

101 Ideas for Family Evangelism

*"The Christian home is . . . by far the most powerful evangelizing agency in the world. . . . 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 . . ." (David and Vera Mace).
Here are suggestions for presenting the gospel to those inside and outside our homes.*

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 part company. 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

"unentered" 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.