

TP 203 Christian Education



Student Handbook Church of the Nazarene Nazarene Theological Institute Africa Region

TP 203 Christian Education
Certificate/ Diploma Level
Syllabus

Course Description

This course introduces students to the principles, philosophies, objectives, methods and importance of Christian education. Sunday School will be the focus in how to practice Christian education in the local church.

Course Rationale

Narration

This course offers students a basic understanding of human development in the context of Christian education. Students will demonstrate the ability to use the best methods for teaching and nurturing the Christian faith in the local context. Students will understand the importance of teaching all ages about the importance of the Christian sacraments and rites of passage as expressions of the Christian faith throughout one's life. At the same time, students will learn the organization of Christian education and formation that is provided through the Church of the Nazarene, in particular Sunday School. Students will begin to develop programs for Christian formation to implement in their ministries as well as how to evaluate them.

Program Outcomes

The following program outcomes assigned to this module are identifiable competencies required of the student in this course.

- CN 7 = Appreciation of the mission, history, and government of the Church of the Nazarene and its place in the larger Christian community
- CN 8 = Appreciation of the position and teaching of the Church of the Nazarene concerning religious phenomenon
- CN 10 = Knowledge of the basic theory and art of communication, especially that which concerns preaching and teaching

- CP 1 = Ability to communicate orally and visually according to the culture
- CP 4 = Ability to teach the Word of God and make disciples that can make other disciples
- CP 5 = Ability to plan and lead worship services
- CP 13 = Ability to organize and promote Christian education
- CP 15 = Ability to prepare church members for exercising their ministry

CR 4 = Ability to allow Christ's character to form the attitudes and actions of one's daily life

CR 9 = Ability to engage in continuing formation and education

CR 13 = Ability to live the experience of entire sanctification

CX 2 = Ability to understand the context within which he or she lives with objectivity

Course Outcomes for this module

For achieving the competencies listed above, this module organizes several learning activities and requirements around the following intended learning outcomes for this course:

At the end of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the life cycle from birth until death in light of Christian beliefs. (CN 7, CN 10, CR 4, CR 9)
2. Explain the process of children's education and adult formation as disciples of Christ. (CN 7, CP 4, CR 9, CX 2)
3. Understand the organization of activities for spiritual growth in the Church of the Nazarene. (CN 7, CN 8, CP 15, CX 2).
4. Understand how to build activities and methods for making disciples, especially in Sunday School. (CN 8, CN 10, CP 15, CX 2)
5. Demonstrate the ability to teach effectively on topics related to Christian beliefs and Christian living. (CN 8, CP 1, CP 4, CP 5, CX 2).
6. Learn various ways of starting educational programs in the context of the local church. (CN 10, CP 4, CP 13, CR 9, CX 2).
7. Recognize the significance of sacraments and other rites of passage for individuals and in the local church. (CN 8, CR 4, CP 1, CP 5, CR 9, CR 13).

The following sessions and exercises of this course offer the following percentages of the four Cs:

- Content 25%
- Competence 40%
- Character 25%
- Context 10%

Course resources

The Manual of the Church of the Nazarene

Sunday School in the Church by Matt Price

Student Handbook for this course

Course Requirements

1. Regular attendance to all course sessions and preparation of all assignments prior to their deadlines. A student that is absent six hours of class sessions will not pass the course. (20% of the final grade)
2. The student will develop a plan to start or enhance an existing program for Sunday School in the local church including a plan to train Sunday School teachers at the child, youth and adult levels. The program should include evangelization and Christian formation of the specific age levels within the community. (course outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) (20% of final grade)
3. Small groups. Each student will be asked to meet each class session with a group of persons to allow reflection on educational concepts, provide feedback on application of some of the materials presented in class, and to work on cooperative projects. (course outcomes 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8) (20% of final grade)
4. Plan and teach a Sunday School Lesson. Each student will prepare a lesson plan for a specific age group (children, youth or adult) based on the class information. (course outcomes 2, 3, 4, 5) (20% of the final grade)
5. Each student will orally present their understanding of the vital importance of Christian Education in the church. Students should demonstrate use of methods as well as content learned in class and course materials (course outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) (20% of final grade)

Course Evaluation

Attendance and Participation	20% (200 points)
Christian formation program	20% (200 points)
Small Groups	20% (200 points)
Sunday School Lesson	20% (200 points)
Oral Presentation	20% (200 points)

Course Schedule

This course can be offered as an intensive or semi-intensive. The sessions are a continuation of required readings and reflections of the assignments. It is important to complete assignments for the due date. Some assignments may be submitted after the final session depending on the level of difficulty.

Session 1: Principles of Christian Formation

Introduce Small Group Project: Age Level Ministries

Session 2: Eight Ways Formation Happens

Session 3: How People Develop

Session 4: How People Learn

Session 5: Developing Curriculum for Sunday School

Session 6: How to Teach (How to Lead a Bible Study, Lead Discussions, etc.)

Session 7: The Organization of Christian Formation in the Church of the Nazarene

Session 8: Making an Impact on the Community through Christian Formation

Session 9: Begin Age-level Presentations

Student's Ability to Complete Course Work

A reasonable effort to assist every student will be made. Any student who has handicaps, learning disabilities, or other conditions that make the achievement of the class requirements exceedingly difficult should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to see what special arrangements can be made. Any student who is having trouble understanding the assignments, lectures, or other learning activities should talk to the instructor to see what can be done to help.

Instructor's Qualities and Availability

The instructor has committed to preparing the content and being familiar with the objectives of the course. The instructor's life and attitude inside and outside of the course should reflect the lifestyle of Jesus Christ—the main subject of the New Testament story. Good faith efforts to serve the students both in and beyond the classroom will be made.

Small Group Activity Guidelines

Educational research demonstrates that shared-learning activities, such as small group projects and discussion groups, raise the student's ability to gain and retain knowledge for practice outside the teaching environment. Students are able to develop critical thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis as they work in small group. Assigning small group projects help students to:

1. Learn how to work together in a team environment through positive interdependence.
2. Understand group processes, including process management, conflict management, synergism, collaboration, resource utilization, individual accountability, shared knowledge, cooperation, planning and problem solving.
3. Effectively and efficiently develop oral and written presentation skills.
4. Be better prepared for social interaction at work.
5. Explore and integrate a broader range of ideas and expertise.
6. Respond to different learning styles.
7. Supplement the knowledge of the facilitator/teacher.
8. Develop a sensitivity to and awareness of cultural and gender diversity.

When engaged in small group activities, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. When considering the formation of groups, take into account that it is desirable to balance the small groups by gender, age, geographical origin, local language, and experience. Try to bring as much diversity as possible to the group.
2. Select a spokesperson(s)/Leader(s) for the group to keep the team on task and for reporting back to the rest of the class about the small group's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The spokesperson(s) should also serve as the recorder(s) for the group.
3. Select a timekeeper for the group. Most small group activities should not exceed twenty minutes. The timekeeper's task is to keep the group moving forward and on task to complete the assignment within the allotted time frame.
4. During the course, students are encouraged to try to participate in as many small group roles as possible—spokesperson, recorder, timekeeper.
5. Solicit the facilitator/teacher's assistance at any time the small group is unable to stay on task.

Session 1: Principles of Christian Formation

Principle of Formal and Informal Education

There are three contexts in which Christian education happens: formal education, informal education, and formation.

1. Formal Education

2. Informal Education

Questions to Discuss

Ask someone in the room for his or her family name. For example: "Taylor." Ask, "How did you learn to be a Taylor?" (Much of what he or she learned was never intentional. It was not formal education or even informal education. It happened in just living together and observing.)

3. Formation

In Christian education it takes all three contexts to learn what it means to be Christian. We are becoming Christian together. This is the power of the Church. Our life in the community shapes us. There is power in what we are doing, our words, our values, and our actions. We are being shaped in terms of what it means to be Christian, but sometimes we do not think about it because it is not formal. But every time the Church gathers we are becoming more and more Christian. Are we being shaped in the image of Christ or in some other image? It depends what the community is like.

Small Group Project: Age Level Ministries

Allow students to choose a group to join with a limit of five or six per group.

Children's Ministry: *Think of a village or neighborhood where most people have not been raised Christian. It will take intentionality to reintroduce formational Christian rituals into everyday life in the home. How can parents*

of young children be more intentionally formational in teaching their children about God in everyday life?

Youth Ministry: *Who are the current role models in the lives of youth today in our society? Who are different role models we would want to introduce to the youth of our church, and how could we go about introducing them? Use examples from popular media to illustrate your choices of role models in society.*

Adult Ministry: *How would you design a new church building to be intentionally formational and shape people to understand God in a way that is life-changing? It will be necessary to review the meaning of formation that is Christian as well as refer to historical and contemporary examples.*

Principle of Domains of Learning

There are three domains for learning.

Knowledge “to know”

This includes subject matter or content such as The Gospel of Mark, Church History, Principles of Evangelism, Scripture passage for Bible study

Attitude “to be”

This includes how one approaches learning including one’s character and commitment and effort, such as the spiritual depth of one’s prayer life or the ability to listen and counsel other’s with godly wisdom. Character is often defined as what one does when no one is looking. In Christian formation, this can be seen as how one studies the Bible, prays fervently, or fulfills homework assignments for class.

Behavior “to do”

This includes the tasks involved with learning such as practice, task completion, and competency such as Using the Roman Road in evangelism or leading a Bible study or organizing a council meeting.

Every course taken toward ordination covers four elements called the four Cs: Content, Competence, Character, and Context. These correspond to the domains of learning:

Content→Knowledge

Competence→Behavior

Character→Attitude

The fourth C is Context which refers to the place or community in which we learn, teach or minister.

Principle of Evaluation:

Evaluation reviews what has been accomplished. It happens in the process of formation (formative) as well as at the conclusion (summative).

Formative evaluation responds to the question: "How are we doing?"

Summative evaluation responds to the question "How did we do?"

These questions help us evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning as well as all the activities and organizations within the church.

Principle of the Cycle of Formation

The cycle begins with evangelism continues with discipleship, and then equipping for ministry.

In 1 John 2:12-14, one reads about the children, young men, and adults in a spiritual sense of moving through the cycle of formation.

12 I write to you, dear children,
because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name.

13 I write to you, fathers,
because you have known him who is from the beginning.

I write to you, young men,
because you have overcome the evil one.

I write to you, dear children,
because you have known the Father.

14I write to you, fathers,
because you have known him who is from the beginning.

I write to you, young men,
because you are strong,
and the word of God lives in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

Babes in Christ need spiritual milk, but the more mature need more substantial spiritual meat.

Some use these verses to support waiting to give new converts responsibility.

Questions for Discussion

Give five reasons for waiting to give a new convert responsibility in the church? (Possible responses: need maturity, more knowledge)

Give five reasons for giving new converts immediate responsibility in the church? (Possible responses: still warm and motivated, process of new birth is fresh and ready to bring others with them, understands sin and conversion, and obstacles to a spiritual new birth)

Session 2: Eight Ways Formation Happens

Definition of formation: the intentional process of nurture for children within a Christian faith community and for assimilation of adults who are entering the Christian faith community for the first time.

1. Community Rites or Traditions

Our rituals shape us.

What rituals were specific to your family? What did these things teach you about family? About life?

What rituals are specific to your church family? Why do you follow these traditions? What would a newcomer to the church think about this tradition? What is the meaning? What do these rituals say about you?

Do you have baptism in your church? Why do you do it, besides the fact that the Bible says we should?

Marriage. When you go to a wedding, do you remember your own wedding?

2. Environment

Our environment shapes us.

E_____ climate

What climate do people feel in the church? How do small children feel when they come to church? Do they feel like this is a place where they are welcome and where they are loved? What is the climate of the church like? Is it emotionally warm or cold?

S_____

What does room arrangement say about the philosophy of education in the classroom?

What does the arrangement of space in an Orthodox or Catholic cathedral say about God?

3. Time

The day of worship

What day do you have church? Why?

The Christian calendar

Advent

Christmas

Epiphany

Lent

Holy Week/ Easter

Pentecost

Ordinary Time (Kingdom Tide)

As we live through the Christian calendar, we are shaped by the gospel. It becomes part of the fabric of our lives more each year.

4. Community Life

What we do or do not do together for enjoyment shapes us.

5. Discipline

Different groups have various emphases shape them.

6. Social Interaction

Communication methods shape us.

What are the rules concerning interaction with those in authority?

The Bible says those in authority in the Church must not act powerful. Rather, they should act as servants.

7. Role Models

Our role models shape us.

Who are our heroes? Who are the people we look up to and try to imitate?

Who is honored in your church? Are the people who are publicly honored the ones who are most like Christ?

Questions for Discussion

Share illustrations of your role models.

Choose role models that are like Christ. We do not have a choice whether to have role models. Will we have good ones or bad ones?

8. Language

What words are used over and over again in your church? What words have you heard repeatedly already in this class about Christian formation? What does that tell you about the instructor's values?

Summary

In the Christian faith community, we must be intentional in all that we do in all of these eight areas. All three ways of teaching persons to "be" Christian (formal education, informal education, and formation) are necessary.

Without formal education, Christian education is impossible. Without informal education, faithful formation is impossible. Without formation, instruction makes little difference and is inadequate for helping persons to be Christian.

It takes all three levels really to learn what it means to be a Christian. We need formal instruction like Sunday School and Bible study. We need informal education, like worship or working together.

We also need to understand that we are shaped as we live life together in our homes, on trips, at camp, fixing a house, doing ministry, etc. We must help people understand that Christian education is more than school. It is life.

Session 3: How People Develop

Developmental Theory

People _____ throughout their lives. In each stage of their lives they have different needs and capabilities. Research has helped give structure to the study of people's lives. This is called developmental theory.

Developmental theories structure our understanding of several arenas of human growth including the psychological, moral, social, and spiritual. Understanding the various theories of the human lifespan show us how to be better teachers and learners.

Developmental theories describe how and what people think and experience in a particular order throughout the lifespan, and what happens early in life influences what happens later in life. Most of this research needs to be contextualized culturally. Critique these theories from what you have experienced in your own cultural context. Major development psychologists include Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson.

Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

Piaget thinks human beings have two main cognitive tendencies:

O _____ **tendency**

As words, ideas, and experiences come into our lives we try to organize them into some type of organizational structure

A _____ **tendency**

We tend to adapt and make sense out of our environment by exploring through the processes of assimilation and accommodation.

- **Assimilation** (One way that we adapt is through putting new information into existing categories).

- **Accommodation** (Another way that we adapt is through creating new categories when no categories exist for the new information)

Piaget developed his theories further into stages of cognitive development:

Piaget's Four Stages of Cognitive Development

Stage	Ages	Cognitive Abilities
Sensorimotor	<u>Birth to _____ years</u>	<p>Makes sense through senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste)</p> <p>Learns manipulation of objects</p>
Preoperational Thinking	<u>_____ years</u>	<p>Not yet forming logical patterns but intuitive knowledge.</p> <p>Uses monologues, differentiates animate-inanimate objects, nightmares seem real</p>
Concrete operations	<u>_____ years</u>	<p>Logical operations begin ($2+2=4$), new experiences assessed by past;</p> <p>makes sense by comparing to real, concrete experience</p>
Formal operations	<u>Begins at _____</u>	<p>Logical operations lead to hypothetical situations;</p> <p>Thinks of possibilities not just realities;</p> <p>able to move from problem-solving to problem-posing.</p> <p>Learns to interact with ideas through dialogue and dialectical thinking</p>

Erikson's Theory of Psycho-Social Development

Erik Erikson believed persons developed through stages. Each stage has a crisis or a point of decision. The response to the crisis leads to positive (virtue) or negative (vice) consequences.

Stage	Psychosocial Crisis	Virtue	Vice
Infancy (birth to 18 months)	<i>Trust vs Mistrust</i>	<i>Hope</i>	<i>Withdrawal</i>
Toddlerhood (2 to 3 years)	<i>Autonomy vs Shame/doubt</i>	<i>Will</i>	<i>Compulsion</i>
Preschool (3 to 5 years)	<i>Initiative vs Guilt</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Inhibition</i>
School Age (6 to 11 years)	<i>Industry vs Inferiority</i>	<i>Competence</i>	<i>Inertia</i>
Adolescence (12 to 22 years)	<i>Identity vs Role confusion</i>	<i>Fidelity</i>	<i>Ignore others</i>
Young Adulthood (22 to 35 years)	<i>Intimacy vs Isolation</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Exclude others</i>
Middle Adulthood (35 to 50 years)	<i>Generativity* vs Self-absorption</i>	<i>Care</i>	<i>Reject others</i>
Later Adulthood (65 years to death)	<i>Integrity vs Despair</i>	<i>Wisdom</i>	<i>Disdain others</i>

*Generativity means the quality of sharing with next generation or giving back to community

In Piaget's and Erikson's theories it is important to remember that the gains or deficits from early stages carry into the next stage in life. For example, if trust is not gained in infancy it can remain a problem throughout life and make a difference in how a person deals with later crises. This is true for each stage in the developmental process.

Question for Discussion

In what ways can awareness of developmental stages change the way a pastor approaches evangelism?

Activity for Action

Use the developmental theories from Piaget and Erikson to assist you in the age-level project.

Session 4: How People Learn

This section adapted from www.learning-theories.com

Behaviorism

Behaviorism is a worldview that operates on a principle of "stimulus-response."

- This philosophy assumes a learner is essentially passive, responding to environmental stimuli.
- The learner starts off as a clean slate (i.e. *tabula rasa*)
- Behavior is shaped through positive reinforcement or negative reinforcement, hoping to cause an intended behavior or understanding. In contrast, *punishment* (both positive and negative) decreases the likelihood that the intended behavior will happen again.
- Positive indicates the application of a stimulus; Negative, the withholding of one.
- Learning is defined as a change in behavior in the learner.
- Lots of (early) behaviorist work was done with animals (e.g. Pavlov's dogs) and generalized to humans.

Proponents of this view are John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov, B.F. Skinner, and E. L. Thorndike

Cognitivism

- Cognitivism focuses on the inner mental activities – opening the human mind is valuable and necessary for understanding how people learn.
- Knowledge can be seen as schema or symbolic mental constructions.
- Learning is defined as change in a learner's schemata through higher level thinking, memory, and problem-solving.
- People are not "programmed animals" that merely respond to environmental stimuli;
- People are rational beings that require active participation in order to learn, and whose actions are a consequence of thinking.
- Changes in behavior are observed, but only as an indication of what is occurring in the learner's head.
- Cognitivism uses the metaphor of the mind as computer: information comes in, is being processed, and leads to certain outcomes.

Summary: The cognitivist paradigm essentially argues that the mind should be opened and understood. The learner is viewed as an information processor (like a computer or a machine).

Keywords: Schema, schemata, information processing, symbol manipulation, information mapping, mental models

Social Learning (Bandura)

- People learn through observing others' behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors.
- "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action." (Bandura).
- Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences.

Summary: Bandura's Social Learning Theory suggests people learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modeling. The theory has often been called a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory, and motivation.

Originator: Albert Bandura

Key Terms: Modeling, reciprocal determinism

Necessary conditions for effective modeling:

A_____ — personal characteristics increase or decrease attention, such as sensory capacities, arousal level, past reinforcement).

R_____ — what helps us remembering what gets our attention. Includes mental images, cognitive organization, symbolic and motor rehearsal.

R_____ — reproducing the image from memory. Including physical capabilities, and self-observation of reproduction.

M_____ — having the need and power to reproduce and imitate what is modeled. Includes what is learned in the past (i.e. traditional behaviorism), what is promised (imagined incentives) and the vicarious (seeing and recalling the reinforced model)

Bandura believed in "**reciprocal determinism**", that is, the world and a person's behavior cause each other, while behaviorism essentially states that one's environment causes one's behavior. He was studying adolescent aggression, and found this explanation too simplistic, and so in addition he suggested that behavior causes environment as well. Later, Bandura soon considered *personality as an interaction between three components: the*

environment, behavior, and one's psychological processes (one's ability to contain and communicate images in mind and language).

Social learning theory is called a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory, and motivation. The theory is related to Vygotsky's Social Development Theory, which also emphasizes the importance of social learning.

Social Development Theory (Vygotsky)

Vygotsky's Social Development *Theory* is the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), who lived during Russian Revolution. Vygotsky's work was largely unknown to the West until it was published in 1962.

Vygotsky's theory is one of the foundations of constructivism. It asserts three major themes:

1. **S_____ interaction** plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. In contrast to Jean Piaget's understanding of child development (in which development precedes learning), Vygotsky felt social learning precedes development. He states: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people and then inside the child." (Vygotsky, 1978).
2. The **More Knowledgeable Other** (MKO). The MKO refers to anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process, or concept. The MKO is normally thought of as being a teacher, coach, or older adult, but the MKO could also be peers, a younger person, or even computers.
3. The **Zone of Proximal Development** (ZPD). The ZPD is the distance between a student's ability to perform a task under adult guidance and/or with peer collaboration and the student's ability solving the problem independently. According to Vygotsky, learning occurs in this zone.

Vygotsky focused on the connection between people and the context in which they act and interact in shared experiences. According to Vygotsky, humans use cultural tools, such as speech and writing, to interact with their social environments.

Applications of the Vygotsky's Social Development Theory

Some hold a view of education in which a teacher or lecturer "transmits" information to students. In contrast, Vygotsky's theory promotes learning contexts in which students play an active role in learning. Roles of the teacher and student are therefore shifted, as a teacher should collaborate with students in order to help facilitate new learning in them. Learning becomes a reciprocal experience and interaction between the students and teacher.

Questions for Discussion

Why do you think “reciprocal determinism” is important for teaching others about holiness?

Apply the four aspects of Bandura’s process of modeling to the task of teaching and/or disciplinmaking?

Where can we find parallels in the Gospels to the educational ideas of Vygotsky?

How can we apply the concept of the zone of proximal development to working with new believers? How much do we tell at first and how much do we allow new believers to learn for themselves?

Communities of Practice

Summary: Etienne Wenger summarizes Communities of Practice (CoP) as “*groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.*” This learning that takes place is not necessarily intentional. Three components are required in order to be a CoP: (1) the domain, (2) the community, and (3) the practice.

Key People: Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991 and further elaborated in 1998.

Key Terms: domain, community, practice

Communities of Practice can be defined, in part, as a process of social learning that occurs when **people who have a common interest in a subject or area collaborate over an extended period of time, sharing ideas and strategies, determine solutions, and build innovations.**

Wenger gives a simple definition of this process: “Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.” Note that this allows for, but does not require intentionality. Learning can be, and often is, an incidental outcome that accompanies these social processes.

There are three required components of CoPs:

1. There needs to be a **domain**. A CoP has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest (e.g. radiologists, football fans, history teachers, mechanics, etc.); it is not just a network of people or club of friends. Membership implies a commitment to the domain.
2. There needs to be a **community**. A necessary component is that members of a specific domain interact and engage in shared activities, help each other, and share information with each other. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. Sharing the same job does not necessitate a CoP. There needs to be people who interact and learn together in order for a CoP to be formed. Note that members do not necessarily work together daily. Wenger points to the example of Impressionist painters who sometimes met in cafes to discuss their painting styles. He indicates that even though these men normally painted alone, these kinds of interactions were essential to making them a CoP.
3. There needs to be a **practice**. A CoP is not just people who have an interest in something (e.g. sports or work). They must also be *practitioners*. They develop and share resources which can include stories, helpful tools, experiences, stories, and ways of handling typical problems. This kind of interaction needs to be developed over time. A conversation with a random stranger who happens to be an expert on a subject matter that interests you does not in itself make a CoP. Informal conversations held by people of the same profession (e.g. office assistants or graduate students) help people share and develop a set of cases and stories that can become a shared set of best practices, whether they realize it or not.

Communities develop their practice through a variety of methods, including: problem solving, requests for information, seeking the experiences of others, reusing assets, coordination and synergy, discussing developments, visiting other members, mapping knowledge and identifying gaps.

For Etienne Wenger, learning is central to human identity. A primary focus is learning as **social participation** – that is, an individual as an active participant in the practices of social communities, and in the construction of his or her identity through these communities. People continuously create their shared identity through engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities. The motivation to become a more central participant in a community of practice can provide a powerful incentive for learning. Students will have a desire to develop skills (e.g. literacy skills) if the people they admire have the same skills. That is, they want to join the “literacy club” and will work towards becoming a member.

Question for Discussion

Describe examples of Communities of Practice in your community.

What are ways in which pastors can become a Community of Practice?

How is the Church like a Community of Practice?

For the students: Use the space below to define learning. Feel free to borrow ideas from the theories, but the final definition should be your own.

Experiential Learning (Kolb)

Summary: A four-stage cyclical theory of learning, Kolb's experiential learning theory is a holistic perspective that combines experience, perception, cognition, and behavior.

Key People: David A. Kolb (1939-)

Key Terms: Learning cycles, learning styles, concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, active experimentation

Building upon earlier work by John Dewey and Kurt Levin, American educational theorist Kolb believes "*learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience*" (1984, p. 38). The theory presents a cyclical model of learning consisting of four stages. One may begin at any stage, but must follow each other in the sequence:

- concrete experience (or "_____")
- reflective observation (or "_____")
- abstract conceptualization (or "_____")
- active experimentation (or "_____")

Kolb's four-stage learning cycle shows how experience is interpreted through reflection into concepts, which in turn are used as guides for active experimentation and the choice of new experiences.

- The first stage, *concrete experience* (CE), is where the learner actively experiences an activity such as a lab session or field work.
- The second stage, *reflective observation* (RO), is when the learner consciously reflects back on that experience.
- The third stage, *abstract conceptualization* (AC), is where the learner attempts to conceptualize a theory or model of what is observed.
- The fourth stage, *active experimentation* (AE), is where the learner is trying to plan how to test a model or theory or plan for a forthcoming experience.

Kolb identified four learning styles which correspond to these stages. The styles highlight conditions under which learners learn better. These styles are:

- **assimilators**, who learn better when presented with logical theories
- **convergers**, who learn better when provided with practical applications of concepts and theories
- **accommodators**, who learn better when provided with "hands-on" experiences
- **divergers**, who learn better when allowed to observe and collect a wide range of information

For more information, see:

- Kolb, David A. 1984. *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

Activity for Action

Write down Kolb's learning style that best fits you. Next gather into groups of four. Write down the learning styles that fit the other three people. Compare responses to see how you see yourself and how others see you. Discuss together the question, Why is it important as teachers of the Gospel to be aware of how people learn differently?

How can Kolb's four-stage cycle of learning help pastors in preparing strategy for ministry and church multiplication?

Session 5: Developing Curriculum for Sunday School

Curriculum is the organization of the goals and learning activities we use in a teaching and learning event.

Every school, even Sunday school, has a curriculum, a course to follow. To develop curriculum, it is necessary to understand how curriculum works. The next step is to set goals and plan learning activities to meet these goals.

Three Curricula That All Schools Teach

1. **Explicit Curriculum**

--what is stated, what the school intends and advertises about itself.

2. **Implicit Curriculum**

—The culture of the educational environment socializes students to its values. The implicit curriculum is what the school teaches because of the kind of place it is (organizational structure, rules, buildings, teaching methods). It can be:

- a. intended, but not stated, e.g., building community
- b. unintended, positive, e.g., students learn punctuality or delayed gratification
- c. unintended, negative, e.g., school teaches compliant behavior, competitiveness, or dependence on rewards, OR student learns to hate a subject because of the way it was taught to them

3. **N_____ Curriculum**

—what the school does NOT teach. This can be intended or unintended, but it affects the student. e.g., The school teaches only its own method or its own theological tradition.

The Sunday School neglects teaching upper levels of thinking or teaching students to study the Bible for themselves.

Elliot Eisner writes,

“It is my thesis that what schools do *not teach* may be as important as what they do teach. I argue this position because ignorance is not simply a neutral void; [ignorance] has important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider, the alternatives that one can examine, and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or problem”

-- *The Educational Imagination*. New York: Macmillan, 1985, p. 97

Setting Goals: Information→Formation→Transformation

Training is for I _____

- Gaining specific knowledge about a subject
- Honing a particular skill
- Correcting an attitude

Examples:

Where?

Short-term, specific goals

Education is for F _____

- Broadening our knowledge: Learning how to think
- Doing what we do because of who we are: Living holy lives
- Taking on the "mind of Christ" (Phil 2): Becoming Christlike

Examples:

Where?

Long-term, broad goals

Discipleship is for T _____

- Closer to God
- Closer to His Word
- Closer to each other

Examples:

Where?

Takes a lifetime with the goal of holiness unto the Lord

All three goals are necessary: information, formation, and transformation. Training is for information, teaching is for formation, and discipling is for transformation.

Review the Goals

In the space below write down ways you can be better informed, formed, and transformed as a pastor, student, spouse, parent, and friend.

In order to best evaluate curriculum it is important to remember the following principles that lay the foundation for what is important to learn and teach:

Basic Principles of Curriculum Development in Christian Education

1. In Christian education, our lives must be intentionally connected to biblical truth.
2. Life and truth will seldom link automatically.
3. It will always be a challenge to tie the two together.
4. The goal is changed life, intentional Christian living. Bible knowledge is a means, not an end.
5. Students need to interact with each other for effective learning.
6. Learning is primarily a life application activity.
7. Remembering information may be a part of the application, but information is the means, not the end.
8. Learning is not simply the presentation of materials in short, easy steps, but an active engagement with truth in the context of real life.

Activity for Action

Create five questions based on the above principles that help us evaluate curriculum. E.g. In what ways will using this curriculum help us live intentionally as Christians? How does this material help us active engage truth? What are the connections between the learning materials and our context?

Session 6: How to Teach

Which Methods Do You Use to Teach?

The more you involve the students in the learning process, the more likely they are to learn and to remember

If I were trying to teach you to fix a car, being in this room would not be the right method. Let's go out and find a car and look at the engine. Let's touch it, name the parts, take it apart, and learn to put it back together again.

Methods must fit

- S _____
- G _____
- C _____

If you want students to think about their life, what method might we use to get them engaged?

Example 1: Examine four items from daily life: a tool, a newspaper, a family picture or piece of jewelry, a key for a vehicle, furniture, etc. Place them around the classroom. Have students gather into smaller groups. They should look at each one and decide as a group how that object describes what life is like where they live. Say, "In considering these objects, we have been thinking about our lives. How do you think God would say about your lives? *'What does God have to say about this?'*")

Example 2: Give each student two cards, one for each hand. One card says, "I agree." The other card says, "I disagree." I will make some statements that are popular statements from the culture or statements from Scripture. I don't tell them which are which. I read the statement, and I ask them to agree or disagree. "On the count of three, I want you to hold up one of your cards." They have to declare something. Sometimes they disagree with each other. Then rather than telling them one is right and one is wrong, we explore and find out why. Then after we have read all the statements, we can say, "I wonder if God has anything to say about this. Let's open our Bibles and look." I might have them read the passage and try to decide if God agrees or disagrees with the statement. If God agrees, what should we do?

These methods involve the learners in learning. Those same methods may not work with preschool, so we have to choose methods appropriate for that age level, such as drawing a picture, filling in blanks in sentences, or acting out the story. Choose methods that work with the age level of the students, goals of the lesson, and context in which we are teaching.

What methods did Jesus use and why? He used methods that fit the people He was teaching, His goals or purposes, and the context in which He was teaching. You cannot use the same methods everywhere all the time.

Balance L and T

Most people come to us unbalanced. What they believe is heavily weighted by their life experiences and lightly weighted on Bible truth.

