INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

**TOPIC:** The Lordship of Jesus Christ (One)

TEXT: Luke 14:25-35

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - Over one billion people today-almost one-forth of the world population-call themselves Christians. In the first century too, multitudes flocked to Jesus. They came for various expectations to satisfy curiosity, to be healed, to sit at the feet of this eloquent and controversial Rabbi or simply to go along with the crowd. But at certain times during His ministry, Jesus challenged His would-be disciples with strong and sobering words about the cost of truly following Him as Lord. As those who claim Jesus as our Lord, we need to carefully weigh these words.

## **QUESTIONS**

- 1. What about Jesus initially attracted you to Him? (Read John 3;2 to have better idea of the question).
- 2. In verse 25-27, what does Jesus demand of those who would truly be His disciple?
- 3. You may think that the word "hate" (verse26) is an obvious exaggeration for emphasis. In what sense are we to hate our family and even our own life?
- 4. A person carrying a cross in first-century Palestine was about to be executed. In this light, *explain the meaning and implications of V. 27*.
- 5. Imagine yourself building a tower (verse 28-30). What types of costs would you need to consider before setting out to build? What might keep us from finishing our Christian race successfully?
- 6. According to verses 31-32, what does the *thoughtful King* understand about battle?
- 7. Some have used verses 33 as a basis for refusing ownership of properties and for justifying their living in poverty. What is the difference between "giving Away" everything that we have and "to forsake" everything we have? What do these illustrations suggest about following Jesus (verse 33)?
- 8. In New Testament times salt was used as preservative agent (i.e. to keep meat from rotting and to give it taste). How can we relate this to our role as disciples of Jesus? (Verse 34-35).
- 9. How are those who do not whole-heartedly fulfil their commitment to follow Jesus like "salt without saltiness"?
- 10. Give some examples of how following Jesus could be costly for us. (Consider such area as relationship, ambition, finance, academics, etc.)
- 11. Could there be areas of our Christian life in which, we may possible still resisting Jesus' Lordship? Explain.

What one thing is God calling us to change today as a Church?

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: The Lordship of Jesus Christ (Two)

TEXT: *Colossians 1: 15-23.* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - To some people, Jesus of Nazareth is a revolutionary, leading the Masses in their struggle for freedom from oppression. Others sea Him as a staunch conservative, fully supporting and representing the status quo. Still others view Jesus as a pious, meek and mild dogooder who loves everyone and avoids confrontation at all cost.

Confusion about the identity and character of Jesus was also a problem in the first century. From both inside and outside the Church, distortions of the truth about Jesus and the Christian life had arisen. Against this background, Paul writes to the Christians at Colossae, reminding them of whom it is they follow as Lord.

- 1. What is Jesus really like?
- 2. Read Colossians 1: 15-23. According to verse 15, "Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God" What are some of the difficulties we have in trying to know and relate to an invisible God? (e.g. In prayer, faith, blessing etc.).
- 3. Christ is also "the first born", which means the one who is first or (Lord) over all creation (verse 15). In what ways are His lordship and supremacy indicated or explained in (verses 16-20)?
- 4. How does this description of Jesus Christ enlarge your view of Him or push forward your trust in Him?
- 5. According to (Col. 1:16 and Rev. 4:11), what is the purpose of all created things, nature, people, rulers and authorities? How should this affect our attitude toward life-including our possessions, relationships and goals?
- 6. Christ is also "the head of the body the Church" (verse 18). How should Christ's authority make a visible difference in your Home or Fellowship?
- 7. Verse 20 helps us to understand God's overall plan and goal for the universe. How can we explain this to the Unbelievers?
- 8. According to *verse 21-22*, what has God done to enable us to participate in His plan? What kind of response does He expect from us (verse 23)?
- 9. Verse 18 summarises the overall thrust of this passage "so that in everything He might have the supremacy". In what area does Jesus not yet have first place in our Fellowship with Him? What steps can we take individually to submit these areas to His lordship?
- 10. In what ways can this *Topic* (The Lordship of Jesus) encourage you to "continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel" (verse 23)?

TOPIC: Who is God?

TEXT: Acts 17:16-34

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - Today there is no agreed definition of "God," and ideas about him vary from person to person. Some view Him as the soul of the universe. Others believe He is a kindly grandfather in the sky or an absentee landlord who created the world and then went off to a celestial Acapulco. People in Paul's day were just as confused about God. In Acts 17 Paul visits polytheistic Athens (i.e., where they belief in many gods), the intellectual capital of the world. There he is given the privilege of speaking in the Areopagus, Athens' oldest and most prestigious institution (i.e., a Senate-like court with special jurisdiction in moral and religious affairs). Paul's spoke of the bases of the Christian Faith and this has helped us to understand who God is.

- 1. In what various ways do people understood the person of God?
- 2. Judging from the passage (vs. 16-17), why would the market places be sometimes good for discussions about God? What do you think can prevent Christians from using such strategy?
- 3. <u>Epicureans</u> believed that **pleasure** is the chief end of life. <u>Stoics</u> emphasised that we should be **rational and self-sufficient**. In you own mind, why do you think they reason in this way? With your knowledge in Christianity, how would you preach Christ to these kinds of people?
- 4. Paul stands up in the meeting of the Areopagus and makes know the "unknown god" (vs. 22-23). What facts does he stress about God (vs. 24-29)? What other facts would you like to add?
- 5. How might Paul's statements have challenged the Athenians' views about the gods? *OR* In what areas might they have reasoned along with Paul that made some of them followers of Paul?
- 6. What has God done so that people might seek Him (vs. 26-28)? How would these things encourage people to reach out and find Him?
- 7. How do *verses 30-31* help us understand Paul's distress about idolatry (*v* 16) and his motivation to proclaim the true God? What in our societies can motivate us as a Church, into organising a massive evangelism programme?
- 8. God commands people everywhere to repent of their ignorant ideas about Him (v 30). What other major things might be taken the place of God in Christians' life?
  - What specific things does the Bible say about each of them?
- 9. How would you convince an Evolutionist (i.e. those that believe that God did not create the earth and that earth evolved from already existing substance. E.g., The Big Bang theorists) that God created the Earth?

TOPIC: God's Glory

TEXT: *Exodus 33:12-34:8* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: -Charles Spurgeon once said: "The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy which can ever engage the attention of a child of God is the name... of the great God whom He calls His Father." God's names in Scripture are more than labels – they are revelations of His covenant character. As God proclaims His name, we come to know Him more intimately. This story narrates a slice of Moses' unique experience as a prophet of God. He has pleaded with God to spare the people and continue his support and presence among them. Elated by God's answer, Moses asks to see God's glory. When God appears, Moses sees only His "back" not His "face" but he hears words of definitive self-revelation. These words reveal the nature of the God we worship.

- 1. What is the difference between being *in contact with* someone and *really knowing* that person? What are those *factors* that enable us to know someone quick enough?
- 2. Let's go back to the text, in verse 3 the Lord threatens not to go with the people into the Promised Land because of their wickedness. How does Moses respond (vs. 12-13)?
- 3. Why is Moses so concerned about God's Presence with Israel (vs. 14-16)? Why is it important today as well as then for God's Presence to be in the church with His people?
- 4. What does it mean that God knows Moses by name (vs. 12-17)? In **what ways** may the presence of God in our individual lives affect us? Illustrate.
- 5. What do you think the responsibility of Church leaders should be in view of what we read about Moses in this text?
- 6. In what ways can we demonstrate our desire to know and to relate with God?
- 7. God places limits on the extent of His self-disclosure because no one may see God and live (vs. 19-23). Why do you think this is so?
- 8. In 34:1-8, God told Moses to bring the stone tablets with him to the mountain (vs.1-4). How were the Ten Commandments a partial or unfinished answer to Moses' prayer in 33:18?
- 9. In *verses 6-7* the Lord passes in front of Moses. How is God's goodness revealed in each attribute he mentions?
- 10. In what ways does God reveal His goodness and glory today?
- 11. In response to God's glory, Moses worships (v 8). What do you think should be the attitude of the church during Worship as to bring down God's presence, Goodness and Glory.

INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: **The Father and the Son** TEXT: *John 13:31-14:11* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - No one may see me and live," the Lord said to Moses. "No one has ever seen God," John echoes in his Gospel. "Whom no one has seen or can see," says Paul. Yet how can we relate to an invisible God? We cannot see Him or touch Him. Is He listening? Is He even there? At times we feel as though we are talking to ourselves! At the Last Supper, on the night of His betrayal, Jesus told His disciples He was returning to the Father. He explained His gracious purpose in going there. Then He made a bold and startling claim: the invisible God has become visible. We can see Him if we know where to look. We can come to Him if we know the way. It is vital for us, as it was for those disciples, to grasp what Jesus is saying.

