

TOGETHER
Bearing Fruit That Will Last
October 27, 2019
Youth and Adult Bible Study – Teaching Plan
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Step 1 – Create Interest

Begin the session by sharing the opening illustration of the young volunteer and the millionaire businessman used in the beginning of the background material. Allow time for learners to laugh at the story. Ask: Have you known someone that reminded you of the selfish millionaire in the story? Did the story remind you of our own selfishness we display from time to time? Remind learners that as followers of Jesus Christ we are to move from selfishness to serving and from taking to giving.

State: Today's lesson is a special lesson written specifically for our Stewardship Emphasis as we prepare to pledge our 2020 ministry budget. We will look at a portion of Jesus' teachings from The Sermon on the Mount and also, His discussions with his disciples in John's gospel. Our goal during this time together is to help us become faithful stewards and to identify ways we can personally be involved in making our Stewardship Emphasis a success.

Display the magnet and piece of metal that you have secured **IN ADVANCE**. Ask, as a child, did you ever take a magnet and attach a piece of metal to the magnet for a long period of time? What happened to the metal? Say, through the process of repolarization, the piece of metal became magnetic because it had been attached to the magnet. And in much the same way, our transformation as good stewards comes as we attach ourselves to Jesus and allow His love to pass through our lives. His power transforms us from selfish takers to magnetic Christ-like givers.

Step 2 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 1**) which you have displayed on a focal wall **IN ADVANCE**. Read the outline poster aloud to the group. Say, as we look at Matthew chapter six and John 15:5, our desire is for God's word to teach us that in this world of selfish takers, to become a Christ-like giver.

Once more, direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 1**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral I**), "Our Problem." Invite learners to turn in their

Bibles to Matthew 6:19-24. Call on a learner to read these verses aloud. Ask: Why do we desire to store up materialistic things? How does our own selfishness play into our materialist desires? Stress to learners that Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God in His teachings and yet, we tend to listen to our own selfish desires and seek the kingdom of the world. Draw from the background material and relate the story of *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding.

Direct learners to make a clenched fist and hold it up toward you, while you in turn hold your clenched fist up toward them. Encourage learners to shake their fists at you. Ask, what is a clenched fist a sign of? (selfishness, defiance, fear) Now direct learners to open their clenched fist and wave to you with an opened hand, while you in turn wave back. Ask, what is an opened hand a sign of? (disarming, friendliness, invitation) Remind learners of God's instruction to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 4) to throw down his rod. Moses' rod was a symbol of his security and identity and yet, God told Moses to "throw it down." Moses was required to fully rely upon God. Draw from the background material and relate the story of monkey trappers in the Congo. Encourage learners to live open handed as a seeker of the Kingdom of God.

Step 3 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 1**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral II**), "God's Perspective." Call on a learner to read aloud Matthew 6:25-32. Ask: Why do people worry? To what does Jesus direct our attention to as an example of God's care? (birds, lilies, grass) Does selfishness relate to worry? How so?

State: Worry can totally consume our lives if we don't keep things in God's perspective. Therefore, as followers of Jesus Christ we must realign our perspective with God's truth. This means we move from selfishness to serving and from taking to giving. Relate the story of Corrie ten Boom from the background material. Say, Corrie stated, "Everything that comes to my hand, I'll lose. Everything I place in God's hand I'll have forever. So don't measure your life by its duration but by your donation." Ask: Would you agree with Corrie ten Boom? Why or why not?

Direct attention to v.26 once more and relate the story of Liz Huntley shared in the background material. Say, God provides the resources we need, just as He provides for the birds of the air. Yet, like the birds we must do our part by trusting in God's promise and being responsible stewards of what He has entrusted to us.

Step 4 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 1**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral III**), “Our Priority.” Call on a learner to read aloud the verse. Ask, according to this verse what should our priority be in life? (Kingdom of God and His righteousness) Relate from the background material some reasons we fail to accomplish our God given priority. Say, one way we can evaluate our priorities is by taking a look at the following items (write each on the chalkboard) Our Checkbook; Our Calendar; Our Entertainment; Our Internet and Social Media Usage. Discuss with learners how an evaluation of each of these areas of our lives is necessary to establish our “real” priority in life. Remind learners that Christ calls each of us to be Kingdom centered persons. James wrote, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves, do what it says” – James 1:22.

Step 5 – Examine and Apply

Direct attention to the outline poster (**KIT, Item 1**) on the focal wall. Read aloud (**Roman Numeral IV**), “God’s Provision.” Read aloud John 15:5 to the group and draw from the background material relating the branch and vine analogy. Ask: How are we connected to Christ? How are we connected to each other? How are we better together?

Option: Bring a cluster of grapes with you to class and use these as an illustration of the vine, the branch, and the fruit. Ask: How were these grapes able to grow to this healthy size? (They were connected to the vine); Over time, what will happen to the grapes now that they have been separated from the vine? (They will decay unless eaten soon.) Relate this illustration to John 15:5.

Say, God’s provision for us should remind us of how dearly He holds each of us in His loving arms. As believers, we are connected to Him just as the vine is connected to the branch and when we abide in a loving relationship with Jesus, we can bear much fruit. Display the poster (**KIT, Item 2**) on the focal wall. Direct attention to the artwork of the cross and the heart to symbolize God’s love for each of us. Read the text aloud . . . Loving = Giving; Giving = Stewardship; Stewardship = Discipleship; Discipleship = Bearing Fruit. When this truth is realized we understand that because He gave, we too must give.

Step 6 – Application

Display a pledge card and privacy envelope before the group (you should have received this in the mail). State: A tangible way we can be good stewards of

God's provision is by participating in our Stewardship Emphasis here at First Baptist Church. The church has approved our 2020 ministry budget, but the way you truly vote for our budget is with your pledge card. By completing this commitment card, you make a faith promise to God and reflect our priority to expand God's Kingdom by fueling God's work.

Step 7 – Closure

Distribute **Faithful Giving (KIT, Item 3)** which you have photocopied **IN ADVANCE** to learners. Ask learners to prayerfully consider their responses to each of the statements. Remind learners that their responses are between themselves and God and will not be shared.

Allow time for learners to complete the exercise and close with a prayer of commitment that *“Together we are bearing fruit that will last.”*