LEADERSHIP LESSON 42: PLUGGING THE LEAKS – HOW TO RECLAIM ABSENTEES
OUTLINE BY JOHN JOHNSTON

1. Read Matthew 25: 42-45

2. Jesus commands us to reach out to people with a variety of needs. People who become chronic absentees miss Sunday School for a variety of reasons: illness, embarrassment over a financial set-back or job loss, lacking a sense of belonging, and, unfortunately, sin in their lives. In each instance, this passage of scripture admonishes us to go to those people and meet them at their point of need.

3. How can Sunday School leaders effectively reclaim absentees?
   - By visiting absentees to determine if there is a problem or a need.
   - By enlisting class members to help meet any physical needs of absentees.
   - By encouraging absentees to remain faithful to the Lord, and being a friend in times of need.
   - By praying for and with absentees.
   - By helping absentees who are struggling with sin or other spiritual issues.
   - By inviting them to class fellowships and other activities in addition to Bible study.
   - By relying on God. Don’t be quick to drop an absentee from your roll! God may be working in ways we cannot see.

4. It may be a cliché, but the saying is true: People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care!

5. How do we avoid the problem of chronic absenteeism?
   - Our classes need to be open and friendly. Cliques create a climate where newcomers feel left out and they often drop out.
   - A consistent system of record keeping is important in keeping track of people.
   - Establish care groups that divide the class into groups of five or six, each with a care group leader who keeps in touch with his or her group and can quickly learn of any problems.
   - Provide frequent opportunities for fellowship. People tend to come regularly when they connect with other people.
   - Get people involved in the class. Enlist a variety of people to serve in different tasks – greeters, hospitality, inreach, outreach, ministry and mission projects, etc. A title is not always required. People tend to make deeper commitments when they have a sense of responsibility.
   - Bear one another’s burdens. (Galatians 6:2) Create a climate where people feel comfortable sharing needs and burdens. Spend time as a class praying for one another.
   - Avoid making sarcastic and hurtful remarks when absentees return, such as “Well, I see the steeple didn’t fall over!” Instead, be welcoming and friendly when they do come back.
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1. Read Matthew 25: 42-45

2. People who become chronic absentees miss Sunday School for a _______________: illness, embarrassment over a financial set-back or ____________, lacking a sense of ________________, and, unfortunately, _______ in their lives. In each instance, this passage of scripture admonishes us to go to those people and meet them at their ___________ __________.

3. How can Sunday School leaders effectively reclaim absentees?
   - By ___________ absentees to determine if there is a _______________ __ __ __
   - By ___________ class members to help meet any _______________ __________ of absentees.
   - By _______________ absentees to remain faithful to the Lord, and being a __________ in times of need.
   - By _______________ for and with absentees.
   - By _______________ absentees who are struggling with sin or other spiritual issues.
   - By _______________ them to class fellowships and other activities in addition to Bible study.
   - By _______________ on God. Don’t be quick to drop an absentee from your roll! God may be working in ways we cannot see.

4. It may be a cliché, but the saying is true: People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care!

5. How do we avoid the problem of chronic absenteeism?
   - Our classes need to be _______ and _____________. Cliques create a climate where newcomers feel left out and they often drop out.
   - A consistent system of ___________ _____________ is important in keeping track of people.
   - Establish ___________ __________ that divide the class into groups of five or six, each with a _______________ who keeps in touch with his or her group and can quickly learn of any problems.
   - Provide frequent opportunities for ________________.
   - Get people ___________ in the class. ___________ a variety of people to serve in different tasks – greeters, hospitality, inreach, outreach, ministry and mission projects, etc. A title is not always required. People tend to make _______________ ___________ when they have a sense of _________________.
   - Bear one another’s _______________. (Galatians 6:2)
   - Avoid making _______________ __________ remarks when absentees return, such as “Well, I see the steeple didn’t fall over!” Instead, be _______________ and friendly when they do come back.