## **QUESTIONS**

- 1. If you had been with Jesus for three years and had placed all your hopes on Him, how would you respond mentally and emotionally to His statement in *verse 33?*
- 2. From the text read, God is glorified when His character is revealed. How will Jesus glorify God, and how will God glorify Jesus (vs. 31-32)?
- 3. To what extent can you identify with Peter's response now that you've also known Jesus (vs. 36-38)?
- 4. How would Jesus words in 14:1-4 calm the troubled disciples?

  How can these words be a special comfort to people approaching the end of physical life?

Thomas asserts they do not know what Jesus claims they know (vs. 4-5) What do you think that Thomas has failed to understand (v.5)?

- 5. How would you explain each aspect of Jesus' claim in *verse 6*? Or what does each of the claim means to you?
- 6. What is involved in embracing or accepting Jesus as our way to the Father?
- 7. Philip assumes they have not seen what Jesus claims they have seen (*vs.* 7-8). What has Philip failed to realise (*vs.* 9-11)? On a daily basis, how
- can we get to know the Father through Jesus?
- 8. Moses was unable to receive a full revelation of God ("You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live" Exodus 33: 19). How has Christ overcome this barrier?
- 9. How has this passage enlarged your understanding and appreciation of Christ?

TOPIC: **The Spirit and the Son** TEXT: *John 15:26-16:15* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - What would it have been like to be with Jesus – to talk with the One who created the whole world, to hear Him teach as no one has before or since, to see His quiet power over life and death? What questions would we ask Him? What Joy just to be with Him! It is easy to envy those had these privileges. We imagine our lives must be poor by comparison. Not so! In this passage we discover just the opposite. We experience something the disciples never knew during Jesus' time on earth. We know what they were only beginning to grasp. The night of His betrayal Jesus tells us why it was good for Him to go away – good for the disciples and for us.

- 1. What would you have appreciated most about being with Jesus during His earthly Ministry, if you had had the privilege?
- 2. From the text, the word "Counsellor" (v 26) means one who is called (or sent) to help us. Identify other different ministries of the Spirit.
- 3. According to (Vs.15:26), what is the Spirit's relationship to Jesus and the Father?
- 4. Both the Spirit and the disciples testify about Jesus (vs. 26-27). In this passage, why is Jesus the focus of their testimony? Explain with reference to His work.
- 5. Why are both sides of this partnership *(between the Spirit and us)* important?
- 6. Jesus warned that His disciples would be persuaded (15:18-26). How can His warning and promise of the Spirit keep us from going astray (16:1-4).
- 7. Because Jesus is going away, the disciples are filled with grief (v 6).
  Why is this "bad news" about Jesus going away, actually good for the disciples and for us?
- 8. The Spirit convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement (v 8). In your own words, explain how he does this (vs. 9-11).
- 9. How can we effectively speak to people today about sin, righteousness and judgement especially when these concepts are foreign or meaningless to so many?
- How will the Spirit of truth guide the disciples into all truth when He comes (vs. 12-15)? Use your personal experience (if any) to illustrate this.
- Explain why it seems as if the Spirit revealed different things to people that we now have differences in our Christian's beliefs and *(denominations)?*

INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: **God beyond compare**TEXT: *Isaiah 40:12-31* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - A. W. Tozer wrote: "The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him." We all have unworthy thought about God – especially during times of stress or difficulty. Does God care? Has He given up on me? Can He really help me out of the mess? "Your God is too small!" Isaiah tells us. In this passage He challenges our funny thoughts, overwhelming us with the majesty, wisdom, grace and power of our incomparable God.

- 1. There are many times for all of us when God seems distant or uncaring. Explain your possible response when you feel as if God is far away?
- 2. From the text, what image of God does verse 12 emphasises *Great?* Explain.
- 3. What aspect of God's character is stressed in verses 13-14? Explain why you would like to agree or disagree with that argument about God.
- 4. Why in verses 15-17 does Isaiah start talking about the insignificance of nations in comparison to God? Does this agree with your thought about this great world? Explain.
  - Is it possible therefore to tell God how to run the universe especially on issues that relates to (*your misfortunes, natural disasters, genocide etc*)? Explain how.
- 5. Even small problems can seem overwhelming while we are experiencing them. Do you think that such description of God in verse 12 can encourage us at such times of trouble? Explain how.
- 6. At what point in a Christian life can people or things become substitutes for God (vs. 18-20)?
- 7. People with authority and power (political leaders, supervisors, and teachers) can exert significant control over our lives. Explain why you think we can trust God to overrule the world's rulers (vs. 21-24)?
- 8. Travelling at the speed of light, it would take 137,000 years to reach the nearest galaxy. How does this help us estimate the greatness of God (vs. 26)?
- 9. How would you explain the saying that this mighty God lives in the heart of believers?
- 10.Israel complained that God seemed distant and uncaring (v. 27). How do verses 12-26 answer this charge?
- 11. How would you encourage one who is depressed or feel weary and without strength (vs. 28-31)?

#### INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

**TOPIC:** God is love

TEXT: *I John 4:7-5:5* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - Why are we so infatuated with love? It dominates our songs, poems, movies and novels. We value it above every virtue. We long to find it and fight to keep it. Everyone has an option about it, but no one seems to have enough of it. How can we explain our insatiable appetite for love?

Love is central to the Apostle John's first letter. He helps us to understand its source, its nature and its significance for our lives as Christians. Most importantly, John enables us to see what the often-quoted statement "God is love" (I John 4:8, 16) really means.

- 1. In your own opinion, why do you think love dominates music, movies, literature and so many other aspects of our lives? Why do you think that most people even Christians would want to fight to keep it?
- 2. From the text, children usually resemble their parents. How does this principle relate to those who claim to be God's children (vs. 7-8)? How does our love for each other make the invisible God visible?
- 2. Does this mean that everyone who loves is God's child, regardless of his or her beliefs (v. 8)? Explain.
  - What does John mean when he says, "God is love" (v. 8-10)? How would your explain the nature and depth of God's love to an unbeliever?
- 3. "Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (v.11-12).
- In what small or large ways can we sacrificially love each other?
- 6. In verses 13-16, what tests does John give us for determining whether "we live in Him and He in us"?
- 7. If our lives are characterised by love, why can we be confident rather than fearful on the day of judgement (vs. 17-18)?
- 8. It certainly seems possible that we could love God and yet hate one of our brothers and sisters. According to John, why is this impossible (vs. 19-21)? Explain.
- 9. If someone is really born of God, what are those things that will be true of that person (5:1-5)?
- 10. If some of these things are not true does that mean a person is not a Christian? Explain.
- 11. How would you respond to situation when people take advantage of your expression of love towards them or abuse it? However, read (Proverbs. 17:13)?

TOPIC: Holy, Holy, Holy

TEXT: Isaiah 6

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - Going to God in time of crisis is a natural response. Isaiah went to the temple to pray when his nation was in grave trouble. Uzziah, Judah's strong king for half a century was dying. Assyria, the evil empire to the East, was restless and threatening. But when Isaiah prayed for the people, he didn't get the answer he expected. He received a vision of the holy God that shook him to the core of his being.

- 1. God is holy (v. 3). Explain all you know about the Holiness of God.
- 2. From the text read, describe in your own words, what do we learn about God from this Isaiah's temple vision? (vs. 4-5).
- 3. Isaiah's ministry is to make people spiritually blind and deaf (vs. 9-10). Why would God give him such a strange task?
- 4. Why do you think the Lord asks for volunteers in verse 8?
- 5. In the ways the Lord purified and prepared Isaiah for ministry, Could it be that there are some self appointed Christian leaders around?
- 6. Spiritually speaking, what leads people's senses to become dulled and their hearts to become callused?

**TOPIC:** God's Wonderful Goodness

TEXT: Psalm 107

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - On September 8, 1860, the Lady Elgin sank in Lake Michigan. A young ministerial student named Edward Spencer dove repeatedly into the icy waters and rescued seventeen people. The prolonged exposure permanently damaged his health, however, and he was unable to complete his studies. Some years later at his funeral it was noted that not one of the seventeen people he saved ever returned to thank him. Thankfulness is basic to godliness. This psalm shows us how much it means to say that God is good, and calls us to thank Him for His goodness to us in the past and the present. Note the repeated refrain in verses 8, 15, 21, 31.

