

LEADERSHIP LESSON # 81: WAYS OUR CLASS CAN LET PEOPLE DOWN

OUTLINE BY JOHN P. JOHNSTON

We have all heard the stories – a once faithful member stops attending Sunday School and worship, vowing never to return. Someone else quietly joins another church. Another person vents to the pastor, angry and hurt. Unfortunately, such scenarios are all too common in our churches. Sadder still, many of these incidents could be avoided.

There are several common ways in which a Sunday School class can inadvertently let people down. Here's a list of ways that, hopefully, your class can avoid:

1. Never contact your **absentees**. Pretty soon they will figure out you really don't care whether they show up or not.
2. Don't **minister** to people in times of crisis. When people get sick, experience a death in the family, or lose a job, it's easy to say, "Let the pastor and deacons handle it, I don't have time."
3. Don't provide a **Bible study lesson** with careful preparation and presentation. Poor teaching can empty a class faster than the best outreach can fill it.
4. Make **no effort** at reaching out to the lost/unchurched. In your community, probably in walking distance of your church, there are people who need to hear the gospel. If you won't share with them, who will?
5. **Fail to pray** for one another and bear one another's burdens. It's much easier to gossip and criticize than to spend time in intercessory prayer.
6. **Assume** the pastor and staff know about every ministry need of your class members and fail to communicate those needs. With modern privacy laws, often the only way a pastor may know someone is in the hospital is when someone from their class lets him know.
7. **Forget** about class members who are serving in other areas – working with preschoolers, children or youth, ministering in nursing homes, etc. These folks should be included in class activities and kept on the prayer list.
8. Don't **organize** your class for outreach, inreach and ministry. Let the teacher do all the work and watch him/her burn out or see the class flounder.
9. Never **encourage members** to take on shared opportunities of service. People who are involved and invested in a class stay longer and tend to grow deeper. If people are not equipped and encouraged to serve as care-group leaders, fellowship leaders, secretaries, outreach leaders, etc., many God-given gifts and talents will go to waste.
10. Never **apologize**. Even the best teacher and the best class can slip up sometimes. By failing to own up when we "drop the ball" we miss a chance to restore fellowship and reclaim someone who could easily fall by the wayside.

Usually when a class lets someone down it is not intentional, rather it is a result of benign neglect.

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1. Never contact your _____. Pretty soon they will figure out you really don't care whether they show up or not.
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3. Don't provide a _____ with careful preparation and presentation. Poor teaching can empty a class faster than the best outreach can fill it.
4. Make _____ at reaching out to the lost/unchurched. In your community, probably in walking distance of your church, there are people who need to hear the gospel. If you won't share with them, who will?
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8. Don't _____ your class for outreach, inreach and ministry. Let the teacher do all the work and watch him/her burn out or see the class flounder.
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