

# **Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School Teaching Plan for Adult Leaders**

## **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 Transformational Sunday School class.

## **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.

## **PREPARATION**

### **Provide the following resources for use throughout the training:**

- Nametag for each participant (A nametag template is provided on the CD-Rom in the *Sunday School Emphasis Kit*.)
- Index cards (or pieces of paper), two cards for each participant, distributed during steps 2 and 5
- Adult Handout 1: Let's Retell the Story Toward Transformation
- Adult Handout 2: Key Elements that Move us Toward Transformation
- Adult Handout 3: Let's Evaluate our Transformation
- Adult Handout 4: Change the Scorecard
- Adult Handout 5: Our Future?

### **Download the following materials:**

- Provide one copy of *Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School* by David Francis for each participant. The book is available three ways: 1) Download and print copies from the file provided on this CD-Rom. 2) Download the file from [www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool](http://www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool) and make copies. 3) Order copies for \$1.50 each at [www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool](http://www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool).
- PowerPoint® presentation: Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School—Adult.ppt. (Note: The PowerPoint® presentation is slides 1-26; slides 28-40 are team assignments for use during the training.)

### **Prepare a display of the following resources:**

- *Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School* by David Francis
- *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* by Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer
- Sample of LifeWay Adult Sunday School resources
- Sample of LifeWay devotional and ministry magazines (*HomeLife*, *BabyLife*, *ParentLife*, *Living with Teenagers*, *Open Windows*, *Mature Living*, *LifeWalk*, *Stand Firm*, *Journey*) for use during step 4

### Prepare the room for learning:

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle facing the focal wall.
- Place a nametag on each chair. Provide tape and thick marker pens throughout the room.
- Arrange for AV equipment to focus on front wall (computer loaded with PowerPoint® presentation, data projector, extension cord with power cord, screen for projection, marker board with markers and eraser, CD player with CD of music for worship).
- Reproduce handouts, one copy of each of the five handouts for each participant expected. These will be distributed at various times throughout the session.
- Prepare visual: *Our prayer for transformation* (see step 2).
- Prepare visuals, one for each of the Bible passage assignments listed in step 3. These assignments are provided on [Slides 26-31]. You can provide hand-printed placards or print each of the slides and use them as assignment placards.
- Prepare two posters as described in step 3. At the top of one poster, write: *Some experiences Peter had*; on the other poster, write: *Some of our catharsis moments*.
- Prepare placards with assignments, one for each team, for step 4. Assignments are provided on [Slides 32-38]. You can provide hand-printed posters or print each of the slides and use them as assignment placards.
- Provide large sheets of paper and marker pens for groups to use in step 4.
- Prepare hand-printed placards, one for each of the following (see step 5):
  - We know we are part of a movement.
  - We are open to persons not part of the group.
  - We intentionally seek to understand and relate to people in our community.
  - God's Word is ALIVE in our class.

### PROCEDURES:

#### 1. INTRODUCTION (15 min.)

Play quiet worship music as participants arrive, visit with others, and get settled. Invite participants to print their name using a thick marker pen on a nametag. [Slide 1]

Distribute **Handout 1: Let's Retell the Story Toward Transformation**. Invite participants to read John 21:1-14 and circle words and phrases that indicate that Peter was experiencing a life-altering experience. [Slide 2] Comment that Peter was at a significant crossroads in his life, whether he realized it or not. Emphasize that our Sunday School classes are also at a significant crossroads, whether we acknowledge it or not. This gave Peter an opportunity to look back, to be reminded of some of the significant things he already knew, and to begin dealing with strengths and challenges involved in creating a Kingdom-building impact.

#### 2. INTRODUCE TRANSFORMATIONAL CLASS (15 min.)

Display the cover of *Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School* as well as *Transformational Church* [Slide 3]. Explain that LifeWay has initiated the largest research project of its kind to identify what churches of all sizes and in all locations are and have done that brings impact in the Kingdom. Explain that this research is making a significant impact on how we refocus on the work of Sunday School. Call attention to the subtitle of the book: *Creating a New Scorecard for the Church*. Ask: *What are ways we have traditionally measured to see if we are achieving our assignment in Sunday School?* [Slide 4] Lead participants to brainstorm responses while you record these on a large sheet of paper or a marker board.

Explain that *Transformational Church* helps us experience actions and attitudes where we have a growing passion to: [Slide 5]

- see more people become more like Christ,
- observe our class act more like His Body, and
- celebrate the impact our class is making to help our community reflect His Kingdom.

