

# Good to Great Sunday School



Training New Leaders    Deeper Discipleship    Friendlier Fellowship    Personal Praying    Building A Christian Culture    Intentional Evangelism

Can the concepts from the books *Good to Great* (Jim Collins) and *Breakout Churches* (Thom Rainer) help our Sunday School class?

## **Level 5 Leadership**

Class leaders who have both personal humility and a strong inner resolve to help the class be successful in making disciples.

## **First Who ... Then What**

In addition to the class leader/teacher, there is an intentional effort to build a great team of people who are known for their strength of Spirit-filled character and passion for people.

## **Confront the Brutal Facts**

Retaining faith that God will help us prevail while at the same time learning the lessons from our present reality.

## **Hedgehog Concept**

Developing a simple, Biblical approach to making disciples that we are passionate about carrying out.

## **A Culture of Discipline**

Disciplined people plus disciplined thought leads to disciplined action where we do the right things and stop doing the wrong things.

## **Technology**

If it is useful in making disciples, we are not afraid to use carefully-selected technology to deepen our relationships and widen our outreach.

## Characteristics of Sunday School Classes Who Go From Good to Great

1. The main teacher is coaching and mentoring other class members to become skilled in teaching, leading discussion and making disciples. He shares leadership responsibilities frequently.
2. Classes find ways to encourage class members to read the Bible passage for themselves and come to class ready to share their insights, thoughts, applications, prayer requests and questions.
3. Because we learn more effectively when we become involved, teachers are lecturing less and using methods that help members get directly involved in the learning/discipleship process. Class members are reading, memorizing, talking, asking questions, sharing testimonies, praying for one another, serving others and reaching out to friends.
4. Fellowship becomes more thoughtful and intentional. Acquaintances become friends. When people arrive in class they look for visitors and sit beside them and show hospitality. When class is over, members have a natural desire to stay and talk with first-time guests. They walk with them to the worship service and sit with them in worship to continue making them feel welcome and appreciated, not from obligation but from a genuine desire to demonstrate kindness.
5. Class parties are consistent and happen often enough (monthly?) to help build genuine friendships among class members/attenders and also provide frequent opportunities to invite friends who may not have visited yet on Sunday or are not able to come on Sundays.
6. Invitations to class and class parties/events are intentional and not left to chance. Guests in the worship service and guests in class are added to the invitation list weekly. There is some sort of brief weekly communication to both class members and guests to express thanks, encouragement and an invitation to whatever is coming up next (the topic of study next Sunday, a fellowship party or a service project). A variety of methods are used—face-to-face, phone calls, emails and text messages.
7. During part of the Sunday School hour, breakout discussion groups of three to six people are used because they increase the opportunity for learning, fellowship and prayer.
  - More people get to talk
  - Conversations can be more personal
  - Small groups provide a less threatening environment for those who don't like to talk to a roomful of people
  - Everyone has a chance to share a prayer request and be prayed for.
  - Every discussion group is led by someone we are coaching to develop their leadership skills.
8. When possible, chairs are arranged in circles, not rows, for better communication.
9. Discussion questions that we use in class are gathered from the literature we use, but also are written by the teacher, class leaders and members of the class who voluntarily want to help. Late-night comedians gather 100 jokes and then use only the best 20 for their monologue. In the same way, teachers may gather 10 to 20 discussion questions and only use the best ones that help in learning, discipleship and evangelism for that particular Sunday.
10. They might schedule a 2-5 minute testimony monthly in their class in order to help members gain confidence sharing their story and explaining the gospel. This helps to develop a culture of evangelism and discipleship. It encourages members and plants seeds with seekers.