

How to Be a Good Teacher

Sometimes people who are going to be a Sunday School teacher are concerned that they don't know enough about the Bible, or that they will make some huge mistake and fail miserably.

These are scary concerns. It makes sense that you might be worried about things like this.

But there are things you can do to help, so that these scary, worrisome things don't happen.

Be Dedicated – Understand that what you are doing is important

Be Dependable – Be there on time and every time, and ready to go, or get a substitute teacher

Be a Student Yourself – Learn the lesson first. Understand it yourself. That way you'll be able to share the lesson and have something to add to it. *Stay at least one step ahead of your class!* 😊

Be Dependent on God – You don't have to know it all. (God does.) The Holy Spirit will help you. Stay humble before God. Pray, asking Him to guide you, to help you, and to give you the words that you need to say. Pray for your students, your class, your church, and yourself.

Be an Example – Apply God's Word to your own life. I suppose that this is where each of us feels we fall short. *It is one thing to teach a truth, it is another thing to live the truth.* But no amount of talking to students (or to anyone else) will convince them of the truth of God's Word, if they do not see it reflected honestly in our lives. This means that we must remain humble before God; reading our Bibles, learning scriptures, honoring Christ, and allowing the Holy Spirit to work through the circumstances in our lives to teach us His truths. In other words, we must grow as Christians ourselves in order to be able to help others grow.

The Lord moves in mysterious ways,

His change to bring about;

While some may work from outside in,

God works from inside out.

SK Chatwell

Look up these verses and read them for yourself. Consider how to apply them to your life.

Romans 12:2 *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

2 Corinthians 10:5 *...take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

Be a Good Communicator – Keep the flow of information moving! Clear communication always needs to happen back and forth between you and your pastor or staff, and between you and your students. (This is especially true if your students are children! In this case, make sure that you are often in communication **with their parents!**)



Be a Good Record Keeper – Keep accurate records of what you teach. This is very important if you are using various resources for your lessons. Many churches have a set curriculum, with printed books for both students and teachers. But if you do not have these, make sure that you keep track of what you are teaching your class and what Bible verses go along with your lessons. Make a file of some sort with your notes (even if they are handwritten) and keep examples of your artwork and activities for your reference later on.

Someone may ask to see these one of these days, and you will want to be able to produce them without too much difficulty! Plus, you may want to use them yourself later on, and it will be nice to remember what you taught and when.

In addition, you also need to keep records for communication purposes. You will need names and addresses of students (and, if your students are children, of their parents as well.) In this day and age, phone numbers and email addresses are often even more useful.

Also, keep notes on how you did things; both in class and for special events (for example a Christmas program or an Easter skit.) Write down your notes in some logical order, so that others can benefit from your experience and follow your ideas. It will help people who want to do what you did later on.

Be Creative – Think about how you would present a lesson, or do an activity. Leave room for prompting by the Holy Spirit. Don't have all the materials required for someone else's arts and crafts project? Make up your own. See what you have around you and use that. Don't be held captive by ideas typed on a piece of paper; be creative. New motto: Your class – Your way!

Be an Encourager – Encourage your students as you go along. Encourage them to grow closer to Christ, to accept Him as Savior, to learn more about Him, to study His Word, to trust Him because He is faithful, and to be led by His Holy Spirit as they go through their lives.

Be Prayerful – The most important of all. Bring your concerns, your ideas about your lessons and your class regularly before the Lord in prayer. He will bless and lead you! Philippians 4:19 says: "...my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

God bless you as you move forward into teaching! May God give you wisdom and insight as you deal with your students and help them learn all that God has for them! Amen

Being Creative

As I write this material for Teachers' Training, I realize that it may be going out to people in different countries all over the world... To people in very different cultures and circumstances.

There are those who will teach their Sunday School classes out in the open, with the whole of Creation available to them to teach their students about God (the Creator.) And there are others who remain trapped in well-lit, air conditioned rooms, hemmed in by mountains of Magic Markers and Flannelgraph. (*Brothers and Sisters, we continue to lift you up in prayer.* ☺)

Some teachers' only resources will be the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. (*And of course, these are enough! Praise God!*) But...No matter where you live, or what your circumstances, it is important for you to remember that when you are teaching **you MUST Be Creative.**

You will not always have everything you think you need. You will not always have enough time. You will not always have unlimited funds... *in fact you will rarely have unlimited funds!*

The point is that you need to **work with what you DO have** and **be as creative as possible.**

FOR EXAMPLE: Let's say you want to teach a lesson about the 12 Disciples. You want to teach the children the Disciples' names and something about each one of them. You have a nice lesson ready, but no real pictures available of the Disciples (*mostly because there aren't any*) and (*thankfully*) no Flannelgraph. (Just Kidding!) **What do you do?**

Well, you might get a piece of poster board and a marker and write all of their names on it. Then you could read it to the children and they might be able to copy it down or read it for themselves.

But, how about this? You need something to represent the 12 Disciples, so you go outside and find 12 small rocks; each of different sizes and shapes. Maybe they have different colors as well. You look at the rocks and think about how they might look like the Disciples. Perhaps the biggest one stands for Simon (Peter), or maybe 2 of the rocks that look alike could be James and John, who were brothers. And perhaps for Judas you might choose a rock that crumbles... or even a dirt clod. You get to decide, **because you are being CREATIVE** with your teaching.

So, you gather your students and show them all the rocks one by one, telling them about each disciple as you go along. At the end, you have all 12 sitting there on the ground. The children will be watching attentively, because no one has ever thought to teach them about the Disciples using rocks before. As they are looking at the rocks, you tell them that your favorite one is the rock for Simon (Peter), **because it looks the most like him.** When they ask you why, you tell them, "Because his name (Peter) means 'rock'." Then you laugh... a lot! And your students will look at you and shake their heads, because of your *terrible* joke. They will not believe that they have such a silly teacher. But they will NEVER forget this lesson about the Disciples, or that Simon Peter's name means "rock," or that Simon Peter's rock **looked just like him!**