

Great Expectation Cards

CROWD

CROWD

PHARISEES

PHARISEES

PARALYTIC

PARALYTIC

**STRETCHER
BEARERS**

**STRETCHER
BEARERS**

Handout 1: Great Expectation Cards

For use with Great Expectations: Planting Seeds for
Sunday School Growth – General Leader Teaching Plan

Great Expectations
Planting Seeds for Sunday School Growth

LifeWay | Leadership

Parable of a Busy Church

There once was a new church in which the people worked hard to reach people for Christ. They called their first pastor, bought some land, and focused on worship and Sunday School as a means for growth; and grow they did! As they grew, they thought, "Let's add more activities and events. Surely this is good!" So they got busy planning golf tournaments, men's events, women's weekend retreats, children's sports camps, youth retreats, and a host of other activities. They expanded the church staff and became very involved in missions activities. As they looked at all they were doing they said, "We are doing so good; look at what we have become!" And the church still grew, especially in worship.

After a few fast growing years, the church began to see their Sunday School attendance slow down. The church staff realized that there was a problem so they decided that the people they were reaching weren't committed. They began to tell people they needed to get committed to Sunday School. They talked about the priority of Sunday School, but they focused the majority of their energies toward maintaining all the other church activities.

Guests were still attending worship and the other events, but somehow they never found their way to Sunday School. People began to ask, "Why aren't we growing? We keep adding people, where are they going?"

At some point, due to the flurry of church activities, it was decided that a focused visitation/ outreach plan was no longer effective. They decided to only emphasize relational evangelism. The Minister of Education then began to spend an extensive amount of time writing annual one-month Sunday School lessons that would tell people how to do relational evangelism. Still the church did not grow.

They soon decided that the Sunday School curriculum was the problem. "Let's just let teachers teach what they want to." They finally decided the organization was the problem. "Let's not worry about organization since we really only need to focus on teaching God's Word." But, were their teachers really teaching God's Word? Nobody knew for sure because the teachers were teaching what they wanted to teach. Those who did attend Sunday School were drawn to the most dynamic speakers; yet it seemed as if relationships were not very strong among participants.

Now, it's five years later. The church that was moving forward was now in decline. What was this church going to do now? They decided they would simply focus on taking care of those who were already in the building—providing all types of programs and activities. They thought, "That is our mission—to help those God has already given us. Maybe these were all the people God planned to bring down our path." So, now their focus was on keeping everyone busy, encouraging them to witness and to attend Sunday School, but never really expecting anything more than what they already had.

Handout 2: Parable of a Busy Church

For use with Great Expectations: Planting Seeds for
Sunday School Growth – General Leader Teaching Plan



Expect New People Every Week

- Provide gospel tracts to your group.
- Lead them to write out and practice sharing their testimonies.
- Give class members a pocket New Testament.
- Guide class members to mark The Roman Road or other gospel verses in their New Testaments.
- Direct members to a study on how to share the gospel. Invite them to participate.
- Lead the group to list names of the lost that they know.
- Develop a prayer list from the names. Lead the group to pray regularly for the list of names.
- Wear nametags during the session.
- Register all guests.
- Designate greeters to welcome guests.
- Provide empty chairs for guests.
- Determine ways to follow-up with guests.
- Enlist members to bake cookies, pies, or bread. Equip your visitation teams with the homemade goodies to deliver to prospects at their homes.
- Look for opportunities to lead your group to participate in helping the unchurched with specific needs.
- Provide 12-15 square feet of clean space for adults and students.
- Provide 35 square feet of clean space for children.
- Provide 25 square feet of clean space for preschoolers.

If you were a guest visiting our church . . .

- Would you be able to find the entrance easily?
- What would be your first impression of the facility and landscaping?
- Would guest parking be easily identifiable and convenient?
- Would you know what entrance to use?
- Would you be able to find the restrooms without asking?
- Would you feel comfortable leaving your child in the preschool?
- Would you understand what takes place during the worship service and Sunday School department/class time?
- Would you be embarrassed or pressured during your visit?
- Would you be greeted and accepted?
- Would you come back next week?

(Based on The Exodus Principle, McIntosh. P.69)

See www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool (articles and ministry helps) for additional information.

Handout 3: Expect New People Every Week

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LifeWay | Leadership

Lifespan Spiritual Development

BIRTH 7TH GRADE 18 YEARS HEAVEN

**HEAR
KNOW
DO**

linear/prescriptive

Learning occurs through ten prescriptive **levels of biblical learning** concepts that are taught in a very linear approach, providing the foundation for salvation and spiritual transformation.

www.lifeway.com/kidspromise

**KNOW
OWN
KNOWN**

linear/discovery

Spiritual development occurs as students know God through **Lordship and disciplines**, own their faith through **character and discernment**, and make their faith known through **relationships and influence**. The process is linear allowing for discovery through experience.

www.lifeway.com/studentstrategy

**CONNECT
GROW
SERVE
GO**

discovery/balanced/integrated

Spiritual growth occurs incrementally and concurrently as adults interact with **the 15 biblical concepts** that impact their personal experiences and practical life situations. Learning should integrate connecting, growing, serving, and going in balanced spiritual development.

www.lifeway.com/adultstrategy

Linear Prescriptive Discovery Integrated Practical

Just Say “YES”



- **Would you come to Sunday School?**
- **Would you like to join our Sunday School class?**
- **Would you prepare for our study next week?**
- **Would you participate in class?**
- **Would you serve as a class leader?**
- **Would you serve as a care group leader in an adult class?**
- **As a student or child, will you help?**
- **Will you serve beyond the class sessions?**
- **Will you pray for the lost?**
- **Will you attend regular leadership meetings?**
- **Will you attend training?**

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Handout 5: Just Say “Yes”

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Expect Classes to Reproduce



Gather space data.

Measure all your available and potential space. Don't limit new classes by space. Get creative.

- Adults/Students: 12-15 sq. ft.
- Children: 35 sq. ft.
- Preschool: 25 sq. ft.

Gather class data.

- Consider attendance versus enrollment.
- Are there gaps in age or affinity groups? Who else could you be reaching?
- Consider how full a classroom is—the rule of thumb is 80% full equals 100% full.

Each class should be training additional leaders, especially teachers.

Enlist leaders and members to help start a new class.

Provide a list of prospects for the new class.

Involve current classes—praying, communicating, encouraging.

Announce the birth of a new class—celebrate new life!

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Handout 6: Expect Classes to Reproduce

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