

□ Copyright, International Publications Services, 1988

MANUAL FOR TEACHERS OF ADULTS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

To be used by teachers of young adults and adults

Prepared especially for use during the "Year of the Sunday School" emphasis in Baptist churches of Eastern Africa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE AND TASK

ORGANIZATION

ADULT DIVISION

LESSON PREPARATION

SOME GOOD METHODS OF TEACHING

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

CURRICULUM (Teaching Materials)

VISITATION

CONCLUSION

TEACHER'S PLAN SHEET

## MANUAL FOR TEACHERS OF ADULTS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Have you ever had a deep desire to see your church grow? Have you ever thought about how wonderful it is when people find Christ as personal Saviour and then discover the real meaning of the life through spiritual growth? These desires are surely in the heart of God who loves us all and wants only his best for us. Jesus said, "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14). The water of life that Jesus speaks of can be found in your church when it has a growing and working Sunday School.

### PURPOSE AND TASK OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The purpose of the Sunday School is to mobilize (gather, inspire, send out) the people of the church to evangelize the community. In a good Sunday School Christian members will be trying to win those who have not been saved. We literally carry out the Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20, when we have a growing Sunday School.

The tasks of the Sunday School are:

1. REACH - to reach the people of the community. Visitation to families in their homes in the cities, villages, and rural areas is basic. We must go where the people are.
2. TEACH - to teach them the Bible. The Bible is the textbook of the Sunday School. The Word of God is "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:11).
3. WIN - to win them to Christ. Experience has shown that people can find Christ as Saviour more often when they are regularly studying the Bible with Christian people. We must involve the unsaved in Sunday School with the purpose of winning them to Christ.
4. DEVELOP - to develop them into mature Christians. As class members study God's Word and fellowship together, they will be able to grow in faith and mature in their Christian walk. The Bible tells us to "be perfect". This means constant progress in knowledge, love and power through the Holy Spirit.
5. MINISTER - to minister to their needs. Because we are Christians we help people in the name of Christ. The Sunday School classes work together and as individuals to do the will of God in the community to those in need, both inside and outside the church.

## ORGANIZATION

The Sunday School has to be organized so that work can be done effectively. This means training the workers and giving each one work to do in order to accomplish the purpose and tasks. Sunday School needs the best leadership; the pastor, church leaders and deacons must be involved. A director, secretary and teachers must be enlisted and trained to lead the Sunday School.

Because Sunday School is for all, an organization should be formed based on age which is the best way to divide the people for Bible study. Children, youth and adults do not learn at the same level, so they should be divided into classes according to their ages. They are divided not just for learning but for fellowship which is equally important in Christian growth.

The organization should be divided into four groups:

Pre-School(4-7 years old)

Children(8-12 years old)

Youth(13-20 years)

Adults

These age divisions are flexible, depending on your needs, yet the rule that we learn better with those of our own age needs to be kept. When a person marries, he is usually thought of as an adult and should be with others of the same age and marital status.

## ADULT DIVISION

Why teach adults? Isn't Sunday School just another school for children? You will hear this old and false argument over and over. Why shouldn't adults keep on learning? What better way can they spend their time, especially on Sunday morning than learning more about God's Word? As long as we live in this world, we need the Bible. If we know the Bible well already, then we ought to be present to help others. But most of us are still learning. Yes, Sunday School is for all ages, adults included. Teachers of adults must work to make learning helpful to the class members.

Reasons for teaching adults

Why do adults need to learn God's Word? Life situations experienced by adults demand dependence on the Bible and its teachings.

Young adults in their 20s and 30s are making life-changing decisions: marriage, life's work, where to live, education and the birth of children.

Middle adults face family pressures, job problems, school fees, leadership responsibilities in the home and community. To face these difficult tasks, they need power that only the living God can give.

Older adults face the prospects of aging, loneliness because of death of a spouse, children leaving home and decisions about retirement.

Adults learn best with those of their same age and sex. They learn best with a teacher who loves them and takes a personal interest in their lives from a Christian point of view. A Sunday School teacher should be much more than just a class leader for one day a week. He should become a true Christian friend, counselor and guide.

