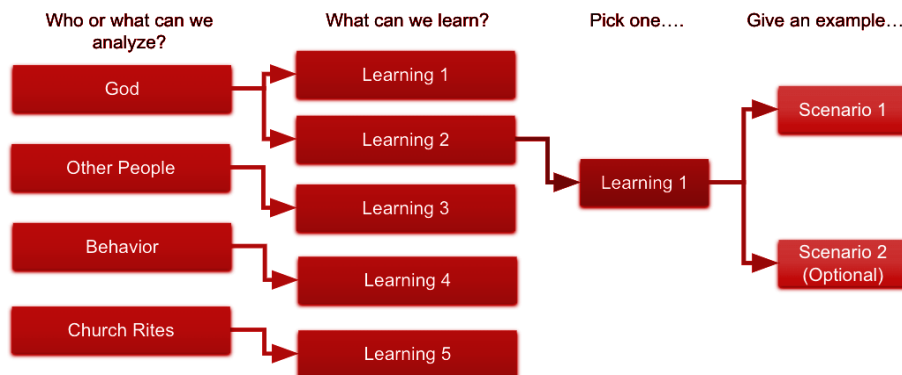
Learnings

In the Gospel of John, Chapter 4, we encounter the profound biblical tale of a Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus, the Messiah. It unfolds in the ancient city of Sychar, where Jesus, weary from his travels, rests at a well. The Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus becomes a pivotal moment in her life. Many learning can be extracted from the narrative.

“so He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where, then, do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?” Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.” Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have well said, ‘I have no husband,’ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.”... The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” Then they went out of the city and came to Him.” (John 4:5-18,28-30)

In order to break down a lesson, thereby allowing others to apply it to their lives, one must have a manner by which to dissect the information presented. Below, there is a formulaic route to understanding each lesson and attempting to apply it to one’s own life, through the examples seen in the final step of the flow chart. The passage above from John 4 can be divided into these categories, to allow for a deeper understanding of the lesson and its roots in Christianity.



First, we must analyze, which may mean we have to re-read it several times. Next, a comprehensive examination of each component of the flowchart should be conducted. God – what did He do? How did He react to certain behaviors; we need to evaluate this because this reveals to us about the characteristics of God, so that we may feel closer to Him. Following this, an examination of the other individuals in the story should be undertaken. Are they rich, poor, greedy, selfish, kind, giving, etc.? Consider the potential lessons that can be learned from their experiences. The next step involves analyzing behaviors, particularly instances of anger, lack of faith, and disobedience, as these

provide insights into how individuals respond in various situations. Lastly, attention should be paid to any Church Rites present in the story, which can be less obvious in stories as these may offer valuable lessons regarding appropriate conduct within the church and its community.

Then once we have evaluated all the different story components, one can think about the learnings themselves. Analyze your initial thoughts, and come up with a few learnings. As a very important note: do not make up interpretations! Pick one that you feel is the most appropriate, as well as is unique to this story. Lastly, try to give an example; start thinking how can this apply in their lives? This is where the role of application comes in, as they may feel the lesson's presence in their lives moving forward, as well as feel much closer to God.

What Makes a Good Lesson Application?

A good lesson application should follow the acronym S-A-U-L-S:

S - It is specific

A - It is age appropriate

U - It is unique

L - It is linked to the story

S - It has a modern day scenario

1. S - Specific:

- Define abstract concepts: Break down abstract concepts into tangible and age-appropriate examples. For instance, explain the concept of courage by sharing stories of heroes from everyday life or from children's favorite books.
- Real-life examples: Use real-life stories, situations, or characters to illustrate the concept, making it relatable and meaningful to the children. For example, discuss how a child in the class demonstrated kindness by helping a friend in need. It is very common to tell the kids, "you have to be humble," however the reality is, they probably do not know what that means.

2. A - Age-appropriate:

- Consider mental capacity: Tailor the lesson application to the children's mental capabilities, attention span, and cognitive development. For younger children, use simple and straightforward examples, while older children can handle more complex concepts.
- Avoid advanced concepts: Steer clear of concepts that are too advanced or complex for the age group, as they may lead to confusion and disinterest. For most children in younger grades, and even some older grades, talking about the living water can be too difficult for their age group. In general, keep in mind their mental capacity, attention span, etc.

3. U - Unique:

- Choose uncommon applications: Select an application that is not commonly found in other lessons to increase its memorability. For example, instead of a traditional worksheet, create a role-playing activity or a hands-on experiment to reinforce the lesson.
- Capture the essence: Ensure the application is unique to the story and captures its essence, providing a fresh perspective on the lesson. For instance, if the story is about friendship, design a collaborative project that requires children to work together and learn the value of teamwork. Or, for instance, St. Mary of Egypt talks about purity but also talks about how God loves us. Pick the one that is unique, as this keeps the children interested and makes for a memorable lesson.

4. L - Linked:

- Direct connection to the story: Make sure the lesson application is directly linked to a specific part of the story, rather than being a general or vague concept. For example, if the story is about a character overcoming a challenge, create an application that allows children to reflect on their own experiences of overcoming difficulties. A lesson application from the story of Jonah cannot be to a life of purity.
- Provide concrete examples: Offer concrete examples that demonstrate how the application relates to the story, helping children grasp the connection. Link to a specific part of the story, not too generally or vaguely. For example....”just like the Samaritan woman did this.....we should do the same...” What did she do? Always remember the first “S” and be specific.

5. S - Modern-day scenario:

- Relatable examples: Use modern-day examples, situations, or scenarios that children can easily relate to and encounter in their daily lives.
- Avoid distant or irrelevant examples: Steer clear of examples that are too distant or irrelevant to the children's experiences, as they may not resonate with them. Do not give an example of something that could happen at work or financial issues that do not really apply to them, as this will increase difficulty when it comes to them applying the lesson back to their own lives.

By incorporating the S-A-U-L-S acronym in lesson applications, educators can ensure that their lessons are specific, age-appropriate, unique, linked to the story, and have modern-day scenarios. This approach fosters deeper understanding, retention, and personal growth, creating a lasting impact on children's learning journey.

Analyzing Lesson Applications

If a lesson application comes back from a student and reads “*never lose hope and know that God is always with us.*” Although this is a kindhearted message, once we go through ‘SAULS,’ we will see that it is far from the ideal lesson application model. Concerning “specific,” it is very vague and therefore does not match the criteria needed; next comes age appropriate, which is achieved. The “U,” is disregarded altogether, as this sentiment is well known and not necessarily unique. It is so vague

that it is not linked to the story either, and lastly there is no scenario given for the final "S" in 'SAULS.' Therefore, objectively, this lesson application needed a lot of improvement, however true their statement might be.

On the other extreme, if the learning looks like this: *"be friendly to everyone, seek the living water, be honest and say the truth when asked, praise others when they do well, or tell others about Jesus and spread the word"*, then they have checked off most of the boxes of 'SAULS,' as these are the actual learnings of the Samaritan woman lesson. However, by keeping them altogether, the learning is no longer unique and specific. Only one should be chosen.

Further analyzing, provided we are choosing an application for 3rd graders, being friendly is common in many topics, seeking the living water is not age fitting honesty is good and unique, praising others is good as well, preaching and telling others about Jesus seems unlikely for that age. First part is picking the learning. Say we pick Honesty. Link it back to the story. Don't tell them, "just like we learned today..." Be specific, tell them which part of the lesson are we learning from? We learned from what the Samaritan woman did. For example, honesty plays a big role, as just like the Samaritan woman was honest and said the truth that she had no husband, Jesus praised her for that. We should do the same, meaning we should always say the truth when asked, even if it may be embarrassing or get us in trouble.

The second part of the lesson is the scenario, which is where you need to get creative. You need to think of a scenario that will help them behave appropriately in their everyday life. Again, do not talk about a scenario where you are driving and something happens, as they likely do not drive. It must be something that they can go through or relate to at the very least. This is the type of scenario logic that is expected of the servant, particularly toward the younger age groups: if you are playing at home and while hitting the ball you accidentally broke that really nice flower vase in the living room, but no one saw you, would you tell your parents about it? What would you do, tell her it was your little brother or sister, or tell her that it just fell all on its own? No, today we learned to always say the truth as Jesus will be very very happy with us. You should apologize and tell her that you broke it even if you'll get in trouble for doing that.



Review Questions

1. What does 'SAULS' stand for? (A: It stands for specific, age appropriate, unique, linked to lesson, and scenario.)

What are four people/ things we can analyze when reading a Bible story? (A: We can analyze God, other people, Church Rites, and behaviors.)

2. True or false? Sunday School is structured somewhat like a history class. (A: False)
3. What is one thing you should not do when enforcing a lesson application? (Sample A: Do not extend the lesson to things the students cannot relate to.)
4. What is a final activity that can be done after the lesson? (A: The class can do group exercises or an assignment.)





1.1 Introduction & Organization

Lesson Delivery

TEACHING BASICS

Delivering the Lesson

Delivering the lesson is one of the most important aspects of service. It is both a gift and a skill, one that develops over time through prayer, experience, and attentiveness to the needs of the children. With each lesson, you will grow in how to engage effectively, communicate clearly, and reach the hearts of your students.

Some servants excel in preparing their lesson content but struggle with the actual delivery, perhaps forgetting parts of the message, losing their train of thought, or allowing distractions to derail the class. Others may prepare a simpler or average lesson but communicate it with clarity, energy, and connection, capturing the children's attention and ensuring the message is received.

An effective servant must aim to be prepared **both spiritually and practically**. We need tools and skills that help us deliver a lesson that is **clear, engaging, and spiritually fruitful**.

Foundational Principles for Fruitful Lesson Delivery

Before discussing teaching strategies, we must first ground ourselves in several spiritual foundations:

1. Prayer Is the Most Important Preparation

From the 3 P's in lesson Preparation, prayer is the first and most essential element of every lesson. Just as we pray before preparing the content, we must also pray before delivering it. This is not a simple presentation—we are bringing God's Word to His children.

We must ask God to:

- Speak through us as His servants;
- Give us the right words at the right time;
- Open the ears of the children to hear;
- Prepare their hearts to receive and grow from what is planted.

Without God's grace and presence, even the most well-prepared lesson will fall short. As our Lord said,

"I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

2. We All Have Different Gifts in the Body of Christ

Not every servant will be a dynamic speaker—and that’s okay. God distributes different gifts among His people. Some are powerful in public speaking, others in one-on-one interaction, some in visitation and follow-up, and others in building strong emotional connections with children.

You don’t need to excel in every area. As St. Paul writes:

“We, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.”
(Romans 12:5)

What matters is being faithful with what God has given you—and growing through His grace.

3. Unity in Service: Supporting One Another

When one servant teaches, the others should support through silent prayer and presence. This spiritual unity creates a peaceful atmosphere and invites the Holy Spirit to work.

“For as the body is one and has many members... so also is Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12)

4. The Word of God Is Powerful

Our goal is not simply to entertain or inform—it is to bring the living Word of God to the hearts of His children.

“For the word of God is living and powerful... a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”(Hebrews 4:12)

“He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Matthew 7:29)

Let us never forget: we are delivering the most powerful truth in existence. Handle it with reverence, joy, and faith.

The Three Stages of Lesson Delivery

To make our lessons impactful, we must be intentional at each stage:

1. Before the Lesson

a. Prepare the Environment

The physical space affects how well children focus and engage. Aim for:

- A quiet, clean, well-lit room free from distractions;
- Seating in a U-shape or circle: this layout encourages interaction and keeps students visible and involved;

- Clear visibility and audibility between you and every student.

b. Organize All Materials

Before class starts, ensure all needed materials are ready:

- Bibles
- Visual aids
- Crafts or activity supplies
- Printouts or handouts
- Any technology (screens, speakers)
- Comfortable lighting and room temperature

Being fully prepared communicates respect for God's message and for the students who've come to receive it.

2. During the Lesson

a. Build a Personal Connection

As servants of God, we are called not only to teach but also to love. When children feel that you truly care about them, you gain their trust, and your influence grows. Take a few minutes at the beginning to "break the ice." This builds trust, draws the kids in, and prepares them to listen:

- Ask about their week, school, or something you know they care about;
- Show genuine interest and empathy;
- Share a light, relevant moment from your own life (as appropriate).

This brief interaction helps prepare their minds and hearts to listen. It creates a warm and safe atmosphere, so they are more likely to be attentive and engaged during the lesson.

b. Introduce the Lesson with Relevance

Every lesson should begin with a short, engaging introduction to focus the children's minds and create anticipation. A good introduction helps them relate to the topic and transitions smoothly into the main message. Examples:

- Ask question that relates to the topic; "What would you do if someone treated you unfairly?" - "Have you ever had to make a hard choice?" ...
- Start with a brief story or real-life example especially one that connects with their age group or current events.
- Make a connection to their world: school, friendships, sports, culture, social media, or something trending to relate the topic to things they care about, and use it as a bridge to the spiritual message.

For younger kids, keep it simple and exciting:

- "Do you like fishing?" ... "Today we'll hear about people who were fishers of men!"

- Avoid beginning with “What did we learn last week?” unless the lesson is part of a continuing story like Esther or Samson.

c. Tailor the Lesson Type and Approach

Your delivery style should match the lesson type:

Lesson Type	Delivery Focus
Dogma	• Approach: Simplify complex theological concepts through story or visual aid. • Example: For the topic of <i>salvation</i> or <i>incarnation</i>, create a story where God and us are the main characters and narrate it in a way children can relate to. • Tip: Avoid heavy terms; use visuals or real-life examples to simplify the idea.
Social	• Approach: Use short biblical stories to illustrate moral or social principles, with more discussion and explanation. • Examples: • <i>King Josiah</i> – the importance of reading the Bible. • <i>Daniel and friends</i> – peer pressure. • <i>David and Jonathan</i> – friendship. • <i>Paralytic man and his four friends</i> – helping others. • Tip: Focus on the specific part of the story that supports your objective. No need to tell the entire narrative.
Ritual	• Approach: These lessons are more informative, but can still include brief stories or visual aids to explain liturgy, sacraments, or icons. • Examples: • <i>Icons:</i> Explain the ark of the covenant and the angels God instructed Moses to carve. • <i>Sacraments:</i> • Baptism: Bring water, a doll, and a dish. • Unction of the Sick: Bring oil and a plate. • Tip: Use tangible items and mini-demonstrations to make it real and interactive.
Saints	• Approach: Focus on the virtue you want the kids to learn, not just the biography. • Examples: • <i>St. George:</i> courage in faith. • <i>St. Monica:</i> persistence in prayer. • <i>St. Anthony:</i> solitude and spiritual discipline. • Tip: Highlight the unique struggle or spiritual strength of the saint and relate it to the children’s lives.

Tip: Every lesson should have **one clear objective**. Stories, visuals, and examples are tools to reinforce that single message.

d. Tell the Story: Don’t Just Teach It

Storytelling is essential. We are formed by stories. From childhood to adulthood, stories have a way of slipping past our mental defenses and landing deep in the heart. Even in church, a distracted mind snaps back to attention the moment a story begins. This is not accidental, our Lord Jesus Christ

Himself, the Master Teacher, consistently used parables to speak to the people. He didn't just teach the truth; He wrapped it in relatable human experience. As servants, we are called to do the same. Every lesson we give has a goal, a message, a spiritual seed to plant. A story becomes the soil in which that seed can take root. Whether it's a biblical account, a moment from a saint's life, or even a real story from today, let it be purposefully chosen not to entertain, but to illuminate the lesson's objective. A well-told story transforms a concept into a lived experience.

To be effective:

- **Live the story:** Don't just read - Act out emotions, use facial expressions, change your tone: putting yourself in the characters shoes.
- **Engage the class:** Move around the room, use gestures, make eye contact, make the story interactive.
- **Use names:** Call on inattentive children gently to draw them back in.
- **Visuals and verses:** Display verses, read aloud together. Avoid reading from your phone, it breaks connection. Children learn in different ways. Try to include all three major styles in your lesson: Auditory, Visual and Kinesthetic.

Type	Learns Best Through	Example in Story of Calming the Storm
Auditory	Hearing, discussion, spoken explanations	Emphasize the sound of thunder, waves, and panic
Visual	Pictures, visual aids, written content	Describe the gloomy sky, lightning, and the boat
Kinesthetic	Movement, touching, hands-on activities	Move around as if you're in the boat, shake, react physically

Tip: Include elements for each style in one lesson to make it memorable for all.

Foster Dialogue (Especially for Older Kids), moving from monologue to dialogue. Ask reflective questions during the lesson:

- "What would you have done?"
- "Why do you think Jesus reacted that way?"

Encourage thoughtful discussion. This makes them active participants, not just listeners.

Ask Questions, strategically. Questions are powerful learning tools, don't wait until the end—ask questions within the story. You can ask indirectly through characters, for example: "Why did the Lord Jesus look around for the bleeding woman instead of just letting her go healed?" Good questions will:

- Spark curiosity.
- Encourage kids to think deeper.
- Help them relate biblical truths to their own lives.

3. After the Lesson

a. Reinforce Through Review

- For older groups: Summarize key points between sections.

- For younger kids: Repeat the verse or theme through characters or songs.

b. Lead Toward Application

Every lesson should move through this sequence:

1. **Truth (Knowledge):** Teach the biblical fact clearly.
2. **Emotion (Engagement):** Bring it to life with story, visuals, and passion.
3. **Behavior (Application):** Show how the story impacts how we live.
4. **Attitude (Transformation):** With time and the Holy Spirit, hearts are changed.

Example: When teaching about Ananias and Sapphira, we don't just want them to remember the story—we want them to understand the danger of dishonesty and be inspired to live truthfully.

c. Radiate Joy and Peace

You are not only teaching content, you are communicating Christ through your presence. A peaceful tone, joyful smile, and loving spirit make a deep impression. Children will remember **how** you made them feel even more than what you said.



Review Questions

5.



1.1 Introduction & Organization

Children of Light Curriculum Overview

TEACHING BASICS

 <i>Books</i>	 <i>Supplementary Material</i>
	 2_-_Children_of_Light_SS_Program(1).mp3

Children of Light Curriculum Overview

Throughout the Coptic Orthodox Church, there are a variety of many great Sunday School Curriculums. All curriculums attempt to provide students with balanced teachings of Dogma, Bible, Rituals, History and Spiritual Social Studies. The Children of Curriculum continues with a similar objective, yet with a few objectives in mind. First, curriculum serves as teaching material to take a child considered a catechumen to become a servant of God. Such a process is lengthy, yet through the grace of God achievable. In the conversion of a catechumen, there are 3 stages to their discipleship: The Story, The Movement of the Heart and the Consecration.

