

Missionary Sunday School Conference Plan for Adults

Prepared by:

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Purpose: To provide a two-hour teaching experience for adult Sunday School leaders and members for the purpose of identifying and implementing a strategy for becoming a Missionary Sunday School group

How to use this plan

- For the local church: Use to train adult Sunday School leaders and members during a local church training or kick-off event.
- For regional and state training: Use to train adult Sunday School leaders and members in state or associational training events.

PREPARE:

Provide the following resources for use throughout the training:

- Nametag for each participant (A nametag template is provided in the zip files for the *2012 Missionary Sunday School Emphasis Kit*.)
- Secure a Post-it® Easel Pad or markerboard, markers, and a Merriam-Webster dictionary (or use www.merriam-webster.com). Write these two definitions on the paper or markerboard (do not display them until called for in the session plan): (1) the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; (2) the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time such as popular *culture* or southern *culture*.
- Adult Handout 1—One Mission: Let's Relive a Missionary Moment
- Adult Handout 2—His Story from Sunday School History: A Missionary Movement
- Adult Handout 3—His Story: From Members to Missionaries!
- Adult Handout 4—Every Person: His Story, My Story, Our Group's Story

Download the following materials:

- Provide one copy of *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis for each participant. The book is available as a free download or you can order copies for \$1.50 each at www.lifeway.com/davidfrancis. The book can also be purchased at the Apple iStore.
- PowerPoint presentation: Missionary Sunday School—Adult.ppt

Prepare a display of the following resources:

- *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis
- Samples of LifeWay Adult Sunday School resources
- Samples of LifeWay Adult undated products such as *Sent: Living the Missional Nature of the Church* by Ed Stetzer; *Compelled by Love: A Journey to Missional Living* by Philip Nation with Ed Stetzer; and *Mission: An Invitation to the Adventure of Life* (Small Group Life), edited by Steve Gladen

Prepare the room for learning:

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle facing the focal wall.
- Place a nametag on each chair. Place thick marker pens among the chairs.
- Arrange for AV equipment if needed (computer with PowerPoint® presentation, data



- projector, extension cord/power cord, screen, or blank wall for projection). Secure a markerboard with markers and CD player with CD of music for worship at the beginning.
- Reproduce handouts for distribution at various times throughout the session.

PRESENT:

1. INTRODUCTION (5 min.)

[SLIDES 1-2]

Play music related to missions/evangelism as participants arrive, visit with others, and get settled. Invite participants to print their name using a thick marker pen on a nametag.

[SLIDE 3]

Welcome leaders and introduce the training focus. Share David Francis's dream for the book, *Missionary Sunday School*: "My hope is that this book will be sufficient to motivate your group to want to start thinking like missionaries and to provide some ideas for beginning that exciting journey."

[SLIDE 4]

2. RELIVE AN EXCITING MISSIONARY MOMENT! (20 min.)

Distribute Adult Handout 1—Let's Relive an Exciting Missionary Moment. Invite participants to read Acts 8:26-40 and follow the instructions on the handout. Allow 5 minutes for them to work.

[SLIDE 5]

Comment: Philip was not only thinking like a missionary but was acting like one as well! God had set up this amazing opportunity, and Philip joined God where He was working. The Holy Spirit's work was apparent in directing Philip to approach the eunuch, listen to what the eunuch was reading (no more appropriate passage than Isa. 53:7-8!), share the good news, and arrive at a rare watering hole in the desert precisely when the eunuch requested baptism.

Ask: What is your perception of the Ethiopian eunuch in this story? Allow people to share from the choices on the handout or come up with their own. Then ask: What is your perception of Philip in this story? Encourage responses.

[SLIDE 6]

Ask: How do Philip's actions motivate you to think more like a Sunday School missionary? Allow for several responses.

Ask: How does this encounter from Scripture enable you to see adult Sunday School as more of a "movement" rather than a program? Allow for responses.

3. HIS STORY FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL HISTORY: A MISSIONARY MOVEMENT (25 min.)

Distribute Adult Handout 2—His Story from Sunday School History: A Missionary Movement. Share this quote from *Missionary Sunday School* (p. 6-7): *The One Mission that runs through the remarkable history of the Sunday School movement is transformation: personal spiritual transformation, transformation of churches, and cultural transformation in the communities surrounding them.*

[SLIDE 7]

Comment: *We're going to learn about some champions in Sunday School history who led Sunday Schools to experience transformation in their day and time.*

If possible, organize conferees into seven groups with at least two people in each group. Communicate the assignments to all the conferees using the PowerPoint slides.

