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## 20 Ways to Double Your Sunday School Class

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# 20

Hundreds of teachers have used the principles I include here with fantastic results. Try them. They work!  
BY ELMER TOWNE

## WAYS TO DOUBLE YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

*In this special article, Christian Life departs from its usual policy of showing what God is doing in the world today. Instead, this report from Sunday School Editor Elmer Towns shows you how to be more effectively involved in God's great program of changing lives through Jesus Christ, His Son. —The Editors.*

**Y**ou can double the attendance of your Sunday School class. Sound impossible? Well, it isn't. Hundreds of teachers have used the principles I include here, and have had fantastic results. Read all the points carefully—then discuss them with the other teachers in your Sunday School. Think how much could be accomplished for the Lord if every class in your school doubled in size this year. And when they start growing, be sure to enter *Christian Life's* "50 Fastest Growing Sunday Schools" contest. For details, send me a note, c/o Christian Life, Gundersen and Schmale, Wheaton, Ill. 60187.

1. *Set an Overall Goal.* If your class has been averaging 15, set a goal of 30. Prepare a poster with a goal of 30. Write 30 on the chalkboard. Saturate your pupils with the goal.

Goal setting works. A junior class in the Florence (S.C.) Baptist Temple hung a large sheet of paper from one wall to another, then had each of the 26 boys write his name on it and sign "52" by his autograph. In that way, each student reinforced the class goal of 52. The total Sunday School set a goal of 1,225. Posters were put

on walls, bulletin boards and doors. Every poster announced the goal of 1,225, but each differently—in German, Spanish, Greek; upper and lower case letters; Gothic and Roman numbers.

2. *Set a Goal for Finding New Prospects.* If your class is going to double, attempt to get twice as many prospects as your average attendance. This means that each member should suggest 2 names. If there are 30 in the class, get 60 names on your prospect list.

An adult class at the Berean Baptist Church, Salem, Va., distributed blank cards to members and asked each to submit names of friends he or she would like to see in the class. After two weeks of listing names, the goal still was not reached. Therefore, 3 ladies were delegated to phone members of the class and write down the names they suggested. They worked until 100 new names were gathered.

To have a growing Sunday School class, put as much emphasis on finding prospects as on recruiting them.

3. *Assign Prospect Responsibility.* Many growing classes type the names of all prospects on sheets of paper, then distribute photocopies in the class, assigning prospects to be contacted before the next week. The Calvary Baptist Church in Ypsilanti, Mich., printed a motto over its visitation board, "People Expect What You Inspect." Many members work in the automobile assembly plants in Detroit where they are taught by GM that people work according to how closely the foreman supervises them. The same rule applies to Sunday School. Therefore, give each of your

class members a prospect to contact, and check up on them the following Sunday to see if they have made the contact.

4. *Phone Every Prospect.* During the campaign, phone every prospect on your list . . . every week. Extend to each a friendly welcome, giving the time, place and reason topic.

5. *Send Mail to Every Prospect.* During your campaign, mail every prospect a postcard or letter, inviting him to Sunday School. A housewife can write a personal note to 30 prospective students in 2 hours. A first-class letter to 30 prospects will cost only \$3—and eternal benefits will result.

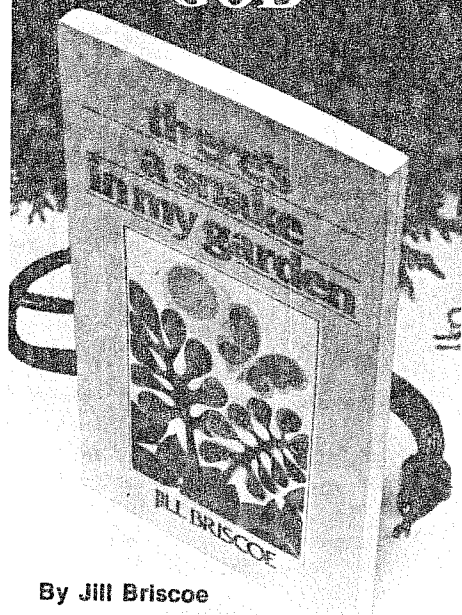
For example, one Sunday several junior boys gathered in the back of a Sunday School room at Calvary Baptist Church, Ypsilanti, Mich., to examine a rolled-up piece of paper from the pocket of a 9-year-old. The superintendent, expecting trouble, went back to spy-out the scene. He found the ringleader showing his buddies a postcard he had received from his Sunday School teacher.

"I thought she didn't like you, the way she yells," one of the boys said.

During the pastor's invitation the next morning, the teacher walked down the aisle with the boy who said, "I was saved at the end of Sunday School."

6. *Visit Every Prospect.* Visitation puts the *Go in Gospel*, carrying the message to every person. After you have phoned every prospect, a visit to his home will convince him of your love. In fact, visit every prospect every week during your attendance campaign.

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7. *Start a Class Newspaper.* During your campaign, start a one-page (or larger) class newspaper. The junior class at the Crestwick Baptist Church, Guelph, Ontario, distributes an eight-page paper, *The Roadrunner*, to every junior. Since it is a large class, the teachers spend time writing articles about juniors who recently have committed their lives to Jesus Christ. The paper also includes crossword puzzles, homework, stories, and news about the attendance campaign. The attendance motto and logo also are printed there, reminding the kids of their attendance goals.

The average Sunday School teacher with less than 10 pupils cannot publish a newspaper every week, but he can do it at least twice during each attendance campaign. A newspaper is not hard to prepare. If you've never issued one, simply write a one-page letter giving the news of the class. Then type the letter in two columns to make it look like a newspaper, and put a headline across the top. Fill the newspaper with the names of students, their accomplishments, and what you expect to do for God.

8. *Name Your Class.* Bill Newton took the fourth grade boys class at the Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Va., and called it "The Treehouse Gang." A massive cardboard tree, with a door, was used at the entrance of the room. Two more large trees, reaching from ceiling to floor, covered the inside walls. Later, a stockade was put in the hall surrounding the doors. Bill Newton started his class in September. His goal was to average 54 before the year was out. With enthusiasm, ingenuity, and determination, Newton pushed the average attendance to 94.

9. *Post Attendance.* A junior boys class at the First Baptist Church, Hammond, Ind., called their campaign "Spring Training." A massive box score chart marked hits, runs and errors so that students could follow their progress each week. The class was divided into two sides, and at the beginning of each class they "batted around," adding up visitors, attendance and Bibles.

Since pupils tend to value those things that are important to teachers, make sure to call the roll carefully. This tells each student it's his duty to be in class every Sunday. The extra pressure of some kind of a wall chart gives added motivation.

10. *Get a Motto.* The high school class at the Bible Baptist Church, Savannah, Ga., had a "Fat Is Beautiful" campaign. Instead of awarding stars or rockets, or putting names on the wall, they weighed in each week. The teams began with an equal total weight. Visitors tipped the scales for the winners, while absentees dragged the losers down.

11. *Get a Logo.* The Indianapolis (Ind.) Baptist Temple is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. A huge silver seal hangs in the auditorium with the motto, "The 25th Year of Redemption." Under the motto is their goal, "2,500 Souls Won to Christ in 1975." The entire seal is their logo. They have had it fashioned into small

silver seals which they affix to envelopes and letterheads. It also is printed on all the literature of the church.

12. *Give out Buttons.* Dr. Bob Gray, Trinity Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., set a Florida record of more than 5,000 in Sunday School on the church's 25th anniversary. Each person was given a button ahead of time with the wording "I Am One of 5,000" to remind him to be faithful in attendance.

13. *Stretch Their Faith.* The First Baptist Church, West Hollywood, Fla., planned to beat the Jacksonville record and have the largest Sunday School in the history of Florida. To do so, attendance had to double from 2,700 to 5,400. In a three-day workers conference, their faith was stretched.

On the first night of the conference, everyone was pinned with a "5,000+" button and asked to pray for 5,000+ every time he ate a meal during the next week. Since most eat three meals a day, every person would pray 21 times for 5,000+. Pastor Verle Ackerman called it, "Fast or Pray," reminding his people that if they didn't pray for 5,000, they should not eat.

The second night, each worker signed a card to pledge, "I will work for 5,000+."

On the third night every teacher made a numerical commitment of a goal for his class on 5,000+ Sunday.

When the tally was in, they had pledged to reach 5,400. And last April they reached 5,427, the largest Sunday School in the history of Florida.

14. *Choose a Good Day.* Don't plan a Sunday School campaign for Labor Day weekend, or during the Fourth of July holiday when there is a natural dip in the attendance. The minister who tries to have his largest attendance on Labor Day weekend and the Sunday after Easter, claiming, "Anybody can get a crowd on Easter, I want to build an attendance to show our people love God," has missed the whole purpose of an attendance campaign. A high attendance should do more than demonstrate the loyalty of the faithful. It should bring in visitors, electrify everyone when the attendance is doubled, and bring men, women and children to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. So plan for Sunday School growth when the best results are possible. Then you will be a good steward of your time, energy and money. Therefore, plan to grow on those days when attendance can be largest.

15. *The Clenched Fist.* A man can keep his fist taut only so long. Then the muscles give out. Likewise, a Sunday School class can pressure itself for expansion for only a short time. Therefore, growing Sunday Schools plan two attendance campaigns for six or seven weeks each spring and fall. They work as hard as they can during a campaign to find prospects, excite students, phone, write and visit. The attendance drive is relaxed during the Christmas holidays, the snows of January, and again during the summer.

16. *Get a Running Start.* Before jumping a creek, a boy runs faster if he has to jump farther. In Sunday School, the larger the

# I never dreamed there was so much to teaching Sunday School!



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goal, the longer it takes to double your class attendance. Plan a six-or seven-week fall campaign with the high Sunday as the last day. Don't read this article and plan to double your class next week. Pray to double, plan to double, and promote to double. But remember this: A teacher can't lead if his class won't follow, and pupils won't work to double their class unless their teacher takes the time to convince them it can be done.

17. *Plan a High Day.* Plan a high attendance Sunday on the last Sunday of your campaign. Some criticize this, saying that it only gets a crowd and doesn't make it possible for small-class teaching. However, the "high day" really is only a return to the old-fashioned rally day, where all pupils assembled in the auditorium to "rally" enthusiasm for Sunday School. Most teachers need to break lethargy and infuse the pupils with expectation. A "double day" convinces the pupils it can be done again and again, until the class is permanently doubled.

18. *Pray.* A junior boys class at the Forrest Hills Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga., set a goal of 26 in Sunday School. They wanted to double their average attendance of 13. The teacher asked each boy to pray. Several boys promised to bring their buddies. Next Sunday morning they began to fill up the little room... 22... 23... 24... 25... 26. All the boys yelled. But the visitors kept coming. Soon they were sitting two to a chair and standing in each row. When the teacher finally counted all the heads, there were 50.

"I can't teach. There are too many in this room," the teacher said apologetically.

A hand went up. "It's my fault," said a tow-headed boy, "I prayed for 50."

God answers the prayer of those who ask for their ministry to be enlarged, but *prayer only* cannot build a Sunday School. God will not do what He has commanded us to do. We are to go and reach people. Classes grow when teachers are busy visiting, phoning, mailing and praying all week.

19. *Feed Them the Word.* People go to restaurants where they get good food, then they tell their friends. Books are sold by word of mouth. The satisfied customer is still the best salesman for any product. The basis for growing Sunday School classes is still good Bible teaching which causes students to bring their friends. The Bible must be made interesting, captivating and relevant.

20. *Super Saturation.* The disciples went everywhere preaching the Word, reaching all men by all means. A Sunday School teacher should use every technique to excite pupils about coming to Sunday School. Extra promotion, contests, and taking pupils to a ball game show that a teacher cares. Extra preparation, visitation and prayer will get results. The work of God is still spelled *WORK*. Any class will grow in direct proportion to the energies expended by the teacher.

## Woman's Day

(continued from page 10)

### Easy Baked Onions

Parboil 1½ pounds small whole onions, peeled, for 15 minutes; drain. Heat ¼ cup butter or margarine and ¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar in saucepan. Roll parboiled onions in this mixture, then in 1 cup crushed corn flakes. Stick a clove in each onion. Place in 1½ quart baking dish, pour remaining butter sauce over all and bake at 350° for 20-30 minutes. Serves 4.

### Your Challenge

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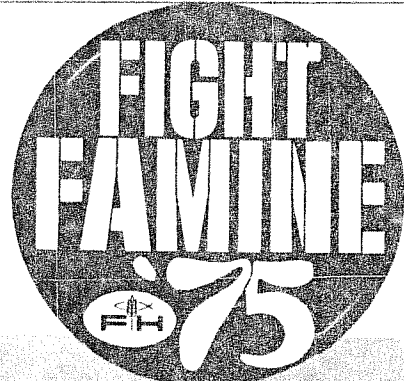
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