

Church of God, International



INTRODUCTION

The result and value of the Christian Development Class (CDC) will be directly proportional with the priority you place on it. Our hope is that the results of participating will benefit you personally, and additionally will benefit many others. Consequently, the value will be priceless as you learn to use the skills and abilities of your God given talents to help serve others as well as working cooperatively on assignments with your brethren.

The Christian Development Class is dual in its objectives: First it is dedicated to *grounding* the individual in his endeavor of Christian fellowship with his Lord, Jesus Christ, family, community, and local congregation. Secondly, it will allow to make manifest those individuals who possess certain God given leadership skills to perhaps, become better qualified to serve in the local congregation.

Overall, the forum is committed to improving the quality of Christianity this way of life exemplifies, and provide each of us with a better understanding of the Biblical truth God has made manifest through the ministry of the Church of God, International.

Keep this manual as a guide and reference. Review the particular assignment description **every time** when designated, before preparing. This will help you to maximize the benefits of the assignments.

Remember, preparation is a key to the success of any endeavor. The impact of the assignment will improve when time is purposely set aside for preparation.

PURPOSE

In Matthew 6:33 your overall purpose in life is stated, simply, plainly, to the point: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God..." This is your great goal in life. Every action should be aimed at achieving this end. One of the means you have chosen to help you gain God's Kingdom is this **Christian Development Class**; tailor every opportunity you have to speak and study with this in mind. Determine your purpose to be closer to God and to bring your Christian brethren closer to His Kingdom with every speech, comment, or opinion you share.

Don't lose sight of that goal; know where you are going when you start; never deviate from that point; drive that *one* point home. **Continuity** is crucial to the sensibility of your comments or presentation.

Dull, dry presentations or comments that put people to sleep are a dime a dozen. You must learn to make your point, give your purpose ringing clarity. Make it sharp, to the point; remember the word of God is likened to a two-edged sword, not a pillow full of feathers. Misunderstanding is the most common ailment of the human mind. People misunderstand each other in conversation. Political orations are misunderstood. Nations bicker over misunderstandings. The main reason for all this is lack of clarity. Most people don't say what they mean, nor do they mean what they say. Concentrate on making that purpose *clear*.

Keep in mind, "A picture is worth ten thousand words." **Your presentation is a word picture** that clearly and colorfully will indelibly engrave your perceptions and understanding in the minds of your listeners. Make your portion of the subject **LIVE!** The truth can be not only plain but vital and living. **BE SURE YOU GET TRUE FACTS!** Arrange the facts in such an order that they have *real meaning*, give the facts *character* and make them interesting. **This will require you to read and study the assigned booklet.** Then be sure to outline the major points. This will help you to retain the facts that are important. You may want to augment your preparation with additional listening of tapes cogent to the booklet assigned.

If need be, additional research at a library may be helpful. Don't be tentative. Pursue your subject with vigor and broaden your understanding of the booklet.

Think continuity! Don't guess or wonder or think or suggest, dream or ponder or expound personal opinion – but **KNOW**. Be positive. Imitate our Master, Jesus Christ, who shocked the Scribes and Pharisees because He spoke as one having *authority*.

A comment or presentation may be clear, colorful, and factual, but if we don't understand it, it is useless! It is of no value unless it is understood, purposeful, and edifies.

Learn to present your facts in such a way that by the conclusion of your portion of the presentation your audience knows the subject. Be sure you keep in mind the next speaker. He will be continuing from where you leave off. Remember, think *continuity!!* This is a panel/team presentation.

Have in mind the response you want from your audience and lead them to it with increased fervor so that when you reach your climax they will want, with all their heart, to listen to the next speaker who will continue the presentation.

PREPARATION

"In a multitude of counselors there is safety" (Proverbs 24:6). As part of the preparation in presenting the assigned booklet, coordination with those associated with the assignment is *imperative*. **This is a panel/team effort.**

It may be necessary to meet a few times to coordinate your presentations. How well you harmonize the content of the booklet, as a team, will determine the understanding of the subject by the brethren.

It may be helpful to anticipate questions that, perhaps, will be asked in the panel session. This will help to improve the understanding of the brethren. Additionally, it will provide all those of the panel to be more apt to respond correctly and become more comfortable "under fire".

Remember, preparation is a key to the success of any endeavor!

"...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh!" (Matt. 12:34).

Take time to not just read the assigned booklet, but to study it. The better you *know* your subject matter the less you think about *self* (the less you have to fight nervousness); the *more* able you are to present it with earnestness and force and *help* the brethren to understand.

Study the booklet!! Write down every major point that comes to your mind about the booklet. Pare the booklet down to the core (your one purpose, aim, goal). Omit all unnecessary ideas, thoughts, wanderings and excuses. Use only the essential elements needed to get across the subject. Minimize your digressions. Draw everything you are going to say toward one point like iron filings to a magnet. The outline will help you to achieve this.

