**Workshop Guide**

**Better Teaching of Students**

**Josh Raybon, Presenter**

Teaching Plan:

Prepare the room by providing enough chairs for each participant focused on any visual aids (TV, monitor, dry-erase board) that will be used.

Welcome attendees and introduce yourself.

Have attendees introduce themselves by sharing their name, where they are located/serving, and maybe one additional detail about themselves.

Introduction to the Workshop:

Say something like:

Today we are excited to discuss ways we might be more effective in how we teach students. Student ministry is a challenging area of ministry which has been made even more difficult in our current culture. We know that we have limited access to students due to the busyness of life (school, sports, declining importance of church attendance). As a result we want to be faithful stewards of the time that we *do* have, especially in the way we teach. So, today we will look at three ways we can strengthen our teaching ministry to students. We also want to give you plenty of time to discuss with each other. So we will be taking a few minutes after each section to think about and discuss practical ways to add to your ministry.

1. Teach ***Intentionally***

*“****6****Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,****7****rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” — Col. 2:6-7*

* When you hear the word “intentionally” what comes to mind?
* Webster defines *intentionally* as “purposely; or with an awareness of what one is doing.”
* Often times, in ministry we fall into a trap of just “doing” without any real purpose or intentionality.
* Discipleship, though, is not something that happens accidentally.
* Today, I want us to ask three questions about our teaching strategy.

A. **Who** am I teaching?

- Who is my audience?

- What are their ages, gender, level of maturity (general and Spiritual)

- Am I teaching students, parents, volunteers?

**Discussion Time** — Take a moment and discuss the following questions with a few people around you. Then we will take a few moments and discuss them as a large group.

* How might a different “audience” on a Wednesday night change the way you teach? (Ex. You have a large group made up of mostly middle schoolers who, to your knowledge, are unchurched)
* Do you currently have times when students are separated by age -or- gender? What benefits have you seen from having those times of study in those groups?
* How might your teaching of parents/leaders look different than your teaching of students?

B. **What** am I teaching?

- What kind of curriculum am I using?

- Does what I’m teaching having a purpose?

- Does my curriculum have unity?

- When I think about what I am teaching on Sunday morning in comparison to what I

am teaching on Wednesday evenings. Are those teaching times working together?

- Am I teaching curriculum that is unified with the lead pastor’s sermon series, adult

small groups, or children’s ministry curriculum?

- Do I have a long-range plan for teaching? Ex. Do I have a rubric for what students will

who are in student ministry for 6 years will learn?

**Discussion Time** — Take a moment and discuss the following questions with a few people around you. Then we will take a few moments and discuss them as a large group.

* Share with one another what you are currently teaching during any meeting time of your choice. This may be a great time to get some ideas from one another while also doing a little self-evaluation. (Ex. What are you teaching on Wednesday Nights or during your small group time)
* Do you currently have a longterm plan for what you are teaching? Do you collaborate with other ministry areas, such as Children’s Ministry, to help form a cohesive longterm plan?
* Can you think of a time where the specific needs of your group led you to choose to teach a specific topic, spiritual truth, or piece of Scripture? What were the benefits?

C. **When** am I teaching?

- Perhaps I have thought through my audience as well as the “what” in my teaching

strategy, but what about the “when”?

- What is my strategy for when we meet and what purpose each teaching time has?

- How many times per week do you meet in a setting that includes teaching?

- Of those times, how many of your gatherings would you classify as discipleship?

- How many times have a more evangelistic lean?

- Am I the one doing *all* of the teaching?

- You are probably the best teacher you have, but you are not the *only* teacher you

have.

- My students need to hear from other leaders, for a few reasons.

* New voice and perspective.
* It allows me the chance to do other things within the ministry.
* It helps raise up new leaders/teachers by giving them the opportunity to teach.

- How many hours (or meetings) will students “give me” during the week?

- Have I considered how I need to adjust my weekly schedule to make my

teaching as efficient as possible?

**Discussion Time** — Take a moment and discuss the following questions with a few people around you. Then we will take a few moments and discuss them as a large group.

* How many times per week are you currently teaching? How many times per week do you have someone else teaching students?
* Would you consider teaching to be one of your spiritual gifts? If so, how can you best utilize that giftedness? If not, what are some ways you might be able to grow or strengthen that ability?
* Which weekly gathering seems to be most effective for you currently? What do you think makes it so effective? Are there elements of that time that you could implement into other times that are not quite as effective?

1. Teach ***Expectantly***

*“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith--that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” — Ephesians 3:14-19*

* Expectations are important!
* We know that if we do not have expectations of ourselves, then we never really have the potential to reach them.
* Think about it. If I never set any goals in my own personal or professional life, will I ever reach them?
* Likewise, if we do not have clear, definable expectations of our students and leaders, how will they ever grow to their full potential?
* Here is a truth I have learned over my years in ministry: People will, more often tag not, rise to the expectations that I give them.
* On the flip side of that, people will always fail to reach the expectations I never communicate.
* Just think about it in terms of marriage. If my sweet wife had never told me that her expectation was that I would be the one who took the trash out anytime that trash can was full, we might still be waiting to see which of us would finally get it to the street.
* She communicated it early on, though. It is an expectation. Clearly, it is not a difficult task, but it was helpful to know that it was expected of me.
* While that may be an oversimplified analogy, we must have expectations when it comes to the teaching aspect of student ministry.
* Here are two key things to think about when we talk about teaching expectantly.

**A. Prayer**

- Setting vision, direction and expectation must begin with prayer.

- Prayer is often overlooked in terms of teaching.

- Whether I am writing my own curriculum or purchasing a study it needs to be a

prayerful process.

- You know your group better than anyone. You know their needs, their struggles, and

what will work best for them.

- Praying for direction in what you will be teaching them will help guide you and your

group as you seek to follow Christ’s leadership.

- Not only is it important to pray for direction, but we almost must be praying for our

people.

- Take time to pray for your students and leaders by name. All of our contexts are

different. Some of us may be able to pray for all of our people by name each week.

Some of us may need to divide up a list of names and pray for a few each week or

each day.

- Pray for their specific needs, pray for minds and hearts to be open to the teaching

of that particular week.

- It is interesting that when we pray specifically, how specifically God sometimes

responds.

**B. Purpose**

- You, no doubt, have an objective or purpose each time you teach.

- You may call it a “Big Idea” or a “Key Point”, but what you are doing each time you

teach your students or leaders is stating a purpose for that particular session.

- If we zoom out a little bit and think about the “Big Idea” or “Key Point” of our overall

teaching ministry, do we have a clearly defined purpose?

- Biblically, the purpose of our teaching is life change or transformation.

- Sure, we want to teach sound doctrine, rich theological truths, and tackle tough

and relevant topics for our students. The ultimate end, though, is an old life left

behind and a new life pursuing Christlikeness.

- On the path to life change we can certainly set both Spiritual and practical milestones

in place.

- Things like ministry involvement, service, discipleship small groups can all be goals

we set along the way to help fulfill our purpose of a transformed life.

**Discussion Time** — Take a moment and discuss the following questions with a few people around you. Then we will take a few moments and discuss them as a large group.

* Share with your group what your expectations are for a student who graduates high school after spending significant time in your student ministry.
* What does your prayer life for your students and leaders currently look like? Do you have any strategies or tips that may be helpful for the rest of us?
* When it comes to spiritual or practical milestones, do you have any goals or targets for your students throughout their spiritual journey? How do you celebrate or recognize those?

1. Teach ***Authoritatively***

*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” — 2 Timothy 3:16*

* How many of you have ever sat and listened to a sermon either in person or online and been amazed by the oratory skills of the teacher, yet walked away empty-handed spiritually?
* While it may seem like a recent phenomenon, created by social media and our modern culture, I can assure you that it is not a new problem.
* We see gifted teachers, rendered powerless due to the source of their teaching.
* I have absolutely no doubt that there are many of you in this session who are extremely gifted teachers.
* Yet, your giftedness apart from the proper source is ultimately unavailing.
* You and I, must stand upon the Word of God if we desire to be effective teachers to our students.
* While, teaching authoritatively certainly comes from our dependence on Scripture, it also requires us to teach within ourselves. We will look at both aspects of that today.

**A. Biblical Teaching**

- If you have made it this far into this session, then you agree that the Bible ought to be

our source for teaching.

- As teachers of students, though, we must go beyond the Bible being “A source” of

our teaching to the Bible being “THE source” of our teaching.

- Regardless of whether you have a degree from a Bible College or Seminary training,

we all have both the ability and responsibility to be rooted in Scripture as we teach.

- You may choose to teach in an expositional manner as you journey through a book of

the Bible all semester or year.

- You may prefer topical preaching.

- While you and I may have strong feelings either way, both can be done in ways that

effectively and efficiently teach Scripture.

- Like anything in life, though, you and I must be diligent in our own study of Scripture in

order to be effective teachers of Scripture.

- Am I putting in adequate time in preparation for my various teaching responsibilities?

**B. Personal Teaching**

- Once we have firmly planted our feet on the foundation of Scripture, the next thing we

must tackle is the idea of teaching as ourselves.

- Now, this may seem like a no-brainer but stick with me.

- People want to feel connected to the people they are listening to. Think about your

favorite teacher. Part of the reason they are your favorite is because they are relatable.

- Use personal stories, both good and bad, as a way to connect rich Biblical truths to

the young people sitting across from you. They want to know that the seemingly

abstract concepts you are teaching actually have some sort of personal value in your

life and in theirs.

- BUT…make sure those personal stories are TRUE. The difference between you and

your favorite YouTube preacher is that you live life in close proximity with your

students.

- Embellishing a story for mass effect may seem like a great way to drive home a point

of a sermon. However, one falsehood could jeopardize your ability to connect with a

student afterwards.

- The current generation of students, more than anything, crave authenticity. They want

want their leaders to be real more than they want them to be superheroes.

- In that same vein, if you are writing your own material be sure to cite your sources.

Again, this seems obvious but I cannot tell you how many guys I come across who are

attempting to pass off someone else’s work as their own.

- If you are feeling the pressure of not having time to write your own messages or

curriculum, that is okay. We all need help! Just be sure not to pretend someone else’s

work is your work.

- Integrity in teaching matters just like integrity in life matters.

**Discussion Time** — Take a moment and discuss the following questions with a few people around you. Then we will take a few moments and discuss them as a large group.

* What steps are you currently taking to make sure your teachings are rooted in Scripture? What resources are you using to help you prepare to teach from God’s Word?
* Do you primarily teach through Books of the Bible, or do you feel more comfortable teaching topically? Do you see a benefit to one over the other?
* How do you feel you can make your teaching more relatable to your students/leaders? What are some practical ways you could improve your teaching?