

## **A Guide for Keeping a Sunday School Class for Young Adults and Others of Teenage Years**

For two years, God used Jonathan and Lori to keep the young adult (teen) Sunday school at Central Park Christian Church of Topeka, Kansas, USA. The work was very successful: the young people exhibited much growth in Christ. Jonathan was asked by at least two different people if he could 'mentor' others in this work. Although he does not know that he could 'mentor' anyone in anything, he has brought forth the material below, a list of things which, if both a Sunday school keeper and God do relentlessly, will produce good results.

1. The keeper of a Sunday school class must have God within him or her, and must be constantly striving to fulfill His Will as He has caused it to be written in Holy Scripture. If this is the case, success is impossible to avoid, because it will be an act of the Almighty; otherwise, all of the keeper's efforts will be in vain. Success is thus an excellent test of both the quality and the source of the keeper's work.<sup>1</sup>
2. Be devoted to God and His purposes.<sup>2</sup> Do not be devoted to the world, to things in the world;<sup>3</sup> do not be devoted to the things of men.<sup>4</sup> Remember that you are an ambassador from God to them, and therefore should never play cheerleader for any nation or human institution or anything else of the world. This is especially true in this endeavor, because young people are often far more aware of hypocrisies around them than most adults.
3. If they point out evil in the world, praise them for their insight, and never ever minimize the evil that they have identified, in order to help them remember that the only thing good is God.<sup>5</sup> No nation in the world is good; no church in the world is good; no man or woman is good: only God is good. It is often said that politics "...is a dirty game, but it is the only game in town". If the young people in your class are there voluntarily, it is because they want an alternative to this evil, dirty, game which everyone around them is so dead-set [sic] on playing. You have to give them the alternative. Jesus Christ is not a dirty game at all, ever, anywhere, except the hands of those who steal His words for their purposes.
4. Hang on every word they say. Praise them for every tiniest scrap of goodness embedded in what they say. Praise them more for larger scraps. Praise first, and then only after chitchat, and only if God gives you a good opportunity, remind them of the truth which contradicts any evil that those scraps may have been within. When whole big concepts of magnificent truth come out of their mouths, trumpet without fail. Don't often let them get away with mumbling under their breath - they are used to being treated as irrelevant, so if you want their respect, you must strongly encourage them to speak their minds regardless of what is in their minds. You must be patient and wait for God to bring forth the good fruits.<sup>6</sup>
5. Show them the sword of the Spirit - its flat side, its edge, its handle, and its light - without yourself striking them with it. God will strike them with it if He so chooses.<sup>7</sup> Show them the consequences of evil: use the evil things you yourself have done and their

consequences, both inside your soul and in the world as a whole, as examples. Do not request from them examples from their own life, but be joyfully encouraging if they do volunteer.

6. Know that it is our responsibility to hold their attention. Know that it is our failure to be truly in Christ if we do not hold their attention: if Christ is speaking to His sheep through us, they cannot help but listen.<sup>8</sup> We have found it very good to allow them to keep only half an ear upon you if they so desire, providing them with alternative things for low-key attention, e.g., crossword puzzles, sketchbooks, et cetera. We learned to earn their respect by humbling ourselves thusly before them, by permitting them to treat us as an equal – we, who (if we are honest with ourselves and with them) are not delivering that which is good enough to deserve their attention.<sup>9</sup>

7. We most strongly recommend that the focus be on group interaction, which means discouraging focus upon any written materials which are not Bibles or very close references to same. Focus on words not God are a great temptation for all of us.<sup>10</sup> With this in mind, we suggest that the keeper or keepers have copies of each lesson with answers, but that no copies of either questions or answers be passed out. We found that if copies of questions are passed out, the people present tend to stare at them, and we very much desire to discourage this. We do suggest that both an older (copyright 1965 or thereabouts, or earlier) Webster's dictionary and a Strong's concordance with lexicon be kept for use by everyone present, because these tend not to distract from the focus, and because these tend to help settle many very basic issues.

### Annotations

1. James 1:26 If anyone thinks to be religious among you, yet not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his heart, this one's religion is vain.

2. Matthew 4:8-10 Again the Devil takes Him to a very high mountain, and shows to Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him. I will give all these things to You if falling down, You will worship me. Then Jesus said to him, Go, Satan! For it has been written: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and you shall serve Him only." [Deuteronomy 6:13]

3. 1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because all that which is in the world: the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

4. Matthew 16:23 But turning He said to Peter, Go behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you do not think of the things of God, but the things of men.

5. Mark 10:18 But Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, God.

6. Luke 8:15 And those in the good ground, these are the ones who in a right and good heart, hearing the Word, they hold it and bear fruit in patience.

7. Luke 2:34 And Simeon blessed them and said to His mother Mary, Behold, this One is set for the fall and rising up of many in Israel, and for a sign spoken against; yea, a sword also will pierce your own soul, so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

8. John 10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

9. Luke 14:11 For everyone exalting himself will be humbled, and the one humbling himself will be exalted.

10. Mark 7:9 And He was saying to them, "All too well do you regard as nothing the commandment of God, so that you should keep your tradition."