Our Lord even clearly “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:4). By first being exposed to the knowledge, the movement of the heart is more natural. Once you know the Creator, have seen what he has done for you, it opens the door for the heart of man to be moved. The Movement of the heart ensues, but is filled with challenges. “My child, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself to endure trials.” (Sirach 2:1). Once a person discovers their path to God, the enemy will surely attempt to snatch the peace of God out of their hearts. They will be fought with doubts, with despair, with trials of all kinds. “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.” (John 10:10). The catechumen will encounter a dichotomy, being presented with two options: to intensify one's commitment and consecrate oneself, or alternatively to revert to one's previous ways.

The curriculum then attempts to go through this process with the child. Through younger ages, such as pre-school and elementary, the curriculum focuses entirely on the story. This inline with their psychological development, which will be addressed in more depth shortly, as they only begin their own sense of morality and fairness by the age of 11-12. At this stage then begins the movement of the heart, with a hope that over the next few years, their heart is moved such that they are willing to join pre-servants by Grade 9 or Grade 10. Should the students not be ready, the cycle restarts but in an accelerated fashion from Grade 9 to Grade 12, where Grade 9 would be to refocus on the story, Grade 10 on the movement of the heart and finally Grade 11-12 aiming for consecration once more.

Themes and Psychological Development

While pursuing the conversion of the child into a servant is the ultimate goal, the objective is broken down further throughout the years. By understanding the student and their psychological stage, we can more accurately engage their attention by speaking of subjects they subconsciously are thinking about and trying to discover. As such, Each year's curriculum is developed with an understanding of the different developmental levels of the child psychological stages and subsequently associated with a relatable yearly theme. This ensures that the curriculum is challenging but not overwhelming for children and that it helps them to grow and develop in all areas.

Each year has a specific theme, and each lesson that was developed touches on that theme to some extent. While not all lessons of the year are entirely focused on the theme, each lesson touches on the theme to varying degrees, making allusions, references, or providing subtle hints that encourage students to explore the theme in greater depth. This approach serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it allows for the exploration of the theme from multiple angles and perspectives, fostering a deeper understanding. Secondly, by implicitly teaching and reinforcing the theme throughout the year, it becomes an integral part of the students' psychological development. Through repeated exposure and exploration, the theme becomes embedded in their minds, shaping their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

The themes of each year in the curriculum are carefully chosen to build and progress in a deliberate and sequential way. It is, therefore, preferable to teach the years in the sequence they are presented. In some cases however, smaller churches may need to combine grades due to limited resources or class sizes. In these situations, it is recommended that the curriculum years be rotated. For example, in a middle school class with grades 6-8, the curriculum could be taught in the following order:

Year 1: Grade 6

Year 2: Grade 7

Year 3: Grade 8

This way, all students in the class will be exposed to all three curricula over the three years of middle school. It is important to note that this is just a suggestion, and there may be other ways to rotate the curriculum years that work better for a particular church or class.

The Yearly Sequence

The initial stage of the catechumen needing to be addressed is the story, which involves choosing themes while keeping in mind their developmental stage and building upon each other. This is a crucial step in the catechetical process, as it lays the foundation for the faith formation of the catechumen. The stories will:

- Use a variety of story types, such as Bible stories, parables, and saint stories.
- Tell the stories in a way that is engaging and interesting.
- Use visuals, such as pictures, puppets, or props, to help the catechumens to understand the story.

- Help the catechumens to apply the story to their own lives.

Starting with KG, the children are to discover that God's love is our greatest source of happiness. Making this amazing and wonderful God personal and loving. They learn aspects that please God (such as small services, sharing, being appreciative, giving apologies), and that which saddens the heart of God - all through the means of stories. They are then introduced to the type of relationship they have with God and its meaning. Fascinated by rules, superheroes while surrendering to adult principles, it is fitting to speak to the children of our God's mighty Fatherhood. His power, authority, blessings & representatives are explored throughout Grade 1. Similarly, in Grade 2, having seen and understood who their spiritual Father is and as the kids are sensitive to adult evaluation while desiring fairness and structure, we introduce them more thoroughly to the living sensitivity and care of their spiritual mother; The Church. This family, the church, will help them grow in the path of perfection they are seeking and help influence their decisions wisely.

As the children are growing to understand concepts, depending more on inter-relationships and seeking to make right decisions, the Grade 3 curriculum turns to the relationship with their brothers and sisters. One that must be governed by Respect & Honor; doing unto others as you would have others do unto you. Achieving this consistently, though makes sense, is challenging, and as they grow older and energetic in Grade 4 while showing signs of responsibility, the Grade 4 curriculum focuses on the virtue of discipline. Discipline in our worship, in our applications of scripture, in our fastings and in our inter-relationships in the world. Finally, as we move to Grade 5, as they develop a sense of morality at a time where they are challenged with fairness issues, are developing a mature sense of right and wrong and have a stricter ethical sense, it seems to be an imperative objective to teach the dependency of faith with morality.

Simplifying this into a table would look as such:

PK	Introduce God as powerful, wonderful, the source of every good thing, and full of goodness
KG	Make this amazing and wonderful God personal and loving.
Grade 1	Make the relationship with God more intimate. He is my Father. Not only does He love me, but He can do all things. All-Powerful, All-Loving, All-Present.
Grade 2	Now that the kids have a relationship with their Father, we build the relationship with their Mother, the Church, which cares and nourishes her children.
Grade 3	After establishing relationships with their Father and Mother, we turn their attention to the relationships with their brothers and sisters. Do unto others as you would have others do to you.
Grade 4	In order to maintain healthy relationships with God, Church, and others, I must practice discipline. As they grow, we emphasize the importance of personal accountability and responsibility.

Grade 5

Growing in disciplines leads me towards virtue and morality. Discipline helps support my faith, which helps me build trust in God and helps me live by his morals and virtues.

There is a big transition in the curriculum from G5 to G6. The emphasis shifts from building foundational material to focusing on their role in society, and building up their personal relationship with God, responsibility, and accountability. Again, this is in an attempt to begin developing a movement of heart. Having begun the movement of the heart and seeking to apply spiritual morality to their lives, we turn to scripture as the living authority and guide in Grade 6. The student dive into its structure, its composition, its authority and most importantly in how it guides us to be Living Bibles ourselves. Then, children that are 11 or 12 years old begin questioning their parents faith. then becomes critical for them to know, understand and choose, on their own, their Christian way of life. This is achieved through teaching and building in them the virtue of Discernment. Being moody, impulsive, with extreme emotions, unable to make decisions yet desiring to be independent; learning and acquiring discernment throughout the year is imperative. Finally, converging in this movement of the heart period, the curriculum attempts to converge their faith and dedication to the Orthodox Church. This falls perfectly inline with their desire to become independent and self-reliant. The servants are then to equip them with the value of Orthodoxy in their moral life, and day to day approach. By the end of the year, it would be natural to find some youth expressing desires to enter this pre-servant program. As they are often challenged with boredom, it is advisable to wait another year before admitting the eligible students to the pre-servants program. Grade 10 student tend to think more long term, while the Grade 9 curriculum still attempts to teach them value lessons in their life of consecration. Levels of temptations increase significantly in this period and it becomes very fitting to equip them with the desire for the virtue of self-control. Controlling these peaking desires thus needs to be presented as a beautiful virtue to which they can choose and aspire for as an aspect of their independence.

Finally, the cycle repeats as the curriculum attempts to stir up the heart in Grade 10 by focusing on the life of repentance. As they grow in understanding consequences of behaviors, they are re-introduced to the fall, the purpose of the incarnation and its connection to our needed repentance. In grade 11, they tend to rethink their friends. This year seeks to present Christ as their friend; their intimate friend who will be dedicated to them in loyalty forever. Accordingly, we likewise bring our relation to deeper levels: consecration; a dedicated life with Him. In Grade 12, as they near full maturity, service becomes the direct objective of life and the students get an abridged catechetical summary of the spiritual life.

Similarly, simplifying these grades into a table would look as such:

Grade 6

I must live out my faith and show God to the world through my actions. My way of life should represent God and His Word to people.

Grade 7

How do I make good decisions? The Bible is my road map. Therefore, it is the basis for my decision making.

Grade 8

We begin to encourage the children to make a conscious decision about their faith.

	Their first big decision is to make their faith their own, not just the faith of their parents. It is personal.
Grade 9	Choosing my Christian faith leads me to TRUE independence. We teach Christian independence which must be guided by self-control, otherwise “independence” leads to sin.
Grade 10	Discernment, Faith, Independence and Self-Control all help keep me on the right path. But, when I fall, I get back up through repentance and confession.
Grade 11	We focus on a life of Holiness. I am dedicated, consecrated to God which makes me different from the world. This year seeks to present Christ as their friend; their intimate friend who will be dedicated to them in loyalty forever.
Grade 12	The ultimate goal for our children is to direct their holiness towards service to God and others through whichever path God has chosen for them.

Building Blocks & Milestones

Each year's theme in the educational program is strategically divided into manageable and coherent building blocks. These building blocks serve as the foundation for the year's curriculum, ensuring a structured and cohesive learning experience. Within each building block, lessons are carefully grouped together based on their relevance to the overall theme. This thoughtful organization allows children to explore related topics in a sequential manner, fostering a deeper understanding and retention of the material.

The interconnections among the lessons within a building block are meticulously crafted. Each lesson independently developed from the previous ones, yet interrelated, creating a natural progression that encourages children to engage in critical thinking and problem-solving. This continuity not only reinforces learning but also promotes a sense of accomplishment as children witness their own intellectual growth.

By organizing lessons into building blocks, the curriculum provides a supportive framework that enables children to make meaningful connections between various concepts and ideas. Regularly reminding the children of the theme and the building block, children can see the bigger picture and develop a comprehensive understanding of the theme. Additionally, the building block structure allows for flexibility and customization, enabling servants to tailor the curriculum to the unique needs and interests of their students, as well as adapt seasonal lessons to their appropriate week. Seasonal lessons can be moved around freely, they are not organized chronologically due to the variance in the coptic calendar.

While proper communication of themes and building blocks help youth remain connected to the material, servants should also consult the end of year milestones and tie them into their lesson when

appropriate. These outcomes are split in Scripture, spiritual, social, and rituals that are intended for children to achieve by the end of the year. These milestones help to track children's progress and ensure that they are making progress in all areas of development. So each lesson is intended to somehow tie to one or more of these objectives or milestones.

What you will find: PK-G5 Lesson Features

The curriculum provides lesson plans and slides from PK to Grade 5. The plan has four independent sections: the preparatory elements, the Lesson, Supplementary Material and the Review. The Servant preparatory elements are broken into four. It provides you with the materials needed to execute the plan as is (whether it be physical material to be purchased, references or links), the objective or message that is being focused, the moral virtues addressed and the memory verse linked to the lesson.

The lessons are then split with the introduction attempting to be creative to help the kids to move from being passive participants to an active participant in the lesson. The lesson body and delivery then ensues with delivery proposals for the servant, where they can choose when to stop and on what to focus. The lesson bodies are very detailed in the curriculum. The committee chose to make the lessons this detailed for several reasons:

1. Providing more detail helps for the edification of the servant.
2. The servants know what their children can handle. If the lesson is too much for their children, they can use their discretion to trim the lessons. However, if the lesson is trimmed it is important that the key relevant features of the curriculum (Themes, Objectives & Milestones, Scriptural, Liturgical, Patristic reference etc.) be preserved as much as possible.
3. Having a more detailed curriculum with many references helps to free their servants time to figure out how to effectively present the lesson to their children and how to connect with their class rather than trying to find references and resources.

Certain aspects of the lessons are also included for the edification and education of the servants who prepare the lesson such as, Detailed discussion points, Patristic sayings and Reference citations. Remember however, even though the curriculum provides everything, the lesson is not a set of information and knowledge being delivered to the children. The lesson is meant to be a spiritual delivery and thus, proper preparation (with prayer, planning - yes, re-plan the lesson, and practice), as detailed in the lesson preparation section, still needs to be followed. Providing the given information verbatim will add nothing of value to the youth.

The next section detailed is the supplementary material where the curriculum will detail creative crafts, activities, movies or songs that can be used to enhance the lesson. These can be used prior, during or after the lesson as seen fit by the servant. They are meant to enhance learning.

The final section of the Children of Light lesson plan is the review, which plays a crucial role in reinforcing the key concepts and ensuring that the children have grasped the material.

Age-appropriate questions are provided to facilitate a thorough review of the lessons. These questions are carefully crafted to stimulate the children's thinking and encourage active participation. The lesson plan then reminds the servant, the person leading the lesson, to revisit both the memory verse and the moral focus one more time. This repetition serves to strengthen the children's retention of these important elements and emphasizes their significance. Additionally, the lesson application, also known as the "take home lesson," is delivered.

The lesson application section presents various applications that can be conveyed to the children. The applications chosen in the curriculum are designed to connect with the end-of-year milestones. The end-of-year milestones represent the expected outcomes of the curriculum in the children's lives, making these applications highly relevant and applicable to them. It's essential to note that the servant has the flexibility to replace the provided application if they deem it necessary. However, it is highly recommended to keep the end-of-year milestones in mind when selecting an alternative application. This ensures that the children continue to receive lessons aligned with the overall goals of the curriculum and that the end-of-year milestones are effectively addressed.

The review, memory verse, moral focus, and lesson application sections collectively form a comprehensive learning experience for the children. By engaging in these activities, the children have the opportunity to solidify their understanding, apply the lessons to their lives, and grow spiritually and morally.

What you will find: G6-G12 Lesson Features

The approach in the Grade 6 to Grade 12 portion of the curriculum changes. The earlier ages focus more on stories and activities while the older portion dives more into reflections and life applications. Stories are still used within them, but the lesson no longer revolves around only one story but rather revolves around the objective with supporting stories. As teenagers grow in the land of immigration, they are faced with many atheistic principles and the curriculum attempts to pursue the lessons from an apologetic approach, when possible.

In the upper portion of the lesson plan, both the objective and application are enumerated in a manner similar to that employed in the younger age groups. However, in these lesson plans, they assume a more central focus. The references and resources utilized throughout the lesson are grouped together and made available for further reading. The lesson plan itself is then broken down into

several smaller lessons or 'hooks' designed to elicit four or five thought-provoking statements or questions. These bullet points or hooks come in seven distinct styles:

1 INTERESTING QUESTION HOOK - Ask a question that relates to your essay or paper. - Make sure it's a question where the audience needs to read the essay to get the answer.	2 STRONG STATEMENT HOOK - Write a sentence or group of sentences that make an assertive claim about your essay topic. - Make sure this question connects to your thesis statement.
3 FACT/ STATISTIC HOOK - Start your essay with a true fact or statistic about your topic. - Make sure your fact comes from a credible source.	4 METAPHOR/ SIMILE HOOK - Write a metaphor that makes a direct comparison between your topic and something different. - Or use a simile by adding "like" or "as" between the topic and something

1. Interesting Question Hook: This hook poses an intriguing question that captures the student's attention and sets the stage for further exploration.

2. Strong Statement Hook: This hook presents a bold or controversial statement that sparks

- curiosity and encourages students to engage in critical thinking.
3. Fact/Statistic Hook: This hook introduces a compelling fact or statistic related to the lesson topic, piquing students' interest and providing a foundation for further learning.
 4. Metaphor/Simile Hook: This hook employs a metaphor or simile to create a vivid image or comparison that resonates with students and helps them grasp abstract concepts.
 5. Story Hook: This hook starts with a captivating story or anecdote that sets the context for the lesson and draws students into the material.
 6. Description Hook: This hook provides a detailed description of a person, place, or event that helps students visualize and connect with the lesson topic.
 7. Quotation Hook: This hook begins with a thought-provoking quote from a notable figure or text, stimulating students' curiosity and inviting them to explore the underlying ideas.

It goes without saying that the objective is to seize the student's attention on multiple occasions throughout the lesson. Each hook is then followed by a more detailed lesson plan that supports or answers the given hook. Every lesson includes at least one of the following resources to facilitate comprehensive delivery:

1. Scriptural: This resource draws on passages from the Bible to provide students with a solid scriptural basis for the lesson topic.
2. Liturgical: This resource incorporates elements of the church's liturgy, such as hymns, prayers, or rituals, to connect students to the broader Christian tradition.
3. Patristic: This resource features writings or teachings from early church fathers, offering students a historical perspective on the lesson topic.
4. Story: This resource includes a story or narrative that illustrates the lesson topic and helps students relate it to their own lives.

Finally, if the servant attempts to create their own delivery, it is crucial to remember all these elements, including but not limited to: the yearly theme, the building block theme, the application and its connection to the end-of-year milestone, and the need for the lesson plan to incorporate scripture, liturgics, patristic writings, and stories. Additionally, it is essential to break down the lesson into engaging hooks that stimulate students' thinking.



Review Questions

1. The curriculum was developed based on ..? (A: with the understanding of the different developmental levels of children at the appropriate age for that year of the curriculum.)
2. What is the purpose of End of Year Milestones? (A: To evaluate the students' learning.)
3. True or False? The theme of PK is to Introduce God as powerful, wonderful, the source of every good thing. (A: True.)
4. True or False? Every PK-G5 lesson includes servant preparation information. (A: True)
5. What are the main elements that each G6-G12 must include? (A: Scriptural reference -

Liturgical reference - Patristic reference - Story from the saints or history of the church- Many lessons include “other” resources as well.



1.2 Relationships

Connection vs. Communication

TEACHING BASICS

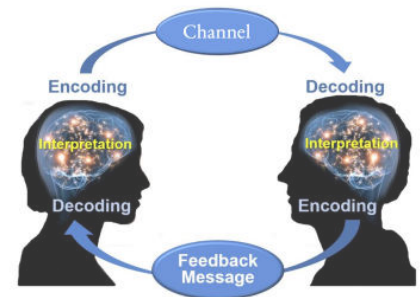
The Communication Process

The communication process involves a sender, a receiver, and potentially a feedback loop. The process begins when the sender has a message they wish to convey to the receiver. This message can be anything from a simple idea to a complex set of instructions. The sender then needs to choose a channel of communication, such as email, face-to-face conversation, or a phone call.

