

our suggestions for parents

Dear Parents,

Every child is a gift from the Lord, and unique in His purpose for the kingdom. Children can touch the lives of others unlike any other person. Children show us the Lord in many ways—if we will stop to notice. Scripture even calls us to become like little children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Luke 18:16, 17). Since the Lord created every child unique, not all children learn the same way. It is important that we, as mature adults, embrace these differences in order to expand their knowledge of God.

The Lord pursues each child with tender love. The most important thing you as a parent can do is spend time with your children, modeling your trust in the Lord. Below are some suggestions for parents that you can use with your children to help them understand the Lord's message in their Sabbath School Bible study guide.

- Have family worship, modeling your commitment to the Lord. Include a brief thought for your growing child/youth to think about during the day.
- Read the Bible together. If some of the words are too difficult, take turns reading and let them read the words they know.
- Study the lesson with your child/children during the week in preparation for Sabbath School. Knowing that the lesson will be reviewed on Sabbath in their classes will strengthen in them a sense of accountability and will facilitate a deeper spiritual understanding of the content.
- Download the audio lessons at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1 so your child/youth can hear the lesson on their own. Use DVDs and CDs that will help children understand the lessons (e.g., Bible stories, Your Story Hour, and even the Bible on CD—this works great with children who struggle with reading in their Bible courses.) Technology is great for students in general, and it will be particularly beneficial for students with special needs, provid-

ing tools that will assist them in becoming more independent learners! If you have a child with special needs, you may be interested to search for ideas, accommodations, and tools available for them at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/article/4/resources#.VGUZYdSxx4.

- Talk with your children about the lesson. For example, where do they see the lesson being applied in their daily lives? Whom did they see reflect Jesus today? How has the power text (memory verse) helped them with issues they're facing?
- Use a simple activity with the lesson on Friday evening to bring in the Sabbath. The children's lessons themselves contain some excellent ideas for family worship activities.
- Think about how your child learns best, and adapt the lesson to that way of learning. It could be auditory (listening), visual (seeing), or tactile (manipulating and touching), or it may be all three ways (multi-sensory)! Use what works.
- Talk with their Sabbath School teachers and let them know what you are doing at home, so they can reinforce it in Sabbath School. In return, support their efforts by encouraging your children to memorize the power text and to make it a habit to bring their Bible to church on Sabbath. By doing this, you provide positive affirmation of their good efforts, a feeling that each child needs to experience to grow spiritually.
- Talk with the pastor when your child is ready to make a commitment to the Lord. Let him or her know what studies you have done with your child, and ask what he or she would recommend prior to baptism.

Our children are important to the Lord, and He wants each one to be successful. It is our privilege to see that we return to God what He has given us.

Lesson 1

Year B Qtr 4

Don't Do Something; Just Stand There! (Jehoshaphat's choir sings)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

When we praise God together, He wins the victory for us.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you" (2 Chronicles 20:17, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ: "We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History:
2 Chronicles 20:1-30

5 Ellen White reference

Prophets and Kings, chap. 15, pp. 190-203: "If the teachings of God's word were made the controlling influence in the life of every man and woman, if mind and heart were brought under its restraining power, the evils that now exist in national and in social life would find no place" (p. 192).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 107-110 ("The Choir That Won a Battle")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore

the core teaching with your children:
Sabbath—2 Chronicles 20:17 (power text)

Sunday—2 Chronicles 20:1-4
Monday—2 Chronicles 20:5-12
Tuesday—2 Chronicles 20:13-17
Wednesday—2 Chronicles 20:18, 19
Thursday—2 Chronicles 20:20-23
Friday—2 Chronicles 20:24-27

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- How does Jehoshaphat's trust in God's deliverance strengthen my faith in Him?
- When do I take my fears to God?
- How has God helped me overcome my fears?
- What battles has God fought for me?
- How often do I praise God for the victories He has given me?
- In what ways can I help others know that God will fight their battles?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Sing and pray together, focusing on what God has done for you. Give Him your worries, hopes, plans.
- Talk about battles that God has won for you and new challenges that only He can help solve.
- Share at worship Bible promises that help strengthen your faith in God.

8 Coming up next week!

An aunt saves Baby Joash. God wants us to care for one another in the family.

Lesson 2

Year B Qtr 4

Prince Rescued (An aunt saves Baby Joash)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
Family members who love God care for one another.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 23, Marriage and the Family: “God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity” (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Kings 11

5 Ellen White reference
Prophets and Kings, chaps. 15; 16, pp. 192, 215, 216: “A reformation followed. Those who took part in acclaiming Joash king, had solemnly covenanted ‘that they should be the Lord’s people’” (p. 216).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 111-114 (“Baby Hid in the Temple”)

7 Family worship ideas
Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—1 Timothy 5:8 (power text)

Sunday—2 Kings 11:1-3

Monday—2 Kings 11:4-8

Tuesday—2 Kings 11:9-21

Wednesday—Psalm 92:1-4

Thursday—Ephesians 6:1;
Colossians 3:20

Friday—Exodus 20:12

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- How could I apply Jehosheba’s example of caring to my family?
- How could I have a positive influence on my family?
- What efforts do I make to bring my family members/relatives to God?
- What practical things can I do today that will convey to my family that I care for them?
- How can I let other people know through my actions that God cares for them?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- In light of Jehosheba’s experience, talk about how each of you could care for your family members.
- Talk about your family tree: How did these family members positively influence and care for others?

8 Coming up next week!
Joash takes a special offering to repair the Temple. We give for the upkeep of our church.

Lesson 3

Year B Qtr 4

The King's Treasure Chest (Joash takes a special offering)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We reflect God's love when we give offerings for the care of our church building.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 21, Stewardship: "We acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow human beings, and by returning tithe and giving offerings" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Kings 12:1-16; 2 Chronicles 24:1-14

5 Ellen White reference

Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 50, pp. 525-529: "Thus the people were constantly reminded that God was the true proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that He sent them sunshine and rain for their seed-time and harvest, and that everything they possessed was of His creation, and He had made them stewards of His goods" (p. 526).

6 The Bible Story reference:

The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 115-118 ("Boy With a Money Box")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—2 Corinthians 9:7 (power text)

Sunday—2 Kings 12:1-8

Monday—2 Kings 12:9-12

Tuesday—2 Kings 12:13-16

Wednesday—2 Corinthians 8:7, 8

Thursday—Malachi 3:10

Friday—Deuteronomy 15:10

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- What does this Bible story teach about offerings?
- Can I be an example in my giving?
- On what should I return a tithe?
- How else can I support my church?
- With what talents can I contribute?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Decorate an offering box. Decide to add spare change to it regularly.
- Share how God has blessed your family as a result of returning tithe.
- Consider how people in some cultures trade their goods rather than sell them in exchange for money. Could these people be returning tithes in other ways than using money?

8 Coming up next week!

Hezekiah reestablishes the worship of God. We worship together and reflect His love.

Lesson 4 Year B Qtr 4

Purifying the Temple (Hezekiah reestablishes worship)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
When we worship together, we reflect God's love to our church family.

2 Power text (memory verse)
"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'" (Psalm 122:1, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ: "We are called to grow into the likeness of His [Jesus'] character, . . . singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Chronicles 29

5 Ellen White reference
Prophets and Kings, chap. 28, pp. 331-339: "No sooner had he [Hezekiah] ascended the throne than he . . . turned his attention to the restoration of the temple services, so long neglected" (p. 331).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 127-132 ("Two Wonderful Weeks")

7 Family worship ideas
Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Psalm 122:1 (power text)
Sunday—2 Chronicles 29:1, 2

Monday—2 Chronicles 29:3-14
Tuesday—2 Chronicles 29:15-26
Wednesday—2 Chronicles 29:27-36
Thursday—Psalm 9
Friday—Psalm 51:10

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- What was the result of Hezekiah's purifying the Temple?
- How is worshipping with my church family important?
- What blessings do I miss if I choose not to worship with the church family?
- How does the comfort of a clean house compare to a welcoming church space?
- In what ways can I help keep my church clean and ready for worship?
- How could I help make my church a source of positive attraction in my community?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Sing praise songs together for family worship.
- Talk about how you could contribute to church activities in creative ways to the glory of God.
- Who is a withdrawn and somewhat neglected person at church? Plan ways you/your family could reach out to that child/young person/adult and become that person's friend.

8 Coming up next week!
Hezekiah hosts the Passover. We worship joyfully together.

Lesson 5 Year B Qtr 4

Passover Party (Hezekiah hosts the Passover)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
God calls us to worship Him joyfully with our church family.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“And rejoice before the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, the Levites in your towns, and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows living among you” (Deuteronomy 16:11, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior: “We are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our whole-ness, joy, and goodness” (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Chronicles 30

5 Ellen White reference
Prophets and Kings, chaps. 23; 28, pp. 288, 291, 335-339: “The seven days usually allotted to the Passover feast passed all too quickly, and the worshipers determined to spend another seven days in learning more fully the way of the Lord. . . . Daily the people assembled at the temple to offer their tribute of praise and thanksgiving” (p. 337).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 133-136 (“Great Joy in Jerusalem”)

7 Family worship ideas
Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Deuteronomy 16:11
(power text)
Sunday—2 Chronicles 30:1-9
Monday—2 Chronicles 30:10-13
Tuesday—2 Chronicles 30:14-27
Wednesday—Matthew 18:20
Thursday—Revelation 5:11-13
Friday—Acts 2:42-47

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- How is the Sabbath a time of joy?
- How can we become more involved in the worship service?
- How is reverence important?
- What is unacceptable in worship?
- What do you find interesting, special, or good in church services?
- Whom can you invite to enjoy the worship experiences at church?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Think about a worship experience that stands out for you. Share with each other what made it special.
- Sing together a song that reminds you of a situation for which you praise God. Share your experience.
- Talk about things in nature that reflect God’s creative power and remind us to praise Him.

8 Coming up next week!
Habakkuk has a vision. God is always with us.

Lesson 6

Year B Qtr 4

Habakkuk's Song (Habakkuk has a vision)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
God is our friend and companion in all circumstances.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior” (Habakkuk 3:17, 18, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 18, The Gift of Prophecy: “The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church” (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Minor Prophets: Habakkuk 3

5 Ellen White reference
Prophets and Kings, chap. 32, pp. 381-391: “The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him” (p. 386).

6 The Bible Story reference
No corresponding story in *The Bible Story*.

7 Family worship ideas
Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Habakkuk 3:17, 18 (power text)

Sunday—Habakkuk 3:1, 2

Monday—Habakkuk 3:3-6

Tuesday—Habakkuk 3:7-10

Wednesday—Habakkuk 3:11-13

Thursday—Psalm 121

Friday—Psalm 95

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- How could I, like Habakkuk, praise God in spite of negative circumstances?
- What will I do to focus on God's power rather than on the situations that trouble me?
- What do I need to remember about God's care when facing challenges?
- How do I show God that I trust Him with whatever happens in my life?
- In what ways can I praise God for His promises?
- How could my experience of God's goodness encourage someone who is facing difficulties?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Sing a song that tells of God's mighty power.
- Share with your family difficult things that God helped you overcome.
- Talk about times you praised God even when you faced problems and God provided a solution.

8 Coming up next week!
Daniel prays for his people. We can come to God with all our joys and concerns.

Lesson 7

Year B Qtr 4

Don't Be Shy!

(Daniel prays for his people)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We can come to God confidently, for He answers our prayers.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 10, The Experience of Salvation: "Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, Substitute and Example" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Major Prophets: Daniel 9:1-19; Jeremiah 25:11; 29:10-14

5 Ellen White reference

Prophets and Kings, chap. 45, pp. 555, 556: "Though Daniel had long been in the service of God, and had been spoken of by heaven as 'greatly beloved,' yet he now appeared before God as a sinner, urging the great need of the people he loved. His prayer was eloquent in its simplicity, and intensely earnest" (p. 555).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 6, pp. 66-70 ("Gabriel's Glorious Secret")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Hebrews 4:16 (power text)

Sunday—Daniel 9:1-3

Monday—Daniel 9:4-19

Tuesday—Daniel 9:20-22

Wednesday—Psalm 86:6, 7

Thursday—James 5:16

Friday—Philippians 4:6, 7

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- Why did Daniel pray for his people, counting himself among those who were guilty?
- Have I asked God to forgive the sins of someone else?
- When and in what ways did God answer my prayers?
- In what ways do I show God that I trust His promises?
- Do I remember to praise and thank God for answering my prayers?
- With whom can I share today my trust in God's promises?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- At family worship, define intercessory prayer and its application.
- Identify a person or some people for whom you will pray this week.
- Intercede on behalf of your family members that they may experience God's forgiveness.

8 Coming up next week!

Cyrus rebuilds the Temple. We unite to worship God together.

Lesson 8 Year B Qtr 4

Journey to Jerusalem (Cyrus decrees the rebuilding of the Temple)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

One way that we worship God is by working together to build up His church.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: 'He is good; his love toward Israel endures forever.' And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid" (Ezra 3:11, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ: "As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History: Ezra 1-3; Nehemiah 8:14-18

5 Ellen White reference

Prophets and Kings, chap. 45, pp. 557-566: "A congregation may be the poorest in the land. It may be without the attractions of any outward show; but if the members possess the principles of the character of Christ, angels will unite with them in their worship" (p. 566).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 6, pp.

66-70 ("Gabriel's Glorious Secret"); pp. 77-79 ("The Hour of Deliverance"); pp. 80-83 ("The Road Back"); pp. 84-88 ("Songs and Tears")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Ezra 3:11 (power text)

Sunday—Ezra 1

Monday—Ezra 1:2-4

Tuesday—Ezra 2:1-70

Wednesday—Ezra 2:68-3:3

Thursday—Ezra 3:4-6; Nehemiah 8:14-18

Friday—Ezra 3:7-12

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- Why did God call Cyrus to order the rebuilding of the Temple in Israel?
- How am I answering God's call to serve Him?
- How do I use my talents to serve God?
- What difference am I making through my service at church?
- How can I help support my church?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Talk about what you could help improve in your local church.
- Discuss together the purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles.
- Share some of the blessings of working together to support God's church.

8 Coming up next week!

The Israelites face discouragement. We worship God even when we are discouraged.

Lesson 9 Year B Qtr 4

Building Up the Temple

(Ezra and the exiles begin rebuilding the Temple)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We can worship God even when we are discouraged.

2 Power text (memory verse)

“Consider now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary. Be strong and do the work” (1 Chronicles 28:10, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 12, The Church: “In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word” (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History: Ezra 4-6

5 Ellen White reference

Prophets and Kings, chap. 46, pp. 567-581: “Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly” (p. 576).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 6, pp. 89-91 (“More Trouble”); pp. 92-95 (“Cheer Up! Be Strong”); pp. 96-99 (“A Mountain Becomes Level Ground”)

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—1 Chronicles 28:10 (power text)

Sunday—Ezra 4:1-5

Monday—Ezra 4:6-24

Tuesday—Ezra 5

Wednesday—Ezra 6:1-12

Thursday—Ezra 6:13-18

Friday—Ezra 6:19-22

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- What gave the Israelites hope when they were discouraged from building?
- How do I react when someone tries to discourage me from my work?
- What can I do to turn around discouraging situations and see the positive in everything?
- What can remind me to trust in God even when I am discouraged?
- What opportunities can I discover in a negative situation?
- How can I be a source of encouragement to someone today?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Discuss how Jesus would want you to respond when someone “tattles.”
- Talk about times when a discouraging situation had a positive outcome.
- With your family, create a banner that encourages you to persevere.

8 Coming up next week!

Joseph risks taking Mary as his wife. God’s grace saves the world.

Lesson 10

Year B Qtr 4

Risking Everything

(Joseph risks everything in taking Mary as his wife)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

Jesus revealed God's grace by risking everything to save the world.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 9, The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ: "In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

New Testament, The Four Gospels: Matthew 1

5 Ellen White reference

The Desire of Ages, chap. 4, pp. 43-49: "God gave His only-begotten Son, that the path of life might be made sure for our little ones" (p. 49).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 7, pp. 23-26 ("The Wonderful Name")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Isaiah 53:5 (power text)

Sunday—Matthew 1:1-11

Monday—Matthew 1:12-17

Tuesday—Isaiah 53:2-9

Wednesday—Romans 5:8

Thursday—John 3:16, 17

Friday—Isaiah 53

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- What risks did Jesus take to save me?
- When have I done something for God despite the risk of embarrassment or ridicule?
- How does Jesus' self-sacrificial living on this earth motivate me to live my life?
- What risks am I willing to take for God in loving others?
- In what ways could I reflect God's love to others regardless of the risks involved?
- What risks am I willing to take to help others know God?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Talk about your relatives or ancestors who loved and served God.
- Together, browse through your Bible and each share texts that describe how much God loves you.
- As a family, identify ways you have observed God's love for you this week.

8 Coming up next week!

Only a stable receives the baby Jesus! Jesus helps us to understand the love of God.

Lesson 11

Year B Qtr 4

God, in Our Neighborhood (Jesus becomes one of us to show us God)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

Jesus was born as a human being to help us understand God's character of love.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 4, The Son: "God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

New Testament, The Four Gospels: Luke 2:1-40

5 Ellen White reference

The Desire of Ages, chaps. 4; 5, pp. 43-58: "But the gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart. . . . Having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear, which is necessary to the completion of His work. . . . The whole treasury of heaven is open to those He seeks to save" (p. 57).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 7, pp. 35-42 ("Night of Nights"); pp. 43-46 ("This Is the One!")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Luke 2:11 (power text)
Sunday—Luke 2:1-5
Monday—Luke 2:6-20
Tuesday—Luke 2:21-40
Wednesday—Matthew 1:21
Thursday—Luke 2
Friday—Luke 1:46-55

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- What have I learned about God from Jesus' life on earth?
- How do I respond to Jesus' love?
- Do others see Jesus in my daily life?
- Why did Jesus choose to live as one of us?
- How does my relationship with my neighbors show that I know Jesus?
- How do my words and actions reflect Jesus' love to those around me?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Think of three ways your family can help others this week to focus on the true meaning of Jesus' birth.
- Talk together during family worship about what it must have been like for Jesus to come from heaven, take up the form of a human baby, and be born in a stable.

8 Coming up next week!

Jesus is God's gift to the world. We want to show our gratitude to God for His gift.

Lesson 12

Year B Qtr 4

Beginning With a Gift (Jesus has always been)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
Jesus is God's ultimate gift of grace to us.

2 Power text (memory verse)
"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:1-3, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 1, Holy Scriptures: "The Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
New Testament, The Four Gospels: John 1:1-18

5 Ellen White reference
The Desire of Ages, chap. 1, pp. 19-26: "In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken" (p. 25).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 1, pp. 73-77 ("One Gleam of Hope"); vol. 9, pp. 105-109 ("Nailed to a Cross")

7 Family worship ideas
Use the following **texts** to explore the

core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—John 1:1-3 (power text)
Sunday—John 1:4, 5
Monday—John 1:6-8
Tuesday—John 1:9-18
Wednesday—Ephesians 2:8
Thursday—Colossians 1:16, 17
Friday—John 3:16

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

- What does it mean to me that Jesus is the greatest gift ever given to us?
- How has my life changed since I've come to know Jesus better?
- What are some things I could do to thank God for His amazing gift?
- How do I reflect in my daily interactions that I received the Greatest Gift?
- How can I, knowing Jesus as the greatest gift of all, share the news with others?
- With whom can I talk today about my friendship with Jesus?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- What can your family do this week to share God's great gift with others?
- Discuss the implications of being called a child of God. What are the privileges and responsibilities?
- Sing together the familiar old hymn "Amazing Grace" with instrumental accompaniment.

8 Coming up next week!
We open our hearts to Jesus, our Savior. Jesus is God's gift to us, and our lives are our gifts to God.

Lesson 13

Year B Qtr 4

Gift Exchange

(Jesus' love transforms us)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We accept God's gift of salvation as we seek to spend time with Jesus daily.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:11-13, NIV).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries: "God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Major Prophets: Jeremiah 29:11-14

5 Ellen White reference

Steps to Christ, chaps. 7; 8, pp. 57-75; *Early Writings*, pp. 149-153: "Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. . . . Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 10, pp. 189-191 ("God Marks His Own")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Jeremiah 29:11-13 (power text)

Sunday—John 3:16, 17

Monday—Jeremiah 29:11

Tuesday—Jeremiah 29:12

Wednesday—Jeremiah 29:13

Thursday—Jeremiah 29:14

Friday—Psalm 63:1

Use the following **questions** as discussion starters with your family:

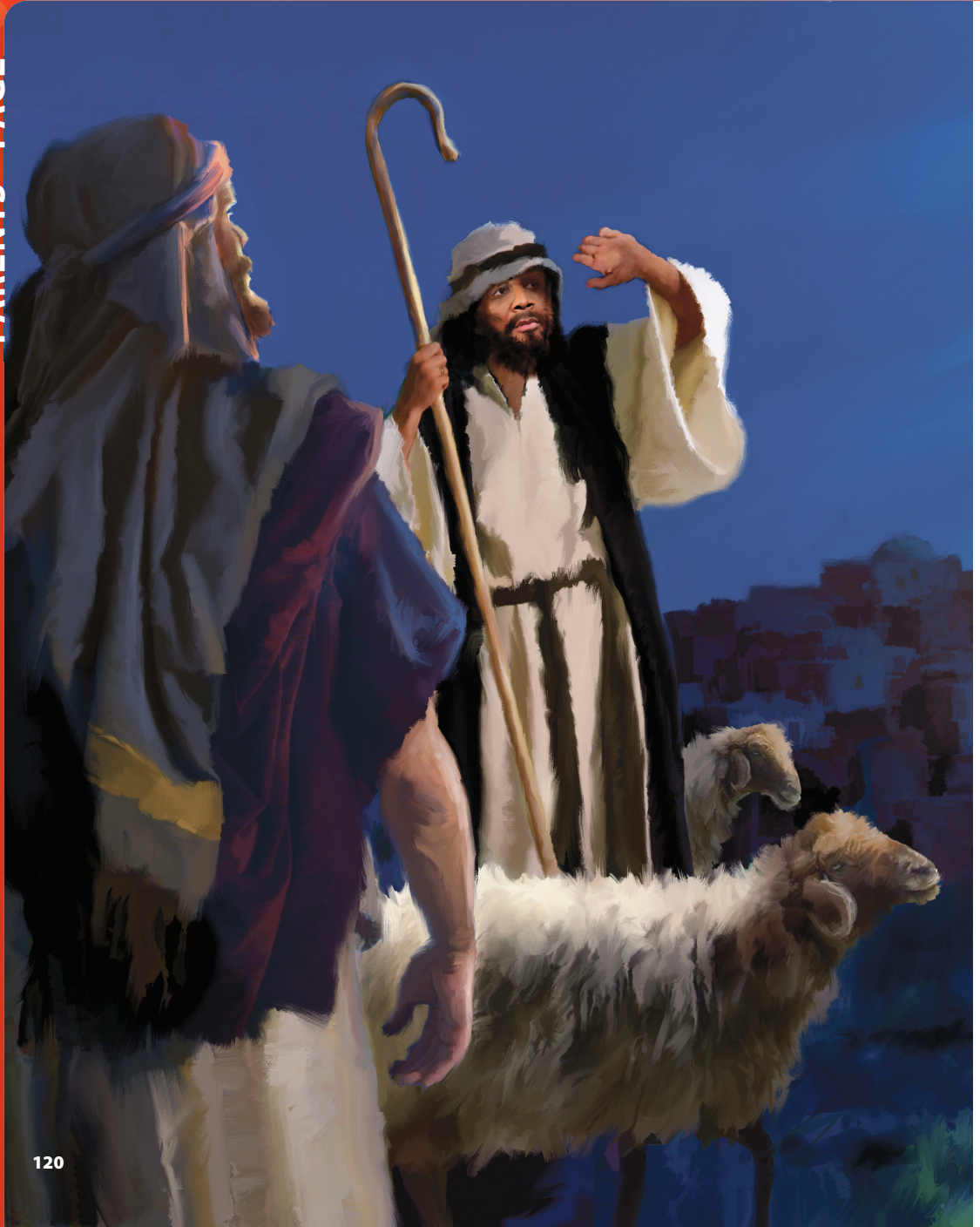
- How can I accept God's gift of grace?
- What is God's plan for my life?
- Will I accept God's plan for my life?
- How can I offer myself to God?
- How can I demonstrate my decision to walk with Jesus?
- How will I share with someone today my response to Jesus?

Choose from the following **activities** to help energize your time together:

- Pray this prayer each morning this week: *Dear Lord, today take me as totally Yours. I give You all my plans. Use me to serve others. Stay with me and show me how to do everything in Your power. Amen.*
- Discuss the implications of seeking God with all your heart. How can you surrender to Him completely?
- Share ways you can serve God, allowing Him to fulfill His plan for your life.

8 Coming up next week!

John baptizes people. God's love leads us to depend on Jesus and to be baptized.



ourbeliefs taken from *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*

1 The Holy Scriptures

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration. The inspired authors spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to humanity the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history. (Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20, 21.)

2 The Trinity

There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. God, who is love, is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation. (Gen. 1:26; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 6:8; Matt. 28:19; John 3:16; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2.)

3 The Father

God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also those of the Father. (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 4:35; Ps. 110:1, 4; John 3:16; 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:28; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 4:8; Rev. 4:11.)

4 The Son

God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and

the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God's power and was attested as God's promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven to minister in the heavenly sanctuary on our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things. (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:25-27; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3, 14; 5:22; 10:30; 14:1-3, 9, 13; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17-19; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2.)

5 The Holy Spirit

God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He is as much a person as are the Father and the Son. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth. (Gen. 1:1, 2; 2 Sam. 23:2; Ps. 51:11; Isa. 61:1; Luke 1:35; 4:18; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 5:3; 10:38; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Peter 1:21.)

6 Creation

God has revealed in Scripture the authentic and historical account of His creative activity. He created the universe, and in a recent six-day creation the Lord made "the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them" and rested on the seventh

day. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of the work He performed and completed during six literal days that together with the Sabbath constituted the same unit of time that we call a week today. The first man and woman were made in the image of God as the crowning work of Creation, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. When the world was finished, it was "very good," declaring the glory of God. (Gen. 1:2; 5:11; Exod. 20:8-11; Ps. 19:1-6; 33:6, 9; 104; Isa. 45:12, 18; Acts 17:24; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; 11:3; Rev. 10:6; 14:7.)

7 The Nature of Humanity

Man and woman were made in the image of God with individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and spirit, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else. When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position. The image of God in them was marred, and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another, and to care for their environment. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7, 15, 3; Ps. 8:4-8; 51:5, 10; 58:3; Jer. 17:9; Acts 17:24-28; Rom. 5:12-17; 2 Cor. 5:19, 20; Eph. 2:3; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 3:4; 4:7, 8, 11, 20.)

8 The Great Controversy

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being,

our **beliefs** continued

endowed with the freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the global flood, as presented in the historical account of Genesis 1-11. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation. (Gen. 3; 6-8; Job 1:6-12; Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:12-18; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:4; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14; 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Peter 3:6; Rev. 12:4-9.)

9 The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ

In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This perfect atonement vindicates the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. The bodily resurrection of Christ proclaims God's triumph over the forces of evil, and for those who accept the atonement assures their final victory over sin and death. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (Gen. 3:15; Ps. 22:1; Isa. 53; John 3:16; 14:30; Rom. 1:4; 3:25; 4:25; 8:3, 4; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 20-22; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 19-21; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 2:15;

1 Peter 2:21, 22; 1 John 2:2; 4:10.)

10 The Experience of Salvation

In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit, we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, Substitute and Example. This saving faith comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him, we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation now and in the judgment. (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 45:22; 53; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 33:11; 36:25-27; Hab. 2:4; Mark 9:23, 24; John 3:3-8, 16; 16:8; Rom. 3:21-26; 5:6-10; 8:1-4, 14-17; 10:17; 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Gal. 1:4; 3:13, 14, 26; 4:4-7; Eph. 2:4-10; Col. 1:13, 14; Titus 3:3-7; Heb. 8:7-12; 1 Peter 1:23; 2:21, 22; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rev. 13:8.)

11 Growing in Christ

By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil

powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the church. We are also called to follow Christ's example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt. 20:25-28; 25:31-46; Luke 10:17-20; John 20:21; Rom. 8:38, 39; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; Phil. 3:7-14; Col. 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess. 5:16-18, 23; Heb. 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4.)

12 The Church

The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to humanity, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word revealed in the Scriptures. The church is God's family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the bride for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a glorious church, the faithful of all the ages, the purchase of His blood, not

having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish. (Gen. 12:1-3; Exod. 19:3-7; Matt. 16:13-20; 18:18; 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38-42; 7:38; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11; 5:23-27; Col. 1:17, 18; 1 Peter 2:9.)

13 The Remnant and Its Mission

The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. This proclamation is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; it coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and results in a work of repentance and reform on earth. Every believer is called to have a personal part in this worldwide witness. (Dan. 7:9-14; Isa. 1:9; 11:11; Jer. 23:3; Micah 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 4:17; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Jude 3, 14; Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4.)

14 Unity in the Body of Christ

The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children. (Ps. 133:1; Matt. 28:19, 20; John 17:20-23; Acts 17:26, 27;

Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 5:16, 17; Gal. 3:27-29; Eph. 2:13-16; 4:3-6, 11-16; Col. 3:10-15.)

15 Baptism

By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, become His people, and are received as members by His church. Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, and our reception of the Holy Spirit. It is by immersion in water and is contingent on an affirmation of faith in Jesus and evidence of repentance of sin. It follows instruction in the Holy Scriptures and acceptance of their teachings. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38; 16:30-33; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-6; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12, 13.)

16 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, our Lord and Saviour. In this experience of communion Christ is present to meet and strengthen His people. As we partake, we joyfully proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again. Preparation for the Supper includes self-examination, repentance, and confession. The Master ordained the service of foot washing to signify renewed cleansing, to express a willingness to serve one another in Christlike humility, and to unite our hearts in love. The communion service is open to all believing Christians. (Matt. 26:17-30; John 6:48-63; 13:1-17; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23-30; Rev. 3:20.)

17 Spiritual Gifts and Ministries

God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each

member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the church in pastoral, evangelistic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love. (Acts 6:1-7; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-11, 27, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11-16; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.)

18 The Gift of Prophecy

The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church, and we believe it was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction to the church. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Num. 12:6; 2 Chron. 20:20; Joel 2:28, 29; Amos 3:7; Acts 2:14-21; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9.)

19 The Law of God

The great principles of God's law

our **beliefs** continued

are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgment. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Saviour. Salvation is all of grace and not of works, and its fruit is obedience to the Commandments. This obedience develops Christian character and results in a sense of well-being. It is evidence of our love for the Lord and our concern for our fellow human beings. The obedience of faith demonstrates the power of Christ to transform lives, and therefore strengthens Christian witness. (Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 28:1-14; Ps. 19:7-14; 40:7, 8; Matt. 5:17-20; 22:36-40; John 14:15; 15:7-10; Rom. 8:3, 4; Eph. 2:8-10; Heb. 8:8-10; 1 John 2:3; 5:3; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.)

20 The Sabbath

The gracious Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3; Exod. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Lev. 23:32;

Deut. 5:12-15; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Ezek. 20:12, 20; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 1:32; Luke 4:16; Heb. 4:1-11.)

21 Stewardship

We are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow human beings, and by returning tithe and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. Stewardship is a privilege given to us by God for nurture in love and the victory over selfishness and covetousness. Stewards rejoice in the blessings that come to others as a result of their faithfulness. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15; 1 Chron. 29:14; Haggai 1:3-11; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 23:23; Rom. 15:26, 27; 1 Cor. 9:9-14; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 9:7.)

22 Christian Behavior

We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to re-create in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit. It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to adopt the most

healthful diet possible and abstain from the unclean foods identified in the Scriptures. Since alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies, we are to abstain from them as well. Instead, we are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness. (Gen. 7:2; Exod. 20:15; Lev. 11:1-47; Ps. 106:3; Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 10:5; Eph. 5:1-21; Phil. 2:4; 4:8; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; Titus 2:11, 12; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 John 2:6; 3 John 2.)

23 Marriage and the Family

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between a man and a woman who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse, except for fornication, and marries another commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, a man and a woman who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ through marriage may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving, tender, and caring

guide who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God, which embraces both single and married persons. (Gen. 2:18-25; Exod. 20:12; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 5:31, 32; 19:3-9, 12; Mark 10:11, 12; John 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 7:7, 10, 11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4.)

24 Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle that the Lord set up and not humans. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. At His ascension He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry, which was typified by the work of the high priest in the holy place of the earthly sanctuary. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry, which was typified by the work of the high priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary. It is a work of investigative judgment, which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God

shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Lev. 16; Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Heb. 1:3; 2:16, 17; 4:14-16; 8:1-5; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; Rev. 8:3-5; 11:19; 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:11, 12.)

25 The Second Coming of Christ

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Saviour's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected and, together with the righteous living, will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die. The almost complete fulfillment of most lines of prophecy, together with the present condition of the world, indicates that Christ's coming is near. The time of that event has not been revealed, and we are therefore exhorted to be ready at all times. (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-6; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2:8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7; 14:14-20; 19:11-21.)

26 Death and Resurrection

The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, a resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Job 19:25-27; Ps. 146:3, 4; Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10; Dan. 12:2, 13; Isa. 25:8; John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Rev. 20:1-10.)

27 The Millennium and the End of Sin

The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected and, with Satan and his angels, will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever. (Jer. 4:23-26; Ezek. 28:18, 19; Mal. 4:1; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Rev. 20; Rev. 21:1-5.)

28 The New Earth

On the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, God will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. For here God Himself will dwell with His people, and suffering and death will have passed away. The great controversy will be ended, and sin will be no more. All things, animate and inanimate, will declare that God is love, and He shall reign forever. Amen. (Isa. 35; 65:17-25; Matt. 5:5; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 11:15; 21:1-7; 22:1-5.)

Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. These beliefs, as set forth here, constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session, when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language to express the teachings of God's Holy Word.

www.adventist.org/beliefs/fundamental/index.html