

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. When we come together, we should also pray for our being blended together; we also need to pray for our dynamic activities—the release of the word and the understanding of the young people, and especially for the oneness of all the serving saints- Eph. 1: 17-18.
- C. 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, “The Two Spirits” to become familiar with the lessons and burdens of each session:
 - 1. In your reading, pray much over this material to see what kind of burden the Lord will give you concerning these crucial truths and the experiences of life.
 - 2. In your reading, ask the Lord to impress you on how to convert every point from doctrine to experience and how to lead the young people into the experience of these lessons.
- 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:
 - 1. Do not classify people, because no one can tell what they will become.
 - 2. The spirit that God has given us is a spirit of love-2 Tim. 1:7.
 - 3. We should give the young people the feeling that we are their good friend, that we sympathize with them, and that we are interested in them and in their affairs.
- 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:
 - 1. Do not find their faults at first, otherwise, we cannot help them-Luke 9:55; Matt. 18:10.
 - 2. Regardless of whether the young people are good or bad, we need to treat everyone the same, we need to like them, and be concerned for them.

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:
 1. Every group time is vital and crucial and we cannot afford to lose one of these group times; if we have no plan these crucial times may be wasted or lost.
 2. Because we are on “The Two Spirits” in our Truth School, there will need to be some time devoted to practice; we need to allow some time for the young people to personally spend time with the Lord during the group time to put into practice what they are learning in the classes.
- 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:
 1. We have emphasized the fact that to have a flame you need to let the draft come in through opening up to the Lord.
 2. If you would go to your group in the Summer School of Truth with a flame, you must be a person of prayer; if you are such a person, you will bring a spirit of prayer to your group.
- 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:

- 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. In Matthew 18:19 the Greek word *sumphoneo* is used for one accord. It means "to be in harmony, or accord" and refers to the harmonious sound of musical instruments or voices.
- C. In Acts 1:14 another Greek word, *homothumadon*, is used for one accord; this word is from *homo*, same, and *thumos*, mind, will, purpose (soul, heart); the word denotes a harmony of inward feeling in one's entire being.
- D. 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. Do not give them another message or other lengthy speaking; your function is to facilitate their opening to speak what they enjoyed.
- C. 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:
 - 1. If we would teach in an experiential way we should help the young people to realize their situation and condition.
 - 2. We must learn in our teaching to touch others experientially; applying every point of our teaching to their personal, practical situation.
- 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:
 - 1. Every point of the lesson should be presented in a way that will create an experiential impression; apply every point to their actual situation.
 - 2. As we are talking with them, we should be watchful over each one, paying particular attention to their expressions; this will help us to know the needs of our students.
- C. The more we speak in this way, the more they will be unveiled; they will see a vision that will expose them, and spontaneously they will be ushered into the experience of the very matter we have been presenting.
- D. 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:
 - 1. The knowledge they gain may damage them; later, on another occasion, when they hear that word, they might say, "I know this already; I heard all about it in the Summer School of Truth."
 - 2. We must not damage the young people by giving them mere knowledge; in order to profit them with the truth, we must always teach them 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.