Once the channel is chosen, the sender encodes the message into a form that can be transmitted. For example, if the sender is writing an email, they will need to encode the message into written language. If the sender is speaking in person, they will need to encode the message into spoken language.

The encoded message is then transmitted through the chosen channel to the receiver. The receiver then decodes the message, interpreting it and understanding its meaning. Once the receiver has decoded the message, they may choose to respond. The response can be verbal, written, or nonverbal.

If the receiver chooses to respond, the communication process continues with the receiver becoming the sender and the sender becoming the receiver. This back-and-forth exchange of messages continues until the communication process is complete. The communication process is essential for building relationships, sharing information, and solving problems. It is also important for creating a sense of community and belonging. Effective communication can help people to build stronger relationships, achieve their goals, and live more fulfilling lives.



This communication process can then be broken into 5 stages:

- Sender Encoding
- Delivery Channel
- Receiver Decoding
- Receiver Encoding
- Feedback Channel

Each of those stages are gates through which communication may fail and ultimately lead to miscommunication, or even altercations. The book of Proverbs clearly emphasizes the importance of each step: "He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him" (Proverbs 18:13). Within the terms of this diagram, the verse can be rephrased as: "He who encodes before properly decoding the message received will be ashamed."

As an example, a servant, John, attempts to plan the yearly graduation celebration for the High School Class. He wants to know who will be available to come but no-one responds. He needs to order the gifts, get the cake, reserve the place, prepare the certificates and he's running out of time. Generally people have not been responding, he is left not knowing what to do!

Based on the Diagram, it appears, there is no feedback. The failure will lie either in the Sender Encoding, Delivery Channel or Receiver Decoding. John will likely need to follow up, approach them personally instead of group messages, be conscious of things that could be keeping people from responding (varying the channel of communication). Alternatively, it may also be due to improper decoding and the receiver was simply busy, or thought they had replied but they didn't, or wasn't sure they needed to respond, or alternatively was not comfortable responding in group messages.

The Hidden Factors

Beyond the potential stages of failure in communication, each individual may have hidden factors that impact their ability to encode or decode messages effectively. These factors can be broadly categorized into four main groups:

1. **Past Experiences:** Previous situations with a particular person or similar situations with others can influence how an individual communicates. For instance, a person who has had negative experiences with a particular server in the past may be more likely to be critical or demanding in future interactions.
2. **Culture:** Different cultures have their own unique norms and expectations regarding communication. What is considered polite or appropriate in one culture may be seen as rude or disrespectful in another. For example, the "OK" sign, which is often interpreted as "perfect" in the United States, is interpreted as "money" in Japan and "zero" in Argentina.
3. **Feelings/Mood:** A person's emotional state can also impact their communication. Someone who is stressed, tired, or busy may be more likely to be short-tempered or irritable. They may also be less patient or attentive when listening to others. They might even get upset about something that's not even that big of a deal!
4. **Language:** Language can be a source of misunderstanding, especially when people are not familiar with the idioms or colloquialisms used in a particular language. For instance, the phrase "once in a blue moon" may not be understood by someone who is not a native English speaker.
5. **Gender:** Men and women tend to communicate differently, both verbally and nonverbally. It is important to be aware of these differences to avoid misinterpretations. For example, men may be more direct and assertive in their communication style, while women may be more indirect and collaborative.

By understanding these factors, individuals can become more effective communicators and reduce the risk of misunderstandings and conflict. For example, imagine a scenario where two servants are in the same class, Peter and Mariam. Peter has this great idea that they start off the lesson with songs. He tells Mariam about it and she listens to his proposal and nods. He is so glad she likes it and can't wait to get started! Two weeks later, Mariam is surprised to see Peter getting up, plugging in his phone and then starting to teach the kids a song. She didn't agree to this! And....it means she won't have time to

do the activity she had planned for that day which she had been working on for two days. What should she do? Where did the communication fail?

Communication Failures

When communication fails, it is critical to remember that the servant of God is to have the spirit of the bondservant of the Lord as expressed by St. Paul: “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:1-3). It is therefore critical that when communication fails we attempt to resort to the sacrifices and self-denial aspects that are needed to keep the spirit of unity and then re-evaluate the point of failure. In this case, Peter and Maria needed to be conscious of gender differences that could cause misunderstandings. Women will nod their head to show they’re listening. Men will interpret head nodding as a sign of agreement, and then are surprised when they realize that they didn’t agree at all. The opposite is quite true as well, when a woman speaks to a man and he’s in neutral body language and does not say anything nor nod, the woman will think he’s bored, uninterested or doesn’t understand. This sometimes makes a woman uncomfortable and she will either repeat or ask a man what she’s saying.

Provided the number of hidden factors and the stages of the communication process, it is given that the odds of miscommunication are excessively high. Avoid holding grudges against servants or any of your surroundings where communication failed. Forgive, evaluate the communication process and repeat. Effective communication is dynamic, it requires significant work, and will be faced with many failures.

Differentiating Connection from Communication

Words are everywhere. Whether through email, texts, billboards, ads, newspapers, magazines, movies, or other types of social media, words are everywhere. Through a varying number of channels of communications, our environment is cluttered with words. In fact, a 2008 research estimates that an individual is usually bombarded with approximately thirty five thousand messages daily (Elway Research). However, how many of these words are actually received, or filtered out. Communicating messages is easy. However, to communicate a message that relates, that makes a difference, this sets the communication apart from all other messages your receivers encountered. The key: Connection. Connecting allows the communicator to identify a method of communication that allows them to relate and influence the receiver. Connecting, then becomes a key in every individual's pursuit of success, and even more so in their day to day life and service. The ultimate goal of communication is connection.

Looking at both Josiah and Nehemiah, both inherited a kingdom or a nation that were alien to God, his laws and his commandments. Yet, through effective communication and zeal, they connected with individuals such that many followed their visions and restoration plan. Or even with Queen Esther who manages to have the King of Persia connect and relate to her inability to follow the decree set by Haman. All of their successful services began with the ability to connect with those around them. People gravitate towards those with the best capabilities of connecting. In many schools and colleges, students have the choice of their professor. Though the material may be identical and the message delivered should relatively be similar, students always attempt to pick the professor with the

communication skills, essentially those that connect with their students. Connection is powerful and is key to delivering any message.

Obstacles to Connection

Connection has many obstacles. Immaturity, ego, and insecurity are formidable barriers to establishing meaningful connections with others. Each of these obstacles distorts our perspective and hinders our ability to engage in genuine and empathetic communication.

Immaturity: Immaturity is characterized by a limited capacity for empathy and an inability to see beyond one's own needs and desires. Immature individuals often struggle to understand the feelings and perspectives of others, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts. They may be impulsive and act without considering the consequences of their actions, further straining their relationships. Immaturity can be a major obstacle to forming lasting and fulfilling connections.

Ego: Ego refers to an inflated sense of self-importance and a preoccupation with one's own image. Individuals with a strong ego tend to be self-absorbed and may have difficulty listening to others or considering their feelings. They may be overly sensitive to criticism and quick to defend their own opinions, creating a barrier to open and honest communication. The focus on self rather than others makes it challenging to establish genuine connections. From the perspective of the communication process, the encoding process is skewed for specific feedback that benefits the self.

Insecurity: Insecurity is a deep-seated feeling of inadequacy or self-doubt. It often leads to a preoccupation with one's own flaws and a fear of being judged or rejected. Insecure individuals may be hesitant to share their thoughts and feelings with others, as they worry about being criticized or ridiculed. This fear of exposure can create a barrier to intimacy and make it difficult to form close relationships.

These obstacles to connection can be likened to the difficulty of having cellular reception in certain areas. Just as a weak signal can hinder communication, these psychological barriers can interfere with our ability to establish and maintain meaningful connections with others. Overcoming these obstacles requires self-awareness, empathy, and a willingness to challenge our own limitations. By cultivating maturity, humility, and a secure sense of self, we can create the conditions necessary for genuine and conducive connections.

Conductive Connection

Creating meaningful connections with others is a fundamental aspect of human interaction. When we connect with someone, we establish a bond that allows for mutual understanding, support, and growth. Connecting effectively involves focusing on the other person and demonstrating certain conducive behaviors. Here are six key connectors that foster connection and their corresponding disconnection counterparts:

	Connector	Disconnector
CARING	Truly caring about others means putting their needs and interests before your own. It involves showing empathy, understanding, and compassion, and	Indifference, selfishness, and lack of empathy create disconnection.

	being genuinely interested in their well-being. Do you truly care for them; it's all about them.	
REAL	Going beyond words and expressing genuine emotions and experiences creates a sense of authenticity and trust. It involves being real and transparent, allowing others to see the true you.	Superficiality, fakeness, and pretense create disconnection.
PROACTIVE	Being proactive and willing to put in the work is essential for maintaining connections. What are you willing to do? It involves taking initiative, following through on commitments, and showing a genuine desire to invest in the relationship.	Passivity, lack of effort, and a "wait-and-see" attitude create disconnection.
RELATABLE	Finding common ground and having shared experiences creates a sense of relatability and connection. It involves understanding and acknowledging similarities, fostering a sense of belonging.	Dissimilarity, lack of shared experiences, and a sense of otherness create disconnection.
SIMPLE	Especially in larger groups, simplicity is key. Clear and concise communication, avoiding jargon and complexity, helps create a shared understanding and prevents disconnection. Smaller groups can be more interactive and clarification can be interjected, while larger audiences this is not the case.	Complexity, jargon, and overcomplication create disconnection.
INTEGRITY	Living by your values and practicing what you preach fosters trust and respect. It involves being consistent in your actions and words, demonstrating alignment between your beliefs and behaviors. Do you practice what you preach?	Hypocrisy, inconsistency, and a lack of integrity create disconnection.

Focusing on these six connectors and minimizing their disconnection counterparts not only strengthens existing relationships but also opens doors for new and meaningful connections. Remember, connection is a two-way street, and it requires effort, empathy, and a genuine desire to build bridges with others.

Settings of Connection

Within the six criterias set out, there are 3 settings of connection: one on one, in an outing or during the delivery of a class. Connecting one on one is, without a doubt, the likeliest setting of connection. Conversations are more personal, more relatable and would be the only setting that can build a true relationship. A person will never build a relationship with a motivational speaker by simply listening to their talk. One on one conversations are necessary for building relationships. Within the one on one framework, you may try to engage the receiver by following the 6 conducive connectors layed out in the table. These can be used in one on one relationship among servants, with students, or even with coworkers, friends or spouses. Connecting, during an outing or with a group, allows a more casual setting to help find common grounds. Finally, connecting with a class or an audience is a workable skillset that requires work and effort and is optimized when the other settings are utilized. It may be the most difficult, and the difference between being a lecturer and a mentor or model. Yet, within this setting, you may still try to achieve the 6 conducive selector differently.

	One-on-One	Group	Audience
CARING	Ask about them, talk more about them, than you. Be a good listener and see what they value.	Compliment for things they are doing, find ways to increase individual value within the group by finding their strengths.	Communicate your desire to be there for them. Do something special for them.
REAL	Keeping eye-contact, and good body language. If feet are pointing outward, or body points away from the person you are speaking to, these are indirect signals of wanting to leave the conversation. Be sensitive to these concepts.	Live the experience and the moment, be authentic. Do not hide, or simply bring a friend to seclude yourself with, or go for a stroll outside the gathering, being absent while simply showing face.	Keep smiles, allow the listeners time to hear, absorb and relate.
PROACTIVE	Bring true energy to the conversation, and be proactive in conversation, See what may be unspoken subtleties in the conversation and ask.	Make sure everyone knows your name and everyone knows your name, and go beyond by trying to discover something unique	Practice tone, visual aids and various delivery methods. When selecting a teacher in college and students are given an option, everyone attempts to select the teacher who has better connection

		about each other.	skills <i>(Better tone, better delivery, etc...)</i> Even though the material is exactly the same!
RELATABLE	Express gratitude when possible, find common ground and share experiences and lessons learned.	Find common traits and expressions within the event.	Have relatable stories and interactions, one that provides the sense that what they encountered has been seen and has solutions that they can experience.
SIMPLE	Use clear communication, and ensure the communication process consistently has feedback and the decoding has properly been transmitted.	Ask for feedback.	Use simple words, have a simple message, and deliver the message in a simple way. The more complicated the words, the more brain power needs to be used, the less is truly captured. Use simple words, have one or two simple objectives, not five.
INTEGRITY	show genuineness in a desire to help, to serve, to relate to them, with values you keep, genuinely caring while believing in the potential of those you serve.		



Review Questions

1. What are the communication process stages? (A: Sender Encoding; Delivery Channel; Receiver Decoding; Receiver Encoding; Feedback Channel)
2. Give two hidden factors that impact the communication. (A: Culture and past experiences)
3. True or false? Immaturity, Ego, Insecurity are all various obstacles to properly connecting with others. (A: True)
4. What are the 6 conducive connectors? (A: Caring; Real; Proactive; Relatable; Simple; Integrity)
6. True or false? Connecting, during an outing or with a group, allows a more casual setting to help find common grounds. (A: True)



Books & References

1. [Communicating with the Opposite Gender by HE Metropolitan Youssef](#), accessed 12 June 2024
2. [Maxwell, John C. Everyone Communicates, Few Connect. Thomas Nelson, 2010](#)



1.2 Relationships

Building Relations: Visits & Calls

TEACHING BASICS**Relational Needs**

Before a child or teenager can place their trust in a guardian, certain fundamental needs must be satisfied. Establishing a strong foundation of love, acceptance, and security is paramount. However, there are more nuanced relational needs that contribute to a trusting bond. Providing opportunities for choice, fostering a sense of freedom and independence, offering recognition and encouragement, and entrusting responsibilities are all essential in nurturing a child's sense of self-worth and trust.

In His profound wisdom, Christ exemplified the principle that love begets love. He demonstrated that the act of being loved first is a catalyst for learning how to love in return. The scripture in 1 John 4:19 beautifully captures this truth: "We love Him because He first loved us." This verse underscores the transformative power of love and emphasizes that experiencing love is a prerequisite for understanding and reciprocating it. The implications of Christ's teachings extend beyond personal relationships. By imitating Christ's example of unconditional love, we can create environments where individuals feel valued, respected, and empowered to make meaningful contributions.

A servant must seek to meet the emotional and relational needs of children and teenagers if they hope to seek to establish a solid foundation of trust. By providing love, acceptance, security, and opportunities for growth and responsibility, we can help them develop a healthy sense of self and forge meaningful connections with them. Furthermore, by embracing Christ's teachings on love, we can create a church community where love is the prevailing force, transforming individuals and society as a whole.

Feeling unconditionally accepted, regardless of their behavior or appearance is a big factor in the decision as to whether a child will open their heart to you or not. God accepted us unconditionally and we ought to do the same. We read in Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." This all begins in the classroom and works its way out into social settings.

Begins in the Classroom: Non-teaching Attendance

While most servants associate service with the chance of giving the lesson, this is far from the core of the service. The goal of service is to empower children to have a relationship with God, while the lesson certainly plays a part, it is nothing but a small aspect. Just like different individuals have different personalities and interests, the children also have different paths to coming to the knowledge of the truth. Unfortunately, some servants may mistakenly believe that not presenting lessons equates to optional attendance. This misconception steers them away from the true purpose of service, which

involves building relationships, praying for the teaching servants, receiving spiritual nourishment, assisting with classroom management, maintaining attendance logs, monitoring time, intervening politely, and serving as role models. It is important to recognize that some children may specifically seek out and connect with the servants. While the focus should always be on Christ and not on the individual servants, these interactions present opportunities to guide children toward a deeper understanding of their faith.

The ultimate aim is to achieve 100% attendance. While occasional absences due to legitimate reasons such as work commitments, illnesses, or travel are understandable, no servant should be absent simply because of laziness or a sense of feeling unneeded. Every servant plays a crucial role, just like the teaching servant who delivers the lesson. By embracing their responsibilities and actively engaging with the children, servants can significantly contribute to the spiritual growth and development of the younger generation.

Pray for the servant teaching, and for the Holy Spirit to guide them. It is essential to maintain a reverent and focused atmosphere in class, avoiding distractions such as chatting with fellow servants, coordinators, or Abouna. This is a time dedicated to learning and spiritual growth, and it is important to honor this purpose. Be observant of unusual behaviors or changes in trends among the children. Pay attention to those who may appear different, withdrawn, or overly active. Bullying, quietness, or sudden shifts in relationships can be signs that require attention.

Discipline is also a crucial aspect of classroom management. Help quiet kids down gently but firmly, allowing the teaching servant to focus on their lesson. Discreetly track the children's involvement, noticing if particular individuals remain quiet or are not being engaged. Encouraging quiet kids to participate is essential, as they may feel excluded or uncomfortable if they are not fully involved. Has the teaching servant been asking the same people all the time? Get quiet kids involved because inclusivity and a welcoming environment are key to keeping children engaged and motivated.

Furthermore, help with questions that get asked to the teaching servant, as they may already have their hands full answering others. Help them out if you know the answer. If you, yourself, are unsure of an answer just tell them that you can get back to them! Listen to the speaker as if you were a student as well: are they saying the right thing? If they say something that is not correct, then you need to find a polite way to correct them because you want the kids to come at the right time, as well as we do not wish to teach them false information. Know when to intervene, (if at all), as well as how to intervene, (in the form of a question, etc.) Usually wait for them to call upon you, as this makes for a good stopping point. The speaker can ask at the end of the lesson; any comments or questions from the other servants?

Begins in the Classroom: Servant Behavior

The impact of a servant's behavior and body language should never be underestimated. A simple act like smiling can have a profound effect on the impression one leaves on children and parents. A person who exudes a warm and inviting demeanor, marked by a genuine smile, hearty laughter, and a kind and peaceful expression, is more likely to be received positively by both children and parents. In contrast, a person with a loud and harsh voice, a perpetually frowning face, or a tendency to

reprimand other children in front of them is more likely to elicit fear and apprehension.

It is equally important to be sensitive to children's individual triggers and boundaries. Some children may be uncomfortable with physical contact, such as hugs or touches, while others may be afraid of individuals with certain physical attributes, such as beards or distinctive clothing. It is crucial for servants to be respectful of these boundaries and to tailor their behavior accordingly, ensuring that they do not inadvertently cause distress or discomfort to the children in their care.

