

What Does a Sunday School Director Do on Sunday Morning?

“Make the coffee and collect the record books.” In the mind of many church members, especially many of the folks who are responsible for enlisting the Sunday School director, those are his major duties. However, the truth is a long way from this fiction.

When churches experience turn-over of the Sunday School director every year or two an unclear understanding of his responsibilities is often at fault. Most Nominating Committees or even pastors just don't know what the Sunday School director does, so year after year finds the perpetuation of a myth.

The truth is that the Sunday School director has responsibilities during the week as well as Sunday, but Sunday is the day he is seen. Let's start on a typical Sunday morning to see what actually goes on in the schedule.

- The first thing a Sunday School director should do is to prepare his heart for the day that lies ahead with a period of time alone with God. The Sunday School lesson should have been studied earlier in the week, but a period of connecting with the Father can set the tone for the rest of the morning.
- While teachers should be arriving at least 30 minutes prior to the arrival of the first student, the director should be in place at least 30 minutes prior to the arrival of the first teacher. This may mean that they arrive at the church 90 minutes prior to the start of Sunday School.
- If there is a custodian to turn the heat or air on then that's one thing the Sunday School director doesn't have to do. In many churches, however, there is no custodian on Sunday morning. The Sunday School director can get the temperature set and turn all of the lights on so teachers enter a comfortable and inviting room. This is especially important for the preschool, children, and senior adult areas.
- It is important to pray for and with as many Sunday School teachers as possible each and every Sunday. A good habit is to meet with as many teachers who come in their areas of responsibility and lead them in a time of prayer for their students and specific needs for that morning. The first Sunday of the month he can meet in the Preschool area with those teachers; the second Sunday in the Children's Department; and so on. This does not limit the teachers only to that Sunday; this is just a suggested time for the Sunday School director to meet with them.
- A very important job is to “show some teeth” as people arrive. A warm smile, hand shake, and/or hug can diffuse many of the strife which may have occurred on the way to church. For many senior adults, this hug may be the only actual touch they receive all week. “High fives” to children makes a connection both with them and their parents. In short, the Sunday School director is a friend to many and can be considered the attitude barometer for the Sunday School as a whole.
- Roaming the halls to check with teachers for last minute needs allows the teacher to give necessary attention to children and to the upcoming teaching time.

- It is a wise Sunday School director who goes to as many classes as possible each Sunday morning to at least say “Hello”. If time permits a doughnut and a cup of coffee is a sure fire relationship building tool.
- Visiting classes during the lesson time is a very good way to be with people and be fed spiritually at the same time. Sometimes the many and varied responsibilities needing the Sunday School director’s attention are greater than the available time on any given Sunday, but people are the reason we have Sunday School. They should always come first. It is very, very difficult to be in class every Sunday but this is where training and ministry needs are discovered
- Between Sunday School and worship (the typical schedule) is another “touch time.” Sometimes having training as a traffic cop can be helpful. The Sunday School director is often the “answer man”: “Where is...?” “Have you seen...?” “Do you know...?” The list goes on.

Sunday morning actually never ends for the Sunday School director. For many churches the hour before evening worship is the best time for leadership training and meeting with Sunday School leaders. Of course, setting up prior to the meeting time calls for early arrival and preparation. Then no self-respecting Sunday School director would even consider not participating in evening worship and Wednesday night services, too.

Responsibilities may vary from day to day and week to week but they never end. Each day brings something new and the rewards are great. No book will give an “end all” list; every church is different and every Sunday School director sees things from his own perspective. For anyone who knows the real world of Sunday morning for the Sunday School director, they know that *not* high on his list of priorities are “making the coffee and collecting the record books.”