

THE 3D SUNDAY SCHOOL

Two-Hour Adult Sunday School Teaching Plan

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PURPOSE:

To present a three dimensional strategy that will enable Adult Sunday School members and leaders to fulfill the Great Commission.

How to Use This Plan

- ♦ *For the local church:* Use to train Adult Sunday School class leaders during a local church training or kick-off event.
- ♦ *By an Adult Sunday School teacher:* Use in a retreat setting or during multiple class sessions.
- ♦ *For regional and state training:* Use to train leaders in state or associational training events.

PREPARATION:

Purchase from a local hardware or boating store three different colors of small rope (preferably three-stranded rope). Cut the ropes into 6-inch segments. Provide one piece of rope for each participant.

Download the following items:

- ♦ *The 3D Sunday School: A Three Dimensional Strategy to Help Members and Leaders Fulfill the Great Commission*, by David Francis. For ordering information, visit www.lifeway.com or write LifeWay Church Resources Customer Service, One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0113 or FAX 1-615-251-5933. ISBN: 1-4158-2604-8.
- ♦ 3D Forms. Copy page 38, “My FRAN Prayer List” and page 39, “Care Group Members” for each participant.
- ♦ Item 7: 3D PowerPoint® (optional).

Arrange chairs in a semicircle. Place copies of *The 3D Sunday School* book and all handouts in each chair. Provide enough space so participants can move into three groups during the session.

If planning to overview Bible study curriculum, download current LifeWay Bible study plans at www.lifeway.com/sundayschool. A brief overview of the 2006-2007 LifeWay curriculum outlines can be downloaded with the 3D plans.

- ♦ Display the 3D posters on the focal wall.
- ♦ Make appropriate copies of items 1-6.

PROCEDURES:

PART 1: Overview and Evaluation of the 3D strategy (50 min.)

Step 1: Introduction (10 min.)

Distribute one piece of colored rope to each participant as they enter. Rotate colors for each person who enters so equal numbers of colored rope will be distributed.

Once individuals have arrived, instruct the group to find others with the same colored rope. They are to group together into three teams based on their color of rope, introduce themselves, and to prepare a list of ways that rope is used.

After a period of time, ask each team to share their list of ideas.

Explain that the Bible uses rope to describe a variety of issues. One issue is described in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. Read the following passage:

⁹*Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their efforts.*
¹⁰*For if either falls, his companion can lift him up; but pity the one who falls without another to lift him up.* ¹¹*Also, if two lie down together, they can keep warm; but how can one person alone keep warm?* ¹²*And if somebody overpowers one person, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not easily broken.* (Eccl. 4:9-12, HCSB).

Call attention to *The 3D Sunday School Book* explaining that the session will focus on three strands or 3D strategy that will strengthen Adult Sunday School—Invite, Discover, Connect. Although all three strands (strategies) are important and can help a class, if only one of the strands is weak or not being used at all it weakens the class. All three are needed for maximum strength much like the strands of a rope used to describe relationships in Ecclesiastes—*A cord of three strands is not easily broken.*

Begin with prayer.

Step 2: Overview of 3D Strategy (30 min.)

Call attention to “Invite-Discover-Connect” (Item 2). Ask the group to fill in the blanks in the handout as you overview the information.

Note: Use the following information to overview the major points of the 3D strategy. Review the book, *The 3D Sunday School: A Three Dimensional Strategy to Help Members and Leaders Fulfill the Great Commission* for additional points to emphasize.

INVITE

Conduct an informal poll by asking the following questions: Why are you in the church you have joined? What caused you to attend in the first place?

Ask for a show of hands of how many visited the church because someone invited them.

Explain that 80-90 percent of people surveyed say they first came to church because someone invited them.

Overview points on the handout and provide additional explanation

An Inviting Class . . .

- ♦ *Is excited about inviting others.* The group is so excited about the class and what God is doing that they willingly and openly invite others to attend. 3D Adult Sunday School members covenant to work together to invite unchurched friends.
- ♦ *Works together* to make sure the class experience is an inviting place for the unchurched.
- ♦ *Meets regularly.* Although they may not meet on Sunday, they do meet once per week. Consistently meeting builds an inviting atmosphere.
- ♦ *Welcomes guests at any time.* There isn't a closed period for joining. Anyone can come at any time including fellowships and other activities.
- ♦ *Is an enrolling class.* Prospects don't have to attend once or even several times before they can join the group.
- ♦ *Has a clear Bible study plan.* If time allows, distribute the information related to the Bible study plan for the appropriate curriculum being used. Ask the group to discuss how knowing and understanding the plan of study helps a class be an "inviting class."
- ♦ *Has a clear plan* for welcoming and following up with guests.
- ♦ *Has taught members to be "inviters."* This includes inviting people to Sunday School and inviting people to accept Christ. The members are learning how to share their faith as they invite.

DISCOVER

Ask the group to think back to their class experience last Sunday. Ask them to evaluate the following:

- ♦ What percentage of class time was spent listening to a lecture?
- ♦ What percent was spent seeing the lesson illustrated?
- ♦ What percent of the time was spent in discussion or group activities?

Explain that a discovering class will do and expect more from the Bible study experience.

A Discovering Class . . .

- ♦ *Covenants together* to create small group experiences in which people discover the truths of the Bible.
- ♦ *Environment and group experience* makes people want to attend.
- ♦ *People won't invite others* if the class environment and group experience is not inviting.
- ♦ *Is centered on the effective study of God's Word.* There is an intentional focus on studying and applying God's Word. There is a plan for helping members and leaders cover key biblical concepts.

- ♦ *Teacher seeks to engage adults* in learning and doesn't just expect learners to come and listen.
- ♦ *Teaches adults how to study* the Bible for themselves.
- ♦ *Challenges believers to grow* and challenges the lost to understand and respond to the gospel. There will be an intentional mix of believers and unbelievers, the saved and the unsaved, the church and the unchurched, the biblical scholar and the biblical novice in a "discovering class." Discuss the challenges of presenting Bible study with such a diverse mixture of adults.
- ♦ *Focuses on smaller groups* so Bible study is learned in the context of strong relationships. Emphasize the importance of keeping groups small. Even in a large class there has to be smaller groups of 10-12 in order to maximize learning. Jesus modeled the best dynamic of working with groups by working specifically with the twelve. He spoke to the masses, taught the twelve, and spent even more time with the three!
- ♦ *Teacher involves members* in the Bible study experience. Lecture is livened up by using visuals and discussion questions. Learner guides are used during and outside of class for further study. Members are invited to read Scripture and pray aloud. The room set-up and visuals help learners discover God's truth.
- ♦ *Teacher expects transformation* and doesn't just hope for it! A teacher who expects transformation never gives up. One who just hopes resigns himself to the fact that some may not learn. They quit expecting so they quit challenging.

CONNECT

Read the following passage: *I led them with human cords, with ropes of kindness. To them I was like one who eases the yoke from their jaws; I bent down to give them food (Hosea 11:4, HCSB).*

Explain the importance of ministry and fellowship to connecting members with one another and with the church.

Guide the group to review the information on the handout.

A Connecting Class . . .

- ♦ *Practices both brotherly love* (a love of brothers) and hospitality (the love of strangers).
- ♦ *Works together* to provide people opportunity to connect through fellowship and ministry.
- ♦ *Creates an environment* where all people—particularly newcomers—can connect and be cared for as someone special. They may use greeters or other leaders to help guide this. They believe that the first three minutes of a guest's experience in the class is the most crucial time—that is the time it takes for a guest to decide if they will return.
- ♦ *Expects visitors* and plans to greet and register them when they arrive
- ♦ *Wears name tags.*
- ♦ *Forms care groups* for ministry and encouragement. Explain that care groups are made up of five to seven individuals, can be organized by gender in coed classes, may have a brief time to meet with each other during class, and contacts members on a regular basis. Care group leaders are ACE connectors. They connect when someone is ABSENT. They connect when there is a CRISIS. They connect to ENCOURAGE.
- ♦ *Connects through prayer.*
- ♦ *Connects through fellowship activities.*

- ♦ *Connects members to the life of the church*—worship, discipleship opportunities, leadership opportunities, mission opportunities, and with other believers.

Step 3: Evaluation & Covenant (10 min.)

Explain that it is not just about the teacher but about the members too. When the class, as a whole, does not have all three of the strategies present or if one is weak then the class becomes weak. Your class may be “holding on by a thread,” or it may be all knotted up, or the ends may be frayed, or it may be a strong, three stranded rope fulfilling its purpose.

Ask the group to review the descriptions and to circle areas that need to be improved. Discuss their findings.

Call attention to the handout “3D Class Covenant” (Item 3). Describe the covenant and read together aloud the covenant points. Explain that the next session will focus on actions they can take to strengthen the strategies.

PART 2: 3D Actions and Ideas (60 min.)

Step 1: 3D Assignments (30 min.)

Distribute copies of “3D Assignments” (item 5). Ask participants to group into teams again based on the color of the rope they have. Assign one of the assignments to each team.

Explain that they will have 15 minutes to work on their assignments and five minutes each to present.

Allow each team to present their assignment.

Step 2: Involving Members in Leadership (15 min.)

Review Ecclesiastes 4:12 again: *“And if somebody overpowers one person, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not easily broken” Eccl. 4:12 (HCSB)*. Emphasize the fact that the work of a 3D class can’t be done alone. A teacher or one single leader cannot help the class be healthy.

Distribute copies of “3D Class Guide” (Item 4) and review the leaders listed emphasizing that a class doesn’t have to have all the leaders but they do need leaders. Recommend that a class has at least three leaders—teacher, invitation leader, and care group leaders—in order to be a healthy 3D class. Lead the group to determine which leaders their class needs to develop first. Contrast the fact that groups may only have the teacher, invitation leader, and care group leaders but they will still pray; they will still be involved in missions; they will still have fellowships—even though they don’t have leaders in those roles.

Remind the group that leaders such as care group leaders and invitation leaders have been mentioned but a teacher still needs help coordinating the work of the class. Emphasize the importance of someone stepping up to say to the teacher, “I will help you coordinate the 3 strategies” (refer to the ministry coordinator role in the guide). Explain how this individual can be the first step for many classes to becoming a healthy 3D Sunday School class.

Step 3: 3D Challenge (15 min.)

Read the following passage: *“Enlarge the site of your tent, and let your tent curtains be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your ropes, and drive your pegs deep” (Isa. 54:2, HCSB)*.

Instruct the group to write the Scripture reference in the front of their Bibles.

Point out the reference to lengthening the ropes emphasizing the fact that the ropes have to be strong in order for this to happen.

Point out the other references and ask the group to consider how this relates to a 3D Sunday School class:

- ♦ Need to enlarge our tent and stretch our curtains—Invite
- ♦ Need to drive our pegs deep—Discover
- ♦ Need to lengthen our ropes—Connect
- ♦ And, most of all, we should not hold anything back!

Lead the group to pray that their class will be a 3D class.







INVITE – DISCOVER – CONNECT

AN INVITING CLASS . . .

- ▲ Is _____ about inviting others.
- ▲ Works together to make sure the class experience is an inviting place for the _____.
- ▲ Meets _____.
- ▲ Welcomes guests at _____.
- ▲ Is an _____ class.
- ▲ Has a clear Bible study _____.
- ▲ Has a clear plan for welcoming and following up with _____.
- ▲ Teacher has taught members to be “_____”

A DISCOVERING CLASS . . .

- ▲ _____ together to create small group experiences in which people discover the truths of the Bible.
- ▲ Environment and group experience makes people _____ to attend.
- ▲ Is centered on the effective _____ of God’s Word.
- ▲ Teacher seeks to _____ adults in learning and doesn’t just expect learners to come and listen.
- ▲ Teaches adults how to _____ the Bible for themselves.
- ▲ Challenges _____ to grow and challenges the _____ to understand and respond to the gospel.
- ▲ Focuses on smaller groups so Bible study is learned in the context of strong _____.
- ▲ Teacher _____ members in the Bible study experience.
- ▲ Teacher _____ transformation—it doesn’t just hope for it!

A CONNECTING CLASS . . .

- ▲ Practices _____ love (a love of brothers) and _____ (the love of strangers).
- ▲ Works together to provide people opportunity to connect through _____ and _____.
- ▲ Creates an environment where all people—particularly newcomers—can connect and be cared for as someone _____.
- ▲ Expects visitors and _____ to greet and register them when they arrive.
- ▲ Wears name _____.
- ▲ Forms _____ groups for ministry and encouragement.
- ▲ Connects through _____.
- ▲ Connects through _____ activities.
- ▲ Connects members to the life of the _____.

THE 3D ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS COVENANT



As an Adult Sunday School class, we covenant together to lead people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and to build on-mission Christians by developing and growing our relationships with each other, those whom we reach, and ultimately with God.

- ☐ Priority: We will place a high priority on meeting together to study the Bible.
- ☐ Participation: We will participate in Bible study discussion and activities without being dominant or argumentative.
- ☐ Respect: We will feel free to share our opinions and ask questions, and we will respect others as they ask questions and share their opinions.
- ☐ Confidentiality: We will not repeat anything said during the Bible study session that is considered personal and confidential.
- ☐ Life Change: We will regularly assess our own life-change goals and will encourage other members to do the same.
- ☐ Empty Chair: We will constantly seek out ways to reach new people for the class. We will expend the time, effort, and resources necessary to reach every person we can for Christ.
- ☐ Care and Support: We give permission to others in the class to call us at any time, especially in times of crisis. We will seek to be encouragers and show care for every member of the class.
- ☐ Accountability: We agree to hold each other accountable to the commitments we make.
- ☐ Mission: We will work diligently to start at least one new group every year.
- ☐ Ministry: We will encourage one another to serve in a ministry and to support missions through financial gifts and personal participation.

INVITE ASSIGNMENT

- ▲ Review the FRAN Prayer List and the Personal Testimony Worksheet and develop a plan for guiding a class to use them to teach the class to be an “inviting class.” Present the plan and the handouts to the rest of the group.
 - ▲ Review the Invite chapter in the 3D book. Formulate answers as a group and present your findings to the rest of the class.
 - When should you enroll someone?
 - Who should you enroll?
 - When they do come, what plan do you have for follow-up?
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DISCOVER ASSIGNMENTS

- ▲ Review pages 20-23 in the 3D book beginning with the section, “Life Changing Discovery Doesn’t Just Happen.”
 - ▲ Read Hosea 11:1-4. Based on pages 20-23 complete the following assignment and present the ideas to the class:
 - What is one application of the truth of this passage you believe can be taught?
 - List at least two ideas you could use to liven up the lecture on this passage. Include ideas such as visuals, room set up, and so forth.
 - List at least two discussion questions you could use that would help involve learners in the study of the passage.
 - If this were a study that included a learner guide, list at least two ways a learner guide could be used to enhance the study of the passage.
 - What is one way this study could help a lost person understand the gospel?
 - How could you conclude the study that would help the group practice the application?
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CONNECT ASSIGNMENTS

- ▲ Review the Care Group Member handout and discuss the benefits of providing the information for Care Group leaders. Is there other information that would be helpful? Present your ideas to the entire class.

(Choose one of the following assignments)

- ▲ Based on information included on page 28 of the 3D book in the section entitled, Organize Care Groups and Enlist Group Leaders and information shared in the first session develop a six month plan for care group leaders that will help them stay connected to their groups. Provide one idea per month that will teach care group leaders how to stay in contact with their group members. Ideas can include ways to use phone calls, visits, e-mails, and mail.
- ▲ Write a case study for the three areas of Care Group Leader work, ACE (Absentees, Crisis, Encouragement). Present each case study to the class and guide them to share ideas that would help a care group leader address the need.
 - ABSENTEE Case Study
 - CRISIS Case Study
 - ENCOURAGEMENT Case Study

Preparing a Marked New Testament

Write the first reference on the front inside cover of your Bible. Write the next reference and page number in the margin next to the preceding reference.

All people sin
Romans 3:23

Sin has a price
Romans 6:23

**God loves all people
and sent His Son
to pay the price of sin
for all people**
Romans 5:8

**Repent of sins and
turn to God**
Acts 3:19

Confess and believe
Romans 10:9-10

**Call on the Lord
and be saved**
Romans 10:13

My Personal Testimony

What my life was like before I heard about Jesus

How I became aware of my need for Christ

How I received Christ as my Savior

How Christ helps me every day

How Sunday School helps me grow as a Christian