



Families Reaching Families

1993 Family Ministries Planbook

Including resources for
Christian Home and Marriage Week — February 20-27, 1993
Family Togetherness Week — September 18-25, 1993

Prepared by
Karen and Ron Flowers
Directors for Family Ministries
Department of Church Ministries
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Families Reaching Families

1993 Family Ministries Planbook

Including resources for
Christian Home and Marriage Week — February 20-27, 1993
Family Togetherness Week — September 18-25, 1993

Prepared by
Karen and Ron Flowers
Directors for Family Ministries
Department of Church Ministries
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists



A Department of Church Ministries publication.

Prepared by Karen and Ron Flowers
Software formatting by Carlene Baugher

Texts credited to NKJV are from *The New King James Version*.
Copyright (c) 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

This material may be translated, printed, or photocopied by any Seventh-day Adventist entity without securing further permission. Republished documents must include the credit line: "Department of Church Ministries, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, used by permission."

© 1992
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904, USA

Contents

Preface.....	iv
<i>Let Love's Light Shine</i>	1
Sermon Resource for February 20	
<i>A Home Is for Sharing</i>	9
Sermon Resource for February 27	
<i>Mission of Fellowship</i>	15
Sermon Resource for September 18	
<i>Little Seka's Big Decision</i> Children's Story	24
<i>Parrot Preachers</i> Children's Story	25
<i>How Jeff Witnessed During the Forest Fire</i> Children's Story.....	27
<i>Time Out for Love</i> Mini-seminar, Feb. 20-27	30
<i>Evangelistic Parenting</i> Mini-seminar, Feb. 27.....	38
<i>Hearts and Homes for Him</i> Mini-seminar, Sept. 18.....	45
<i>101 Ideas for Family Evangelism</i>	57
<i>Family Evangelism Resources</i>	64
<i>Ten Ways to Witness From Your Home</i> Reprinted Article	67
<i>Hospitality Evangelism</i> Reprinted Article	69
<i>Evaluation</i>	71

Preface

The reception to the first **Family Ministries Planbook** in 1992 was overwhelming and most gratifying! This is the next edition, for use in our churches in 1993. The title ***Families Reaching Families*** speaks for itself; the material is designed to encourage families to witness to their faith in the wide of variety of ways that are open to them. There are sermon outlines, children's stories, seminar ideas, and resources for family life leaders and committees.

Important days in the 1993 calendar year are:

Christian Home and Marriage Week February 20-27

Christian Marriage Day February 20

Christian Home Day February 27

Family Togetherness Week September 18-25

Family Fellowship Day September 18

An enormous resource for evangelism surrounds each local church. That largely untapped resource is the Christian home. We were deeply stirred by an observation made by the late David Mace, pastor, counselor and co-founder with his wife Vera of the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment. We share it with you as a fitting preface for this resource:

The Christian home is, in fact, by far the most powerful evangelizing agency in the world. Its evangelism, however, is not aggressive; it is persuasive. It proclaims its message not by words, but by deeds. It does not tell others what they should be; it shows them what they could be. By their gracious influence, Christian homes win more converts than all the preachers put together. Give us enough of them, and the world would soon be a Christian world; for the world's life rises to the higher levels only as its homes do so.—David & Vera Mace, *In the Presence of God*, (The Westminster Press, 1985) p. 113.

May your ministry be blessed as you work with these materials.

Karen and Ron Flowers
Department of Church Ministries
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Sermon Resource
Christian Marriage Day
February 20, 1993

Let Love's Light Shine

Theme

Each Christian married couple is a ministering unit whose love and oneness is a powerful means of sharing the gospel and uplifting the lives of other couples and individuals.

Theme Texts

Gen. 2:24; John 13:34, 35; 17:21; Eph. 2:14

Presentation Notes

Throughout the following outline, superscripts such as ^{1, 2, 3} are used to indicate items from the section called **Sermon Illumination** on pages 4-7, which may be used for illustration. The addition of your personal illustrations will enhance the presentation.

Introduction

Is there anyone who doesn't enjoy attending a wedding? Everything about a wedding, the candles, the flowers, the music, the attire, especially the bride's gown, all are intended to make a glowing statement about marriage. Marriage is important to us. On their wedding day each couple is eager to find some way to give expression to their feelings!¹

Human marriage is important to God. God intends that each marriage will make a special statement to the world. That statement grows out of the uniqueness of marriage, its oneness.

Biblical Uniqueness of Marriage: "One Flesh"

Genesis 2:24 conveys what the Bible considers the central, unique quality of marriage—the experience of being *one-flesh*. This "one-fleshness" refers to more than just the physical union of husband and wife. The intent is that they also would be one in spirit, one in their hopes and dreams and goals.²

Male and female share a common origin. The same Creator fashioned them. The woman was fashioned from Adam's rib. She comes, therefore, from the same earth material as he (Gen. 2:7; 3:19). Neither one was superior to the other. "Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him."—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 46.

Through the narrative of Genesis 2 until this point, *adam* designates the one who awaits a companion. With her arrival, the sexual distinctiveness of the two genders of humankind becomes evident. "Man" is now called *ish* and the "woman" *ishshah* (Gen. 2:23). Originally one being, they are now two beings. They are complementary, harmonious parts of one humanity. Genesis 5:2, like Genesis 1:26, 27, indicates that this oneness was so complete "in the day when they were created" that they had one name, "Adam," given them by God. Together they were "Adam." Only after the Fall do we read of the name "Eve" being given the woman.

Barriers to Oneness

When sin altered human nature at the Fall, the husband-wife relationship was changed. The curse of sin brought a curse upon the marriage relationship (Gen. 3:16). Henceforth, where sin reigned, marriage would suffer from selfishness, the quest for personal gratification, and the tendency to exploit or dominate another. In their sinless state neither of the sexes ruled the other. But with the Fall, their masculinity and femininity were distorted and their delicate alignment in marriage was disturbed.³

Scripture points to the sinfulness of the heart as the source of difficulty in relationships between us as human beings as well as between us and God (Jer. 17:9). This heart condition often produces a sense of worthlessness, and one may consciously or unconsciously act this out by withdrawal, by hiding feelings, by a lack of communication, or by fighting, blaming, or seeking to control others. Selfishness causes normal human differences in age, race, gender, temperament, attitudes, habits and experience to be aggravated. Disagreements, anger and conflict often result. The closer together we try to bring our fallen hearts, as in marriage, the greater the potential for discord.

Culture often institutionalizes fallen models of marriage, which are then considered normative.

As both Scripture and human history bear witness, marriage has fallen far from the way of Eden. The curse has brought to marriage abuses and distortions of every kind imaginable. Culture often institutionalizes fallen models of marriage, which are then considered normative. The assault of the enemy upon marriage and its unique quality of oneness is comparable to the perversions and corruption brought upon the Sabbath truth. Many couples today long for more from marriage. In various ways they try to cope.⁴ For those who apply the gospel of God's grace to their relationship, marriage takes on the qualities our loving Creator intended.

One Again in Christ

Despite sin, God did not abandon His original plan for human beings to experience oneness in marriage. According to Genesis 2:24, the divine intention for marriage is for each couple, even after the Fall, to reenact in their relationship such oneness. Jesus reaffirmed the Edenic ideals of marriage (Matt. 19:5, 6), knowing that the gospel He brought redeemed marriage, redeemed men and women, and provided the means whereby couples could experience this sacred institution as God planned.

"Like every other one of God's good gifts entrusted to the keeping of humanity, marriage has been perverted by sin; but it is the purpose of the gospel to restore its purity and beauty."—Ellen G. White, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 64.

"Without any fuss or publicity, Jesus terminated the curse of the Fall, reinvested woman with her partially lost nobility, and reclaimed for his new kingdom community the original creation blessing of sexual equality.—John Stott, *Involvement: Social and Sexual Relationships in the Modern World*, p. 136.

Genuine Christianity abolishes all religious, cultural, social or gender barriers which separate people from each other (see Gal. 3:28). The cross of Christ is the source of reconciliation (see Eph. 2:14-18). The curse involved the wife's subjection. When the gospel concept of mutual submission (Eph. 5:21-28) is believed and practiced, it has the practical effect of neutralizing the curse and its effects by emphasizing instead the love and service of husband and wife to each other. Christ makes a difference in the marriage of Christians. A new mutuality prevails. Husbands and wives are "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:1-7).⁵

The Witness of the Oneness

Jesus was concerned for the witness of His disciples to others (John 13:35). Where better to find a love for one another that would testify to the world about Him than in Christian marriage? He longed for oneness among His followers which likewise would be a testimony for God in the world (John 17:20-23). Where better could He look for such oneness than in the hearts of couples who have found their salvation in Him and demonstrate His grace toward each other in their married life?

"Jesus once told His disciples that we are the 'light of the world,' and that we should not try to be like other people, hiding our light under convention's bushels, but rather that we should put our lamp on a stand and let it give 'light to all in the house' (Matt. 5:14-15). Could it be that that is finally the task of Christian marriage? Is it not only a lifelong vocation in which we wrestle and grow and learn and fight for our commitment to God and to each other, but is it also to be a light shining into the darkness of our society's homes? . . .

"By the way we spouses get along with each other and with our children, we tell our agonized society that there is hope of healing for its grievous wounds, or we announce that the patient has the 'sickness unto death' and that there is no possibility of recovery. By the way we conduct our marriages, we proclaim that Jesus Christ has won the victory over sin in the marital sphere too, or we confess that He is powerless to reconcile husband and wife, parents and children, old folks and youth."—Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Committed Marriage*, pp. 107, 108.

Marriage as Ministry

Setting the home atmosphere. The health of the whole family depends heavily on the health of the marriage relationship.⁶ The first setting in which marriage ministers is to those who dwell in our homes with us.

Beyond the sphere of our homes. "Our sympathies are to overflow the boundaries of self and the enclosure of family walls. There are precious opportunities for those who will make their homes a blessing to others. Social influence is a wonderful power. We can use it if we will as a means of helping those about us."—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 354.

Each Christian married couple is a ministering unit which can be highly effective in reaching out to strengthen and encourage other couples and individuals. Needs exist today for couples to minister to other couples within and outside the church. A great need is present in the lives of countless husbands and wives for guidance and encouragement in their marriages. Fewer and fewer couples have models of lasting, committed, satisfying marriages. Fewer and fewer have any genuine friends. We, as Christian couples, could be those friends.⁷

Special meetings needed for couples. Ellen White wrote of the benefits to be gained by talking out our experience, so that others may be aided in their spiritual growth.

"All have not the same experience in their religious life. But those of diverse exercises come together and with simplicity and humbleness of mind talk out their experience. All who are pursuing the onward Christian course should have, and will have, an experience that is living, that is new and interesting. A living experience is made up of daily trials, conflicts, and temptations, strong efforts and victories, and great peace and joy gained through Jesus. A simple relation of such experiences gives light, strength, and knowledge that will aid others in their advancement in the divine life."—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 579.

Just as individuals are refreshed and encouraged by meeting and sharing together, so married couples need the periodic refreshment, encouragement and renewal that comes from sharing their experiences, their thoughts and feelings with other couples. The sacred circle that gives a couple individuality and privacy should remain in place, but that circle should not become a wall which prevents fellowship and encouragement to flow into the relationship and out of it. In the presence of other caring couples, husbands and wives have seen a practical demonstration of God's love, have found reassurance for their identity, comfort in the midst of difficulty, hope to carry them forward and inspiration to work together for God.⁸

Conclusion

The nurture and outreach potential of marriage to marriage ministry is enormous. As couples realize the healing, enriching implications of Christian faith for marriage, the way will be prepared for them to reach out in dynamic relational evangelism, building bridges of friendship to non-Christian couples which will put them in touch with One who greatly cares about our marriages, who likened Himself to a bridegroom deeply in love with His bride, His Church.⁹

Sermon Illumination

1 Weddings give a glimpse of the couple's love for each other

"Recently some young friends of ours gave us the great honor of participating in their wedding ceremony. . . . It was a day for making memories. Enraptured by the setting, the music, the inspiring words of the minister, and most of all the presence of his beautiful bride, the groom excitedly replied to the question, "Will you take this woman . . . ?" with a resounding "I

sure will!" His romantic flair overcame all inhibitions when, upon their introduction as husband and wife, he boldly scooped her into his arms and strode exuberantly off the rostrum down several steep steps to the sanctuary floor."—Karen and Ron Flowers, *Love Aflame*, p. 76.

2 "One flesh"—the essence of marriage

"Scripture upholds one all-encompassing ideal as the essence of marriage—becoming 'one flesh'. This tiny phrase has tremendous implications. It speaks of physical intimacy, yet much more. Emotional and spiritual bonding, mutual giving and receiving, exclusiveness, unswerving devotion, total commitment—all find themselves encompassed in this compact blueprint for marriage. Such oneness does not call for the surrender of personhood, of one becoming lost in the shadow of the other. Rather it represents a complete unity, mutuality, and harmony between two distinct persons who maintain full personhood and full equality."—*Ibid.*, p. 98.

3 Subjection of Eve identified as a part of the curse

"When God created Eve, He designed that she should possess neither inferiority nor superiority to the man, but that in all things she should be his equal. . . . But after Eve's sin, as she was the first in the transgression, the Lord told her that Adam should rule over her. She was to be in subjection to her husband, and this was a part of the curse."—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 484.

4 Wife seeks better marriage through karate lessons

An abused wife confided in her doctor that she truly wanted to stay in the marriage, but could endure her husband's attacks no longer. Not being a Christian doctor, he told her that to survive the marriage she would need karate lessons. So for six months, unknown to her husband, she trained. At length the instructor notified her doctor, "She's prepared." "Now", said her doctor, "You know what to do." When the husband started to abuse her again, she knocked him to the floor and held him in a strong grip for more than an hour. He was surprised. He raged. He reasoned. He pled with her. Finally, he wept. He never beat her again.—Adapted from a report in the newsletter *Marriage and Divorce Today*.

5 Equality and unity between husband and wife restored

"It is because of our commitment to Christ that we are able to grant one another in marriage full equality, personhood, and freedom. It is in Christ that the brokenness of the relationship between male and female is overcome, and the possibility of joyful equality and unity between husband and wife is restored."—Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Committed Marriage*, p. 104.

6 Marriage: the home heating system

"Mutual affection between husband and wife will be to the family what the heating system is to a house. It will maintain the relationship of all family members in a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere. That does not mean, however, that the peace of the family will never be disturbed. Striving to maintain a superficial peace may actually create a less happy home than allowing hostility, when it arises, to express itself and be resolved. The point is that a family in which there is true affection can meet disturbance of this kind without suffering harm. It is not the absence of problems that marks the truly happy family, but the confident assurance that relationships in the home are so basically sound that family members can deal with any problems which may arise."—David & Vera Mace, *In the Presence of God*, p. 109.

7 Centers of contagious friendliness

"A Christian home should be, in fact, a center of contagious friendliness, with open doors toward all human need."—Ibid., p. 98.

8 Marriage enrichment program brings blessings

"It has been almost two years since we went through the Marriage Enrichment Seminar. There has been a dramatic change in our home. The hours we used to spend watching television are now spent reading and studying. The tapes on righteousness by faith that had been in the desk drawer for a year have been taken out and listened to. The Lord has led us step by step in our Christian growth. Our communication skills have improved as a result of the things we learned at Marriage Enrichment. We find it much easier to communicate our deep feelings to each other and to talk over our problems. Our relationship with our teen-agers has also improved.

"I used to worry about not being able to witness to those around me. After Marriage Enrichment that was no longer a problem. When Jesus has changed your life the way He did mine, you can't help but share it with others."—Arlene Jenkins, quoted in Roger and Peggy Dudley, *Married and Glad of It*, pp. 138, 139.