Fix your beginning and ending well in mind. It is not absolutely necessary to say the presentation over, or practice out loud; but do at least go over the things you intend to bring out, quietly to yourself, and with your associates. This will help you come closer to the time limit and also plant the subject matter more firmly in your mind.

Explain, clearly, with exactness. Almost anything can be interesting if it is readily understood. Don't be double-tongued. Don't use substitute words such as: thing, etc., so on and so forth, deal, gizmo, this or that, really something. The booklets are very specific. So be specific. Be methodic in your portion of the presentation. Say what you mean and mean what you say; and keep in harmony with your part in the overall presentation. Identify your roles clearly with each other in the cooperative effort of the presentation.

Be logical in your portion of the presentation. Go in an orderly manner step by step from the beginning to the end in a clear, understandable explanation of the subject. Think continuity. When you have studied the booklet or "portion of" you are going to speak on, ask yourself the following questions about it: what, why and who ... and then answer these questions about your subject so clearly that the dumbest person in your audience will comprehend without a shadow of a doubt.

Think enthusiastic! Be colorful! Be yourself! Listen to the sermons from the ministry, imitate their color and enthusiasm. If a sermon has stirred you deeply, speak from the same depths that stirred you.

You will notice one recurring point in all presentations: **BE FILLED WITH YOUR SUBJECT!** Ask God, our Father, in earnest seeking prayer and supplication to use you as a tool in His hands so that you may effectively profit your brethren with your portion of the presentation.

If you decide to use a picture or a "prop" of some sort for illustration, use it naturally. Don't bring too much attention to it, only let it supplement your words. An anecdote will aid you, because most jokes are colorful. But be sure to use one in good taste and one that fits the subject. An analogy may be helpful to clarify clouded meanings and vividly portray the point that you want to get across.

Make your points obvious. Appeal to interest. Catch and hold the eye of the audience. *Research* your subject! **Know the booklet!** Commit to knowing more about and adding to your store of knowledge regarding the subjects. Edify your fellow Christians. If you use statistics, beware of using too many making your subject cold and your audience colder. Research and digest a great number of facts, but when you give them to your audience, be sure that they are *few* and comprehensive.

God has given us the spirit of a sound mind. Use this sound mind in gathering your material and appeal to the sound mind and reasoning of your audience. Remember they too have been reading and studying the same booklet.

"Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh," Solomon observes in Ecclesiastes. But books *do* hold an inexhaustible supply of information; and what you are to learn is how to *extract* information and *dig out* the facts and present them with startling clarity and irreversible logic to your listeners. *Teaching as you have been taught.*

Remember you are a team member, presenting only a portion of a comprehensive subject. Keep in mind your role and part your presentation plays within the "whole". Be considerate to your associates by staying within the limits of time and subject which should have been coordinated over the weeks previous, *while preparing together.*

Spend a good deal of your time in preparation on your knees. Remember that there is a responsibility that rests upon your shoulders every time you speak to your brethren, privately or publicly. Ask God to guide and direct and help you to *edify* and *help* your brethren in the true Christian spirit of love. It would be good to go over your presentation on your knees even after you have the notes written down.

FORMAT FOR A PRESENTATION

Your portion of the presentation will be a finished product. A polished, well-rounded, whole and complete speech. It must be thorough, well-filled and purposeful.

The aim here is to have all of the purpose, clarity, color and facts that were singular points and particular aims in the purpose and preparation sections of this manual. This presentation should give you and those who hear you a sense of edification at its conclusion.

Spend real effort in your preparation. *Review the previous sections of the manual.* Determine to round off those rough edges: nervous gestures which may become habits of speech, embarrassing hesitations where you lose your train of thought, and the "and-uhs" that crop up as fillers. Concentrate on eliminating them. **Think continuity. Think team work!**

Watch for details, the finer points. Don't let little grammatical errors mar an otherwise perfect delivery. Look carefully to your dress and attire. **BE METICULOUS!**

See to it that your notes are inconspicuous but complete. Watch organization very carefully. Have each point neatly fitted to the next, and securely joined to the "whole". Remember your team mates are listening and in line to present their parts too.

Select your best type of speaking style. Put your best foot forward. Humor may be your best tool. Or maybe the use of an analogy to make your point. Just friendly conversation expanded may be your style. But above all, *just be yourself.*

Beware that you do not become so sophisticated and suave in your delivery that you give the air of a well-greased con artist. Avoid being so letter-perfect that you lack candid sincerity: this would only be an unwanted extreme. Be cognizant your audience is there *to hear your topic* more than you.

Spend time in prayer, asking God's guidance and help. No one is an complete and thoroughgoing as our Creator, and He can help you develop this same attribute in your character!

During the intermission make a last-minute check of your notes, clothing, and with your associates. Relax and forget about the whole thing until you are introduced... then give it all you have to give! And think team work! Your associates are depending on you for connection with them, so be considerate of their portion too! They're depending on you for a good "set-up".

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Your responsibility is to get the Program off to the best start possible. You must be a genial host weaving the whole program together into a session to be remembered. Give thought to comments that will make a congruous WHOLE out of the separate sections, weaving together the topics session, booklet presentations, and panel session.

Create an atmosphere of eager interest and anticipation in the program you have prepared. The SUCCESS OR FAILURE of this *important* assignment will affect the whole meeting. You will set the pace and, consequently, the atmosphere.

The shortest way to spell responsibility is ... WORK! Plan your program! Contact each participant *well ahead of time*. Prod them. Urge them! HELP THEM! It is *your responsibility* to see that the program is in *readiness* when the meeting begins! This will test your leadership ability. It's easy to do things for yourself, but to get others to perform takes hard work and determination, sparkling drive and ability!

Comments regarding the topics session can be made at the end of this session, but beware of detraction. Be cognizant of time. Additional perspective on any of the topics is certainly welcomed and is your prerogative; but be concise and brief.

FOR THE SPEAKING SESSION

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO GET DOWN EACH OF THE SPEAKERS' NAMES AND TITLES, OR YOU WILL BE THE DIRECTOR OF A GRANDIOSE FLOP!

Go to work as soon as you get your assignment! Find out each participants name: how to spell it, pronounce it correctly ... perhaps the derivation of it as a point of interest. Then check into the general background of the panel members, where they came from, what their job is, and outstanding past experience, any point of interest that could be woven into an introduction. Know the booklet title and subject also.

Armed with this information you will be able to organize. Jot down a few appropriate thoughts to **give the program continuity** – perhaps a joke or two to spark things up: exercise caution here and try to introduce any joke you have as naturally and unsuspectingly as possible – and you will be ready to confidently fulfill the program directorship.

Make a general comment or two, sparking the audiences' interest in the booklet presentation portion of the program. With an alert, expectant tone of interest in your

voice, smile warmly to the audience and panel. Gesture toward the panel as you introduce the speakers in the order of their presentations. Give the TITLE of the booklet and the speaker's names, clearly, distinctly and CORRECTLY! FOCUS ALL AUDIENCE ATTENTION ON THEM!

BE BRIEF! If you have FULLY PREPARED it will be easy. Four to five minutes will usually be enough for the actual presentation/introduction. NEVER OVER 5 minutes!!!

*** Important:** DO NOT introduce each speaker again between presentations. This will only serve to disrupt the flow of the presentations. Besides, if you used your introduction time effectively, no further introductions should be needed.

Avoid stale, worn-out phrases. Don't use, "It is indeed a pleasure... a man who needs no introduction... we are gathered here tonight..." Be different. Use VARIETY. You can explain some interesting point of background that qualifies each of the speakers on the subject. Be complimentary in a sincere way. The purpose is to MAKE THE AUDIENCE WANT TO HEAR THIS PRESENTATION. Don't forget to mention the title of the booklet and perhaps some objectives. **You may want to discuss your introduction with the panel** for coordination.

When the speakers finish, lead the applause, make some brief comments of appreciation. Don't rehash or evaluate the presentations. Just a comment briefly to pick up the flow of the program making a smooth transition into the "panel question/answer sessions" smooth.

FORMAT OF THE PROGRAM

At the end of the topics session, thank everyone for participating. Dismiss for a ten minute intermission. Be sure you resume on time for the booklet session. Remember, it's your program. After the presentations, introduce the "panel question/answer session."

During the "panel question/answer session", remain standing at the lectern while calling on those in the audience responding with questions. Additionally, you may from time to time have to act as a moderator on behalf of the panel. *Be prepared!* Be sure to keep the session going if it bogs down. A helpful technique to use is rephrasing the question more diplomatically and re-address the panel or panel member again.

Afterwards, introduce the secretary for the reading of the next meetings assignments. Turn the meeting over to the director.

TABLETOPICS

The Tabletopics section offers opportunity for EVERYBODY in the class to be *on his feet* in a stimulating discussion of thought-provoking subjects. Each comment of this topics session is a short, *complete*, impromptu speech. Here is your chance to learn to *think on your feet!*

We are instructed in I Peter 3:15 to "...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you..." Be alert and listen carefully as the Topics master begins to introduce a topic. As he asks the specific question, collect your thoughts quickly, and if you have a comment to give, raise your hand enthusiastically. When the Topics master recognizes you, rise and thank the Topics master for allowing you the opportunity to comment and then address the audience.

Avoid long, rambling comments. The best comments will average one minute or less in length. Make your comment clear but *concise*, and be sure the comment is cogent to the question asked; not another question on a related topic that you happen to know something about. Strive to volunteer so that the Topics master will not have to call on you in order to get you to comment.

In order to make a worthwhile contribution during Tabletopics, you need to be informed about world news. Read a daily newspaper or a weekly news magazine. Keep your mind active, and THINK about news events, analyzing them in specific terms. Be able to back up your comments with concrete PROOF or clear LOGIC.

Remember that you will get out of the Tabletopics session **ONLY** as much as you put into it. The key is to listen carefully to the question, **BE PREPARED, BE INFORMED, AND BE READY TO PARTICIPATE.**

As the Topics master, it is your responsibility to plan and present an interesting, worthwhile, balanced program. Among your topics should be at least *one* subject relating to a recent news item and another topic relating to the Bible or Christian living. The latter might be a question involving a seeming contradiction in the Bible, a difficult scripture to explain or a question involving a principle of Christian living. Besides one of *each* of these two types of topics you should include other *useful* topics, and at times a lighter one can spark up the session. Avoid "picky" and "what if" questions – especially on a Bible topic. **Always start out with a light subject to get things started.**

It is best to prepare **MORE** topics than you think you will actually use so that you will not be caught short.

Continuity and good flow is important. Plan the session so that the topics will be presented in a logical order, but it will sometimes be necessary to say, "Now to go on to another topic..." If the response is not good for a particular topic, do not drag it out. In this kind of situation you can either change topics after one or two comments, or *modify* the topic slightly by rephrasing it. You will sometimes be able to use one topic as a springboard for another.

You will find that the comments will be better, and the session will be more interesting if you recognize *volunteers* as much as possible, but you may have to *call* on reticent members who need encouragement to participate. **Endeavor to get EVERYONE on their feet during Tabletopics.** You should rarely, if ever, call on a member to comment for the second time before *everyone* has had an opportunity to comment.

When introducing a topic, "set the stage" for the question so that the class can anticipate the question for a few seconds and begin to prepare a response. Generally you should avoid asking a question without any introduction, even though this would be all right for certain types of topics. **Be careful, however, that you do not monopolize the floor in introducing the topics.** Your job as Topics master is to help everyone to respond with a good comment without focusing attention on yourself. This is an excellent opportunity to learn the basis of TRUE leadership – which is serving others!

The success of the session will depend not only on the **QUALITY** of the topics you present, but also to a great degree on the way you present them and the personality you exhibit in your presentation. **SET THE EXAMPLE** for the class in enthusiasm, and this will help them give an enthusiastic response. Be alert, lively and interested

in their comments! When a comment is particularly good, lead the class in applause. Remember that YOU, as Topics master, are responsible for the success of this session. If you will accept the CHALLENGE this assignment offers and put yourself *into it wholeheartedly*, you will gain valuable experience, and the whole group will profit.

ASSIGNMENTS

These assignments are required for each meeting. The secretary will assign individuals to each role for each meeting. This should be done at least a month in advance.

Preferably, the secretary will fill out the assignment schedule at the beginning of the year to be inserted in the manual. This way the members of the class will have more than enough time to prepare and complete the booklet outlines.

IMPORTANT: If a member is assigned to a task and must cancel for whatever reason, that member is responsible for contacting the secretary. The secretary then, upon notification, will assign a replacement and reschedule the individual at a later date.

ASSIGNED ROLES

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

TOPICS MASTER

PANEL PRESENTATORS (3 Minimum, 4 Maximum)

Note: Preferably, all will participate in the presentation. However, if not all are going to participate in the presentation, divide the allotted time of 40 - 45 minutes by the number of speakers to arrive at your time limits.

Important: 2 speakers minimum

TIMER

Note: Timer is responsible for arranging times of signals with the panel Presenters. This should be discussed at some point before that session of the meeting begins.

STANDARD PROGRAM FORMAT

Opening Prayer	Program Director's Choice
Opening Comments	Program Director
Introduction of Topics Master	Program Director
Topics Master	Assigned
(Approximately 30 minutes)	
Closing Comments of Topics Session	Assigned
and Announcement of Break	

BREAK (10 Minutes)

Presentation Session (Approximately 40 - 50 minutes)

Introduction of Booklet Speakers	Program Director
(4 - 5 minutes)	
Booklet Panel Speakers	Assigned
(40 minutes)	
Panel Question/Answer Session	Speakers/Audience
(15 minutes)	
Concluding Comments	Program Director
Reading of Next Assignments	Secretary
Introduction of Overall Director	Program Director
Concluding Comments and Summary	Director
(15 minutes)	