

t_{he} Chalkboard

A Quarterly Publication of Children's Ministries
Zion Assembly Church of God



Back to the Book

The start of a new school year is a time of new beginnings. Many parents purchase school supplies, books, and clothing to mark this special occasion. Lazy summer schedules are replaced with a disciplined routine. This time of the year creates anticipation and anxiety. Children in public schools look forward to beginning another grade level with a new teacher, but they also fear the unknown.

In our Children's Ministries, this significant event often goes unnoticed and uncelebrated. However, "Back to School" is an opportune time to begin something fresh and new in our Children's Ministries. As our children head off to school to further their education, we should also remember their spiritual formation. What are we teaching them during Sunday School, Children's Worship, and mid-week classes?

We know that our "Young Disciples" are faced with many challenges in today's world. We need to equip them to combat the enemy and to live a victorious Christian life. Our children may know a few basic Bible stories but are they learning the Word? We need to provide them with a structured routine of Scripture memorization. Moreover, they should not only be able to quote some verses, but know how to apply them to their lives.

The benefits of learning Scripture are limitless. Psalms 119 explains how knowing God's Word cleanses our way (v.9), keeps us from sin (v.11), is our counselor (v.24), strengthens us (v.28), is our song (v.54) teaches us good judgment (v.66), is our hope (v.81), and gives us peace (v.165). In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, the apostle Paul teaches us that learning and applying Scripture will equip us to do good work for the Lord.

Where do we begin? We need to promote REAL Scripture memorization. What does "R.E.A.L." mean?

R – Read the verse together.

E – Explain the meaning and any difficult words.

A – Apply the verse and its meaning.

L – Learn the verse in a creative way.

Children are like sponges. They will absorb what we pour into them. But we must use some creative methods to help them apply and remember the Scriptures.

There are many proven methods for learning the Bible. One way is to draw out the verse. The teacher can assist the children in illustrating key words. These drawings can be condensed onto note cards. Also, writing the verses on cards with crayons or markers is helpful for review. In addition, the children can act out the verse with hand and body motions or even use sign language for important words. Over the years, some verses have been taught as a song. Try to put the Scripture to a familiar tune. Of course, the most used method for memorizing the Bible is quotation. Repeating the verse aloud several times is necessary. This can be accomplished by quoting the verse in the context of a game where students earn a point for every verse they recite. Finally, try playing a game where several words of the verse are missing or out of order, and allow the children to say them correctly. Be creative in Scripture memorization. Let's get back to "the Book!"

This fall, I would like to challenge our children to learn God's Word. If we begin in September and learn one new verse each week, it will be easy to learn about 17 verses by the end of the year. Here are a few verses to help you get started.

Genesis 1:1	Psalms 27:1
Psalms 119:11	Psalms 119:105
Psalms 145:13	Proverbs 3:5-6
Jeremiah 33:3	Matthew 1:21
Matthew 22:37	Mark 16:15
John 3:16	John 15:12
Acts 16:30	Romans 3:23
Romans 6:23	2 Corinthians 5:17
Ephesians 6:10	Philippians 4:13
1 Thessalonians 5:17	1 Thessalonians 5:18

Chalk Talk:

Let's Talk! In preparation for the General Assembly, please e-mail me a brief report of your Children's Ministry activities for August 2008-July 2009. Please forward information about your weekly ministry as well as special events in your local church.

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