9 Persevering couple wins the couple next door

"Within hours of arriving at our new home we had to leave for camp meeting. I ran next door to meet our neighbors and to ask if they would water our house plants for the next two weeks. A lady with a gruff voice answered my knock, 'What do you want?'

'I'm Lillian, your new neighbor. We have to go away for two weeks, would you mind watering our house plants? Here's the key to our house.'

She took it without a smile or a word and closed the door.

Back home, I said to my husband, 'I don't know what to think of our neighbor. She looked angry. She just took the key and closed the door.'

Two weeks later, I greeted my neighbor with a smile and handed her a gift. 'This is for being so good to me,' I said, suggesting that she could keep the key because I had another one. With no response she closed the door.

The next day I took her a loaf of fresh homemade bread. She received it without a smile or a word. A few days later I made some cinnamon rolls, and again there was not even a smile or a 'thank you'. I tried flowers and an apple pie, but I just couldn't seem to get close to her.

One day my evangelist husband came home with a beautiful bouquet of roses given to him by one of the couples he had visited. We decided together to give them to our neighbors. With a smile I delivered them saying, 'A friend gave us some roses, and I want to share some with you.'

With a bewildered look on her face, she invited me, 'Come in.' As I entered, I saw a man lying on the couch.

'This is my husband, Jim,' the lady said.

'Hello, Jim, I'm Lillian.'

'I know your name is Lillian. I heard you introduce yourself when you brought the key. By the way, my wife's name is Lou.'

Still looking bewildered and unsmiling, Lou said, 'How is it that you trusted me with a key to your home when you didn't even know me? Why are you doing all these things for us? Nobody has ever brought us homemade bread and roses. No one ever cared like you do. Why are you doing all these things?'

Putting the flowers on the table, I put my arms around Lou and after a hug and a kiss, I said, 'It's because I love you.' Lou just kept repeating, 'I don't understand, I don't understand.'

They invited me to sit down. I learned that both Lou and Jim were in very poor health. He had heart trouble, and she had a combination of painful problems. Their only son had gone deep-sea fishing and the boat had never returned. He was presumed lost at sea. Before I left their home, they readily consented to my request to offer a short prayer.

Now that the ice was broken, I was a welcome visitor in their home. After learning about their health, I often made two extra portions when I was preparing a meal and took two trays over.

During one visit Jim and Lou told me of their spiritual situation. They had come from different religious backgrounds—one Catholic and the other Protestant. During courtship their discussions of religion had led to arguments. When Jim proposed marriage, Lou accepted on two conditions—they would never discuss religion and he would never force her go to church. They admitted that they had missed a lot by not attending church.

One day I told them about the Gift Bible Plan sponsored by our church. I showed them the Bible and the reading guides and asked if they would like to participate. They both agreed. Before that day was over, Lou brought me the study guides with all the answers neatly written. Soon they had completed the entire series and asked if we had any more courses they could do. They finished a second course, and then, because we had to be away, we suggested a correspondence course.

Lou wanted to share with her sister the things she was learning from the Bible. We were able to enroll her sister in the Gift Bible Plan also. Lou and Jim remarked that since studying these lessons they were now able to discuss the Bible without an argument.

When evangelistic meetings were held in a Seventh-day Adventist church near us, we invited Jim and Lou to attend. They went faithfully and, at the conclusion of the series, were

*"I was
so
glad I
didn't
give
up!"*

both baptized. As I observed their baptism, I thought back to those early visits and the lack of any visible response. I was so glad I didn't give up!"

Contributed by Lillian Knowles, lay evangelist and wife of former General Conference Church Ministries Director George Knowles.

References

Achtemeier, Elizabeth. *The Committed Marriage*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976.

Dudley, Roger and Peggy. *Married and Glad of It*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1980.

Flowers, Karen and Ron. *Love Aflame*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1992.

Mace, David & Vera. *In the Presence of God*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985.

Stott, John. *Involvement: Social and Sexual Relationships in the Modern World*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1984.

White, Ellen G. *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1946.

_____. *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958.

_____. *Testimonies for the Church*, vol 2. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948.

Sermon Resource
Christian Home Day
February 27, 1993

A Home Is for Sharing

Theme

The truly Christian home has a faith and experience to share which can help and bless others.

Theme Texts

Isaiah 39:4

Presentation Notes

Throughout the following outline, superscripts such as ^{1, 2, 3} are used to indicate items from the **Sermon Illumination** section on pages 12-14, which may be used for illustration. The addition of your personal illustrations will enhance the presentation.

Introduction

Isaiah 39 records a visit of emissaries from Babylon to Jerusalem. Delighted to entertain them, King Hezekiah gave a grand tour of his capital. His treasury, his depositories of gold and silver, his museums and archives where precious mementos, documents and artifacts were kept were all displayed. They saw his armory and weapons center. The record indicates that in particular he showed them those things that pertained to his rule as a monarch. No mention is made of showing the temple or explaining its services. After their departure, the prophet Isaiah came to the king with a sobering question, "What have they seen in thine house?" (Isa. 39:4).

Hezekiah did not lose the opportunity to display the trappings of his power. His visitors observed and returned home, but without discovering his spiritual treasure. The Psalmist declares that the revelation of God to mankind in His Word is more to be desired than gold (Ps. 19:10), yet Hezekiah evidently put little or no emphasis on the things which would have opened the eyes and hearts of these inquiring ambassadors to the knowledge of the true God. Isaiah refers to this more important revelation when he asks the king, "What have they seen in thine house?"

Stewards of the Lord's Home

Christians recognize that all that they have belongs to God. Over that with which He has entrusted us we are His stewards or managers. Like our time, talents, treasure and body temple, our homes belong to the Lord but are entrusted to us. We are stewards of our home which, in reality, is the Lord's home. God wants our houses and homes to be witnessing centers. We need to ask the question of ourselves today, "What have they seen in thine house?"

One renowned stewardship leader used to speak of "listening for the voice of God in our income," that is, listening for direction from God as to how we should use that which is His. In a similar manner we may lay our homes before Him, and prayerfully listen for His guidance in how all that is there, the resources of love and caring, as well as the physical accommodations, may be used in ministry for God.^{1, 2}

What Should We Be Sharing?

Before the ambassadors from Babylon came, Hezekiah had just experienced a miraculous recovery from a mortal illness. That turnaround in his health was accompanied by supernatural evidence of God's blessing in a most unusual event—the sundial moved backward 10 degrees. (See Isaiah 38:4-8.) A marvelous opportunity was thus afforded the king to share the precious truth of Jehovah with which he and his nation had been entrusted.

News about a Healer. The lesson from the life of Hezekiah is that Christians are called, not to show their material blessings of prosperity and their accomplishments, even though we may recognize these blessings to be from God. In the first instance we are to share, and allow all our interaction with others to spring from the awareness that we have needs in common with all humankind. We were sick, yes, dying. But there is One who has healed and continues to heal us. We were spiritually lost, but there is One who looked upon our condition, had compassion upon us, and saved us.

Using our homes for ministry may range from the simple offering of a drink of water to a neighbor child playing with our children, to inviting church members or visitors to a meal, to the radical hospitality of lending a room to an abuse victim or to a homeless addict while he or she is rehabilitated. It may mean conducting neighborhood Bible studies in our home, or giving time for personal counsel and prayer with someone. Happy are those who find opportunities to open the Word of God with another and share deeply of their faith. While our sharing may not always lend itself to an in-depth disclosure of our faith, the sharing of our homes must be founded upon the bedrock of biblical teaching about the gospel. While ministry may be driven by a variety of motives, ultimately the giving of the gospel alone makes service a great joy.

The gospel. The essence of what Christians have to share is the good news of the grace of God toward sinners manifested in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Apart from anything we could do, God loved us unconditionally and acted in our behalf. Christ identified Himself with us (Matt. 1:23). God looks upon the whole human race as being "in Christ," participating in His history, His life, His death and His resurrection (1 Cor. 1:30; Heb. 2:9; Rom. 5:14-19). Because of Jesus, God justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5) and does not reckon our sins

against us (2 Cor. 5:19). We were dead in our sins, but, in Him, God considers us spiritually resurrected, raised and seated in heavenly places (Eph. 2:1). The call of God is for sinners to believe in Jesus, accept His atonement for us, and to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called (Eph. 4:1), letting God work in us to will and to do His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

The fruit of the gospel. The assurance of the gospel is found in being "in Christ," a spiritual reality accomplished by God which the believer grasps by faith. Alongside this, God wants to do a work in the life of the believer which the New Testament speaks of as "Christ in you" (Col. 1:27), the indwelling of the Spirit (Rom. 8:9), or Christ dwelling in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17). The resulting lifestyle of the Christian is not the gospel per se, but the *fruit* of the gospel. The second coming of Jesus is not the gospel per se, but the *hope* of the gospel.

True Christian hospitality, the love, care and warmth displayed by a Christian home, comes from the hearts of individuals who have been touched and are being healed by the gospel. From our homes there will be the witness of a lifestyle and there may well be the sharing of many other Bible truths, all of which are important. But the distinctions must be kept clear between what truly constitutes the good news, and what is good advice or good information.

With Whom Shall We Share Our Home Resources?

The nearest mission field. "As workers for God, our work is to begin with those nearest. It is to begin in our own home. There is no more important missionary field than this."—*Child Guidance*, p. 476. "Our work for Christ is to begin with the family in the home. . . . By many this home field has been shamefully neglected, and it is time that divine resources and remedies were presented, that this state of evil may be corrected."—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, pp. 429, 430. "You may be evangelists in the home, ministers of grace to your children."—*Child Guidance*, p. 479.

The first use to which the resources of our Christian homes are to be put is for the salvation of our own families. God intended the family to be a natural setting for carrying out Jesus' directive, Go and make disciples (Matt. 28:19). In the circle of a caring family one's deep and abiding needs for belonging, for love, for intimacy and for social contact are all addressed. Since it is in the family that one first learns about relationships, the Christian family possesses a remarkable potential for teaching about loving God and relating lovingly to others (John 13:35). By God's grace the family may be a powerful agency for the discipling of its members for Christ.³ In our rush to work for others, we must not neglect members of our own homes.⁴

Reaching outside our homes. "The mission of the home extends beyond its own members. The Christian home is to be an object lesson, illustrating the excellence of the true principles of life. Such an illustration will be a power for good in the world. Far more powerful than any sermon that can be preached is the influence of a true home upon human hearts and lives."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 352.

People in homes around us need what we as Adventist Christians are privileged to have in our families. The world is starving for love. For want of models of how real love can be born in the heart and can permeate family living, homes are suffering. Some divorce, some separate, others simply hang on as best they can, often warring under their roofs with each

other or enduring pain and frustration. Those of us who are finding the way to successful Christian living at home have something to share so that others may see and know.

Vibrant witnessing centers. An important aspect of making our families missionary centers is to let others observe our relationships in marriage and family living, to participate in some way in our home experience. Many have no example of healthy family relationships to follow. They simply need to see how our homes and relationships work and how the Spirit of Jesus makes a difference.

For all, both old and young, married and unmarried, there is an abundance of human need in our neighborhoods that can benefit from the love which Christ brings to our homes and the special message He has entrusted us to share. Mission must become a way of life for us. We must find ways to build bridges of relationships to others.⁵

"Go to your neighbors one by one, and come close to them till their hearts are warmed by your unselfish interest and love. Sympathize with them, pray with them, watch for opportunities to do them good, and as you can, gather a few together and open the Word of God to their darkened minds."—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 64.

Bonds of friendship develop from acts of kindness and thoughtfulness that we show, from gifts we give, meals we share, time we spend with others in conversation on a level that deals with our and their inner feelings. Our homes provide us with countless opportunities for forming such friendships and sharing our Adventist Christianity with others. We must hurdle the barriers that often separate us from the families around us.⁶

Conclusion

"Our sphere of influence may seem narrow, our ability small, our opportunities few, our acquirements limited; yet wonderful possibilities are ours through a faithful use of the opportunities of our own homes. If we will open our hearts and homes to the divine principles of life we shall become channels for currents of life-giving power. From our homes will flow streams of healing, bringing life and beauty and fruitfulness where now are barrenness and dearth."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 355.

Sermon Illumination

1 The difference between entertaining and hospitality

"Entertaining says, 'I want to impress you with my beautiful home, my clever decorating, my gourmet cooking.' Hospitality, however, seeks to minister. It says, 'This home is not mine. It is truly a gift from my Master, I am His servant and I use it as He desires.' Hospitality does not try to impress, but to serve."—Karen Burton Mains, *Open Heart, Open Home*, p. 25.

2 Home: a tool for ministry

Each of us can participate in some way in evangelism through hospitality—the use of the home as a tool of ministry. The genius of the home is that it is universal to each Christian. We all abide somewhere—in a room or a dormitory or an apartment or a bungalow. In this inhospitable world a Christian home is a miracle to be shared.—*Ibid.*, p. 137.

3 The nearest mission field

A recent study by Dr. Janet Kangas of more than 1500 Seventh-day Adventist youth in North America indicates that "the home is the most important religious influence."—Janet Leigh Kangas, *A Study of the Religious Attitudes and Behaviors of Seventh-day Adventist Adolescents in North America Related to Their Family, Educational, and Church Backgrounds*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Andrews University, 1988, Introductory abstract.

"Among the influences studied that could be isolated to the home, the church membership of both parents (as opposed to one or neither), the teenagers' perceived spiritual commitment of the parents, whether both biological parents were present in the home, and the frequency of family worship correlated significantly with teenagers' intentions to remain Adventists."—*Ibid.*, p. 163.

4 Mommy, why aren't you this nice to us?

"Hospitality, like charity, in order to be true, has to begin at home."—Mains, p. 77.

"Husbands, housemates, children, or strangely enough, their friends, often receive short shrift of our kindly attention. This point was brought forcibly home to me by my daughter, who cleverly exclaimed before a roomful of guests, 'Mommy, why aren't you this nice to us when people aren't here?' "—*Ibid.*

5 We must become involved in other people's lives

"I believe that the church, when functioning properly, can provide healing for those who come. Within the church exists the necessary structure, the philosophical framework, and the power to deal with people and their problems. The power exists in the person of the Holy Spirit. But the church members must be willing to give up their isolation and total pursuit of material comfort in order to become involved in other people's lives. This is the only way out of loneliness and into community."—Brenda Hunter, *Beyond Divorce*, p. 56.

6 Witnessing through hospitality

Pastor Samuel Monnier, retired General Conference Lay Activities leader known for his Maranatha and Lay Evangelists Training Seminars, relates the following experience of family life and hospitality:

"In our home after family worship on Sunday mornings we would have a family council and at that time would often select someone to invite to our home for a meal. My wife Yvonne and I would cast our votes for the children's choice. Then we would pray that the chosen individuals would accept our invitation. When they did, we would pray daily that each one of our family might have a positive attitude and that our visitors would be touched by the Holy Spirit. Just before their arrival we would pray again for them.

Around our table I announced that we were Christians and enjoyed asking for God's blessing. Yvonne then designated one of our children to pray. Such prayers by our children always impressed the hearts of visitors. We deliberately did not speak about God, church or religion in our table conversation, though I would explain that we had made some personal decisions not to use alcohol or meat. Before our guests left our home I usually shared my testimony in about two minutes—how I became a Christian and the meaning of faith in my life. I

would share a Bible promise and offer a prayer. In that prayer I recalled aspects of our conversation, expressing to our heavenly Father our care and concern for the various things that had been mentioned by ourselves and our guests.

Often our guests reciprocated by inviting us to their homes. We would respond and do our best to build the relationship, staying clear of topics related to church or God. I would have a small Bible with me and, before leaving their home, I would ask, "May I read a Bible promise; may I pray?" In this simple, practical way our family witnessed. When individuals were ready for more, we found ways of involving them in events at church, a concert, a film, later an evangelistic series. In all these events we would be with them. In this way we made many friends and saw many begin on the road to church membership."

