

If Your Class is Going to Minister... It Will Have to be Done on Purpose

Sunday School classes (or Small Groups or Life Groups or whatever your church calls them) tend to over-estimate how well they are ministering. There is generally a circle of friends in the class who naturally look after each other. If you ask them, theirs is a loving class with “a great fellowship.” However, there are sometimes other class members who fall between the cracks and disappear off the radar screen. No one ever seems to know what happened to them. “Well, they must not have been very committed,” we think.

Perhaps, the disappearing member had moved here from out of town. Maybe it’s someone who joined the class because they loved the Bible teaching, but who didn’t really have much else in common with the other members. Possibly, it was someone who’s a little awkward socially. For whatever reason, they are not in our circle of friends, and it would be a real challenge for them to work their own way in.

Winston Churchill once complained about an item on the menu: “This pudding has no theme!” Sometimes a Sunday School class lacks a theme in the make-up of its members. Here is where organizing our classes so the members of each class will have most in common can be a big help – at least, our new classes.

Here's the thing: Classes must reach escape velocity to pull away from the gravitational pull of being only with our friends. It takes a great level of energy to care for the person who resides outside our circle of lifelong friends.

A word used in recent years to describe what is needed is *intentional*. Which means, to do it, it must be done on purpose. You need a plan. Of course, at this point, it’s tempting to comment that our class is going to “let the Spirit lead.” In real life, classes that say this revert to their default setting of looking after their friends. Let’s stop blaming the Holy Spirit because it’s hard to expend the effort to include others.

What follows is a list of class leaders for your adult class. They can help ensure that no falls through the cracks, and everyone is ministered to. Consider that, for some, this will be their first opportunity to minister in the church. It will make them feel that they are a part. These roles also serve as portals for entry-level discipleship.

SECRETARY:

Keeps accurate attendance.

Alerts teacher to chronic absentees.

Asks, "Does anyone have an offering envelope today?"

CARE GROUP LEADERS:

The backbone of the class!

Try to have one Care Group Leader for every seven or eight members.

Calls or texts members in their groups who are absent

Informs the teacher (or ministerial staff member, if serious) about ministry needs.

FELLOWSHIP LEADER:

Plans a class "get-together" at least once per quarter.

Remember to invite your "in-service members" who teach children's classes, work security, etc.

You can also invite people on you "invite list."

PRAYER LEADER:

Takes requests and leads prayer time in class.

This person sees that someone prays by name for each specific request.

Communicates prayer concerns of members in crisis to the Care Group Leaders, and the Care Group Leaders communicate, in turn, to their groups.

DOOR GREETER:

Stands outside the door, welcoming those attending as they enter.

Makes guests feel comfortable entering the room.

The more foreboding the door, the more important this role is.

OUTREACH LEADER:

Maintains an "invite list" of people the class is trying to involve in the class

and, like a casting director, will ask a member to touch base with a particular person on the invite list.

TEACHER:

Teaches the Bible and leads the class in ministry.

Sometimes, a smaller class will need some leaders to fill two roles until the class grows.

For example, Outreach Leader *and* Door Greeter or Care Group Leader *and* Secretary.

This Plan Helps Us Avoid the Danger Jesus Warned Us About in Mark 5:46-47:

For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don't even the Gentiles do the same?

This Plan Helps a Class Obey the “One Another” Commands in the New Testament:

- “Show family affection to *one another* with brotherly love” — Romans 12:10
- “Accept *one another*, just as Christ also accepted you” — Romans 15:7
- “Encourage *one another* and build each other up.” — 1Thessalonians 5:11
- “Be hospitable to *one another* without complaining.” — 1 Peter 4:9
- “Love *one another*, because love is from God” — 1 John 4:7

Ways a Class Ministers to Each Other:

- Absent: Contact and check on them
- Crisis: Communicate and pray
- Death: Take food, attend the service, and pray
- Surgery or Baby Born: Take meals to the house for a few days

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