

Education Sabbath

A program for Education Sabbath.

Theme: *It takes a whole village to raise a child.* - - African Proverb

Planning carefully in advance allows you the opportunity to involve your students. Use them in ways that you and your congregation feel comfortable. Whether as readers of scripture, in offering prayer, for the interactive reading for worship, leading out in music for worship, or in providing special music - the students will discern quickly that we are doing more than giving lip service to their value in our homes, churches, and in God's kingdom.

Suggested Scriptures:

Psalms 127:3-5 "Sons and daughters are a heritage from the Lord, children . . . "

Proverbs 22:6 "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old. . . "

Matthew 18:2-6, 10 "He called a little child and had him stand among them . . . "

Suggested Hymns:

653 Lead Them My God to Thee

218 When He Cometh

543 Jesus Friend of Little Children

545 Savior Like a Savior

Interactive Readings for Worship:

The responsive reading that follows may be presented as the scripture lesson, as a dramatic reading to introduce the sermon, or at the beginning of the church service to develop the theme. A rehearsal of main participants, particularly if you use young people, would be very important in making them comfortable and successful.

Children's Story:

"The Tools" was included because of its basic underlying theme that it takes all types of people used by God to make a successful community of faith. Each church needs each young person - regardless of their talents. Each youth needs the influence of many kinds of Christian mentors.

Sermon:

It Takes a Whole Village



Children's Story

Story teller should bring a box of tools to be used in the story. If unable to get actual tools - be sure to have pictures of them. You will need the following: hammer, saw, gimlet, screws, ruler, plane, sandpaper, carpenter's apron.



Gimlet

"The Tools"

It was a beautiful day in Nazareth of Galilee. The Master had left the carpenter shop to go and seek more materials with which to work. All seemed peaceful and quiet, but listen! The tools were quarreling. They were having a meeting and had elected Brother Hammer to the chair when an objection was raised by some of those present. They said he was so noisy, he upset every meeting, and beside he never could speak without knocking someone. Instead of being chairman, they said, he should be asked to leave the meeting.

Brother Hammer replied, "Well, I'm quite willing to leave, but if I go, Brother Saw should be asked to leave also. He's so sharp and cutting and can't take the least blow without whining."

"Very well," said Brother Saw, "but what about Sister Gimlet? She is very insignificant, and when she is finished she seems to have made little impression; she's so prying."

Sister Gimlet arose and said, "If it is the wish of all that I should go, very well, I will go, but Brother Ruler should go, too. He does nothing but make everybody else tow the line and measure up. He's always telling us we're too much this or not enough that."

Brother Ruler rose to his height and replied, "I'm willing to leave the shop, but I take Brother Plane along with me. I know that he seems to be doing a great deal of work, but everything is so superficial, there's no depth. It's all on the surface."

Brother Plane responded, "I will go if you all wish it, but if I go, Sister Sandpaper goes, too. She is always rubbing people the wrong way."

In the midst of all this harangue, the latch of the door was raised and the Carpenter of Nazareth entered the shop. He had come back to do His work. First, He put on His apron and went to His bench. Before Him He had the plan of a pulpit which He wanted to make in order to proclaim the message of His love and grace to all people. He took up the ruler and the saw and He used them. And He took up the plane and used it. Then He took up the sandpaper and smoothed off the edges.

The sun was setting and the day's work was finished. The Carpenter looked at His work and it was perfect. After He had gone out, the tools were silent. They had discovered that the Great Carpenter had work for every one of them and that they had all been made workers together with the



The Lost Sheep (Child)

An Interactive Reading

Scriptural Base: Matthew 18:10-14

Subject: Children, God's Faithfulness to Humankind

Background:

The reading is based on the parable of Jesus in Matthew 18:10-14. The parable illustrates the value of human beings, but in the immediate context the worth of little children. Throughout Jesus' ministry, we find him interacting with children and saying things about them that suggest their characteristics are shared in some way with the saved and the kingdom of Heaven. The parable of the lost sheep has been consistently overlooked as a parable about the significance of children.