References

Hunter, Brenda. *Beyond Divorce*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1978.

Kangas, Janet Leigh. *A Study of the Religious Attitudes and Behaviors of Seventh-day Adventist Adolescents in North America Related to Their Family, Educational, and Church Backgrounds*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Andrews University, 1988.

Mains, Karen Burton. *Open Heart, Open Home*. Elgin, IL: David C. Cook, 1976.

White, Ellen G. *Child Guidance*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954.

_____. *Ministry of Healing, The*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942.

_____. *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6. Nampa, Id: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948.

Sermon Resource
Family Fellowship Day
September 18, 1993

Mission of Fellowship *

Theme

Our families and our churches as families, when we allow God's Spirit to minister through us, have the opportunity and privilege of carrying out the fellowship aspect of mission.

Theme Texts

Phil. 1:5
1 John 1:7

Presentation Notes

Throughout the following outline, superscripts such as ^{1, 2, 3} are used to indicate items from the section called **Sermon Illumination** on pages 18-22, which may be used for illustration. The addition of your personal illustrations will enhance the presentation.

Introduction

Recent research on church growth has shown that a church's understanding of itself and its role in mission critically affects its growth and advance. Right concepts of ourselves as God's people and of His commission lead to growth. False concepts of purpose and mission or narrow views of the biblical concept of mission impede progress. Examples from historical Adventism illustrate this.

"Shut door" to "open door." At the beginning, Adventist believers thought of themselves as an "ark with a shut door." Their mission was simply to encourage each other. Later, the Adventist Church came to see itself as "an open door to the world." Missionary endeavor developed accordingly.¹

Doubts, debates and the challenge confronting Daniels. In the 1920's, when difficulties, doubts, debates, and questions about revelation and inspiration bred a decline in church growth, A. G. Daniels was asked by the General Conference to hold meetings and stimulate a new self-understanding. He reported that the prevailing idea of the church as a "little flock" presented considerable resistance to efforts to move the membership into missionary action.² This view, despite being based on a biblical metaphor, had resulted in a lopsided, limited perspective.

* Adapted with permission from a message by Gottfried Oosterwal delivered at Pioneer Memorial Church on the campus of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, July 18, 1992

Similar challenges today. Today, despite considerable growth in our self-understanding and our mission, some three billion people have never even heard the name of Christ. Though more is involved in accomplishing mission than a proper self-understanding as a church, many are convinced we need to grow in this area of self-understanding so that the mission may advance. How shall we grow?

Our Image of the Church Shapes Our Mission

The New Testament uses many word images to describe the church, such as *truth*, *remnant*, *mountain*, *Zion*, *ship*, *sheep*, *body*, *people of God*. No one word can fully define the many aspects of what it means to be the church of God. Each image stands in need of being complemented and corrected by the others. Further, the church as *truth*, *remnant*, or as *little flock* needs to adapt and change when new circumstances arise in the world, so that it may be *present truth*, and respond to new challenges.

Our church, which once identified itself as the "warning message," is now coming to understand itself as a "caring church." It is not a matter of choosing between one image or another. Each image needs the other. One supports the other, compliments the other, corrects the other.

Proclamation of truth. Until now our Adventist Church has been guided by two or three typical, biblical images of the church. We have identified ourselves with the "truth" and see our mission as *proclamation of the truth*. While nothing should detract from this very biblical self-understanding of the church and its mission, which has had such an impact upon the world, there is more to mission than proclamation.

Service. We've also seen our mission as *service*; we've established many hospitals and clinics and schools and are increasingly engaged in technical development. We thank God for the progress, yet there is something very basic missing in our self-understanding as a church.

Fellowship. Mission is not only proclamation, be it in word, in publications, through the media. Nor is it only proclamation and service. A third characteristic is the hallmark of mission, the notion of *fellowship*.^{3,4}

Fellowship: Core of the Biblical Images of Church

Importance of fellowship shown by sociology. Sociologists tell us the greatest disease of modern humanity is alienation and utter loneliness. Families are breaking down; primary groups are breaking down; urbanization makes us just lonely individuals. The greatest need of humanity today is a new sense of belonging, a new sense of fellowship.

Biblical teaching about fellowship. Paul speaks of the church as a "fellowship in the gospel" (Phil. 1:5). The apostle John writes, "If we walk in the light as He is the light, we have fellowship with one another" (1 John 1:7, NKJV). Other images may not use the word, but emphasize the same thing. The church is compared to a human body (1 Cor. 12), with every member needing every other and linked to every other. When one receives honor all receive honor; when one of the members is hurting we are all hurting. That's the core of the fellowship.

This fellowship is the reflection of the relationship between the Father and the Son. The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' doctrine and to fellowship, says Acts 2:42. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. We don't read here of mighty evangelistic campaigns, as powerful as they are. We don't read here of establishing schools and hospitals, as important as they are. The reason for the growth of the early church was the fellowship of the believers.

When fellowship is missing. Often the church can be a place of insensitivity and great hurt rather than a place of fellowship. The presence or absence of fellowship is conveyed by our attitude and our behavior, in the way we greet one another, in our conversations with one another. How do we treat strangers among us? Do we take pains to create a feeling of fellowship?^{5,6}

Barriers to Fellowship

Why is it so difficult for many of us to accept this concept of the church as fellowship? Ellen White tells us that, because of the conditions of the people, God is holding His hand over the church so that not many people are joining (see 6T 371 and 9T 189). Among those conditions she describes, are lack of love and lack of fellowship. She indicates that many more people could have been baptized. That means that instead of the seven million membership we have now there could have been many millions.

Theological barriers. Our mission to proclaim truth has become almost sacred to us. It is a core pillar of the Adventist mission, and I pray to God that it ever will remain so, but it is only one aspect of what it means to be the church in mission. The text (Acts 2:42) says, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship . . ." They devoted themselves to Bible study, to the truth, *and* to fellowship. We need to see ourselves, not just as proclaimers, messengers of the truth (which we are) but also as people who are fellowshiping with their own kind, with their neighbors and even with their enemies.⁷

Cultural barriers. Often when we speak about fellowship we think of fun, having a good time, eating, laughing, but not doing things that pertain to God and the church. We have relegated the concept of fellowship to the social, that is, the secular realm of life, which is of a much lower nature than the spiritual. Again, this is an unbiblical division and the sooner we get rid of it the better. We must recognize that to be in fellowship with each other is a spiritual experience of great magnitude. The Psalmist constantly speaks about the joy of fellowshiping with the believers in the temple of God. The New Testament is full of this notion of fellowship as wholistic. Fellowship is at the very core of being a Christian.

To the extent that culture focuses on the individual; the fellowship of the group tends to become only an appendix. Cultural individualism tends to shape our Adventist theology, our church services, as well as our church buildings. When we enter the church we look only at each other's neck, when we look at each other we see only each other's neck, and when we leave the church we look at each other's neck again. Instead we should be looking each other in the eye and saying, "Brother how are you, sister how are you?" Our theology defines the church as a group of individuals meeting with God, instead of a communal feast, the celebration of the fellowship of the believers on the very day of fellowship.

Visiting: Making Fellowship a Reality

Let's start to overcome obstacles to fellowship by visiting each other. Let's speak to each other instead of speaking *about* each other. Let's eat and drink together. The greatest criticism of Jesus was that He ate and drank with sinners. But that was the very core of fellowshiping with people whom He loved.

Let's feast together, let's do things together. Ellen White describes the annual feasts among ancient Israel and indicates that it would be a good thing for us as a church to have such a celebration (see PP 540, 541). God knew what was good for the believers then, divided and separated into tribes as they were. All met together and slept together in little huts. Can you image what kind of forced fellowship it was? But it worked.⁸

Let us visit each other, let us speak with each other, let us eat together, let's do things together, let's feast together, let's meet in small groups for prayer and Bible study to see how we can advance the work. But above all, let our whole life be one fellowship with each other. It is as Scripture says, "If we walk in the Light, and He is the Light we have fellowship with each other" (1 John 1:7, NKJV). God bless you.

Sermon Illumination

1 Missions advance begins following the "open door"

After the Great Disappointment of 1844, Adventists struggled with the questions, What are we here for now? What is our mission? At first they used the image of Noah's ark to define themselves and their purpose. The faithful few were safely hidden in the "ark." The Lord Himself had shut the door and now they were anxiously awaiting His return. James White defined their mission as "to encourage the brethren of Laodicea." Thus they spoke only to themselves. There was no growth. No advance. Their framework for understanding seemed biblical, yet they were all too limited in their self-understanding. For them the door of salvation was shut, and nobody could be added. After a decade or so, following the guidance given by God to our church, we suddenly changed and grew in our self-understanding as a church and mission. In the 1850's James White defined the church as "an open door to the world." The church began to grow and its mission began to advance.

2 "Little flock" notion stifles growth

At the first meeting Brother Daniels held, he said in effect, "If we had the right understanding of ourselves as a people and would act accordingly, millions would join this church and make preparations for the coming of Christ." Immediately after the meeting the brethren took him aside and rebuked him for what he had said, admonishing him, "Don't teach that heresy again." "What heresy?" he asked. "*Millions* of people would join," they said, "that is a wrong understanding; we are God's remnant; we are a little flock. `Millions' is a characteristic of Babylon. We, however, are only a small little flock who have chosen to go the narrow path, to go through the narrow gate."

3, 4 Fellowship important to persons joining church

A study by the Southern Baptist Convention asked their new members from the last five years why they had joined. The leading reason: "We joined because we loved the fellowship in

the Baptist churches." When that study was mentioned at a meeting of the administrative committee responsible for the growth of the Adventist church, the chairman commented, "Brethren, I'm so glad that this is not the case with the Seventh-day Adventist Church." He believed that people join the church because they love and hear the truth and that church mission is a matter of proclaiming the truth with clarity. The fact is that today people love this church not in the first place because of the truth, even though it is an essential pillar, but because of the fellowship.

Recently the Southeastern California Conference asked new members of the last five years about their reasons for joining the Adventist church. The conference secretary reported, "Most of the people said, 'We were loved into the truth.'"

5 Lack of fellowship contributes to apostasy

For every 100 members we bring into the Adventist church 40 leave and most of these do so within the first two years after their baptism. The Institute of World Mission conducted a study on why this is so. More than 2,000 former Adventists in North America and Europe were interviewed. Of those interviewed 70% reported, "We would have stayed in the church if there would have been a genuine fellowship among the believers."

6 When fellowship is missing

Oosterwal: Not long ago my family and I went to a church where we were not known. We arrived early and sat down. When the service was about to begin a sister suddenly appeared in front of us and said, "That's my seat." If I hadn't been a long standing member of the Adventist church I would have left, never to come back.

Recently a sister in one of our Adventist centers took her own life, leaving behind a note which began, "I have nobody . . ." How is it possible to be a member of an Adventist church for 22 years and end your life with the words, "I have nobody." How is it possible to be a member of a choir for 12 years and end your life with the words, "I have nobody."

7 Oosterwal's own story of the crucial importance of church fellowship

My mother was an Adventist and my father often went along, but I hated to go to church as a boy, for a number of reasons. In the first place I couldn't play soccer, and all Dutch boys grow up playing soccer. I never could join the junior league and of course all my friends said, "Hey, Bobby (that was my name when I was young) when are you going to join the rest of us playing soccer?" The second reason was that we didn't have a church. We had no building, no tower, no organ, no choir, no minister with a beautiful robe. The little handful of church members in Rotterdam were meeting in the greasy basement of a bicycle repair shop. There was never a moment of quiet, all the time you heard the metal hitting metal. I hated to go there. On top of that, the building we used was located in the most run down part of that large port city. You can't imagine how that section of the city looked and smelled. And coming from a better part of town, I hated it.

At times I attended the Dutch Reformed churches of my friends. They were huge—with towers and organs, choirs, and reverent ministers with long robes. I sat in them with awe. And my friends would say, "Hey, Bobby, where do you go to church?"

I replied, "Don't worry, don't worry." I was so ashamed; I was angry.

One Saturday as we set off for church I spied some of my friends waiting for me behind the corner. School was closed that particular day and they wanted to follow me and see my church. Noticing them and guessing what they intended, I excused myself, "Momma, I better run on ahead." I started running as fast as I could. I could run very fast in those days, so I lost my friends across the railroad tracks. Every Sabbath after that I would watch to make sure my friends weren't watching. If they were, I'd say, "Bye bye, Momma," and I'd run to church. One Sabbath I overheard my mother say to a church sister, "Our Bobby loves to go to church. He can't wait for us, he's always running!"

But all that changed. The church became the center of my life. I found meaning here and the deepest fellowship that ever can be experienced by a human being. I know the day and I know the hour. The date was May 10, 1940, a Friday, when troops from Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands. The Germans had used their crack paratroopers for the first time in the war, landing them in the southern part of Rotterdam where I lived, while the Dutch Marines were defending the bridges in the northern part of the city.

The battle raged from house to house—shooting, bombing. The next day was the Sabbath and as our family huddled in our basement, afraid of the bombs, mother began dressing my brother and my sister.

"What are you doing?" father asked.

"I'm dressing the children."

"I see that, but what for?"

Answered mother, "We are going to church."

My startled father stated, "Today? There's a war going on!" The paratroopers were firing a machine gun right in front of our house. Father sought to reason with her, "Not even a dog is outside. How can we go on the streets?"

My mother simply responded, "Today is the day of fellowship."

When she said "day of fellowship," something hit me right there and then as a young teenager. You see the Sabbath is not only a great memorial to God's creative activity as in Exodus 20, but Deuteronomy 5 indicates that the Sabbath was given as a memorial of redemption, a memorial to the time when one nation was molded together. Once we were slaves, with divisions among us as human beings, divisions between slaves and masters, between tribes, between people of different races and ethnic groups. But the Lord has given us the Sabbath, so that we can celebrate the fellowship of the believers.

As we entered the street, a soldier, with hand grenades in his belt and a machine gun under his arm, confronted us.

"Halt, where are you going?"

"We're going to church."

He said, "Go back, go back, there's a war going on, there is shooting all the time."

My mother said, "No, we want to go to church."

Then he suddenly thought of something and said, "No, no, no, not today, tomorrow. Everybody is confused in the war."

"No, no," my mother said opening her Bible to Exodus 20. At that point he called in his sergeant.

The sergeant said, "You better go home."

"Oh, no, we go to church today."

And he thought for a moment and said, "Jewish people."

"No, no," my mother said, knowing the love the Nazis had for the Jewish people, "we are Seventh-day Adventists. Look the Bible says" But that was too powerful for the sergeant, and so he called the lieutenant.

The lieutenant listened for awhile and, realizing what was in the minds of my parents, said, "Go, and may God be with you."

I'll not give here the details of how we crossed the front line between the Dutch Marines and the German Paratroopers. Some of us in the family are still bearing the scars. When we got to the greasy basement of the bicycle repair shop, without an organ, without a tower, the whole congregation was there. The bombs were falling and the grenades exploding, but the church was there. It was there because the very hallmark of the church is not the building, not the tower, but the fellowship of the believers. There was hugging and kissing. They did what the Bible says to do when you get together. Greet each other warmly. Hug, give each other a kiss, a kiss of love, or a holy kiss. I still see before me the hugging and the kissing and suddenly I felt so proud to be a Seventh-day Adventist.

