



HIGHER GROUND
CALVARY CHAPEL

SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

“Teach Us...

Class 04

Preparing the Soil

Jesus gave us the Parable of
the Sower

Matthew 13:3:

“And He spoke many things
unto them in Parables, saying,
‘Behold a sower went forth to
sow.’”

In this Parable, Jesus speaks
of different soils.

There was the compressed
soil of the pathway

There was the shallow soil

There was the soil with weeds
and thorns

There was the good soil

In our case, the soil is made up of the hearts and minds of the student
Let me make a suggestion...
What if we were to prepare the soil before we planted the seed?

In his series, *The Seven Laws of the Learner*, Bruce Wilkinson noted his view of the teacher/student relationship
He saw it less as a student/teacher relationship
And more of a coach or cheerleader position

We have to want our students to succeed

We have to actually care about them

This might involve getting personally involved in their lives

Years ago, when Bev was a teacher, she had one student that she worried about

She spoke to him after class, went over his work and told him that she believed he could do better than he had

She allowed him to do the assignment over

He got a much better grade

In fact, he got better grades the rest of the semester

He asked her what she liked to drink

She told him, "Ice Tea."

He was surprised, but on the last day he gave her a gift

Two beautiful wine glasses and a large box of tea bags

She always cherished this

So many students just need to know that someone cares

They need a little extra attention

They need a little bit more guidance

I discovered a secret

It's not true in every case

But it is true in many cases

Sometimes your problem student is just trying to get attention

When they cannot get positive attention they settle for negative

I try to take my problem student and have them do something for me
I get them involved
I try to give them some positive attention

Some students just do not “get it.”
I have found that if I can bring it down to their level and help them to get it
They have the foundation they need to build on

Some students just get bored
In their case, I add some of the deeper things to the lesson to challenge them
I try to meet each student on their level
I try to meet each need that I can

I've learned a lot from watching Star Trek
They have what is called "techno-babble"
Each episode's solution is based on some obscure law of physics

So they introduce the concept in "techno-babble"
Someone will give a definition
Someone gives an example

"So, it's like when too much water has evaporated and now it has to rain?"
"Oh, it's like an air-filled balloon being let go and it flies around the room."

And the end result is that your audience has been educated and now they will understand the solution to that episode's problem.

I've been told, "You write in crayon."
This means that I make it simple
I do, but it is more than that
I go pretty deep, too.

I do not want to lose any of my students
And so I start out with simple basics – I teach the basic lesson
But then I go over it again with more information

I go over it again deeper to challenge the advanced students
What I have done is to take all the simple students
And move them to advanced students without their realizing it

I teach on different levels and I use different methods and styles to keep it interesting as I do
The key to this is learning to read your audience

I had to learn how to do this when we did puppet shows
We were behind the stage and could not see our audience
So I had to learn to read my audience by listening

When you have your audience
lose its attention you will hear:
Talking or whispering
There will be shifting in chairs
You hear pages turning or
rustling
They are doing something else

It can be subtle when you say
something that should be
funny, but there is little to no
laughter
You are losing your audience
Remember the four things you
control

Subject – the material you are
presenting
Style – how you are presenting
your material
Setting – how the class is
structured
Speaker – that would be you

There was one technique
someone told me back in high
school
Don't look at the audience
Talk to the back wall
That's how I would do my
public speaking

I took a class in public
speaking in Junior College
Within two minutes of starting
the teacher shouted:
"Stop speaking to the back
wall!"
BUSTED!

I've learned to "work the
room."
I will pick out one or two
people in a section of class
I will talk to them
I pick another one or two
I talk to them

I then shift to another part of the room

This way each part of the room is being invited in and included in my message

That is the first thing that you need to do to “keep your audience”

I’ve taught workshops with over two hundred people in them

I’ve been before audience of over 2,000 people

This is just one technique to make each student feel like you are talking to them

Obviously you can’t do this with everyone

When you see the blank stares or you hear the shuffling that is the early warning sign that you are losing them

What do you do?