Adults learn when they are led to search the scripture for themselves both during the class time and other times as well. They learn when they are led to participate in the group. Adults learn best when they are given the opportunity to react to what is presented. Sometimes their own reaction will help them to see for the first time that they need to change. When they are led to change their lives through God's Holy Spirit, true learning has taken place.

### The Adult Teacher

When God called you to become an adult teacher, He gave you a great honor and an equally great responsibility. Let us list several important requirements for an adult teacher:

1. He/she should be a born again Christian. A teacher must be able to tell about his faith in Christ because this will be the basic part of his ministry to the class. You cannot tell about what you have not experienced. The church must make sure that all teachers are Christians.
2. He/she must be a baptised believer and a supporting member of a local Baptist church in which they teach. Baptists believe in the local church as central to the work, so the teacher must set the example in church membership.
3. He/she must be a student of the Bible. Because the Bible is the textbook of the Sunday School, the teacher should have an understanding of the Bible and Bible doctrines. Use the same Biblical qualifications in I Timothy 3 for an overseer or deacon:

"Let him not be a new convert lest he become conceited and fall into condemnation incurred by the devil" (I Timothy 3:6).

4. He/she should be one who is willing to learn. The job of teaching requires constant improvement. A good attitude toward learning will make the teacher a growing teacher.

5. The teacher must visit, share his faith and win others to Christ.

6. The teacher must set the example in Christian giving. The Bible is plain about stewardship and class members usually follow what their leader does.

#### LESSON PREPARATION

Before we look at how the teacher should prepare, we need to establish when he should begin. Sunday afternoon is the best time to start to prepare for the next Sunday. By working on the lesson 30 minutes each day, the teacher will grow. He will have the material and plan of teaching firmly in mind and he will be ready to teach on Sunday morning. To start the Saturday night before or, worse still, Sunday morning just before teaching, does not give enough time to prepare. Study some each day.

##### 1. PERSONAL PREPARATION

a. Begin with prayer. Ask God to guide your thought and the work that you will do in study. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7).

b. Study the lesson passage from the Bible for yourself without any help. Write the impressions given to you by the Holy Spirit.

c. Now consult other resources such as your teacher's and pupil's lesson books, and other books which you may have such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries and concordances. Then write the Biblical background using your own impressions and the notes you have taken from all the resources. This will make up the Biblical background or teaching material.

2. PLANNING THE PURPOSE OF THE LESSON- Complete the top portion of the teaching plan sheet which has to do with setting the direction of the lesson. Example:

a. Date - Lesson Title, Scripture

b. Basic truth

c. How does this lesson relate to those in my class?

d. Aim of the lesson

e. What do I want the learner to do after the lesson?

a. Write the date, title of the lesson and the scripture passage. Think about the subject of the lesson and relate this Sunday's lesson with other lessons which may be on the same subject.

b. Write the basic truth of the lesson. It should be in your own words.

c. Determine the needs in the lives of your learners and how this particular lesson can meet those needs.

d. Write an aim for this lesson. A good aim should be brief enough to be remembered, clear enough to be written and specific enough to be achieved.

e. Do you want your learners to learn something, or do you want them to change an attitude, or do you want them to do something? Determine what you want them to do after the lesson.

3. PLANNING CLASSROOM PROCEDURE - Next, write the teaching plan which you will use. Ask yourself these questions: What will I be doing in the class? How will I lead the learners to participate in the learning experience? Complete the next portion of the Teacher's plan sheet. Example:

#### Planning Classroom Procedure

a. I will get the learners interested in the lesson by \_\_\_\_\_

b. I will involve learners in Bible study by \_\_\_\_\_

c. I will help learners to apply the lesson truths to their lives by \_\_\_\_\_

d. I will encourage further Bible study by \_\_\_\_\_

There are four sections in the teaching plan.

a. Getting the attention or interest of the learners: This brief opening section should help the class members to think together on the subject of the lesson. The teacher should introduce something that they already know about. In John 4, Jesus asked the woman at the well for water. This enabled him to tell her about living water. This is a basic method of teaching. The introduction should be related to the lesson. A statement will need to be planned which can be used as a "bridge" between the introduction and the Bible study. For example, Jesus said, "If you knew the gift of God and who it was that was saying to you, 'Give me a drink', you would have asked him and He would have given you living water" (John 4:10). Do not forget to plan the "bridge".

b. Involving the members in purposeful Bible Study: This is the most important part of the lesson. You have studied the Biblical

background and you know what you are going to teach. The question now is how do you plan to relate this to the learners?