We didn't have an organ or a tower, or a big building, only a greasy basement in a bicycle repair shop, but we were celebrating the very essence of what it means to be the church, we were a fellowship of believers. It was that fellowship that saw us through those five terrible years of the war when there was hunger and when people were taken captive and put into concentration camps. Some children lost their fathers but they had many other fathers because of the church. Some people lost mothers, but we had many mothers as long as we had sisters in the church. That's the core of being the church. As long as one member had some soap (and my mother had hoarded a lot of soap), then the whole church had soap. And as long as some people had bread or flour or sugar or salt, the whole church had bread and flour and sugar and salt. That is what saw us through.

Some who were teenagers then owe their lives to the fellowship of believers. When all the food was rationed to one quarter loaf of bread per family, some older Adventists came to our home and gave us their bread. Before the war was over these very people had collapsed in the street. Some of us can tell the story because we are alive and well because of their sacrifice.

The next week, so proud was I of this people that I made my stand to be joined to this people of God. But all the churches were closed because the Germans forbade any meeting of more than two people. However, the following week, May 25, the churches were open again. We met, even though our city had been bombed to pieces, the second city in the Second World War after Warsaw. Many of us had lost everything we had. Some had lost their lives. And here the church was together again in sadness, thanking God for our lives but being so sad about the lives of the brothers and sisters, for when one is hurting the whole church is hurting.

We had barely sat down and our organ, the little harmonium, had begun to play when suddenly we heard a sound in the stairway to the basement of the repair shop. It was the sound of boots. The door opened and there stood a German soldier. A hush fell over us all. Forgive us, but when you lose everything through bombing, when everything is being taken away, when your country's being occupied by an enemy, you hate that enemy and we did, we did. There was hatred in our hearts and in our minds.

The first deacon went up to him and said, "Get out, leave us alone! Isn't it enough that you bomb our city and destroy our lives? Isn't it enough that you rob us of everything? This is a little church! Get away, get out, leave us alone!"

The German soldier just stood there and said, "But, I've come here to worship. I'm a brother."

I saw the first deacon swallow very hard. Just a few days before, his home and everything he owned had been destroyed. From a wealthy businessman he had been turned into a pauper because of the bombings by the Nazis. Then, suddenly, he throws his arm around the young soldier and says to him, "If you have come here to worship God, you are my brother." And he took him to the front seat of the church and held his hand through the whole service.

Fellowship isn't just for people like ourselves, fellowship extends to the foreigner and the stranger, fellowship extends to the enemy surrounding us. That's the core of the church in mission.

8 Visitation encourages fellowship

Oosterwal: As a boy I was always afraid that my friends wouldn't accept me. But they did, and one reason was that I had so many people I knew in Rotterdam. As we boys roamed throughout that big city, we would need a drink or to use the toilet. My friends would say, "Hey, Bobby, don't you have an uncle or an aunt around here somewhere?" So I would walk to a door, ring the bell, and inevitably a man or woman would open the door and say, "Aye, Bobby, I'm so glad you are here, come up." Whatever we needed the people behind these doors would provide. It didn't matter that sometimes there were 12 or 15 of us. "That's alright, your friends are my friends."

Who were these people? Not blood relatives, for my mother came from far away Lithuania and my father from the most northern part of Holland. I grew up without uncles and aunts. Who then were these "aunts" and "uncles" all over the city? They were members of the church, that little group of people that met in the bicycle repair shop. And how did I know where they lived? Because my father and mother, like all the members of our church, were visiting others.

It is not easy to be a genuine Adventist in life in general; you need the comfort and the strength of each other. When my father was in an accident our family experienced great poverty. Yet almost every day there was a brother or sister of the church who visited us and each time they left a dollar, a gilder, in the hands of my mother. And we didn't have to be afraid of having nothing to eat. We were a fellowship of believers, the very core of what it means to be the church.

References

White, Ellen G. *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958.

_____. *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948.

_____. *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948.

Children's Story

Little Seka's Big Decision

Seka lives in Ivory Coast, West Africa. From the time he was born, his parents, who were Seventh-day Adventists, had family worship every day. His father and mother told him the stories of the Bible. Every Sabbath, Seka and his family went to Sabbath School. At Sabbath School he learned to sing the songs that give praise to the Lord. He heard wonderful mission stories of faraway lands and he heard more Bible stories. Seka had learned from the Bible that the Sabbath is a very special day and that on that day God wants to have special fellowship with the people He has created. So Sabbath after Sabbath Seka looked forward to this special time with his family and with God.

When Seka was six years old, his parents sent him to the community school. How they wished that they had a Seventh-day Adventist school where Seka could go, but alas, there was none. Like most schools in West Africa, Seka's school had classes on Sabbath. Seka was expected to be there every Sabbath. But Seka knew that it would be wrong to go to school on Sabbath. God Himself had set that day aside for a very special relationship with His people.

Each Sabbath, instead of going to school, Seka went with his parents to Sabbath School and church. After several weeks, the teacher called Seka to his desk after school. "Why have you been absent each Saturday?" he asked. Seka stood tall and

*"Why have you
been absent each
Saturday?"*

answered, "I am a Seventh-day Adventist Christian and I don't work on Sabbath. I go to Sabbath School and church instead." The teacher was so impressed by this sincere response (Seka was only six years old, remember), that he decided not to say anything about Seka's absences on Sabbath.

Seka had witnessed for Jesus. His parents were so proud of him! They knew that God had given him courage to stand firm for what he knew was true.

Contributed by Priscille Metonou, Africa-Indian Ocean Division

Children's Story

Parrot Preachers

Grandma Maria was the first member of the Colon family to become a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. She loved Jesus very much and it didn't take long for people in her neighborhood to realize that fact.

Grandma lived in a big house in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. The house was always a bustle of activity. In the basement, Grandpa operated a furniture factory. Every day you could hear the sounds of saws, hammers, machines, spray painting guns, and workmen shouting above the noise as they made all the beds, dressers, cabinets, tables, and chairs. The smell of wood shavings and spray lacquer blended together with the heat and humidity of the tropics.

Upstairs, life was very busy too. Several of Grandma's children were now grownups and lived in the house. They had their children, which of course were Grandma's grandchildren. And then there were all the neighborhood kids who would come and visit. The delicious smells from the kitchen were always an attraction for those who passed by the big house, and Grandma was always there to invite them in for a glass of water or a meal. Grandpa would often be seen loading the factory

truck with furniture to be delivered to the various stores in town.

Grandma was the only Adventist Christian in the family. That was not easy. When family worship time came, she always invited the members of the household to join her for singing, Bible reading, and prayer. Sometimes there were those who would join her, but most of the time Grandma found herself alone on the back porch with God and her two parrots. Their names were Pepe and Suzie. How she enjoyed having family worship! She would sing songs and read the Bible aloud, and sometimes would even preach to her parrots when there was no one else around for her to talk with.

Soon Pepe and Suzie began to learn to sing some of Grandma's favorite hymns. Her favorite hymn was *Santo, Santo, Santo . . . (Holy, Holy, Holy . . .)*. Every time Grandma would start to sing that hymn, Pepe and Suzie would begin to sway back and forth with their necks stretched out, singing the song with all their might. Grandma also repeated certain words and phrases from sermons she had heard. Her parrots learned those, too. It wasn't long before one or the other of the parrots would shout, "Preparate pecador, que Cristo viene!" ("Prepare sinner, the Lord is coming!").

Pepe and Suzie were kept in a cage at the top of the steps that came up from the basement to Grandma's back porch. In Grandpa's basement furniture factory there was one worker, named Carlos, who was very lazy. Carlos would saw a board and then he would take out a cigarette to smoke while he rested for a while. Every time Carlos' corner of the factory got quiet, Pepe and Suzie would call out his name, "Carlos!" Then they would add, "Get to work!" ("Travaja!") in a scolding voice. This would make Carlos very angry. He got so angry that one evening, as he climbed the stairs from the factory, he opened the latch of the parrot cage and left it open.

Early the next morning while it was still dark, one of Grandma's neighbors woke up to the sound of voices just outside her window. "Santo, Santo, Santo . . ." ("Holy, holy, holy . . .") Prepare sinner, the Lord is coming!" The neighbor lady ran to her window and peered out into the darkness. Again came the song and the warning cry, "Prepare sinner, the Lord is coming!" With that she hurried out to the street only to find

others who were asking each other, "Did you hear what I heard?"

Grandma heard the commotion and joined the group. She happily announced that her parrots must be up in those trees. Soon Pepe and Suzie were back in their cage, leaving Grandma to explain to her neighbors how it happened that her parrots learned to sing and preach! Some of Grandma's neighbors said they wished they knew more about the Bible, so Grandma offered to give them Bible studies. Several of them gave their hearts to Jesus and were baptized.

We all know that Pepe and Suzie were just repeating words and sounds they had heard Grandma say in family worship. They didn't really understand what it all meant. But we know about the love of Jesus from the Bible. Jesus is our friend, and we can tell others of His love. If Pepe and Suzie could witness for Jesus by just repeating sounds, how much more we could do by intelligently sharing our love for Jesus with others!

Contributed by Gaspar & Mary-Ellen Colón, Family Ministries Directors, Africa-Indian Ocean Division

Children's Story

How Jeff Witnessed During the Forest Fire

Jeff Crandall leaned on his hoe. Another row and a half of string beans, and he would have the garden weeded for a couple of weeks at least. He heard the roar of a plane overhead. He looked at the billowing cloud of smoke rising, hot and glowing. It was behind Rattlesnake Ridge only three miles away.

The wind puffed up, blowing dust across the dry garden. Jeff knew such breezes fanned the fire and blew it across roads and rivers that should have stopped it. Twenty-four thousand acres of pear and apple orchards had already been burned.

The sun beat down on Jeff's bare back. He wiped the back of his hand across his forehead and finished up the last few feet of the row. Then he dragged out the hose and gave the struggling plants a drink of cool water.

Well, that's that, Jeff thought to himself. He went into the house for supper. He washed his hands at the kitchen sink. Then, leaning over the faucet, he splashed water on his face and neck.

The fire was on everyone's mind at the dinner table. Jeff's little brother, Eric, looked at Dad with wide, frightened eyes and asked if it was getting any closer.

"Hard to tell, son," Dad answered. "But if it does, someone will warn us before it gets too dangerous." He ruffled Eric's brown

hair. "Don't worry, Son. God will take care of us."

"Well, we may be able to get away from the fire," Jeff said, "but if it comes up our hill, there won't be much we can do to stop it from burning the house down."

"That's true, Jeff, but there's no use worrying about it. Remember, 'All things work together for good to them that love God.'"

At worship that evening, just before they went to bed, the Crandall family prayed that God would protect them from the fire. Jeff lay awake in bed for longer than usual, thinking about the flames raging through the brittle undergrowth only three miles away.

It seemed to him that he had just floated off to sleep when Dad was shaking his shoulder. "The fire's getting too close," he said. "We have to leave."

Jeff scrambled out of bed and slipped a pair of jeans over his pajamas. He grabbed his jacket and followed Dad down the hall to the living room, where Mother was helping Eric button his sweater. Dad opened the front door. The sleepy family went out to the car. Farther up the hill Jeff could see the first line of the fire beginning to burn bushes, little more than two city blocks away.

"Is it going to burn the house down, Dad?" he asked as his father got in beside him.

"We've cleared away most of the weeds around the place," Dad said, "but if the big oak tree next to the house catches fire, we may be in trouble."

Dad started up the motor and drove down the hill toward town. "Where will we go?" Eric asked.

"The Red Cross has arranged for people to stay in the high-school gym," Dad said. "We'll have to stay there the rest of the night at least."

When they arrived at the school, other families were filing into the gym. A woman stood at the door, writing names on a clipboard. Inside, cots stood in neat rows, and at the far end of the gym, volunteers served fruit juice and doughnuts.

The Crandall's found four empty cots and got ready to spend the rest of the night. "Dad," Jeff asked, "God *will* take care of the house, won't He?"

"He will if it's for the best, Jeff."

"Well, how could it ever be for the best to lose your home and everything in it?"

Dad smiled. "It isn't always easy for us to understand, son, but we have to remember that God can make good things come out of bad."

"Why don't we pray that God will watch over our house tonight," Mother suggested. So the Crandall family bowed their heads together right there in the high-school gym, and each took a turn talking to God.

When Dad finished the last prayer, Jeff slipped under the blanket of his cot. Just then, he noticed another boy about his

own age lying wide awake only three cots away. The boy looked frightened. He was watching Jeff as if he wanted to ask him a question but was afraid to.

Jeff threw his blanket back, got up and went over to the boy's cot. "Hi," he said. "I'm Jeff. What's your name?"

"Kevin," the boy mumbled. "I didn't mean to stare. What were you and your family doing just now?"

"Oh, do you mean when we were praying? We were asking God to watch over our house tonight and to keep it safe from the fire."

"Do you really think praying does any good?"

"Sure," Jeff said.

"Well, would you pray to God for me and ask Him to protect my house too?"

"Sure, but there's no trick to it. You can do it yourself, you know."

"I'd rather have you do it."

The two boys bowed their heads together, and Jeff prayed for the protection of Kevin's home.

When the prayer was over, Jeff's new friend smiled shyly. "Thanks," he said. "I've never really prayed before."

"Well, listen," Jeff said. "Would you like to go to church with me sometime? I think you'd like it."

"I'll have to ask Dad," Kevin said, pointing to his father sleeping on the next cot. "But I don't think he'd mind."

Finally both boys lay back down on their cots. The clock on the gym wall showed 3:00 a.m. Jeff's eyes got very heavy, and he was soon asleep.

When Jeff awoke in the morning, Kevin was already up and was folding his blanket. Seeing Jeff awake, he came over and said, "Dad says it's OK for me to go to church with you sometime."

"Great," Jeff grinned. They gave each other their phone numbers. Just then Jeff's dad called for them to leave.

As they were walking out to the car, Jeff was thinking about Kevin. "You know, Dad," he said, "I think I understand now what the Bible means when it says, 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' I was worried about our house burning down, but if it hadn't been for the fire, I'd have never met Kevin. I made a new friend and had a chance to tell him about Jesus."

"Well," Dad said, "we've been doubly blessed, then. The police officer who came to tell us we could go home said the fire missed our house."

Adapted from Gary B. Swanson, "Forest Fire!" *Primary Treasure*, September 7, 1991. Used by permission.

Marriage Enrichment Mini-Seminar
Christian Home and Marriage Week
February 20-27, 1993

Time Out for Love

Theme

The marriage bond is strengthened as couples recognize their personal worth and endeavor to build the worth of each other.

Objective

To provide a period of marriage enrichment during which each participant learns about the importance of a healthy self-concept and discovers ways of encouraging his or her spouse.

How to Use This Resource

The ideas which follow may be used to create a marriage enrichment event of approximately two hours in length. Concepts offered here are suitable for presentation to non-Adventist couples or spouses.

Program Ideas

Couples arrive before the session in time to care for last-minute registration items and pick up or make name tags (if desired).

Warm, sociable surroundings are important in the meeting room. Comfortable chairs arranged in a circular format, flowers, candles and other suitable decorations will contribute to a friendly, inviting setting. Soft music, played as couples are gathering, is relaxing and helps set the tone for the program.

The leaders welcome the couples and introduce them or in some way facilitate their meeting one another.

Welcome, Introduction, and Prayer

An introduction to the weekend event should be given, sharing with the couples the goals for the *Time Out for Love* program. The leader couple can simply share with the group that growth as a couple takes time. Often we are so busy we have little opportunity to simply focus on our love together. This evening (or afternoon) will be an opportunity to learn about an important aspect of marriage—the need each spouse has for affirmation. A lengthy

presentation is not necessary, but a few well-chosen comments which communicate a joyful anticipation of time spent together in the presence of other caring couples are appropriate. After these comments, you may wish to share as a leader couple in praying for God's Spirit to be present and to bless the program.

