

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 children 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, providing 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 <http://www.juniorpowerpoints.org/article/4/resources#.VGUZIYdSxx4>.
- 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. 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 support 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 A Qtr 4

The Fugitive Heir (David finds Mephibosheth)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We reflect God's love when we treat everyone kindly.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:17).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 3, God the Father: "The Father . . . is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History:
1 Samuel 20:12-15; 2 Samuel 9

5 Ellen White reference

Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 70, p. 713: "David now summoned the young man [Jonathan's son] to court and received him with great kindness" (p. 713).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 4, pp. 89-92
("God's Kindness")

7 Family worship ideas

Use the following **texts** to explore the core teaching with your children:
Sabbath—James 1:17 (power text)
Sunday—1 Samuel 20:12, 13

Monday—1 Samuel 20:14, 15

Tuesday—2 Samuel 9:1-5; Proverbs 14:21

Wednesday—2 Samuel 9:6-8

Thursday—2 Samuel 9:9-13

Friday—Psalm 23:5, 6

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

- Why did David show kindness to Mephibosheth?
- What are some Bible promises of God's forgiveness and grace?
- How will my friendship with Jesus influence how I treat others?
- How will an attitude of forgiveness help me extend grace to others?
- Whom do I know that needs to know about God's grace and forgiveness?
- How can I express love and acceptance to someone today?

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

- Write the power text on a small card and place it in a small gift box. Each day, read your "gift" text.
- Share times you were treated kindly. Contact the people who showed kindness to you and thank them.
- Think of three people who could benefit from kindness. Plan to help them with your family.

8 Coming up next week!

David covets Bathsheba. God wants us to treat others in our community with honesty and respect.

Lesson 2

Year A Qtr 4

Death by Deception (David covets Bathsheba)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
We treat others with respect by being honest and not taking advantage of them.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy” (Proverbs 12:22).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 7, The Nature of Humanity: “The image of God in [our first parents] 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” (www.adventist.org).

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

5 Ellen White reference
Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 71, pp. 717-720: “It was the spirit of self-confidence and self-exaltation that prepared the way for David’s fall” (p. 717).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 4, pp. 96-98 (“A Shadow Falls”)

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

Sabbath—Proverbs 12:22 (power text)

Sunday—Isaiah 33:15, 16

Monday—2 Samuel 11:1-13

Tuesday—2 Samuel 11:14-26

Wednesday—2 Samuel 12:1-9

Thursday—Mark 12:31

Friday—Proverbs 12:19-22

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

- What does David’s experience teach about the consequence of coveting?
- Why does the Bible condemn coveting what belongs to someone else?
- Are there times in my life that I rely more on my own judgment than on God?
- What happens when I place my trust in my own wisdom?
- In what ways can I learn to depend more on God?
- How am I an example of integrity to others?

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

- Share personal experiences of being tempted to sin or to hide something you have done wrong.
- Discuss ways you treat your friends and how they treat you. How could you improve your friendships?
- For worship, read Isaiah 33:15, 16 and discuss the type of person described in these verses.

8 Coming up next week!
God forgives David! Just as God has forgiven us, we should forgive others.

Lesson 3 Year A Qtr 4

Found Out and Forgiveness (Nathan confronts David)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
Because God has forgiven us, we forgive ourselves and others.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Matthew 6:14).

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. . . . This saving faith comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God’s grace” (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Books of History:
2 Samuel 12

5 Ellen White reference
Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 71, pp. 720-726: “Whoever will in faith accept God’s promises, will find pardon. The Lord will never cast away one truly repentant soul” (p. 726).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 4, pp. 99-102 (“David’s Repentance”)

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

Sabbath—Matthew 6:14 (power text)

Sunday—Psalm 51:1-10

Monday—Psalm 51:11-19

Tuesday—Psalm 32:1-4

Wednesday—Psalm 32:6, 7

Thursday—Psalm 32:8, 9

Friday—Psalm 32:10, 11

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

- How did the message of the prophet help David recognize his great sin?
- What was David’s response to God after being convicted of his sin?
- How does the story of David’s fall, repentance, and forgiveness help me?
- When I’ve done wrong, how has God gotten my attention and convicted me of sin?
- What types of consequences did I have to face because of my sin?
- With whom do I need to make things right and reconcile today?

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

- Read Psalm 51 and with a colored pencil underline the parts that are meaningful to you.
- Talk about a time the Holy Spirit convicted you to ask for forgiveness and God forgave you.
- Do something kind as an expression of your gratitude for God’s forgiveness and love.

8 Coming up next week!
Absalom plots and leads a revolt against his father, King David. God wants us to work together in harmony.

Lesson 4 Year A Qtr 4

Talent Turns Toxic (Absalom plots evil)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We accomplish more by working with, rather than against, one another.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up" (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 8, The Great Controversy: "All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan. . . . 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" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Samuel 14:25-15:37

5 Ellen White reference

Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 72, pp. 727-745: "And the Lord did not forsake David. . . . Never was the ruler of Israel more truly great in the sight of heaven than at this hour of his deepest outward humiliation" (p. 738).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 4, pp. 103-106 ("A Very Bad Son")

7 Family worship ideas

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

Sabbath—Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10
(power text)

Sunday—2 Samuel 14:25, 26

Monday—2 Samuel 14:27-33

Tuesday—2 Samuel 15:1-37

Wednesday—1 Corinthians 14:40

Thursday—Exodus 18:12-19, 24-26

Friday—1 Corinthians 3:16, 17

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

- How did Absalom's pride get in the way of using his talents to bless others?
- Why is cooperation far better than competition and rivalry?
- How could I use the gifts God has given me to serve Him and others?
- Why is planning and organization important in my life and in church?
- How could I contribute with my gifts in my local church?
- With whom could I work together using my talents?

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

- Share strategies that help you be organized.
- Identify some of the gifts that God has given you to serve Him and others.
- Talk about ways you can use your gifts to serve at church and in the community.

8 Coming up next week!

David grieves the loss of his son Absalom. God wants us to love everyone, even our enemies.

Lesson 5 Year A Qtr 4

Grieving Father, Victorious King (David mourns Absalom's death)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

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 Samuel 16:15-18:33

5 Ellen White reference

Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 72, pp. 744, 745: "God had given them reason for triumph and gladness; the greatest rebellion that had ever been known in Israel had been crushed; and yet this great victory was turned to mourning for him whose crime had cost the blood of thousands of brave men" (p. 745).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 4, pp. 109-111 ("Caught in a Tree")

7 Family worship ideas

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

Sabbath—Matthew 5:44, 45 (power text)

Sunday—2 Samuel 16:15-17:4

Monday—2 Samuel 17:5-17:29

Tuesday—2 Samuel 18

Wednesday—Luke 15:11-24

Thursday—Ephesians 6:1-4

Friday—Matthew 6:26-33

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

- What were the consequences of Absalom's rebellion?
- How is Absalom's rebellion and fall similar to Lucifer's rebellion and fall?
- How can I learn patience?
- How does my acceptance of others bless those around me?
- How should I respond to someone who is rebellious?
- Why should I seek reconciliation when I have disagreements with others?

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

- Describe a time you continued to be kind to someone who did something hateful or unkind.
- Name another father and son in the Bible who had a disagreement of some kind. Compare the stories.
- Discuss some values that help build positive family relationships.

8 Coming up next week!

King David brings reconciliation to Israel and Judah. God wants us to be reconciled with those around us.

Lesson 6 Year A Qtr 4

In Pursuit of Peace

(David brings reconciliation)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We reflect God's grace by solving conflicts peacefully.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness" (James 3:18).

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 Samuel 19

5 Ellen White reference

Patriarchs and Prophets, chap. 72, p. 745: "He [David] went down to the gate, and with words of courage and commendation greeted his brave soldiers as they marched past him" (p. 745).

6 The Bible Story reference

No corresponding story in *The Bible Story* books

7 Family worship ideas

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

Sabbath—James 3:18 (power text)

Sunday—2 Samuel 19:1-8

Monday—2 Samuel 19:9-30

Tuesday—2 Samuel 19:31-43

Wednesday—Matthew 5:9

Thursday—Matthew 18:21, 22

Friday—Jeremiah 33:8

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

- How did David handle crisis and conflict situations?
- How did David show grace and kindness to people?
- How could I have peace with people in times of conflict?
- How does experiencing God's forgiveness help me extend forgiveness to others?
- In what ways can I make things right with a person who argues and disagrees with me?
- How could I be a peacemaker today?

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

- Think of a time you should have been kind. Contact the person you hurt and ask for forgiveness.
- During worship, discuss why it is not a sign of weakness to forgive others.
- Talk about ways you could manage conflict situations wisely and effectively.

8 Coming up next week!

The psalms feature songs of praise. We express our gratitude for God's gift of grace through songs of praise.

Lesson 7 Year A Qtr 4

Sing It, Say It, Share It! (Psalms of praise)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
We praise God for His gift of grace.

2 Power text (memory verse)
"Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Psalm 103:2-5).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior: "For the Spirit to recreate 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" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Books of Poetry: Psalms 103; 107

5 Ellen White reference
Lift Him Up, p. 36: "The Lord is represented in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament not only as a God of justice but as a Father of infinite love" (p. 36).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 4, pp. 28-30 ("Song in a Cave")

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

core teaching with your children:

Sabbath—Psalm 103:2-5 (power text)
Sunday—Psalm 103:1-5
Monday—Psalm 103:11-22
Tuesday—Psalm 51
Wednesday—Psalm 91
Thursday—1 Thessalonians 5:18
Friday—Psalm 103

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

- When is it easiest to thank God? When is it hardest to praise Him?
- According to 1 Thessalonians 5:18, how often should we thank Him?
- Why is it important that we acknowledge all that God does in our lives?
- In what ways do I show God my appreciation for His wonderful grace?
- What amazing things has God done in my life for which I wish to praise Him?
- For what things will I praise God today?

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

- Have each person share praise for a way God has blessed your family in the past.
- Talk about the distance between east and west. What does Psalm 103:12 tell you about God's grace?
- Read Psalm 91, then have each family member share experiences of God's protection.

8 Coming up next week!
Elisha receives a double portion. The Holy Spirit empowers us to work for Him.

Lesson8 Year A Qtr 4

Elijah's Hand-Me-Down Cloak (Elisha receives double portion)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
God's Spirit gives us the power to live and work for Him.

2 Power text (memory verse)
"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 5, The Holy Spirit: "God the eternal Spirit . . . draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture
Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Kings 2:1-15

5 Ellen White reference
Prophets and Kings, chap. 17, pp. 217-228: "Elisha asked not for worldly honor, or for a high place among the great men of earth. That which he craved was a large measure of the Spirit that God had bestowed so freely upon the one about to be honored with translation. He knew that nothing but the Spirit which had rested upon Elijah could fit him to fill the place in Israel to which God had called him" (p. 226).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 55-60 ("Heaven's Fiery Chariot")

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

Sabbath—Acts 1:8 (power text)
Sunday—2 Kings 2:1-8
Monday—2 Kings 2:9-15
Tuesday—Psalm 68:17
Wednesday—Revelation 5:11
Thursday—Acts 2:2-11
Friday—John 14:26, 27

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

- Why did Elisha ask for a double portion of God's Spirit that rested on Elijah?
- How is God's granting Elisha's request an encouragement to me?
- How do I feel about receiving a special gift from my family?
- If I had one request to ask God, what would it be?
- Why do I need God's Spirit in my life today?
- Where do I need God's Spirit to help me serve Him today?

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

- Share a story about a time God's Spirit gave you power.
- Take turns telling what you think Elisha saw and felt on the day Elijah was taken to heaven.
- Together, sing a song or write a poem about God's Spirit that empowers us to serve Him.

8 Coming up next week!
A widow pays her debts with oil. God's grace never ends.

Lesson9 Year A Qtr 4

Oil Unlimited

(Widow pays her debts with oil)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

The supply of God's grace never ends.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 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" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

Old Testament, The Books of History: 2 Kings 4:1-7

5 Ellen White reference

Reflecting Christ, p. 269: "God's gifts increase as they are imparted. We see this illustrated in the case of the poor widow whom the prophet Elisha, by a miracle, relieved from debt" (p. 269).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 5, pp. 69-73 ("Mother's Mysterious Oil Pots")

7 Family worship ideas

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

Sabbath—Philippians 4:19 (power text)

Sunday—2 Kings 4:1-5

Monday—2 Kings 4:6, 7

Tuesday—Luke 6:38

Wednesday—1 Kings 17:7-24

Thursday—Psalm 37:3, 4

Friday—Matthew 7:7-12

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

- What does this story reveal about God's providence in times of need?
- How am I encouraged by the widow's faith?
- What did the widow have to contribute in order to experience the miracle?
- What needs do I have that my heavenly Father can satisfy?
- What talents has God given me to use as I experience His blessings?
- How can I help to fill the "jars" of other people's needs?

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

- Create a small box and add to it prayer requests. With your family, pray for these during the week.
- List some needs in your church, neighborhood, or community. Plan ways you will help.
- With your family, do a service project, allowing God to use you to fill the needs of someone in need.

8 Coming up next week!

No room for Jesus? We worship God when we accept Him and make Him first in our lives.

Lesson 10 Year A Qtr 4

No Room? (Jesus is born)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

We worship God when we accept the gift of His Son and make room for Him in our lives.

2 Power text (memory verse)

“But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship” (Galatians 4:4, 5).

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. . . . Forever truly God, He became also truly human, Jesus the Christ” (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

New Testament, The Four Gospels: Luke 2:1-7

5 Ellen White reference

The Desire of Ages, chaps. 3; 4; pp. 31-49: “There is no room for them at the crowded inn. In a rude building where the beasts are sheltered, they at last find refuge, and here the Redeemer of the world is born” (p. 44).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 7, pp. 31-34 (“No Vacancy”)

7 Family worship ideas

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

Sabbath—Galatians 4:4, 5 (power text)

Sunday—Micah 5:2

Monday—Isaiah 7:14

Tuesday—Luke 2:1, 2

Wednesday—Luke 2:3-5; 1 Samuel 17:12; 20:6; Micah 5:2

Thursday—Luke 2:6, 7

Friday—Matthew 2:1-6

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

- What were some reasons Jesus was born in Bethlehem?
- What does Jesus’ birth in a stable tell about God’s great sacrifice?
- What can I do to make room for Jesus in my life?
- What things keep me from accepting Jesus in every aspect of my life?
- How can Jesus become my first priority?
- How will my life show to others that Jesus is first in my life?

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

- Share the story of Jesus’ birth with someone who doesn’t know the true meaning of Christmas.
- Ask your parents how far back they can track your family line and who makes up your family tree.
- Sing a song of praise together with your family for worship.

8 Coming up next week!

Angels announce the birth of Jesus, God’s Son. We can worship God when we sing songs of praise to Him.

Lesson 11

Year A Qtr 4

Praise Explosion! (Angels sing to shepherds)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
Every day we can praise and worship God as the angels did.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests’” (Luke 2:13, 14).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ: “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
New Testament, The Four Gospels:
Luke 2:8-20

5 Ellen White reference
The Desire of Ages, chap. 4, pp. 43-49: “Above the hills of Bethlehem are gathered an innumerable throng of angels. They wait the signal to declare the glad news to the world” (p. 47).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 7, pp. 35-42
 (“Night of Nights”)

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

Sabbath—Luke 2:13, 14 (power text)
Sunday—Luke 2:8-10
Monday—Luke 2:11, 12
Tuesday—Luke 2:13
Wednesday—Luke 2:15-20
Thursday—Isaiah 7:14; 9:6
Friday—Luke 2:8-20

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

- Why did the angels bring the good news about Jesus to the shepherds?
- What can I learn from the ways that angels praise and worship God?
- What can I learn from the shepherds who hurried to see Jesus?
- How does my love for God show in everything I do?
- What do I have to do to prepare for Jesus’ second coming?
- How can I share the good news about Jesus, as the shepherds did?

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

- Discuss why the angels appeared to the shepherds and not to someone like the innkeeper.
- Share your thoughts on how you would react if angels would appear today in your town.
- For worship, read Luke 2:1-20 and talk about your reasons for praising God.

8 Coming up next week!
Jesus is dedicated. Living in harmony with God’s will is our gift of worship to Jesus.

Lesson 12

Year A Qtr 4

Dedicated

(Jesus is dedicated)

1 Core teaching of this lesson

When Jesus lives in our hearts, we are inspired to worship Him.

2 Power text (memory verse)

"For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel" (Luke 2:30-32).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain

Our Beliefs, no. 12, The Church: "The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word revealed in the Scriptures. The church is God's family" (www.adventist.org).

4 Where this lesson is found in Scripture

New Testament, The Four Gospels: Luke 2:21-40

5 Ellen White reference

The Desire of Ages, chap. 5, pp. 50-58: "In the temple the Son of God was dedicated to the work He had come to do" (p. 55). "From the manger to the cross, the life of Jesus was a call to self-surrender, and to fellowship in suffering" (p. 57).

6 The Bible Story reference

The Bible Story, vol. 7, 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 2:30-32 (power text)

Sunday—Luke 2:21

Monday—Luke 2:22-24

Tuesday—Luke 2:25-35

Wednesday—Luke 2:36-38

Thursday—Luke 2:39

Friday—Luke 2:40

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

- Why was it important for Jesus' parents to follow the Law of Moses?
- What is the meaning of Jesus' dedication in the Temple?
- How did Simeon and Anna recognize that the Messiah has been born?
- How has God fulfilled His promises in my life?
- How will my life be a gift of praise and worship to God?
- How will I tell others how grateful I am for God's many gifts?

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

- Talk about what it means to dedicate your life to God. Identify some changes that need to take place.
- Sing carols and praise songs of the season.
- Plan to do something to make a difference in someone's life during the Christmas season.

8 Coming up next week!

The Magi come to worship Jesus. We worship God when we give our praise, offerings, and lives to Him.

Lesson 13

Year A Qtr 4

Magi and the Messiah (The Magi visit Jesus)

1 Core teaching of this lesson
We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

2 Power text (memory verse)
“Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts” (1 Chronicles 16:8, 9).

3 Key doctrine that this lesson helps to support and explain
Our Beliefs, no. 1, The 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: Matthew 2:1-12

5 Ellen White reference
The Desire of Ages, chap. 6, pp. 59-67: “The magi had been among the first to welcome the Redeemer. Their gift was the first that was laid at His feet. . . . If we have given our hearts to Jesus, we also shall bring our gifts to Him” (p. 65).

6 The Bible Story reference
The Bible Story, vol. 7, pp. 47-52 (“Strangers From the East”)

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

Sabbath—1 Chronicles 16:8, 9 (power text)
Sunday—Numbers 24:17
Monday—Matthew 2:1, 2
Tuesday—Matthew 2:3-6
Wednesday—Matthew 2:7, 8
Thursday—Matthew 2:9-12
Friday—Matthew 2:1-12

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

- What was God communicating to the Magi through the star?
- How did the Scriptures help the Wise Men in their search for the Messiah?
- What gift do I have to offer God?
- How can I worship God with my gifts, my praise, and my life?
- How can I give my heart/life to Jesus?
- How will my actions reveal that Jesus has control over my life?

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

- Plan with your family to invite someone into your home for Friday supper and worship.
- For worship, sing the song “We Three Kings” (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 137).
- Share with each other what gifts you could give to Jesus.

8 Coming up next week!
Jesus gave us the gift of salvation. We give Him our hearts.





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; Ex. 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; Ex. 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; Dan. 7:9-14; 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.)

our **beliefs** continued**19 The Law of God**

The great principles of God's law 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. (Ex. 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; Ex. 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 Christ-like 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 intel-

ligently. 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; Ex. 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; Ex. 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