By being mindful of their behavior and body language, servants can create a supportive and welcoming atmosphere that encourages positive interactions with children and parents alike. A genuine smile, a kind word, and a respectful attitude goes a long way in building trust, comfort and thereby building the relationship.

From your Home: Calls

Keeping attendance is very important, as it can aid in helping with outreach projects, as well as tracking trends among students. These are means to ensure you are a Christ-like voice. If they attend but do not know you, they will not listen or absorb much. Therefore, attendance can additionally familiarize them with you and your fellow servants. “But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” (John 10:2-5)

The significance of attendance can be further illuminated through the analogy of a shepherd and his sheep, as depicted in John 10:2-5. The shepherd enters through the door, and the sheep recognize his voice, willingly following him because they know and trust him. Conversely, they would flee from a stranger whose voice they do not recognize. In the same way, consistent attendance allows you to establish meaningful relationships with students through calls, demonstrate love and care through visits, and build rapport through engaging activities.

By establishing a relationship through calls, you create a two-way communication channel, allowing you to connect with students on a personal level. Through calls, you can inquire about their well-being, offer support, and provide guidance. Visits, on the other hand, convey a sense of love and care, as you physically come into the students' spaces to show your concern and support. Activities serve as a platform for building rapport, as they engage students in interactive and fun ways, fostering a sense of camaraderie and mutual understanding.

By all these means, maintaining attendance is not merely about tracking presence but about establishing a deeper connection with students. It enables you to be a Christ-like voice, ensuring that your words and actions resonate with them. Through regular attendance, calls, visits, and activities, you create an environment where students feel known, loved, and cared for, ultimately leading to their spiritual growth and development.

Home Calls- General Guidelines

When it comes to house calls, many servants wonder who they should call and how often it should be done. Typically, if they miss Sunday school twice consecutively, a servant should call to check in on them. However, if the child has been coming, can regularly call every three to four weeks.

Sometimes, servants worry the phone call will stall as they run out of ideas of things to talk about. However, it is an endless list and here are a few of them. Tell them that you missed them, and, more importantly, ask if they are okay, (particularly if they have been missing Sunday School.) Next, perhaps ask how their day/week at school went, or about their favorite hobbies. Try to then ease into more spiritual topics, such as asking them if they prayed, did their bible study, etc. However, never criticize them for not doing so; rather, encourage them to improve without sounding disapproving or judgemental. Before hanging up, ensure they do not have any remaining questions.

Make note to never make them feel bad or guilty for not coming to church. Avoid lecturing or scolding them. Never start off the phone call by telling them that they should come to church. Rather, always make the child feel that you care about them. Take an interest in the child's life, and try to end the phone call on a positive note, telling them that you miss them, and would like to see them soon.

Home Visits - General Guidelines

A regularly asked question is how often should visits take place? Before defining the frequency, let us re-evaluate the objective. The goal of the servant is to establish a relationship with each child such that they begin to see the voice of Christ being emanated from the servant. A visit is an act of love and closeness, as entering one's home is a privilege. By visiting the child at least once a year, a bridge is gapped. In an ideal world, each servant should visit each child at least once per year. A second visit is encouraged as it deepens the connection. These are even more important with children who DO NOT attend Sunday school much. Why? In a visit, there should be a habit of opening scripture. How beautiful is the image of seeing God come to the child when they don't come to hear the word of God. So if they do not come, go more!

Now looking at some guidelines, ideally, servants would go two by two, just like the disciples went to preach two by two. As an act of love, take a gift with you, unless it is deemed inappropriate to do so. Always pray before you go in or pick up the phone. Read the bible study assigned for that week, as you need to set an example to those you are outreaching to. Typically sit with kids and parents, as well as the child alone if possible.

Make it your goal to become the child's friend. Speak with them face to face as a friend. We read in the Bible, "God spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend." (Exodus 33:11) Develop the type of friendship with the child that they seek your mentorship and guidance in life. Always talk on the child's level and never make them feel that you are better than them, more sophisticated than them, or more knowledgeable than them. After initial casual conversation, turn to spiritual topics, as recall this is the purpose of your visit.

The suggested time for a visit is typically 30 to 45 minutes. It can be divided as follows: one minute, before entering, to pray, five minutes for small talk with the child/ family, five minutes to talk to the parents, ten minutes to play with the kids, ten minutes of Bible study, and finally the last five minutes to pray, once again. Of course, if you are familiar with the child and their family the visit might be much

longer or shorter, but as a rule of thumb for new students, a visit should not go on too long. Always be mindful of the time of others and the privilege of the parents opening their homes to you.

Win them through love

Moreover, winning the child through love, acceptance, and security is the best way to keep them in the Church longterm. Always ask yourself, how do we accept the child? Then, remind yourself that the first step is to understand the child, as each one is different, and you must learn the most effective way to communicate with those which you interact with. Listen to them, observe them, and be perceptive, if you wish to pick up more about them: what they like and do not like, etc. Talk and work with the child one-on-one as well to make them feel that they are not overlooked in a classroom full of people. Do not forget to arrange a visit to their home from time to time, as well as call them on the phone regularly to keep them involved.



Review Questions

1. If you are not teaching do you still have to come to Sunday School? (A: Yes)
2. How long should a house visit be? (A: Thirty to forty minutes.)
3. True or false? Body language and facial expressions play a big role in first impressions, especially with children. (A: True)
4. How often should you do house calls if they come to Sunday School regularly? (A: Every three to four weeks)
5. When should Sunday School end? (A: 1 PM)



1.2 Relationships

Dealing with Difficult Children

TEACHING BASICS

A Hidden Struggle

Serving children in Sunday School is one of the most beautiful and rewarding ministries in the Church. But if we're honest, it's also one of the most emotionally complex. Every servant knows the joy of a class that's responsive, peaceful, and spiritually engaged.

But what happens when that peace is disrupted? When one child dominates the room, another refuses to speak, and a third seems determined to challenge every word? Throughout service, servants will meet children with challenging behaviors, some with diagnosed disorders, and others who are just stressed and act out in class.

But here's the paradox: The kids who are hardest to love are often the ones most desperate to experience real love. The ones who seem spiritually closed may be the ones secretly watching how we treat them, how we react, how we persist, how we pray for them when no one is looking. Dealing with difficult children in Sunday school can be a challenging task, but with patience, understanding, and the right approach, it can be managed effectively.

Behavioral Challenges in the Classroom

Throughout the service, a servant will inevitably encounter students who exhibit challenging behaviors. These are not disruptions to the mission — they are the mission. Our calling is not only to teach the easy or eager child but also to shepherd the difficult and restless ones with wisdom, patience, and love, just as Christ does with us.

Before reacting to a behavior, pause to consider:

“What is this child trying to communicate?”

Often, difficult behaviors stem from unmet needs, emotional stress, trauma, or a desire for connection.

Below are several common types of behaviors you may encounter, along with possible causes and recommended servant responses.

Chronic Talking

Possible causes: High energy, seeking attention, anxiety, social needs, lack of engagement in the material.

	● Channel their energy: Give them meaningful roles — helping pass out materials, reading verses, or leading short discussions. ● Use proximity and gentle redirection: Quietly stand near them or gently place a hand on their desk or shoulder as a reminder. ● Create structure: If needed, rearrange seating to minimize distractions. ● Teach purpose: For older students, remind them of the sacredness of the time in Sunday School and why attentiveness matters. “Let all things be done decently and in order.” – <i>1 Corinthians 14:40</i>
Attention-Seeking Behavior	Possible causes: Emotional neglect, insecurity, desire for affirmation, or testing boundaries. ● Catch them doing good: Praise positive behaviors (e.g., “I love how Sarah raised her hand!”). ● Avoid reinforcing negative behavior with public scolding, which may reward their need for attention. ● Build quiet connections: Speak to the child privately after class to affirm their value and offer personal attention. “Encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” – <i>1 Thessalonians 5:14</i>
Physical Aggression or Emotional Outbursts	Possible causes: Underlying trauma, overstimulation, poor emotional regulation, unmet needs at home, or medical conditions (like ADHD). ● Safety first: If a student becomes aggressive, calmly separate them from others. Seek help from a co-servant. ● De-escalate lovingly: Take them for a short walk, offer water, and talk about something unrelated to reset their emotions. ● Teach emotional tools: Once calm, talk about what happened and help the child understand their feelings and better choices for next time. ● Recap the lesson gently: Ensure they still feel included and valued by reviewing the lesson briefly one-on-one. “A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out.” – <i>Isaiah 42:3</i>

Frequent Bathroom Breaks / Repeated Excuses

Possible causes: Avoidance of the lesson, attention-seeking, anxiety, or a legitimate physical need.

- **Establish structure:** Let students use the restroom before class begins and explain that breaks will be limited during the lesson.
- **Stay flexible but firm:** If a child needs to go out, ask them to briefly answer a question from the lesson upon return — this reinforces learning without harshness.
- **Monitor patterns:** If a student is consistently leaving, have a private conversation to understand why.

“Let your yes be yes and your no be no.” – *Matthew 5:37*

Encourage consistency and clarity, but always temper with compassion.

Understanding Complicated Challenges in the Classroom

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental condition affecting both children and adults. It involves a combination of **inattention**, **hyperactivity**, and **impulsivity**, but each child’s experience with ADHD can look different. Children with ADHD may struggle to regulate focus and activity levels in a way that matches their environment.

Common signs include:

- Difficulty staying on task or following multi-step instructions
- Frequently losing or forgetting items
- Seeming not to listen even when spoken to directly
- Excessive talking, interrupting, blurting out answers
- Fidgeting, restlessness, or inability to stay seated

Possible underlying causes:

- ADHD is **not** a matter of laziness or willful disobedience — it reflects differences in brain development affecting attention, impulse control, and executive functioning.
- Environmental stress or sensory overload can worsen symptoms.
- Coexisting challenges like learning disabilities or anxiety may also be present.

Servant Approach:

- **Be patient and flexible:** Expect movement and interruptions, but gently redirect rather than scold harshly.
- **Break tasks into smaller steps:** Give one instruction at a time and check for understanding.
- **Use their energy positively:** Let them help pass out papers or act out parts of a Bible story.

- **Minimize distractions:** Seat them near you or away from doors and windows if possible.
- **Incorporate movement breaks:** Allow them to stand or move appropriately during longer activities.
- **Offer consistent structure:** Post and review class rules regularly. Predictability helps reduce impulsivity.
- **Communicate with parents:** They can offer strategies that work at home or insights on what triggers or calms their child.

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” –
Ephesians 4:2

This verse reminds us that patience is an act of love, not a sign of weakness.

ADHD is a lifelong condition, not a phase. Our goal is not to “fix” these kids but to create an environment where they can engage, learn about God, and know they are deeply loved as they are.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is a behavioral condition typically seen in children and adolescents, characterized by a consistent pattern of angry, irritable mood, argumentative or defiant behavior, and vindictiveness toward authority figures.

Common signs include:

- Frequent temper tantrums or angry outbursts
- Refusing to follow instructions or rules
- Deliberately annoying or upsetting others
- Blaming others for their own mistakes
- Being easily annoyed and spiteful

Servant Approach:

- **Avoid power struggles:** Remain calm and composed. Don’t match their tone or enter into arguments.
- **Set clear and consistent boundaries:** Explain rules ahead of time and enforce them with kindness but firmness.
- **Reinforce positive behavior:** Acknowledge and reward even small acts of cooperation.
- **Stay relational:** Kids with ODD often feel misunderstood. Work to maintain connection and express genuine care. A simple, “I see you’re upset. I still care about you, and I want to help,” can go a long way.
- **Work with parents or leadership** when behaviors escalate or become unsafe. The servant is not alone in this.

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” – Proverbs 15:1

King Solomon here encourages us to remain gentle and calm in the face of opposition, choosing peace over power struggles.

Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety is more than just worry. For some children, it can be persistent and overwhelming, interfering with their ability to engage in class activities, social interactions, or transitions.

Behaviors you might see:

- Constant worrying or asking repetitive questions
- Avoiding participation or refusing to attend class
- Physical symptoms like headaches, stomachaches, or crying
- Panic attacks or freeze responses during certain activities
- Fear of separation from parents

Servant Approach:

- **Create a calm, predictable environment:** Avoid sudden changes. Let the child know what to expect in class.
- **Validate their feelings:** Say things like, “It’s okay to feel nervous. You’re not alone.”
- **Offer gentle encouragement:** Help them take small steps to engage without forcing participation.
- **Assign quiet responsibilities:** Let them pass out papers or help with setup to give a sense of belonging without pressure.
- **Communicate with parents:** They may provide insight or coping strategies that work at home.

“When I am afraid, I will trust in You.” – Psalm 56:3

Children struggling with anxiety need reassurance that God is their safety, and that we reflect His presence through our patience and calm.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects how a person perceives the world and interacts with others. Children with autism may experience challenges in communication, social interaction, and exhibit repetitive behaviors or have strong preferences for routine.

Common traits:

- Difficulty making eye contact or reading social cues
- Limited verbal communication or highly literal language use
- Repetitive movements (e.g., hand-flapping) or fixations on specific topics
- Sensory sensitivities (e.g., sounds, textures, lights)
- Trouble with transitions or unexpected changes

Servant Approach:

- **Use simple, direct language:** Avoid figurative speech unless explained.
- **Support transitions:** Give advance notice when class will shift activities or end.
- **Offer sensory accommodations:** Be mindful of classroom noise and allow breaks if a child is overwhelmed.
- **Celebrate their strengths:** Children with ASD often have unique gifts—strong memory, attention to detail, deep interests. Incorporate these into the lesson when possible.
- **Be patient with social interaction:** Don't pressure eye contact or verbal responses. Connection may come differently, and that's okay.

“Each of us has one body with many members... and these members do not all have the same function.”

– **Romans 12:4**

This verse beautifully affirms the unique ways God has made each child and reminds us to value every gift, even when it looks different.

While there are a wide variety of complex behaviors, these children are not trying to be difficult, they are *trying to cope*. These conditions are not excuses for misbehavior, but explanations that help us understand the heart behind the struggle. Our role is not to “fix” them but to **minister Christ’s love and patience**, shaping our expectations and strategies with both **wisdom and warmth**. Their healing may not come in one lesson or another, but the memory of being loved in their uniqueness may last a lifetime.

Lesson Workshop

Every servant has encountered a child who challenged their patience, defied expectations, or quietly slipped under the radar. Sometimes it’s the hyper child who seems to be everywhere *except* where he’s supposed to be. Other times it’s the quiet girl no one notices, or the teenager who seems more interested in challenging your faith than hearing about it.

These moments can leave us feeling frustrated, helpless, or even tempted to give up. But each of these children has a story—and a soul deeply loved by God. Behind the behaviors are wounds, fears, unmet needs, or hidden cries for connection.

This section offers real-life scenarios—not just to help you “fix” problems, but to slow down, reflect, and grow in how you **see** and **serve**. For each child, we’ll offer reflection questions, spiritual insights, relevant Scripture, and simple takeaways rooted in Christ’s way of dealing with us when we are difficult.

These stories are fictional, but they’re based on the real challenges you will likely face. More importantly, they are opportunities to train your heart to respond like Christ: with wisdom, courage, patience, and love.

Scenario 1: "Mark, the Disruptive One"

Mark is a 7-year-old boy in Grade 2 Sunday School. He constantly gets out of his seat, talks while you're teaching, pokes the kids next to him, and runs around the room if you ignore him. You've tried separating him, giving warnings, even asking him to sit with another servant. Nothing seems to work. Some servants have begun saying, "He just needs discipline at home," while others are simply ignoring him.

Discussion Questions:

- What assumptions do we tend to make about children like Mark?
- What might be behind Mark's behavior emotionally or spiritually?
- What would Christ see in Mark's behavior that we might overlook?
- What are some proactive (not reactive) strategies we can use?
- Spiritually, how can we respond differently next Sunday?

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." – Proverbs 15:1

Children like Mark often reflect a heart overwhelmed by inner restlessness or unmet emotional needs. When we react with irritation, we escalate the chaos. But when we choose gentleness and consistency, we become a calming presence. Christ never responded to people with mere discipline, He saw past the surface into the storm within.

Ideal Takeaway:

Instead of labeling Mark as "the difficult one," ask: *What would gentleness and understanding look like if I truly believed he was hurting inside?*

Scenario 2: "The Child No One Notices"

Andrew is a 6th-grade boy who never speaks in class. He always shows up, sits in the back, never raises his hand, doesn't participate in activities, and leaves as soon as class ends. He doesn't misbehave, but he also doesn't seem connected. When you ask a question directly, he shrugs or says, "I don't know." No one in class seems to be friends with him.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do quiet or withdrawn students often get overlooked?
- What could be going on in Andrew's heart?
- What are simple ways to build bridges without pressuring him?
- How can we spiritually serve students who don't seem "hungry" for God yet?
- How did Jesus deal with those on the margins or spiritually passive?

"When I am afraid, I will trust in You." – Psalm 56:3

Some children hide behind silence because it feels safer than being vulnerable. While others fight for attention, Andrew disappears quietly. But silence does not mean absence of need. Jesus always

noticed the overlooked (Zacchaeus, the Samaritan Woman, etc...) and reached out **before being asked**.

Ideal Takeaway:

Ask yourself: *Who didn't speak in class? Who didn't laugh? And how can I reach out to them one-on-one this week?*

Scenario 3: "Julie, the Skeptic"

Julie is a high school junior. She comes to Sunday School irregularly and sits at the back with arms folded, rolling her eyes during discussions. When asked questions, she responds with sarcasm:

"Yeah, sure, because God is definitely listening to my prayers."

She often brings up topics like evolution, science, or moral questions to derail the lesson or corner the servant. Other youth laugh with her, but you sense it's more nervous than supportive. You later find out that her father is emotionally distant and critical.

Discussion Questions:

- What is Julie really saying with her sarcasm?
- How do we typically react to a teen who challenges us publicly? Is it helpful?
- What's the difference between defending the faith vs. winning an argument with a teen?
- What are some wrong assumptions we might make about Julie?
- What would Christ do if He was in your servant chair?