Get-Acquainted Exercise: "Relationship Diary"

Distribute copies of *Pages from Our Relationship Diary* (Handout #1) to husbands and wives. Each spouse makes notes independently and then reminisces with the other. When couples have had opportunity to talk together, invite them to share one or more memories with the whole group.

The leader couple can help get such sharing started by doing so first. The results are enhanced if both husband and wife participate in the sharing. Of course, sharing is voluntary. It should occur spontaneously, back and forth in the group, rather than "going around the circle," thus avoiding any awkwardness or feelings of pressure to participate because "it's your turn."

This sharing from personal memories is a significant step in the development of "community" within the group. It should not be rushed. Through this experience, couples get better acquainted by entering into a little of one another's history. Consequently they are more at ease with one another and the setting for experiences leading to marital growth is prepared.

A second benefit of this exercise is that it prepares the way for the presentation on self-worth and affirmation. Couples have an opportunity to reflect upon a time in their marriage when, generally speaking, spouses affirmed each other readily and thought in glowing terms about each other.

Presentation Module—"Self-worth"; Exercise: "How It Is to Be Me"

A healthy self-concept is fundamental to healthy, well-adjusted marriage and family relationships. Our self-concept is an intricate interweaving of what we believe God thinks of us, what we think about ourselves, and what we think other people think about us. Although the tendency to low self-concept is everywhere present because of our fallen human natures, improvement can be made and behavior patterns which spring from a low self-concept can give way to reflect an increased sense of worth.

Along with the awareness of one's own value and specialness comes a perception of the equal value of one's spouse. This is essential to marital growth.

Incorporating the ideas found in the Leadership Resources section of this mini-seminar and other materials that may be available, prepare your own presentation module (20-30 minutes).

The exercise *How It Is to Be Me* (Handout #2) provides each spouse with an opportunity to reflect on his or her personal worth and to communicate with the marriage partner about this vital aspect. Give time for individual reflection.

Closing

Express appreciation to all for their presence. Encourage each couple to pursue the communication they have begun with each other on this vital topic. Close with prayer.

Leadership Resources

How Our Self-Concept Affects Us

The innermost thoughts and convictions determine the life (Prov. 23:7). People who have a healthy sense of personal worth are happier, better able to cope with life's problems and better able to relate to others. They tend to be more independent, popular, assertive and creative than those who do not. This applies to children as well.

"There is one need so fundamental and so essential that if it is met, everything else will almost certainly harmonize in a general sense of well-being. When this need is properly nourished, the whole human organism will be healthy and the person will be happy. This need is a true and deep love of self, a genuine and joyful self-acceptance, an authentic self-esteem, which result in an interior sense of celebration: It's good to be me. . . . I am very happy to be me!"— John Powell, *The Secret of Staying in Love*, p. 13.

Low self-concept is revealed through behavior and ways of coping. Depending upon their temperaments, people who don't feel good about themselves exhibit behaviors such as clowning, withdrawing, escaping, conforming, fighting, unhealthy extremes in compensation. Extreme low self-worth can lead to depression, disease, even death.

The World's Criteria for Determining Human Value

We face today a virtual epidemic of low self-worth which can lead not only to misbehavior, but disease, depression, even death. Such epidemic proportions may be a result of the growing distance between what people sense themselves to be and what the world expects them to be.

After all, secular society has its own very definite method of assessing personal worth. The world has its way of looking at people and deciding whether or not they are really valuable. What does the world look for in people?

The first thing that secular society notices is *beauty*. Countless millions are spent each year on beauty aids, cosmetics, hairstyling, facials and fashion-following by women and men, and teenagers. Major cosmetic companies and toy manufacturers are now pushing complete

lines of cosmetics for the elementary-age set. It is generally true that beautiful, handsome people have a head start in just about every area of life.

The world has a second criterion. *Intelligence*.

Let's suppose, though, that you weren't born beautiful or handsome and you aren't so bright. If you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth, that is, into a family which has money, the world will still beat a path to your door. *Wealth* becomes the third way whereby society estimates the worth of a person. Next in line after beauty, intelligence and wealth comes *accomplishment*. Through sheer effort and grit, the highly motivated, perhaps physically talented individual can earn the approval of society and come to be valued. The fascination with sports, the incredibly high sums we are willing to pay to the athlete who can take a lot of physical abuse, who has the skill to make the three-point basketball shot or hit the home run is evidence of this.

To some degree all of us are caught up in this value system of the world. Unconsciously we apply these criteria to our spouses and too often assign a particular value to our spouse depending on how he or she measures up.

Popular psychology's plans for developing a good self-concept. Numerous schemes, plans, self-improvement programs are now available, but by themselves they are hollow and leave us vulnerable and ultimately unsatisfied.

"Start by writing a list of things you do well or are good at. No matter how low you feel, you can come up with good things that you like about yourself. No one is going to see this list except you, so now is your chance to admit that you've always thought you have expressive eyes, or a sonorous speaking voice, or a nicely shaped forehead. Or maybe you disco splendidly but never have the chance. . . . I don't even care if you record the fact that you wear down your shoes evenly. If you really put your mind to it, you can do it. . . .

"The best way to attain happiness is to decide what you want. Plan how to get it. Work like hell. And then savor your reward to the fullest."—Juliene Berk, *The Down Comforter: How to Beat Depression and Pull Yourself Out of the Blues* quoted in *Woman's Day*, March 11, 1980.

A Spiritual Problem Needing a Spiritual Solution

God's criteria for determining human worth. Two great truths about us as human beings speak to this matter of personal worth.

- *Creation* (Jer. 1:5; Isa. 43:1, 7). We are precious, loved and special in His eyes, even in our deplorable condition. Sinful, yes, but of great value still; not because of anything we have of ourselves, but by virtue of who our Creator is.
- *Redemption* (Isa. 43; Matt. 3:17; 1 Peter 1:18, 19). God's act in redemption conveys the worth He attaches to every soul.

God's Plan for People-building

Antidotes for low self-worth. To enable us to be healed and encouraged from the malady of low self-worth God has provided:

- *The truths of the gospel of creation and redemption.*
- *The Holy Spirit to minister to us and be our Comforter.*
- *His rules for living which bring a sense of well-being.*
- *Each other*—in the family and in the church—to share the gospel truth with each other and help one another experience on the human level the love and acceptance we can know with God.

A spiritually sound sense of self-worth is life-changing.

- *No longer need we struggle to be valuable.*
- *We can have a new appreciation of ourselves.*
- *We can see others as Christ sees them.*

Jesus gives an example of how to build worth in others (Matt. 12:20). "Bruised reeds" were strengthened to once again stand tall in His presence. Even when the fire of life was all but snuffed out, Jesus bent low and blew gently, nurturing any spark that was left.

"The Lord would have us ever to urge the worth of the human soul upon those who do not understand its value."—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 461.

Jesus ever sought to press the truth of their worth home upon human hearts. Close examination of His encounters with many different kinds of individuals show that He did this by:

- *Instilling hope.*
- *Giving practical help.*
- *Showing confidence and trust.*
- *Offering forgiveness and another chance.*
- *Being a friend.*
- *Accepting unconditionally.*
- *Focusing on strengths.*
- *Expressing love.*
- *Receiving graciously another's gestures of kindness.*
- *Separating the deed from the doer.*
- *Giving eye contact.*
- *Sparing embarrassment.*

Brought into the circle of the family, lived out by couples in marriage and by parents in relationship to their children, this mind and manner of Jesus will do much to soften the harsh tones and sweeten the relationship we share together.

References

Berk, Juliene. "Feel Better About Yourself," *Woman's Day*, March 11, 1980.

Powell, John. *The Secret of Staying in Love*, Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1974.

White, Ellen G. *Evangelism*, Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946.

PAGES FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP DIARY

My recollections of the first time we met.

Qualities I found attractive about you as we got to know each other better.

A memory I have of you from before we were married.

Something I especially remember from our wedding day.

Handout # 1

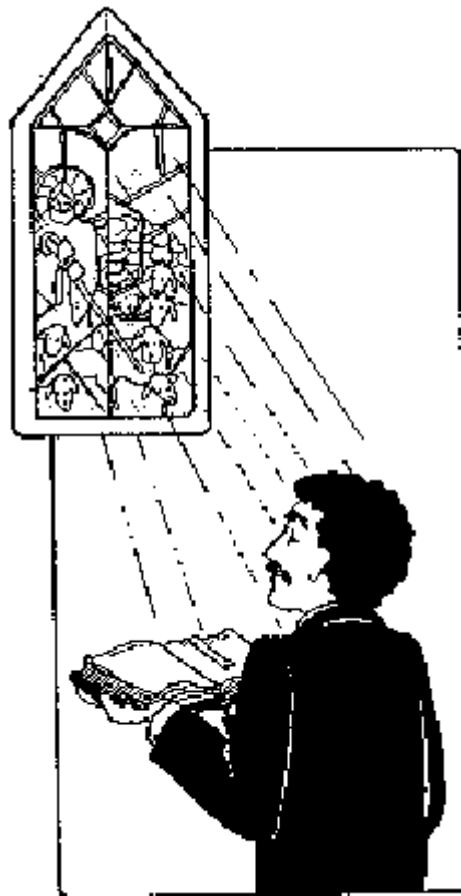
HOW IT IS TO BE ME

My statement of acceptance of the worth God, as my Creator and Redeemer, has bestowed upon me.

Times when I feel good about myself:

Times when I feel unsure, discouraged, not so valuable:

Things you can say and do that lift my sense of personal worth:



Mini-Seminar Resource

Christian Home Day

February 27, 1993

Evangelistic Parenting

Theme

The style of parenting to a great extent determines the effectiveness of the home as an evangelistic unit.

Objective

To outline a pattern for family management and home government which will increase the likelihood that children and young people will make decisions to follow Christ.

How to Use This Resource

This material can be used as a short workshop for parents in any suitable setting.

Presentation Helps

Ellen White made this remarkable statement many years ago: "You may be evangelists in the home, ministers of grace to your children"—*Child Guidance*, p. 479.

There probably isn't a parent alive who has not stood beside the bedside of a child just to watch him or her sleep. In those moments of reflection, have you ever thought of your child as a non-believer, placed by God in your home to be disciplined for Jesus Christ? Have you considered how different your treatment of that child might be if you thought of yourself as an evangelist trying to win that child for God?

Probably no truth is more well documented in research than the fact that the way parents manage their families profoundly affects their family's spiritual development as well as family members' overall formation as persons. The question of how to order a family was heavy on the minds of Manoah and his wife as they prepared for the birth of their son (Judges 13:8).

Finding Balance in Parenting

In a broad-based, multicultural study by Dr. Reuben Hill, investigation was done as to why some homes produce good, self-respecting, responsible children while others produce children who are irresponsible and highly vulnerable to counter-culture activities such as drugs, alcoholism, sexual promiscuity, etc. Also, there were questions about why children in the same family differ in their choices, some making good choices while others make poor ones.

Adapted from "Utilizing the Home as an Evangelistic Unit," an unpublished presentation by Alberta Mazat to Church Ministries leaders.

Control continuum: *No control to high control.* Dr. Hill found that he could divide parents and their family management styles along two continuums, one representing the amount of *parental control* in a family and the other the amount of *support*. (Refer to Handout 1, which may also be made into a transparency.)

On the far end of control continuum, there were some parents who simply had *no control over their children* at all. When they said "no," the child went ahead and did what he or she wanted to do anyway. Even if they threatened severe punishment, the child knew from experience they would never follow through and nothing would happen, so the child did as he or she pleased. If these parents had once tried to maintain some control, they had long since given up.

On the opposite end of the control continuum, Dr. Hill found *high control parents*. These parents were the ones who could answer the popular bumper sticker "Do you know where your kids are tonight?" with a "yes." They made a habit of knowing where their children were at all times. Further, their children were obedient to their parents' instruction, most of the time anyway. And if they weren't, they knew the consequences they could expect. There was discipline, and the children learned to respect the authority of their parents.

This authority was not the kind of authority which scared kids half to death that they would be beaten or grounded for weeks if they didn't obey. It was an authority that included the children in the decision-making of the family according to their ages and gave the children reasons why they should follow the family rules. These weren't parents who were apt to say, "You do as I say because I said it." They were more likely to say, "I don't want you to go and play with Johnny now because . . ." or "I'm expecting you to do this work because" Thus these parents maintained a high level of control, but they were not exhibiting the kinds of behavior which implied "You do this because I'm big enough to make you do it!" so that when their children got older they were likely to rebel.

Support continuum: On the other continuum, high support parents were very good at letting their children know they loved them. There was a lot of "I'm so proud of you, son!" or "I'm so glad this girl of ours was born into this family. You've always been such a delight to us!" "My, it's fun having you to mow the lawn with me," or "What a joy it is to be able to sit here and teach you how to sew!" These kinds of parents didn't just say these kinds of things to adults, but to their children. And they didn't keep their warm thoughts to themselves. They were very good at support.

On the opposite end of the support continuum were *low support parents*. This does not mean these parents did not love their children. It's just that they weren't very good at letting

them know how much they loved them. Some had a hard time showing their love at all. Others struggled to show their love in ways that made the children feel loved. They had a hard time pushing that arm out and drawing that child close, especially when they got to be teenagers. In fact, the older the child got, the harder it got. They almost believed their boy when he said, "Aw, Mom, stop that!" when his mother reached out to hug him. They thought the boy really meant what he said, when what he really meant was "Don't do this around my friends, Mom, because around them I've got to pretend I don't like it. But it sure feels good anyway." Parents at this end of the continuum didn't know how to say "I love you." If asked "When did you say 'I love you' to your child the last time," they'd answer, "My child knows I love him. I'm getting his teeth straightened right now, and he's taking trumpet lessons, and I just bought him a new bike." Sometimes these kinds of parents confused giving love with giving things.

The results to this study were most fascinating. Dr. Hill discovered that parents fit in one of four quadrants created by the intersecting of these two continuums. For example, parents who were both low control and low support were called neglectful parents. They gave their children neither support nor limits. They just let their children do as they pleased because it was easier to give up than to maintain any kind of control, and they had great difficulty expressing their love.

Then there were parents who were very good at support, but still didn't have any control. These were called permissive parents. These were parents who said, "Oh, let him do it; he's only young once." Or, "Does it really make that much difference whether she is allowed to do that or not?" These parents were very good at saying "You are such a good boy," but the trouble was sometimes he was not being a good boy, but anything he did was O.K. Lots of support but no control.

Another set of parents was very good at control, but very poor at support. These were called authoritarian parents. These were the parents who could snap their fingers and their children sat up and behaved. They said "don't" and the kids "didn't." They said "do" and the kids "did." These children often behaved very well until they became teenagers and started doing some things apart from their parents. When their parents weren't there to tell them what to do, and not to do, and to force them to comply, they didn't know how to behave. They had never learned to make choices.

You can begin teaching children to make choices as early as the age of two. By that age, for instance, children can choose what to wear today, the blue shirt or the red one. Not

*Parents fit in
one of four
quadrants
created by the
intersecting of
these two
continuums*

very much hangs on a choice like that, but they do have to wear the shirt for the rest of the day and they begin to learn that the result of your choice goes with you all day long. But the authoritarian parents had not been very good at that. So when their children were faced with making choices on their own, they had no experience to fall back on. These children had also never felt their parents' love through inclusion in the family decision-making process and responsibility as a member of the family. This, coupled with the sternness which accompanied their parents' control, made them feel unloved.

The last group of parents exhibited both high support and high control in their family management style. These parents were called authoritative parents. Don't be confused by the similarity between the word authoritarian and authoritative as we are describing now. Authoritative means that these parents had good control, but at the same time they were very good at showing love. These children reported that they knew their parents loved them because they told them often. But they also knew certain things were expected of them, and what consequences would follow what choices.