As Christian educators, our task is to help them balance their lives with biblical truth.

HOW TO LEAD A BIBLE STUDY

Four Steps of Bible Study

- Read it (before the Bible study)
- Study it (before the Bible study)
- Prepare it (for the Bible study)
- Lead it (during the Bible study)

Read It

Read the Bible passage at least three times before studying it.

Pray that God's Spirit will help you understand His Word and help you lead the study.

Study It

Decide on scope of the Bible study (Choose the bible passage of John 3:1-8, but not the whole chapter)

Be familiar with context just before and just after the Bible passage (What happened in John 2 and the rest of John 3?)

Ask Five Ws and H about the Bible passage

- **Who** are the persons speaking, being spoken to, involved in the action of the passage?
- **What** are they saying? About God? About humans? About each other?
- **What** are they doing? For God? Against God? To each other?
- **Where** does the Bible passage take place (culture and historical period)
- **When** does the Bible passage take place? (historical period or place in the whole Bible book)
- **Why** is this passage important for Christians to know more about it?
- **How** does this passage help us grow in our walk with Christ, help us understand something about a topic like sin, or help us or someone else do something or know something more about God?

Look in the Bible passage for words that describe, repeat, symbolize, and give action.

What is the main point of the Biblical passage?

How does this Biblical passage tell us something about God's truth for today's world?

Gain hints about the history and cultural background.

(Example: What was life like during this time? Look in study Bibles or Bible handbook/commentaries/Bible dictionaries.) How does this background help us understand the Bible passage? For John 3:1-8—what role does water play in the religious lives of Pharisees? It keeps them clean for God's use. Why would a Pharisee want to see Jesus at night instead of the day?)

You will probably only use 20% of what you study, but you need to be more than ready to ask and respond to questions 80% of the time during the Bible study.

Prepare It

- 1) Hook (draw students into subject)
- 2) Book (enter into the Bible for study)
- 3) Look (connect what is found in the Bible to real life)
- 4) Took (live out what is learned)

Hook

These are activities that draw students into the learning process, much like a fisherman draws in the net. Feel free to create examples from your context.

- 1) **Outline a true story or real-life incident:** Last week there was another school shooting in North America, this time in Canada. (On a topic about violence or Cain and Abel)
- 2) **Ask for a show of hands:** Raise your hand if you have climbed a mountain? Tell us about it. (Be ready with story if no one responds or another question like, "Who would like to climb a mountain? Tell us why.")
- 3) **Ask a question:** Who has ever had a hard time praying?
- 4) **Get them laughing.** Tell a joke, but be careful with humor, so it is not cruel or demeaning to others.
- 5) **Make a promise:** By the end of this study, you will know why Jesus wept.
- 6) **Real-life introduction:** Tell us about the worst fight you had with your brother or sister. (Then, introduce study on Cain and Abel or Jacob and Esau)

- 7) **Make a provocative statement:** At least 100,000 people will die today who have never heard of Jesus Christ. (On a study about evangelism)
- 8) **Use an unusual statistic:** One out of 5 children in the United States use Spanish as their first language. (On a lesson about unity or mission)
- 9) **Use a visual aid or prop:** Show and name all the uses of a screwdriver (Show two—one in bad shape and another in good shape.) Which is a better screwdriver? (On a study about serving God.)
- 10) **Others:** ???

Hooks can be called **springboard motivators**, because not only do they help get everyone's attention, they help us spring into the subject matter of the Bible study.

They should also **grab attention, be enthusiastic, and give some background** on the topic. No longer than five minutes.

Book

Use the results of the pre-study to prepare questions for the Bible Study.

Three Basic Questions:

What does this passage/verse say about God?

What does this passage say about humanity (you and me)?

What does this passage want me to do for God or for others?

Here are several basic models for Bible study.

Swedish Bible Study Model

Read a selected Bible passage together or silently.

Candle → Ask everyone to note verses or phrases that help you "see something in a new light"; new insights or things we didn't know before

Arrow → Ask everyone to identify verses or phrases that "prod or poke your conscience" that teach challenge us to live in a new way

Question mark → Ask everyone to highlight verses or phrases that "are remain unclear or uncertain in our minds after reading the Bible passage"

Q&A Method

Prepare a minimum of five questions about the Bible passage (use the tips for How to Ask Questions)

Act It Out

Assign parts to everyone and have them read or act out the parts. Follow the drama with two or three questions to help people understand what the passage says about God.

Look

A _____ the Bible passage to today's world. Have students take a **LOOK at their lives in response to God's Word. They should ask themselves, **What does God's Word expect me to do?****

Possible questions:

- How does this passage help us grow closer to God?
- What does this passage expect us to do for God or for others?
- In what ways does this passage help other know God better?
- What difference does this verse or passage make in today's world?
- What difference does this verse or passage make in my life?

Memory-making Closers:

1. Summarize (Tell them what you told them)
2. Highlight key points
3. **Call to action**
4. Story, poem or song
5. A video or skit
6. A moral (important point) to the study
7. A visual aid
8. Others:

Took

Once the Bible study is over, the way to living out what is learned has only begun. Ask yourself, what do I want students to take away from this session? This is the fourth item—TOOK—in the process.

Questions for Discussion

Compare these four steps for Bible study (Hook, Book, Look, Took) to the educational paradigms studied earlier.

Lead It

- **Arrive 15 minutes early**
- **Set up chairs in a circle and get room ready**
- **Get visual aids and other learning helps ready**
- **Greet everyone**
- **Begin with the attention getter (if you're nervous, start with prayer)**
- **Be confident because you know what you're doing**
- **Follow the tips for leading discussions (next page)**

Tips for Leading Discussions:

Based on material from Rick Ryding

How to Ask Questions

Avoid close-ended questions – requires yes or no answer.

Did you read the Bible today?

Use Open-ended questions – requires a thoughtful response.

How often should someone read the Bible today?

(Note: Not “How often do you read the Bible?”—that’s too specific and might be taken as rude by someone)

Other types of questions:

Rhetorical – requires no answer: How many times does the sun rise every day?

Overhead – anyone can answer (Ask the question, count to five; or ask for a volunteer to answer)

Direct – aimed at one person

1. Name the person to answer
2. Pause (count to 3)
3. Ask question
4. Wait for response (count to 3)

Combined – pose question to group, then pick someone to respond

1. Ask question
2. Pause (count to 3)
3. Name person to answer

Relay – “Bob, how would you answer Tom’s question/remark?”

Reverse – “Jim, how would you answer your own question?” or “What do you think the answer is?”

Chain – “Jane, do you agree with Jim? Explain why or why not.”

Questions Do’s and Don’t’s

Do . . .

Plan questions (write them down)
Ask questions equally
Use direct questions to focus study
Use easy questions early
Avoid leading or yes/no questions

Don’t . . .

Don’t wing it
Don’t question only one or two persons
Don’t use questions to punish
Don’t start tough
Don’t over use “yes/no” questions

How to Respond to Questions

- 1) Focus on content and intent
- 2) Acknowledge question ("Thanks for that good question.")
- 3) Clarify what was asked ("Help me understand what you're asking.")
- 4) Verify what they want to know ("Are you asking about [this idea]?")
- 5) Admit you don't know a response when you don't know

How NOT to Respond to Questions

- 1) Do NOT show emotions or feelings (don't be upset or laugh at a question)
- 2) Do NOT be unresponsive, acknowledge the question
- 3) Do NOT avoid question, use relay, redirect or chain questions, but do not sidestep questions)
- 4) Do NOT put down the person asking the question

Using Humor

Do . . .

1. Know your story
2. Dramatize your story
3. Keep it clean, uncluttered
4. Make it harmless
5. Base it on caring
6. Include everyone

Don't . . .

- Don't wing it
- Don't make it dull
- Don't spice it up
- Don't choose delicate issues
- Don't be rude or insensitive
- Don't put down (or exclude)

What if I panic? Remember:

- **You are in Charge—**
- **Eye Contact—**
- **Enjoy do not Worry--**
- **Lose yourself—**
- **Prepare—**

Review: Hook, Book, Look, Took

- __ook—draw students' interest by using example or situation from real life
- __ook—see what God's Word says.
- __ook at possible applications of the Bible to our lives as described in the "Hook"
- __ook—What will you do? Response or commitment.

Let's take another look at the importance of the hook.

The Importance of the Hook

The Hook step provides information on your students' lives. The Book step provides biblical principles. The Look step, which may be as simple as one question, is like a set of scales, weighing or contrasting what is true in our lives with what is taught in the Scriptures and looking at possible applications.

The purpose of fishing is to hook . . .and retrieve fish. Be sure your hooks grab your students and pull them into the learning activity

Basic Principles of the Hook

Here are some guidelines for identifying an appropriate "hook" or introduction to a Bible study lesson

1. This is a "life" step. The students are describing their lives on the **T**_____ of the lesson.
2. The students should be **A**_____ in thinking, describing, considering, etc.
3. Try to focus this step on the students' felt needs.
4. "Interest leads to attention, but felt need leads to effort" (Lois LeBar)
5. Move from the non-threatening to the threatening.
6. Use what the students "teach" during this section of the lesson to direct the rest of the lesson.

A Hook Is NOT

1. merely an introduction to the theme of the lesson
2. a mixer
3. a review of a former lesson
4. open prayer request time

Activity for Action

Honesty Hooks

Based on the principles given above, which of the following is a good "hook" for a lesson on honesty?

1. Have each student write down one lie he or she has told and gotten away with. Collect their papers and read them out to the class without revealing who told which lie.
2. Have students memorize a verse on honesty. Then see who can repeat it without cheating.
3. Play a small game as a class. Before the class begins, ask someone to intentionally cheat in the game until everyone notices.
4. Present a small story (case study) or a person who is in a tempting situation. Ask the students how they believe the person will respond? List all of his or her different options. What do the students think they would choose in a similar situation and why?
5. Show a clip from a popular video where a person does something dishonest.
6. Have the students retell or act out the story of Pinocchio, a popular Disney figure known for his nose growing whenever he told a lie.
7. Have the students write and present skits about last week's Bible story.
8. Have the students write and present skits about temptations they face to be dishonest at home and at school.
9. Have the students work in groups to define "honesty" using an acrostic.

