



HIGHER GROUND
CALVARY CHAPEL

SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

“Teach Us...
Class 01
Preparing for Success

I am designing this class a little
bit different from my other
classes

I am redesigning this class to
ensure success

Success for me

And success for you

My name is Dennis Knotts

You have wandered into a
seminar on how to teach

Before we start, let's go around
the room

What is your name?

Why are you here?

What goal do you want to reach?

Let me let you in on a secret...
I have just done something
that I normally do not do
I normally do not do this
because there is no need to do
this

In most of my classes, my goal
is to present information
I present it in such a way that it
creates an expectation:
I lecture
You listen
No one interrupts
I do this on purpose

When you are dealing with
specific topics
And are on a tight schedule
You must control the class in
order to ensure that you reach
your goal
Those goals are set by the
person asking you to teach

Now I am good at what I do
I am good at transferring
information
I can motivate my students to
learn and remember what I
say
But this is different

We are going to be dealing
with skills
Skills are something that we
practice over and over to learn
to be proficient
In order to do this, I need to
break down the wall between
us

We are filming, but I am going
to ignore the camera
I am going to ignore the clock
I am not teaching to the
camera or the clock
I am here to teach to you
I need you to learn

And so your goals for being here in this class should become MY goals for teaching this class
If I am not meeting those needs; then I am failing as a teacher

So what I have just done is change my teaching style
The needs in this class are different
And so the first thing I have done is tear down the wall that is between me and you

I asked you questions
I let you talk to me and to the class
The expectation of you sitting there quietly while I lecture is gone
That is NOT how this class is going to operate

Which is why I am ignoring the camera and I am ignoring the clock

This is going to freak the pastor out

But to do what I am here to do

I need to change my focus

I need to change my style

As the instructor I control four things:

1. The Subject Material
2. The Style of Teaching
3. The Classroom Setting
4. The Speaker – meaning me

We get our subject material based upon the need or purpose of the class

Is this a lesson from a book?

Is this a Bible study?

Is this to meet job requirements?

Why are you there?

Let me give you one of our
Rules

Rule #1:

Make the lesson your own

What do I mean by that?

“Make the material your own”

Do not teach someone else’s
lesson

You could just read from a
book if that were the case

But God chose you to TEACH
this lesson

Not to READ the lesson

Look at the information you are
going to cover

How would you explain this to
someone?

What illustrations would you
use?

What is in your personal life
that you could use?

It's someone else's information
But it is your lesson.
Let's do an exercise...

Proverbs 3:5 – 6:
“Trust in the Lord with all your
heart; and lean not unto your
own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge
Him; and He shall direct your
paths.”

What is this verse saying to
you?
When did you have to trust the
Lord?
What happened?

So we have just done a little bit
of work on Subject
As the Teacher you control the
subject
They may tell you what to say
But you can control HOW you
say it

Let's touch on Rule #2:
"Teach to your strengths"
God made you the way that
you are
He gave you strengths
He gave you weakness

He's given you interests
He's given you fears
When you come to teach, teach to
your strengths
Use those things in your make up
that you are comfortable with
Use those things that you are
good at

Do you like sports?
Use examples from sports
Do you like movies?
Use examples from movies
What do you do for a living?
Draw from what you know
Use personal experiences

This is our discussion on Style
As the Teacher you control the style
Pick the style that is best for you

These are things that are under your control
As the instructor, I need to be flexible
I need to pay attention to my audience
Am I meeting their need?

I need to meet your goal for being here
If what I am doing or saying is not meeting these needs;
Then I need to adjust or change the subject, the style, the setting or me

This is a completely different concept in teaching
And this is what is going to set this class apart from any other class you have taken before
I am dedicated to your success
Your success is my success

Again, I want to stress that as the teacher, you are in control
I've just noted you should play to your strengths
Let's explore your strength
[Exercise]

What are you good at?
What are your interests?
What are you confident with?
Use the above and tell the class a little about yourself

Now let me ask you another question:
How many of you have had some experience at teaching?
What was it?
How many have shared your faith?

