

Excerpts for contemplation, discussion and application from this week's issue of THE LOOKOUT.

Making Sunday School Meaningful (pages 3-5)

"Our classes are becoming small churches within the larger umbrella of Pinedale Christian Church."

- How does the quality of interaction in a smaller class setting differ from that of a larger corporate worship service?

"As a result, their children aren't learning the great stories and history of the Bible."

"Church used to be people's lives. When did it change? I want Sunday school to be exciting—a place kids want to be because they know they learn more about Jesus there."

- How has Sunday school influenced your Christian growth?
- Can passion for God be taught? Why, or why not?

A Taught Faith (pages 6 & 7) Changing Lives Through the Bible School

"In our postmodern culture, truth is what you make it. Good and evil are negotiable. In these times, the church must make disciples—learners who follow the Lord."

- How does a student differ from a disciple?
- Why is God interested in our discipleship?

"The most effective training aid in any class is the teacher. Computers, modern equipment, and pleasant surroundings may help, but nothing means more than the well-prepared teacher."

- Who have been your most effective Bible teachers? Why?

"Your Bible school can be an effective tool for reaching out in these confusing times with a solid message of God's unchanging truth."

- How could your Sunday school be modified to better fulfill the Great Commission?

The Planting Of An Orchard (pages 8 & 9)

"No child is denied the opportunity to attend Saturday Sunday school, a place where love abounds."

"Many haven't eaten breakfast, some have uncombed hair, and others have obviously slept in their tattered and wrinkled clothes. Willing hands offer to tie shoes or to slip a snack into the hands of a child with a hungry tummy."

- In what other ways can your Sunday school reach out to "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40)?
- Other than Sunday school, what venues has God used to increase your Christian growth?

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Higher Education

Scripture clearly communicates the high value God places on his children meeting together, and provides guidance for us to make the most of such meetings. The Holy Spirit, who dwells within each Christian, makes our gatherings far greater than "the sum of the parts." When followers of Jesus come together with expectant, willing hearts, they will depart enriched and a step closer to being transformed into the image of Christ.

The early church was committed to Christian education—being devoted to the teaching of the apostles, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). When we meet today, we commit ourselves to that same teaching found in Scripture.

While the Bible places great responsibility on the shoulders of teachers (James 3:1), everyone in your small group needs to assume some responsibility to learn. What we learn can be processed, over time, into wisdom. This process occurs in contemplation, fellowship with other believers, interacting with the world around us, and in prayer.

As a group activity for this week, consider taking some time to pray together for your group leader or teacher. Ask the Lord to give your leader wisdom, understanding, and protection.

Then pray for your group, that its members will be willing recipients of the luxurious treasures of Scripture, and "being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ" (Ephesians 3:17, 18).

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in

their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. (Acts 2:46).