

SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING ADULT CURRICULUM

Bryan Matthew Dockens

While it is not a requirement that a Bible class teacher write coursework for the class, it is recommended. Even if most students neglect most of the homework, enough will come to class so prepared that a robust discussion of the subject will follow. Receiving questions to answer in advance makes this possible, whereas simply knowing the text that will be examined without knowing what will be asked about that text can minimize a sense of direction.

Curriculum developed by others can be used, but there are certain drawbacks. If every teacher in every class is ordering books for every student, there can be a financial burden on the church, especially in a smaller congregation. Even if the material is free online and only needs to be printed, it can be challenging to guess what the writer intended by certain ambiguous questions. Besides, the teacher who writes his own material is most ready to present that material and to anticipate responses from the class.

1. **Rely on one primary translation.** Students should be aware of the Bible version the teacher reads from and bases the questions on so that if they are reading from another and cannot find the relevant wording, they may consult the teacher's preferred translation for clarity. Avoid going back and forth between versions, but when doing so is necessary, cite the relevant translation.
2. **Consult many translations.** There are a handful of accurate English-language Bible versions and students are not required to use the same one the teacher does. Remain aware of how the passage being studied will appear to different readers in the class.
3. **Write the question so the Scripture itself is the answer.** No student should need to read the teacher's mind to find the answer. Reading the assigned Scripture ought to suffice. Craft the wording of the question so the answer is demonstrable from the assigned Scripture, preferably in the language of the text itself. Homework questions are deliberately leaner than teacher notes; the purpose is not to convey the whole lesson in advance, but to compel close reading and prepare students for guided discussion. The student's task is not to get carried away with experiences, opinions, and

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impressions, but to simply find the answer in God's word. Questions are not open-ended discussion starters, but instruments of disciplined discovery. While inviting student participation, the onus remains firmly on the teacher to write compelling questions and to prepare for their answers. Do not be lazy and simply ask, "What does verse 12 say?"; rather, ponder the inspired words until they form the answer to a question worth asking.

4. **Expound from the answer in Scripture.** Expect the students to arrive prepared, but still needing the class. The homework is designed for textual observation by the student, while fuller explanation, cross-referencing, and application are reserved for classroom exposition.. It is the role of the teacher to show the class how to apply the principles under consideration. This includes exposing errors the text does not allow. To avoid perceiving one book of the Bible in isolation from the greater context of all Scripture, the teacher ought to copiously cross-reference the material with other passages. This will demonstrate to the class that the Holy Spirit has provided a consistently reliable message that does not contradict itself from book to book.
5. **Follow the passage in order.** Students need to be able to read through the assigned chapter and find the answers to the questions in the lesson as they go. Deviating from this should probably be limited to those instances wherein a topic is revisited later in the same chapter.
6. **Provide some variety in the questions.** Just as a novel would be quite dull if the dialogue was narrated as "he said" and "she said", so a lesson full of nothing but "What?" questions can become tedious. As the text permits, include a few "Who?", "How?", and "Why?" questions, but not as open-ended opportunities for personal disclosure; use these questions only where the relevant Scripture answers directly. In addition to questions, there is room for commands, such as: "Identify" or "Describe" or "List".
7. **Revise the material after teaching it.** Mature and growing Christians will contribute meaningfully to class discussions. Incorporate the verses and observations they share into updates. It will improve the content for the next class.

A disciplined, Scripture-focused teaching method has students continually looking to the text while being shown that each verse belongs to the larger, harmonious counsel of God.

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***"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"***

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"***

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

***"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"***

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"***

PROVERBS 25:11

"Christ is our soul proprietor."

– Stephane Maillet

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"DO NOT WORRY"

Dylan Stewart

During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said three times, *"Do not worry"* (Matthew 6:25, 31, 34). Anxiety is not necessarily a sin, but it can become sinful when we nurture it, allow it to govern us, or refuse to trust God.

The Bible does not tell us to deny our anxieties or pretend they do not exist. It tells us where to take them: *"Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you"* (1st Peter 5:7). We handle anxiety appropriately when we put our concerns in the Lord's hands, remember His character and promises, seek the support and encouragement of faithful brethren around us, and take whatever wise actions are available to us.

Jesus's words, *"Do not worry,"* are not a reason to shame the anxious. They are an invitation to trust the Father who knows exactly what we need and who promises to provide: *"For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you"* (Matthew 6:32-33).

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