
MOORE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION II ASSIGNMENT

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SUBJECT: Christian Education II

TITLE: A case study of the adaptation of a three-talk sermon series from 25-minute monologues to one-hour teaching sessions using techniques from the Christian Education II course. (*Custom topic approved by Bill Salier*)

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1. AIMS

This case study considers the adaptation of a three-talk sermon series on the book of Leviticus from 25-minute monologues to one-hour teaching sessions. Despite positive comments on the sermons in their original format, I decided to implement some adult-education teaching techniques for the weekend houseparty context to enhance their delivery. The resources available included an overhead projector, a whiteboard, plus flexible seating.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

I opened the first session by asking the question, “What do you know about Leviticus?” The numerous responses, both serious and light-hearted, were written as a list on one side of the whiteboard. This was followed by a second question, “What do you *want* to know about Leviticus?” These responses were recorded on the other side of the whiteboard. When the board was full, I then commented on all responses, emphasising and elaborating upon certain responses. The result was that the audience was shown the usefulness and relevance of the talks, as well as having an opportunity to claim ownership of the conference material. It also indicated the level of knowledge the crowd brought to the group. Whilst these audience responses were not recorded, they were regularly referred to.

Perhaps it would have been better if they were also written down on a separate overhead transparency so that they could be regularly displayed as an advance organiser.

The **overhead projector** was used to display the text of all Bible verses that I specifically referred to. This allowed the participants to continue to look to the front, and permitted me to the point to the screen as I referred to specific words and phrases. In addition, a diagram of the temple layout and a schematic representation of the sacrificial system were also displayed as appropriate.

Participants were given an **outline of each talk** in their conference booklets, which served as an advance organiser, as well as a means of assisting those who learn by taking notes.

In order to explain the layout and function of the Tabernacle in Leviticus, I set up chairs and tables in the dining hall as a scale diagram. When the time came in the talk, I asked the participants to follow me into the room, where on arrival I visually **acted out the procedure** of the sacrifice of an animal from Leviticus 1:1-9. This allowed the audience to have a clear visual model of the action, as well as understand the dimensions of the tabernacle.

During one talk, I divided the crowd into five sections, and allocated the people of each group one chapter from Leviticus 11-15. **Individually, members were asked** to look for the condition that caused defilement, and the remedy suggested. After a few minutes, I then recorded all answers on the whiteboard. This allowed a quick and interactive summary of five chapters, and gave the group a 'feel' for the kinds of laws in the passage. It also served as a break within the talk.

Illustrations were relatively sparse, and were only used to describe difficult concepts. For example, the obsolescence of the Old Testament sacrificial system was compared to the redundancy of the Old Parliament House.

After around 40 minutes of talk time, I asked the participants to **break up into informal groups** of around four to six people. They were to discuss questions listed in the conference booklets. These referred them to appropriate New Testament passages, and encouraged them to discover for themselves the modern relevance of Leviticus.

After around 20 minutes of group time had elapsed, I called the people together, and asked them for their conclusions. Their **answers were written on the whiteboard in a 'Mind Map'**, a tree diagram with a central idea and radiating branches and sub-branches. The first responses were based upon the meaning of the text, (eg. "What does the passage say are our sacrifices today?"). The next responses came from the second question, which forced them to consider practical means of implementing the Biblical imperatives, (eg. "What are some practical ways we can 'do good and share with others' (Hebrews 13:16)?"). These practical responses were recorded on the mind map and emanated from the branches that contained the Biblical imperatives that they had already discovered. This provided the excellent opportunity for me to further address the applications, and to steer the group in the discussion. In addition, I was able to link related ideas on the board by drawing a line between the relevant branches of the 'Mind Map'.

This group time allowed the members to be active in their learning, and to test their comprehension. The corporate brainstorming allowed for feedback from the small groups, and encouraged them to raise questions as relevant.

For the delivery of the talks, I did not rely upon full-text manuscripts. Rather, **I spoke largely without notes**, which allowed me freedom and flexibility to respond to the groups' questions and spontaneous responses. The brainstorming sessions allowed for warmth and humour to emerge, especially when light-hearted comments were made by the listeners. In addition, the safe and predictable environment of a houseparty weekend provided an excellent climate for interactive learning.

Questions were permitted at any time from the floor. This opportunity was not overly utilised, and perhaps I should have planned and directed more questions throughout the talk. However, on Saturday night after two of the three talks were completed, a special question time was convened to permit questions on Leviticus and beyond. This was very successful, as it allowed me to clarify certain issues from the talks, especially those that I treated too briefly. It also gave me an opportunity to confirm to the group that I had a thorough grasp of the material.

3. EVALUATION

The weekend turned out to be extremely successful. Some comments on a 'Thank You' card included the following; "I didn't realise Leviticus could be so interesting... thanks for being so informative, creative and challenging", "Your visual illustrations and analogies were great for our understanding", and "...the practical application was great".

There were many areas that could be fine-tuned. Additionally, I am eager to explore the possibility of using a multimedia PowerPoint presentation instead of overheads. Yet, overall, the techniques from Christian Education II produced tangible results, and preserved the attention of the group for over an hour.

The format and feel of the weekend allowed for certain flexibility in the presentation. As to how many of these techniques could be incorporated in a church/sermon environment, this remains to be seen. Yet, any or all of these techniques are sure to reap rewards, both educationally and spiritually in the life of the hearers.