Say: *Imagine what our Sunday School class would look like if we rediscovered and demonstrated more of a passion for these three key aspects! What would our “scorecard” look like if we were more interested in achieving this focus of transformation?*

Explain that this session will help us: [Slide 6]

1. review our stories of faith (as individuals and as Sunday School classes),
2. identify significant elements we are rediscovering that will help us make a life-changing impact in the Kingdom, and
3. help us address ways we can meaningfully measure how our class deals with strengths and challenges.

Distribute an index card to each participant. Invite them to write at least one prayer concern they have for their class [Slide 7]. Direct participants to use masking tape to display these on and around the visual, *Our Prayer for Transformation*, on the focal wall. Explain that the entire training will help us focus on these kinds of prayer concerns. Invite participants to pray together that our classes and our churches will experience transformation.

### 3. REVIEW OUR STORIES OF FAITH (20 min.)

Explain that one great opportunity that moves a class toward transformation is when we review and celebrate our own personal and class stories. Say: *In order to put some significant things in perspective, let’s briefly retell highlights of Peter’s story up to the point where we encounter him in John 21:1-14.* [Slide 8]

Call attention to the definition of “catharsis” [Slide 9] and emphasize the impact of catharsis in the journey of transformation by reading: *Every transformational church and class experiences a catharsis: an event, crisis, awakening, insight, or other dynamic that jolts the class toward a transformational path.*

Ask: *What are some things you remember about Peter up to this point as recorded in John 21?* Invite participants to get into teams of three or four persons. Distribute placards on which one each of the following passages are listed [Slide 10]. Lead teams (or individuals) to briefly read the passage and list significant events (positive and challenging) that made a difference in Peter’s journey of faith.

- Luke 5:1-16 (Peter fishing; Jesus heals leper)
- Matthew 8: 14-27 (Peter’s mother-in-law healed; storm stilled)
- Matthew 10:1-22 (Peter commissioned along with other disciples; receives specific instructions)
- Matthew 14:13-33 (Feeding of 5,000; Peter walks on water)
- Matthew 17:1-21 (Jesus’ transfiguration on mountain; Jesus’ power over demonic enemy)

- Mark 14:22-42 (Peter commits; Jesus indicates Peter will deny Him; Peter sleeps when asked to pray)

As teams report, use the visual you created to record the experiences Peter had in two columns: positive and challenging. After teams have reported, invite them to briefly discuss and then report some experiences they have had that would have been catharsis moment(s). Distribute another index card to each person. Invite persons to write one or more catharsis moments for themselves or their class that could potentially jolt them toward a transformational path. Invite participants to attach these to the catharsis visual you made.

#### 4. IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS THAT EMPHASIZE TRANSFORMATION (45 min.)

Distribute copies of *Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School* to each participant. Explain that one of the significant factors that leads to transformation is when a class or church becomes aware of strengths and challenges regarding seven key elements. [Slide 11]. The booklet provides information regarding each element.

Distribute **Handout 2: Key Elements that Move us Toward Transformation**. Lead participants to fill in the blanks for each of the seven elements and identify a brief definition or description from each [Slides 12-18].

After briefly listing and describing the seven elements, lead participants to get into one of seven teams. If attendance is less than 14, allow teams of 2-3 persons to select two of the following assignments on placards. If attendance is higher than 14, give more than one team the same assignment.

Direct teams to overview their assigned page numbers from the book to discuss and report implications of what a Sunday School class would look like if it reflected their assigned element. Lead each team to discuss the implications of the statement(s) or question(s) on their assignment. Play quiet worship music while teams work (optional).

As teams report (on large sheets of paper using marker pens), be prepared to emphasize that Sunday School is a movement that focuses on changing lives through the impact of God's Word read, taught, discussed, learned, and applied. Be prepared to lead participants to:

- Identify strengths that help a class build momentum
- Identify challenges/obstacles that keep a class from experiencing transformation
- Identify actions they can take to help strengthen their class.

1. **Missionary mentality**—Our class seeks to understand its cultural and socioeconomic context. Review pages 9-14. [Slide 12]

Discuss the implications of the following statement: We show we are part of a movement. Where have we gotten away from the enthusiasm for that movement? [Slide 32] provides content for this group assignment.

2. **Vibrant leadership**—We stay focused on open groups practicing open enrollment. Review pages 15-19. [Slide 13]

Discuss the implications of the following statements: We will help establish at least one new open Bible study group for a person of our specific target group. Who are we seeking to reach? How would they know we want them to belong before they believe? [Slide 33] provides content for this group assignment.

3. **Relational intentionality**—We seek to contact every member every week. Review pages 20-24. [Slide 14]

Discuss the implications of the following statements: We will intentionally seek to engage people in life-changing Bible study each week. What are some strengths and challenges for your class regarding this “intentionality” through care groups? [Slide 34] provides content for this group assignment.

4. **Prayerful dependence**—We will intentionally seek God’s direction regarding every aspect of our scorecard and will be open to prayerfully petition God’s intervention before, during, and after each session. Review pages 25-28. [Slide 15]

Discuss the implications of the following statement: We will intentionally move our class (members) to engage in prayer on the class, community, and commission level. [Slide 35] provides content for this group assignment.

5. **Worship**—We will intentionally lead our members and prospects to actively embrace Jesus as a lifestyle before, during, and after each Bible study experience. Review pages 29-33. [Slide 16]

Discuss the implications of the following statement: Too few Bible study experiences engage class members in answering “so what?” Brainstorm some ways you can engage people in daily devotions or quiet times by using Sunday School resources and ministry magazines. [Slide 36] provides content for this group assignment.

6. **Community**—There are five elements of group life in a transformational class: mission orientation, Word-driven, multiplication mindset, stranger welcoming, and Kingdom focused. Review pages 34-36. [Slide 17]

Discuss: What are ways we can help our class determine if our focus is on us or on working together to minister to and engage others? [Slide 37] provides content for this group assignment.

7. **Mission** – There are three key ingredients for a transformational class: Release, Reproduce, and Reach. Review pages 37-41. [Slide 18]

Discuss: What are some implications for a class that intentionally plans to be on mission? [Slide 38] provides content for this group assignment.

## 5. EVALUTE OUR JOURNEY TOWARD TRANSFORMATION (20 min.)

Reveal the hand-printed placards on the focal wall. Distribute index cards, one for each participant, and invite persons to write these four statements on their index card and then to rate their class between 1-10 as an indication of how they are doing in each area [Slide 19]. On the back of the card, instruct them to list at least one action that could strengthen that attitude or action in the class.

- We know we are part of a movement.
- We are open to persons not part of the group.
- We intentionally seek to understand and relate to people in our community.
- God's Word is ALIVE in our class.

Distribute **Handout 3: Let's Evaluate Transformation**. Invite half the participants to focus on the left side of the sheet and identify how members of their class would answer the four questions. Invite the other half of the participants to focus on the right side of the sheet and identify how people from the community (not part of the class) would answer those questions about your Sunday School class. [Slide 20]. Then provide time for everyone to quickly rate (1 being a significant challenge and 10 being a significant strength) the perceived responses to the five statements at the bottom of the page. Lead participants to discuss responses and identify differences in how we typically perceive our class and how people outside of our class/church may perceive it. Review significant actions and attitudes class members can take to strengthen the class as it moves toward transformation.

## 6. CREATE A NEW SCORECARD (10 min.)

Explain that one of the significant findings of the Transformation Church research is that churches are discovering the need for a new scorecard to measure if and how we are intentionally pursuing Kingdom impact and intentionally making disciples. Distribute **Handout 4: Change the Scorecard**. Invite participants to overview the brief list of ways most Sunday School classes measure the impact of our work [Slide 21]. Invite participants to brainstorm additional ways we measure how we are doing as a class.

Call attention to the Transformed Class Scorecard at the bottom half of the sheet. Invite participants to get into teams of 3-4 and brainstorm ways we can seek to measure if our class is becoming transformational [Slide 22]. Emphasize the information already rediscovered through the seven elements of transformation.

## 7. CONCLUSION (15 min.)

Remind participants of the significance of stories of our journey. Review some of the highlights of Peter's story. Lead participants to imagine they were part of the same Sunday School class as Peter and other disciples who followed Jesus.

Invite participants to read Sandy's story (pages 43-44) from *Transformational Class*. [Slide 23]. Invite participants to share one thing in particular they rediscovered through this training that encourages you about the opportunities for your class.

Share the following with class members. *Imagine you learn of the sudden death of someone who has such great potential. You are asked to write that person's obituary to identify some of the impact made during his or her lifetime.* Distribute **Handout 5: Our Future?** [Slide 24]. Invite participants to get in teams of 3-4 and brainstorm words, phrases, concepts they would want to be included if someone were to write the obituary of their own Sunday School class (assuming it would be in the distant future). After giving some time for participants to interact, invite teams to briefly report while you record responses on a large sheet of paper or on the marker board.

Call attention to the bottom portion of Worksheet 5. Invite participants to imagine that the obituary is now seen as a plan for their class to live out between now and the future. Lead participants to list actions and attitudes (re)discovered during this training that would help them reflect a transformational class.

Review the index cards on which participants wrote prayer requests at the beginning of the session. [Slide 25]. Invite participants to go to the focal wall and get a card other than their own and return to their seat. Invite participants to keep the card as a reminder to pray for transformation in our own lives and in the lives of others through our Sunday School classes. Lead in prayer of recommitment.