

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

Prepared by:

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Purpose: To provide a two-hour teaching experience for Student 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 Student Sunday School leaders and members during a local church training or kick-off event.
- For regional and state training: Use to train Student 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) so each participant will have two cards distributed during the session
- A map, preferably from anywhere except where you are located
- Student Handout 1: Key Elements that Move us Toward Transformation
- Student Handout 2: Let's Evaluate our Transformation
- Student Handout 3: Change the Scorecard

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) Print copies from the file provided on this CD-Rom. 2) Download the file from www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool and make copies. 3) Order copies for \$1.50 each at www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool.
- PowerPoint presentation: Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School—Student.ppt

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 Student Sunday School resources (KNOWN, Life Focus, *Living with Teenagers*, ec)

Prepare the room for learning:

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle facing the focal wall.
- Place a nametag on each chair. Provide tape and thick markers 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 the three handouts for each participant expected.

- Place the map on the wall for use during the introduction.
- Provide large sheets of paper and markers.
- 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 (20 min.)

Invite participants to print their name on a nametag using a thick marker. Begin by asking: *If you could describe your Sunday School class with one word, what would it be?* Allow everyone to share an answer and then ask how they think a student would respond to the same question. Record their answers on a sheet of paper or on the marker board. Lead conferees to discuss: *Are the answers given different? Why or why not?* [slide 1]

Point out the map [slide 2] and ask someone to tell you how to get to a certain location (pick any place on your map and ask how to get there). This should be difficult because no one knows where you're starting from. Explain: *Without a beginning point, you can't give directions to a final destination. The same is true about Transformational classes. If we don't know where we are, we can't chart a course to get where we need to be.*

Refer to the opening question and review the words that were given. Ask leaders: *Is this where you want your class to be or do you desire something more?* Explain that the training today is designed to help us learn where we are, why we're there, and how we can begin moving in the direction of transformation.

2. INTRODUCE TRANSFORMATIONAL CLASS (20 min.)

Begin by displaying *Transformational Church* by Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer. [slide 3] Spend a few minutes explaining where the information for this book came from. Explain that LifeWay initiated the largest research project of its kind to identify what churches of all sizes and 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 if we are achieving our assignment in Sunday School?* Lead participants to brainstorm responses while you record these on a large sheet of paper or a marker board. Direct conferees back to the map illustration. Remind them that these answers are going to be like landmarks along the way. Ask: *What happens if our landmarks change over time? What could happen if previous measuring tools were measuring the wrong thing? What if attendance is not an accurate marker of transformation?*

Explain that *Transformational Church* helps us identify new markers for success. [slide 4] Through this transformation we should begin seeing our actions and attitudes grow by:

- Seeing ourselves and others become more like Christ
- Observing our class act more like His Body
- Celebrating the impact our class is making to help our community reflect His Kingdom

Ask: *What would your Sunday School class look like if you rediscovered and demonstrated more of a passion for these three key aspects? What would your scorecard look like if you were more interested in achieving this focus of transformation? What if these were terms used to describe your class?*

3. IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATION (50 min.)

Distribute copies of *Transformational Class: Transformational Church Goes to Sunday School* by David Francis 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. The booklet provides information regarding each element.

Distribute **Handout 1: Key Elements that Move us Toward Transformation**. Lead participants to fill in the blanks for the seven elements using their *Transformational Class* book and to identify a brief definition or description of each element.

After providing a brief overview of the seven ingredients, form seven teams. (If attendance is less than 14, allow teams of two or three persons to select one of the following assignments on placards. If attendance is higher than 14, give more than one team the same assignment.) Lead teams to review their assigned page numbers from the book and 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. Distribute large sheets of paper and markers for teams to record their findings. 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 our class build momentum
- Identify challenges/obstacles that keep us 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 11-16. [slide 5]

Discuss the implications of the following statement: We show we are part of a movement. Do the students in your class understand they are part of a movement? Where have we gotten away from the enthusiasm for a missionary mentality? What are ways we can begin to identify with and join that movement as a class?

