

## Identifying and Enlisting Potential Sunday School Leaders

Written by J. David Apple

Who is God preparing and calling to lead others to focus on transformational Bible study? One of the greatest opportunities is to help others discover where God is calling them to serve. Sunday School provides the opportunity and challenge to help existing leaders consider God's call and to raise up additional leaders who will join in the work of the Great Commission.

Enlistment (and reenlistment) is one of the most significant steps to take in building a Kingdom-Focused Sunday School. Your job is to clearly set and explain the course needed by your leaders and help them understand expectations of the church.

One reason many Sunday Schools have been flat-lined (minimal or no growth) or declining is because teachers have either not done what has been expected or teachers have not known what has been expected in leading the class to accomplish the work of the Great Commission. Many churches are more interested in filling leadership vacancies than finding the person God has to do a specific job in the Sunday School. Now is our chance to help teachers prayerfully consider and accept the challenge of raising Great Commission Christians.

### Consider the Expectations for a Teacher

Carter Shotwell, Minister of Education at Lake Pointe Baptist Church in Rockwall, Texas explains that high standards are set for the teachers. They are enlisted with these mindsets:

- They are to focus wholeheartedly on Bible study, discipleship, ministry and building relationships.
- Each class is designed to multiply.
- They are expected to do whatever it takes to reach the unchurched persons in the community, and they do it through the Bible study groups.
- They understand they are expected to participate in regular training.
- Every teacher is to enlist an apprentice who will be nurtured by the teacher and by the class. The apprentice is trained to help start a new group in the near future.

Each Bible study group is designed to do the work of the church. The expectations are high; the accountability is strong, and the results are consistently growing.

Enlistment is not merely reviewing a job description (even though a clearly defined job description is needed). Enlistment is merely setting the straightforward expectations for the teacher and other leaders and showing how the church will help them accomplish their work. Effective enlistment is not merely asking a person to take a job. It is helping the person prayerfully consider their opportunity to join in the work of the Kingdom.

Consider the following actions you can take to strengthen potential teacher enlistment and training.

- Enlist prayer warriors who will focus on God's plan in raising and calling out servant leaders from the class.
- Work with other leaders and members in making a list of persons on whom you understand God is working and may be available to consider a specific area of service.
- Identify areas of ministry that need new or additional workers.
- Identify specific qualifications needed for specific leadership roles; evaluate how persons being considered relate to those qualifications.
- Develop a list of specific responsibilities needed.
- Personally enlist the person you believe God is leading you to consider for a specific ministry or area of responsibility.
- Assign the prospective worker to an existing worker. The prospective worker could serve in the role as an apprentice in order to learn skills in the ministry area.
- Provide opportunities for potential and existing workers to receive a variety of training experiences.

Make sure your leaders understand their job, understand how the church will support them in getting their job accomplished, and are willing to accept responsibility for helping others grow as Great Commission Christians as they grow in their service of the Lord.