The most important outcome of this research for us is the discovery that these various kinds of family management practices produce children with predictable strengths and struggles. It was the children with authoritative parents who emerged responsible and self-respecting and who were the least vulnerable to the counter-culture. In general, these children could be characterized by four important characteristics:

1. **Good self-esteem.** Self-esteem is the most important ingredient necessary to fortify a child against peer pressure. If a child has a good sense of personal worth, she can make her own decisions, because even if a particular group of peers turn against her, she feels good enough about herself to cope with that. In a marriage, when one or both partners don't feel very good about themselves, you haven't got much to work with in relationships.

Fundamentalist churches have not been very good at building this ingredient into people. Sometimes we have the attitude, the more needy you are, the more no good you feel, the more God can use you. In fact, just the opposite is true. People who feel they have real value because they are God's child, are the ones most equipped to be used of God. We are to value ourselves in proportion to the price of our redemption. (See Christ's Object Lessons, p. 196, The Desire of Ages, p. 668.)

2. **Respect for authority.** Children who emerge from a home where those in authority are reasonable and where limits are coupled with kindness and much love, enter adulthood believing that the rules of society are, for the most part, just and for the best good of all. Because the essential needs of their lives have been met, and they have not been spoiled by excess, their expectations of society are reasonable. Their respect for human authority provides a natural bridge to respect God's authority.

3. **Less vulnerability to the counter-culture.** Their defenses are high against drugs, truancy, alcohol use, and promiscuity.
4. **More apt to adopt the value system of their parents.** These children are more likely to see their parent's religion as winsome and as something they want for themselves as adults.

One of the most significant evangelistic thrusts of our church needs to be within the home. And we have just discovered one of the most tested and true methods of evangelism for children—authoritative parenting. Parents who move toward the authoritative style of family management:

1. Set consistent limits.
2. Are firm, patient, loving, reasonable.
3. Consider the child's needs.
4. Communicate freely.
5. Tolerate no put down or harassment at another's expense.
6. Maintain warm relationships with their children.
7. Practice self-control.
8. Teach children to reason and make choices.
9. Share family responsibility across family members according to age and ability.
10. Release freedom with increasing responsibility.

Group Activity

In small groups, talk for a few minutes about the home in which you grew up. In what ways were the 10 characteristics listed above present? absent? unpredictable? Discuss how difficult it is to break from the patterns of parenting established in your childhood home. Recall families you have watched who were moving positively toward making a reality of these characteristics in their homes. Make a list of practical how-to's you think will help parent's who want to grow toward these ideals. Share with the entire group.

Authoritative parenting is an ideal worth stretching toward. It reaps big results in home evangelism. But we are not left alone in our striving. Bask in the following encouragement:

- Parents, are you working with unflagging energy in behalf of your children? The God of heaven marks your solicitude, your earnest work, your constant watchfulness. He hears your prayers. With patience and tenderness train your children for the Lord. All

heaven is interested in your work. . . . God will unite with you, crowning your efforts with success.—The Adventist Home, p. 205.

- Let mothers come to Jesus with their perplexities. They will find grace sufficient to aid them in the management of their children. The gates are open for every mother who would lay her burdens at the Saviour's feet. . . . If we will live in communion with God, we too may expect the divine Spirit to mold our little ones, even from their earliest moments.—The Desire of Ages, p. 512.
- After they [mothers] have done the best they can do for the good of their children, they may bring them to Jesus. Even the babes in the mother's arms are precious in His sight. And as the mother's heart yearns for the help she knows she cannot give, the grace she cannot bestow, and she casts herself and children into the merciful arms of Christ, He will receive and bless them; He will give peace, hope, and happiness to mother and children. This is a precious privilege which Jesus has granted to all mothers. . . .

These precious words [Matthew 19:14] are to be cherished, not only by every mother, but by every father as well. These words are an encouragement to parents to press their children into His notice, to ask in the name of Christ that the Father may let His blessing rest upon their entire family. Not only are the best beloved to receive particular attention, but also the restless, wayward children, who need careful training and tender guidance.—The Adventist Home, pp. 274-276.

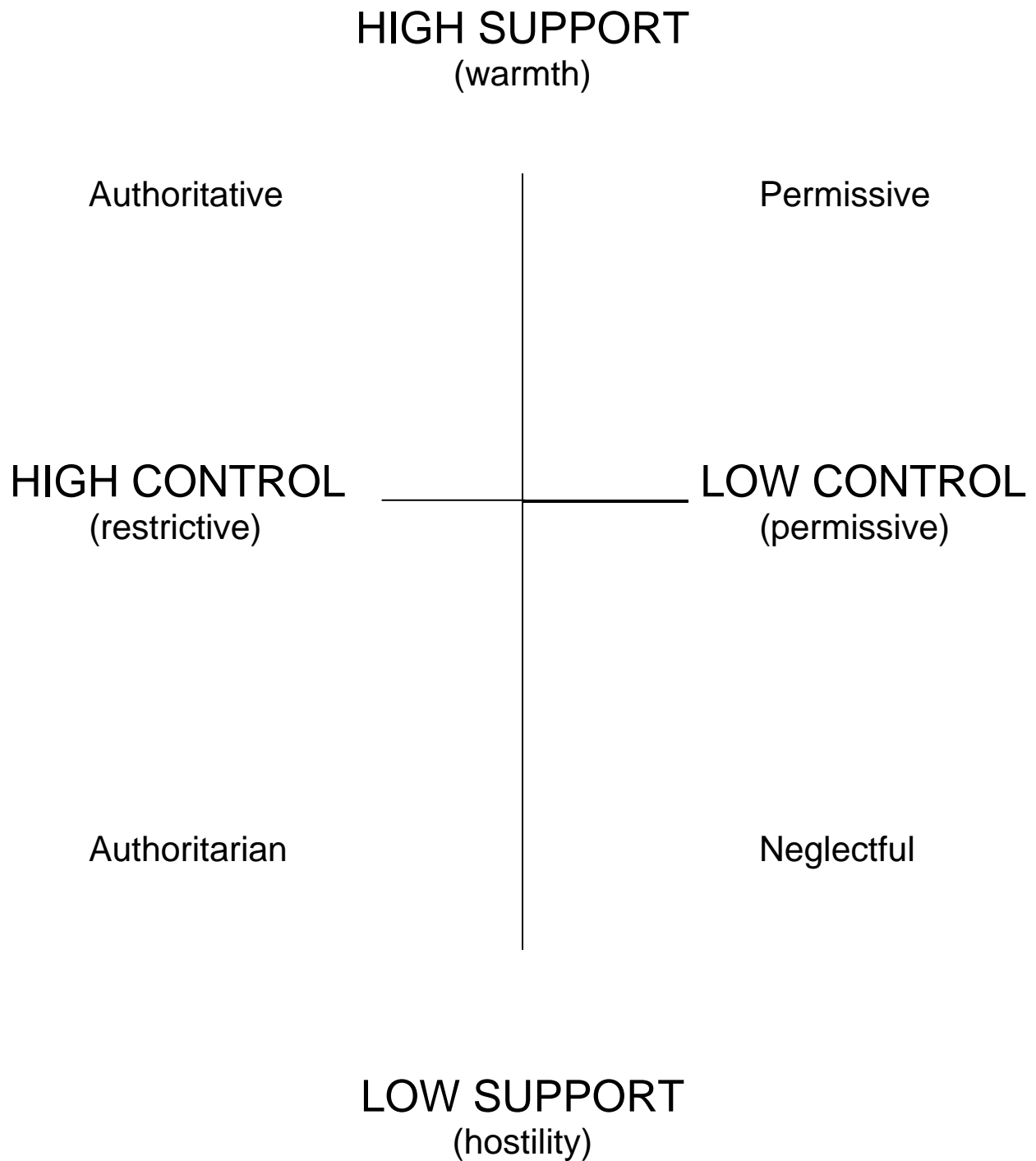
Additional Resources

Campbell, Ross. *How to Really Love Your Child*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1977.

Narramore, Bruce. *Parenting With Love and Limits*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979.

Strauss, Richard L. *How to Raise Confident Children*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1975.

ADULT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS



Handout # 1

Mini-Seminar Resource
Family Fellowship Day
September 18, 1993

Hearts and Homes for Him *

This self-study course uses *Open Heart, Open Home* by Karen Burton Mains as a textbook. Order from Seminars Unlimited, P.O. Box 66, Keene, TX 76059, (800) 982-3344. Includes study guide, 3 audio cassettes and textbook - US \$19.95.

Theme

How to make Christian hospitality a reality and a means of witness among Christian families.

Objective

To present a learning activity which (1) clarifies the meaning of Christian hospitality, (2) identifies practical how-to's for making hospitality a reality and an avenue for evangelism among busy Christians and (3) enables participants to develop the gift of hospitality in the church.

How to Use This Resource

This material can be used in a workshop, midweek meeting or small groups during Family Togetherness Week. Begin with the Ice-breaker and use each activity in the order given.

Ice-breaker

(Ask the group to reflect on the following question. Then give individuals a few minutes to share what they wish of their thoughts with someone sitting next to them.)

Of all that you have, what do you count most valuable?

Most will likely value relationships at the top of the list. Human beings were made for relationships. Without them they are miserable. Ultimately, our success at relationships is rooted in our ability to love and care for others. Hospitality creates a path toward a warm network of relationships. But it will mean the giving of oneself in ways that meet the needs of others.

* Adapted from *Christian Hospitality Made Easy* by Patrica B. Mutch, Ph.D. Published by the Ministerial Association/Shepherdess International, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1987. Used by permission.

Presentation Ideas

The Challenge

Ours is a world that desperately needs hospitality. It is a world where people everywhere experience broken relationships, mistrust, hostility, anxiety and hopelessness. Technological advances bring their benefits, but often at the expense of family togetherness and stability, trusting relationships, and enduring friendships. People today are more mobile, often reducing family groups to nuclear families, and in many cases to singles living alone or as single parents. The extended family is no longer available as a source of personal support or as a ready-made team to share in the work entailed in hospitality.

At the same time that people everywhere are searching for the gold of true affection and caring, hungering for relationships that will last, Christians find themselves so spent they can scarcely respond. Christians are no different from those around them in these respects. Yet we desperately need each other. And the world needs our love. In truth, many will never hear what we say about God's love until they have experienced it in our midst.

Group Activity #1

In small groups, make a list of the challenges you see to your church family becoming a caring community of believers where the gift of hospitality is fully developed. Share your ideas with the entire group.

Summary of probable responses

- time pressure
- energy drain
- lack of resources
- feelings of inadequacy
- tendency to protect ourselves from worldly influences by having minimal social interaction with non-church members
- awkwardness that many, particularly those raised in Adventist homes, feel outside the Adventist subculture
- fear that others will discover the reality of our lives
- the core selfishness of the human heart which does not want to make the investment in others

The purpose of this seminar is to address some of these challenges by (1) clarifying our understanding of hospitality and (2) stimulating church members' interest in finding ways to increase their "hospitality quotient" both within the community of believers and among non-members potentially within their circle of relationships.

The Concept of Hospitality

Scripture instructs about hospitality both by providing examples and offering admonition. The following group activities explore meaning and intent of some of these tests.

Group Activity #2

*(Divide your group into two parts. Assign **Activity #2** to one part and **Activity #2A** to the other. Use smaller groups within the two halves as necessary.)*

In small groups of not more than four people read the following Bible passages and look for principles of biblical hospitality. It may be helpful to read these passages from various versions.

Texts

Possible responses

Exodus 23:9

Aliens were to be treated kindly.

Leviticus 23:22

Provision was to be made for the poor and for strangers.

Isaiah 58:6, 7, 10-12

One's bounty was to be shared. (This passage is one of the most comprehensive biblical statements on hospitality, its responsibilities and its rewards.)

Matthew 5:42

Sharing is crucial to life.

Luke 14:12-14

The guest list is addressed. (Invite those in need to your feasts.)

1 Peter 4:9-10

As some became uncomfortable with all things being held in common (see Acts 4:32-35), they needed reminding about hospitality. Importance of service to one another.

Romans 12:13

Sharing with those in need.

1 Timothy 3:2

Importance of church leaders being examples of hospitality. Qualifications of an elder included hospitality.

Group Activity #2A

In small groups of not more than four people, investigate one or more of the following scriptural examples of hospitality. For each person or situation, note what describes the quality and attributes of the gift of hospitality which is manifested.

Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 18)

Lot in Sodom (Genesis 19)

Rebekah and Eliezer (Genesis 24)

Rahab and the spies (Joshua 2)

Abigail and Nabal (1 Samuel 25)

Elijah and the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17)

The Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:8-37)

Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:9-19)

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus (Luke 10:38-42)

Christ feeding the multitude (Matthew 14:13-21)

Simon of Bethany and Mary (Matthew 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8)

Lydia of Thyatira (Acts 16:13-15, 40)

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-9)

If these principles were implemented, these models emulated, hospitality would provide a mechanism for the conveyance of Christ's love to those in need of relationships and physical and emotional support. Likely we would find those who have experienced our hospitality much more receptive to doctrinal matters. But who has the time and energy for extensive meal preparation, for keeping a spotless home suitable for company?

Somewhere along the way a counterfeit to hospitality has arisen, a false hospitality we will call "entertainment." (This may be a different usage of the word than you are accustomed to, but in this seminar it will be used with a particular definition attached.) Entertainment mimics hospitality, but really has little to do with real biblical hospitality. Note some contrasts between the counterfeit of entertainment and real hospitality on the next page. (Also see Handout # 1, *Entertainment or Hospitality*.)

Entertainment

Requires a spotless home, a perfectly matched and decorated table, a gourmet meal, a perfectly dressed and coiffured hostess.

Hospitality

Seeks to put its priorities on the guest and meeting his or her needs.

Entertainment

Leads guests to admire what the host and hostess have provided.

Hospitality

Offers all that the host and hostess possess to meet the needs of the guest.

Entertainment

Motives are egocentric, to impress others with what we have and what we are able to do.

Hospitality

Motives are other-directed, focused on meeting the needs of others.

Entertainment

Puts its priorities on things.

Hospitality

Puts its priorities on people.

Entertainment

Models arise out of the dream world of homemaker magazines.

Hospitality

Models arise out of examples of persons who seek to meet the needs of others.

Entertainment

Creates bondage to resources, time, perfection.

Hospitality

Becomes increasingly a joy as we become channels of God's love and blessing.

Group Activity #3

(Give individuals a few minutes to complete and reflect personally on "When I Felt Welcome," Handout #2. Invite several to share their reflections with the entire group. Discuss the irony that often the very things we think we have to do in order to be a good host or hostess are the very things that make us uncomfortable as guests. And vice versa, the very things that would bring us concern and embarrassment are the same things that make us feel at home as a visitor.)

In small groups spend a few minutes visioning together what your church would be like if the gift of hospitality were fully developed among the members. What kinds of things can you see happening? What kind of atmosphere can you feel? With what kinds of results? Share your dreams together in the large group.

Developing the Gift of Hospitality*

So what can we do to bring real hospitality back into our lives as a church family and into the lives of our neighbors as we seek to meet their needs?

- *Commit ourselves to be used of God.* Meet the needs of others through whatever aspect of hospitality He calls us to perform, recognizing our dependence upon Him for strength and the realization of our purposes (1 Peter 4:11).

- *Bathe the gift of hospitality in prayer.* Ask God to make us discerning of the needs of others and ask Him to bless our efforts to meet those needs. Ask Him to purify our motives and to give us strength to do what He bids us to do.

- *Set clear priorities.* Ellen White made this remarkable statement many years ago: "The first work of Christians is to be united in the family. Then the work is to extend to the neighbors and then far off."— *The Adventist Home*, p. 37.

1. Our families and their needs take first priority. Families need attention, and should not be shunted aside for the *larger task* of hospitality. "As workers for God, our work is to begin with those nearest. It is to begin in our own home. There is no more important missionary field than this."—Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance*, p. 476.

There are times in all families when family members are in a position to minister to others. The entire family can be included in gestures of hospitality. The next generation need not have so much to learn about this gift when it is part of their lives since childhood.

But there are also seasons in the life of every family when they themselves need to be ministered to, times when they simply must retreat to rekindle their own flames.

* There are many ideas which would be helpful for developing this section in the *Christian Hospitality Made Easy* resource from which "Developing the Gift of Hospitality" has been adapted.

2. Our next priority goes to friends, neighbors and co-workers whom we encounter on a daily basis. As part of the support network of persons to which we belong, we are privileged to be used by God to bear the burdens of those close to us.

3. Our final priority includes the strangers God sends our way and to whom we respond according to our ability to help. The pressing question of hospitality for all three groups is always: What are the needs of each person and how can I help to meet those needs?

- *Develop supporting skills that help to maximize our efforts.* (For this section you may wish to ask several church members to share their own experiences. Choose not only persons whose God-given gifts have made them naturals at hospitality, but also those who have cultivated this gift through conscious effort.)

- Tips on time management that help maximize a small amount of time for God.
- Ways to keep the costs of hospitality affordable.
- How to stock a "ready shelf" of long-term storage items for short notice meals. (Plans for a menu/recipe exchange of quick, but nutritious meals for various occasions could be advertised so that each would come with something to share.)
- How to surmount the hurdle of feeling one must do everything, and do all things perfectly, when company comes.
- Discovering the joy of lasting friendships born when families are able to accept themselves as they are without apology and simply take guests in as members of the family.
- How to start conversations with strangers, both Christians and non-Christians. Practice and develop the art of asking good questions.
- Share experiences of times when God has impressed you to reach out in hospitality and you have had the joy of sharing the good news in your home. Work together in pairs to develop a simple personal testimony suitable for sharing with another believer and with a non-Christian as the opportunity arises.

Hospitality Evangelism

"I am firmly convinced that if Christians would open their homes and practice hospitality as defined in Scripture, we could significantly alter the fabric of society. We could play

a major role in its spiritual, moral, and emotional redemption."—Karen Burton Mains, *Open Heart, Open Home*, p. 22.

"Our time here is short. We can pass through this world but once; as we pass along, let us make the most of life. The work to which we are called does not require wealth or social position or great ability. It requires a kindly, self-sacrificing spirit and a steadfast purpose. A lamp, however small, if kept steadily burning, may be the means of lighting many other lamps. Our sphere of influence may seem narrow, our ability small, our opportunities few, our acquirements limited; yet wonderful possibilities are ours through a faithful use of the opportunities of our own homes. If we will open our hearts and homes to the divine principles of life, we shall become channels for currents of life-giving power. From our homes will flow streams of healing, bringing life, and beauty, and fruitfulness where now are barrenness and dearth."—Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 33.

Hospitality can provide a means of building up the body of Christ, of winsomely drawing our children and youth to Jesus and His teachings and encouraging growth and commitment among members of all ages. Hospitality can also provide an avenue for reaching into the community around us. The home provides an ideal setting for drawing others close that we may share the good news that is bursting in our hearts.

Group Activity #4

Divide the group in half. (1) Ask one group to generate ideas for using hospitality to build the body of Christ. (2) Ask the other to create ideas for using hospitality to reach into circles beyond the church family.

The following are suggestions with which to start the groups' thinking or to use as part of your summary.

Hospitality to build the body of Christ

- *Social activities.* Make a list of social activities you think represent the best of true hospitality to pass on to your church's social committee.
- *Linkages between new members and believers.* Becoming a Seventh-day Adventist requires many lifestyle changes. New believers need new and close ties with church members who can help them make these changes and provide a network of friends and family with whom to fellowship. These linkages will not just happen. They must be planned. For instance, a plan might be developed to rotate invitations to new believers to Sabbath dinner in the homes of different church members at least once a month for a year after their baptism. New

members could be paired with members of longer standing in exercise classes, weight-control programs, bread baking workshops, church cleaning/gardening responsibilities, etc.

- *Prayer fellowships.* Prayer maybe for general or specific needs. You may want to form intercessory prayer groups, prayer partners, or small groups.

Hospitality to reach into the community

- *Sabbath visitor hospitality.* Dinner with visitors—whether at the church or in homes—provides opportunity for visitors to reflect on what they have experienced and ask questions, for church members to discover the reasons for their visit—perhaps even part of the story of their lives if they are willing to share it, and how the church can meet the needs of their hearts.
- *Youth socials.* Many churches open their doors to the youth of their communities, providing exercise rooms, gyms for basketball, drug and alcohol free parties, etc. as circumstances allow.
- *Supper and Bible study.* A light meal followed by Bible study offers the chance not only for church members to gather for fellowship but opportunity to invite a friend outside the circle of the church family.
- *Bed and breakfast for travelers.* Many Seventh-day Adventists are becoming involved in this business. While business does not allow for overt evangelistic gestures, the literature left in the common areas, a kindly welcome, a Bible and devotional book left in a room, grace printed on a small card and placed at the breakfast setting, etc. all give opportunity for witness.

Many hospitality opportunities which meet special needs may be present both within the **church family** and in the **community**. Some examples follow.

- *Funeral meals.* Death in a family provides the opportunity for caring Christians not only to provide food, but to offer to prepare and serve it, to sit and listen as the family talks of their loved one, to clean up afterwards.
- *Food for the hungry.* Whether this involves feeding the homeless, becoming involved in senior citizen food programs, providing food for the hungry in ways that are not demeaning but which meet their needs with dignity and caring concern offer wonderful occasions for hospitality.
- *Family needs during hospitalization.* Even the simple tasks of maintaining a household create enormous stress on a family when one of their members is

hospitalized. Meeting needs for meal preparation, child care, laundry, errands, etc., at this time will never be forgotten.

- *Students.* Many churches have universities and boarding schools in close proximity. Students away from home revel in a home cooked meal and an evening or afternoon in the home of a church family, especially when they are taken in, even put to work, as part of the family circle.
- *Radical hospitality.* Foster care, taking in refugees, runaways, homeless persons are examples of radical hospitality. This kind of hospitality is not for everyone, and should be attempted only when the whole family feels a commitment to it and when God is surely leading. It is a ministry of hospitality increasingly needed in our world.

David Mace, a Quaker pastor who with his wife Vera has opened his family circle to hundreds, closes his book *In the Presence of God* with the following observation:

"The Christian home is, in fact, by far the most powerful evangelizing agency in the world. Its evangelism, however, is not aggressive; it is persuasive. It proclaims its message not by words, but by deeds. It does not tell others what they should be; it shows them what they could be. By their gracious influence, Christian homes win more converts than all the preachers put together. Give us enough of them, and the world would soon be a Christian world; for the world's life rises to the higher levels only as its homes do so" (p. 113).

Additional Resources

LeFever, Marlene D. *Creative Hospitality*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1980.

Mains, Karen Burton. *Open Heart, Open Home*. Elgin, IL: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1976.

McGinnis, A. L. *The Friendship Factor*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979.

Ortlund, Anne. *Discipling One Another*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1979.

Pippert, R. M. *Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.

Stott, John. *Basic Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1971.

“Entertainment” or “Hospitality”

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires a spotless home, a perfectly matched and decorated table, a gourmet meal, a perfectly dressed and coiffured hostess. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeks to put its priorities on the guest and meeting his or her needs. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leads guests to admire what the host and hostess have provided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers all that the host and hostess possess to meet the needs of the guest. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motives are egocentric, to impress others with what we have and what we are able to do. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motives are other-directed, focused on meeting the needs of others. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Puts its priorities on things. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Puts its priorities on people |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Models arise out of the dream world of homemaker magazines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Models arise out of examples of persons who seek to meet the needs of others. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates bondage to resources, time, perfection. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Becomes increasingly a joy as we become channels of God's love and blessing. |

When I Felt Welcome

The purpose of this section is to aid you in reflecting on the occasions when you were a guest and felt particularly welcome or unwelcome. Such reflection assists us in identifying common elements which we can consider incorporating into our own hospitality efforts.

- A. Describe an occasion when you were a guest in a place where you felt particularly welcome and at home.

In the experience you described above, what factors contributed to your feelings of being welcome and *at home*?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- B. Describe an occasion when you were a guest and felt quite uncomfortable or even were anxious to leave the situation.

List below 3 or 4 factors which contributed to your feeling *uncomfortable* and *unwelcome* in the situation described above.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Consider again the uncomfortable situation under B. What advice would you have liked to give that host or hostess?

101 Ideas for Family Evangelism

Karen and Ron Flowers

Personal Preparation

- Study carefully such Bible verses as Eph. 2:4-8, 13; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:12-20; 8:1 which convey the good news of salvation in Christ.
- Reflect on the love of God. What human instruments have profoundly influenced you in your understanding of God's love? How is your understanding of God's love growing?
- Prayerfully develop your personal testimony of faith and assurance of salvation in Christ. Writing your testimony may help you to think it through.
- Make a personal list of Bible verses which speak to you of God's love. Study and memorize these for sharing with your personal testimony.

Sharing Faith in Marriage

- Share your testimony with your spouse. Listen to your spouse's testimony. How has the gospel influenced your relationship?
- Give evidence of God's grace at work in your life by your empathy with your spouse, in sharing thoughts and inner feelings together.
- Take time to communicate about the meaning of your faith with your spouse. How does your faith affect the way you handle anger, resolve conflict, deal with depression?
- Endeavor to uplift and encourage your spouse with affirmation and appropriate compliments.
- Worship and pray together regularly.

Winning Ways with Unbelieving Spouses

- Be a source of emotional and spiritual encouragement for your non-believing spouse, striving not to be judgmental of his/her behavior, but offering compliments and affirmation regularly.
- Provide an example of your belief in God's grace by living your Adventist Christianity before your spouse honestly. Be candid about weaknesses and faults, recognizing these as areas where Christian growth is needed.
- Communicate with your spouse about the forgiveness and continual renewal you are finding in Christ. Let everything you have learned about relationships in Christ make your experience in marriage better.
- Make extra efforts to identify and emphasize the things you and your

spouse have in common. Seek points of agreement.

- Enter willingly and happily into every possible aspect of your spouse's life which you can without compromising principle.
- Discover together new activities and friends to replace those that may have been left behind because of your beliefs, realizing that the strength of your love bond together is the greatest asset you have in winning your loved one for Christ.
- As you develop acquaintances at church, invite men to befriend your husband, or women your wife.
- Invite your spouse to participate in activities of church life: social activities, health seminars, family life events, retreats, camp-outs, or church building/maintenance programs.
- Encourage the participation of your spouse by recruiting and enlisting his or her expertise in some aspect of church life.

Evangelistic Parenting

- Prepare a list of changes you would like to make to give a more evangelistic approach to your parenting.
- Make the gospel attractive to your children by your positive relationships with them, by smiling often, by entering into your child's feelings.
- Sing songs to your children which tell of God's love.

- Pray with each of your children, rehearsing God's love and your love for your child in your prayer.
- Tell your child in simple terms about God's love as described in His Word.
- Ask forgiveness of your child for something you have done which brought pain to him or her.
- Show unconditional love and acceptance of your child. Avoid conveying the message, "I will love you if"
- Plan ways for giving each of your children special opportunities to make their decisions to trust in Christ personally.

Relatives

- Pray regularly that relatives will accept the gospel.
- Work together as a family to prepare a list of specific efforts your family can make to lead unsaved relatives to Christ.
- Plan ways for making contact with each relative for whom the family is praying—by phone, by letter, by personal visit to give, first of all, an expression of your love and to share encouragement.

Friends and Neighbors

- During family worship relate what special opportunities for gospel sharing have occurred for each one during the day—in your family, at work, at school, in the neighborhood.
- Discuss as a family the prospective spiritual interest of individuals in work, neighborhood, school, family circles.

- Start a prayer list on which are the names of your 10 closest neighbors.
- During family worship talk about special ways of witnessing to the individuals on the prayer list.
- Encourage your children to do little errands of love and mercy for those less fortunate than themselves.
- Cooperate with your child in some task of Christian service to which their abilities, strengths and interests are suited and from which they will gain success and joy.
- Assist your older children and young people to form missionary bands with their playmates and schoolmates for some task of Christian help work.

Spiritual Gifts

- Spend some family worship periods reading and studying the Bible texts on spiritual gifts—Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12, 13; Eph. 4. Discuss: How do these texts help us to identify our spiritual gifts?
- Read biographies of Seventh-day Adventist pioneers or other notable Christian leaders whose spirit of service and spiritual gifts will inspire and encourage your family.
- Think together, pray about and discover what each family member's talents and abilities are. Thank God together for these gifts and abilities of each one.
- The gifts that God has given your children may differ from yours as parents. Invite other Adventist Christian relatives or church members who may have

spiritual gifts and abilities more nearly like those of your children to share their experiences to help provide models and examples for your children.

- Express appreciation in a special way for the unique talents, gifts and abilities of each one in your family, affirming the contribution each one makes to the smooth running of the family.
- Think and pray together about how the special abilities of father, mother, sister, brother or other household member could be used by God in the home, in the church, in missionary work in the community.
- Recognizing personal talents and abilities, let each family member prepare a simple plan of one or two specific things he or she could do to witness for God. Small children may draw pictures depicting their contributions.
- Ask family members to share on a regular basis how God has prompted them to use their talents and abilities in their everyday activities.

A Family Missionary Project

- Plan to involve the family's various talents in a special family missionary project. Get suggestions from church leadership on projects that might be helped by your family's involvement.
- Tailor the family's involvement to accommodate various ages of family members, keeping an appropriate balance between the family's personal needs and the need to share with others. Strive toward an experience that has

some measurable results and whereby all can feel a sense of success and fulfillment.

- Read the Bible or gospel literature to an elderly or visually impaired person.
- Pay a friendship visit to a shut-in.
- Do grocery shopping for a shut-in.
- Write a letter of encouragement to a bereaved, grieving or discouraged family.
- Visit someone who is sick.
- Provide a no-interest loan to a financially struggling family.
- Bake a loaf of bread for a homeless person.
- Prepare sandwiches for distribution to homeless individuals.
- Offer a food basket regularly to one or more families in need.
- Do grass-mowing, leaf-raking or other yard work for an elderly person.
- Provide once-a-week child care for a single parent.
- Distribute gospel literature home to home regularly in a specific part of town.
- Sing or play musical instruments at a nursing home or retirement center.
- Give a few hours of service on occasion to families needing assistance in child care, home remodeling, financial management.
- Provide foster child care for a young person in need.
- Give new or used clothing to persons in need or donate such items to an appropriate distribution center.
- Go Ingathering as a family.
- Address invitations to evangelistic meetings.
- Enroll neighbors in a Bible correspondence course.
- Distribute invitations to evangelistic meetings.
- Invite younger family members to share toys with children of needy families.
- Use the family car to transport individuals to evangelistic meetings.
- Invite friends to a health fair or cooking school.
- Invite one or two of your children's friends to church and a meal on Sabbath. Provide transportation if needed.
- Have a "help and bless" brainstorming session with your family. What act of Christian helpfulness might your family perform right now for some acquaintance in your extended family, your church, your neighborhood, your community?
- If there are aspects to the missionary project which can be done during family worship, such as preparing mailings, developing Bible studies, then plan for some special worship time which will

incorporate these, giving family members time to discuss their feelings about the missionary activity.

