

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUNG PEOPLE—TEACHERS' TRAINING

Message Three

Practical Helps for Conducting the Small Group Sessions

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:17-18; Rom. 1:9; Eph. 1:16; Luke 15:20, 4; 2 Tim. 1:6-7

- I. Before the Summer School of Truth begins, we have to pray very much for this crucial time:**
 - A. In these coming weeks, we have to go to the Lord in prayer every day to deal with all the practical items; we need to pray thoroughly for the Summer School of Truth, for the practical arrangements, for the hospitality, the lessons, the groups, the transportation, for all the serving saints, the meal preparation, the activity times, the small group times, the messages, and everything else we may consider.
 - B. Obtain a list of the names of the young people that you will be serving with and begin to daily mention these names before God—Rom. 1:9; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thes. 1:2; Phlm. 4.
- II. Before the Summer School of Truth begins we also need a lot of personal preparation:**
 - A. In these coming weeks, read carefully through all the lessons that we will be covering from the book, *Life—Knowing and Experiencing Life* to become familiar with the lessons and burdens of each session.
 - B. It would also be very useful if we can obtain the group assignments prior to the Truth School so we can have some preparation concerning the young people in our groups; try to meet them and get to know them ahead of time to reduce the time of adaptation at the Summer School of Truth.
- III. From the first group session build up an atmosphere that is full of love, encouraging, positive, mutual and age-appropriate:**
 - A. We all need to have the loving and forgiving heart of the Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ—Luke 15:20, 4; 2 Tim. 1:7.
 - B. If we want to help the young people, first, we need to be interested in them; do not be concerned about their mistakes and do not condemn them at all.
- IV. Have a plan (strategy) for each group session—know what you want to accomplish in each session:**
 - A. Because of your preparation beforehand, have an idea and plan for what you want to accomplish during each of the group times.
 - B. Because of the subjective nature of these classes, the group discussions will be most crucial to the young people's realization of the truth and their experiences of life; pray much for their apprehension and practice in preparation of these group sessions.
- V. Doing your best to stir up and maintain an atmosphere of prayer in your group:**
 - A. I have no doubt that, as believers in Christ, you have received the eternal life and the divine Spirit, but I am concerned that you will go to your group with "ice water" instead of a flame—2 Tim. 1:6.
 - B. You will then be able to stir up the praying spirit of the young people in your group; everyone must be stirred up to pray; this means that you need to create an atmosphere of prayer.

- C. Do not teach unless there is such an atmosphere in your group; to have an atmosphere of prayer, you should allow an adequate time in every group session for prayer.
 - D. I hope that there will be much prayer in your group in the Summer School of Truth; adequate prayer will accomplish at least three things: it will impress the young people in an experiential way with the points of the lesson; it will stir up the praying spirit within them; and it will cause them to become living.
- VI. Serving in a blended way and with a harmonious coordination between all the serving ones and helpers in each group—Matt. 18:19; Acts 1:14:**
- A. We need to pass through a period of time in which we can be blended with all the serving ones in our group and allow the Lord to gain us as one entity for the carrying out of His economy.
 - B. The impact is with the one accord, and the one accord actually is the blending; if we do not have the one accord, God cannot answer our prayer—Matt. 18:19.
- VII. Your function during the group times is to facilitate the function of the young people; do not dominate the time by repeating the message or any other lengthy speaking:**
- A. We need to be exercised in our spirit to be living and vital, not dead and boring.
 - B. If the serving ones are open, new, and living, then the young people can also be open, new, and living.
- VIII. If the serving ones are touched by the Lord’s word in the messages, then the young people can also be touched; testify about what touched you, do not preach to them or exhort or rebuke them.**
- IX. We must learn how to teach in an experiential way, we must convert every point in the lesson from doctrine into experience; after making such a conversion during our time of preparation, we should then speak to the young people about each point in the way of experience—1 Thes. 2:11:**
- A. We should not ask our students merely to remember and recite all the points related to the lesson; that would be to teach in a doctrinal way.
 - B. When we lead a group in the Summer School of Truth, we should not take the way of giving messages or lectures; instead, we need to have personal talks with the young people, teaching every point experientially.
 - C. If we teach in the way of merely imparting doctrines from the printed materials, we will do nothing more than impart some knowledge to the minds of our students; as a result, they will gain nothing in an experiential way.
- X. Our group times need a positive progression throughout the week; we need to be building from session to session until we reach the end:**
- A. Do not consider the group times to be separate and independent times with no purpose other than to fill some time and accomplish some menial tasks.
 - B. The group times need to go higher and higher throughout the week, progressing in content, richness, openness, and participation.
 - C. Pray desperately for this kind of effect in your groups; pray beforehand and pray daily throughout the week to achieve this kind of an effect.