How will the scripture be read? Before the class starts one person could be asked to read. The teacher may read the whole passage, or he may prepare a dramatic or choral reading. Do not embarrass a non-reader or a poor reader by asking them to read.

Now, what do you plan for the learners to be doing? Will they just listen? Do you plan for them to ask questions or answer questions? Write the plans for this section.

c. Applying the lesson to life. If teaching leads only to knowledge it is not good teaching. Knowledge is not complete if it does not lead to action. If there are no changes in the way members act or think, they are not learning.

Jesus pointed out the problems in the home of the woman at the well. We also live in a world of hurt and need. A teacher should teach Bible truths that can cause people to change their attitudes. By leading the learners to make commitments to action, the teacher really teaches. The teacher should plan for this type of commitment.

d. Encouraging further Bible Study. Plan to involve the class in further study. Suggest portions of the scripture to be read and encourage them to study during the week. The teacher can bring about better Bible study and class participation.

(Read the section "Some Good Methods") in this manual for a list of things you can do in each of the four sections of the teaching plan.)

#### SOME GOOD METHODS OF TEACHING

Jesus was the Master Teacher with the Perfect Message. His methods were also perfect. He told stories and parables. He asked questions and answered other questions. He used object lessons. His insight into people's lives and his ability to lead his pupils to repentance and faith are without equal. Teachers can follow the example of Jesus.

Listed here are a few methods that can be used in the four sections of the teaching plan.

#### 1.GETTING THE INTEREST AND ATTENTION OF THE CLASS

a. Object lesson - Use something that can be seen and that is familiar. For example, Jesus used water to gain the attention of the woman at the well.



- b. Quotation - Read a quotation from the Bible, a newspaper, book, famous person or a well-known proverb.
- c. Statistics - Numbers usually reveal progress, warning or encouragement.
- d. Poem - Poetry will gain attention because of its beauty.
- e. Current Event - World news, local events and news of national interest are good to illustrate needs in life.
- f. Questions - Well prepared questions that lead people to think are good. They will also help the teacher to discover the needs of the learners.
- g. Case Study - Actual or imagined studies of individual situations can gain interest. Do not use an actual case of one of the members. Ask, "What would you do if .... ?"
- h. Music - A short song or one verse of a hymn will create interest.
- i. Drama - Use members in a short drama to help them see and hear the direction of the lesson.

## 2. INVOLVING THE MEMBERS IN PURPOSEFUL BIBLE STUDY

- a. Lecture - A good lecture must be well prepared. The teacher must teach so that the pupils will remember and act on what has been said.
- b. Scripture Searching - The class will look for specific things as they read the Bible passage. This can be combined with discussion, small group studies or questions.
- c. Map Study - Draw a map on the chalk board or on the ground with a stick. In the back section of many Bibles there are maps. Learners will remember what they can see more easily.
- d. Report - Give written assignments to the class and allow time in class for study. This may also be done one Sunday for the report to be given the following week.
- e. Small Group Study - Divide the class into small groups to answer questions or discuss the lesson.
- f. Outline - It helps to see the outline of the lesson. Use chalkboard, a piece of paper, newspaper or even the ground.
- g. Questions/ Discussion - Ask questions and lead the class to

discuss the answers. The teacher must guide the discussion to make sure it accomplishes the aim. He must take care that questions do not lead away from the lesson he is teaching.

### 3. APPLYING THE LESSON TO LIFE

a. Life situations/response - Ask, "What would you do if .... ?" to real or imagined life situations. Members should be able to identify with this.

b. Problem solving - Use any problem that relates to the lesson. Show how the Biblical truth in the lesson can solve the problem.

c. Meditation and prayer - Use the class time for this spiritual activity. Let the class session be a time when God speaks in special ways to the learners.

d. Testimonies - Ask members to share their experiences and how God has worked in their lives.

