

A Coach's Guide to Sunday School

Second Edition



A Sunday School Director's Manual

Compiled by the
**Sunday School Department of the
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**
With help from their friends

DEDICATION

This Second Edition of the Coach's Guide is dedicated to the memory of David Wills, former Director of the Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 1998–2000. A Great Team Player.

To the past coaches who have shown us what a winning Sunday School can do to accomplish the Great Commission –

Arthur Flake

J. N. Barnett

A. V. Washburn

Harry Piland

Acknowledgments

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We must extend our thanks to those who have added their wit and wisdom to our understanding of Sunday School work. Some we know and some we cannot even name at this time—they've shared a story, a cartoon, an insight to this resource.

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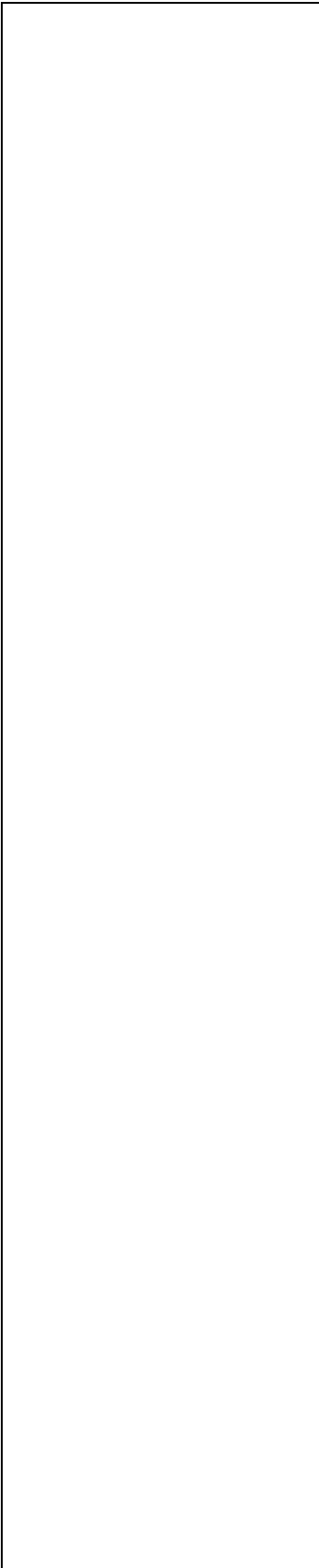


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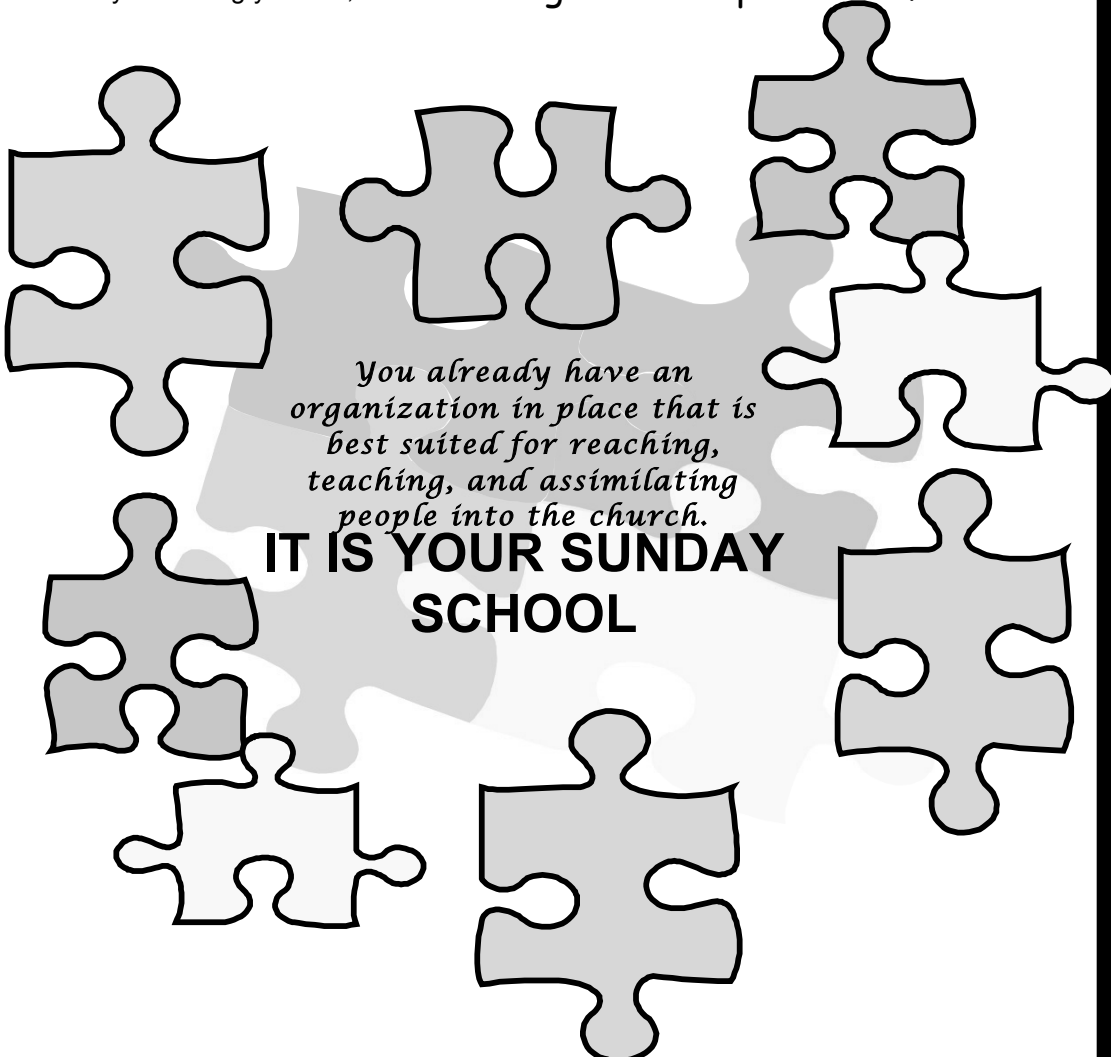
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Pastor's Clipboard

Although this manual is designed for a Sunday School Director, it is essential for you, the Pastor, to be the driving force and the head Cheerleader in order to see your Sunday School grow.

You may be asking yourself, "How do I get all the pieces to fit?"



You already have an organization in place that is best suited for reaching, teaching, and assimilating people into the church.

IT IS YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

WHAT IS SUNDAY SCHOOL?

“Sunday School is the foundational strategy in a local church for leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and for building on-mission Christians through open Bible study groups that engage people in evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, and worship.”

Sunday School...

It is foundational. It can set the course of the church.

It is a strategy. It takes work and planning.

Its purposes are both an evangelism strategy and a discipling strategy.

Open groups are developed to allow anyone to be enrolled.

The functions of Sunday School are evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, and worship.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR?

The pastor is the primary leader of a Sunday School. Rarely will a Sunday School stay on its purpose without the visible, vital leadership of its pastor. The pastor and/or other ministers on the church staff are responsible for the overall direction of all of the church's ministries, including the Sunday School. The pastor works with the Sunday School Council (Planning Team) to set goals and evaluate the Sunday School's work in evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, and worship.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide overall leadership to the Sunday School Council (Planning Team)
2. Lead the team in keeping the Sunday School focused on its purpose.
3. Give vital and visible support to Sunday School and its leaders.
4. Communicate the overall mission (purpose) and message of the Sunday School to the entire church.
5. Guide team members toward spiritual maturity and assist them in developing skills that enhance their ability to fulfill their responsibilities.
6. Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and through full involvement in the life and ministry of the church.
7. The pastor and other leaders will give frequent opportunities for members who are not Christians to confess Christ publicly, and urge them to do so.

“There is no substitute for a pastor with a vision for the church, the understanding that the Sunday School is the way to grow a church, and the commitment to give the time necessary to help his staff do the work of the Sunday School.” — Jerry Squyres, in Secrets of Sunday School Success for Ministers of Education, Joe Haynes, compiler. Convention Press, 1992.

Need Help? Contact your state Convention Sunday School Department to schedule a Sunday School consultation, arrange for training, or to gain additional information on Sunday School as a

Foundational Strategy for Changing Lives.

INTRODUCTION

Coach? Am I a coach?



Coach. Webster describes a coach as one who trains intensively by instruction, demonstration, and practice. We see this in the lives of great coaches such as Vince Lombardi, Tom Landry, and Bear Bryant. These legendary coaches instructed their players on the fundamentals of football, showed them how to win and conducted practices in a way as to mold together individual men into a single winning team. Through their understanding of the game and how to work with people, they will forever be considered among the greatest coaches of all time.

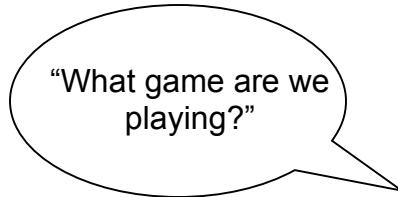
But who was the greatest coach? Without a doubt, it was Jesus. Look at how He coached the disciples. He instructed them in truth. He demonstrated truth before them. He gave them opportunities to practice truth until it became a part of them. He was able to take a group of men and make them the most powerful team the world will ever see, a team that changed the world.

Wouldn't it be great to be able to bring your Sunday School teachers, workers, and members together to form a team that would be as effective as the disciples? A team that understood the purpose of the game and worked together to accomplish that purpose? A team that, while executing different tasks and responsibilities (such as in football the offense, defense, and special teams), would use their talents and gifts to help the entire team? Is it possible? You better believe it! That is what Sunday School is all about.

In the following pages we will talk about what it takes to make your Sunday School into a team. We will talk about your role as coach. We will talk about the fundamentals that your team must execute to be successful. We will talk about how to develop a game plan. Very quickly, we will give you an overview of what it means to coach a team like the disciples, that can change your community and the world.

But don't rush it. While we tried to make this resource brief, we have included two very important sections that we hope you will take your time and work through. The first is "Time Out". This is designed for you to take a "time out" from reading and consider your answer to the questions and their implications for your Sunday School. The other section is the "Practice Session". This section gives you suggestions on how you can put this fundamental into practice in your Sunday School and your own life.

Are you ready to begin? Are you ready to consider your role as Sunday School Director as a coach of this potentially powerful team? If so... let's begin with the primary question every coach must ask:



SESSION ONE:

VISION

Welcome to the game —leading an exciting, dynamic Sunday School in your church. You may not know it, but you are about to undertake something that could have a profound impact on your church. Put simply, you are about to embark on a mission. It could become the mission of a lifetime.

Understanding the nature of the game makes the first and most important difference in the way you lead Sunday School. The truth is, what you believe about Sunday School affects how you see its role, the people who make up Sunday School, how you pray and work with those people, and how you lead them to victory. There is an old saying that “Seeing is believing.” Don’t believe it. *Believing* is seeing. It is what you believe about Sunday School that determines how you *see* Sunday School and how you see Sunday School determines how you lead it.

Time Out!

Consider what you believe about Sunday School.

1. What do you believe to be the real purpose of Sunday School?
2. What do you believe should happen on Sunday mornings when people are gathered in Sunday School?
3. What do you believe should happen with Sunday School when Sunday is over?

What you believe about each of these affects how you see Sunday School in your church and each of these affects how you lead Sunday School. You could be seeing Sunday School in your church in three different ways.

1. Seeing Sunday School as a SCHOOL.

You would be in good company for seeing your Sunday School as primarily a school. For over 200 years of the Sunday School movement, Sunday Schools have been seen as schools. It is in our terminology. Start with the name: Sunday *School*.

Check out the other terms we use and see how many are basically school terms.