Family Stewardship

- Plan a special gift for the current thirteenth Sabbath mission offering.
- Plan a family investment project. Ask your Sabbath School investment leader or Sabbath School superintendent for more information and suggestions on how your family can become involved in this plan of raising money for missions.
- Establish a "Lord's Fund" as part of the family budget in addition to regular tithes and offerings. This money may be kept in the family treasury and distributed when family members feel especially impressed by God to assist in some unusual missionary project or some other special need that comes to their attention.
- In addition to regular family tithes, offerings and church commitments, pray about missionary work with which your family might become sacrificially involved.

The Art of Evangelistic Visiting

- Ask an individual successful in visitation to take your family, or members of your family, on a visitation excursion into your neighborhood. Allow this individual to coach you in appropriate manners, conversation and conduct of the visit.
- To provide an opportunity to become acquainted and begin to cultivate friendship, take a "Welcome to the Neighborhood" gift to a family just moving in.

- Take a "Congratulations on your new baby" gift to a family with a newborn.
- Take a "Congratulations on your wedding" gift to a newly wedded couple.
- Take an appropriate expression of sympathy to a family who has experienced some loss.
- Invite your neighbors to church programs, i.e. Vacation Bible School, holiday celebrations, socials, etc., so you will be prepared to invite them to evangelistic meetings and worship services.
- Take a gift of food to a neighbor. Allow your children to have a part in its preparation and its presentation.
- Give gifts that are tailored to perceived interests and tastes of your neighbors, perhaps a potted plant to a neighbor who likes plants, a stamp for a stamp collector, a recipe for one who enjoys cooking.
- Give gifts that will interest and delight your neighbor's children. Christian periodicals with stories, storybooks, or tapes, for example, are gifts that will be appreciated by both adults and children.
- Ask your neighbors for a favor. Show them that you need their friendship and help as a family. This will place you on common ground with them and open the doors for fellowship.
- When visiting homes of friends or acquaintances offer a humble prayer as you say good-bye. Your prayer will be a

powerful witness to your belief in God, His care, and the truth in which you believe.

- Invite other families, acquaintances of the family or those with whom you would like to become better acquainted, to your home for family worship. Make the service brief, interesting and full of life. Sing songs that can be easily sung and pray short, simple prayers. Choose cassettes for listening or readings tailored to the age and interest level of those present.
- Invite others to your home for a meal. Offer friendship and modeling about temperance and healthful living through the meal which is served.
- Invite others to join you in a family outing or recreational activity that is typical of the wholesome times your family spends together.

Reaching Out to the World

- Learn the names and locations of missionaries from your locale or region that are serving in missions. Pray daily as a family for these missionaries.
- Obtain addresses and write regular letters of encouragement to foreign missionaries.
- Take special interest in the projects of the 13th Sabbath Mission offering. Learn more from libraries, magazines, etc. about the country, the people and needs of the area where one of these specific projects is located. Pray for this project and plan as a family to support your

prayers with a sacrificial offering on 13th Sabbath.

- Discover from your pastor or church leadership where there are areas unentered by Seventh-day Adventist missions in your country or some other country. Learn all you can about this area and its people. Pray that doors for entrance to this people will be opened.
- Contact your pastor or church leadership about how to make contact with a pen pal from a foreign country. Have family members write to pen pals appropriate to their ages and share with the family what they learn about life in another country.
- Short terms of service are available for adults and young people in a growing number of areas in the world. The doors to service in these areas are open through the General Conference, through educational institutions and private organizations. Inquire of your pastor or church leadership about the possibilities for family members to experience some mission service. If possible, plan to participate in such a missionary experience.
- As the Adventist message circles the globe, more and more workers are needed in foreign fields in a wide variety of professions and occupations. Consult with your pastor or church leadership, pray about and consider as a family whether some of your family members might serve the Lord in full-time mission service.
- Pick a block in your town where there are no Adventists living and consider this

your "un-entered" area in which to make missionary visits, distribute literature, etc., to win individuals for Christ.

- Make a study as a family of one of the main world religions outside Christianity. Discuss creative ways Adventists might reach these groups with the good news about Jesus. What about their religious beliefs might make them open or closed to such good news?
- Should it be necessary to relocate as a family, pray about and consider moving

to a section of the city, country or region where Seventh-day Adventists are few or non-existent so as to provide a witness there.

- As children are growing in the family discuss the blessings and importance of missionary service either at home or abroad and the possibility of settling themselves as adults in parts of the country that need the witnessing presence of Seventh-day Adventists.

Family Evangelism Resources

BOOKS

OPEN HEART, OPEN HOME

Mains, Karen Burton. Elgin, Illinois: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1980. 199 pp.

A book that gives a biblical basis for open-hearted living—hospitality. Author shares her personal and family experiences of openness and sharing with others in this lonely, love-starved world.

OUT OF THE SALT-SHAKER & INTO THE WORLD

Pippert, Rebecca Manley. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979, 188 pp.

Designed to enable Christians to communicate their faith. Not as a duty. Not as a program. Communication of faith becomes automatic and natural, and flows from the Christian as a way of life.

SHARING OUR FAITH WITH FRIENDS

Sahlin, Monte. Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1990, 220 pp. US\$13.95.

A complete handbook for a relational approach to church growth: Friendship Evangelism, small groups, winning baby boomers, etc. Traces the history of evangelism and proposes that relational evangelism is currently the most effective approach.

CURRICULUM RESOURCES

CHRISTIAN FAMILY SEMINAR

Written by Pastor Rocky Gale, of the Florida Conference. Youth and family life have been central to the ministry of Rocky and his wife Chris. This set of 17 lessons is a perfect blend of Family emphasis with the Adventist message. A refreshing approach that will not only help church families but also reach out into the community. Covers topics of family concern: marriage, communication, family, intimacy, children, self-esteem, and also Sabbath—"Family Time Management," Law & Grace—"Odd Couple," Tithe—"Until Debt Do Us Part," Death—"How to Face Family Tragedy," Second Coming—"World's Greatest Wedding," etc. It is evangelistic in purpose and makes a good "follow-up" series or a change from the prophetic approach.

Student Packs—Include Bible, binder, lessons, pen & ruler. Packs differ only in type of Bible included.

- A. Deluxe Pack—Materials & Bible #580. Sep. priced US\$14.25
Pack Priced Item 47580
In Qty of 1-9 US\$13.50 ea.
10 or more US\$12.95 ea.

- B. Economy Pack—Same as "A" with soft cover, giant print Bible #575
Sep. priced US\$12.25

Pack Prices Item 47560
In Qty of 1-9 US\$11.50 ea.
10 or more US\$10.95 ea.

- C. Lessons and Binder
Item 48000 US\$ 4.95

- D. Family Seminar Teacher's Manual
Written in conjunction with John and Millie Youngberg of Andrews University.
Item 42500 US\$15.95

- E. Overhead Transparencies
Color transparencies—invaluable teaching help.
Item 42700 US\$70.00

Order from: Seminars Unlimited,
P.O. Box 66, Keene, TX 76059 USA
1-800-982-3344

CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY MADE EASY

by Patricia B. Mutch Ph.D.

Shows how through social interaction the love of Christ can be demonstrated and how we witness through sharing. Includes study guide, three audio cassettes, and textbook: *Open Heart, Open Home*.

HCM 7177 US\$19.95

Order from: Seminars Unlimited,
P.O. Box 66, Keene, TX 76059 USA
1-800-982-3344

FAMILY LIFE EVANGELISM

Leaders' Manual

by Gordon Martinborough

A new tool for evangelism. Sermons, Bible studies, and instruction guide.

MSI 301-1 US\$18.95 (English)

MSI 301-2 US\$18.95 (Spanish)

Order from: Seminars Unlimited,
P.O. Box 66, Keene, TX 76059 USA
1-800-982-3344

FAMILY LIFE EVANGELISM

Participants' Lesson Guides

by Gordon Martinborough

Series 1—Groundwork; Series 2—Followup.
Sold only in sets of 25 (12 lessons per set)

MSI 302-1 US\$16.95 (English)

MSI 302-2 US\$16.95 (Spanish)

Order from: Seminars Unlimited
P.O. Box 66 Keene TX 76059 USA
1-800-982-3344

FAMILY TIMES

produced by Family Matters

The purpose of this new publication is to provide concise, interesting and timely articles that focus on the needs and concerns of families today. The publication is an 11 by 17 inch quarterly newspaper to be used as an outreach tool. The local church can use as many of the *Family Times* articles that they choose, and add their own articles to publish a family newspaper for their community.

For a free sample issue and free *Family Times* Publication Kit, write to:

Family Matters, P.O. Box 7000
Cleveland, TN 37329 USA

WELCOME BABY

by Dr. Kay Kuzma

A new and exciting outreach program designed to facilitate gentle interaction

between a caring church member and the parents of a newborn in your local community.

Complete guide for establishing and operating a *Welcome Baby* program in the

local church. Introductory Kit US\$29.95 plus postage.

Order from: Family Matters, P.O. Box 7000, Cleveland, TN 37320 USA

Reprinted Article

Ten Ways to Witness From Your Home Proven ideas you can use

Gladys Delong

I have had numerous people, mostly women, say to me, "I have small children [or a sick or elderly parent], so I cannot leave home to work for the Lord. What can I do?"

In response to this question, I have made up a list of ways to witness from our homes. Members who have used this list have seen good results.

1. Keep small books and magazines beside your front door. Give one to every person who comes to your home.

2. Write letters of condolence to the survivors listed in the obituary notices of the newspaper. As a result of doing this, I was able to lead a widow to join our church.

3. Use your telephone. Begin with the first name in your area phone book and invite each person to enroll in a Bible correspondence course. A sister of mine saw a family baptized as a result of using this method to witness.

4. Start a lending library in your home. Lend your books to the people in your neighborhood. I have found that women especially seem to like books containing stories of how people heard and accepted our faith. Another of my sisters has interested a lady in our message in this way.

5. Save your unusual canceled stamps, as well as S&H green stamps and Top Value stamps. Send these to the Voice of Prophecy, which will sell them and invest the money in contacting people.

*I cannot leave
home to work for
the Lord.
What can I do?*

6. Are you a ham radio operator? Use your amateur radio to contact non-Adventist hams. When you send them a QSL card, enclose a Bible correspondence course card with an invitation to send for the course. Invite them as well to join the Adventist Bible study group on ham radio, which meets each morning at 6:30 EST on 3980mHz (75 meters).

My husband has been a member of the Adventist Bible study group on amateur radio for years and has seen many people come into the church through this ministry.

7. Put up a sign in your front yard saying "Bible Study Every Sunday Night at 7:30. Everyone Invited." You will be surprised, as was my niece, at how many neighbors will come.

8. Take a child to Sabbath School with you. Also invite the neighborhood children to come and have family worship with your children. As a result of my taking a girl to Sabbath School, both she and her mother were baptized.

9. Start a mailing project. Choose a town or county with no Adventist church. Send a pamphlet and Bible course enrollment card to as many homes as you can.

One church that tried this baptized two to three times more people in the next

three years than in any previous corresponding period. After my brother sent literature every week to such a county, evangelistic meetings held there succeeded in raising up a church.

Just now my sister, her husband, and I have two people accepting the Sabbath in response to our mailing project.

10. Start a prayer circle in your home. Ask two or three church members to come to your home one day a week. Make a list of spiritually needy friends or relatives, and have a group pray for each person on the list. Also pray individually each morning and night.

These methods work, as I, my family, and many others who have used them or have been led to the Lord by them can testify.

Gladys DeLong writes from Fletcher, North Carolina. From 1974 to 1979 she and her husband Dale, a builder, were involved with Maranatha Flights International in building the Valley of the Angels Hospital in Honduras. Reprinted by permission from the *Adventist Review*, February 27, 1986.

Reprinted article

Hospitality Evangelism

Esther Lausten

Won't you come over? What would have happened if I hadn't invited her home? Would she have returned to church?

I was about to walk out the church door when I looked back and saw her standing in a corner. She looked lonely and embarrassed.

"She must be a stranger," I mused. "I'd better speak to her and invite her home to dinner."

Dora had been taking courses from the Voice of Prophecy, who had given her the address of our church and encouraged her to visit. She had enjoyed it, but had felt left out of things, not knowing anyone there.

We had a nice dinner with her. Then we discovered that she had a lovely singing voice. As my daughter played the organ, we sang all afternoon—solos, duets, and chorus-style. In the evening, my daughter took her to the young people's social. She enjoyed herself and promised to come back the next week.

We were glad to add Dora to our list of friends. What would have happened if I hadn't invited her home? Would she have returned to church?

The next day my friend Mary phoned. "Who was that girl I saw you talking to yesterday in church?"

When I told her how much we had enjoyed Dora's visit, Mary asked, "Really, Esther, don't you ever get tired of having people over for meals? It's so much work!"

As long as you are preparing for your own family's Sabbath dinner on Friday, it doesn't take much more work to prepare a little extra in case there are visitors at church. Groceries are costly these days, but I haven't run short of food yet! The Lord blesses those who do this work. "Christ keeps an account of every expense incurred in entertaining for His sake. He supplies all that is necessary for this work. Those who for Christ's sake entertain their brethren, doing their best to make the visit profitable both to their guests and to themselves, are recorded in heaven as worthy of special blessings."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 450.

In some cases entertaining is sheer delight and very educational. We live near one of our colleges and have discovered that students who come to preach in our church are happy for a home-cooked meal. We love to hear them tell their conversion experiences, and in the case of foreign students, to hear all about their countries and cultures. This is a special blessing for families with children.

House an excuse

Some people's excuse for not entertaining is that their house is too plain. But I believe most people feel more comfortable in a plain home, as long as it is *clean*, than in one that is too fine and extravagant.

I have some retired friends who are widowed. They live alone and complain, "Sabbath is such a lonely day." If they would prepare a meal on Friday, then invite someone home with them on Sabbath, they would do themselves a favor as well as the person they invite. Sometimes older people feel that there is not much they can do for the Lord, but this is one thing both older men and women can do.

In some churches members leave it up to the minister or one or two families to entertain the visitors, but this is a practice Ellen White counsels against in *Testimonies*, volume 6, page 344: "It is not in God's order for one or two to do all the entertaining for the conference or a church, or for workers to be paid for entertaining their brethren. This is an invention born of selfishness, and angels of God make account of these things."

The most important reason for dispensing hospitality is that it makes you feel so good. When your company leaves, you may be a little tired, but you are always happier. Nothing can beat the companionship of good friends.

Esther Lausten writes from Knox, Indiana. Reprinted with permission from the *Adventist Review*, September 6, 1984.

Division _____

Union _____

Evaluation

1993 Family Ministries Planbook "Families Reaching Families"

1. On a scale of 1-10 ranging from "Of little value" to "Extremely valuable," how would you rate the materials?

Of little
value

Extremely
valuable

<i>Let Love's Light Shine</i> Sermon Resource for Feb. 20	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>A Home Is for Sharing</i> Sermon resource for Feb. 27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Mission of Fellowship</i> Sermon resource for Sept. 18	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Little Seka's Big Decision</i> Children's Story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Parrot Preachers</i> Children's Story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>How Jeff Witnessed During the Forest Fire</i> Children's Story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Time Out for Love</i> Mini-seminar, Feb 20-27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Evangelistic Parenting</i> Mini-seminar, Feb. 27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Hearts and Homes for Him</i> Mini-seminar, Sept. 18	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>101 Ideas for Family Evangelism</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Family Evangelism Resources</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

<i>Ten Ways to Witness From Your Home</i> Reprinted Article	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Family Living</i> Reprinted Article	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2. What changes would make the materials more helpful to you?

Receiving them sooner

More detailed instructions for usage

More sermon illustrations

More program resources

More helps for family life leaders

More children's stories to accompany sermon topics

Other

3. What adaptation of these materials or good ideas for their use can you share with us?

Please return this form to Karen and Ron Flowers, Department of Church Ministries, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA