

# Sunday School

How aware of this vital ministry are you? Did you know that over 70 years ago the American Sunday School Union (known now as InFaith) provided classes in our valley, contributing to the start of Applegate Community Church?

The Sunday School movement is a concept originally transplanted from England to the US in the late 1700's. Originally the emphasis was on the education of children in biblical truth. But don't miss the convictional significance imported on the very first ships to arrive in America, as the colonists imported Christian education. The first settlers had left Europe for personal religious freedom. They were concerned that the Scriptures guide their daily practice and built their entire societal structure on a foundation of education that was Christian, and thus thoroughly biblical. Sixteen years after the Puritans landed in Massachusetts, 1636, Harvard College was founded. It was soon after that local town governments were instructed to establish instruction for children, as part of the system of public schools. Yet, it was the church that was the single most important place for intellectual growth and development during those early years. To supplement the Sunday sermons, there were often mid-week lectures on various subjects. As Malcolm Knowles so aptly states, "The church was probably the most influential institutional force for the education of adults in the first two centuries of our national life" (*History of the Adult Education Movement in the US*, 5).

Do you recall how the writer of Hebrews chides his readers for being dull of hearing, rather than receptive to Gospel truth? He said, "...it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the Word of God" (Heb 5:11b-12a); essentially the ABC's of salvation. There is the need to hear, study, understand, and appropriate the truth, otherwise stagnation awaits. We want to come alongside the saints at ACC to help them make the Truth a living reality in their daily experience. The small groups in Sunday School (SS) provide just a few moments longer in our study of the Word of God outside the corporate worship service.

The children's ministry is using *Generations of Grace* curriculum, which goes on a 3-year journey through redemptive history of the OT (because most of our youngsters need to come all the way to Christ before they can become diligent followers of Christ), life of Christ, Acts, and Revelation.

Our teen group, The Foundry, is studying church history and The Truth Project.

The adult class has studied various NT epistles, Fundamentals of the Faith (FOF), distinguishing marks of healthy churches, biblical decision-making, a theology of the Church, the OT's significance for NT believers, and are currently studying the foundational book of Genesis.

Consider how you can contribute to and be an active part of this vital ministry of the local church.

For the Church, the pillar and support of the truth,

Pastor Parker