

LEADERSHIP LESSON 15: SUNDAY SCHOOL ALIVE: AFFIRM THE MISSION* OUTLINE BY DANIEL EDMONDS

Each church develops a mission statement that in some manner reflects the Great Commission call to evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication. The Sunday School should be organized to carry out this mission through what Daniel Edmonds, State Missionary, has called the “3 R’s” of Sunday School: reaching people, raising them up, and releasing them to serve.

A common question among Alabama pastors is, “How can I get the Sunday School to adopt the mission of the Church?” Pastors recognize the key role Sunday School plays in accomplishing the mission of the church. Sunday School ought to seek to accomplish the mission of the church, since it is the church organized for reaching, teaching, fellowship, and ministry.

Most Sunday School classes fail to accomplish the mission of the church because they are not designed for that purpose. Each church needs to develop a class strategy and equip their members to carry out the mission. (An example of this can be seen in Growing Sunday School TEAMS)¹

Here is a simple plan:

1. Connect people to a specific purpose of the mission. Using the generic mission of reaching, teaching, ministry, and multiplication a church could make sure an individual or group of individuals in each class is enlisted to carry out that function (Outreach leaders, Care Group leaders, Mission leaders, etc...).
2. Coach people in the proper goals and skills to succeed. Every leader needs to know what the goal is and how they can accomplish it. A lack of direction and training will leave an individual with feelings of frustration.
3. Call for progress and praise reports during class each week. There are different reasons for asking for reports; accountability, visibility, and encouragement. The bottom line is that each ministry needs a public platform to demonstrate its importance and to solicit more involvement.
4. Continue to expand the number of people involved in the various aspects of the mission. A key component in any organization is to discover ways to continue and expand the ministry. As more people are involved, the church can discover gifted leaders and develop them for more effective ministry.

Using the “3 R’s” as a template for the plan would mean the following:

1. Reaching people: Leaders will be enlisted and trained to assist class members in witness training, prospect discovery, and follow-through care ministries. These individuals would lead the class in ministry, outreach visitation, intentional evangelistic ministries, discovering prospects, and reporting.
2. Raising them up: Leaders will be enlisted and trained to teach the Bible, disciple the new believer, and to engage all members in discipleship groups.
3. Releasing them to serve: Leaders will be enlisted and trained to assist members in the discovery of spiritual gifts and to engage them in leadership/ministry/service opportunities.

¹ Lawrence Phipps and Daniel Edmonds, *Growing Sunday School TEAMS: A 5 Step Practical Guide to Growing the Church Through the Sunday School* (Montgomery: Vaughn Forest Baptist Church, For LIFE Ministries, 2001). Available at www.forlifeministries.org

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The Sunday School should be organized to carry out this mission through what Daniel Edmonds, State Missionary, has called the “3 R’s” of Sunday School: _____ people, _____ them up, and _____ them to serve.

Sunday School ought to seek to accomplish the mission of the church, since it is the church _____ for reaching, teaching, fellowship, and ministry.

Most Sunday School classes fail to accomplish the mission of the church because they are not _____ for that purpose.

Here is a simple plan:

1. _____ people to a specific purpose of the mission.
2. _____ people in the proper goals and skills to succeed.
3. _____ for progress and praise reports during class each week.
4. _____ to expand the number of people involved in the various aspects of the mission

Using the “3 R’s” as a template for the plan would mean the following:

1. Reaching people:
2. Raising them up:
3. Releasing them to serve: