

Witnessing to these friends and work associates about your relationship with Jesus Christ is an important part of accomplishing the tasks of the Sunday School. Personal evangelism is every Christian's responsibility. Leading others to faith in Christ is as much a challenge for the longtime Christian as for the new convert.

### **Concerned, Caring Ministry**

Ministering to the needs of class members and prospects demonstrates the results of a growing relationship with Christ. When you are asked to participate in a ministry project, be ready ... take the time ... give your time and talents willingly. You will be glad you made the effort.

You can begin your ministry by being a friend. Get to know other persons in your class, particularly prospects and new members. Pray for class members as well as prospects. Talk with God about your concerns. Pray for your teacher, fellow members, and for persons whose needs have been brought to your attention.

When "announcements" are made in Sunday School, do not view them as a necessary bother. Rather, realize that to be an active Sunday School member is also to be an involved church member and an informed, involved Southern Baptist. Your class plays an important role in communicating the opportunities of service and involvement in Baptist work worldwide.

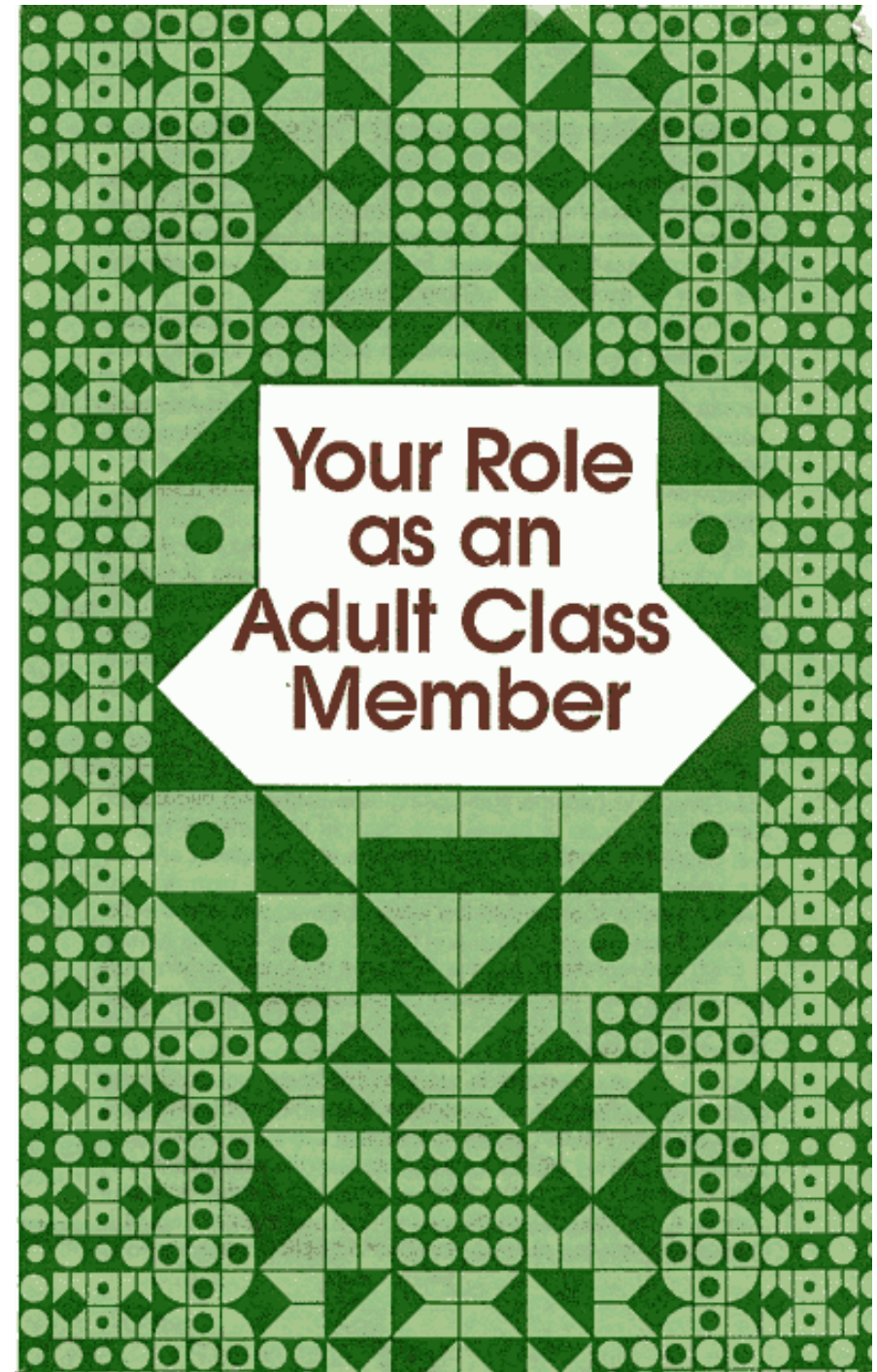
Refuse to be "just a member." Rather, make a personal commitment right now to be a member of your Sunday School class in the fullest sense of the word. Become involved in all aspects of your Adult Sunday School class by:

- actively participating in Bible study
- actively reaching out to others
- actively ministering to the concerns of people
- actively witnessing to lost persons
- actively being involved in worship experiences
- actively participating in church and denominational events and service opportunities.

Prepared by *Joe Sherrer* consultant, Sunday School Department,  
Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma

Editor: *Richard E. Dodge*

Copyright 1987, The Sunday School Board of the  
Southern Baptist Convention.



# Your Role as an Adult Class Member

Welcome to Adult Sunday School! Perhaps you are new to this particular class, or maybe you are new to Adult Sunday School in general. Others of you have been involved as a leader or member of an adult class for many years. In whichever case, welcome. You are in for an exciting and fulfilling adventure.

Think for a moment about why you are enrolled in an Adult Sunday School class. Your response has tremendous impact on the development of successful relationships in Sunday School. Some people come to Sunday School looking for friends and fellowship opportunities. Others come hoping to find answers to life's problems through Bible study. And, quite frankly, some join Adult Sunday School classes because of habit, tradition, or out of a sense of obligation. What about you? Why did you enroll?

Now that you have examined why you attend Sunday School, ask yourself one more question: What is the purpose of Sunday School? The most common response is “to teach the Bible.” Certainly that is true. But the Sunday School is responsible for a great deal more. The work of Sunday School includes six major areas of responsibility, which have come to be known as the tasks of the Sunday School. These six areas are:

- Reach persons for Bible study
- Teach the Bible.
- Witness to persons about Christ and lead them into church membership.
- Minister to Sunday School members and prospects.
- Lead members to worship.
- Interpret and undergird the work of the church and the denomination.

Each task represents an important area of Sunday School work with adults. Each class needs to highlight these vital tasks.

## But What About You?

Perhaps our real concern is not with just some “ideal” Sunday School class. Perhaps we should be concerned rather with your class and how you can get the most out of that class. Then again, the idea of “getting the most out of it” may be the wrong approach. Membership in any organization—especially Sunday School—implies a certain amount of commitment. A better approach is “how much you can put into your Sunday School class.”

Begin your commitment to your class with regular attendance. You can be a part of the warm, personal fellowship that comes with consistent, week-by-week participation in Bible study, outreach and ministry activities, and fellowship events. Your attendance will encourage others. Arrive on time and enjoy every moment!

## Bible Teaching and Worship

Far too often we view the responsibility of providing quality Bible teaching and learning as the job of the teacher only. While the teacher does have the major responsibility of involving members in studying, the Bible, you will increase your learning tremendously by studying the appropriate Scripture passages and the lesson in your quarterly each week. Bring your Bible with you for use in class each Sunday. Take part in discussions. Ask questions about what you do not understand. Your growth will depend greatly on your level of personal involvement.

The goal in Adult Sunday School is applying what you have learned in class to your personal life daily. Each week try to discover a truth or principle that God can use in your life. Let what you learn in your Sunday School class be a vital part of your developing, maturing Christian life.

