

"Three Simple Rules" to train church leaders and volunteers

Outreach and mission provide a wonderful opportunity to share the light of God's love with neighbors near and far. Whether you're training a team of volunteers for an event across town or you're assembling a team of mission workers to travel across the globe, preparation and training are key to executing a faithful and fruitful experience for everyone involved.



Challenges in mission and ministry will arise, but by adopting John Wesley's rules for living, your team can respond to any difficulties with love. Bishop Rueben Job, author of *Three Simple Rules*, clearly defines these rules in a wonderful resource that can help any team engaged in ministry.

As you train, discuss how to apply these three rules to situations volunteers may encounter:

Rule #1: Do no harm.

Job says, "To do no harm means that I will be on guard so that all my actions and even my silence will not add injury to another of God's children or to any part of God's creation" (p. 46). To do no harm means to respect the cultures and life situations of those *with* whom we minister. Applications to discuss with volunteers include:

- Dressing appropriately.
- Respecting everyone.
- Using appropriate language.
- Listening to one another, including those we are serving, without trying to "fix" situations.
- Doing everything without complaining or arguing (Philippians 2:14). Read "Take on the 21-day complaint-free church challenge" and do it!
- Always speaking calmly. Anger and anxiety are contagious!
- Seeing every person as a beloved child of God.

Rule #2: Do good.

Job says, “My desire to do good is in response to God’s invitation to follow Jesus, and it is in my control. I can determine to extend hospitality and goodness to all I meet” (p. 40).

To do good is to seek opportunities to extend grace to all. Some ways of doing this include:

- Greeting and making each person feel welcome.
- Looking for small ways to serve beyond what is expected.
- Thinking of being in ministry *with* those we serve, rather than being in ministry *to* them.
- Anticipating the needs of those we serve.
- Proactively resolving conflicts with other team members.
- Celebrating moments of joy.

Rule #3: Stay in love with God.

Job says that as we stay in love with God, we “find our moral direction, our wisdom, our courage, our strength to live faithfully from the One who authored us, called us, sustains us, and sends us into the world as witnesses who daily practice the way of living with Jesus. Spiritual disciplines keep us in that healing (p. 54).”

Staying in love with God means preparing to give from the overflow of our hearts. Since what we practice in seasons of calm will help us in seasons of stress, consider how your team will prepare their hearts for serving. Consider asking team members to commit to:

- Daily devotional time in the weeks leading up to the ministry or mission
- Formation of a prayer team
- Corporate worship
- Fasting
- Journaling

Training and preparation will help both volunteers and those we serve experience God’s grace together!