Here are some possible responses:

1. This activity would get students to describe their lives by admitting they have struggled with honesty.
2. Some have raised the objection that it is too threatening or embarrassing. Not enough life description.
3. No life description.
4. This one works. The students actively describe options and choices they make.
5. This might be an introduction to your Bible study topic, but it is not a hook. The students did not describe their lives at all and they were not active in the learning process.
6. Once again, a possible introduction to the Bible study, but not a hook.
7. A hook is not a review.
8. This one works.
9. No. *Which principles does it violate?*

Take the challenge to create a good "hook" for a lesson on honesty:

Eleven Hook Ideas (out of 10,000 possibilities)

1. Each student **chooses from a list an object** that describes their life regarding the lesson's theme. They should share their answer with the group and give his or her reasons. E.g., Lesson on growing in Christ. Choose an animal from the list: snail, hawk, leopard, penguin, elephant, etc. The person might say, "When it comes to growing in Christ, I feel like a bear because I have been hibernating for a while." Or "When it comes to growing in Christ, I feel like a snail because it seems like my progress is so slow."
2. **Unfinished skit**—Finish the story. What would you do?
3. **Abstract art**—Do an abstract drawing or painting to show how you react to the theme, then explain it to the group.
4. **Game show** with planned questions that center on the theme of the lesson.
5. **Panel** discussion.
6. **Moving to the Answer**—Hang a sign on each wall with one of the words, "Sometimes, Always, Never, Usually." Then make statements, and have people move to "the wall" that answers for them. Begin with non-threatening statements and move to those that really get to the heart of your lesson. For example, in a lesson on loneliness: (1) I eat. (2) I skip classes. (3) I get all A's (5s). (4) I was popular at school. (5) I have a hard time making friends. (6) I feel like I have enough friends. (7) I feel lonely. (8) I think if I were different, more people would like me. (9) I get depressed when I feel alone. (10) I wonder who I can trust with my problems. (11) I like to be alone.
7. **Case Study**—role-play (e.g., a church board or a jury, made up of your class members, must decide something). Explore the criteria on which they based their decision.
8. **Anonymous Questions**—Have students write answers to questions anonymously on small slips of paper. Collect them and read them to the group.
9. **Advice column**—read a problem someone has sent to the columnist. Have each student write down the advice he or she would give for dealing with the problem. Collect them and read them to the group.
10. **Interview** two or three students about how they would handle a situation. You may send the other interviewees into the hall so they don't hear each other's answers.
11. **One Step Backwards**—Have the students stand along a line facing the front of the room. They should have two to three meters of open space behind them. Make statements as in number 6 above. If the statement is true for the person, they must move one step backward.

Activity for Action

Plan a Sunday School Lesson using the information in the previous sections, including each of the four parts of a lesson Hook, Book, Look, Took. Each student will prepare a lesson plan for a specific age group (children, youth or adult) based on the class information. (course outcomes 2, 3, 4, 5) (20% of the final grade). This activity fulfills course requirement #4 in the syllabus.

Session 7: The Organization of Christian Formation in the Church of the Nazarene

One way of organizing Christian education is through Sunday School. It is not only for children or youth but for all Christians.

The Origins of Sunday School

After God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He gave them a challenge: Do not forget what God has done for you and remember how you should live for Him! God tells His people:

"⁴Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
(Deut 6:4-7)

In other words, everyone is responsible for communicating God's truth to one's neighbors and to the next generation. This task was not left to ancient societies, but also to those living in modern times. Over 200 years ago, one man heard God's call to teach his community more about the God of the Bible. In 1870, Robert Raikes, a church layman living in England, did not want to see children wandering the streets and causing trouble. So, Raikes decided to hold classes on Sunday mornings and began to teach the Bible to these wayward children. In six years, more than 250,000 children were enrolled in Sunday School.

Since then, Sunday School has become a means of reaching the lost, teaching disciples, caring for each other, and growing the church into "the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

Sunday School, Defined

Sunday School is ***a weekly hour given for studying the Bible with other Christians led by a faithful lay teacher.*** Highlight the main points from the reading found in the Appendix. Then, spend time on the Questions for Discussion.

Sunday School Is . . .

"a weekly hour given"

Every local church meets regularly for worshipping God, hearing God's Word preached, singing praises, praying for God's help, and offering tithes and gifts to God's work. Usually worship services last up to two or three hours. During the week, many churches offer more opportunities to pray together and encourage one another. How often do believers gather together to read and study the Bible? Not often enough. By studying the Bible we can

learn more about God and how He brought the gift of salvation into the world. All it takes is one hour per week before or after Sunday worship.

Questions for Discussion

You will need to choose a response to the following questions from the possible responses offered by the teacher. Stand on one side of the room designated for the response you choose. Be prepared individually and as a group to defend and explain your response.

When should Sunday School be offered?

Choose one: **Sunday** (stand to the left) or **Any Day** (stand to the right)

Is one hour per week enough time for good Bible study?

Choose one: **Yes** (stand to the right) or **No** (stand to the left)

What is the most important purpose of Sunday School?

Bible teaching (front left of the room)

Fellowship (front right of the room)

Prayer (back left of the room)

Singing (back right of the room)

"for studying the Bible"

The Bible is a gift from God to help us learn about Him and how to follow Him daily. Further, many Christians do not have a basic knowledge of what they believe about God. The Bible helps us to learn what we believe. Christians study the Bible in order to know better the God of the Bible. In fact, God teaches us through the Bible.

The Gospel of Matthew has an example of the best teaching session in history. "[Jesus'] disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying . . ." (Matthew 5:1-2). Jesus then proceeded to teach his original disciples about the blessings of living for God (the Beatitudes in Mat. 5:1-10), how to pray to God (the Lord's Prayer in Mat. 6:9-13), and how to respond to social sins like murder and adultery, and how to deal with the universal problems like greed and anger.

Sunday School is a great place to start studying and learning more about God's Word. Studying the Bible helps us to know how God works in our lives today as He did in the lives of others a long time ago.

Questions for Discussion

Ask the question:

What are the main similarities and differences between a sermon and a Bible study?

After giving time for students to respond, ask them *which subjects, stories, parts of the Bible (i.e. Sermon on the Mount) would make good Bible studies for Sunday School?*

"with other Christians"

Believers are encouraged when they spend meaningful time together. The Bible says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24). Christians grow closer to Christ as they grow closer to each other. We can motivate each other to stand firm in our Christian beliefs as we learn spiritual and practical truth found in the Bible.

Sunday School offers an opportunity to invite friends and family. They can enjoy a smaller group of people and spend time asking questions and interacting with one another. Christians can welcome others into God's family as they meet together.

In Sunday School Christians of all ages can learn about God in a way that fits their stage of development. Every child, youth, and adult can find a way to apply God's truth found in the Bible to their daily lives.

Questions for Discussion

Why is it important for Christians to gather for smaller groups outside of normal worship services?

Can you think of Bible verses to support your explanation to the previous question?

"led by a faithful teacher"

Teachers are responsible for guiding students into the deep truth of the Scriptures. They need to be leaders of people by following Jesus Christ. They will be faithful to their gift of teaching by presenting well-prepared lessons and leading honest discussions about faith. Teachers guide by their words, but even more by their actions. They are examples for holy living. Sunday School teachers prepare tomorrow's church leaders.

Questions for Discussion

What qualifications are necessary to become a teacher? Are there biblical examples you can find?

Describe all the characteristics you think are necessary for being a Sunday School teacher or Bible study leader.

Who organizes Sunday School and discipleship ministries in the local church?

Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries Board

The purpose of Sunday School in the Church of the Nazarene is:

"To reach the largest number of unchurched people for Christ and the church, bringing them into the fellowship, teaching the Word of God effectively, and encompassing their salvation; teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith and developing Christlike character, attitudes, and habits; helping to establish Christian homes; preparing believers for membership in the church and equipping them for appropriate Christian ministries." (Manual, 147.2)

Sunday School Superintendent

The Sunday School Superintendent directs the activities of the Sunday School Ministries Board. They are responsible for coordinating the enrollment of students, weekly attendance, and ongoing leadership and teacher training. They are nominated by the Sunday School Ministries Board (in a meeting in which the person is not in attendance) with direction from the pastor. They are elected during annual church elections according to Manual, paragraph 148.

The following characteristics, offered by two General Superintendents, describe an effective Sunday School Superintendent:

- A vision that looks beyond the present
- Integrity that characterizes lifestyle
- Risk-taking when others shrink back
- Patience that is equal to the pressures of the work
- Kindness that brings people together

(Johnston and Toler, *Rediscovering the Sunday School*, 2000, p. 52)

A Sunday School Superintendent should instill these same qualities in the leaders and teachers that they want to develop.

How do we plan Sunday School for our church?

S _____ : A Time for Learning

Usually, Sunday School is best scheduled just before or just after Sunday worship. There are times during the year, harvest or vacation, when Sunday School is scheduled on Sunday afternoons or during the middle of the week. The schedule should always be posted in the church or community for everyone to see. Announcements and reminders should be given from the pulpit on a regular basis.

S _____ : A Place for Learning

Space can be devoted to hold classes either in the church building, nearby homes, or under the shade of a tree. Children need more space to move around. Youth and adults need to sit in a manner that allows the students to see the teacher and each other's faces. The space should help the teachers teach and the students learn. The emphasis should not be, however, on the space in which we gather. The educational space does not need to be expensive or decorated at great cost. It should be well-maintained and be useful for teaching and learning. The main point of Sunday School is to be together: teacher, students, and God. "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20, NIV).

SPECIAL EVENTS: Celebrate Learning

During the year, particularly after an extended period of vacation, harvest, or rainy season, special events can be planned to encourage families and people to return to Sunday School if they have been involved in other activities. All-church dinners, festivals of games, sports tournaments and Bible quizzing contests can all provide the context for gathering people together. New classes, new teachers, and new schedules can be announced during special events. Most importantly, non-believers are invited to the events. Their names are recorded and followed up by Sunday School teachers and volunteers.

T _____ : A Guide for Learning

The Sunday School Superintendents selects and trains adult teachers for all age levels. Adult teachers not only teach Bible lessons, but they serve as mentors, leaders, encouragers, and evangelists. They encourage the students in their classes much like a pastor encourages those in the worship service. Adult teachers are faithful in preparing thorough lessons, engaging students with interesting activities, and visiting their students through the week. Most of all, the teachers pray for their students and live as good examples as mature Christians in all they do. Teachers may designate an assistant who learns how to teach, care for students outside of class, take attendance, and fulfill all the roles of the teacher. The goal will be for the

assistant to teach when the teacher is not there, and eventually to begin another class of students.

Age-appropriate Classes: A Group for Learning

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The local church is expected to follow up when people are absent or only attending sporadically. This is one way that the local church cares for others.

Activity for Action

Using the information in this section, develop a plan to start or enhance an existing program for Sunday School and Discipleship in the local church including a plan to train Sunday School teachers for the child, youth and adult levels. The program should emphasize evangelization and Christian formation of the specific age-levels within the community. (course outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) (20% of final grade).

The outline of your program should include:

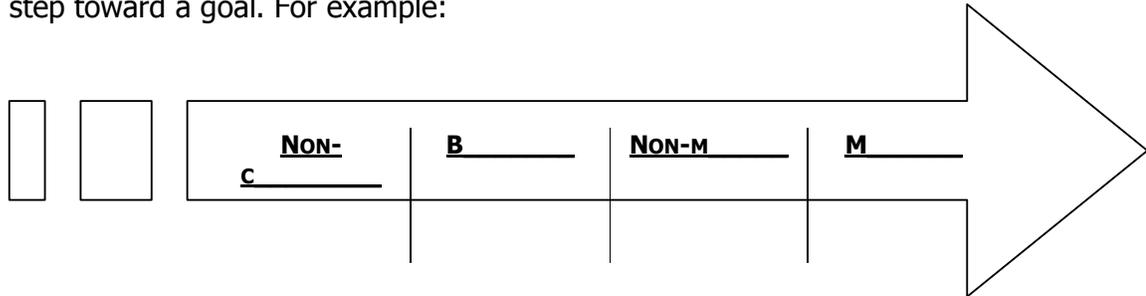
Name of Sunday School Superintendent, Number of classes, times and locations of classes, estimated number of students per class, names of teachers for each class, sample of an attendance and student contact form, topic list for one year of classes, and an sample outline of a Sunday school lesson for each age-level: children, youth, and adult.

The activity is course requirement #2 in the syllabus.

Session 8: Making an Impact on the Community

Getting People Involved

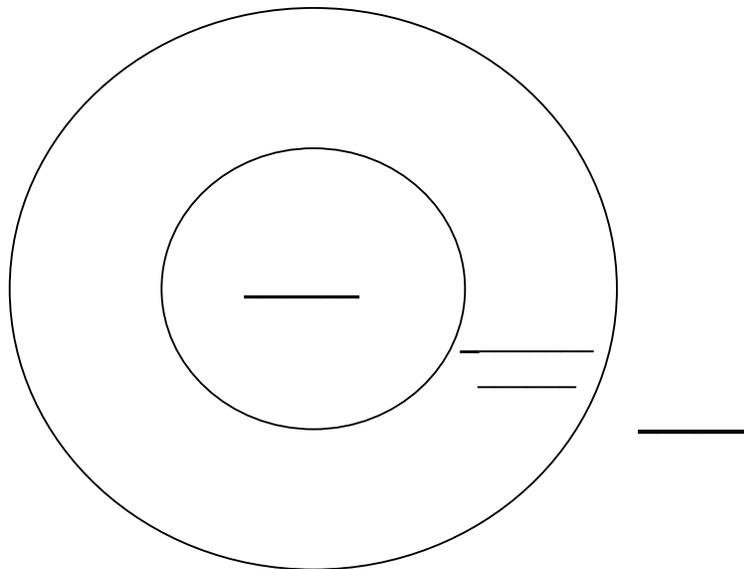
There are various levels of involvement in the church. Many times we look at peoples involvement in a linear fashion, one step ahead of the last, one more step toward a goal. For example:



It is important to think of Christian formation as **M** toward Christ. The journey may not be a straight line as shown above. Rather, Christian formation and the work of pastors and ministers should be moving others toward the center of life, toward the One Who gives life true meaning and fulfillment—

“to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:12-13)

Another diagram illustrates this process of discipleship growing toward Christ the center:



The **World** includes all of those who are not believers in Jesus Christ.

The **Congregation** includes those who are believers or seeking to believe in Jesus Christ. They attend worship services, prayer times, and Bible studies, but they have not discovered what it is like to be a follower—disciple of Jesus Christ. This group includes believers, church members, and those who have the potential to be leaders and teachers in the church.

The **Core** includes those who are believers and committed disciples of Jesus Christ. They are members as well as leaders and teachers of the church.

Christian formation helps people move from the **World** into the **Congregation** into the **Core** toward **C** _____ **living and discipleship.**

G _____ **in a Children’s Sunday School**

It is possible to bring children into the Core through Christian formation. They begin developing friendships and competency skills during childhood. One of the best activities for them is Bible quizzes. They can join a team learning Bible verses and Biblical knowledge. They have good-natured competition and motivation for learning information about the Bible.

I _____ **and Affiliation in Youth Sunday School**

It is possible to bring youth into the Core through Christian formation. They begin searching for an identity within their families and communities. As they search for a niche, they do so by gathering together—affiliating—with like-minded people. Sports activities, clubs, and other gatherings are a good place to talk about spiritual topics and Biblical truth. Youth need challenged and geared up for future leadership in the church.

V _____ **in Adult Sunday School**

It is possible to bring adults into the Core through Christian formation. They usually solidify relationships and begin families. In this process, they seek meaning in their lives. For believers, this meaning is found in vocation, following God’s calling to do particular sake for the glory of God. For some this is ministry within the church, as a pastor or lay leader, and for others it is doing their jobs as though they worked for the Lord. Meaningful vocations are a way to serve God throughout our lifetimes. The task is not completed until we, like Christ, give up ourselves sacrificially and develop the next generation of disciples.

Sunday School in Your Church

**by J. Matthew Price, Ph.D.
translated by Dany Gomis
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- 2) Organize Sunday School**
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- 4) Promote Sunday School**

1) Why Sunday School?

Sunday School is a weekly hour given for studying the Bible with other Christians led by a faithful lay teacher.

Sunday School Is . . .

"a weekly hour given"

Every local church meets regularly for worshipping God, hearing God's Word preached, singing praises, praying for God's help, and offering tithes and gifts to God's work. Usually worship services last up to two or three hours. During the week, many churches offer more opportunities to pray together and encourage one another. How often do believers gather together to read and study the Bible? Not often enough. By studying the Bible we can learn more about God and how He brought the gift of salvation into the world. All it takes is one hour per week before or after Sunday worship.

"for studying the Bible"

The Bible is a gift from God to help us learn about Him and how to follow Him daily. Further, many Christians do not have a basic knowledge of what they believe about God. The Bible helps us to learn what we believe. Christians study the Bible in order to know better the God of the Bible. In fact, God teaches us through the Bible.

The Gospel of Matthew has an example of the best teaching session in history. "[Jesus'] disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying . . ." (Matthew 5:1-2). Jesus then proceeded to teach his original disciples about the blessings of living for God (the Beatitudes in Mat. 5:1-10), how to pray to God (the Lord's Prayer in Mat. 6:9-13), and how to respond to social sins like murder and adultery, and how to deal with the universal problems like greed and anger.

Sunday School is a great place to start studying and learning more about God's Word. Studying the Bible helps us to know how God works in our lives today as He did in the lives of others a long time ago.

"with other Christians"

Believers are encouraged when they spend meaningful time together. The Bible says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24). Christians grow closer to Christ as they grow closer to each other. We can motivate each other to stand firm in our Christian beliefs as we learn spiritual and practical truth found in the Bible.

Sunday School offers an opportunity to invite friends and family. They can enjoy a smaller group of people and spend time asking questions and interacting with one another. Christians can welcome others into God's family as they meet together.

In Sunday School Christians of all ages can learn about God in a way that fits their stage of development. Every child, youth, and adult can find a way to apply God's truth found in the Bible to their daily lives.

"led by a faithful teacher"

Teachers are responsible for guiding students into the deep truth of the Scriptures. They need to be leaders of people by following Jesus Christ. They will be faithful to their gift of teaching by presenting well-prepared lessons and leading honest discussions about faith. Teachers guide by their words, but even more by their actions. They are examples for holy living. Sunday School teachers prepare tomorrow's church leaders.

The Origins of Sunday School

After God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He gave them a challenge: Do not forget what God has done for you and remember how you should live for Him! God tells His people:

⁴Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (Deut 6:4-7)

In other words, everyone is responsible for communicating God's truth to one's neighbors and to the next generation. This task was not left to ancient societies, but also to those living in modern times. Over 200 years ago, one man heard God's call to teach his community more about the God of the Bible. In 1870, Robert Raikes, a church layman living in England, did not want to see children wandering the streets and causing trouble. So, Raikes decided to hold classes on Sunday mornings and began to teach the Bible to these wayward children. In six years, more than 250,000 children were enrolled in Sunday School.

Since then, Sunday School has become a means of reaching the lost, teaching disciples, caring for each other, and growing the church into "the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

2) Organize Sunday School

Who is Responsible for the activities of Sunday School in the local church?

Sunday School Ministries Board

The purpose of Sunday School in the Church of the Nazarene is:

"To reach the largest number of unchurched people for Christ and the church, bringing them into the fellowship, teaching the Word of God effectively, and encompassing their salvation; teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith and developing Christlike character, attitudes, and habits; helping to establish Christian homes; preparing believers for membership in the church and equipping them for appropriate Christian ministries." (Manual, 147.2)

Sunday School Superintendent

The Sunday School Superintendent directs the activities of the Sunday School Ministries Board. They are responsible for coordinating the enrollment of students, weekly attendance, and ongoing leadership and teacher training. They are nominated by the Sunday School Ministries Board (in a meeting in which the person is not in attendance) with direction from the pastor. They are elected during annual church elections according to Manual, paragraph 148.

The following characteristics, offered by two General Superintendents, describe an effective Sunday School Superintendent:

A vision that looks beyond the present
Integrity that characterizes lifestyle
Risk-taking when others shrink back
Patience that is equal to the pressures of the work
Kindness that brings people together

(Johnston and Toler, *Rediscovering the Sunday School*, 2000, p. 52)

A Sunday School Superintendent should instill these same qualities in the leaders and teachers that they want to develop.

How do we plan Sunday School for our church?

Schedule: A Time for Learning

Usually, Sunday School is best scheduled just before or just after Sunday worship. There are times during the year, harvest or vacation, when Sunday School is scheduled on Sunday afternoons or during the middle of the week. The schedule should always be posted in the church or community for everyone to see. Announcements and reminders should be given from the pulpit on a regular basis.

Space: A Place for Learning

Space can be devoted to hold classes either in the church building, nearby homes, or under the shade of a tree. Children need more space to move around. Youth and adults need to sit in a manner that allows the students to see the teacher and each other's faces. The space should help the teachers teach and the students learn. The emphasis should not be, however, on the space in which we gather. The educational space does not need to be expensive or decorated at great cost. It should be well-maintained and be useful for teaching and learning. The main point of Sunday School is to be together: teacher,

students, and God. "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20, NIV).

