



Key Scriptures: John 4, Micah 6:8, Romans 12:2

Main Idea: *In order for us to be properly prepared, we need to make sure we're spiritually nourished.*

[Teacher's Note: This manuscript was prepared as a back-to-school lesson but you can use it any time that you feel your students need to hear the importance of being prepared or being spiritually nourished. This would be a good lesson to have before a mission trip, summer camp, or any big event on the youth calendar.]

WELCOME

Good evening guys! Welcome to [Your Church Name]. If you're visiting today, I'm excited and grateful you chose to spend your evening with us. I know you could've chosen to be anywhere tonight but I'm glad you chose to be here. I appreciate it and I know God does as well.

For those of you that don't know me, my name is [Your Name] and I'm the [Your Position] here at [Your Church].

I'm pumped about our lesson tonight because around this time every year, our culture begins to transition back to school. And here at [Your Church], as Christians, we strongly believe that, as the calendar of our culture shifts, it creates for us a good opportunity to refocus and reprioritize the things that are important to us, not by worldly standards but by Godly ones.

That means we have to **BE PREPARED**. Tests. Papers. Extracurricular activities. Deadlines. Grades. School can be a lot to handle if you're not ready. Preparing our hearts and our minds for what's to come is vital for the direction of our school year.

You know, as we begin to focus our minds on this concept of being prepared, I remember a time recently where I didn't feel that prepared. At least not in the moment. I thought I was prepared beforehand but it turned out, like so many other times in my life, I was wrong.

[Teacher's Note: Tell a story about when you thought you were prepared but you really weren't. The story will be more impactful if the stakes were pretty high. I told a story about when I took my youth group on a backpacking trip expecting only a bit of rain over the weekend. The weather turned out to be much worse than we anticipated, with 60+ mph straight line winds and quarter size hail.]

Being prepared is absolutely crucial to the success of so many things in our lives but especially in the world of academics. And with insights from God's Word, that's exactly what we're going to try to focus on tonight.

INTRODUCTION

Now, whether you can tell or not, it has been almost two decades since I've graced the halls of a school with my presence but, I still have pretty vivid memories of that time in my life.

Specifically, I remember that it seemed like every time I talked to an adult, they asked me some sort of questions about school. It's like the only thing they could think of to talk about with a teenager was school.

I heard questions like...

- How's school going?
- Are you making good grades?
- Do you like your teachers?
- What are your plans after graduation?

But the question I liked to be asked the most was...

- What's your favorite subject?

And being the clown that I was, I always had the same answer: lunch!

Of course, I was joking at the time but, now that I think about it, there might have been some wisdom to my response. How we nourish our bodies and what we nourish them with is a very important subject, especially when it comes to our success or our failure in the classroom. We don't want to forget our lunch!

I don't want to get too deep into the science of it all, but when you have some free time do a study on glucose and its effect on the brain. Essentially, our brain is the greatest consumer of glucose in our bodies and if we don't consume enough, our brains can't function properly.

When most of us hear the term glucose we think sugar. And your right, sugar is the quickest way to get glucose to the brain but, the only problem is that the effects of sugar are short lived and, not too long after eating it, you crash.

Has anyone ever felt the effects of a sugar crash before? Not fun right? You're sluggish and slow the rest of the day. Can't focus. Unproductive. Zero energy.

That's why carbohydrates like grains, fruits, and vegetables are so much better for your focus and productivity. These types of foods don't rush your brain with glucose like sugar does but slowly release glucose to the brain over time. And with 6–8-hour school days, 5 days a week, for 36 weeks a year, proper nourishment is crucial to your academic success.

If we were to forget our lunch, it would have a huge impact on our physical nourishment and ultimately, our focus, productivity, and success throughout the day. However, there's something far more important than physical nourishment that we need to think about as we start the school year, and that's our spiritual nourishment.

But now the question that you're probably all asking yourselves is...

How do I do that? How do I make sure I'm spiritually nourished to be ready for the school year? The way I look at it is if you have a Bible question, you have got to go find a Bible answer.

TEACH

If you have your Bibles with you, please turn to John chapter 4. We're going to look at an account from Jesus' earthly ministry that we're all familiar with, a time when Jesus has a specific conversation with a specific person, in a very specific place. Most of us know this account as Jesus with the woman at the well.

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Main Idea: *In order for us to be properly prepared for the school year, we need to make sure we're spiritually nourished.*

1. Share about a time when you thought you were prepared but weren't.
2. What is the hardest part about school to be prepared for academically?
3. What is the hardest part about school to be prepared for spiritually?
4. Has there ever been a school year when you 'forgot your lunch?' What happened?
5. Why do people go out of their way to avoid others, like the Jews avoiding Samaria?
6. Have you ever taken a different path to be sure you had an interaction with someone? What happened?
7. Describe to me the emotional roller coaster you think the Samaritan woman had as she interacted with Jesus.
8. What does spiritual nourishment look like in your life?
9. What can I do as your youth leader to help you be more spiritually nourished?
10. What are some things you're nervous about or excited for in this upcoming school year?
11. Let's pray about those specific excitements / concerns.

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