[SLIDES 8-9]

Members of each group will read silently through their assigned section of “Missionary Sunday School” (refer to their handout) and write down insights obtained and principles learned on their handout. Group members will then share with others in the group, compile their insights, and prepare to report to the large group.

After 15 minutes, call for groups to report.

Then state: *As we've reviewed His story from Sunday School history, it may have caused you to stop and consider your place in Sunday School history as a leader.* Allow for reaction or response from any conferees.

Review the three questions at the bottom of the handout as time allows.

4. HIS STORY: FROM MEMBERS TO MISSIONARIES (20 min.)

Distribute Adult Handout 3—His Story: From Members to Missionaries. Ask a volunteer to read the opening statement. Ask: *For what outcome do you seek when you teach your group: Knowledge, Understanding, Application, or Training them as Missionaries?* Allow for responses. Direct conferees to place an X where that falls on the teaching chart on the handout.

[SLIDE 10]

Ask: *What steps do you need to take to move the X further to the right?* Allow conferees time to share ideas of how they can do so and interject your own ideas as well after you've given sufficient time for each conferee to share.

Have conferees read the statement at the top of their handout again and ask: *Does Bible study each week become an end in itself or is it equipping your group members to become missionaries?* Call for responses to the *how* and *why* questions.

[SLIDE 11]

Continue working through the handout by guiding learners to mark their rating on the three elements included on the scale. Ask: *What steps do you need to take to improve (move closer to the left) the ratings you just now gave your adult Sunday School group?*

5. HIS STORY & MY MISSIONARY STORY (25 min.)

Designate someone to read various definitions of the word *culture* from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Ask: *Which definition provided is applicable to the Sunday School class you teach?*

Display the definitions you wrote on the paper or markerboard. Ask: *What do you know about the people group God has assigned you to reach and teach each week? Who are they? What are they like? What are some behaviors they exhibit that are uniquely a part of the culture surrounding your Sunday School class?*

Distribute Handout 4—Every Person: His Story, My Story, Our Group's Story. Direct the conferees read the scripture at the top together.

Comment: *God has called you to lead your adult group to write a unique story! God has placed each of you in unique contexts and cultures to lead an adult Sunday School group for the purpose of expanding His kingdom and developing disciples who become missionaries.*

[SLIDE 12]

Call attention to the quote from *Missionary Sunday School* on the handout.

[SLIDE 13]

Ask conferees to pair up (preferably with someone he/she does not know) and use the handout as a guide to share their stories with each other of how God is working in their Sunday School group to send out missionaries to other groups in the church or the community.

6. TOOLS FOR THE MISSIONARY SUNDAY SCHOOL (20 min.)

Direct learners to the Appendix (p. 42) of *Missionary Sunday School*. Point out the wide variety of tools that David Francis highlights and how each one can be helpful to a church that sincerely desires to have a missionary focus.

Present a brief overview of LifeWay's adult curriculum options for ongoing Bible study groups: *Bible Studies for Life*, *Explore the Bible*, *You*, *MasterWork*, *LifeConnections*, *LifeWay Lessons*, and *The Gospel Project* (releasing in Fall 2012). (Refer to www.lifeway.com/curriculumguide for more details about specific products.) If all the adult Bible study groups use the same curriculum, present an overview of the options within that set of curriculum. Highlight the value of learner guides, leader guides, resource packs with a CD-Rom, commentaries, and *Biblical Illustrator*. Make sure leaders are aware of online helps like extra! and free downloadable teaching plans for ETB's *Discovery Study Guide* (available at www.lifeway.com/explorethebible). Call attention to undated products as well and possible uses for these additional Bible studies.

Direct conferees to cluster in groups of three or four and discuss responses to these statements:

1. In addition to God's Word, one leader resource that I depend on for my preparation is _____.
2. Our Bible study groups uses the Learner Guide to _____.
3. Our best Bible study happens when _____.

[SLIDE 14]

Highlight Tool 3 on pages 43-44 and challenge leaders to respond to the questions at the conclusion of this section (p. 44).

7. CONCLUSION (5 min.)

Remind conferees of the significance of their story to add to God's story on the journey of leading their adult Sunday School group. If time allows, mention the "Tools of the Missionary Sunday School" (pp. 42-46 of *Missionary Sunday School*) and Flake's Formula (pp. 45-46 of *Missionary Sunday School*) briefly. Lead participants to now silently and prayerfully reflect on actions and attitudes (re)discovered during this training that would help them build an adult Missionary Sunday School group as you verbalize a prayer of (re)commitment.

[SLIDE 15]