It's time to change one of the four things you can change
I will change the subject and either tell one of my war stories or make a joke
I'll keep this going until they are all back with me

I'll change the style
I'll become personal
I will relate directly to one person
I will ask a question and have them respond

I'll change the setting
I might come down off the platform and move among them
I might have them stand
I might sit down and get intimate with them
I might call for a break

I might change myself
I might take off the coat
I might roll up the sleeves
I might take off the tie

The point is I change something
If it's not working, change something
Keep changing things until it begins to work

Now let me move over to preparation
The rule is that you should spend 2 – 3 hours in preparation for every hour you actually teach
It is better to over-prepare than to under-prepare

It is better to have too much
and cut things
Than to not have enough and
to have to make things up as
you go along

Step One in preparation is you
Prepare yourself
Take care of personal hygiene
Have your clothes ready
Take care of bathroom breaks
Take care of food and water
Look in a mirror and double
check your appearance

Now it is important to know
yourself
I know that it is not good for
me to eat before I teach
My stomach gets upset
I may set a limit of not eating
four hours before class
Or I may not eat that day

I will have something to drink
But I give myself enough time
to drink and make a bathroom
break before I start
I will have water available
during the class

Next prepare your technology
What are you going to do if
your technology does not
work?
Have a back up plan
If no PowerPoint have a
whiteboard

Make sure that you
communicate with your
support staff
It's amazing how many
people fail to do this

Go in early enough to check things out and run things through

But also go in early that if there is a problem you have time to fix it before the program starts

Make sure you have communicated with the staff
Did you tell them everything?
Do they know what they need to do?
Do they have what they need to complete their task?
Are there any problems?

Never assume
If you do you will get caught nearly every time
Remember, your skill is communication
You communicate with the audience
Communicate with the staff

Now in many cases your staff are Church members and volunteers

In some cases it might be employees of the facility

Remember what it was like to be staff

Treat them with respect

Keep them in the loop

Be willing to pitch in and help

Don't delegate blindly

Know what you're asking them to do

Always say "please" and "thank you"

Appreciate what they do

Prepare you material:

PowerPoint

Lap top

Sound system

Prepare handouts

Prepare the room

Prepare your spirit

Now let's go back to our original concept
Let's prepare the soil before we plant the seeds
Before the class spend time getting to know who are in the class

What are their dreams?
What are their interests and hobbies?
Why are they here?
What do they want to get out of this lesson

This will give you time to change:
Subject
Style
Setting
Speaker
Always be willing and prepared to change

Also, this is the time to read your audience

Where are the problem students?

Why are they problems?

What are they fighting?

What do they need?

How can you win them over?

It is important that you are genuine

It is important that you are sincere

They can always spot a fake

Talk with them

Listen to them

Treat them with respect

Again, I cannot stress this enough

You are doing this because your skill is all about how to communicate

It is not enough to communicate with the masses

Communicate with individuals

Communication is an exchange of thoughts, concepts and ideas
You have to know how to listen
You have to be able to read the clues
You need to find solutions

Your goal is not to impart information
Your job is to make it possible for them to succeed
We need clear goals to know when we have succeeded
We need to encourage them each step of the way

One of the most important lessons anyone can ever learn is how to fail
Failure is not the end
Unless you let it become the end

Teach them how to come back from failure
Teach them to try again
Teach them not to give up on themselves

Let's do an activity
We have done activities today
Let's start by identifying a time when you personally failed

How did you deal with this failure?
How did you overcome this failure?
Who/what helped you?
What lesson did you learn?

There was a major corporation
One of their employee made a
major mistake and cost the
company twenty million dollars
The employee was called into
the president's office
He expected to be fired

"So what did you learn?" the
president asked.
"Learn?" the employee replied.
"I thought I was here to be
fired."

"I just spent twenty millions
dollars so that you could learn
something...
I'm not firing you
I want to know what you
have learned."

Every failure is a learning opportunity
We need to learn from our mistakes
So that we do not keep repeating them
This is a life lesson that each of your students must learn

We need to shift from being their teacher
A teacher does not care if someone learns or not
They are hired to teach
They are not hired to ensure someone learns

This is why we must abandon the role of teacher
We need to become their coach
A coach is invested in their team's success
That involves each team member

You are not a success until
they are a success
The sower in the Parable was
only there to sow seeds
The sower was not responsible
for whether or not the seeds
took root

Now do not take this analogy
too far
If we do, then we only plant
seeds where there is the
greatest chance of success
That is NOT what Jesus was
teaching

Jesus wanted the sower
sowing seeds everywhere
It did not matter in His Parable
if the seeds took root or not
They were still sown
You never know which seed
will take root
We need to do the same

But as we sow our seeds
We can follow up and do what
we can to ensure those seeds
have the greatest chance of
taking root and bearing fruit
That's the difference

We still sow whether or not
there is a chance for success
The more we sow, the greater
the chance for success
But we can improve those
chances through follow up

When we invest in the success
Then there becomes a greater
chance of success
That begins with us caring
about those we are teaching
We want them to learn
We want them to succeed.

QUESTIONS


