

Sunday School—a Support for Parents

Childlike Faith

In the Bible, Jesus reminds His listeners to bring children unto Him. “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 19:14). We yet today wish to bring our children to learn of Jesus. He also spoke of little children to illustrate the simplicity of faith. “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:3,4). Our hope is that our children would remain in child-like faith.

Children grow up to be teenagers and then young adults. Many are blessed with spouses and children. This cycle continues from generation to generation. The teachings of God’s Word are the foundation of faith. They support all children of God from childhood through their adult life. The teachings are unchanging, for God’s Word never changes.

Teaching Begins at Home

How is God’s Word taught from generation to generation? When my father died, a dear brother reminded me that the work of God’s kingdom passes from our fathers down to us. We must do our part as parents to raise our children and to instruct them about living faith.

Teaching begins when children are babies. It is according to God’s instruction. “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deut. 6:6,7).

We find, however, that the amount of time spent instructing our children seems to dwindle as the family grows. God blesses His work in many ways: through camps, services, Sunday school and various Christian publications, for example. These support the work that is done in our homes. In North American Zion, we are fortunate to have the support of the local congregation in the form of Sunday school. God gives His gifts to those who teach our children of living faith. It comforts me as a parent to know that my children receive instruction on the Word of God from fellow believers.

Lesson Aids

Over the years, much work has been put into the current Sunday school curriculum. It contains lesson topics and objectives, along with Bible and other references to help teachers prepare lessons. The current curriculum was completed in 2004, and since then God has blessed us with many more LLC publications that can also be used in preparing and teaching lessons.

The *Illustrated Home Bible*, for example, has Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments with accompanying images that can be used in lessons. It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. This is true in the teaching of God's Word, for the lexicon and grammar of the centuries-old Bible translation can be difficult to understand. Examples of LLC publications that can be used as teaching material are listed in the accompanying sidebar.

New Digital Resources

To support teaching in the home and Sunday school, a project team was established in early 2017 to review and update resources. Most will be made available in digital, downloadable format. This will give teachers more information to help prepare and teach the lessons. In addition, the resources will be available online, so teachers can prepare in the convenience of their own home.

The project team is working closely with LLC congregations across North America. By including all congregations in the Sunday school resources update, the teaching gifts of many believers are being used. Last year, a letter was sent to each congregation asking for assistance in reviewing lessons for one or two grades and in finding references from new LLC publications. Congregations were asked to submit their updates to the project team. To date, some congregations have submitted their updates. One compiled a list of references from the *Illustrated Home Bible* and *Bible Story Illustrations*. Work will continue this fall to make the references readily available to Sunday school teachers. All will benefit from this work.

God Blesses the Work

“Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy” (1 Chron. 29:9). We are thankful for the gifts with which God has blessed His kingdom. They support this important work—help that is needed for our children to grow up in living faith. “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).

Loren Hillukka

Discussion Points

1. How have the teachings in Sunday school supported you and your family?
2. Tell about reference materials that have especially helped you in lesson preparation.
3. Going to Sunday school each week, both as a student and as a teacher, can sometimes get tiring. How do you deal with these feelings? What helps to again continue with renewed strength?
4. Sing song of Zion 445, “O Jesus in the Temple.” Share your thoughts.

LLC Resource Material

- *Illustrated Home Bible*
- *Bible Story Illustrations*
- *Let's Study the Bible*
- *The Treasure Hidden in a Field*
- *In the Footsteps of the Sheep*
- *At the Crossroads of Choosing*
- *Crossing the Current: The Christian in Society*
- *The Sheepfold Tender: Life within God's Kingdom*
- *Fortifying the Foundation: Keeping a Christian Household*
- *Expanding Gospel Work*
- *I Found God's Kingdom*
- *Martin Luther, a Faithful Servant of God*
- *Jesus, the Son of God*
- *Jesus, Our Friend*
- *Jesus, Our Teacher*
- *Jesus, Our Savior*
- *Stories of the Apostles*
- *A Golden Vessel (poetry)*
- *An Iron Pillar and Brazen Wall*
- *Voice of Zion*
- *Shepherd's Voice*
- To view current online resources, go to www.llchurch.org > Faith > Resources