Benefits of Sunday School

If Sunday School did not exist, would we reinvent it? Yes we would! Here are several reasons to keep Sunday School: If Sunday School did not exist, would we reinvent it? Yes we would! Here are several reasons to keep Sunday School:

1. **Sunday school provides a structure** for teaching God’s Word. Preaching isn’t enough. A systematic teaching of the Scriptures – not just preaching (Acts 5:42) needs to occur through all age levels. Children, youth, and adults need opportunities for discovery, review, and interaction as they study God’s principles. Sunday school meets needs!

2. **Sunday school gears** Bible teaching to a specific age group (Deut. 31:12). It means a wiggly four-year-old can discover great biblical truth by acting out a Bible story, completing dot-to-dot pictures, singing fun songs, and obeying parents. During the same hour, senior adults may discuss whether their relationship with their spouse or responses to daily crises reflect their trust in God. Both age groups leave Sunday school with specific applications for the week.

3. **Sunday school mobilizes** and trains laity for leadership. It’s difficult to say who benefits more, the teacher or the student. The teacher’s Bible knowledge and care grows… his or her life is changed… a stretching occurs as leadership skills are developed. Students learn and are challenged, but how much more is that true in the life of the teacher

4. **The Sunday school is discipleship!** Every shepherd/teacher must have a desire to see each student in his/her flock have a special new change. True discipleship is “teaching to obey all I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20), it’s not merely teaching facts, but teaching obedience. While there are man styles of discipleship (one-on-one, small group, etc.) Sunday school is the group discipleship that is entry-level. It’s the “next step” after attending morning worship. From Sunday schools can develop small cell groups – discipleship. Since many people who attend church are not in a one-on-one or small group discipleship, an effective Sunday school is a form of “Discipleship 101.”

5. **Sunday school is convenient.** With the work, family and activity schedules of many church members, it is easier to come to church one hour earlier or love one hour later than to arrange another night out during the week. Also by having it on Sunday the children can be taught while the adults are learning. Parents who skip Sunday school in favor of mid-week small group often overlook the valuable “teaching times” their children miss by receiving “child-care” during the week rather than “teaching” in children’s Sunday school.

6. **Sunday school organizes** the church into caring groups. The teacher becomes a shepherd for the class, an extension of the pastor’s ministry. Where the pastor finds it impossible to know all the needs of the congregation, Sunday school teachers (shepherds) know when someone is absent or hurting and can express love personally.

7. **Sunday school leads** the prayer in prayer and relationships. From the preschool class through all the adult classes, prayer is directed toward the specific needs of the class members. Often the less not only prays, but has an opportunity to respond to specific needs. Fellowship and informal conversations flow easily in small groups where care is expressed and people know your name and your needs.

8. **Sunday school focuses** on outreach to peers and friends. In a small group setting, where warmth and love flow and topics are non-threatening, class members are encouraged to invite fellow employees or friends from school. Class socials and activities can focus on community outreach through social or ministry events.

9. **Sunday school lets** the church do all the above with consistency. Sunday school is one of the most consistent programs in the church. It doesn’t stop for the summer and rarely for holidays. Sunday after Sunday its dedicated staff leads the church in this most important ministry.

Ways That You Can Help Your Adult Bible Fellowship

- Ask the teacher or class pastor how you can help with the care needs of the class.
- Open your home to class attenders. Use two Sundays a month to invite someone new to your home for lunch or an evening dessert.
- Begin a personal prayer list for people in your class.
- Share freely when there is group discussion.
- Arrive a few minutes early and stay a few minutes after class to talk with people.
- Help plan a class social where unchurched friends could be invited. Make sure you bring a friend.
- Volunteer to follow-up attenders who are absent.
- Help coordinate coffee and doughnuts for your class.
- Encourage your teacher/leader to be a shepherd to the class – not merely a teacher.
- Encourage the teacher. Give him or her feedback on what you appreciate.
- Attend an area Sunday school convention for new ideas and motivation.
- Be a “seed” member of a new class.

Why not call it ABF instead of Sunday school. Other terms such as “Discipleship Groups,” “Next Stop” or “Training Class” are also good.

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