This leads me to another point
Rule #3:
A teacher needs to grow
We need to never stop learning
If we do, we stagnate

I have a rule...

If I am sitting under a pastor or
a teacher

And they have taught this
book, lesson, message for
three times and I am not
getting anything new out of the
lesson, it's time to move on

This requirement to grow
applies to all areas of our lives
I've told you to play to your
strengths

But you should also work on
your weaknesses

That is what this class is to me

My weakness is social
interaction

I am a wall flower

I could happily live as a hermit

Engaging in social interaction
terrifies me

Teaching THIS class is
terrifying to me

Why am I doing it?

1. There is a need
2. I need to face my fears
3. I need to grow
4. I need to improve

When you are first starting out,
play it safe

Teach to your strengths

But after a while step into the
unknown

We are afraid of the unknown
because we have never been
there

Here is the nice thing about
being the teacher

You control the style

If this becomes too much for
you

Then you adjust your style

I can adjust and just lecture

But I am trying to face my fear
I am taking my safe teaching
environment
And I am making it a learning
ground for social interaction

Let's take a moment and
discuss the setting
You get to control the setting
Do you want outdoors, go
outdoors
You want something formal
Make it formal

Look at how this room is set up
What message is it sending to
you?
What would make this setting
more relaxed?
What would make it more
formal?

What environment is most conducive to you and your style?

Here is a more important question...

What environment would help your students learn more effectively?

Again, that is the key

This is all about the student

The student needs to learn

What level of learning do you want your students to experience?

Now I do not want anyone to panic

I don't want to freak anyone out

You look at me and many of you think

"I'll never be that good."

You're wrong

When you teach a topic, you learn that topic more effectively

Teaching is the ultimate method for learning

The more you teach something the better you become at it

What you are seeing here today is just me using the skills that I am going to teach you

The more you do it

The easier it gets

I just make it look easy

But you don't get here by accident

I have a reputation

That is all it is

Each one of you will develop your own reputation

I will help you build a good reputation

You will make it a great reputation

Two things happened in my career

I came into the service after children's worship

"Do you see Bob?"

"No"

"You've got five minutes..."

I taught what I knew

I played to my strengths

I read my audience

I adjusted my style and subject

Those were my skills in presenting information

ANY information

My second secret is that I have a pastor who keeps reinforcing my reputation

He keeps telling the Church I am the resident theologian

I'm not

I'm the resident teacher

You do not have to know everything
You just need to know how to find the information you need
Organizing your resources will make this easier
The rest is all in appearance and presentation

It was like the time we performed puppet scripts
No one in the audience had a copy of the script
No one knew when we messed up
Unless we told them

So let's talk about failures
Tell me about a time in your life that you failed
What happened?
How did you recover?
What did you learn?

This brings me to the fourth
thing under your control: the
speaker

That would be you

You develop your reputation

Now I am not talking about
being fake

I have always said that the
most important lesson we can
teach our children is how to fail

At some point we have to let
them fail

They have to learn that failure
is not the end

Recovering from failure is a
skill

We have to experience to
learn how to do it

We have to experience it a lot

“As long as God’s grace is
available, our failures are
never final”

If your audience sees your mistake, use it
Make it a teaching opportunity
If they see it, don't ignore it
Don't pretend that it did not happen
People can see through fake

Now you should consider how you appear to your class
When I teach – especially on line, I try to look professional
Some teachers like to appear informal and relaxed
This is also a question of style

I learned an important lesson one day at work
I had to take our nurse to rent a car
I was in a three piece suit
The car rental office was packed

The line was out the door
Our nurse got in line
I went and stood in the back
In three minutes, the manager
came out of his office, walked
up to me and asked me what I
needed

This is a reality of the world
If you look important; people
will think that you are
important
If people do not know me
And I am saying something I
want them to believe

Then I make myself look
important
That is what I had to do when I
was an expert witness
I had to look authoritative to a
judge and the jury so that they
would listen and given me the
chance to convince them

This can extend to your
manner of speech and
teaching

I don't use big words

There is no need

So I can use small words

I can keep it simple

Ask yourself:

What do my students really
need from me?