"Each of us has one body with many members... and these members do not all have the same function."
– Romans 12:4

Julie's sarcasm is often a mask for spiritual confusion, pain, or unmet questions. Jesus never silenced the honest doubter, He drew near. Even when Thomas demanded proof, Christ didn't rebuke him. He invited him to touch His wounds. Teens like Julie don't need us to win arguments, they need us to stay present, listen longer, and love unconditionally.

Ideal Takeaway:

Instead of being provoked by sarcasm, ask yourself: *What is she afraid of believing? And can I earn her trust enough to ask her, gently?*

Beyond the Challenges

As servants, it's easy to focus on managing behaviors, quieting the classroom, and delivering a lesson. But our deepest calling is far more spiritual than logistical. Teaching a lesson may take 30 minutes—but forming a soul takes a lifetime. To stay faithful in this holy work, we must learn to see our students through the eyes of Christ—especially the ones we find most difficult.

How Does God Deal with "Difficult Children"?

Throughout Scripture, we see spiritual children who resisted, doubted, fled, or failed—yet God never gave up on them.

- **Jonah** ran from God's call, angry and resentful—even at God's mercy for others.
- **St. Peter** denied Christ three times, despite walking on water just chapters earlier.
- **St. Thomas** refused to believe unless he could touch and see.
- **The Rich Young Ruler** walked away from Jesus with sorrow, unable to let go.
- **Israel**, God's chosen people, repeatedly grumbled, disobeyed, and abandoned their covenant.

And yet, in every case, God responded not with abandonment, but with **patience, discipline, mercy**, and above all, **eyes of love**. He pursued. He corrected. He waited. And He continued to call them His own.

“The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.” – Psalm 103:8

The Spiritual Danger of Giving Up

When a child is disruptive, defiant, withdrawn, or skeptical, we are tempted to label them, ignore them, or emotionally withdraw from them. It often doesn't feel like sin—it just feels like survival. But the Lord takes this seriously.

*“You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured.
You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost.”
— Ezekiel 34:4-6*

God's judgment in Ezekiel was not toward teachers who were "bad at lessons," but toward shepherds who stopped caring. When we give up inwardly, even while showing up outwardly, our service becomes hollow. The enemy rejoices when we start acting like employees, not fathers and mothers in Christ.

Faithfulness Over Outcome

We are not called to fix every child. That is the Spirit's work.
We are called to love faithfully—even when we see no change.

Remember: Jesus wept over Jerusalem knowing it would not repent. He still went to the Cross.

“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.” – 1 Corinthians 3:7

We may never see the fruit of our labor. But we are called to plant with love, water with tears, and trust the Lord of the Harvest.

Sunday School is not just 30 minutes of content. It is the fruit of a weeklong offering: of prayer, preparation, repentance, and relationship.

The lesson you deliver is only as powerful as the heart it flows from.

Just as confession is only effective when born of love and honesty, our service is only truly spiritual when rooted in Christ Himself. In Confession, we teach that there is efficacy to the mystery by itself, to truly benefit, confession begins in our rooms, in our prayers and repentance and our constant struggle. Confession is the completing point. Likewise, the Sunday School lesson is the end of the journey of service. It is only of true benefit when we establish individual connection with the children and see them personally.

And so, when you are tired, misunderstood, or tempted to withdraw, remember His eyes upon you. The same eyes of patience, mercy, and love that watched over Peter, Jonah, and Israel are watching over you now.

And through you, He watches over His children.

*“He will tend His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs in His arms.” — Isaiah 40:11*



Review Questions

1. What is the main paradox a servant in Sunday School might face when dealing with children?
 - a) The children who are the most engaged are often the most disruptive.
 - b) The kids who are the hardest to love are often the ones most desperate for real love.
 - c) The most well-behaved children are the ones who need the most spiritual guidance.
 - d) The mission is to teach, but the reality is managing behavior.
2. Before reacting to a child's challenging behavior, a servant should first consider:
 - a) What the child's parents are doing wrong.
 - b) What is the most effective discipline method.
 - c) What the child is trying to communicate.
 - d) How to quickly get back to the lesson.
3. Which of the following is a recommended servant response for a child with chronic talking?
 - a) Publicly scold them to set an example for the class.
 - b) Ignore their behavior completely until it stops.
 - c) Give them a meaningful role, like helping pass out materials.
 - d) Immediately send them to sit outside the classroom.
4. A child who frequently seeks attention by acting out may be struggling with:
 - a) ADHD.

b) Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD).

c) Emotional neglect or insecurity.

d) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

5. When a child with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is being argumentative, the recommended servant approach is to:

a) Engage in a power struggle to show who is in charge.

b) Remain calm and avoid matching their tone or arguing.

c) Immediately send them to a higher authority for discipline.

d) Publicly criticize their defiance to the rest of the class.

6. For a child with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a servant should:

a) Force them to sit still for the entire lesson.

b) Avoid communicating with their parents about their behavior.

c) Expect movement and interruptions, and gently redirect them.

d) View their condition as willful disobedience.

7. What is the spiritual danger of giving up on a difficult child?

a) It makes the lesson less effective for the other children.

b) It reflects a servant's inability to manage a classroom.

c) It's similar to the shepherd who stops caring for the weak, sick, and lost lambs.

d) It may cause the servant to become an employee, not a father or mother in Christ.



1.2 Relationships

Disciplining with Humility and Love

TEACHING BASICS**Complexity of Discipline**

Discipline is a broad and complex subject. Although it is not possible to cover every aspect exhaustively, this chapter aims to provide foundational guidelines for understanding and implementing discipline effectively. It encompasses guiding individuals towards self-control, responsibility, and respect for others. We will explore the nature of discipline, its theological underpinnings, and practical approaches for its application.

Discipline vs Punishment vs Abuse

Understanding the distinctions between discipline, punishment, and abuse is crucial for effective service and teaching. These terms, though often used interchangeably, represent fundamentally different approaches with distinct outcomes on the individuals involved. Can you tell the difference?

Discipline

Discipline is inherently constructive and goal-oriented, aiming to teach and guide individuals towards better behavior and self-control. It is not merely about correcting mistakes but about fostering growth and instilling values that will benefit the individual in the long term. Its purpose extends beyond mere rule enforcement; it encompasses guiding individuals towards self-control, responsibility, and respect for others. Discipline serves an educational role by teaching responsibility and self-control.

The key characteristic of discipline is that it is done with love. This approach is rooted in a desire to nurture and support, ensuring that the individual understands the reasons behind the rules and the importance of adhering to them. For instance, saying no to a child who wants another toy, despite already having many, is a form of discipline. It teaches the child moderation and prevents them from becoming spoiled. This act is not a punishment but a way to guide the child towards responsible behavior and self-control.

Punishment

Punishment, on the other hand, often stems from a place of anger and frustration. Unlike discipline, punishment is less about teaching and more about expressing dissatisfaction or anger towards the individual's behavior. It is typically a reactive measure, focusing on penalizing the wrongdoings rather than guiding the individual towards better behavior. Punishment can be destructive, leading to fear, resentment, and a breakdown in the relationship between the servant and the individual. When punishment is administered, it often lacks the constructive, goal-oriented nature of discipline and instead serves to vent the anger of the person administering it. This can result in negative emotional outcomes, such as fear and resentment, rather than positive behavioral change.

Abuse

Abuse is a severe form of mistreatment that involves actions which result in belittling, humiliating, or degrading the individual. Unlike discipline, which is done with love, and punishment, which is often an expression of anger, abuse is characterized by harming the individual's self-esteem and well-being. Abuse can take many forms, including spiritual, physical, emotional, and financial. Spiritual abuse occurs when religious teachings or scripture are misused to manipulate, control, or shame individuals. For example, using biblical verses to guilt or demean someone, even though the intent might seem to be for correction, it is a form of spiritual abuse. Such actions can cause deep emotional and psychological harm and are fundamentally opposed to the nurturing intent of true discipline. Even Satan, during the temptation of Jesus on the mountain, used a verse from Psalm 19 to attempt to mislead. Therefore, it is crucial to be vigilant against the temptation to wield scripture as a tool for manipulation or harm.

If someone of great authority and respect asks you to go hit an individual, will you do it? In 2-3 words – why not?

- Because I'm a Christian?
- Because I'm raised well?
- Because we are in church?
- Because I have to lead by example?

All good answers but the correct answer is...."because I don't want to hurt them."

In a Sunday School context, it is imperative to refrain from disciplining students if one is experiencing internal anger. Effective discipline requires a foundation of peace and calmness; it must emanate from a serene and composed heart rather than one agitated by anger. This ensures that the disciplinary actions are constructive and nurturing rather than punitive and harmful. The focus, thus, should be on discipline, which is conducted with love, patience, and a genuine desire to guide and support the child's development.

Theology of Discipline

Discipline, from a theological perspective, is deeply rooted in love and care. Theologically, discipline is viewed as a means of guiding individuals toward becoming who they are meant to be. This concept reflects God's discipline, which is based on His love for us. For instance, in Hebrews 12:6 and Proverbs 3:12, it is stated that God disciplines those He loves, emphasizing that divine discipline is intended for growth and betterment, not for retribution. "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." (Hebrews 12:6) "For whom the Lord loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights." (Proverbs 3:12)

Divine Love and Discipline

God's discipline is motivated by His love. It is not for every minor mistake but aims to correct and guide us towards fulfilling our potential. If I allow the child to do whatever they want, is this love? Actually, it's a lack of love! For example, if a child insists on having car keys without knowing how to drive, allowing this would be irresponsible and potentially harmful, reflecting a lack of genuine care. By allowing him to have the keys, this would not be love.

This mirrors how God's discipline is not arbitrary but aimed at guiding us towards safety and growth. God in his love does not want us to die in our sin, thus the discipline is aimed to protect us from the death that is ensued by sin.

God's Presence and Involvement

God's involvement is intimate and personal. He's not detached from us. He's not in heaven and we're on earth and we're disconnected. Yes, we say Our Father who art in heaven, but God in heaven became Emmanuel (God is with us). He sent His Holy Spirit to live "in" us. This involvement implies that while authority is maintained, God is actively engaged in our lives. He's above us, yet not far from us, because He's in heaven and we're His creation but He came to us and now abides in us through the Holy Spirit. Let us dive into each element of God's authority and involvement with us using the following table:

Relation	Application
Above – Our Father who art in heaven	If you love your children, keep this hierarchy in the class. If the authority is reversed you cannot discipline them. You are the authority figure, you are the decision maker. In some houses the authority is reversed, the child decides and the parents execute. God does not allow this in our relationship with Him. If He allows that we decide and He executes then it won't work for our benefit. God reminds us "our father who art in heaven" He's above us.
With – Became Emmanuel (God is with us)	But at the same time, you are with them, you are involved with them. God's not far from us, He's with us. Although you're the authority figure, you're not disconnected. The kids should not be scared of you or not know how to talk to you. They should not be so scared to come and bring an issue to you. Yes, there is a hierarchy, but the kids feel like you're with them, you sit and play with them on the floor, you go out with them, carry them.
In – Sent us the Holy Spirit to live "in" us	Through love, you are inside their hearts. Same time you're in their heart.

Sovereignty and Free Will

God's respect for human free will, even when individuals make poor choices, illustrates a key aspect of divine discipline. Although God is sovereign, He gave us the freedom to make choices and He respects

our free will. Even with our freewill when we make wrong choices. Many times God makes us reap the consequences of our choices but He respects our choices, even the wrong ones.

This principle is evident in the parable of the Prodigal Son, where the son's experiences of consequence are part of his journey back to reconciliation. "But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself as a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, **and no one gave him anything.** (Luke 15: 14-16) No one gave him anything when he was in need! The father was very rich. Imagine if the father said, "I'll send him some money and some food and so he will see my love and come back to me." Would the prodigal son have come back? Unlikely. That kind of love hurts our children.

For example, a child is speeding, gets a ticket, the parent pays their ticket, speeds again, pays again, speeds again, pays again and then their driving license is revoked so the parents find a lawyer and pay the fees of that lawyer, etc. What are they doing? They are stopping him from reaping the consequences of his wrong behavior. Actually, it can even be considered challenging God's plan. God has a law of sowing and reaping - what we sow we reap. But now we tell God, I will let my son sow, but I will reap.

Practical Implementation of Discipline

Effective discipline in a Sunday school setting requires a thoughtful and structured approach to manage and guide behavior. Addressing common disruptive behaviors involves employing a variety of strategies tailored to the specific context and needs of the children involved. Setting clear rules and expectations at the beginning of the year or class is a foundational aspect of effective discipline. It is important to communicate these rules clearly to students and explain the reasons behind them. This can be achieved through discussions, visual aids, and role-playing scenarios, which help students understand the importance of adhering to these guidelines.

Part 1: Be ready

Know the common disruptive behaviors of each age group. Before beginning the year, speak to previous servants who have served the same kids and seek their insight. Why restart from scratch and come to the same conclusion as another servant 6 months later only to have them go to another class 6 months after! Regardless, have an outright plan to the very least to common disruptive behaviors such as:

- Talking, laughing, or joking during a lesson or activity
- Answering when not being called upon
- Excessive movement during a lesson
- Talking back to servants
- Using inappropriate words
- Sleeping in class
- Playing with their toy/phone, etc.

Part 2: Educate

Education about behavior involves not only setting rules but also discussing the rationale behind them. Explaining how certain behaviors impact themselves and others can help students internalize expectations. This educational approach fosters an understanding of why specific behaviors are encouraged or discouraged. God gave us the commandments, taught us what's right and wrong. Similarly, do they know what is wrong? Do we set these rules at the beginning of the year/class? Again, train them and explain – take time to sit with the kids, talk to them about their behavior, and try to rationalize the positive impact of why proper behavior has positive impacts.

Part 3 : Chasten

Chastening, as part of discipline, should be tailored to each child and the specific situation. Many different techniques are used but in order to truly be effective, always offer a prayer that God may guide and direct you to the proper method of intervention. Below are a variety of methods that can be used:

Low-profile interventions, such as incorporating a student's name into a lesson example, can redirect behavior without disrupting the entire class. Positive reinforcement, such as acknowledging and rewarding good behavior, is also effective in encouraging desired actions. Additionally, involving students in tasks, such as distributing materials or leading activities, can help redirect disruptive energy into productive activities.

Intervention	Example
Low-profile intervention	Use the student's name in part of your presentation. "As an example, let's measure Michael's height in centimeters." Michael, who has been whispering to his neighbor, hears his name and is drawn back into the lesson with no disruption of the class.
Involve them	Have a child distribute coloring pages or take notes of questions
Education	Take the time one on one to help guide the child to be educated on the error separately. Similar to taking a defensive driving course if you get a ticket. Child gets angry and shouts and breaks something. So you ask him to go do a research about anger and get verses from the bible about anger
Positive reinforcement	If you don't do this for a certain period of time, I will give you this thing (which he wants). So he will earn what he wants. Not an ideal method since it can be used for manipulation in the long run, but a method nonetheless.

Withdrawal of privileges	If you do this or that then a certain privilege will be taken away
--------------------------	--

Beware!!

- **Pick your battles** - God doesn't discipline us for every little mistake we do. You're not going to go through all the stages every time someone does something wrong. Is this something that really needs to be stopped? E.g. a kid that didn't raise their hand before answering. Must be in proportion to what they did.
- **Follow through:** Say something and do it. Otherwise they won't take you seriously, you lose credibility.
- **Consistency in my behavior:** Kids see inconsistency between your words and your behavior. Who you are and what you want your children to be. That's why we have to be disciplined ourselves.
- **Consistent message (word vs action):** don't give contradicting messages. You tell them I love you, but all your actions don't show this love. So the kid gets confused on how to reconcile those two contradicting messages. Do you love him or not? A study of Schizophrenic (skit-suh-freh-nuhk) children - 80% of them show due to receiving contradicting messages from their parents in their early childhood. The kid wants to resolve it but cannot, they start saying I'm confused. I don't know if my dad loves me or not, he says so but his behavior does not.
- **Unacceptable Consequences:** more on this in the following section.

Acceptable vs. Unacceptable Consequences

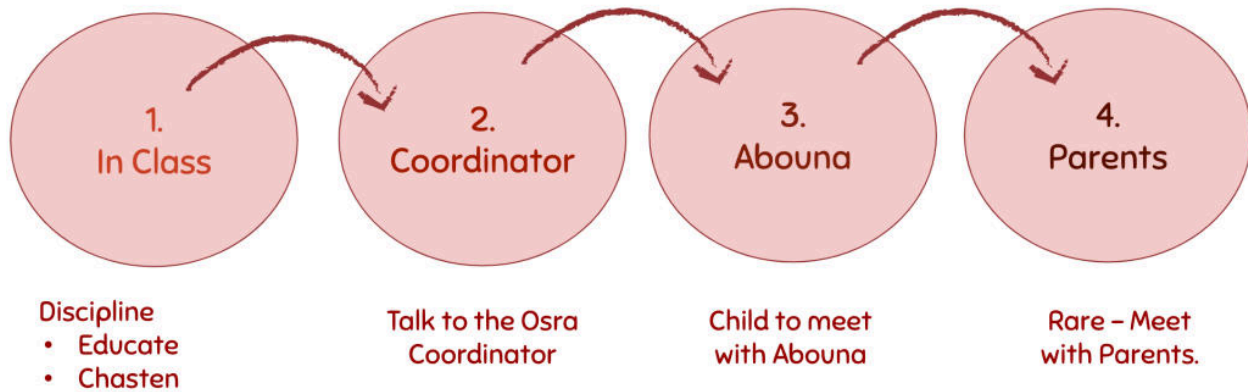
When it comes to consequences, it is essential to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable measures. Acceptable consequences might include withdrawing dojo points, removing candy or other small rewards, or providing assisted time outside of the classroom. Such consequences are intended to be constructive and help students reflect on their behavior without causing undue harm.

Conversely, unacceptable consequences involve punitive actions that can be harmful or excessive. These might include barring students from essential activities like attending liturgy or dressing as deacon, denying outings or crafts, giving timeouts, denying basic needs like restroom access, leaving a child alone outside. Such measures can be counterproductive and do not contribute to the child's development in a positive manner.

Escalation Process

In cases where in-class strategies are insufficient, it is important to follow an escalation process. Initially, address issues through discipline, education, and chastening within the classroom setting. If these measures do not resolve the issues, involve the Coordinator for additional support. The Coordinator can offer further resources and strategies for managing persistent problems.