- ◆ Enrollment
- ◆ Attendance
- ◆ Class
- ◆ Teacher
- ◆ Lessons
- ◆ Records

These suggest a strong relationship to education and academics. In fact, we often measure the success of today's Sunday School by observing two of these criteria—attendance and lessons (or study). The average member feels that Sunday School has been successful in proportion to the number of people who show up (attendance) and if the lesson has been presented (Bible study). Those are pretty important concerns, for sure.

Chances are you report Sunday School attendance each Sunday and measure your Sunday School's success by that standard. You believe that Bible study takes place because you have enlisted teachers and have provided Bible study materials to teachers and students. By those standards you have been successful, perhaps. Why, then, do we feel something is missing?

With these standards alone, a church can still have a stagnant Sunday School.

There's more to Sunday School than attendance and studying lessons, as important as those things are.

2. Seeing Sunday School as *Small (Relational) Groups*.

The emphasis on relational groupings came to the forefront in the last thirty years or so. Seeing Sunday School as primarily made up of small relational groupings adds an important dimension to our view of Sunday School. People bond together in small groups. We feel included, accepted. We know one another. We may share similar interests, or at least be in similar stages in our lives. Younger adults relate better with younger adults. Youth bond better with youth. Median or senior adults with each other. It's not that

people can't relate to people of other ages or life circumstances—rather it is that we feel more comfortable in smaller groups of people who know each other and who build continuing relationships over a period of time.

Relationships are a powerful dimension of Sunday School. Research indicates that the main reason people attend Sunday School is because of relationships. Small relational groups can emphasize meeting needs, healing hurts, praying for one other, and enjoying fellowship with each other.

When you visit people about attending Sunday School, chances are you will describe your Sunday School in terms of relationships—“we have a wonderful class, our people are friendly, they care about you, you will be welcomed.” How long has it been since you invited people to Sunday School because you wanted them to study? Bible study *is* important in this view, but it occurs in the context of relationships.

Success in the relational or small group view of Sunday School is measured by how well classes enjoy each other and how strong the bonds of fellowship are.

However, there can be a major flaw to this view of Sunday School. Many times the fellowship we enjoy is more with one another instead of with people outside the Sunday School. While we may be friendly with each other, we may not be viewed that way by a stranger or an occasional visitor who feels left out and not welcome because he or she does not fit the style of the group.

So how can we have a quality school plus a warm, caring fellowship and still reach out to people who are not part of the Sunday School?

We need to see the Sunday School in a different light.

3. We can see Sunday School as...

Teams of People on Mission for God.

Sunday School is not just about classes and organizational structure, as important as those are, but about how we function as a people. Sunday School is about teamwork. Teamwork becomes a style of working together. We join together in mutual commitment to the team's goal. A Sunday School director functions more as a coach. Teachers function more as team captains. It is simply a way of thinking about our work together more than about changing organizational structure. We can still have classes and departments. *The difference is that we become a team!*

When you think of teams, what characteristics come to mind?

Notes

Did you think of things like:

- Teams have a goal.
- Teams work together.
- Teams share a common vision.
- Teams have fun!
- Team members each have a special role on the team.
- Teams study the game.
- Teams employ strategies to win the game.
- Teams are measured by how well they play the game.
- Teams want to win!

It may seem strange to think about teams as a concept for Sunday School. That's true until you add that we are to become *teams of people on mission with God*.

Sunday School, then, has a "mission" purpose.

A purpose driven
church needs a
mission driven
Sunday School.

Think about where your church's mission field begins. It begins right at your doorstep. As people leave Sunday School and worship on Sundays, they reenter their mission fields. Your members' mission fields consist of their families, friends, work and school associates, neighbors, and anyone else with whom they have contact during the week. Their mission field begins where they are and extends ultimately around the world. God has called us to be on mission—His mission in the world.

We cannot understand Sunday School apart from mission. The reason we gather, pray, study the Bible, have fellowship with each other is to prepare ourselves to once again go into the mission field. We do this each week. *Every Sunday is preparation day* for all the teams of people who make up our Sunday School. Every class is a team of people. Every department is a team of people. Those teams have a mission to accomplish. It is best described in the Great Commission — *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Matthew 28:19–20. (NASB)

Sunday School's measure of success becomes how well it is fulfilling the Great Commission.

Attendance is only one part of the measure of success.

Quality and consistent Bible study is only one part of the measure.

Fellowship and caring about one another is only one part of the measure.

Being on God's mission is the final and most important measure of all.

A successful Sunday School, then, is one that prepares its people to be on God's mission in the community and around the world.

Do you believe that about Sunday School? Do you see that in your vision of Sunday School?

Until a leader gains a deep conviction about the mission purpose of a Sunday School, it is doomed to become just one more activity a church does. God did not call us to lead just another activity, but to lead the most important thing—His mission.

Read about the first Sunday School we know about. Read Luke 24:13-35. The resurrected Jesus joined two men walking on the road to Emmaus. You might think, "Come on, you can't be serious. This wasn't a Sunday School." Before you conclude that, check out a few things:

1. It took place on Sunday—actually resurrection Sunday!
2. It was a small group—two men and Jesus, the teacher.
3. He joined them in their journey—a teacher joins students in their life journeys.
4. He began with a question "What are you talking about?" Teachers must begin with students where they are and with what they are discussing among themselves.
5. He found out that they knew something about Jesus, that they had hoped there might be someone like Him — many people know something about Jesus. Most hope there could really be someone like Him. But they are not sure.
6. He opened to them the Scriptures—He taught the Bible. Like today, even then they still did not quite get it. (And He was the resurrected Jesus teaching on resurrection Sunday!)
7. Their eyes were opened—when Jesus had fellowship with them. Just like today, some people will not "get it" until we get out there with them, in their homes and in their lives and become examples to them.
8. They became people with a message—a *good news* message—to share with others.

*Being on
God's
mission is
the final and
most
important
measure of
success!*

Notes

My vision for Sunday School is....

You don't think that this was the first Sunday School? Perhaps. But you will have to admit that it depicts the very elements of what a Sunday School is all about!

The interesting thing is that Jesus has chosen to do this very kind of teaching *through us*. *The way we must do Sunday School is the way Jesus dealt with the two men on the road to Emmaus on resurrection Sunday.*

Now that we understand the purpose of the game, let's put together the team.

Practice Session

- In the sidebar, write your vision for your church's Sunday School.

SESSION TWO:

If Sunday School is made of teams, who is on the team?

THE TEAM

It's fourth down, four yards to go. This is one of the most critical plays of the game and it is crucial that the team gets the first down this time. So the coach pulls out all stops and asks you to go in. You put on your helmet, and run out on the field. There you are, facing 11 of the biggest football players you have ever seen. You crouch down over the ball. And then you realize.... you are the only one on your team out there.



your helmet,

Does that sound ridiculous? In many Baptist churches, this scenario is played again and again. The time is critical for the Sunday School to “make a big play” and become the team that it was meant to be. But instead of sending a whole team, the church sends just one person out on the playing field.

Are you in one of those situations? Do you feel like you are up against a wall with no one to help you play the game? You can't play the game successfully by yourself. And you are not meant to play the game alone. In the game of Sunday School, you are meant to have a team in the game with you. Mike Ditka is credited with the acronym TEAM — **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore! It is exciting when a team of people work together in a common mission. When you have a team, everyone really does achieve more.

In the Old Testament, we find Moses with the same dilemma. There were so many demands on his time, and so many people coming to him for advice, that he found there were not enough hours in the day. It was his father-in-law who suggested that Moses select men who would serve as judges for the people. Moses needed a team!

Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves. (Exodus 18:24–26).

Time Out!

How would an organization such as what Moses had help you in your Sunday School ministry? Write your response below.

Notes

Let's look at another Biblical example of how "the team" helps a ministry. In John 10, Jesus is shown as a role model in the Sunday School ministry. When Jesus was on earth, He had a clear understanding of His mission. *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (John 10:10). Yet, He chose others to help with that mission. These men were a diverse group, ranging from Matthew, a rich but hated tax collector; to Judas, a stingy money keeper; to James, a self centered, but disciplined servant; to Peter, an overzealous follower; to John, a fisherman who just came out of his boat. And yet, Jesus brought them all together to accomplish His mission. You can find that mission in Matthew 10. "He called His twelve disciples to Him and gave them authority..."

Time Out!

How did Jesus include the disciples in His mission? Write your response below.

In essence, Moses and Jesus formed teams. These teams were critical to effective leadership and ministry. The "team concept" was important to them. The team concept is important to us. Who do you need on your team?

THE COACHING STAFF

As in any good team, it can only have one "head coach" guiding the team. In 1993, Jimmy Johnson coached the Dallas Cowboys to a Super Bowl victory. And yet, the next season, he resigned, citing "without question (owner Jerry) Jones wanted to be more involved, and I'm accustomed to doing things a certain way. And so that's where it ended up being a problem." In assembling the team, you must first, and foremost, realize that the church you are in is God's church. He is *the* Head Coach. So rely on God. Ask Him for guidance and strength.

Time Out!

Take a moment, right now, to pray and ask God for His leadership through the Holy Spirit.

You will want others on your coaching staff. Your coaching staff is the Sunday School Council or in some churches the Sunday School Leadership Team. This group is made up of men and women from different age divisions in your church. How do you recruit these other members of your coaching staff? One approach used in many churches is the Nominating Committee who nominates leaders in your church. If you have not had the opportunity to work with the Nominating Committee, it is one of the most important things that you can do. Your opinion regarding who should serve in certain Sunday School positions is important.

Time Out!

Who is the head of your Nominating Committee?

When do they meet?

How do you provide input to this group?

For a guide in enlisting leaders, see page 60

In selecting your Sunday School Council in a small church setting, you may want to choose one leader from the Preschool Sunday School area, one from the Children's, one from the Youth, and one or two from the Adult. A church that is set up in departments may want to use Department Directors. Larger churches may choose to use Division Directors.

Be careful that your coaching staff does not get too large. It needs to be large enough to share input, but small enough that decisions can be made easily. If it gets too large, then all of your players become coaches!

Time Out!

Think about your Sunday School Council. Who should be on your coaching staff? Write your response below.

Now that you have a coaching staff, what needs to be done? The coaching staff will have the tasks of planning and coordinating the Sunday School ministry. The tasks include:

- ◆ Setting numerical goals for outreach and growth for the Sunday School.

Notes

- ◆ Study records and reports and develop ways to improve outreach, Bible teaching, and Christian living.
- ◆ Determine the best use of space, furnishings, and supplies.
- ◆ Formulate an annual calendar of activities.
- ◆ Schedule special activities and projects for Sunday School.
- ◆ Prepare for the enlistment of leaders.
- ◆ Involved leaders in appropriate training.
- ◆ Act upon recommendations from the Church Leadership Team.
- ◆ Develop a Sunday School budget and determine budget priorities.
- ◆ Provide training and special recognitions.
- ◆ Promote and support schedules for Sunday School weekly workers meetings.
- ◆ Plan for an efficient functioning Sunday School organization.
- ◆ Coordinate the work of the Sunday School with special emphases such as Winter Bible Study and Vacation Bible School.

Finally, the coaching staff is to evaluate how well we are playing the game. Here are a few factors to consider: Do your officers and teachers have job descriptions? How are they doing? Is the Sunday School in line with church objectives and goals? When was your last training opportunity and how could it be improved?

Time Out!

Take a moment and name the top two strengths of your Sunday School and the top two weaknesses of your Sunday School.

THE GAME PLAN

So what would be the game plan of the Sunday School Council? In other words, what would a typical Sunday School Council meeting be like? You may wish to call these “team meetings.” Following is a suggested outline. Whether you use this, or another outline, make sure to mail a copy to your team before the scheduled meeting.

1. Inspiration

- ◆ Present a meaningful and timely devotion.
- ◆ Select Scriptures and suggestions about leadership.
- ◆ Renew commitments.
- ◆ Prayer.

2. Information

- ◆ Training tidbits
- ◆ New ideas that can be shared by the group.

3. Evaluation

- ◆ Goal setting and progress reports.
- ◆ Rooms and materials.
- ◆ Evaluation of previous quarter, month, and/or Sunday.