### 4. ENCOURAGING FURTHER BIBLE STUDY

a. Assignments - Ask learners to study certain sections and make a report the next Sunday.

b. Memory work - To memorize Bible verses helps each one remember the scripture. Key verses could be assigned.

c. Questions - Write questions to be given to the learners at the end of the lesson. These will be about next Sunday's lesson. They should come prepared to answer the questions the next week.

d. Problems - Write some life problems and give to each of the learners. Ask them to write solutions by applying the Bible truths from the lesson.

These are only a few methods that can be used. You can choose each week those you will use. By studying, planning ahead and involving the learners, your teaching will be more effective.

### SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

One of the advantages of Sunday School is its regularity. It meets each week and the best time is on Sunday morning before the worship service. This has proven to be the best time through years of experience. Most churches allow one hour for Sunday School. Here is a suggested schedule:

9:30-Sunday School opening; everyone meets together for songs, prayer, announcements and Bible reading. You must be very careful

about time. Do NOT go beyond the allowed 15 minutes.  
9:45-Go to classes; teach the lesson.  
10:25-Dismiss Sunday School classes.  
10:30-Church worship service.

The schedule can vary according to the needs of the church, but the main point is to give enough time to Bible study. If the teachers are trained, prepared and committed, they will need more time to teach. The lesson will take more time if the teacher gives the learners an opportunity to participate. Do not move too hurriedly over too much material. Give your learners time to understand what you are teaching.

Lead the people to be on time in Sunday School. They will be on time if they are expected to be and if there is something for them when they come. Begin on time! Finish on time!

## CURRICULUM

Sunday School lessons are generally prepared in units of study. These are done so that different topics of the Bible may be studied. Other units are simply a verse by verse, chapter by chapter study of books of the Bible. Both systems are good and each has its own advantages.

\*(The Baptist Publishing House which serves your country will be your best source of literature for adults.)\* Let us make sure that we study good literature. Other religions and other denominations print materials which they distribute. We must be careful of other doctrinal interpretations which may cause confusion.

Help your church to buy, distribute and use Baptist literature. This material is being improved all the time. Remember, it is only an aid to the study of the Bible, the textbook of the Sunday School.

## VISITATION

A great evangelist-teacher once wrote a book entitled, "With Christ, After the Lost." This is a good motto for the Sunday School. In a parable Jesus tells of the Master who sent his servants "out into the highways and hedges to compel them to come in that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23). Someone said, "They will not come, they must be brought; they will not study, they must be taught."

The Sunday School must reach people for the church. Because of the assignment of names of the lost by age, the Sunday School classes can do this work better than any other organization. By

dividing a big job into smaller jobs, more work can be done. When the teachers of the Sunday School lead the members in visitation, the church can reach out to a lost community.

Instead of visiting "when we get around to it", set a definite time each week. Meet together for prayer, then go out and visit. Come back for a time of reporting and prayer. This is an important work of the church.

## CONCLUSION

Remember that the Lord Jesus was primarily a teacher of adults. He was referred to more often as teacher (rabbi) than by any other title. Adults are waiting for someone like you with the message of the Bible. They need the fellowship of the church which an adult Sunday School class can bring into their lives. Your work as an adult teacher will demand much work, but you will know it is a rewarding work.

## TEACHER'S PLAN SHEET

### 1. Personal Preparation

- a. Prayer
- b. Study the Bible passage
- c. Study the lesson from the Teacher's book

### 2. Planning the Purpose of the Lesson

- a. Date - Lesson Title, Scripture
- b. Basic truth
- c. How does this lesson relate to those in my class?
- d. Aim of the lesson
- e. What do I want the learners to do after the lesson?

### 3. Planning the Classroom Procedure

- a. I will get the learners interested in the lesson by \_\_\_\_\_
- b. I will involve learners in Bible study by \_\_\_\_\_
- c. I will help learners to apply the lesson truths to their lives by \_\_\_\_\_

d. I will encourage further Bible study by \_\_\_\_\_