

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.