## **QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why do you appreciate it when someone thanks you for something special you have done?
- 2. From the text read, how do verses 1-3 provide the theme and tone of the psalm?
- 3. The psalmist describes four different incidents in verses 4-9, 10-16, 17-
- 22 and 23-32. What belief title would you give to each incident
- 4. What elements do they have in common?
- 5. How is God's unfailing love demonstrated in each account?
- 6. Each scene begins by describing a calamity and a cry for help. Why do we often hit bottom before we cry out to God?
- 7. What kind of help do you need from the Lord at this time?
- 8. Each scene concludes by describing God's salvation and by calling us to give thanks for His unfailing love.

Why do we often forget to thank God for answered prayers?

- 9. What prayers has God answered recently for which you are thankful? In verses 22 and 32, what are some ways we can give thanks?
- 10. What do verses 33-42 reveal about the ups and downs of life?
- 11. Verse 43 states that if we are wise we will "heed these things and consider the great love of the Lord."

What things does the psalmist want us to heed?

12. Spend a few minutes thanking the Lord for His goodness to you and others.

TOPIC: Pleasing God

TEXT: *Matthew 6:1-18* 

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - "Look what I did, Daddy!" the child squeals, delighted that her father notices and approves. Children love praise – especially from their parents. Our heavenly Father understands this. In fact, he encourages us to seek His praise and gives it to us freely. But God also knows how desperately we seek to impress others. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus presents personal godliness as life in God's family – a life in which there can be no true substitute for our Father's praise.

## **QUESTIONS**

- 1. Why do you think children are especially responsive to praise?
- 2. From the text, God is called our Father ten times in this passage. How does our relationship with the Father provide the context for understanding verses 1-18?
- 3. How does verse 1 relates to what Jesus says in verses 2-18?
- 4. In verse 2, Jesus described how hypocrites in His day gave to the needy. In what ways can our giving be hypocritical today?

What kind of giving pleases God, and why (vs. 3-4)?

- 5. In what ways do hypocrites love to pray today (v 5)?
- 6. In contrast to hypocrites and pagans, what does the Father desire from us, and why (vs. 6-8)?
- 7. In verses 9-13 Jesus teaches us how to pray. What do we learn about prayer and about our Father in heaven?
- 8. In what ways do your prayers need to become more balanced?
- 9. In what sense does our forgiveness from God depend on our forgiving others (vs. 14-15)?
- 10.In verses 16-18 Jesus assumes we will fast. Why and how should a Christian fast today?
- 11. Jesus mentions earthly and heavenly rewards seven times in this passage. Why this emphasis?
- 12. How has this passage helped you to better understanding life in Gods family?

TOPIC: The Lord is King

TEXT: Daniel 4

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - Dr. Seuss tells a story about Yertle the turtle. Yertle prided himself on being king of all he could see. But from his little throne he couldn't see much, so one day he decided to build it higher. He summoned all the turtles in the pond to stack themselves on top of each other. Reluctantly they obeyed. From his new vantage point atop this turtle throne, Yertle was now king of the pond, king of a tree, king of a house and king of a bee. But Yertle wasn't satisfied. More turtles were summoned and more and more, and Yertle was lifted up in magnificence. Then at the bottom of the stack an insignificant turtle named Mack burped, and Yertle was toppled from his throne. Dr. Seuss concludes: "And today the great Yertle, that marvellous he is King of the Mud. That is all he can see."

In Daniel 4 we read about another king, like Yertle, who thought he was someone special. Then one day something shook his throne and the king saw things he'd never seen before.

- 1. In your opinion, why is Yertle the turtle both an amusing and pitiful creature?
- 2. In verses 1-27 Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, begins his letter. How do his words differ from what we might expect from a pagan king (vs. 1-3)?
- 3. If you had been Nebuchadnezzar, what would have disturbed you about the dream *(before you knew its meaning)?*
- 4. What is even more disturbing about Daniel's interpretation of the dream (vs. 19-27)?
- 5. Why would it be especially easy for someone in Nebuchadnezzar's position to become proud?
- 6. What did Nebuchadnezzar need to learn about himself and God?
- 7. In what areas might we be tempted to be proud, and why?
- 8. In verses 28-37, after receiving this vision, Daniel's interpretation and sound advice, why do you think Nebuchadnezzar failed to repent (vs. 28-30)?
- 9. In verses 31-33, what statements and experiences indicate the extent to which God humbled this proud king?
- 10.In what ways is Nebuchadnezzar's experience both a warning and an encouragement to us?
- 11. What evidence is there in this chapter that he learned his lesson?
- 12. What does this chapter teach us about genuine humility?

INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

**TOPIC:** God's Severe Mercy

TEXT: Hebrews 12

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTIONS</u>: - Twenty-six miles is a long way to go. You've been running for over two hours; your heart is pounding, your chest is heaving, your body aches and your pace begins to slacken. How nice it would be to quit, to lie down and rest, and to take it easy. You begin to wonder whether the race is really worth all the effort.

The Hebrews wondered that about Christianity. Within the Jewish community their lives had been tranquil and carefree. But now as Christians they were ridiculed, rejected, persecuted – and ready to give up. Like an experienced trainer, the author encourages them to keep on running. He helps them and us to understand why hardship can be God's severe mercy.

- 1. What do athletic training and parental discipline have in common?
- 2. In Verses 1-13, in what ways is the Christians life like a marathon (vs. 1-4)?
- 3. How can the "great cloud of witnesses" in the stadium (those described in Hebrews 11) motivate us to keep on running?
- 4. What kinds of thins can hinder or entangle us as Christians?
- 5. Jesus has already completed the race. How can fixing our eyes on Him keep us from growing weary and losing heart?
- 6. In verses 5-13 the imagery changes from a race to a family. What "word of encouragement" does the Father give us about hardships in life (vs. 5-7)?
- 7. We often want our lives to be free from hardship or difficulty. How does verse 8 challenge such an attitude?
- 8. How does the discipline of our human fathers compare with God's discipline (vs. 9-10)?
- 9. If we endure God's discipline now, how will our lives be different later on (vs. 11-13)?
- 10.In verses 14-29, what factors can lead us, like Esau, to miss out on God's blessing (vs. 14-17)?
- 11. Looking at verses 18-24, describe in your own words the vivid differences between Mount Sinai (symbol of the Old Covenant) and Mount Zion (our heavenly home).
- 12.In light of the glorious destiny of the righteous, why is it perilous to refuse to listen to God's encouragement and warning in this chapter (vs. 25-27)?
- 13. What have you learned about how discipline can be God's severe mercy?
- 14.Our God is not only loving Father but also a consuming fire (vs. 28-29). Thank and Worship Him with reference and awe.

INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: **God's Triumph**TEXT: Romans 8:26-39

**Directions:** - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will <u>formulate diverse questions</u> in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>: - At the end of the movie *Patton* we hear the famous general say, "For over a thousand years Roman conquerors returning from the wars enjoyed the honour of a triumph, a tumultuous parade. In the procession came trumpeters, musicians and strange animals from the conquered territories, together with carts laden with treasure and captured armaments. The conqueror rode in a triumphal chariot, the dazed prisoners walking in chains before him. Sometimes his children robed in white, stood with him in the chariot or rode the trace horses. A slave stood behind the conqueror, holding a golden crown and whispering in his ear a warning: that all glory is fleeting."

In Romans 8 Paul described Christians as conquerors, who by God's love and grace overcome all forces that are hostile or harmful to us. But the glory we receive can never be taken from us! Our triumph is God's triumph in us.

- 1. Why is it easy for Christians to feel more like the conquered than the conqueror?
- 2. From the passage, what words would you use to describe the mood of this passage?
- 3. Are there ever times when you feel at a loss about how to pray (v. 26)? Explain.
- 4. How can the Spirit's prayers encourage us (vs. 26-27)?
- 5. In verse 28 Paul speaks of "the good" and "his purpose." What is God's good purpose for us (v. 29)?
- 6. How do words such as *foreknew, predestined, called, justified and glorified* (vs. 29-30) help us to understand how God accomplishes His purpose for us?
- 7. Paul claims that God is working in every situation and circumstance in our lives to accomplish His good purpose (v. 28). How do you respond to this claim?
- 8. Paul imagines a courtroom in which God is the judge and Jesus is our defence attorney. How and why would they respond to any accusations brought against us (vs. 31-34)?

  How can their verdict encourage us when we feel unacceptable before God?
- 9. Many first-century Christians, including Paul, experienced many of the hardships described in verses 35-36. Why might these experiences cause us to question God's love for us?
- 10. How can Christians who are led like sheep to be slaughtered be considered "more than conquerors" (vs. 37-39)?
- 11.In what ways can this passage help us appreciate our triumph in God (vs. 26-39)?