**Starting New Adult Bible Fellowships**

**Spiritual Leadership Conference 2013**

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***Isaiah 54:1-3***

*1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.*

*2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;*

*3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.*

1. **Understand the Nature of an Evangelistic Sunday School**

Five Functions of the Sunday School:

* 1. Each class reaches people of a specific age group with the Gospel.
  2. Each class connects new members and meets needs through relationships.
  3. Each class teaches Bible truth for life application.
  4. Each class leads people toward maturity through discipleship and participation in church life.
  5. Each class develops new leaders by providing opportunities to serve others.

1. Understand the Nature of Effective New Classes

When launched properly, new adult Bible classes typically possess the following characteristics:

* 1. More enthusiasm than an established class.
  2. Less intimidating than an established class.
  3. Greater involvement than an established class.
  4. More caring than an established class.
  5. Greater commitment than an established class.
  6. Better outreach than an established class.

1. Establish an Expandable Departmental Structure

Adult Sunday School Departments at LBC:

* + College & Career (18-22)
  + Single Life 1 (22-29)
  + Single Life 2 (30+)
  + Ladies
  + Young Couples (18-34)
  + Mid Couples (30-45)
  + Median Couples (40+)
  + Mature Adults (50+)
  + Senior Adults (60+)
  + Specialty Department (Deaf, Korean, & Sunshine Classes)
  + Spanish Department

1. Carefully Prepare for the Successful Launch of New Classes

Consider the following timeline for launching new classes:

* 1. Prayerfully identify potential new class leaders. (3-4 months before kickoff) [approve with pastor, ask second]
  2. Interview potential class leaders. (3-4 months before kickoff)
  3. Train new class leaders. (8-10 weeks before kickoff)

New adult class leader training topics:

* + 1. Fulfilling the Role of the Class Leader
    2. Developing Additional Leaders in the Class
    3. Making the Most of the Weekly Class Time
    4. Teaching the Bible to Change Lives
    5. Reaching People through the Class
    6. Practicing Enrollment in the Class
    7. Conducting Purposeful Class Activities
  1. Prayerfully identify potential new class pioneer members. (7 weeks before kickoff) [include input from existing teachers]
  2. Meet with and invite pioneer members to help launch new classes. (6 weeks before kickoff)
  3. Introduce new classes and leaders to the congregation. (3 weeks before kickoff) [consider making this presentation first to the more committed crowd and then to the entire congregation]

Include the following when you advertize new classes:

* + 1. The stage of life (or age group) of the class
    2. The topic of study in the class
    3. The name of the class leader
    4. The name (or theme) of the class
  1. Pre-enroll members into the new classes during a Sunday morning worship service—two weeks in a row. (2 & 1 weeks before kickoff)
  2. Conduct pre-launch fellowships with pioneer and pre-enrolled members, for the purposes of bonding and job-assignments. (1 week before kickoff)

1. Additional Strategies for Success in Launching New Classes
   1. Create care groups within classes that grow beyond an enrollment of 25.
   2. Conduct ongoing monthly class leaders meetings for all adult teachers.
   3. Cultivate a team of apprentice teachers who can move through the ranks.
   4. Conclude as a team of leaders that, “growing more classes is as valuable as growing larger classes.”
   5. Consider finding pioneer members in larger classes, in classes with a wider age-span, and in existing care groups.
   6. Conduct quarterly enrollment campaigns, where people may re-enlist or move classes.
   7. Create an opportunity for members to select classes from a variety of biblical themes and topics [2 quarters]

**Recommended reading on starting new adult Sunday school classes:**

*Sunday School that Really Works*, by Steve Parr

*You Can Double Your Class in Two Years or Less*, by Josh Hunt

*The Six Core Values of Sunday School*, by Allan Taylor

*How to Break Growth Barriers*, by Carl George