2. **Vibrant leadership**—We stay focused on open groups practicing open enrollment. Review pages 17-21. [slide 6]

Discuss the implications of the following: 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?

Discuss what open groups are (We expect new people each week and are actively inviting those in our circle of influence to join us) and what open enrollment is (You can belong to our community before you believe). These are essential elements to understand and make part of your class.

3. **Relational intentionality**—We seek to contact every member every week. Review pages 22-26. [slide 7]

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?” How can you connect to your class during the week?

Ask: *As the teacher of students, do you view your job as a once a week teaching time or a weeklong relational process?* Remind conferees that this element is especially true for students. It may be difficult to have a transformational class with only one contact point each week. Discuss the various options for maintaining contact with students. Challenge student leaders to include social media opportunities but not to overlook more personal ways of connecting with students.

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 27-30. [slide 8]

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. This will help keep the class focused on issues outside their immediate needs. Constantly discuss the community and church needs as a class and be devoted to praying through these needs. Prayer shouldn’t be limited to class time. As you stay connected during the week, be alert to opportunities to pray with and for those in your class.

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 31-35. [slide 9]

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 students in daily devotions. Again, worship isn’t just a Sunday morning activity. Be sure to connect the Bible truths and principles to the everyday life of the students. Never forget the “So what?” question.

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 36-38. [slide 10]

Discuss this statement from page 35: “No one’s story is complete ... until it has intersected with God’s Story... which happens best in a community being enriched by the stories of others.” 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?

7. **Mission**—There are three key ingredients for a transformational class: Release, Reproduce, and Reach. Review pages 39-43. [slide 11]

Discuss the implications for a class that intentionally plans to be on mission. How can you get your class on a mission? God’s movement includes us living on mission. Challenge leaders to give their class a mission.

5. EVALUTE OUR JOURNEY TOWARD TRANSFORMATION (15 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. On the back of the card, instruct them to list at least one action that could strengthen that attitude or action in the class. [slide 12]

- We know we are part of a movement.
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- We intentionally seek to understand and relate to people in our community.
- God's Word is ALIVE in our class.

Ask participants to turn in their cards. Review and discuss their responses.

Distribute **Worksheet 2: 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. 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 (15 min.)

Comment: We discussed the idea that maybe we've been using the wrong scorecard for our classes. You can't measure transformation by some of the historical attributes we've used in the past. Things like attendance, enrollment, Bibles brought, and lesson studied aren't bad ideas, but they don't tell the whole story. Just because a student attends or even brings his Bible doesn't mean he has interacted with Christ during the week or plans on engaging His Word during the class time.

Distribute **Worksheet 3: Change the Scorecard**. Invite participants to overview the brief list of ways most Sunday School classes measure the impact of their work and discuss how each may not be a good indicator of transformation. Invite participants to brainstorm additional ways we currently measure how we are doing as a class.

Call attention to the Transformed Class Scorecard on the bottom half of the sheet. Invite participants to get into teams of three and brainstorm ways we can measure if our class is becoming transformational. Emphasize the information already discovered through the seven elements of transformation.

7. CONCLUSION (10 min.)

Remind participants of the significance of stories of our journey. Lead participants to imagine they were part of the same Sunday School class as Peter and other disciples who followed Jesus. Ask: *What evidence do we have that these men who spent significant time with Jesus were transformed? How did they impact the people around them?*

Invite participants to read Sandy's story (pp. 43-44) from *Transformational Class*. Ask participants to share one thing in particular that they rediscovered through this training that encourages them about the opportunities for their class. [slide 13]

To conclude this training session, hand out an index card to each person and ask them to list one action point they will begin to work on immediately. Challenge them to think in concrete terms for their class. Direct them to put the card in their Bible as a reminder.

Close in prayer for the student leaders, their students, and the potential for transformation.