Special Events: Celebrate Learning

During the year, particularly after an extended period of vacation, harvest, or rainy season, special events can be planned to encourage families and people to return to Sunday School if they have been involved in other activities. All-church dinners, festivals of games, sports tournaments and Bible quizzing contests can all provide the context for gathering people together. New classes, new teachers, and new schedules can be announced during special events. Most importantly, non-believers are invited to the events. Their names are recorded and followed up by Sunday School teachers and volunteers.

Teachers: A Guide for Learning

The Sunday School Superintendents selects and trains adult teachers for all age levels. Adult teachers not only teach Bible lessons, but they serve as mentors, leaders, encouragers, and evangelists. They encourage the students in their classes much like a pastor encourages those in the worship service. Adult teachers are faithful in preparing thorough lessons, engaging students with interesting activities, and visiting their students through the week. Most of all, the teachers pray for their students and live as good examples as mature Christians in all they do. Teachers may designate an assistant who learns how to teach, care for students outside of class, take attendance, and fulfill all the roles of the teacher. The goal will be for the assistant to teach when the teacher is not there, and eventually to begin another class of students.

Age-appropriate Classes: A Group for Learning

Sunday School is most effective when classes are offered for various age levels. Adults meet in one class, children meet in another, and hopefully, youth (ages 12-20) can meet in other classes. The teachers can target their teaching in a way that is best suited for their students. Children can receive an active and interesting foundation in Christian beliefs. Youth can be challenged to commit their lives and relationships to Jesus Christ and to make a difference in the world. Adults can be challenged to be responsible and spiritually mature members of their families and communities. Adult teachers are responsible to use methods and themes that help their students of any age to better know God and understand His written Word.

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The local church is expected to follow up when people are absent or only attending sporadically. This is one way that the local church cares for others.

3) Teach Sunday School

Choosing the Best Teachers

The following passages describe how important the teaching ministry is to the life and work of Christian believers.

His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them . . . (Mat. 5:1-2)

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. (Mat. 9:35)

For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. (1 Cor. 4:17)

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. (2 Tim. 2:24)

So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God. (Acts 18:11)

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (John 14:26)

The Scriptures are full of examples of those who teach the great things of God. The apostle Paul taught an entire church at Corinth (Acts 18:11) and Timothy, a young student-pastor (2 Tim 2:24). Jesus taught as a master teacher (Matt 5:1-2; 9:35), and the Holy Spirit continues to teach us today (John 14:26).

In choosing teachers for Sunday School, the ones most qualified to teach are those called by God to do so. They are gifted as we read in Romans 12:7, but also willing to learn and grow as a teacher. There are more responsibilities than privileges for those who teach. "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly" (James 3:1). Teachers are responsible to teach right doctrine by using the most effective methods. If not, they should be asked by the Sunday School Ministries Board and the Sunday School Superintendent or pastor to leave the teaching ministry to others. The greatest privilege for a teacher is in knowing that they can change a life for all eternity by presenting the story of Jesus Christ to students with open hearts and minds.

The role and responsibility of a teacher is best recounted by the apostle Paul in describing the task of Timothy to the church in Corinth: "He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Cor. 4:17).

Teaching Methods

The teacher can use a variety of methods to teach the Bible. The basic method is simply to tell a Bible story. Here is a good way to practice telling a Bible story, according to Jim Bowman:

1. Choose a story from the Bible, such as the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15.
2. Learn the structure of the story and divide it into parts.
3. Think about the story's setting: Where does the story occur?
4. Think about the action that takes place: How does the story progress?
5. Read the story aloud several times.
6. Memorize the story, but do not change what happens.
7. Practice telling the story at least three or four times.

(Bowman, www-dot-chronologicalbiblestorying-dot-com)

Other methods include leading a discussion about a Bible story or passage. It helps to ask good questions. YES/NO questions are quickly answered. These are called closed questions. The best questions, however, are open ones that begin with the words Who, What, Where, When, Why, or How.

The process of studying the Bible through group discussion begins with the facts that can be found in the Bible passage after a single reading. Have the students identify who is in the passage. Example: "Who is Paul writing to in the letter to Ephesians? Of course, the Ephesians, who are "saints" and "faithful to Jesus Christ."

The students can also identify key words, images, or events in the passage. Example: "What happens to the prodigal son after he leaves home?" "In how many different ways is the word love described in 1 Corinthians 13?"

The students can identify others facts about where the story takes place and when it happened. Example: "Where is Saul/Paul going when he encounters the resurrected Lord in Acts 9?" "What was Saul/Paul doing just before his encounter with Jesus? What does Saul do next?"

The second step is to ask "why" or "how" questions. Example: "Why did Saul's name change to Paul?" "Why did Moses hesitate to follow God's call in Exodus chapter 3?" "How can Isaiah's response to God's call in Isaiah chapter 6 influence where and how we respond to God's presence today?"

The task of Bible study and discussion is to discover what the Bible meant in the ancient world and also how it applies to us today. Well-prepared Bible study and discussion leaders will ask open-ended questions, and will make sure all students have an opportunity to participate.

Other methods work best with children including the use of pictures to illustrate the Bible stories and acting out the Bible stories by giving a different role to each student. Sand tables, object lessons, murals, and dramatic presentations are a few of the many activities that enliven Bible studies. Every teacher can include a moment where students can practice memorizing key verses from the Bible story or passage. The students can be encouraged during the week by the Scripture verses they learn.

Teaching Content

There are 40 essential stories in the Bible to understand the grand story of God's plan of salvation. According to the recent methodology of Chronological Bible Storytelling, Jim Bowman suggests that the following stories give people a solid understanding of the Bible's message:

The Story of the Beginning explains the Bible's response to life's biggest questions.

1. Story of Adam (Genesis 1-2:25 Genesis 3)
2. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4)
3. God Sends a Flood (Genesis 5:28-9:28)
4. Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)

Abraham's Story tells us of God's faithfulness in this world.

5. Abraham- Friend of God (Genesis 12,13; 16:1-18:15, 21:1-8; 22:1-19)
6. Descendants of Abraham (Genesis 24, 25:19-34, 27:1-28:9, Gen. 28:10-29, Gen. 29:15-31:1)
7. Story of Job (Job 1-40)

The Stories of the Prophets prepare the way for the Gospel to be presented.

8. The Story of Joseph (Genesis 37:1-17; Genesis 37:18-36 through Genesis 47:31 (selections))
9. The Story of Moses and the Passover (Exodus 1-12; Exodus 19:1-20, 32-34 (selections))
10. King David and the Psalms (1 Samuel & Psalms (selections))
11. The Story of Solomon and Proverbs (1 Kings 1, 2, 3, 5-9 (selections))
12. The Story of Jonah (Jonah 1-4)
13. The Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 1:1 -20, 2 Kings, Is 40:1-31 (selections))
14. The Prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:1-19, 2 Kings 23:25-34, 25:1-14, 46-4 (selections))
15. The Prophet Daniel (Dan.1:1-3:30, 7:1-28, 5:1-6:28 (selections))

The Story of Jesus prepares the way for the Gospel to be a believer in Jesus.

16. An Angel Visits Mary (Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-25)
17. The Messiah is Born (Luke 2:1-38)
18. The Boy Jesus (Luke 2:40-52)
19. Jesus' Baptism and Temptation (Matthew 3:1-18; Luke 3:1-18; Matthew 13-4:11)
20. Jesus' First Disciples (John 1:35-51)
21. Jesus Forgives Sins (Mark 2:1-12)
22. Gadarene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20)
23. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
24. Lazarus is Raised (John 11:1-54)
25. Jesus Enters Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-19)
26. The Passover Supper (Matthew 26:1-5; Mark 14:10-16; John 13:2-15; Mark 14:17-25)
27. Jesus Is Arrested (Mark 14:26-52; John 18-10-11)
28. Jesus' Trial (Mark 14:53-72; John 18:28-19:16)
29. The Crucifixion of Jesus (Mark 15:16-47)
30. The Risen Christ (Luke 24:36-53; John 20:24-29)

The Story of the Early Church helps people understand what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

31. Waiting for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1)
32. Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)
33. Peter and John Heal a Beggar (Acts 3:1-43)
34. The Disciples Share (Acts 4:32-5:11)
35. The Story of Stephen (Acts 6,7:1-8:1)

The following stories help to train leaders

36. Philip Preaches in Samaria (Acts 8:2-25)
37. Saul Begins to Preach (Acts 9:19-31)
38. Peter Heals Aeneas and Dorcus (Acts 9:32-43)
39. The Macedonian Call (Acts 15:36-16:15)
40. Paul Visits Corinth (Acts 18)

These stories can be told, discussed, and taught several times with a different emphasis each time. From Advent, four Sundays prior to Christmas, to Easter Sunday, the 15 stories of Jesus can be taught every year. The other Bible stories can be interspersed throughout the rest of the year along with special studies of Psalms, Proverbs, the parables of Jesus, and the letters of Paul. Knowing the basic story of the Bible should help believers of any age reach the goal of knowing God better and following Him more obediently.

4) Promote Sunday School

Planting and Growing Churches

Young churches need a solid foundation in the beliefs of the Christian faith and understanding of God's Word. The apostle Paul found it necessary to stay 18 months with a young church to "teach them the word of God" (Acts 18:11). Churches that plant other churches should help the new converts and young congregation to meet regularly for discipleship training and Bible study. Sunday School is a practical method for strengthening young churches.

A growing Sunday School class for adults can be the seed for planting a new church. After a class is large enough, the class can begin meeting in another location as the cell for a new church plant. The Sunday School classroom and the responsibilities for leading, teaching, caring, and growing make it a training ground for future pastors and lay leaders.

Mentoring New Leaders

Teaching is one of the most important responsibilities of a pastor. They guide the process of learning right doctrine and right living to the people of the local church. Teaching a Sunday School can help young leaders learn how to care for each other and for loving each other as Christ loved us. Pastors can put emerging leaders into the role of a Sunday School teacher. Before long the new leadership skills can be used with a new church plant or another congregation.

Giving Ministry to the Laity

The teaching responsibilities are not only for pastors. Lay people should have an active ministry in the local church. Teaching Sunday School is a perfect opportunity. Other gifts can be shared in a Sunday School setting including caring for one another, hospitality, evangelism, and organizing activities for the Sunday School class or classes.

Creating a Place for People of All Ages

The Sunday School of a local church reaches all ages from birth to old age. Every person can learn lessons from God's World regardless of their ages. Everyone can feel welcome at church when there is an active and well-structured Sunday School.

Making Disciples and Fulfilling God's Call to the Church

Sunday School helps the church bring converts and new members to a deeper understanding of the Bible and a more mature faith in Christ. In this way, Sunday School helps a local church fulfill its role in following the Great Commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). So, take up the challenge and responsibility of starting a Sunday School in your local church without delay!

