

## Characteristics of an Emerging Class Leader

A common remark heard in Sunday School meetings is, "I know we should start new classes, but where do we get the leaders?" Historically, there is a tendency to designate leaders rather than to develop or disciple leaders. Nominating committees bestow leadership positions on individuals because of their visibility (attendance frequency) and inability (to say "no"). Biblically, leaders should be discipled, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Mt. 4:19)

As a part of the disciple-making process, every leader should be seeking to discover and develop future leaders. Discover emerging leaders by their:

- 1) Passion - an individual who clearly displays a love for Christ, His Church, and for serving.
- 2) Participation - inside the class, this individual engages in discussion, asks questions, and displays a love for understanding and living the Word.
- 3) Potential - outside the class, in an interview or conversation, the individual reveals leadership potential. Develop a habit of spending time with class members to discover the potential everyone has through their spiritual giftedness. Utilize one of the great varieties of tools that are available to assist in this process.

After the discovery process, all leaders need to be developed or discipled as follows:

1) Scripturally - As stated earlier, Jesus' example was to call people to "follow," and He began both to "do and teach." (Acts 1:1) Develop an apprentice or mentoring relationship with emerging leadership. Call them alongside before sending them out to serve.

2) Spiritually - Every leader needs to develop and be held accountable for some basic, daily spiritual disciplines (derived from Acts 2):

- A) Studying the Word
- B) Spending time in prayer
- C) Sharing with anyone as they have need
- D) Stewardship of their resources - time, talent, and treasure
- E) Serving with sincerity of heart <sup>1</sup>

3) Skillfully - take emerging leaders with you to a wide variety of training events that will hone their skill. Training may be done through the local Church, Association, State Convention, or SBC entity. All leaders are to be lifelong learners!

Daniel E. Edmonds, State Missionary, Director of the Office of Sunday School & Discipleship, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

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<sup>1</sup> Phipps, Lawrence H. and Daniel E. Edmonds, *Growing Sunday School TEAMS*, (Montgomery, For Life Ministries, 2001), 19.