

Beginner

Bible Study Guide

A Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for Beginner Children
GraceLink® Sabbath School Curriculum

www.gracelink.net

Year A, Fourth Quarter

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Special thanks to . . .

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Basic Needs of Children*

All children have certain basic needs as well as needs that are specific to their age and stage of development. The basic needs of children are . . .

Physical

- Food
- Warmth
- Shelter

Mental

- Power—to make choices and follow plans

Emotional

- A sense of belonging
- Approval and recognition
- Expressions of unconditional love and acceptance
- Freedom within defined boundaries
- Humor—a chance to laugh

Spiritual

- An all-knowing, loving, caring God
- Forgiveness of wrongs and a chance to start over
- Assurance of acceptance with God
- Experience in prayer, answers to prayer
- A chance to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God

The Beginner Child

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church the GraceLink curriculum for beginners targets children ages birth through 2 years. However, both the beginner and the kindergarten materials are adaptable to 3-year-olds.

A general rule applying to the beginner child is: seat children so their feet easily touch the ground. For children under 18 months use walkers (without wheels).

To better understand beginner children, ages birth through 2 years, it is helpful to note characteristics of their growth and development.

Physical

- Vary greatly in their physical development
- Are growing rapidly
- Tire easily
- Cannot sit still for long

Mental

- Have an attention span of only one or two minutes
- Learn by active involvement and imitation rather than by instruction
- Learn best one ministep at a time
- Focus attention on what they see and/or touch

Emotional

- Are extremely egocentric—centered in themselves
- Fear separation from parents
- Cry easily; one crying child sets other children crying
- Express their needs by crying. The crying usually stops when needs are met.
- Become attached to adults who show love and acceptance of them

Spiritual

- Sense attitudes of respect, joy, and anticipation in connection with church, the Bible, and Jesus
- Can identify pictures of Jesus and lisp His name
- Will fold hands (briefly) for the blessing before meals and kneel (again briefly) for prayer

Developmental Needs

In addition to the basic needs listed earlier, 2-year-olds need to experience:

- Power—to have a chance to manipulate objects, events, people
- Freedom—to make choices, to interact in learning situations, to sometimes move about at will
- Independence—to do some things unaided
- Security—to feel safe

**Children's Ministries: Ideas and Techniques That Work*, ed. Ann Calkins (Lincoln, Nebr.: AdventSource, 1997).

A Letter to Parents

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this edition of the GraceLink curriculum *Beginner Bible Study Guide*. Have you noticed the Do and Say activities that follow each story? Have you tried any of them with your child? Do you like having the memory verses, songs, and finger-plays at the end of the Bible Study Guide? Is your child responding and trying to do some of them without help?

Now is the time to help your child start to learn about God's Word, the Bible. Show your child the memory verses in *your* Bible. Point to each word as you say it together. (Using the motions will help to reinforce the text.) Be an example. Let him or her see you reading God's Word every day.

Remember, these lessons are introduced in Sabbath School. This book is intended for use as daily reinforcement. Share the story with your child each day. Review the memory verse and do the motions. Have fun with the Do and Say activities.

Pray with your child often. And when you do, include us in those prayers. Let us pray for one another as together we seek to lead our children to Christ.

May God be with you and your family as you draw closer to Him. And may these lessons help you do just that.

**Cordially,
The Editors**