

# Beginner

Bible Study Guide

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

Year B, First Quarter

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### *Special thanks to . . .*

Special thanks to **Bailey Gillespie** and **Stuart Tyner**, of the John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry at La Sierra University, for initial work in planning the GraceLink curriculum, and to **Patricia A. Habada** for coordinating the GraceLink project and seeing it to completion.

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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

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

# A Letter to Parents

## Dear Friends,

The three lessons in this Bible study guide focus on serving others, Jesus' unconditional love, and joyful worship. Activities in the Do and Say section at the end of each lesson teach and reinforce these three important concepts.

We encourage you to study the options and try some of these activities as a part of your family worship. Involve your young child in worship now, and you will foster a love for Jesus and His Word that will last. Sing songs of praise and share meaningful scripture. Read together from books such as *A Child's Steps to Jesus* series for young children.

Make the time—take the time—to worship with your child every day. Years from now you'll be glad you did.

Our prayer is that these lessons will bring joy and peace to you and your child. Let us pray for one another as we work together to lead our little ones to Christ.

**Cordially,  
The Editors**