Should the situation require more extensive intervention, seeking guidance from the priest of your church may be necessary. Abouna's involvement can provide additional support and perspective. As a final step, involving parents may be appropriate, but it is crucial to handle such discussions delicately. Avoid discussing specific behaviors in front of the child to prevent embarrassment, and focus on finding collaborative solutions to support the child's development.



It is recommended not to jump and skip through steps but respect the escalation process. This helps relieve the load as well as enables additional disciplinary measures. By skipping too quickly through steps, the child may, in due time, no longer feel accountable to any of these stages as the most extreme measures were abused and endured.

Help Needed!

Discipline should be approached with love and aim to foster growth and development. Implementing effective discipline requires a combination of thoughtful effort, spiritual support, and consistency. While discipline and dealing with kids requires effort, our efforts are not enough. It needs support from God and direction from the Holy Spirit. Continuously strengthen your relationship with God in order for the Holy Spirit to direct you and guide you with the best way to deal with your children. When we discipline them, they become a light to the world and salt to the earth. **Discipline** needs our effort, support **from God**, direction **from the Holy Spirit**.



Review Questions

1. What are the differences between discipline, punishment, and abuse? (A: Discipline is constructive and done with love. Punishment is destructive and done with anger. Abuse is humiliating.)
2. What are the two parts of discipline? (A: Educational part and chastening part)
3. What does it mean that God is loving? (A: In His love, He's concerned that we become the people He wants us to be)
4. True or false? If you love your children, keep this hierarchy in the class. If the authority is reversed you cannot discipline them. (A: True)
5. Give three examples of Common Disruptive behavior? (A: Answering when not being called upon; Excessive movement during a lesson; and Talking back to servants Using inappropriate words)
6. Give two examples of unacceptable consequences? (A: Can't attend liturgy; and cannot dress deacon)



1.2 Relationships

Teamwork in Service

TEACHING BASICS

Why is Teamwork so important?

Teams composed of multiple individuals, provide an abundance of resources, ideas, and energy. This collaborative opportunity enables us to accomplish more collectively than we could individually. The apostle St. Paul recognized this principle in 1 Corinthians 12:14, 18-19, emphasizing that the body consists of many members and not just one. “For in fact the body is not one member but many ... But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be” (1 Corinthians 12:14, 18-19). God orchestrates the harmonious functioning of each member within the body, demonstrating His design for teamwork. When we collaborate as a team, we unlock our full potential and achieve remarkable accomplishments.

This concept of teamwork is deeply rooted in God's plan for the church. In Romans 15:5-6, the apostle St. Paul emphasized the need for unity and like-mindedness among believers. *“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Romans 15:5-6) He encouraged them to glorify God with one mind and one voice, highlighting the significance of teamwork in magnifying God's glory.

With harmonious teamwork, the effort is efficiently distributed to achieve a goal while multiplying its impact. The results achieved by a team collectively surpass the individual efforts of any single team member. This principle is evident in the behavior of geese, which can fly 72% farther when flying in formation compared to flying alone. The application of this principle extends to all areas of life, demonstrating that collaborative efforts lead to greater achievements than individual endeavors. Together, everyone achieves more.

In Colossians 3:23-24, St. Paul reminds us that our work, including teamwork, has eternal significance. “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” This verse serves as a reminder that our work, including teamwork, extends beyond mere temporal pursuits but carries eternal significance.

Accountability and Shared Responsibility

No individual possesses all the necessary skills, gifts, or wisdom to lead a successful life. Our innate human design predisposes us to rely on God and on one another. In Romans 12:5-6 we read, “so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them” We are called to utilize our unique talents, abilities, and spiritual gifts to serve one another with kindness, respect, and appreciation. The biblical account of Moses provides a compelling example of teamwork. Although God entrusted Moses

with the vision to construct the tabernacle, he did not undertake this task alone. Instead, he relied on a team of skilled craftsmen and women who collaborated to complete the project successfully (Exodus 35:31). This illustrates that even the most exceptional leaders require the assistance of others to accomplish their objectives.

Within these frameworks of different unique members, teamwork plays a vital role in the dynamism and vitality of the church. Church leaders cannot shoulder the entire responsibility alone. Jesus Christ exemplified this concept by sending his disciples out in teams of two to initiate their ministry. St. Ignatius of Antioch, an early church father, highlighted in his Letter to Polycarp the significance of teamwork not only for achieving goals but also for fostering spiritual growth and deepening our love for one another. "Toil and train together, run and suffer together, rest and rise at the same time, as God's stewards, assistants and servants." *Letter to Polycarp*, 6, Ignatius of Antioch. Working together as a team offers the advantage of diverse perspectives and ideas. When faced with challenges, multiple minds generate various solutions, enabling us to identify the most effective approach. This collaborative process contributes to personal growth, enhancing our abilities and effectiveness in various areas of work. Proverbs 11:14 underscores the importance of seeking counsel from others before making crucial decisions, emphasizing the value of teamwork in navigating complex situations. *"Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety."* (Proverbs 11:14)

A cornerstone of making this teamwork successful involves sharing credit for successes and responsibility for setbacks. This fosters genuine humility within the team, as we acknowledge the contributions of others and recognize that we are part of something greater than ourselves. Proverbs 11:2 states, "Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom." This verse underscores the critical nature of humility in teamwork. When we acknowledge the contributions of others and recognize that we are part of something greater than ourselves, we embrace humility and promote a genuine sense of unity within the team. Moreover, this collective responsibility fosters a culture of trust and respect within the team. When members know that their successes will be recognized and their mistakes will be confronted with understanding and support, they are more likely to be open, honest, and engaged in their work. St. Paul further emphasizes the principle of shared responsibility in Philippians 2:3-4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others." This passage encourages team members to set aside personal aspirations and prioritize the team's goals. By considering the needs and perspectives of others, we foster a collaborative environment where every member feels valued and respected and encouraged to collaborate.

Moreover, accountability in teamwork aligns with the principle of stewardship, reminding us that we are entrusted with the resources and opportunities to make a positive impact. When we hold ourselves accountable, we acknowledge our responsibility to use our time, talents, and abilities wisely, maximizing their potential for the benefit of the team and the organization. This stewardship mindset cultivates a sense of ownership and empowerment, as team members feel responsible for the outcomes of their work and motivated to contribute their best.

John Maxwell in his book *The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player* states, "Great challenges require great teamwork, and the quality most needed among teammates amid the pressure of a difficult challenge is collaboration. Notice that we didn't say 'cooperation' because collaboration is more than

that. Cooperation is working together aggressively. Collaborative teammates do more than just work with one another. Each person brings something to the table that adds value to the relationship and synergy to the team. The sum of truly collaborative teamwork is always greater than its parts” (page 13, 14)

Ultimately, effective teamwork glorifies God. When we collaborate harmoniously as a team, unity emerges, reflecting God's glory. John 13:35 emphasizes that the world will recognize us as Christ's disciples through our love for one another. “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” By working together effectively as a team, we provide a glimpse of God's love to the world.

Examples of Teamwork

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each have unique roles in the creation and redemption of Mankind. The Three Persons of the Godhead are never independent but always work together. Scripture records the work of the Divine Trinity in the creation cosmos (Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:15-17), but this perfect and harmonious interaction was especially evident in how God made it possible for people who were formerly alienated from him to be transformed into his beloved children. St. Paul first spoke of the work of the Father in accomplishing our salvation in Ephesians 1:3-6. Second, the apostle focused on the work of the Son in verses 7-12. Third, the work of the Holy Spirit, identified in Ephesians 1:13-14, seals and guarantees our spiritual inheritance. The Trinity exemplifies teamwork and harmony perfectly.

Similarly, we are called to be members of One Body, that is the Church of the Living God. Ephesians 4:12 refers to the church—the community of believers—as the “Body of Christ”. The church is to work as a team. 1 Corinthians 12:17-31 unpacks the idea of the church as a body in greater depth, using the systems of the human body as an analogy for the way team members need to rely on each other. Strong teams, just like strong bodies, are made up of interdependent members fulfilling defined tasks.

Another example can be seen in the Liturgical services of the church. The Divine Liturgy is not a spectacle that people simply follow, nor a concert of hymns and readings that they listen to. It is a divine work, which is celebrated by God's priest together with His people. The very word ‘liturgy’ means ‘the work of the people’ (Greek ‘leitōs’, which derives from laos = people). Going to church means that people go to participate in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. St. John Chrysostom says, “We should dwell in the Church as in one house, as one body. For holy baptism is one, the table is one, the source is one, the creation one and the Father one”

Biblically, there are many examples as well. Moses, even though a great leader of the Israelites and author of the first five books of the Bible, needed Aaron, Joshua and Caleb with him. Aaron was his brother and earliest teammate, “So the LORD said to Moses: “See, I have made you *as* God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. ² You shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land.” (Exodus 7:1-3). Joshua and Caleb served as influential guides to Moses, (Numbers 13-14) and Jethro, his father-in-law, gave him precious advice on how to delegate part of his responsibilities and workload to a team of elders. (Exodus 18:19-23)

In his service, the Lord Christ called His disciples and later the seventy apostles to help in His ministry. Jesus sends them out in teams of two, “After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.” (Luke 10:1. The Apostles held on to this principle and carried it through their own service. In the book of Acts, the apostles and other workers traveled and worked in groups of two or more. The early church demonstrated a great example of teamwork on different occasions, e.g., choosing the seven deacons.

Why are some people not team players?

In many environments, where collaboration and teamwork are highly valued, certain individuals may struggle to adopt a collaborative mindset. Understanding the reasons behind this behavior is crucial for promoting effective team dynamics. This section aims to elaborate on five key factors that contribute to non-team player behavior.

1. Preference for Individual Work

Some people may find it easier and more efficient to work alone. They may believe that individual effort allows for greater control over the quality and pace of their work. This preference can result in a lack of engagement with teammates and an unwillingness to contribute to collaborative efforts. An example of this could be a student who prefers to work on individual projects rather than group projects because they feel they have more control over the outcome of their work when working alone.

2. Control Issues

Individuals with control issues may have a tendency to take on multiple tasks without seeking input or support from their teammates. Such behavior stems from a desire to maintain dominance over their work, often leading to resistance against suggestions for improvement. This attitude goes against the biblical principle of unity and like-mindedness as stated in Philippians 2:2.

3. Resistance to Change

Some individuals may display resistance to change, particularly in situations where team dynamics or work processes are modified. They may be comfortable with established routines and may perceive changes as disruptive or unnecessary. This reluctance to adapt can hinder the team's ability to innovate and respond effectively to new challenges. For example, when a company implements a new software system, some employees may resist learning how to use it, as they are comfortable with the old system and may not see the need for change.

4. Lack of Vision and Clarity

A clear vision and understanding of one's role within the team are essential for fostering team spirit. For example, in a soccer team, each player has a specific position and responsibilities. If a player is

unsure of their role or the team's overall strategy, they may feel disconnected from the team and less motivated to contribute. When individuals lack a sense of purpose or are uncertain about their responsibilities, they may feel disconnected from the team's goals. This lack of clarity can lead to decreased motivation and engagement in team activities.

5. Ego Needs

An inflated sense of self-importance, commonly referred to as ego, can significantly hinder team player behavior. Individuals driven by ego may believe that their ideas and approaches are superior to those of others, leading to inflexibility and an unwillingness to consider alternative perspectives. This self-centered attitude undermines the collaborative nature of teamwork. For example, in a workplace setting, an employee with an inflated ego might constantly interrupt colleagues during meetings, disregarding their opinions and suggestions. This behavior creates a hostile environment, discouraging open communication and collaboration among team members.

8 Principles of Teamwork

Principle	Description
1. The collective goal is the most important	Team members must remember that the goal is more important than their individual role, just like how in a relay race, each runner must focus on passing the baton to the next person, rather than just their own speed.
2. Every member has a unique value added	All players have a place where they add the most value. This place is often called their "sweet spot" or "niche." It is the area in which they have the most experience, knowledge, and skills. When a player is in their sweet spot, they are able to perform at their highest level and contribute the most to their team. Much like how we all have our own unique talents and abilities that we can bring to any project or endeavor.
3. The weakness of a teammate impacts the entire team	The strength of the team is impacted by its weakest link. As much as any team likes to measure itself by its best people, the truth is that a team is only as strong as its weakest player. A weakest link is defined as such because of attitude, special agenda, or ability.
4. Team members must buy into the team vision	Vision acts as a guiding light, illuminating the path for team members. It provides a sense of direction and purpose, enabling them to navigate obstacles and make informed decisions. Much like a compass, vision helps individuals stay on track and aligned with their goals. Without a clear vision, it's like sailing without a destination, leading to confusion and uncertainty. Just as a compass guides sailors on the vast seas, a well-defined vision guides individuals and teams toward their desired outcomes.

5. Negative attitude brings a team to its demise	Negative attitudes can have a detrimental impact on a team's success and overall morale. When team members display negativity, it can create a hostile and unwelcoming environment, leading to decreased motivation, productivity, and collaboration. While good attitudes do not guarantee success, negative attitudes guarantee failures. For example, just as a bitter ingredient can spoil a cup of tea, a sour outlook can ruin a team. Tea is often associated with relaxation and tranquility, so a sour ingredient can clash with that atmosphere, making it difficult to fully appreciate the tea's flavors and aromas.
6. Teamwork impacts more than ability	If a team doesn't reach its potential, rarely is ability the issue. It is almost always a payment issue. Sacrifice, time commitment, personal development, and unselfishness are required payments for a team's success. Consider the example of a soccer team with talented players who fail to gel as a cohesive unit. While they may possess the skill and athleticism to succeed, the team may struggle to reach its potential if its members are not willing to make the necessary payments. They may prioritize individual glory over team success, leading to selfishness and a lack of cohesion on the field. To improve, they must recognize that individual ability is only one component of team success and be willing to make sacrifices, dedicate time to training, and focus on personal development to achieve their collective goals.
7. Adjustment can be made with honest feedback	The team can make adjustments when it knows where it stands. When a team knows where it stands on the scoreboard, it can make strategic adjustments to improve its chances of winning. This is true for any endeavor, whether it's a sports team, a business, a service or a personal goal. Without a clear understanding of where you are in relation to your goals, it's difficult to know what changes need to be made. If a basketball team is losing at halftime, the coach may decide to make some changes to the starting lineup or the team's defensive strategy. The coach can make these adjustments because he knows where the team stands in relation to its goal of winning the game. On the personal level, for example, if someone wants to lose weight, they may decide to change their diet or exercise routine. These adjustments can help the individual achieve their goal of losing weight. Knowing where you stand is essential for making progress towards your goals. It allows you to set realistic goals and develop a plan to achieve them. Without this information, you would be shooting in the dark and would be less likely to succeed.
8. Shared values define the team	Shared values serve as the foundation for team culture and behavior and help to create a strong sense of camaraderie and trust among team members. Shared values can include things like honesty, integrity, respect, collaboration, and excellence. For example, in a healthcare setting, a team might share the values of compassion, patient-centered care, and teamwork. These values guide their interactions with patients and each other and help to ensure that they are all working towards the same goal of providing the best possible care to their patients. Shared values are essential for any team that wants to be successful.

They provide a sense of unity and purpose and help to create a positive and productive work environment. When team members share the same values, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to their work. They are also more likely to collaborate effectively and support each other in achieving their goals.

Hierarchical interrelationships

During the course of service, or throughout the course of any leadership interactions, there are numerous obstacles and challenges that can arise within the relationships among the leader, the team, and the task at hand. These obstacles and challenges can significantly impact the effectiveness of the leadership process and the ability to achieve desired outcomes.

Let us evaluate a few interactions. First, where the Leader is distant from the team and the task. A disconnection from the team members and the task may ultimately impact the team and the completion of the task. Building a great connection with the people is essential for maintaining their engagement and for the success of the task. It's like trying to build a house without a blueprint - it's possible, but it's going to be a lot harder and take much longer.

On the other hand, there are leaders that are close to the task, but distant from the team. They are typically task-oriented leaders. This may lead to a lack of the team members autonomy and creativity. This type of leader focuses on the tasks that need to be carried out in order to reach goals. Task-oriented leadership involves some task management features. This involves placing emphasis on administrative activities, coordinating job-related activities, preparing financial reports etc. This type of leader doesn't really care about relationship building. They are more concerned with following their plan to reach organizational targets.

On a better scale, another leader is close to the task and the team, but communication is limited. This poor communication from leaders can disrupt a team's cohesion and performance. Leaders need to take care when communicating with their team to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Just like a game of telephone, miscommunication can lead to unexpected and often humorous results.

Now, imagine the Leader is involved with the task and the team, but something is still missing. In the destruction of the wall of Jericho, we see a team working together and succeeding together but something was still missing. "But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the Lord burned against the children of Israel." (Joshua 7:1) From this verse we find that Israel acted unfaithful in the Battle of Jericho when it stole something from the ban. When one of them, named Achan, took some things from the ban, He rebelled against God's command. They acted unfaithfully and they were defeated. They lacked the fear of God.

This leads us to the final interaction, the leader is involved with the task and the team... AND ALL IS WITHIN THE FEAR OF GOD. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Proverbs 9:10). Fear of the Lord can be defined as the continual awareness that our loving heavenly Father is watching and evaluating everything we think, say, and

do, (Matthew 12:36; Psalm 139:2; Jeremiah 12:3). Thus, a leader of any capacity is expected to have the fear of God and be considerate with his leadership. Nehemiah 4-5 provides a master lesson in leadership based on the fear of God. Nehemiah 5:19 tells us: Nehemiah is not looking for approval from nobles or from people. He is looking for approval from God. In other words, he feared God.

What are the characteristics of a good team?

Finally, we can now conclude the characteristics of a team team. A good team has good connections between its members. They will have a clear understanding of the team's mission with a common goal and purpose. They will grow together as this is one of the team leader's top responsibilities. The team members trust and respect the other players while the team's best interests come before a member's individual rights. Each team member plays a special role. Ideally, each person's role is built on his or her greatest strengths and everyone is willing to pay the price. Time and energy should not be spared while practicing and preparing.

There is no jealousy in teamwork. When the whole team is working for the glory of God, there is no internal competition: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." (1 Corinthians 3:6). The unified team understands that reaching goals is God's doing. And what God is doing requires teamwork on our part: "And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." (John 4:36-38).



Review Questions

1. Why is teamwork important? Give two reasons. (A: Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect; We are designed to need God and each other.)
2. Give an example from the Bible. (A: Jesus sends His disciples out in teams of two.)
3. True or false? Team players actively listen to their coworkers. (A: True)
4. Why are some people not team players? (A: Working alone is easier; control issues.)
5. What is a team player? (A: A team player is someone who actively contributes to their group in order to complete tasks, meet goals or manage projects.)



Books & References

7. <INSERT DOCUMENT HERE>, accessed 2 April 2024, [John C. Maxwell "The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork"](#)



Lined area for writing notes, consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

Part 2

2.1 Leadership

Principles of Leadership

TEACHING BASICS

Relation Between Leadership and Service

Being granted the privilege and responsibility to serve, we, servants, are being called to leadership. It is a profound calling that demands not only stewardship but also the ability to guide and inspire others. In the corporate world, the primary responsibility of a leader is often perceived as the need to increase organizational wealth and enhance its reputation. These objectives, while significant, represent a limited understanding of leadership's true purpose.

To grasp the essence of leadership, let us turn to God's first dealings with man. In the words of Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion." This encapsulates the fundamental principle of leadership: to create, to nurture, and to empower others to reach their full potential. Leadership influences others. Leadership is not self-seeking but rather seeking to bring the best out of those around them. Thus, great service almost always requires great leadership.

Leadership vs Management

In the realm of leadership and management, John C. Maxwell offers a profound insight when he states, "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." This statement encapsulates the essence of effective leadership and distinguishes it from management. Leadership is not merely about having a vision or understanding the path; it involves actively embarking on the journey, setting an example, and guiding others along the way.

At its core, leadership is a skill of influence, one that harnesses the potential and enthusiasm of individuals to work towards common objectives. A true leader possesses the ability to inspire, motivate, and empower others, enabling them to reach their full potential and contribute to the greater good. By fostering a sense of purpose and belonging, leaders can create a team of highly engaged and dedicated individuals who are willing to go above and beyond to achieve their goals.

In contrast, management focuses on the practical aspects of getting things done. It involves planning, controlling, delegating tasks, developing strategies, and organizing resources efficiently. While management is essential for the smooth operation of any organization, it is distinct from leadership. Managers are primarily concerned with the execution of tasks and the achievement of specific objectives. They ensure that resources are allocated effectively, processes are followed, and deadlines are met.

While leadership and management are often intertwined, they represent distinct roles and skill sets. Leaders are visionaries who set the direction and inspire others, while managers are responsible for implementing those visions and ensuring operational efficiency. Leaders provide the vision, purpose,

and motivation that drive an organization forward, while managers ensure that the necessary structures, systems, and processes are in place to turn that vision into reality. Typically, great leadership translates into great service.

Five Levels of Leadership

There are five levels of leadership that will be discussed, inspired by John Maxwell's book '5 Levels of Leadership': pinnacle/top-down, people development, production, permission, and position. Below shows the hierarchy of the levels as well as a brief description on what they entail when it comes to a leader. These elements will apply to both the servant and real world scenarios of leadership opportunities. What kind of leader are *you* aiming to be?

Positional Leader - Follow Because They Have To

In this case, influence is provided solely due to the title. Following a positional leader produces the least output, because followers tend to be: clock watchers, mentally absent, or minimalists. Noticing that if you interact with those types of people regularly, it may be an indication of you potentially being a positional leader. These elements will apply to both the servant and real world scenarios of leadership opportunities.

Based on the interactions, you can see whether a person may be viewing your leadership as positional. For example, clock watchers. At times, while teaching, you may stop and see if anyone has questions. A child will raise his hands and ask you a question. A question, you had not seen coming, especially if it was his first time. "Sir, how much time is left?" Know that in that scenario, it is likely there is no connection and no relationship. It is a positional interaction, with little to no influence. The child is not paying attention, and is only there by force, as in because it is mandatory.

Others may be mentally absent, characterized by a physical presence but a lack of engagement: 'there but not there.' Typically they are daydreaming or thinking of something else even when they are with others. They are similar to clock watchers, words go in one way and out the other. There is no interest shown. They display a noticeable absence of curiosity and interest.

At the other end of the spectrum, one may encounter the minimalistic type. This group is characterized by a lack of a core relationship with the learning process. Their primary concern is achieving success, which they define as fulfilling the bare minimum requirements. They show no inclination to explore beyond the minimum necessary, lacking the drive and motivation to challenge themselves or expand



their knowledge. For them, education becomes a mere exercise in checking off boxes rather than an opportunity for personal growth and discovery.

The positional leader portrays authority, however, they are fixated on self-image. They strive to project an illusion of perfection, seeking validation and admiration. This preoccupation with strength masks their inner vulnerabilities. These leaders tend to be self-centered, viewing the world through the lens of their own needs and desires. Every decision and interaction revolves around them, as they demand unwavering attention and obedience.

In order to maintain control, positional leaders often resort to intimidation tactics. They subtly or overtly threaten to use their authority to punish or marginalize those who challenge them. This creates a climate of fear and uncertainty, making it difficult for others to express dissenting opinions or offer alternative perspectives.

The positional leader's obsession with image and strength often comes at the expense of genuine connection and empathy. They may struggle to understand the needs and concerns of their followers, as they are primarily focused on maintaining their position and projecting an image of dominance. This lack of emotional intelligence can lead to strained relationships, low morale, and a lack of trust within the team.

While positional leaders may achieve short-term success through intimidation and self-promotion, their leadership style is ultimately unsustainable. True leadership requires more than just authority and strength; it demands humility, empathy, and the ability to inspire and motivate others. Without these qualities, positional leaders may find themselves isolated and ineffective, unable to build a truly successful and cohesive team.

If we aspire to embody the leadership exemplified by Jesus Christ, characterized by the intentional development of disciples, we must cultivate a unique quality of leadership. This necessitates a shift from a predominant focus on task-oriented outcomes to a people-oriented approach. While tasks and goals are undeniably important, a Jesus kind of leader recognizes that true impact and lasting change are achieved through investing in the lives of others. This means prioritizing the development of relationships, understanding and empathizing with the needs of those served, and creating an environment that fosters growth and empowerment. It requires the ability to listen actively, provide guidance and support, and celebrate the successes of others. By embracing a people-oriented approach, leaders can inspire and equip those served/serving to become leaders themselves, creating a ripple effect of positive influence and transformation within their churches and communities. Ultimately, this shift in leadership mindset aligns with the teachings and example of Jesus, who invested in a few individuals who went on to change the world.

Permission - Follow Because They Want To

The willingness of the follower is achieved through the relationship with their leader. However, this willingness does not guarantee immediate results. Instead, it serves as a solid foundation upon which progress can be built. When King Rehoboam exercised purely authoritative leadership toward Jeroboam, he failed to establish permission, resulting in the division of the kingdoms. The key takeaway is that once a meaningful relationship is forged, a willingness to listen and follow naturally follows.

Leaders who adopt this style prioritize the individual growth of their followers, offering tailored guidance and attention to each one. As the leader, it's essential to maintain an encouraging attitude, even in the face of setbacks. A significant aspect of this approach is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with followers as they navigate challenges.

Initiation plays a vital role in this leadership style. Leaders may need to take the first steps for or with their followers, but it should never be viewed as a competition. The ultimate goal is to collaborate and cooperate toward a shared objective. Recognizing and embracing the uniqueness of each individual is crucial for the well-being of the collective. Therefore, followers should be actively involved in decision-making processes.

While this leadership style has its merits, it's important to acknowledge its potential drawbacks as well. Permission leaders can be susceptible to being taken advantage of due to their kind and understanding nature. Additionally, this approach may appear to yield slower results compared to other leadership styles, although it often involves less risk. Finally, in certain situations, these leaders might be perceived as overly lenient or soft.

Production - Follow Because of What You Have Done

In organizations where leaders effectively articulate their vision and objectives, a profound sense of purpose and direction permeates every level of the hierarchy, creating a unifying spirit that moves towards a shared goal. When servants have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how their individual contributions align with the broader goals of the church, they experience heightened levels of engagement and motivation. This clarity fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, as servants recognize the direct impact of their actions on the collective success of the team.

Trust and credibility are indispensable components of successful leadership. When individuals perceive their leaders as honest, competent, and genuinely invested in their well-being, they are more likely to exhibit unwavering loyalty and dedication. Additionally, when the servants see their leaders directly bring production towards their organization, this trust increases. This trust-based foundation facilitates open communication, candid feedback, and a shared commitment to achieving common objectives. Leaders who consistently demonstrate integrity, transparency, and a willingness to listen to their team members' concerns foster an environment where this trust can flourish.

However, no single leader can accomplish extraordinary feats in isolation. Effective leadership encompasses the cultivation of a collaborative environment where every team member feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique ideas and expertise. When individuals work cohesively toward a shared purpose, leveraging their collective strengths and perspectives, the likelihood of achieving remarkable outcomes is significantly enhanced. Leaders who actively encourage collaboration, break down silos, and create opportunities for cross-functional teamwork foster an environment where innovation thrives.

To establish a thriving team, leaders must create a conducive environment that fosters love, encouraging team members to voice their opinions and share innovative ideas without fear of judgment or retribution. This requires leaders to model vulnerability, admit their own mistakes, and create a culture where it is acceptable to take risks and learn from failures. Additionally, effective

leaders possess the ability to actively listen to feedback, demonstrate humility, and adapt their plans in response to changing circumstances. Through collaboration and open communication, leaders and their teams can unlock their full potential, harnessing their collective wisdom to overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and accomplish extraordinary feats.

This effective leadership involves effectively communicating a compelling vision, fostering a climate of trust and credibility, promoting collaboration, and establishing an environment where unity and harmony is valued. By doing so, leaders can create a thriving team that is motivated, engaged, and capable of achieving remarkable outcomes.

People Development - Follow Because of What You Have Done for Them

People development leadership is a leadership style that focuses on empowering followers and helping them reach their full potential. This type of leader believes that the best way to lead is to bring out the best in others. They do this by providing opportunities for growth and development, creating a supportive environment, and recognizing and rewarding achievements. People development leadership is the goal of church services. It aligns with the Christian principle of love and service. When leaders empower their followers, they are not only helping them grow as individuals but also creating a stronger and more effective church community.

However, people development leadership is not without its risks. One potential risk is that it can lead to increased self-centeredness among followers. This can happen when followers become too focused on their own development and lose sight of the needs of the church as a whole. Another risk is that leaders may become insecure as their followers grow and develop. This can happen when leaders feel threatened by the potential for their followers to surpass them in knowledge or ability.

Despite these risks, people development leadership can be a highly effective form of leadership when done well. The key is for leaders to strike a balance between empowering their followers and maintaining a healthy sense of humility and self-awareness.

Another important aspect of people development leadership is the need for commitment. When a leader is committed to developing their followers, they are willing to invest the time and energy necessary to help them grow. This includes providing opportunities for training and development, offering feedback and coaching, and creating a supportive environment. In addition to commitment, leaders also need to be disciplined in their approach to people development. This means that they need to be consistent in their efforts and not give up when things get tough. It takes time and effort to develop people, and leaders need to be patient and persistent.

When leaders are committed and disciplined, they can help their followers reach their full potential and create a thriving church community.

Personhood

Under this aspect of leadership, people follow because of who you are as well as what you represent to them. This level of leadership is reserved for those who have dedicated years to noble causes,

fostering the development and growth of individuals and organizations. The leader's teachings transcend their own being, becoming a reference point, a guiding philosophy that shapes the thoughts and actions of others. As a person, the teachings become a reference – a school of thought and being.

One great example is His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third. Over 40 years of service, weekly sermons, hundreds of books written, the impact Pope Shenouda left cannot be underestimated. To the point where his sayings are recited by many individuals today. Arguments are held and individuals at times will be asked, 'why do you do such and such this way?' The response would be, 'because Pope Sheouda taught us this'. He became a reference. His integrity, his zeal, his love for God were never put in question. His leadership to the coptic church helped it grow throughout all the lands of immigration, his constant defense against heresies, his persistence on righteous living, all became an inspiration to millions. This is the epitome of personhood leadership. People follow because of what the leader now represents. He has gained followers permission, he has great vision, he has developed people around him and helped develop all of us.

Good Connection

In summary, there are certain guidelines for good connections with people as a leader and speaker. The stronger the connection between a leader and a follower, the more help the follower will offer to the leader. Below is an outline of what different elements may help flourish a connection:

1. Be Confident in Yourself:

- Have a strong belief in your abilities and capabilities.
- Project self-assurance and conviction.
- Confidence inspires trust and credibility in your followers.
- Embrace your imperfections and learn from your mistakes.

2. Know Your Audience:

- Gather as much information as possible about your audience.
- Understand their needs, aspirations, and concerns.
- Tailor your message and delivery to resonate with their specific interests.
- Establish a genuine connection by showing empathy and understanding.

3. Be Authentic:

- Live your message and practice what you preach.
- Lead by example and demonstrate your commitment to your values.
- Authenticity builds trust and fosters respect.
- Be transparent and honest with your followers, even when it's difficult.

4. Focus on Your Followers and Goals:

- Keep the well-being and success of your followers at the forefront of your mind.
- Set clear and achievable goals that align with the interests of your team.

- Empower and involve your followers in decision-making processes.
- Celebrate their achievements and recognize their contributions.

5. Give Hope and Build Futures:

- Inspire your followers by offering a vision of a brighter future.
- Motivate them to believe in their potential and strive for greatness.
- Help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.
- Foster a sense of optimism and possibility.

6. Personal Qualities and Symbolic Representation:

- Cultivate personal qualities such as integrity, humility, and compassion.
- Embody the values and ideals that you want your followers to emulate.
- Use symbols and imagery to communicate your message and reinforce your identity as a leader.
- Create a compelling narrative that resonates with your followers and inspires them to action.

Leaders must acknowledge that sacrifice is an intrinsic aspect of their position. Their role often requires them to make personal sacrifices in order to safeguard the well-being and success of their team. This selfless commitment is what truly distinguishes genuine leaders from others. True leaders prioritize the interests of their followers above their own, demonstrating a willingness to make personal sacrifices for the greater good. While sacrifice may come with its own challenges, it is essential for leaders to find fulfillment in knowing that their sacrifices contribute to a positive impact on those they serve. Leaders who recognize that sacrifice is a necessary component of their role will be more prepared to make difficult decisions and navigate the challenges that come with leadership. By embracing this reality, they can cultivate a team culture that values dedication and collaboration, setting the stage for long-term success.

Remember, leadership is not about personal glory but about serving others and making a positive difference in the world. By embracing these guidelines and understanding the importance of sacrifice, you can foster meaningful connections with your followers and lead them towards a brighter future.

Jesus' Leadership Style

Jesus turned leadership upside down. He taught the disciples that in the Kingdom they were not to lead people as those in the world did; they were to be radically different. The leadership style that Jesus taught and modeled was neither about command and control, nor status and power. He did not teach techniques but grew character — a character centered on a Christ-like servant heart. He modeled servanthood and challenged his disciples to follow that example — to be like Him. From the Kingdom perspective, this makes leadership modeled on Jesus and centered on his indwelling character superior to all secular leadership styles. This style will be further discussed in the 'Servant Leadership' section.



Review Questions

1. What are the five types of leadership? (A: They are pinnacle/ top-down, people development, production, permission, and position leadership.)
2. What style of leadership do we aim for as church servants? (A: People development leadership.)
3. What are some weaknesses or obstacles of the leadership style we are aiming for? (A: They can be seen as soft, and can also be taken advantage of.)
4. What is the difference between leadership and management? (A: Leadership maximizes the efforts and empowerment of others, towards the achievement of goals, while management dictates plans, control, delegates, development, and organization of a group.)
5. True or false? Leaders do not make many sacrifices. (A: False)



Books & References

1. [The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential: Maxwell, John C.: 9781599953632: Amazon.com: Books](https://www.amazon.com/Books/dp/9781599953632)



2.1 Leadership

Servant Leadership

TEACHING BASICS

What is Leadership?

Leadership has gathered several meanings to different individuals. Many successful leaders have evoked their understanding of good leadership. Peter Drucker, a management consultant whose writings shaped modern business corporations, stated that, “The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers.” Yet, limiting the definition to being relative to followers seems incomplete. When a new army captain is put in the command of 200 soldiers, he never leaves his room, or utters a word to the men and women in his unit. Perhaps routine orders are given through a subordinate. By default his troops have to “follow” orders. Is the Captain really a leader? Commander yes, leader no.

Similarly, Warren Bennis, a scholar, author and consultant in organizational structures believes that “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” Yet, if every spring you have a vision for a garden, and with lots of work carrots and tomatoes that becomes a reality. Are you a leader? No, you’re a gardener. Another leader, Bill Gates, Microsoft innovator, defines leadership saying, “As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.” This definition includes “others” and empowerment is a good thing. But to what end? We can see many empower “others” in life, from rioting hooligans to Google workers who were so misaligned with the rest of the company finding themselves unemployed. Gates’ definition lacks the parts about goal or vision.

John Maxwell, an American pastor & author primarily focusing on leadership, states that “Leadership is influence - nothing more, nothing less.” However, restricting leadership to only influence lacks context. A robber with a gun has “influence” over his victim. A manager has the power to fire team members which provides a lot of influence. But does this influence make a robber or a manager a leader? Maxwell’s definition omits the source of influence.

Defining Leadership

Each of the previous innovators and leaders bring about very valid points about leadership. Yet, each one seems incomplete. Nevertheless, if one were to attempt to consolidate each interpretation, a full definition can be formed. Ducker speaks about followers, Bennis focuses on vision, Gates emphasizes empowerment and Maxwell, influence. What is leadership all about then? Leadership is composed of vision, influence, empowerment and followers. Leadership can then be defined as a process of social influence (influence), which maximizes (empowerment) the efforts of others (followers), towards the achievement of a goal (vision). Again, leadership can then be defined as a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.

Who Are Leaders?

Think of someone who you would consider a great leader. What makes him a leader in your eyes? Is it his position? His hierarchical responsibility? His personal achievements? When looking at the definition constructed, none of it involves hierarchy or traditional pyramid structure hierarchy. In fact, more often than not, the leaders that solely rely on their positions are rarely considered as a personally influential leader. Rather, it is rooted in the relationship between two individuals.

In today's interconnected world, where our actions and words can have far-reaching consequences, it is essential to recognize that everyone possesses the potential to influence others. This influence may not always be overt or intentional, but it is nonetheless present. Whether we realize it or not, we are all leaders of some sort, guiding and inspiring those around us.

However, leadership is not limited to positions of authority or formal titles. It is also embodied in the countless servants who take on responsibilities and are held in high esteem. These servants may be teachers, mentors, parents, community leaders, or anyone who selflessly dedicates their time and energy to making a positive difference in the lives of others.

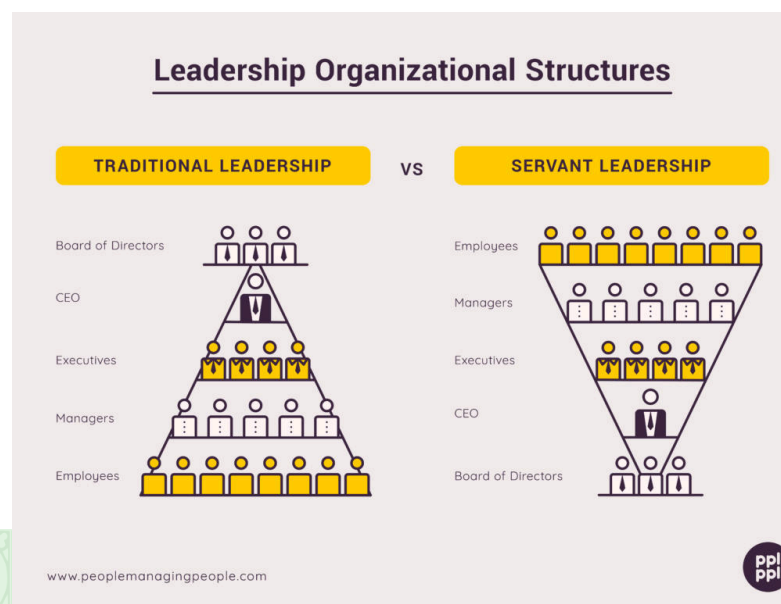
Every individual is unique, and being a servant allows us to showcase our uniqueness in a profound way. Our passions, talents, and perspectives are all valuable contributions to the world, and when we share them through service, they are bound to be noticed by someone. This recognition, in turn, creates an opportunity for influence.

When we influence others, we have the power to empower them. We can inspire them to reach their full potential, to make a positive impact on their own lives and the lives of those around them. This is the true power of influence: the ability to ignite change and transformation.

Therefore, let us all embrace our role as servants and leaders. Let us use our influence to create a better world, one person at a time. By empowering others, we empower ourselves and build a stronger, more resilient community for all.

Servant Leadership

There are two primary leadership styles that have been identified and studied: traditional leadership and servant leadership. Each style has its own distinct characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses.



Traditional leadership, also known as authoritarian or directive leadership, is characterized by a clear hierarchy and a top-down approach. In this style, the leader has the most power and makes all the decisions. Traditional leaders tend to be more directive and controlling, and they may expect their followers to obey their orders without question.

Servant leadership, on the other hand, is a more collaborative and empowering style. Servant leaders focus on serving their followers and helping them reach their full potential. They are more likely to listen to their followers' ideas and concerns, and they may involve them in the decision-making process. Servant leaders are also more likely to be humble and self-aware, and they may be more focused on the long-term success of the organization rather than their own personal gain.

Both traditional and servant leadership styles can be effective in different situations. Traditional leadership may be more appropriate when there is a need for quick decision-making and a clear chain of command. Servant leadership may be more appropriate when there is a need for collaboration and innovation.

Here is a table summarizing the key differences between traditional and servant leadership styles:

Characteristic	Traditional Leadership	Servant Leadership
Power structure	Hierarchical	Collaborative
Decision-making	Top-down	Shared
Focus of the leader	Self	Others
Communication style	Directive	Persuasive
Motivation of followers	Fear or reward	Inspiration and empowerment

The servant leadership model is thus a renowned organizational structure with a leadership philosophy in which the main goal of the leader is to serve. This model is indeed a model Christ created by His self since He emptied Himself for our sakes. Everything He did was for us, such that we might imitate Him. We will see that it is the pinnacle of true leadership and influence. Servant leadership was truly initiated by the life of Christ.

In servant leadership, there is a power of influence in which everyone influences someone, we never know who or how much we influence, and the best investment in the future is a proper influence today. Growing as a leader equates to reflection and sacrificing of the self. It is important to serve with positive influence doing all that you can to maximize the potential in those whom you serve.

The world's idea is that those who lead are in some way better than the people whom they lead. They gain status because they exercise power over others to achieve their goals. All of which leads to rewards, benefits, and preferential treatment. This is not the model Christ set out for mankind. Jesus' leadership style is entirely contrasted to that of the world. He declared that in the Kingdom, greatness belongs to the servant and that distinction grows from child-like humility (Matthew 18:4). He taught that leaders were to serve others, not to be served by them.

Jesus' heart was a servant heart (Philippians 2:5-11). This heart led Him to act for the benefit and growth of others. One of the most powerful images in the life of Jesus is when He washes His disciples' feet in John 13. When He is finished, he says to them, "You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you

say well, for so I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

Jesus, of course, isn't talking about feet. He's talking about servant-leadership. Great leaders focus on serving those who follow them. Great leaders wash their people's feet.

Jesus calls us, as His leaders, or disciples and servants, to grow a servant heart. He calls us to follow His example with humility, serving those whom we lead; enabling them to achieve the purpose to which God calls them is our goal.

Knowing that one is valued is an important encouragement for everyone. Ask yourself, *"How can I publicly and genuinely recognize the value of individuals and their achievements?"*

Defining Servant Leadership

The word servant may prompt an initial negative connotation and the word leader may carry a great deal of honor and respect. So, the term servant-leader offers new insights. leadership is really about serving.

In The Servant as Leader's essay, Robert K. Greenleaf says, "The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions... A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the "top of the pyramid," servant leadership is different. The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible." A definition oddly similar to the one we established when defining leadership.

Servant leadership is best defined by Jesus Himself: "whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:26-28). In the Christian realm, all leadership should be servant leadership.

Power of Influence

There are three aspects to power of influence which include speech, time, and exemplary life. In terms of speech, what you say (in church and outside) matters because a few sentences can change the direction of a nation. For example, Nehemiah used his words for good while Herod used his words for destruction. We need to learn to give words of comfort to those that are afflicted, healing through words of kindness to those in emotional pain, guidance to those that are lost or confused, and simplification to make that which is difficult to understand be understood in simple terms. Don't over-complicate or over-simplify things. In terms of time, the importance of being present and

available to anyone you serve, has served. Once assigned a service, forever the impact – there is no checking out. We see this in the Bible with Abraham and Lot. Though Lot left Abraham, while under his care, Abraham never left Lot from his heart and continuously cared for him. He ran after him and sought to protect him from God’s destruction in Sodom and Gomorrah, even though Lot had left him and denied his leadership. Abraham was always seeking to serve and influence those around him. Thus, let us say with Isaiah 6:8, who calls us to be ready at any time for any needs: “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: ‘Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me.’”

In terms of living an exemplary life, we never know who or how much we influence. Our life will influence others, so it’s important to choose your influence. Accordingly, in the diocese of the Southern United States, the servant commit themselves to a level of sacrifice from worldly matters and vow to keep themselves from actions that may negatively impact the influence of the servant.

- Using profanity in any kind of communication whether via texting, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, or Instagram posts, or any social media posts
- Displaying pictures of themselves, friends, or relatives on Facebook or any social media site that are not fitting for a Sunday School Servant (e.g., improper clothing, dancing, drinking, etc.)
- Smoking cigarettes or hookah, vaping, drinking alcohol or using drugs
- Spending leisure time at a night club, bar, or hookah lounge
- Dancing or drinking such as at wedding receptions or gatherings
- Maintaining an inappropriate relationship such as a boyfriend or girlfriend relationship in secret and without the knowledge of family or the guidance of a confession father
- Dressing in a way that is not befitting the modesty of a Christian servant and not in accordance with the dress code of the diocese
- Showing direct or indirect approval of any of the above behaviors

Characteristics of Servant Leadership

Attribute	Description
Listening	The motivation to actively listen to others and support them in appropriate ways.
Empathy	The ability to understand others while going on a deeper level by showing respect and unconditional love.
Awareness	The ability to step back from immediate reactions and emotions to assess the bigger picture and identify the underlying causes and potential consequences of actions viewing situations from a more integrated and holistic position.

Relational Persuasion	The refusal to use power or position in a coercive or forced manner, but rather seeks the path of genuine relationship.
Insight	The ability to learn from the past, anticipate potential outcomes, and make needed adjustments and course corrections.
Stewardship	Looking at service as being a caretaker of the gifts entrusted by God.
Commitment	The willingness to focus on and attend to the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of others.

Biblical Base for Understanding Leadership

Leaders of God's people were most often described as servants of God anointed to do various tasks. Moses was the first to practice servant-leadership (Ex. 32:11-14, 30-35). Servant leaders strengthen the weak and empower those entrusted to their care, and show compassion towards the disadvantaged and the lost (Eze. 34:2-10). God wants leaders who will listen to His will and execute it faithfully with divinely appointed authority.

Obedient and courageous Joshua had a powerful impact on Israel. David, while sinful, was a leader after God's own heart; his deep spirituality led to great accomplishments.

Servants ought not to do anything out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility considering others better than oneself. "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." (Philippians 2:3-4)

James and John asked Jesus if He would grant to them the privilege of sitting on His right and left in positions of leadership in His kingdom. But Jesus explained to them that their philosophy of leadership was not to be modeled after that of the "Gentiles" and "great men" of the world: "Whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all." (Mk 10:42-44; Mt 20: 25-28).

Attitude of Servant-Leadership

The essence, style and attitude of servant leadership is found in Philippians 2:3-5. "*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*"

The focus of servant leadership is on the growth, success and welfare of the followers. The primary focus of a servant-leader is on his or her followers rather than on self. It is this singular characteristic which defines servant-leadership. A good reflective question to ask oneself, do I serve because I am a leader, or do am I a leader because I serve? The goal of service is not to be leaders or achieve some type of ambition, but rather is to offer Christ a sweet smelling aroma in our sacrificial service.

The servant-leader Jesus served best at times by saying “no” to some who wanted to follow Him, denied the requests of others (James and John in Mark 10:36-40) and even “turned away” some who weren’t going where He was going (John 6:66, Luke 14:25-35).

Sometimes servant leaders wash others’ feet, (John 13:1-17), but other times they rebuke, (Matthew 16:23), and even discipline, (Matthew 18:15-20). Sometimes they serve at their own expense, (1 Corinthians 9:7), but other times they issue strong imperatives (1 Corinthians 5:2; 11:16).

Attitude is everything: A servant leader seeks the glory of his Master, “He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.” A Christlike leader is a *bondservant* of Christ (Ephesians 6:6), and always demonstrates that Christ — not public approval, position, or financial security — has his primary loyalty.

In Christian service and ministry the most powerful style and attitude of leadership is that of servant-leadership. Any other style which is not like the one Christ modeled for us, cannot be called “Christian.” There is no room for king-leadership, selfish-leadership, ruler-leadership and self-serving leadership. Servant-leadership is a powerful and transformative lifestyle.



Review Questions

1. What are the two types of leadership? (A: Servant and traditional.)
2. What are the five levels of leadership? (A: Position, permission, production, people development, personhood.)
3. What is the definition of leadership? (A: Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.)
4. True or False? Everyone is a leader of some sorts. (A: True)
5. True or False? Servant leadership was truly initiated by the life of Christ. (A: True)



Books & References

1. [Servants Leadership](#)

2. [Books on Servants Leadership](#)
3. [The Servant as a Leader](#)



Part 3

3.1 Additional Resources

Serving Children With Special Needs

TEACHING BASICS

Every child is created in the image of God and is deeply loved by Him. As the Church, we are called to reflect that love by welcoming and including all children — regardless of their abilities. Sunday school should be a place where every child feels safe, valued, and included as they grow in their understanding of God.

Children with special needs may face a variety of challenges — physical, cognitive, sensory, behavioral, or emotional — that can impact how they learn, communicate, and interact with others. By recognizing these unique needs and intentionally adapting our approach, we can create an environment where they are not only accommodated but celebrated.

Serving children with special needs in Sunday school is such a blessing and important ministry, it requires compassion, and often some adaptations to traditional methods. There are some practical tips that would help us to serve them and create a supportive environment.

Adapting to Their Needs

Small adjustments can make a big difference in a child's ability to connect with God. A child with hearing loss or visual impairment may need large pictures, a front-row seat or a sensory object to touch while sitting with you at the classroom. For a child who enjoys music but is nonverbal, a Velcro hand strap with bells or a shaker allows him to actively participate in spiritual songs.

Creating an environment where the child thrives is also important for helping him engage and learn more about God.

Bringing the Bible to Life

Adding sensory objects that are found in a Bible story can help make the story a more interactive experience for a child with special needs. When telling the story of the Lord Jesus walking on water, for example, you can use a phone app to play the sound of crashing waves. That can help children imagine the story more vividly.

Because scents and tastes can provide powerful connections in the brain, incorporating natural aromas and foods mentioned in Scripture can help bring stories to life. Enjoying fresh bread fits with the story of the Last Supper. And smelling perfume during the story of the woman who washed Jesus' feet (Luke 7:36-38) can help our children experience the Bible in a new way.

Even when we wonder whether what we're doing is working, we can pray for God's Word to penetrate young hearts, knowing that He is the Author and Perfecter of our children's faith.

Visual Aids for Special Needs

Try cartooning to better communicate with special needs children, and illustrate your bible story or your Saint lesson. Cartooning is a fast, easy and fun way to correct mistakes and clarify your message. Don't worry if you aren't an artist — you can use simple stick figures. Here's how the process works:

In the first frame, write the words you want to say or the character in your story; write what you want to say in a speech bubble coming out of the character mouth. It might also help to draw a thought bubble above the character head to let the child know what the character thinking...etc

Children who have all types of special needs. If your words aren't getting through, a picture can sometimes make all the difference.

Assign tasks to Kids with Special Needs

Give them simple responsibility if they are able to, as arrange the chairs, distributes the scarfs--- these tasks make them feel that they are responsible and belong to the church. If we exempt kids from work or tasks because they are "special," we may unintentionally send the message that they are somehow incapable or helpless. And children who love to be productive are more likely to carry these traits into adulthood.

Set A Routine

Remember that most children, including those with special needs, respond well to routines and set schedule. Typically, repetition yields some good results. So, as much as possible.

Plan for Transitions

Transitions are hard for some children with special needs so, remember to give him or her notice before you're going to switch to a new activity. (going to hymns, or taking a break) You might want to use a timer so the child can see that the time is winding down for one activity and you'll be switching soon.

Positive Reinforcement

Reinforce successes and good behavior with words of encouragement, saint picture and special play time with you.

Communicating with Kids

Also, encourage the other kids in class to communicate with the child with special needs via email, art projects, or conversations over social media. Depending on the area of special needs, some kids won't be able to communicate but others will welcome a hand extended in friendship. (remind them always that we all a body of Christ and we all so precious to Him)

Adapting Your Sunday School Lesson for Children with Special Needs

Including a child with special needs can present challenges inside Sunday school class. However, by planning ahead and incorporating easy changes into the existing curriculum's lesson plan, the classroom setting can better include the child with cognitive or physical challenges. The key to making effective adaptations is in understanding the participating students' strengths and weaknesses. Knowing the children's ability levels is the starting point for making any curriculum changes.

- **Classroom Size & Teacher Ratio** – Smaller groups and dedicated attention help children stay engaged. Pairing a child with a peer buddy or adult assistant can improve participation and behavior regulation.
- **Time Management** – Activities should be planned carefully to prevent boredom or frustration. Over-planning is better than under-planning, ensuring a structured and supportive learning experience.
- **Varying Instruction Methods** – Lessons should cater to different learning styles: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Incorporating creative elements like music, puppets, and movement enhances engagement. Some children may require alternative communication methods, such as sign language or picture symbols.
- **Simplifying Instructions** – Adjusting rules and instructions can make activities more accessible to children with cognitive or physical challenges. Small modifications, such as pre-cutting craft materials, can make participation easier.
- **Substituting and Enhancing Materials** – If an activity doesn't engage a child, alternatives should be provided. Consulting special education professionals can help tailor lessons to meet diverse needs.
- **Emphasize Belonging** – Teach other children about love, kindness and including others. Make sure every child feels seen, valued, and loved- as the Lord Jesus love each one of us.

Supporting Parents of Special Needs Children

For you as Sunday school servant, remember that being the parent of a child with special needs takes a lot of energy beyond that which is required of any parent. So, ask those parents how can you support him or her and be ready to pitch in where needed.

All Children Are Blessing from God

Children with special needs have unique gifts and talents to contribute to all of our lives if we take the time to get to know them.

“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth.” (Psalm 127:3:4)



Review Questions

6.

APPENDIX

 Review Answers

Part 1

- 1.1.1 What does it mean that “We believe...in one Church? (A: One = meaning the one union in faith, teaching and doctrine.)
6. True or false: When Bishops are ordained, they take a vow to keep the Orthodox faith. (A: True)
7. What’s wrong with this statement: The Lord Promised me a Crown - Saved by grace alone.? (A: We teach that we are saved by Faith and Works)
8. Non-Orthodox Teachings can come in many different ways: mention two. (A: Is the lesson in line with the Orthodox Faith? Is your reference source in line with the Orthodox Faith?)
9. In teaching about Communion, what should be your emphasis? (A: the Real body and blood.)



Powerpoint Presentations

Introduction & Organization

 TCHG01 - Characteristics of the Orthodox Teaching...

 TCHG02 - Lesson Prep Part 1.pptx

 TCHG03 - Lesson Applications.pptx

 2_ - _Curriculum_Overview.pptx

Relationships

 TCHG04 - Connection vs. Communication.pptx

 TCHG05 - Building Relations.pptx

 TCHG06 - Discipline with Love.pptx

 Teamwork in Service.pptx

Leadership

 TCHG08 - Basic Principles of Leadership.pptx

 TCHG09 - Servant Leadership.pptx