

140463 - A teacher is complaining that the students do not respond to her exhortation and advice

the question

I apologize for the length of my question, but the matter is very serious, and I hope that you will be patient with me. I work as a teacher in an Islamic elementary school, which is located inside a mosque. I teach children between the ages of 10 and 12 years. My question is: when I try to teach them hadiths, Islamic education and lessons about the Sirah (Prophet's biography), they are very happy to listen, but I do not see the hoped-for results. For example, I do not see them putting what they learn into practice. Please note that they know that they should not drink standing, and they know the hadith which speaks about drinking when standing, yet they persist in doing that, unless I tell them and remind them about the hadith. I want to strengthen their faith and see them put into practice what I teach them, but I do not know what I can do more than that. I think that I have neglected some important topics, and that is why they find it difficult to put it into practice. Sometimes I think that it is shortcomings on my part, and I want them to love the faith as I love it. I also take into consideration the fact that some of the children came from public schools, and the Islamic environment is new to them. What are the best topics to start teaching the children step-by-step at this age, so that they will fear Allah and love to strive for His sake? How can I make the faith appealing to them and explain its beauty to them?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

This question of yours indicates that you are doing well in fulfilling your responsibility as a teacher, guide and caller. We ask Allah, may He be glorified, to reward you for your passion and bless your efforts.

The teacher is entrusted with his work and is responsible for what he is entrusted with, namely advising the students, guiding them and showing them what is good and beneficial for them. According to the hadith, `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: I

heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “Each of you is in a position of responsibility and each of you is answerable for those under his care.” Narrated by al-Bukhari, 853; Muslim, 1829.

If all teachers had the same concern and drive as you, and these good goals – we would raise a good and righteous generation, by Allah’s leave.

Secondly:

The Muslim should teach, advise and guide, but he is not responsible for the outcome, or if people do not respond to him. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): {The Messenger’s duty is only to convey [the message]} [al-Ma’idah 5:99].

The success of calling is not measured by quantity or numbers. According to the hadith, Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The nations were shown to me and I saw a Prophet with a group of men, a Prophet with one or two men, and a Prophet with no one with him.” Narrated by al-Bukhari, 5378; Muslim, 200.

If the people called do not put the message into practice, this does not mean that the call has failed. Perhaps one word, one piece of advice or one exhortation will bear fruit after a while.

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “This matter [Islam] will surely reach as far as night and day reach, and Allah will not leave any house of mud-bricks or tent of [goat or camel] hair except Allah will cause this religion to enter it, by which the honourable will be honoured and the disgraceful will be disgraced. Allah will honour the honourable with Islam and will disgrace the disgraceful with disbelief.” Narrated by Ahmad, 28/155. Classed as authentic by al-Albani in *as-Silsilah as-Sahihah*, 3.

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not see that during his lifetime.

For the call to be regarded as successful, it is not essential for a person to see its results directly.

The method that we advise the teacher to follow when advising and guiding his students is as follows:

a.. It is essential to have communication between the home and the school. If the school does constructive work and the home destroys it, or vice versa, that will never lead to the hoped-for results. Hence it is essential for there to be communication with the parents or guardians of the students. For example, if the teacher encourages the students to pray regularly, there must be follow-up from the families of the children, and they should remind the children to pray.

If the teacher encourages the child – for example – to observe the etiquette of eating, namely saying Bismillah and eating with the right hand, then there must be follow-up from the family. The same applies to all other matters of etiquette and rulings.

b.. There should be a focus on spiritual education and strengthening the child's faith.

See the answer to question no. [22950](#) .

c.. Education by means of stories and teaching the child to love the Prophets and the righteous, such as the Sahabah and Tabi`in, and to follow their example. This method is one that will have the greatest impact on the students.

d.. Teaching by example. If the teacher shows the students that he or she is honest, presents things well and has a good attitude, this will have the greatest positive impact on them. How can a student accept the teacher's encouragement to tell the truth and fulfil promises when he lies, or he makes promises and does not fulfil them?

e.. Putting into practice what is taught. So the teacher should pray in front of the students, and do wudu' in front of them, because when they see that they will have a mental image in their minds of how to do that act of worship.

With regard to the first things that the teachers should instil in the students' minds, they are:

a.. The pillars of faith, namely belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and the divine decree, both good and bad. This should be presented in a simple and

straightforward manner, as suited to the students' level, giving examples and repeating frequently.

b.. The rulings having to do with the most important acts of worship, such as prayer, along with wudu' and the etiquette of purifying oneself, and encouragement to always be clean.

c.. General etiquette, such as speaking good words and avoiding bad words, loving one's parents, respecting elders, treating friends kindly, and so on.

d.. Warning against bad things, such as insulting others, swearing, lying, transgressing against others, and so on.

The most important attributes that the teacher should have include patience, following up on things and not giving in to despair.

We ask Allah to help you and guide you, and to grant you the best reward for your passion and efforts.

And Allah knows best.