I don't need to convince them
that I know more than them

That's already a given

I have to convince them of
something else

I have to convince them that I
can teach them what they
want/need to know

They must believe I can meet
their needs

We're going to shift over into a new skill

So before I make the shift I want to stop and open things up to give everyone an opportunity to go back over what I have covered

Are there any questions?

Does everyone feel comfortable with our rules and what they mean?

Is there something else you want to cover in more depth?

Again, this class is for your benefit

To meet your need

Am I meeting that need?

Rule #4:

If the student is not learning stop teaching – ask why

And Rule #5:

Don't be afraid to go back over the material or to find a new way of presenting it

Be open to changing the subject, the style, the setting and who you are

How many of you have sat in a class where it feels like nothing more than an information dump?

In most cases that is exactly what it was

An information dump



It then fell to the student to figure out what was important
It fell on the student to succeed or fail in the class
In reality, every time a teacher gave a student a failing grade was a time when the teacher is the one who failed

The teacher did not care if you learned or not
The teacher did not see it as his/her responsibility for you to learn the material
They were paid to “cover the material”

They were paid to “fill up the time”
I taught professionally for many years
I was a corporate training for a multimillion dollar company
I taught for the IEA

I was an expert witness and so it was my job to educate the judge and the jury
My style was based upon the need
I had to know the needs of my audience

What got to be frustrating for me is that my employers saw my goal as dumping information or just filling up the time
If I finished early; they wanted me to still “fill up the time”

Nowhere in these assignments was there the question of whether or not my audience learned
If we approach teaching with these goals in mind you are setting yourself up for failure

So let's be relaxed
Let's be informal
Let me coordinate this process
And let's discuss the
information
Not just present it

Let's make sure you
understand the information
Let's ask questions
Let's perform activities
Let's move at our own pace
So you are getting what you
need out of this class

Keep in mind that there are
many styles of teaching
You can lecture
You can fill in the blank
You can do activities
You can be formal
You can be relaxed

But ask yourself this question:

“What message am I sending my students?”

If I give them handouts where they listen and fill in the blanks the student believes that is all that is required of them – fill in the blanks

If you ask them to repeat what you said

And they are graded on how accurately they repeat the lesson back to you

All they learn is how to repeat what you said.

Let’s do one more topic and one more exercise for today...

We are going to select a Bible verse and use it for our final exercise

But before we do let’s discuss what is important?

If you can only say 1 thing about this verse; what would you say?

If you could only say 2 things about this verse; what would you say?

If you could only say 3 things then; what would you say?

What we have just done is sifted your information



Consider your lesson like a meal

What we are doing at this point is selecting the menu

What are we going to serve?

Once the menu is selected; then you decide how to prepare that dish and how to serve it

This would normally be a three step process



Your first level of sifting identifies the key points to the presentation
These are things that your audience NEEDS to know



You then sift your information a second time



This identifies information that would be NICE to know



You then sift your information a third time



I describe this information as “Does anyone really even care about this?”



Now, we are going to focus on these two or three items
This will be your main meal
You are going to do everything you can to make this interesting and easy to digest

So here is the Bible verse:
“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son; that whosoever should believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Ask yourself this question:
What is God saying to me through this verse?
Where is God placing my focus?
What words or phrase is popping out at me?

There is no right or wrong
answer here
You may pick the same thing
as someone else
But it's not just the word or
phrase
It's what it is saying to you

Is there something in your
personal life that really drives
this point home for you?
Okay?
Let's begin

QUESTIONS


