

# Models for Starting New Units

Most ways of beginning new units fall into one of the following models. Some local variations may be made depending on the specific target group, experience of the leadership team, or setting in which the Bible study group is being started.

## **Restructure Existing Class or Department**

Generally, a new unit should be started when an existing Bible study group reaches an enrollment or attendance that exceeds the numbers of persons who can adequately be cultivated and assimilated, and when additional prospects have been discovered. The new group may be started by creating two or more groups from the existing group. For example, a single department for fifth and sixth graders may become two separate departments, one for fifth graders and one for sixth graders.

Multiplication of units also may occur by enlisting specific attenders and targeting nonattenders from one or more existing classes. A new group may be created that focuses on the new target group.

For example, one department of adults may have three existing classes:

- Coed ages 31-35,
- Coed ages 36-42, and
- Coed ages 43-49.

Assigned to the classes of this department are many men whose wives attend but the men do not. In addition, several other men in these age ranges are members of the church but are not attending a Bible study group. To address those needs, the department can be restructured to create a class for men and a class for women and to broaden the target age groups of the coed classes. Hence, the department would now consist of these classes:

- Coed ages 31-38 (because many of the women will be attending the women's class),
- Coed ages 39-49 (because several attenders agreed to be part of the men's or women's class),
- A class for men ages 31-49, and
- A class for women ages 31-49.

Plans may be made for a future class in the department that targets new parents who likely would come from the coed class targeting ages 31-38.

No matter how the class or department is restructured, use terminology that communicates the process in a positive manner. Avoid such words as divide or split.

## **Assign a Leadership Team to an Unchurched Target Group**

Another approach to multiply leaders and units is to enlist a new leadership team to start a new class that targets a specific group of nonattenders. The leadership team will consist of a Bible study leader and an outreach-evangelism leader to identify and enroll prospects and to encourage nonattenders to participate. A third leader may be a class coordinator or apprentice who helps to arrange the facilities, obtain resources, and assist with ministry, fellowship, and worship opportunities.

A new class or group may be started to target nonattenders in other existing classes. Additional prospects need to be identified as well if the class is to reach its full potential. The goal of any Bible study group is to have the members of that group engaged in reaching others, even to the point of being multipliers themselves. Hence the need for continuing to discover prospects.

### **Identify Unreached Persons and Begin a Nontraditional Bible Study Group**

A target group may be identified that consist of people who cannot or likely will not attend Bible study at the church or on a Sunday morning. Such groups may include:

- Homebound adults
- Shift workers
- Business men and women who travel on weekends
- Residents of multi-housing units
- Professionals who work on weekends such as firemen or nurses
- People in life transition stages (new parents, recently divorced, college students)

A Bible study group may be created that meets at a nontraditional time and place in order to reach a particular target group. Examples of such target groups may include, but are not limited to, the list given above. A leadership team needs to be enlisted to be responsible for teaching, reaching, and ministry to members of the target group.

Locations for this Bible study group:

- home or apartment
- business office
- recreation site
- residential institution where members receive care, live, or work