Allow yourself to experience the joys of regular participation in worship experiences. Consistent attendance in the worship services of your church will be a beginning in experiencing the many joys of worship. But worship experiences in church services are just the beginning. Your Christian growth will be enhanced also through daily personal times of worship that include prayer and Bible study, and family times of worship can add another dimension of spiritual growth for you and your entire family.

## Aggressive Outreach and Evangelism

Encouraging others to participate in Sunday School is an important part of being a member of an adult class. Perhaps you have friends or work associates who do not attend Bible study or church anywhere. Invite prospects to attend with you or introduce them to one of the leaders of a class specifically for their age groups. Also give their names and basic information about them to your teacher or the outreach leader of your class.

# How to Use *Your Role as an Adult Class Member*

*Your Role as an Adult Class Member* is a resource to challenge Adult Sunday School members with all aspects of Sunday School work. It is written for all Adult Sunday School members, both new and old members, men and women, young adults and senior adults, and the developing Christian and the unsaved class member. Every new member should receive a copy of this leaflet as a part of his or her welcome to the department or class.

## **Why Use *Your Role as an Adult Class Member*?**

Getting a good start is vital with any aspect of life. Beginning well is equally important for new Sunday School members, and understanding the foundations of good Sunday School work is essential for effective involvement in an Adult Sunday School class. Yet far too often many members drop out of their class or cease to be actively involved before they really become part of a class.

Obviously, many reasons exist for this failure. Some reasons can be attributed to class leadership while others can be attributed to outside influences faced by class members. This leaflet can be used by concerned and dedicated class leaders who want to help adults build a solid foundation of commitment to Christ and to the work of the Adult Sunday School class.

Most adult class members have a limited concept of the total scope of Sunday School work. Perhaps this is reflective of their reasons for joining. Some attend seeking solutions to problems through Bible study. Others attend for a variety of fellowship reasons, while still others enroll from a sense of obligation or tradition. Few members seem to be aware of the vital linking in Sunday School of quality Bible teaching and learning, aggressive outreach, and concerned, caring ministry. Using this leaflet with new members can assist the development of a complete Sunday School concept that has the potential of translating into more involved members. Leaders should be aware of the six tasks of Adult Sunday School:

- Reach adults for Bible study
- Teach adults the Bible.
- Witness to adults about Christ and lead them into church membership.
- Minister to Sunday School members and prospects.
- Lead members to worship.
- Interpret and undergird the work of the church and the denomination.

Perhaps then, too, we allow or even encourage a “spectator” mentality to creep into members by failing to help them understand their responsibilities as Christians and as class members. This leaflet is designed to inform class members of their role in accomplishing the tasks of the Sunday School in a nonthreatening way.

Ideally, *Your Role as an Adult Class Member* should be used in a personal conference or meeting with each new class member. The teacher, group leader, or outreach leader could visit new members to discuss the material in the leaflet. Delivering this leaflet to the home of new members provides a natural way to visit the home of new members. This leaflet also can be used as an “excuse” for visiting the homes of other class members, since every class member should understand the member's role in accomplishing the tasks. Thus the leaflet can be used...in fact should be used...with all class members. This leaflet also could be used as the subject for discussion in a class meeting one month.

Here are some specific ways leaders can use this leaflet.

## **Teachers can use it ...**

- to acquaint new and prospective members with what an Adult Sunday School class is and does.
- to explain to new members the value of group study. - to show the importance the church places on the class and the individual class member.
- to encourage members to accept responsibility for selfimprovement.
- to help class members set goals for themselves and the actions that are needed to reach the goals.
- to encourage members to loyal support of church programs.

## **Outreach leaders and group leaders can use it ...**

- as an information piece when visiting new members.
- as a resource when making a list of class objectives and goals.
- to instruct class leaders in their relationships with members.
- as a basis for inspirational thoughts before the teacher begins
- a lesson or at class meetings.

## **Department directors can use it ...**

- in personal conferences, department periods, weekly workers' meetings, and group training sessions.
- when training teachers and outreach leaders.
- to emphasize the role of the individual member.
- as part of the material presented at the beginning of the Sunday School year to leaders and members.

Prepared by *Joe Sherrer* consultant, Sunday School Department, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma

Editor: *Richard E Dodge*

Copyright 1987, The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention