

Five Reasons Evangelism Should be Done through Sunday School:

1. SS/LG is the church organized to carry out the Great Commission.
2. SS/LG is the largest ministry in the church.
3. SS/LG has groups that are small and age-grouped to help quickly add and assimilate new people into the body of Christ.
4. SS/LG meets during our “prime time” on Sunday mornings when the most people are present.
5. Our Bible studies will lead attending lost people to faith in Christ as the Gospel is shared.

Therefore, we must see SS/LG as something more than a one-hour event to attend on Sunday mornings. It is a core ministry to embrace for church growth as we fulfill our mission. It is the church organized to carry out the Great Commission.

Ten Observations for Effective Outreach Through Sunday School:

1. Effective outreach will not develop without the intentional efforts and emphasis by church leaders. Three intentional areas:
 1. Personnel - there must be people appointed to lead; someone must be in charge
 2. Schedule - designated time and place for priority
 3. Budget - budgets reflect priorities; budgets should support outreach
2. Those who visit the church are the greatest prospects for church membership.
3. Most unchurched people will attend church because of the relationship they have with a friend or family member.
4. Prospects should be visited and cultivated by those of their potential Sunday School class.
 1. Visit on a consistent basis,
 2. By the same visitation team to allow the opportunity to develop a relationship.
5. Approximately fifty percent of outreach efforts should be consumed in discovering and qualifying prospects. The other fifty percent of outreach efforts should be used in pursuing the identified and qualified prospects.
6. Use people where they are usable.
7. Special events can be a great outreach tool if prospects are registered, visited, cultivated, and assimilated quickly.
8. New members should be assimilated quickly; they have many unchurched friends to bring with them.
9. Getting people zealous about outreach is rarely a “quick fix” proposition; it is a long-term process, requiring perseverance and focus.
10. All the planning in the world will not replace an aggressive, obedient spirit to “Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.” (Luke 14:23 ESV)

Note: A LIFE Group is very similar to a Sunday School class in function and structure. A LIFE Group has made the additional commitment to be active in outreach as well as regularly sharing life among the members beyond the Sunday morning group time.

LIFE stands for:

- Living with others
- Interactive Bible study
- Fellowship in community
- Encouragement & accountability



First Baptist Church of Terrell

Sunday School/ LIFE Group Philosophy



fbcterrell.org

*Encounter God.
Equip Believers.
Empower Ministry.*

FBCT Sunday School/LIFE Group Philosophy

As a church, we must decide what we will do with the Great Commission, and how we will do it. The Head of our Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, told us what we are to do:

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20 NASB)

As FBC Terrell, we must determine how we will accomplish this mission. Sunday School & LIFE Groups are our primary strategic plan for accomplishing our mission of making disciples.

Sunday School/LIFE Group Vision Statement

To lead FBCT to be a New Testament church by involving our people in the twofold mission of the Great Commission:

1. *Evangelizing the unsaved*
2. *Discipling the saved.*

Sunday School/LIFE Groups (SS/LG) is the church organized to do the work of the Great Commission. All other organizations/ministries within the church generally recruit membership from and are designed to fulfill purposes *within* the church among those who are already part of the church fellowship. SS/LG alone is the organization with the task of reaching people. Thus, the prime objective for SS/LG is to be reaching lost people, as well as making disciples

If SS/LG are not effective in reaching people, then the whole church suffers. If SS/LG lose sight of this fact, groups can become *maintenance-driven* rather than *mission-driven*. How we view SS/LG will have everything to do with what we do with it. It is not a program but a ministry and process. It is a strategy and not just a weekly event. It is *how* we go about fulfilling the Great Commission. And if *not* through SS/LG, then how?

“The Simple Six” Vision Core Values

1. **Reaching** People
2. **Teaching** People
3. **Ministering** to People
4. **Involving** People
5. **Assimilating** People
6. **Relationship** Building with People



These six values guide our decisions, prayers, and plans for SS/LG. It's about people. It's why we're here as a church and using SS/LG as our primary strategy to reach people in fulfilling our mission.

Vision & Growth Strategy

1. *Develop New Leaders*
2. *Start (birth) New Units*
3. *Make Space Accommodations*
4. *Have an Outreach Plan*
5. *Minister & Multiply through Care Groups*



As we “do” SS/LG, these are crucial elements to help us be effective in reaching and adding new people. The key to reaching and adding new people is starting new units. So we must always be in the process of developing **new leaders** *from within* the SS/LG organization—the individual groups. Where else do we expect new leaders to come from? Leadership is critical in taking a new group from surviving to thriving mode.

If we are to be continually reaching and adding new people, we must also have groups to add them to. Thus, starting **new groups** becomes key (and new care groups within existing groups). New groups usually grow faster than existing groups as newer people tend to be more “relationship hungry” than people already in established groups. New Units = New People = New Growth.

Groups must also have a place to meet that supports the mission of reaching, teaching, and ministering. Adjustments in use of **building space** may need to be made along the way to help accommodate needs of new or growing groups. With a eye on the mission, leaders must coach and lead their groups into a mindset of “doing what it takes” to help us be more effective in reaching and adding new people.

It's hard to accomplish a goal without a plan. Since reaching new people is a core component of SS/LG, each group should have an **outreach plan** unique to them that is adopted by the leadership and group. This plan then provides the direction, tasks, and steps to help guide and facilitate the efforts of the group to reach people.

People need to be connected with others—it's God's design for relationships. **Care Groups** within a SS/LG help foster connection and relational growth while providing a way to identify and minister to needs that arise in life.

Vision Structure

1. **Reach** *people* for Christ and church membership (Encounter)
2. **Teach** *people* God's Word (Equip)
3. **Minister** to *people's* needs (Empower)



Knowing and understanding our mission and strategy for SS/LG, we can set in place a leadership and class-time structure to support our objectives. Our tasks need to be aligned with leaders who are committed to execution of both the vision and the tasks. Key leaders each SS class/LG should have include:

Leader:

Teachers (Key Leaders)
Outreach Leaders
Care Group Leaders

Task:

Teach people God's Word (A call to minister)
Reach new people for Bible study (A call to evangelize)
Minister to people's needs within the group (A call to care)

Each leader needs to know what is expected of them in order to serve effectively. This is accomplished through position descriptions/role responsibilities statements. Each class or group is a miniature congregation that is a model of the overall church. The teacher serves in the lead role as a shepherd or pastor for the group to help guide and oversee overall needs and effectiveness.

Class time is highly valuable. Since our vision and values are based on three areas—Reach, Teach, & Minister—how class time is used should reflect these three as well.

We cannot teach people God's Word if we do not first reach them. SS/LG is better equipped to reach people than any other organization in the church.