4. Communication

- ◆ Communicate upcoming events.
- ◆ Appreciation of team members.

5. Preparation

- ◆ Plan for upcoming projects.
- ◆ Schedule an annual planning retreat with your team.
- ◆ Discuss needs of the Sunday School and how to help with those needs.

6. Prayer

This is so important! Do not cut this short!

- ◆ Pray for prospects.
- ◆ Pray for open doors of ministry.
- ◆ Pray for laborers for other areas of ministry.
- ◆ Pray for items of need and concern in persons' lives.

THE PLAYERS

The Pastor, Minister of Education, Sunday School Director, and Sunday School Council make up an excellent coaching staff. But if they are the coaches, then who are the players? Your church probably already has teachers in positions of leadership in your Sunday School. Without them, the teaching ministry could not happen. But there are other players who are also important.

If your Sunday School is set up in classes rather than departments, you may want to fill positions such as Class Secretary, Class Fellowship Leader, Prayer Leader, and Class Outreach-Evangelism Leader.

If your Sunday School is set up in departments, you will want to fill department positions such as the Department Secretary, Department Fellowship Leader, Department Outreach-Evangelism Leader, Prayer Leader, and even a Department Inreach Leader.

BUILDING TEAM SPIRIT

Have you ever thought about the role of a cheerleader on your team? We don't often think about their being a part of the team, but the role they play is vital. It is important to build team spirit and cheer the team on in their tasks. Part of your role as church leader is to be cheerleader.

The country is full of good coaches. What it takes to win is a bunch of interested players.

—Don Coryell

Building team spirit is more than an occasional meeting. It is nurturing and developing the individual in their task. In *Church Staff Teams that Win*, Jerry Brown outlines some excellent ways to build team spirit. The *first* is to grow spiritually together. This means taking time to present a meaningful devotion in your team meetings, as well as encouraging your team in their daily walk with Christ. The *second* is to communicate with each other. A quickly written memo does not encourage your team to be the best they can be. Communication is a two-way street, and that includes opening yourself to communication from others. The *third* is to express appreciation openly. Individuals not only like, but need to feel appreciated. *Fourth*, confront conflict redemptively. If there is conflict on your team, it needs to be dealt with in a loving, redemptive manner. And *fifth*, define the mission corporately. Let the team share not only the planning, but the vision as well.

Another way to build team spirit is to provide training for your team. A well trained team is a confident one. Your team, including class and department leaders, should attend a training event at least once a year. Your church may already budget and plan for an annual training event. If not, then you may want to try to include this item in your next year's budget. You will want to secure leaders to lead your team in preparation for the upcoming year. If you need help in securing these leaders, contact your association or state Sunday School Department for help. They can give suggestions for conferences or for leaders around your area that could help with your training event.

Time Out!

What kind of training event is appropriate for your church? Take a moment and calendar this event, or check with your association or State Sunday School office to find out about events in your area.

The team is now organized and trained. They are ready to get out on the field. It's fourth down, four yards to go. The time has come to send them onto the field. And it's time for you to step back and cheer the team on. Isn't it great to know that the work of the Sunday School doesn't rely on just one person? Rather, it relies upon the TEAM — **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**ccomplishes **M**ore.

Go, TEAM!

Practice Session

- Recruit your Sunday School Council.
- Schedule monthly meetings for this year.

Notes

Like blocking and tackling, every game has necessary fundamentals. Sunday School also has fundamentals. Outreach is an important one.



SESSION THREE: OUTREACH

“Say Coach, this Outreach stuff is a whole lot like visitation.”

“Yep, you’re startin’ to get the picture. Now let’s DO IT!”

Jesus said, *“On the basis of My authority, as you are going, make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things I have taught you and I’ll be with you even to the end of the age.”* Matt. 28:18–20.

We are commanded and commissioned to build a team of Great Commission disciples, missionaries, and team members to defeat the enemy of the Kingdom by winning to faith in Christ one lost person at a time. We are then to assimilate them into an ongoing Bible Study, Sunday School class, where they can be encouraged, nurtured and brought to spiritual maturity. This sounds good. It even sounds like something every coach can do. But, just how do we do it effectively?

We follow the simple plan put forth in Scripture and do it correctly. Just like a football team, teach the basics, master the basics, and then put them into practice. Jesus used a simple, yet profound strategy of evangelism. He modeled His plan before 12 men over and over again until they caught the plan, then He sent them out two by two to carry out what He had taught them. When they came back overwhelmed with the results, He reassured them and sent them out again. The result is what we know as the New Testament church.

Another outstanding coach, Arthur Flake, began and concluded his “Flake’s Formula for Sunday School Growth” with the basics.

- 1) Know your potential — Who and where are the prospects for your Sunday School?
- 2) Enlarge your ministry — Where can you begin new units?
- 3) Equip the people — Prepare your people for ministry.

- 4) Provide the environment — What space is available?
- 5) Go after the people — Enroll the prospects.

Notes

KNOW YOUR POTENTIAL

Where can you find prospects for your Sunday School and what do you do with them when you find them? There are countless ways of finding people in your community who are not presently attending Sunday School on a regular basis. Some of those may be your own church members. **EVERY RESIDENT MEMBER OF YOUR CHURCH SHOULD BE ENROLLED IN SUNDAY SCHOOL.** If they are not enrolled, call them and ask them to be enrolled. It will surprise you that some have never been asked.

Here are just a few other ways you can discover prospects.

- 1) A community telephone survey. You can get names and addresses from a “criss-cross” telephone directory. Develop a simple questionnaire asking personal information about their involvement in Bible Study/Sunday School. Make it sound personal. Tell them you are concerned for them and their needs. Many will respond positively.
- 2) A walking community survey. Select a neighborhood around your church. Send a letter to let them you know will be coming within a certain period of time. Use a similar questionnaire as above to determine their involvement in Bible Study/Sunday School. Take something with you from your church as a gift. Show personal interest. Many can be enrolled immediately.
- 3) Gather names from special events like concerts, Vacation Bible School, Fall Festival, Wild Game Suppers, Ladies’ events, and Men’s events, just to name a few.
- 4) Newcomer list. Local agencies like Welcome Wagon will gladly provide names of newcomers to your area for a small fee. Local utility companies will let you gather names if you tell them your purpose. Write a welcome letter to those families you discover and include a response card or call them with an invitation. They are waiting to hear.
- 5) Enlist folks to check the paper for birth announcements. Call with congratulations and ask the new parents if they are attending Sunday School.

- 6) FRAN Prospects—
 Friends
 Relatives

Associates (co-workers)
Neighbors

Have a special emphasis such as “I know a prospect for Sunday School.”
Ask your members to submit names of people they know who are not presently attending Sunday School.

- 7) Worship and Sunday School guests. Ask them on their first visit if they would like to be enrolled in Sunday School. Continue asking every time they come until they agree to be enrolled or request that you don't ask them anymore.

Time Out!

Can you think of other ways to discover prospects for your Sunday School? Think of new ways and write them here:

MASTER FILE

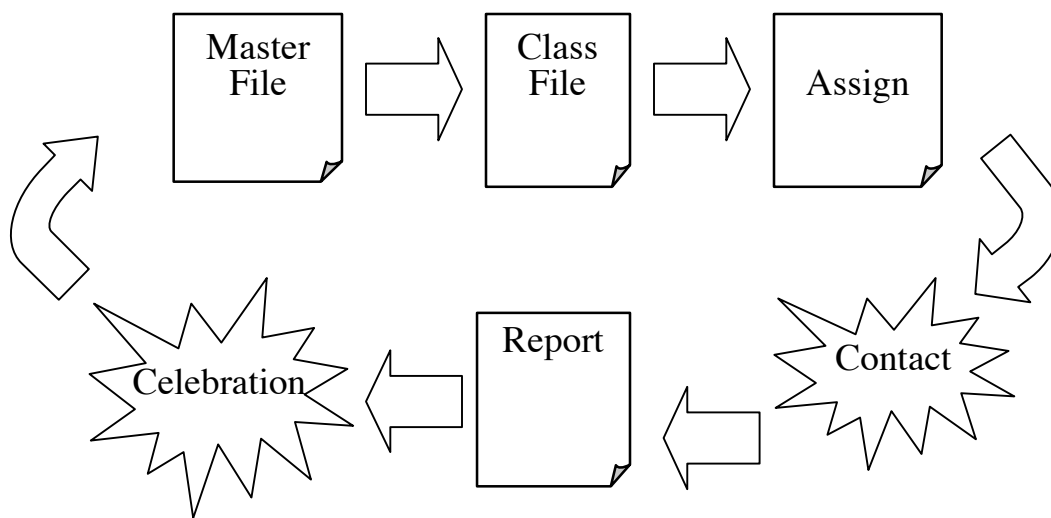
Organize every prospect's name by age according to your Sunday School organization. This file should be kept in the Sunday School office and kept up to date. These names can be duplicated and given to the appropriate age class, but the names of individuals in the Master file should be kept until the individual is enrolled or tells you they are not interested.

CLASS FILE

Every class should keep a prospect roll just as they keep a membership roll. The activity regarding this roll should be kept up to date. These names should be assigned on a weekly basis and reported on a weekly basis. The reporting can be a celebration, especially when the prospect is introduced as a new member on Sunday morning.

GO AFTER THE PEOPLE

Take a look at this picture for organization, involvement, follow-through, and results.



This plan works if you work the plan. It fails if the files are not kept up to date. It fails if you do not keep active prospects in the file. It fails if the prospects names are kept in your Bible and never contacted. But if you DO these things, it will work regardless of the location and size of the church. How do you accomplish such a challenge?

ENLIST THE RIGHT TEAM

True enough, there are some folks who just love outreach. AND, they are in your church. They can be easily enlisted, equipped, and encouraged to do the work. You can pray for them, find them, ask them, equip them and great results will follow. There are many training strategies to use like F.A.I.T.H., G.R.O.W., the “NET”, Evangelism Explosion, the Roman Road to Salvation, etc. which work great. Just adapt the one that works for your church and DO IT.

You will need to enlist a Sunday School Outreach Leader to coordinate the outreach ministry for the entire Sunday School. That individual will assist you in planning, conducting, and evaluating the outreach activities for your Sunday School.

Every Adult and Youth class needs to have an Outreach Leader as well. Your Teachers and Activity Leaders in Children and Preschool classes serve as Outreach leaders.

What are the basic things these folks do?

- They love people.
- They encourage people.
- They motivate people.
- They get involved with people to lead them to Christ.

Time Out!

Who do you know like this? Have they been asked to serve? Have you prayed for them to serve? Make a list of possibilities.

CONTACT

It is important to contact your prospects soon, especially if they have been guests in your church. It is important to contact guests within 72 hours of their visit with you. This could be by phone, personal visit, or letter. A personal contact is always best and makes a more lasting impression. This contact can be made by the pastor or staff, but is best if made by a member of the Sunday School class of which they would attend.

All prospects should be assigned through the age group into which they fit as a basic plan. Others may be assigned to special interest groups as they fit best. Whatever the process, the objective is the same. Make a personal contact and seek to meet the needs of the individuals by getting them involved in your caring, ministering fellowship and Bible Study.

REPORTING

Once the contact is made, the results need to be reported to the Class Outreach Leader and shared with the class. The Class Outreach Leader will then give the results to the Sunday School Outreach Leader, who updates the Master file.

You have the prospects. You have the team. You have the strategy. Now it is time to get out of the huddle and get in the game. *“As you go, make disciples....and lo, I am with you.”* Matt. 28:19, 20.

Practice Session

- Develop and maintain a Master Prospect File.
- Assign prospects through age level departments and classes.
- Go after the people.... Celebrate the results!

Studies have proven that the number one reason why people come to Sunday School is fellowship.



Notes

SESSION FOUR: INREACH

Once we reach people for Bible study, we need to do all we can to keep them actively involved. It means making sure that people feel a part of the family — that they are connected to what is going on in your church. Whatever term we decide to use, ministering to our members is essential to a healthy, growing Sunday School.

