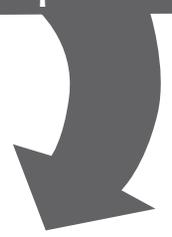




# Organize Your Life for Classroom Success



“Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed” (1 Peter 1:13).

- How can you best prepare your mind and life for teaching?
- What changes might you need to make in your personal life in order to feel better prepared to teach?



## ▼ Training Session

We all agree that it's a worthy goal to have our minds prepared for action, ready to help children focus on the grace of Jesus. But that's not always how it works every week.

The reality is that some weeks the car won't start, the cat will throw up, you'll spill coffee on your shirt, or getting your kids ready will take a little longer than usual.

Those are the things that try the patience.

Then there are money concerns, family issues, marital discord, health problems, or stress at work.

Those are the things that try the soul.

No matter what, we're each expected to show up with a smile on our face, a spring in our step, and a life-changing lesson in hand. Realistic? You bet! (OK, maybe not always the spring-in-the-step part, right?)

But because we have God on our side, ready and willing to change our hearts and conform our spirits to his, we *can* come into class already victors!

God wants us to succeed in our ministry. He put us there. He knows the challenges we face. He wants to help. All we have to do is turn to him. Ask God to prepare your heart for his ministry, and he will.

In addition, there are a few practical steps you can take to help minimize the stressors in your ministry:

- **Get things ready the night before.** Set out the kids' clothes. Set the coffee maker so all you have to do is flip the switch. Put your teaching supplies by the door.
- **Ask for help in your church.** Make sure you have the assistance you need, both in and out of the classroom. Maybe there's someone who could shop for your supplies or make the copies you need. It doesn't hurt to ask.
- **Don't expect perfection**—of yourself or of your students. Not every week will be filled with earth-shattering teaching. Do your best, and let the Holy Spirit take care of the rest.

Rely on God. He won't let you down.



Take this training deeper as you think over these questions:

- What are the biggest stressors in your ministry?
- What can you do to eliminate the distractions in your ministry?
- How can you rely more on God?

## ▼ Journal

*Lord, here are the stumbling blocks in my ministry. Please help me with . . .*

*Lord, bless me with self-discipline and commitment to follow through with . . .*

**Remember that God is with you. Turn to him for refreshment and renewal. Everyone needs that, especially in ministry. Satan will try to hamper you, but he won't be able to because you'll be relying on God.**

## ▼ Application

Make a list of three action steps you'll take to minimize the stressors in your life and ministry. Take those action steps within the week (or you never will).

For example, you could start with this list:

- Get up 30 minutes earlier (and go to bed earlier) before I teach my next lesson.
- Write a list of my classroom and lesson needs to go over with my ministry coordinator.
- Spend a few minutes meditating on God's Word before I teach.

Then ask God to help you rely on him as you prepare your mind for action, gain self-control, and set your hope on the grace of Jesus.