Suggestions for Reading:

Participants - Reader 1, Reader 2, Reader 3, Reader 4, Congregation

Position all four Readers facing the congregation. Readers 1 and 2 should stand together in front on one side of the platform. Readers 3 and 4 should stand together on the other side. The Readers are in a teaching role in this reading. Their lines should be read consistent with the emphasis given by punctuation. For example, ellipsis (. . .) indicates a pause. Be warned that this reading can sound fragmented if not read right. With some focus and rehearsing, the Readers will be able to make these sentences smooth and will discover the delightful effect of several voices cooperating to produce vocal thoughts.

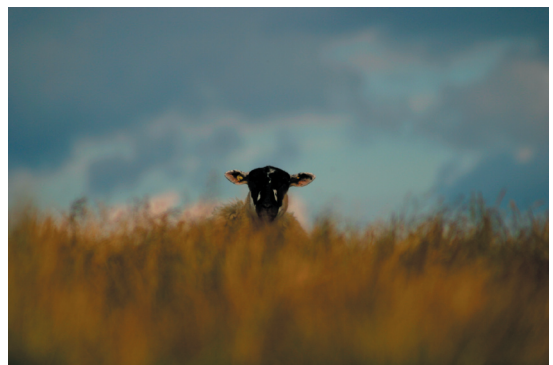
The Lost Sheep (Child)

by Melvin Campbell and Edwin Zackrison

Reader 1: This is a parable
Reader 2: about the kingdom of Heaven.
Reader 3: The kingdom is . . .
Reader 4: is like sheep.
Congregation: SHEEP?
Reader 3: And a shepherd.
Reader 2: And little children who are lost.

Reader 4: The kingdom is . . .
Reader 2: is like wandering.
Reader 1: losing and looking,
Reader 3: finding and laughing,
Reader 4: maybe rejoicing!
Reader 3: Tell me,
Reader 4: what do you think?

Reader 2: A man was counting



Reader 1: his flock of sheep - -
Reader 3: One,
Reader 1: Two,
Reader 2: Three,
Congregation: Four,
Reader 3: . . . Seventy-two,
Reader 1: Eighty-nine,
Congregation: ninety-nine, one hundred.
Reader 3: No, . . . just ninety-nine!

Reader 2 One of them,
Reader 1: one of the hundred,
Reader 4: wandered off, got lost - -
Reader 2: hopelessly lost - -
Reader 4: in the hills - -
Reader 2: or in the world - -
Reader 3: which left just
Congregation: ninety-nine.

Reader 4: A man owns
Reader 1: a flock of sheep - -
Reader 3: one hundred,
Reader 1: to be exact.
Reader 4: But now it's - -
Congregation: ninety-nine - -
Reader 2: He looks
Reader 3: for the one lost sheep.

Reader 1: He leaves the
Congregation: Ninety-nine
Reader 2: on the hills or in the world - -
Reader 4: . . . or wherever - -
Reader 1: looks for and finds
Reader 2: the wandering lost sheep.

Reader 3: This is the truth
Reader 4: about shepherds and sheep,
All Readers: And God and people
Reader 2: When the man
Reader 3: finds the sheep
Reader 2: he is so happy - -
Reader 1: happier about finding the lost - -
Congregation: than keeping the ninety-nine
Reader 4: who didn't get lost
Reader 2: or who didn't wander off.

Reader 1: This is a parable about little children - -



Congregation: Little children?
Reader 4: Little children
Reader 2: who are lost.
Reader 1: And a God in Heaven
Reader 3: who is not willing
Reader 4: that any little child
Reader 2: should be lost.

Reader 1: Furthermore - -
Reader 2: a child - -
Congregation: One child?
Reader 4: even just one - -
Reader 3: is equal to the
Reader 4: ninety-nine big people
Congregation: Equal?
Reader 2: who were left.
Reader 1: For of such,
Reader 3: that is, the likes of little children - -
Reader 4: for of such
All Readers: is the kingdom of Heaven.



"It Takes a Whole Village"

An Education Sabbath Sermon
by Bonnie Walker

Several years ago, Newsweek included a feature article stressing the importance of brain development during children's formative years. It is incredible to think that so much is dependent upon the first two to five years of a child's life.

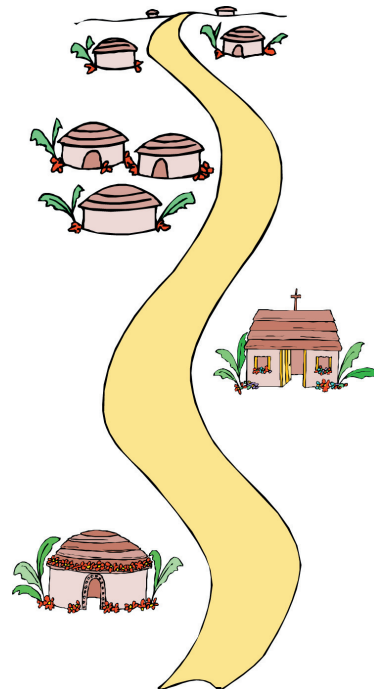
Up to 80% of a child's character and personality is developed by the age of five years. In fact, it is reported that humans learn 80% of all they will learn during those years. Although science is just proving this so, Ellen White wrote over a hundred years ago in the book Ministry of Healing page 380: "The lessons learned, the habits formed during the years of infancy and childhood have more to do with the formation of the character and the direction of the life than have all the instruction and training of after years." The following poem underscores this point about how easily we are molded in our formative years:

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day,
And as my fingers pressed it, still
It moved and yielded at my will.

I came again when days were past,
The bit of clay was hard at last,
The form I gave it, it still bore,
And I could change it never more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day
And molded with God's power and art
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone
An adult I now looked upon,
And he that early impress wore
And I could change him never more.



The old African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a child: is an idea we as a church family ought to consider this morning. We influence children when we visit, conduct business ventures and while we play.

Stop and think of this awesome responsibility and task which each one of us faces. The wiseman said, "train up a child in the way he should go." And we ask, "Which way should he go?" "What should he be taught?" and "What values should be emphasized?"

Each church sanctuary is a village. The church school is a part of that village. Parents should not be isolated somewhere in their little hut with their children, bringing them up alone.



A few years ago there was an article in the Review with a picture on the cover of a tall, dignified, white-haired gentleman bending down to talk to a toddler. The article drew our attention to each person's responsibility in the church to nurture children.

Children must have "Roots for something to hold onto and then Wings that they may fly."
(Unknown)

Franklin R. Ruehl wrote in How to do a Top-Notch Job of Raising Children: "You can raise children who become good students and develop into well-adjusted, productive adults by following some time-tested guidelines."

He mentions a National Institute of Mental Health survey which found that parents who successfully raised children followed certain basic principles. He listed the following:

- Love abundantly
- Teach right from wrong
- Discipline constructively
- Develop mutual respect
- Really listen
- Foster independence
- Spend time together
- Set up regular study time for children
- Be realistic
- Nurture quiet time
- Show interest
- Help-don't do it
- Reward-don't bribe

There is a quotation that reads something like this: "Home is where life makes up its mind" (Unknown). How are we doing as a church family in cultivating a spirit of trust and an example? How are we helping children make up their minds to serve our Savior?

We could say that in our homes, our schools, and our church, we have an environment where children make up their minds. It is here, in our village, that children cultivate attitudes, memories, beliefs and most of all - character. Parents hold an awesome responsibility-but each one sitting here this morning also has an influence on each person - big or little.

Proverbs 22:6 reads, "Train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Everyone in this room is a part of the village scene. The training of the child. Think what can WE do to help parents and children around us? Teens have an influence over younger children: and small school- aged children have a responsibility to preschool children. Take a minute now to think of how you could bless just one other person in this room today.

First of all we must be ready to love. Yes, love abundantly. the most important task is to really care about someone else. To really care about children, we not only give children a



sense of security, belonging, and support, but we also help smooth out the rough spots.

Remember what God calls children? Psalms 127:3 reads, "Behold children are a GIFT of the Lord."

When love is expressed in verbal appreciation it usually brings positive results. There is a story told in the book Chicken Soup for the Soul that I will share with you.

A teacher in New York decided to honor each of her seniors by telling them the difference they each made. Using a process developed by Helice Bridges of Del Mar, California, she called each student to the front of the class, one at a time. First she told them how the student made a difference to her and the class. Then she presented each of them with a blue ribbon imprinted with gold letters which read, "Who I Am Makes a Difference."

Afterwards, the teacher decided to do a class project to see what kind of impact recognition would have on a community. She gave each of the students three more ribbons and instructed them to go out and spread this acknowledgement ceremony. Then they were to follow up on the results, see who honored whom and report back to the class in about a week.

One of the boys in the class went to a junior executive in a nearby company and honored him for helping him with career planning. He gave him a blue ribbon and said, "We're doing a class project on recognition, and we'd like you to go out, find somebody to honor, give them a blue ribbon, then give them the extra blue ribbon so they can acknowledge a third person to keep this acknowledgment ceremony going. Then, please report back to me and tell me what happened."



Later that day the junior executive went in to see his boss, who had been noted, by the way, as being kind of a grouchy fellow. He sat his boss down and told him he deeply admired him for being a creative genius. The boss seemed surprised. The junior executive asked him if he would accept the gift of the blue ribbon and would he give him permission to put it on him. His surprised boss said, "Well, sure."

The junior executive took the blue ribbon and placed it right on his boss's jacket above his heart. As he gave him the last extra ribbon, he said, "Would you do me a favor? Would you take this extra ribbon and pass it on by honoring someone else? The young boy who first gave me the ribbons is doing a project in school and we want to keep this recognition ceremony going and find out how it affects people."

That night the boss came home to his 14 year old son and sat him down. He said, "The most incredible thing happened to me today. I was in my office and one of the junior executives came in and told me he admired me and gave me a blue ribbon for being a creative genius. Then he put this blue ribbon on my jacket above my heart that says, 'Who I am Makes a Difference.' He gave me an extra ribbon and asked me to find someone else to honor. As I was driving home tonight, I started thinking about who I would honor with this ribbon and

I thought about you. I want to honor you.

"My days are really hectic and when I come home I don't pay a lot of attention to you. Sometimes I scream at you for not getting good enough grades in school and for your bedroom being a mess, but somehow tonight, I just wanted to sit here and, well, just let you know that you do make a difference to me. Besides your mother, you are the most important person in my life. You're a great kid and I love you!"

The startled boy started to sob and sob, and he couldn't stop crying. His whole body shook. He looked up at his father and said through his tears, "I was planning on committing suicide tomorrow, Dad, because I didn't think you loved me. Now I don't need to."

* * *

Who around this room - or at home - needs us to validate them? We **MUST** take time to verbalize our appreciation. Just **THINKING** that we appreciate someone doesn't really count.

Another thing we **MUST** teach our children is how to tell right from wrong. Now, more than ever before, we **MUST** clearly state our own moral values and discuss them with our children. Most importantly, all of us can set an example of moral courage and integrity. We can **ALL** treat others with kindness, respect, and honesty. We set the example.

A chaplain once wrote, "A delinquent is usually nothing but a child who is trying to act like his parents." Or maybe he is acting like one of his brothers or sisters he sees here each Sabbath.

He whipped his boy for lying,
And his cheeks were flaming red,
And of course there's no denying
There was truth in what he said -
That a liar's always hated;
But the little fellow knew
That his father often stated
Many things that were untrue.

He caught the youngster cheating,
And sent him up to bed,
And it's useless now repeating
All the bitter things he said;
He talked of honor loudly,
And a lesson to the learned,
And he forgot he'd boasted proudly
Of the cunning tricks he'd turned.

He heard the youngster swearing,
And he punished him again -



He'd have no boy so daring
As to utter words profane.
Yet the youngster could have told him,
Poor misguided little elf,
That it seemed unfair to scold him
When he often cursed himself.

All in vain is splendid preaching
And the noble things we say;
All our talk is wasted teaching
If we do not lead the way.
We can never, by reviewing
All the sermons on the shelves,
Keep the younger hands from doing
What we often do ourselves.

We **MUST** develop mutual respect. How can we develop this mutual respect? We need to be polite to children. Our children and all children. We can apologize when we have made a mistake. We can insist that children treat us with the same respect **WE** give them.

As we raise our children in this "church" village, we **MUST** learn to listen. Try to understand from the child's point of view. Paraphrase what they have said and ask if that's what they mean.

Encourage independence. Children need to have some freedom in making decisions. They learn from mistakes. Think back on a time when you learned by a mistake you made. (Give a personal example here.)

Spend time together. At church fellowships, take time to get acquainted with others. Or better yet, ask a family home to your house.

Even in the family, time together is vital. Did you know that in some homes a preschooler spends more time watching TV than it takes to earn a college degree?! Yet we know from experience that given the option of watching TV or doing something together (something the **CHILD** chooses as fun), the child will choose to do something with a **REAL** person.

The principal of Avalon SDA School at Port Hardy, Canada, feels that **DOING THINGS TOGETHER** is important. He and his staff plan a time when parents, teachers, and students go on a camp-out together. They cook, play, hike, sing, and pray together. Many parents who are members of other churches, as well as non church-going people, send their children to Avalon School. These parents attend the camp-out and all are blessed. Other schools find **DOING** things with young people a real blessing as well.

Let's encourage the young people in our church family to get involved with the many outreach opportunities offered through our Christian schools. Support them not only verbally but financially as well in order to make them a reality.



All of our church schools provide outreach into the communities where children learn to help others outside our own church group. Our academies provide active Mission projects to other countries. Our young people who go, come back thrilled with having had the opportunity to serve. "It takes a whole village to raise a child." We are part of the village. We can help dreams come true and we will see young people on fire to work for Christ.

Adventist teachers are committed to Christian education. Most of them could teach in public schools with salaries starting at about double what they receive in our schools. However, they love teaching in a Christian environment where they are encouraged to transmit FAITH and VALUES in the learning process. Next to parents, teachers are contributing to this larger family unit in lasting ways.

If you are a child listening this morning, we adults want you to know we love you. We care about what is happening in your life.

If you are a parent, continue to look to Jesus as your strength and example. God is the source of all real love. He can fill you with understanding and love to share with each of your children.

Teachers, you are appreciated. You are a vital part of this scene of raising our children. Thank you for your commitment - your hours of planning for each child - your prayers.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, what an opportunity! Each one can help raise our children. Your example. Mine. We all can show we care.

While we are doing and being, remember that what we DO speaks louder than what we SAY and how we dress.

Max Lucado shares an experience in his book When God Whispers Your Name. He tells about stopping one morning for lunch at a deli. A prophet enters. He is dressed in a blue robe and carries a rake. He is extremely picky in ordering his food.

The prophet, having ordered his food, turns to Max and blesses him. Since he has a Bible in one hand and the rake in the other, Max offers to carry some of the prophet's food. He declines saying, "No. Thank you in the name of Jesus for offering to help, but I can make it." He stacks one plate on the other with the water on top and almost loses the load. Max offers help again. The man replies, "No, but in the name of Jesus I bless you for offering to help me.

He then turns to the lady serving and blesses her in the name of Jesus for her kind assistance. Catching the eye of the deli man, he blesses him in the name of Jesus as well. Having blessed all around him, he stumbles to a table.

Max wonders what the lady may be thinking at that time about the One the prophet represents. He wants to tell her that he and the prophet are on the same team (preachers), that they just have different approaches. But she has already turned to someone else.



As Max turns to leave, he meets Lawrence. Lawrence is a friend from his church. He's big - it's like bumping into a football player. Everything about him is big and everything about him is kind. Max says that a strong hug from Lawrence could last a week. And that is what he gives Max . . . a good hug and a handshake, and a genuine question about his well being. Not much, just a couple minutes of kind concern, and then he is on his way.

As Max is leaving, he is struck by the contrast of the two encounters. Both the prophet and Lawrence are followers of Christ. Both are unashamed of their faith. Both love to carry a Bible. Both like to bless people. But that is where the similarities end.

One wears sandals and a robe, and the other wears tennis shoes and jeans. One dresses like Christ and the other acts like Jesus.

One introduces himself as an ambassador of Christ, the other doesn't have to. One stirs the curiosity, but the other touches someone's heart.

Something tells me that if Jesus was here in (name of your town) and I ran into Him in a deli, I wouldn't recognize Him by His rake and His robe and a big Bible, but rather by His good heart and His kind words.

Who will the children in this "village" see as they leave today? Will they see big Bibles and fake smiles, or Lawrence - someone who has a kind, firm handshake and a warm and friendly smile like Jesus?