To do an effective job with the tasks of care and fellowship, we must plan for it. What does it take to help members and prospects feel a sense of belonging and to help meet needs as they arise? We will look at the “why’s” and “how’s” of care first and then fellowship.

CARE-BINDING UP THE WOUNDS

Showing care for another’s needs is not an easy thing for everyone. But do we, as followers of Christ, have an option when it comes to ministering to others? Look at what God’s Word says concerning care and compassion.

Luke 10:30–37 is the familiar passage about the Good Samaritan. The keys to this passage are in verses 33, 34, and 37—...*But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him, and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him...* And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” And Jesus said to him, “**Go and do the same.**”

The Good Samaritan was not only willing to see the needs that someone else had, he was willing to take action, making personal sacrifices to see that the needs were met. Verse 37 directs — *go and do the same*. Other examples make this point — the life of Christ; the accounts of the early church in Acts; the New Testament letters. **We find that we are to see needs with Jesus’ eyes and meet needs with action and with love.** The

biblical mandate is clear in 1 John 4:7, “*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*”

We should be constantly striving to create a climate within our Sunday School departments and classes where sharing of real needs and concerns can take place and where our members can be challenged to meet needs as the Holy Spirit prompts them. When we care for people and minister to their needs they learn that they are truly part of the family.

Time Out!

List the five greatest personal needs that your Sunday School members have.

How do we care? What shape does “care” take when we try to organize and plan for it to happen? Let’s take a look by age division at how you can best meet needs in your Sunday School.

Preschool and Children. For your preschool and children’s divisions, care will take place in several different ways. The first way for care and ministry to be experienced is when teachers and department directors take time during the Bible study period to make each child feel special. A special look, a gentle touch, a kind word — all of these can say, “I care about you and I’m glad you’re here.”

Adults need to be sensitive to each child’s verbal and non-verbal messages that are displayed while in their care. Sometimes children, especially preschoolers, will exhibit worries and frustrations through their behavior. It is vital that the adult workers know the children well enough to know when something is not right in their world — to do this, they must be familiar with the child’s world (home, school, church). This sensitivity takes the worker to the next part of care, and that is ministering to the child’s family.

Many ministry opportunities may open up for your workers and your church when you desire to meet needs beyond the walls of the classroom. When family needs are discovered they should be shared with the pastor and the adult Sunday School department/class or others responsible for ministry to the parents. Keep in mind that things shared with you in confidence should not be shared with others without permission.

Youth. Care and ministry within the youth division is identical in purpose and intensity to what you expect from the preschool and children's workers. The need for acceptance, belonging, and love is intensified during the teenage years. Adult workers with youth have the responsibility to help meet these needs. An increased opportunity to minister to entire families — some of whom may not be a part of your church family and in need of a Christian witness — is often provided during these adolescent years.

In order for youth workers to know about their class members' needs, they must do what it takes to let the young person know that they truly care. As with preschool and children, this will take more time than just the period given to Bible study on Sunday morning. They must invest time outside the programmed church schedule to have the opportunity to make a difference in the young person's life. This can be expressed through occasional attendance at sporting events, plays, band or choir performances — anything where you can show that you are interested in them. When they know you care about every part of their lives, they will be more willing to seek you out when needs or crises arise. Encourage youth workers to commit to putting in the extra relationship-building time necessary for effective care and ministry.

While teachers have the responsibility to see that care and ministry take place, youth can be involved in the process too. Allow them to make ministry visits with you. Some ministry opportunities can become class projects. Older youth may be responsible enough to be care group leaders in the same way as the adult class model. Each care group leader would be responsible for being the primary ministry contact for three to four other youth. Give them responsibility to exercise their spiritual gifts and to lead out in caring for others. When this is done we will be training the next generation of church leaders to have a caring mindset. Some church in the future will be glad you did!

Adults. Organizing adults for care and ministry is one of the keys to successful Sunday School work. Adult members and prospects also have needs of belonging, love, and importance which must be met. The adult class almost becomes a family unit within the larger church family. We must be intentional in our ministry, for it is vital to every person feeling part of the family. With adults, organizing for care and ministry is essential so that no one "falls through the cracks" when needs arise.

Just as in the other age divisions, knowing our members and being interested in their lives and well-being is the key to whether they will want us around when true ministry needs arise. Make sure that your adult classes are “safe havens” where people can be real and share things that they are facing in their lives. Adult class members may not always remember how good the lesson was or how eloquent the teacher, but they *will* remember whether or not they were made to feel like part of the family as they make the weekly decision of whether or not to come to Sunday School.

So how do we organize for effective care and ministry? The best method around is to organize your class into **Care Groups**. Find persons who have the spiritual gifts of service/helps, administration, mercy, shepherding, encouragement (or a combination of these) and who have a desire (calling) to serve as care group leaders. Each leader has the responsibility of ministering to/keeping up with four to six people or up to four couples — it all depends on the make-up of the class. The more you can enlist qualified persons within your class, the better your ministry of caring will be.

Care group leaders may do such things as telephone, write notes of encouragement, have informal times of fellowship at their home — whatever they need to do to get to know their group better and let them know they truly care about what happens in their lives. They are the “front-line” ministers for those persons/families. The teacher is responsible for keeping up with the activities of the care group leaders, helping to make needs known to the pastor (if necessary) and the rest of the class (when appropriate), and helping to meet needs when they have opportunity. The care group concept can be as simple or complex as you want it to be. The important thing is that you take proactive steps to organize for effective ministry.

The key to a successful “caring” Sunday School team is accountability. The adult workers should help one another be aware of ministry opportunities and should be responsible for tracking and follow-up. The Sunday School director and the Sunday School Council are responsible for keeping a ministry mindset/atmosphere before the workers at all times. We must ask them the tough questions, “Tell me about the needs that you have discovered this week/month in your class.”

Let workers know that effective care and ministry is an expectation for every class within your church’s Bible study organization. When you do a good job of meeting needs, along with providing quality Bible study, you will have a healthy organization that can’t help but grow!

FELLOWSHIP — THE TIE THAT BINDS

“And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:46–47, NASB)

Fellowship. . . *koinonia*. . . getting together with a purpose. Webster defines it as, “a group of people with the same interests.” Fellowship means different things to different people. To some, fellowship means filling your plate to the brim at the annual “dinner on the grounds.” To some, fellowship means trying a little bit of everyone’s homemade ice cream on a hot July Sunday night. To others, it means having a meal with three or four other couples — without children! And to others, it simply means getting together for a time of sharing.

Whatever images the word “fellowship” brings to your mind, as Christians, they all accomplish the same purpose — bringing us together in Christ. Fellowship provides the bond of unity which draws us closer together as a family of faith. As Christians we hold many things in common — *Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all* (Eph. 4:3–6). This commonality binds us together.

Just as true Christian fellowship is vital to the unity of your expanded church family, so too is it vital to the health and unity of your Bible study class. Fellowship is as important to the growth of the class as are care and ministry. For without it, the atmosphere of trust, acceptance, and honesty is hard to come by. Once again, let’s look at the age divisions to get a grasp on the “how to’s” of fellowship.

Preschool and Children. Obviously, the younger the child, the more difficult it is to have any kind of grand scale fellowship. However, you should not take this to mean that we don’t create fellowship opportunities in the younger age groups. Fellowship can be anything from knowing each child by name to having preschoolers and their parents over to your house for a picnic. Whatever you can do to help them feel a part of what is going on, that’s what you need to do.

Notes

For older preschoolers and especially for children, make an effort to do several special things during the year to help foster a feeling of unity. Ideas abound for fellowships with children. One great resource for helpful age-specific suggestions is the *In Ministry with Kids* magazine published by the Lifeway Christian Resources. Each month, helps are given for all aspects of teaching. Be creative. Take ideas that you read or hear about and add a twist to make them unique for your class.

Youth. Anything goes in the world of youth fellowships. Whoever is responsible for the fellowship aspect of youth Sunday School should have high energy and a lot of creativity! The relationship side of youth Sunday School is the key to whether or not they will give any credence to what you say on Sunday morning.

Fellowships for youth Sunday School need to be fun and frequent. Where an adult class or department may have one fellowship per quarter, the youth department or class may want to consider having one fellowship for the department and several smaller fellowship opportunities for the classes.

Department ideas for youth could range from having donuts and orange juice on Sunday morning prior to Bible study, all the way to day trips to an amusement park. Ideas for class fellowships could include: eating together at a local pizza place after Sunday morning worship; going on a campout; watching an appropriate video at the teacher's home on the weekend; going as a class to see an appropriate movie at the local theater; a girl's class may enjoy a shopping trip; a boy's class may enjoy going fishing together — you get the idea, anything to build unity! Our common bond is our desire to learn more about Jesus, but fellowship is a great way to let the Holy Spirit mold us into a group that cares about one another.

Adults. The adults in your Sunday School are no different from the other age groups — they like fellowships too! Adults of all ages need opportunities to build relationships with each other and to have fun. As you are probably all too familiar with, our busy lives sometimes get in the way of doing the important things. Developing friendships with other Christians is one of those important things in your life and the life of your church, department, and class. The number one reason for incorporating a new member is the friendship factor.

Develop fellowship ideas that meet the needs of *your* group. Consider such things as schedule, frequency, child care issues, transportation, cost, and purpose. The purpose of our fellowships is to build unity within our class or department. With that in mind, we should also use these times to invite prospects so that they can get to know us in a more relaxed setting.

Sharing fellowship events draws others into the group by providing a base of common experiences. Consider this statement — “The times in our lives when we are more like Jesus are when we are spending time reaching out to those who do not know God.” This can be used as an opportunity to build a unity with them that may not be accomplished in the classroom setting.

Be creative. Don’t be afraid to try new ideas. One adult class at our church planned a family retreat at a nearby State park. They also incorporated a time of discussion and learning about parenting issues. They had a great time and drew closer together in the Lord as a group.

The times in our lives when we are more like Jesus are when we are spending time reaching out to those who do not know God.

Fellowships for adult **departments** need to occur at least once per quarter. Ideas for these may include: potluck luncheons/suppers; progressive suppers; using the entire Sunday School time once a quarter for the department to be together for fellowship and worship; renting a skating rink (roller or ice!) and having a family fellowship — once again, your creativity will be the only limiting factor. **Class fellowships** need to occur more frequently. To become a cohesive team, we need to spend time together, but not to the exclusion of anyone.

Ideas for other fellowships may include: supper at a class member’s home (with or without children); a white water rafting trip or canoe trip; a class family picnic; a class retreat; a class family campout; a class ministry project (yes, working together can be a unique bond for fellowship — it is the fellowship of labor — remember the definition: *that which is held in common*); going out to eat as a class (with or without children); and just about anything else your group is willing to do.

Whatever you do to develop fellowship, the important thing is that you **are intentional in your planning and purpose** to see that meaningful opportunities for fellowship are available.

“Blest be the tie that binds.”

Time Out!

Write two things you will do to encourage fellowship with your classes.

CONCLUSION

Care and fellowship are two vital elements for a successful Sunday School. They are, however, closely tied together. A successful care ministry depends greatly on successful fellowship. The stronger the relationships are among your members, the stronger your ability to minister in times of need. The Lord has given us an awesome responsibility as Sunday School team members to strengthen our members in love and unity. As we come together each week to study His Word, let's not forget that He desires for us to apply it to our daily lives. Two ways we can do that are through care and ministry that makes a difference and fellowship that unites our hearts. ***“Go and do likewise.”***

Practice Session

- Encourage classes to recruit care leaders.
- Encourage classes to recruit fellowship leaders.
- Provide training for class care and fellowship leaders.

What must teachers know to be effective?
What do I need to know to coach them in their ministry?



SESSION FIVE: TEACHING

Some believe the highest calling for a layperson is the call to teach. While a person might serve in many areas within the church, the opportunity to shape, direct, and mold the lives of others through teaching is one of the most exciting and challenging experiences.

COMPONENTS OF THE TEACHING/LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Four components are basic to the teaching experience. These four elements are the student, the desired outcome, the material to be used, and the teacher. Everything that is a part of the classroom experience should fit within one of these four elements. Here is an explanation of these four elements.

Student: A church's Bible teaching ministry should be student driven. A primary reason people are in the class is to find solutions or answers to their needs. It is important for the teacher to recognize that the students are individuals with specific life needs. The main reason to have a Bible teaching ministry is not to merely teach Bible facts, but to impact lives with the truths of God's Word. In Romans 10:14, Paul said what good is preaching (teaching) if no one can hear it. Paul started from the perspective of the student (one who needed to hear).

Outcome: The ultimate goal of the classroom experience is for the students to live out the Scriptures in their daily lives and, over a period of time, to grow in their Christian faith. As a lesson is being prepared, the teacher needs to have in mind specific results to accomplish this goal. The result is termed as the *outcome* of the lesson. The outcome may not relate to the entire class every time the teaching experience takes place. At times the desired result may be aimed at one individual. At other times the outcome result may be directed toward two or three individuals. At other times everyone in attendance may be the focus of the desired outcome. It is a mistake for a teacher to assume that all students, at all times, will be the object of the desired outcome. This general approach to the teaching will be less than fruitful. A more specific and direct approach to outcome must be adopted if the students grow in their Christian life.

Material: When the teacher has meshed the central truth with the student's need and established the desired outcome, the details of the lesson plan can be formulated. In preparing the lesson plan the teacher will make a list of materials needed to enable students to internalize the central truth and the outcome is realized. The material of the classroom experience is anything and everything the teacher will use to explore God's Word. The material may be printed lesson helps, maps, electronic equipment, blackboards, pictures, or any number of other aids.

Time Out!

Who has been changed as a result of your Sunday School?
Write their names here.

Teacher: The teacher is the guide to the learning experience. The teacher's responsibility is to discover the life needs of the students, discover the truth of the Scripture to be studied, and direct the students to the desired outcome. This responsibility can only be accomplished when the teacher is involved in a detailed planning of the classroom experience. The teacher ensures that the classroom experience is planned, prepared, and ready for student participation. The teacher's presence may not be critical in the classroom experience. It is possible for a classroom experience to be successfully conducted without the teacher's presence.

THE LESSON PLAN

The following is a suggested plan for preparing a Bible study lesson that is based on the four basic components. This plan is divided into eight steps.

- **STEP 1 — Lesson Bible Truth or Central Truth:** The teacher must determine the central truth of the passage of scripture that will be explored in the classroom experience. The central truth is defined as the basic truth of Scripture as it applies to student needs. Sometimes a central truth is printed in the teacher's materials. The teacher should avoid the temptation of using this statement when preparing the lesson. While this printed central truth statement in most cases is a good statement, it was not prepared with the needs of the students of your classroom in mind. The teacher must be sensitive to God's leadership in order to see which portion of

the overall Scripture text that has been suggested for the next classroom experience will address specific needs in the lives of the students. A further examination of the concept of a central truth is in order at this point.

A teacher should do three things to develop a central truth: *write it*, *keep it short*, and *keep it simple*.

- **STEP 2 — Teaching Aim or Lesson Outcome:** A teaching aim is defined as a statement revealing where the teacher is heading with the central truth. The teaching aim will contain three elements — time, person, and action. Most teaching aims are stated in terms of what action the students will do or reflect in their lives within a certain period of time.
- **STEP 3 — Attention Pacer or Create Interest:** The opening activity or statements are designed to focus the attention of the students on one item or thought. When students enter the classroom they are not ready to immediately dive into God's word. Teachers that open the classroom experience with a prayer and immediately begin the teaching process will discover that the students will not be fully attentive until they are half way through the lesson. Thoughts occupying the mind of the student as he or she walks through the door will continue to occupy the mind for several minutes into the classroom experience. It would be better for the teacher to lead the students into an activity that would grasp their attention and focus their thoughts on one thing before moving into a study of the Scripture.
- **STEP 4 — Purposeful Bible Study:** Purposeful Bible Study is an activity guiding the students through a hands on experience of examining Scripture. The end result of this portion of the lesson plan is to enable the students to discover the central truth for themselves. Students in general will not internalize the central truth unless they uncover it themselves. Most adult teachers use the lecture method of presentation at this point. Other teachers try to encourage student participation through the use of questions or discussion. Nothing is wrong with these two methods. There are, however, over 100 different methods than can be utilized to engage student participation. Students that are exposed to only one or two methods will probably feel the classroom experience is not interesting, exciting, or relevant to life needs. The only bad method is the one you use all the time.

- **STEP 5 — Practical or Life Application:** When students experience the Scripture that was just studied as being relevant to their lives, practical application is being made. Practical application helps students understand that the truths they have studied in God's Word still apply in today's society. This is done by guiding students through an activity that will focus their attention to the relevance of the Scripture. This activity makes the life connection for the students and bridges from purposeful Bible study to follow-through.

Time Out!

Think about last week's lesson. What life application did you see from the lesson?

- **STEP 6 — Follow Through:** Follow-through is the time when the teacher guides the students through an activity to get them to experience what they just learned in the Scripture. This is where the teaching aim will be presented or experienced.
- **STEP 7 — Conclusion:** The conclusion is not merely a time of wrapping up the classroom experience. It should also be a time to entice and encourage the students in regard to the next classroom experience. The teacher may choose to do this by presenting one or two statements outlining the content of the next classroom experience.
- **STEP 8 — Review, Rehearse, and Set-up:** When the lesson plan is complete the teacher should review the plan to make sure all areas have been covered and are in order. Time should be taken to gather any materials or equipment needed for the classroom experience. The teacher may need to spend time rehearsing the lesson presentation to make sure all elements flow smoothly and materials and equipment will work properly. The final step for the teacher is to ensure that the classroom is set-up for the classroom experience. The set-up should be done as early as possible. Students should not be arriving while the room is being set-up.

As Sunday School Director, your responsibility is to ...

- Help teachers understand the learning process.
- Help teachers understand who they teach. Teaching is different with age groups. For example, a preschooler does learn and needs learning activities and purposeful play.
- Provide training for them in how to be an effective teacher.
- Encourage teachers to teach more than Bible facts, but life application. We just don't "teach people the Bible" but we "teach people the Bible to LIVE". Consider the following statement:

The ultimate indication that a person has learned what the Bible teaches is to live like Jesus, the Lord of the Bible. The work of the teacher, the facilitator, is to help people learn to live like Jesus.

Practice Session

- Encourage teachers to teach based on needs of their class.
- Conduct a teacher appreciation event in your church.
- Conduct a teacher training event.

New classes? Are they anything like expansion teams??



SESSION SIX: NEW UNITS

Creating new units is the process of enlarging the Bible study ministry of your church to assure that peoples' needs are met effectively and to make certain everyone has a place. New units can be departments or classes. Creating new units is an essential element of church growth.

A growing Sunday School is constantly creating new classes and departments. This idea of creating new classes is rooted in Scripture. Jesus told His disciples—*I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful* (John 15:1–2).

Jesus was using the image of tending a vineyard. Vines were pruned each year. New growth came at the cut. The trunk, with its strong root system, supported and nourished the new growth, but did not bear the fruit. The fruit was produced on the new growth, not the old. A growing Sunday School is constantly creating new classes to bear more fruit.

A Mississippian by the name of Arthur Flake was one of the first persons to realize the linkage between creating new units and reaching more people for Christ and for Bible study. He became the “Field Director” for the Baptist Sunday School Board in 1909, and then founded the Sunday School Administration Department in 1922. He created a systematic approach for enlarging a Sunday School. *Flake's Formula* became the standard for effective Sunday School ministry.

Flake's Formula had five basic components

1. Know your potential.
2. Enlarge your ministry.
3. Equip the people.
4. Provide the environment.
5. Go after the people.



**...he prunes so
that it will be
even more
fruitful**
—John 15:2

Creating new units by this simple formula propelled Southern Baptists to become the largest Protestant denomination in North America. For decades before a “church growth movement,” Flake's Formula helped churches

reach new people through Bible study. This numerical strength allowed a compounding influence in many areas of our culture by the end of the twentieth century. Creating new units is still crucial to an effective Sunday School. But, is it as easy to create new units today?

ME, MYSELF AND OTHERS

Although we are challenged in Scripture to find focus beyond ourselves, the self-centeredness of our present culture is a fact. Many people are struggling to “find themselves”, “help themselves”, and in general “be good to themselves.” We are a “ME” group of individuals trying to make sense of life in general and our lives in particular. As church leaders, we can decry the “ME” syndrome as a bad thing *or* we can use it to assist us in extending the church’s effectiveness in reaching persons for Christ. We may be in the most opportune time ever to make a difference in the world by reaching our friends and neighbors for Christ. We can so impact their lives that they want to be involved in the life of the church. We can take the focus of our culture and make it a force for growth in our churches.

The secret is developing a process for creating new units and then keeping people highly involved in that process. Input, relationships, empowerment and evaluation are at the hub of any process for beginning new units. Involving people means allowing members to have a part of the overall plan for starting new units of any kind. Given a cause to rally behind, an objective to reach, and a specific, realistic outcome to strive for — they will become involved.

WHY START NEW UNITS?

Based on the signs of a healthy church, new units help us reach people and witness to more lost persons. More persons attend church because of a relationship with another person in a given church than for any other reason. In fact, many people first come to church looking for a friend. When our structures are not able to provide an environment for that to happen and flourish, we create a roadblock to be able to reach those people.

Here are a few more positive reasons for beginning new units:

- New units provide opportunities for more adults to discover and use their gifts and talents in Christian service. Every member of a class should be involved in some function or ministry of the class. This is called “assimilation.” The Team approach to adult organizations offers one of the better structures for involving adults. Ministry Team, Prayer Team, Missions Team, Teaching Team and Fellowship Team are just some examples that can be in a team-based adult organization. The types of teams can be expanded as the class grows.

Remember that new Christians and new members might need to be asked to take “entry level jobs.” Those are tasks that do not require extensive Bible knowledge or teaching skills. They may include fellowship team member (to bring juice and donuts one Sunday a month), a “secret greeter” within the class making sure that there are enough chairs or that first time attendees are welcomed, and so forth. Every adult unit must identify and provide those entry-level jobs. Without them you may not get the newer, more introverted persons involved. The idea is that every member of the class should be involved in some ministry in the class.

- When classes get beyond a reasonable number of persons enrolled, workers are stretched too thin in ministering to class members and prospects. The only way to eliminate this is to constantly enlist members to be a part of some team within the class. As stated prior, the goal needs to be to have an organization that has a specific purpose (every member involved in something) and is fluid enough to provide those opportunities. One reason it has become difficult to enlist new adult teachers is that they have seen the enormous amount of work that has to be done if the class is to grow. Since many leaders try to grow a class themselves, they reflect a negative model of organization. A consistent plan for beginning new units and involving more and more members will help alleviate that problem.
- When a class becomes too large for ministry to be done effectively, the result is that people tend to drop out all together or become inactive. In other words, a class is too large when ministry to members and non-members ceases! The question is often asked—what is ideal size for an adult class. Probably there’s not an ideal number. Many factors enter into making a class an optimal size—the space available, the passion of the class for God, the effectiveness of organizational structure, the abilities of the class leaders, and so forth.

The ideal class in the 1940s and 1950s was around 10. That's why many church buildings built during that period have tiny rooms that will accommodate about 10 persons. Today, many churches have discovered that larger classes can be very effective. They have designed buildings with larger spaces to accommodate larger classes. But the larger the class, the more crucial the organization of that class becomes. Every person on that roll needs to have what they feel is a significant role in the class. Be certain that everyone is given opportunity to be a part of something bigger than him or her self. There are no *insignificant* jobs to be done at church. Everything has a purpose. When the small things are not done they become very obvious.