Editor's note- These ideas were written for youth globally. Care should be taken to be culturally appropriate. What is permissible in one culture/country may offend in another. Use these with caution.

Recreation Ideas for Youth

- A. Octopus - Mark out playing field. One person is the Octopus. Line everyone up at one end of the playing area, with the Octopus standing in the middle of the area. When the Octopus counts to three, everyone must run to the other end of the playing area without being touched by the Octopus. If they are touched, they must stop where they are touched. Everyone who was touched is now on the Octopus' team and must try to "capture" others by touching them. However, they cannot move their feet. They must stay where they are touched. On the count of 3, everyone runs to the opposite end of the playing area again, while the Octopus and his "arms" try to touch them. (Remember that the "arms" cannot move their feet!) The game continues until everyone has been touched.
- B. Human Knot – make circle, join hands, your left with their right, with those across from you (not with person beside you or both hands of the same person). The object is to untangle yourselves – making a circle (without letting go of hands).
- C. Upset Fruit basket – Everyone sits in chairs in a circle. Assign everyone the name of 1 of 4 fruit. Person in middle of chairs calls out name of a fruit – those people must switch places with one another while person in middle tries to sit in one of the vacated chairs, and person left without a chair is then in the middle. When they call out “upset fruit basket”, everyone must switch places.
- D. Co-ordination clapping test – Youth are to clap when the leader crosses his hands. They are out when they clap when they aren't supposed to or don't when they're supposed to.
- E. Balloon ankle pop – tie balloons on to each person's ankles with string. The object is to pop everyone else's balloon while protecting your own. This can be played as teams.
- F. Electricity – two teams sit facing each other. Team members hold hands. The first person in each line watches the leader as he flips a coin. If the coin is heads, the first person must squeeze the hand of the next person, and that person squeezes the next, and so on. When the last person feels his hand being squeezed, he must grab an object placed at the end of the row. The first team to complete the “circuit” and grab the object wins. The end person of the winning team then goes to the head of the line. The game is over when one team has made an entire rotation. (When a team squeezes when they aren't supposed to, and they grab the object, they must rotate in the opposite direction – so the first person goes to the end of the line. Also, don't allow team members to watch the front of the line to see when people are squeezing. Everyone is to watch the end of the line.)

- G. Shuffle Your Bum – everyone sits on chairs in a circle. One person is chosen “it” and must stand in the middle of the circle, leaving one chair open. The object is for that person to sit in the open chair before someone next to it scoots over into it, and so on. The people in the chairs must try to keep the person from sitting in an empty chair by moving over into the empty chair. If the person manages to sit in an empty chair, the person to the left of where the person sat down is now “it”.
- H. Hookum – Everyone hooks one arm with a partner, and all the pairs stand in a large circle. Then one pair is unhooked and put in the middle. One person must chase the other person. The person who is chased must try to “hook up” with another pair before being touched by the one who is “it”. When he hooks up with another pair, the odd person in the pair must leave and find someone else to hook up with. If the chaser catches him, the roles are reversed and now the chaser becomes the one who is chased.
- I. Wink em – girls sit in a circle with one guy behind each girl. One guy has an open chair in front of him. The object is for the guy to wink at a girl, and then that girl must try to go sit in his chair before the guy behind her can reach out and touch her. The guys cannot look at the guy who is winking, but must just watch the girl in front of them and try to catch her when she moves.
- J. Handshake Knockout – one person is chosen ahead of time to be it. Then everyone must mingle and shake one another’s hand and introduce themselves. The one who is “it” knocks people out of the game by giving their hand 3 quick squeezes. The person whose hand is squeezed in such a manner must then shake hands with 3 more people and then announce they are out and leave the game. The object for “it” is to knockout everyone before someone guesses who he is. Once someone’s hand has been squeezed 3 times, he cannot tell anyone who is it. A person is out if he guesses the wrong person as “it”.
- K. Circle Knockout – everyone sits in a circle and holds hands. Someone is chosen as it beforehand. “It” knocks people out of the game by sending a certain number of hand squeezes around the circle. If he squeezes the hand of the person to his right 3 times, that person then squeezes the hand of the next person 2 times, then that person squeezes the hand of the next person once. When someone receives one squeeze, they are knocked out of the game and they must leave the circle. The object is for “it” to knock everyone out before he is guessed. A person is out if he guesses the wrong person as “it”. This game is best if played in the dark or very low light.
- L. Blanket name game – two teams gather on each side of a blanket which is held up between them. Then each team sends one team member up to the blanket. On the count of 3, the blanket is dropped, leaving the two opposite team members facing each other. The first person who calls out the correct name of the other person wins, and the loser must then go over to the team of the winner. The game is over when one team has no more members.

- M. Stack em up – everyone sits in a circle. The leader reads out a description, and if the description applies to anyone, they must move one seat to their right. Ex. - If you have long hair, move one seat to your right. If you have a green socks, move one seat to your right. If there is someone already in the chair, they cannot move. The person changing chairs simply sits on their lap. One chair could end up with 3,4,5 or more people stacked up on it. Read 15-20 descriptions per game.
- N. Gorilla, Gun, Woman – Played like rock/paper/scissors. Mark out field with a middle line and two end lines about 15 meters from the center line. Divide into two teams. Each team must huddle on their side of the line and decide what they are going to be. Gorillas beat women, gun beats gorillas, and women beat guns. After each team decides what they are going to be, they each step up to the line. On the count of three, the team must pose like what they've chosen (woman – pose like a woman with hands on head and hip, gorilla – pose like mean gorilla, gun – point fingers like a gun). The team who wins must chase the other team, while the losing team must run as fast as they can to reach their end line. If a winning team member touch anyone of the losing team before they reach their end line, they get to take the captured people over to their team. Then, the teams huddle up again, choose who they will be, and do it again. The game ends when one team is completely captured by the other team.
- O. Crows and Cranes – played much like Gorilla, Gun, Woman. Two teams line up on center line. One team is the Crows, and the other team is the Cranes. On the count of three, the leader calls out the name of "Crows" or "Cranes". The team whose name is called out must run to catch the members of the other team before they can run to their end line. Each captured person is brought over to the winning team. Then teams line up again and do the same thing again. The game is over when one team captures everyone on the other team.
- P. Count them up – Two people stand facing each other with their hands behind their backs. On the count of three, they are to bring their hands out in front of themselves, showing a certain number of fingers held up. The object is to be the first to call out the total of all fingers being held up. Play the best out of 3 games. The winner from each pair then plays the winners of other pairs, while the losers sit down. Keep going until there is one winner remaining.
- Q. Sardines – Reverse hide and seek. One person is chosen as it and must go hide. Everyone must then look for the person who is hiding. Once they find that person, they must then hide with him. The last person to find "it", and everyone hiding with him, is then "it" for the next game.
- R. Tin Pan Bang Bang – Played with large groups. Group marches around a predetermined circle while music plays. When the music stops, the leader will bang loudly on a large pan or drum, and people must get into groups with the same number as bangs. Example, 3 bangs means they must get in groups of 3. The last ones to get in a group, or groups that have the wrong number of people – are out. Then start the music and continue.

- S. Water-balloon volleyball – give each team one large bedsheet. Use a balloon filled with water instead of a volleyball. Instead of hitting the “ball”, the team must put the waterballoon on their sheet, and then working together, toss the balloon over the net. The other team must then catch the waterballoon in their sheet. No one may touch the water-balloon with their hands. Points are scored just like regular volleyball.
- T. Soccer cricket – play cricket using a soccer ball. Roll the ball to the batter instead of throwing it. The batter must kick the ball and run to the wicket (or 1st base). He may stay there or try to make it back to where he kicked it from (home). Then it’s the next person’s turn. No one has to leave the first base until he wants to. You may have 15 people on the base. Points are scored when someone successfully makes it to first base and then back home. A person is out if a fielder hits him with a ball while he is running from home to 1st or from 1st to home, or if a fielder catches the ball in air after the batter has kicked it. After everyone on the team has kicked, the teams switch positions. The winning team is the team with the most points.
- U. Guess the leader – Explain the game and then send a volunteer out of the room. Everyone else stands in a circle and chooses a leader. The group must do what the leader does. The volunteer comes in and stands in the middle of the circle and tries to guess who the leader is by watching what everyone else is doing. He gets three chances. If he guesses correctly, the person who was the leader must then go out of the room. If he doesn’t guess correctly after 3 tries, he then chooses who will be “it”.
- V. Rhythm – play with 15 or fewer people. Everyone sits in a circle and counts off. Then all together in rhythm, everyone slaps their hands on their legs once, claps their hands together once, snaps their fingers on their left hand, and then snaps their fingers on their right hand. Everyone must do this in rhythm while the game is being played. #1 begins first. He will say his number on the left hand finger snaps and then the number of someone else on the right hand snap. Then the person whose number he called must stay in rhythm and say his own number on the left hand snap and someone else’s number on the right hand snap. If the person says his number wrongly or breaks rhythm, he must lose his place in the circle and go to the end of the circle, and becomes the last number, and everyone changes their number accordingly. The object of the game is to reach the #1 spot.
- W. Ultimate frisbee/ball/etc. – two teams. The object is to advance the object (ball, frisbee, etc) up the field to the opponents goal. The object can only be advanced by throwing it. Once a team member catches the object, he can only take 2 steps and then must throw it to another teammate (while the opposing team is trying to catch it as well). If the object is dropped, it is given to the opposing team member who is closest. After a goal is scored, the object is given to the other team, and they must try to score. The team with the most goals wins.

- X. Blob – Set a large playing boundaries. One person is “it” and must catch others. When he catches someone, they join hands and then go to get more people. Each time they touch someone, that person becomes part of the “blob”. The bigger the blob becomes, the harder it is to run fast, but the more area it can cover and it can corner people easier. The object is for the blob to catch everyone. The last person to be caught is the winner.

- Y. Tail grab – Divide everyone up into teams of 5-10 people. The team holds hands. The person on one end is the leader, and the person on the other end is the tail. Give the tail person a tail to tuck into the back of his pants. It should hang out at least 1/3 of a meter. The object of the game is for the leader of each team to pull out the tails of the other teams while protecting their own tail. When a team loses their tail, or it breaks apart, that team is out. The last team remaining wins.

Developed by Rev. Monte Cyr – former Global NYI President

**Course Report
TP 203 Christian Education**

Student Name: _____

Location: _____
Instructor: _____

Assignment	Percent	Mark
Attendance and Participation	20%	_____ /200 pts
Christian formation program	20%	_____ /200 pts
Focus Group Participation	20%	_____ /200 pts
Sunday School Lesson Outline	20%	_____ /200 pts
Oral Presentation	20%	_____ /200 pts

_____ / 1000

Signed _____

Date _____