CONSIDERATIONS

When plans are being made to begin new units, several factors must be considered.

- 1. Space:** Every unit needs some place to meet — it does not always have to be at the church!
- 2. Options:** Every unit needs to be able to provide some kind of options for people you are trying to reach. Today's young adults are accustomed to having options. This is part of the "ME" syndrome. Provide options that will be attractive, in many cases short-term by nature, and consistent with the purpose of your church.

One option can be found in the way your organization is set up. There is NO RULE that says every Bible study group has to be organized in exactly the same way. Take into consideration the age of the group. Many senior adults, for instance, like having a president, vice-president, Sunshine Chairman, and so forth. Most young adults would prefer to work on teams. Every group should be organized in a manner that would help it be effective in reaching, in ministering, in participation and, yet, allow them to be fluid enough so they can branch out and start another group without a lot of stress and pain.

- 3. Times and Places:** Other options to consider are when and where new groups will meet. You will need to be as creative as possible in this part of your new unit strategic planning process. For example, not all groups need to meet at the church on Sunday morning. You may want to look for places near the church like subdivision or apartment

complex meeting rooms. Schedule new units to meet at different times of the day as well as different days of the week.

People who must work on Sunday are automatically left out of your Bible study or support groups if they are all conducted on Sunday. Is it possible to take the study to the people where they work? Seek out possibilities in your community where no one is providing studies during the week and build relationships that will open the door for you to start new units all over your community.

4. Short-term vs. Long-term Units: The question is, “must this group continue until death us do part?” Or, is this a short-term group that is meeting to complete a specific task? For instance, a group might meet to conduct a 6–8 week course for new Christians or to address specific incidents relevant to your community such as teenage issues, divorce recovery, grief recovery, and so forth. Many groups that are short-term by their design can become an ongoing group.

Time Out!

Consider what you have read about new units.

1. What are some areas in which new units are needed?
2. What are some options that are available?

HOW TO CREATE NEW UNITS

Here are some options when creating new units:

- 1. The paper class:** a list of prospects is given to a teacher who is instructed to build a class.
- 2. The divided class:** the roll of a class is simply divided into two equal units — some of all types of members in each unit.
- 3. The dropout class:** this class is formed by giving a teacher a list of Sunday School dropouts.
- 4. The seed class:** select persons are enlisted to begin a new class. This class probably has the greatest potential for growth and success.

Class Composition

Knowing the composition of a class is crucial to creating a new class successfully. Almost every Sunday School class has a discernible composition. It looks like this:

T—Teacher: the primary class leader to whom members look for instruction.

C—Core: class members who are committed to Christ, who enjoy Bible study, who delight in Christian fellowship.

H—Half-timers: these members are in attendance approximately 50% of the time. They consider themselves faithful, but they are easily drawn away.

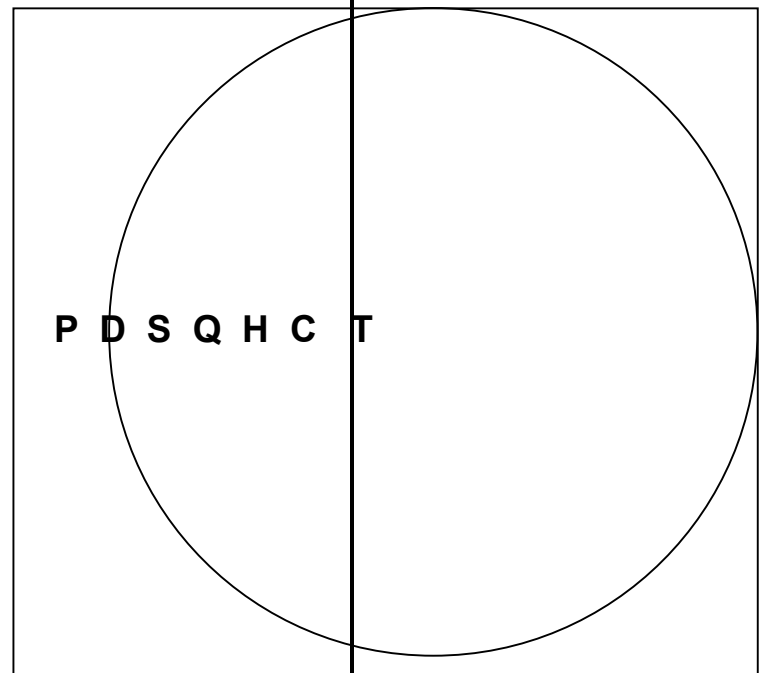
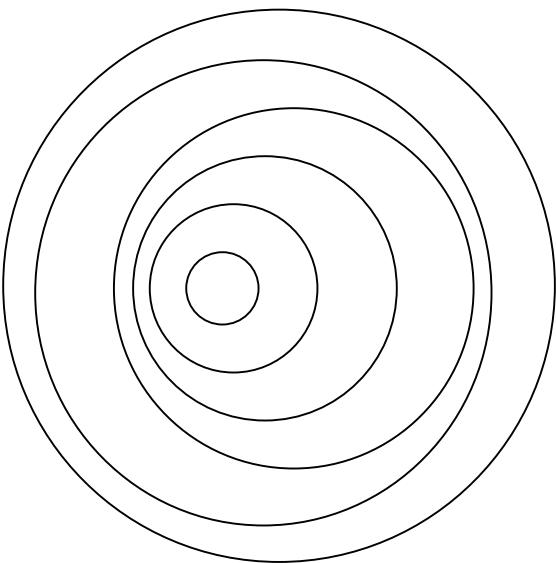
Q—Quarter-timers: these members are present about 25% of the time—they might spread their attendance equally over the year, but they might attend their 25% of the year in one quarter and not show up for another nine months.

S—Spasmodics: these members rarely attend and when they do it is a total shock to everyone, including themselves.

D—Dropouts: the reasons vary, but the result's the same—they don't attend.

P—Prospects: potential members—these may be only suspects, some have never attended.

Notes



Analyze any class that has been in existence a year and this pattern will be found. This basic configuration must be considered when creating new classes.

The best way of creating a new class is the seed class. “Seeding” a class with a good teacher and some core members gives the greatest probability for success. Look at the following scenarios to see why this is so:

Scenario One

If you create a paper class, the teacher seeks to enlist people who are prospects for the class. Some of these, possibly all of them, have not visited the church. If they are invited, some of them will attend. Commitment levels are slight to non-existent. Growth in this type of class is extremely slow. The leader/teacher must be tenacious and not easily discouraged. Some of those who come initially might be uncomfortable with few persons in attendance. A high dropout rate is to be expected. The class can be built, but time and tenacity are required.

Scenario Two

If a class is split—each class receiving equal representations of each member type—an extremely disruptive situation develops. Friends are separated. Some members, who attend only occasionally because of relationships with other class members or the teacher, find themselves assigned to separate classes. Some of the quarter-timers and spasmodics return to find a new teacher in a new room. These disruptions can be enough to cause some of these persons to drop out.

Scenario Three

If the new class is composed of dropouts, the group will grow with great difficulty—if at all. Some dropouts can be brought back into the life of the church. Some will bring negative attitudes that can infect the spirit of the class making growth difficult. Patience, determination, and a caring spirit must characterize the teacher assigned to this type of new class.

Scenario Four

This scenario has the greatest probability for success. A teacher is enlisted and then selected persons from a class’s core group (or possibly from several classes) are enlisted to create the core group of a new class. These persons should be committed to Christ, to Bible study, and to reaching others for Bible study, Christ, and church membership. Because these members are enlisted for the task, they understand their purpose as growth agents. Their consistent attendance creates a receptive group to welcome prospective members.

When enlisting members for the new class, be careful to leave a strong core group in the original class. The original class needs strength to maintain itself. It should not be sacrificed to a new group. Usually, several months are required for the older class to restore itself to the point it was prior to the beginning of the new class.

Time Out!

Name one class in your Sunday School that is ready to provide “seeds” for a new class.

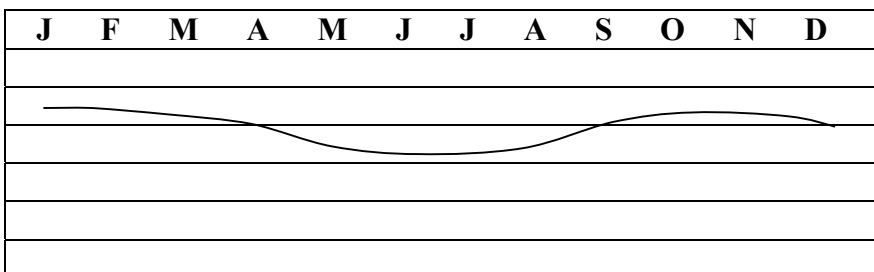
What happens when a new class is seeded with a core group from an existing, strong class?

1. The outer fringes pull in together—some of the half-timers become core members. Faithfulness increases.
2. Some of the fringe are drawn to the new class—this might be a re-entry point for some of the dropouts.
3. The new class will attract new guests to a far greater extent than the existing class. Guests know it will be easier entering and becoming established in the newer class than in an older class with a history.

When to Create New Classes

Timing is important. Knowing when to do something is almost as critical as knowing what to do. As in nature with the ebb and flow of tides, with the seasons of the year—a church has its cycle. Knowing this cycle can aid the probability of success or the ease of creating new classes.

The following chart gives you a picture of most churches’ attendance cycle.



Notes

January–March is the most stable period of attendance. Colder more unstable weather discourages travel and recreational involvement. With no major holidays, parents of school age children maintain consistent routines.

April–June is marked by improving weather patterns, the latter days of the school year and the beginning of summer.

July–September is middle of summer and the beginning of school. Vacations are often taken during the last two months of summer.

October–December is stable for the first half of the quarter. Then the holidays hit. Attendance fluctuates wildly during this quarter. It is not unusual to have the year's high and low attendance during this quarter.

When making changes, two periods need to be considered—one is the beginning of the church year, the other is the beginning of the calendar year in January. Both of these are followed by periods of consistent attendance. Both are times when new commitments are being made. Both are times when many changes are made in other areas of life. Psychologically, people are more receptive to change at these times than at other times. The two periods of relative consistency around these periods allow the changes to become normative before periods of lower attendance or inconsistency begin. January might be the best time to create new classes because it is after the holidays, it is the period of highest attendance, and it allows the longest period of consistent attendance before the disruptions of spring/summer holidays and schedules take effect.

Guidelines for Creating New Classes

- ◆ Know the annual attendance patterns and select the optimum time to begin new classes.
- ◆ Cultivate relationships with those members who will create new classes—you will get more done through relationships than through detached administration.
- ◆ Creating new classes cultivates an environment of growth. This environment helps members fulfill their commission to reach others for Christ.
- ◆ Remember, church is an organism and not an organization—a finely structured (graded) organization might look good on the charts, but it might be a hindrance to growth. Don't worry if the structure is a little fuzzy. You can even have overlapping age divisions—a little competition is good.

- ◆ Move with the movers—don't wait to win over recalcitrants.
- ◆ Avoid restructuring classes above the age of 50—generally, there's no need. Most viable Sunday School prospects are below this age.
- ◆ Those with the vision must be the ones to fulfill the vision. If left to others without the vision, confusion at best, failure at worst, will result. This means one of two things. *First*, the ones with the vision must do the work of creating the new class or department or, *second*, the ones with the vision must help others catch the vision. Even then, a great deal of encouragement, coaching, and guidance is necessary.
- ◆ Communication is critical. Use every means available to inform those involved in creating the new class—both the class or classes from which the new class is created and those involved in creating the new class.
- ◆ In the initial stages, however, involve only those persons necessary in creating a new class. Change always unsettles people. The more people who are told in the initial stages of creating a new class, the more people there are to get upset. Wait until the change is certain in the planning or in reality to inform the larger body of a department or the church as a whole. Less disturbance will result if you wait until the action is settled in the minds of those involved in the change.
- ◆ Find the teacher, then form the class. Each teacher will attract a certain following initially.
- ◆ Channel prospects to the new classes. Without histories, new classes are a better environment for new persons.
- ◆ Assign dropouts from other classes to the new class. The formation of the new class might provide just the opportunity needed to re-activate these members.
- ◆ Create as many favorable circumstances for success as possible.
- ◆ Pay close attention to the new classes—care for them as you would a new child. Offer encouragement to the teacher and class leaders.
- ◆ Tell the story to others. Stories shape opinions and attitudes quicker than anything else. Facts and figures won't do the job for most people. Putting a face with those facts and figures helps people believe and care.
- ◆ Close the back door. It's not enough to reach new people, if they just file through. Keep those you reach.

A VARIETY OF GROUPS TO REACH A VARIETY OF PERSONS

A number of different kinds of new units can be started. Each new unit has the possibility of reaching a different group of persons. However, planning and preparation for each of these groups is a key ingredient to their success. Here are just a few ideas for creating new units:

Gender-specific Groups

If you currently have all co-educational groups, you may want to consider gender-specific groups as well. Gender-specific groups during the Sunday morning Bible study have recently had a renewal of interest. The ideal goal would be to provide a co-educational group, an all women's group, and even an all men's group for each of the adult age groupings. (The possible exception to that might be in the senior adult groups.)

Affinity Groups

People have a variety of common interests or concerns that create a bond between them. These affinity groups may be formed based on their professions, the ages of their children, common needs, or for any number of factors. Often the interests or concerns can be a basis for beginning a new unit.

Special Education Groups

Many people with special needs are living longer and for most churches the needs of adults with special needs are not being addressed. Group homes exist where adults with special needs can live independently. You might want to provide Bible study times for them.

Senior Adult Groups

Have you visited a Retirement Center lately? They are equipped with wonderful facilities and for the most part the people who live there are well able to take care of themselves. Many are still able to drive their own cars, shop and do many things they did when they lived in their homes, but now they don't have to if they don't want to.

The director of activities for one of these retirement centers asked a local minister to come out for a preview of their new center. The minister asked a couple of senior adults to accompany her. During the visit they were asked if their church would like to provide a weekly Bible study for the residents. Both of the senior adults with the minister immediately agreed and one even volunteered to help get things set up. Do not miss a

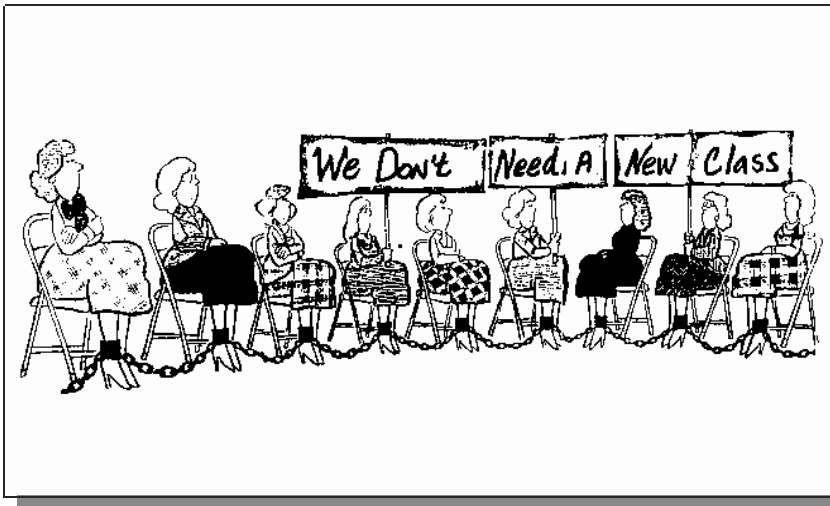
wonderful opportunity for a new unit in your community. The rewards are great. As a result of that Bible study, the church had four people to become members. Every week the Bible study group at the retirement center has increased.

Weekday Groups

A large number of persons in our culture are required to work on Sundays. Not all of us have the privilege of being home with our families during the weekend. Think of many single mothers who have to work on Sunday. When you pass a fire station, think of the fire fighters on duty. When you go out to eat on Sunday, have you ever wondered if those who prepare and serve the meals have had an opportunity for Bible study? Almost every community has persons in similar situations. Can classes be arranged for these during the week or off-site on Sunday? Bible study is not just on Sunday anymore, or at least it shouldn't be!

Time Out!

Look at the following cartoon. Consider some of the reasons and guidelines for creating new departments and classes. List ideas that you would offer this group as reasons for creating new units.



New Units should be created because...

Practice Session

- Analyze your existing Sunday School organization to see where new classes need to be started

- Start at least 2 new classes this year.

*The material in this chapter is based on **Five Handles for Getting a Grip on Your Sunday School** by Jerri Herring and Larry Garner. Used by permission.*

Every good team needs a winning game plan.



SESSION SEVEN: PLANNING

Every successful coach knows the value of a working game plan. He will spend hours developing a strategy that will lead his team to win. He knows the law of planning, “If we fail to plan, then we plan to fail.” He must do both short-term and long-term planning. He must involve his whole team, individually and as a whole. The situation poses a question, “How does one get this started if the team is not accustomed to planning and preparation?” This question is particularly significant for the church. Consider these guidelines.

1. Begin with PRAYER. Scripture tells us “*The faithful prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*” (James 5:16). It is critical that we bathe our planning in prayer. We need the wisdom of God, not the thoughts and ideas of man. God has a perfect plan waiting to be revealed to those who seek Him and ask Him with a believing heart.
2. Analyze the needs and abilities of your leadership team. Know the people you have working with you and develop your plan according to their gifts and the needs of your church.
3. Provide adequate resources. There is an abundance of fantastic resources available for every age level and a variety of study opportunities. Make certain your leadership is aware of these excellent resources. Your association and state convention can assist you with this information.
4. Provide quality training for all leadership. Paul tells us in II Timothy 2:2 “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” Proper training should be provided for all new workers according to the age group where they are working. Training should be provided for all workers, at least annually. Excellent training opportunities are provided through your local association as well as your state convention.

Notes

The will to win is important, but the will to prepare is vital.
—Joe Paterno

5. Provide updated information on a monthly, if not weekly basis. Regular leadership meetings help sustain and inform your workers about needs as well as encourage them in their particular situation. You can keep the vision of your Sunday School fresh on the minds of your leaders and help them celebrate accomplishments along the way. Research has shown that those churches having consistently strong motivational, informational, and inspirational workers' meetings will result in an atmosphere of growth, numerical and spiritual.
6. Keep the vision of your Sunday School before the leadership team. This is critical both to short-term and long-term planning. Are you still on course? Do you need to make adjustments? Were your goals too low or too high? Make sure the long-term and the short-term goals complement each other. Are your people still excited about their work? Are you giving opportunity for celebration along the way? Plan for check points that will give indication of accomplishment.

Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with that plan.

—Tom Landry

Time Out!

Take a moment to review these areas of planning. Which of these are you presently implementing?

Think about these things in planning for the year.

- 1) Saturate your work in prayer.
- 2) Involve your leadership team.
- 3) Provide quality resources.
- 4) Provide excellent training.
- 5) Schedule at least monthly leadership meetings.
- 6) Celebrate victories large and small.

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

Practice Session

- Pray. Pray. Pray
- Conduct Annual planning
- Conduct monthly, if not weekly leadership meetings

Great! Kick-off.
Just what I've
been waiting for!



SESSION EIGHT: GETTING STARTED

Seems like a lot of work, doesn't it. You might be asking yourself, "Where do I start?" Remember, the key to developing a winning Sunday School is to improve day by day. Consider this quote —

"It's all about self-improvement, about being better than you were the day before."

—*Steve Young, former quarterback for the San Francisco 49'ers*

Steve Young didn't become a great quarterback overnight. It took time. Slow, but steady improvement. Just trying to become better than yesterday.

Time Out:

Look back at the "Practice Session" exercises at the end of each chapter. Can you name two or three activities you will lead your team to accomplish in the next two or three months to move your Sunday School in this process of improvement? Write them here.

Looks like the beginning of a game plan. As you work to complete your game, here are some other aspects of the game you need to consider:

DAILY COACHING ASSIGNMENT

Pray for ...

- Your Teachers and Workers
- God's Guidance
- God's Wisdom
- God's Vision
- New Workers

COACHING ON SUNDAY

- Provide an example of faithfulness.
- Check up on the Team.
- Make sure all are doing their jobs and are in position.
- Secure needed supplies.
- Encourage the players.
- Communicate necessary information.
- Keep everyone focused on being — *Teams of people on mission with God.*

SUGGESTED YEARLY GAME STRATEGY

August

- Make sure all Sunday School Workers have been properly recruited.
- Plan or attend a Training Event for your teachers and workers.
- Plan to start one or more new classes.
- Plan for the new year by having a planning session with your Sunday School Council.

September

- Conduct a Kick-off event for the new Sunday School year.
- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Start new classes.

October

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Plan an outreach activity or promotion.
- Consider a high attendance day.
- Order Literature for the Winter quarter.

November

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting
- Encourage classes to conduct a holiday outreach ministry project.

December

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Plan to start a new class after the holidays.

January

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.

- Conduct Sunday School promotion to get your Sunday School back on track after the holidays.
- Start new classes.
- Begin preparing for Vacation Bible School.
- Order literature for the Spring Quarter.

February

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Conduct a Sunday School teacher appreciation event.
- Conduct a “spring training” event.

March

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Begin nominating committee.
- Conduct a potential teacher search and consider a training event for them.

April

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Order literature for the Summer quarter.

May

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Plan summer attendance campaign to keep a focus on attendance.

June

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Conduct Vacation Bible School.

July

- Conduct a Sunday School Leadership Team Meeting.
- Order literature for the Fall Quarter.

Conclusion usually means that something is over. Why do I get the feeling that something is just beginning?



IN CONCLUSION:

SUNDAY SCHOOL = A TEAM OF PEOPLE ON MISSION FOR GOD.

Remember, your role as Sunday School Director or leader of the Sunday School is to develop your Sunday School classes into teams of people on mission for God. These teams will reach out and touch the lives of those in their community. These teams will show genuine care and concern for everyone God entrusts them with. These teams will exhibit warm fellowship. These teams will study and apply Biblical principles to their lives. These teams will carry out the Great Commission in your community.

You must keep this focus. Yes, there is literature to be ordered. Yes, there are meetings to attend. Yes, there are supplies to gather. Yes, there are problems that need to be fixed. Yes, there are a lot of little things that need and must be done. However, you must keep your teachers and workers focused on the game we must play.

Time Out:

Consider again your answer to this question: “If your classes truly became teams of people on mission with God, what would your Sunday School look like?” What would be the outcome?

Do you want that in your church? Can it really happen? The answer is yes. But, it will not happen overnight. It will be a process of prayer, changing mindsets and of making necessary adjustments and improvements. The reality in many churches is that it will take years. The question for you is —will you commit yourself to the long term, to continue working until God tells you to quit? For it to happen in your church, a leader is needed

that is in it for more than one season. Are you that leader? Are you willing to coach for as long as it is needed?

Notes

You see, the issue is were you *caught* or *called*. Did you say “yes” to become Sunday School Director because you felt like you had to or because no one else would do it? Or did you say “yes” to this job because you felt God called you to do it? I believe that the question of focus, persistence, patience, and longevity is a question of calling. To do the job of Sunday School Director, you must have a sense that this is what God wants you to do and therefore, you will stay Sunday School Director until God calls you to do something else.

Time Out!

Pat Riley, coach of the Miami Heat once said,

**There are only two options regarding commitment.
You're either IN or you're OUT. There's no such thing
as life in-between.**

Do you feel called to this important leadership position? Are you IN?

The Great Commission cannot be lived as “life in-between”. Commit yourself totally to the task before you. Begin now by closing this book and praying a prayer of commitment, asking God to begin shaping you into a person that He can use to develop the Sunday School He desires in your church.

Appendix?
I've already had mine
removed!

Appendix



DISCOVERING ENLISTING WORKERS

1. The group responsible for discovering workers, usually the church Nominating Committee, takes these steps:
 - Secure up-to-date lists of the resident church membership roll for each person involved in the discovery process, along with blank sheets of paper and pencils.
 - Meet in a room around a large table away from the telephone and other distractions.
 - Begin the meeting with a prayer time, seeking the Lord's leadership and claiming the promise of Matthew 9:38.
 - With church membership rolls in hand, go completely through the roll, pausing by each name to ask these two questions:
 - (1.) *Would this person be acceptable to the church as a worker?* By answering this question, the group tries to determine, under the leadership of God's Spirit, if the person meets the written or unwritten expectations of the congregation.
 - (2.) *Could this person serve if willing?* By answering this question, the group seeks to determine whether the person's work schedule and physical condition would prevent him or her from serving somewhere. The group should not ask, "*Is the person willing?*" That question needs to be answered by the individual being enlisted.
 - If the answer to both questions is yes, then place the name, address, and phone number on a list of prospective workers.
 - Go completely through the membership roll recording every name that passes the two questions test. The final list will contain the names of those who could be enlisted to serve in some capacity.
 - If the work is being done by the Nominating Committee, and workers are being sought for all organizations, then the committee may divide the prospective worker list between the various organizations so that no person is enlisted for jobs in more than one organization.
2. At this point, the Sunday School Director and Sunday School Council may take these steps:
 - List by classes and departments all the positions that need to be filled.
 - Take the prospective worker list provided by the nominating committee and after a time of prayer, match every position with the name of the person the group feels is the one the Lord would have serve there. When this process is completed, a name will be beside every position.
3. The prospective worker needs to be enlisted by the one who will be supervising that person in the organizational structure. For example, in the smaller Sunday School, the general director enlists the other general officers and teachers. In a departmentalized Sunday School, the general director enlists the department directors and the department directors enlist the teachers.

ENLISTING A PROSPECTIVE WORKER

Make an appointment with the person to be enlisted. Tell the person why you want to talk with him or her and where you would like to meet. The best interview is one that takes place face-to-face. Include the following in the enlistment interview:

- Pray for the Lord's leadership in the life of the individual being interviewed.
- Tell the person the process that was used to arrive at his or her name.
- Explain the responsibilities of the job; give the person a written job description and other material pertinent to the job for which he or she is being enlisted.
- Review the expectations related to attendance, involvement in visitation, witnessing, workers' meetings, and training.
- Tell the prospective worker what resources the church will provide to help do the work. Mention such things as teacher and leadership materials, equipment and supplies, training opportunities, and prayer support.
- Be prepared to answer questions.
- Ask the person to pray to determine whether this is where the Lord would have him or her serve. Arrange a time for a follow-up contact for a decision.

Follow-up Actions

- The Sunday School Council or Nominating Committee reviews the results of the contacts. Where persons decline, then agreement needs to be reached regarding the names of other persons who may serve in the positions.
- Schedule subsequent meetings as needed to complete the slate and to share needs and information with the Nominating Committee.
- The Nominating Committee presents the list to the church for election.
- Plan a commissioning service as part of the morning worship service the first Sunday in the new year.

Responsibilities of Workers in Sunday School

Pastor (Team Leader)

1. Lead the church to have an effective Bible study ministry.
2. Interpret the biblical basis for evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship to the congregation.
3. Lead the church to reach believers and non-believers for Bible study.
4. Lead the church to be evangelistic by training Sunday School workers to witness to lost persons in daily contacts and structured outreach and by being alert to evangelistic opportunities in the Bible study sessions.
5. Lead the church to organize its Sunday School Ministry effectively.
6. Assist in making adequate training available for all workers; lead in training activities as appropriate.
7. Assist the Sunday School director in annual planning.
8. Share information about the need for potential workers; lead the church to adopt leadership standards for workers.
9. Participate and promote Bible teaching opportunities such as Vacation Bible School and January Bible Study.
10. Work with the Sunday School to help workers and members provide caring ministries to members and prospects.



Sunday School Director

1. Lead in determining the Sunday School organization needed to reach and teach effectively.
2. Give direction to the enlistment and training of workers for the Sunday School.
3. Help all workers see the importance of involving people in Bible study.
4. Help develop and support the outreach-evangelism ministry of the church, and lead workers to become effective witnesses.
5. Lead workers to set challenging but attainable goals and develop and maintain Sunday School planning meetings.
6. Give direction in selecting and using appropriate Bible study materials for each group.
7. Determine financial and physical resources needed for the Sunday School and recommend these resources to the church.
8. Maintain and use records for the Sunday School and report periodically to the church on the progress of the Sunday School.
9. Lead in evaluating the work of the Sunday School.
10. Lead the church to enlist additional general leaders to share these responsibilities.

Sunday School Outreach-Evangelism Director

1. Assist the Sunday School director in magnifying the role of the Sunday School in reaching people for Christ and church membership.
2. Assist the Sunday School director in organizing the Sunday School for effective outreach; enlist and train outreach workers for every class.
3. Lead in planning and conducting outreach activities.
4. Lead in building and maintaining a prospect file.
5. Perform the duties of the Sunday School secretary in his or her absence.

Preschool Leader Responsibilities

Preschool Department Director

A preschool department or class refers to the teaching team and pupils in a classroom. The department director is the teacher who leads in planning for outreach, record keeping, and worker enlistment and conducts the Bible teaching session during Sunday School. The director leads the teacher (s) in planning for teaching and in completing administrative details. He or she may coordinate the extended session for the department / class during worship time.

Preschool Teacher

Two teachers should always be present in a preschool department for security and safety, with one doing the work of the director. The preschool department director and teacher(s) work together to do the following:

1. Conduct ongoing weekly or monthly worker planning meetings.
2. Conduct an ongoing plan of ministry, witness, and outreach to preschoolers and their families.
3. Conduct an ongoing Bible-teaching session each Sunday with preschoolers, using age-appropriate resources and activities including an activity time, cleanup time, group time/ Bible story time (only for threes or older). One teacher may work in extended session with other enlisted teachers as needed.
4. Cooperate with other preschool departments / classes and other preschool ministries of the church.
5. Support ongoing church worship and other ministries and emphases of the church.
6. Maintain a daily personal devotion and prayer time.



Children's Leader Responsibilities

Children's Department Director

A Children's department director is the teacher who leads in planning and evaluating outreach, record keeping, and worker enlistment for Children's Sunday School. He or she guides the Bible teaching session during Sunday School and leads in enlistment of other department workers.

Children's Teacher

1. Guide children to know God and His redemptive message in the Bible. Lead girls and boys to Christ when the Holy Spirit convicts them.
2. Promote, encourage, and participate in in-reach, home-reach, and outreach activities, which include evangelistic visitation and ministry.
3. Cooperate with other children's workers in discovering and cultivating prospects and their families and in cultivating members and their families.
4. Participate in regularly scheduled planning meetings.
5. Engage in training and study activities that can improve effectiveness in teaching, reaching, and evangelistic witnessing.
6. Attend and support church worship services and the church ministries and emphases.



Youth Leader Responsibilities

Youth Teacher

1. Develop a plan of action to reach youth for Bible study with the Sunday School leadership team.
2. Participate in the Sunday School planning meeting.
3. Practice effective Bible study methods that involve youth in small groups and large groups.
4. Create or revise a youth prospect list in cooperation with Sunday School leadership.
5. Conduct and involve youth in outreach activities and ministry activities that meet specific needs of youth.
6. Assign records and record keeping to assistant.
7. Build a relationship with youth that goes beyond church and Sunday School.
8. Instruct youth in the use of daily devotional material.
9. Maintain a daily personal quiet time, including prayer.
10. Attend training opportunities.

Youth Class Leader

1. Participate with the youth teacher in developing a plan of action to reach youth for Bible study.
2. Assist the teacher during Bible study as requested.
3. Participate in visitation and outreach activities.
4. Enlist members in visitation and outreach activities.
5. Assist the teacher in creating or revising a prospect file.
6. Encourage youth to participate in ministry action activities.
7. Assist the teacher in developing ministry action activities that meet the needs of youth.
8. Maintain a personal quiet time, including daily prayer.

Adult Class Leader Responsibilities

Adult Class Teacher

This leader is responsible to the Division Director for the total work of the class. Specific duties include:

1. Serve as class administrator and Bible study leader.
2. Enlist and train an outreach-evangelism leader, secretary, and care group leaders. Enlist and train a prayer leader and fellowship leader when the class is large enough for these offices.
3. Organize other class members into care groups with no more than six members per group, including the care group leader.
4. Participate in Sunday School planning meetings.
5. Visit members and prospects regularly, participating in the weekly visitation ministry.
6. Plan with the class leadership team to accomplish the work of the class and to conduct a regularly scheduled meeting.

Adult Class Outreach-Evangelism Leader

This leader is responsible to the teacher and relates directly to the Sunday School outreach-evangelism director. The outreach-evangelism leader leads the prospecting and witnessing activities of the class. The outreach-evangelism leader assigns prospects to class leaders and members for visitation, cultivation, and witnessing. Specific duties include:

1. Lead the class to discover, witness to, enroll, and minister to lost and unchurched prospects.
2. Develop a class prospect file and keep the file updated based on visitation/contact reports and make reports to the Sunday School outreach / evangelism director.
3. Assign prospects to members and encourage frequent cultivation, evangelism, and discipleship visits and contacts.
4. Enlist at least two persons per week to represent the class at weekly visitation.

Care Leaders

These vital workers serve as a ministry link to the Sunday School members. Each care leader should be responsible for a group of six or fewer class members. Specific duties include:

1. Contact every member of their group each week.
2. Receive prayer requests from members of the group. Pray for them and relay the requests as appropriate.
3. Take action on ministry needs discovered.



Secretaries

1. Meet regularly with class leadership team.
2. Process and maintain general records for the class and compile reports as requested, including prospect information
3. Coordinate ordering and distribution of Bible study curriculum, supplies, and other resources.
4. Set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness.



Great Sports Quotes

from *Get Lost* Adventure Magazine

“Winning is not a sometime thing; it’s an all time thing. You don’t win once in a while, you don’t do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is habit. Unfortunately, so is losing.”

—*Vince Lombardi*

“Most games are lost, not won.”

—*Casey Stengel*

“How you respond to the challenge in the second half will determine what you become after the game, whether you are a winner of a loser.”

—*Lou Holtz*

“The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.”

—*Vince Lombardi*

“Before you can win a game, you have to not lose it.”

—*Chuck Noll, ex-Pittsburgh Steelers Coach*

“You need to play with supreme confidence, or else you’ll lose again, and then losing becomes a habit.”

—*Joe Paterno*

Famous Yogi Berra Quotes

“It ain’t over till it’s over.”

“This is like *déjà vu* all over again.”

“Baseball is 90% mental, the other half is physical.”

“You got to be very careful if you don’t know where you’re going, because you might not get there.”

Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.

—John Wooden

There are only two options regarding commitment. You're either IN or you're OUT. There's no such thing as life in-between.

—Pat Riley

It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.

—John Wooden

Ingenuity, plus courage, plus work, equals miracles.

—Bob Richards, Pole Vaulter

Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with that plan.

—Tom Landry

To be prepared is half the victory.

—Miguel Cervantes

Besides pride, loyalty, discipline, heart, and mind, confidence is the key to all the locks.

—Joe Paterno

The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather, a lack of will.

—Vincent T. Lombardi

The mind is the limit. As long as the mind can envision the fact that you can do something, you can do it—as long as you really believe it 100 percent.

—Arnold Schwarzenegger

You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.

—Michael Jordan

The country is full of good coaches. What it takes to win is a bunch of interested players.

—Don Coryell

It's not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog.

—Archie Griffen,
two-time Heisman winner (5'9")

The will to win is important, but the will to prepare is vital.

—Joe Paterno