LESSON 1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

Groups

Ask the students to stand up and push back their chairs, leaving a large empty area. Tell them you will call out a number and an action. People should get together into a group of that number doing that action as quickly as possible. Whoever is left out of a group has to sit down. Allow them to practice once by calling out **Five, form groups of five—huddled tight.**

Continue giving directions, such as:
- **Six** — shoulders touching, facing the same direction.
- **Four** — holding hands in a circle.
- **Three** — lined up in a row standing on tiptoe.
- **Two** — holding both hands and facing each other.

Continue until there are only two students left. Applaud the students who remain.

**Debriefing**

Ask: **How did you choose the groups you were in?** (Accept responses.) **If you were in a group—what did you think about those who had been left out?** (OK, sorry, didn’t think of them) **How did it feel being left out of the group?** (OK, lonely, etc.) **What could we do at church to make sure no visitors or members feel that way?** (Be friendly, invite people to sit with us.) Say: **As Christians we are called to be united with the same purpose. Together we can reach out to others with the good news about Jesus. Let’s say together our power text, Galatians 6:10,**

> “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).

Say: **Our power point this week is:**

- **Our church is a family of believers who take care of one another.**

B

Needs and Haves

Instruct the students to pretend that there has been a disaster in their town. Divide the class into two groups. The first group will make a list of things people who have lost everything will need to set up a household: homes, furniture, clothing, food, tools. (Tell them to add some things to the list that are luxuries, such as silk pajamas, etc.) Without conferring with the first group, the second group will make a list of things people already have that they could share. When everyone is finished, the first group will read their needs list. The second group will respond whenever they have listed an item the first group needs.

**Debriefing**

Ask: **What is it like to be able to fulfill the needs of others?** (OK, great, etc.) **What do you think we might do about the needs of others that are unfulfilled?** (Accept responses.) **How is this like what the early Christians did for each other?** (very much) **Let’s say together our power text, Galatians 6:10,**

> “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).

Say: **Our power point this week is:**

- **Our church is a family of believers who take care of one another.**

**Accommodations for students with special needs**

Allow students with special needs who experience difficulty with this activity to work with a partner who could assist them.
Fellowship
Allow students to report things that they are pleased or troubled about. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors. Get contact information from the adult who brought them to church. At the beginning of the following week, send a postcard or e-mail letting the visitors know how much you enjoyed having them in your class and that you would like to see them again.

Suggested Songs
“This Is the Day” (He Is Our Song, no. 98)
“Walking in the Spirit” (He Is Our Song, no. 73)
“We Are the Family of God” (He Is Our Song, no. 114)

Mission
Use Adventist Mission for youth and adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students identify and mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place. Send a letter to the parents, informing them about the mission offering (see letter to parents on p. 144).

Offering
Use a food basket or bowl as an offering container to represent how the early church shared food.

Say: In the early church people gave things such as food and clothing to help others. We still do that today, but we also give money. Plan to set aside a little of the money you get each week to give so other people can have the things they need.

Prayer
Have the class divide into groups of two or three. Instruct them to spend time asking God to show them ways that they can share what they have with others. Pray for the students’ joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors. Close by thanking God for the privilege of sharing.
LESSON 1

INTRODUCING THE BIBLE STORY

The Net Kids

The Net Kids are an imaginative way to introduce the Bible story. If you prefer not to use this imaginary element, read over the script yourself and introduce the lesson concept in your own words.

You will need three scripts for the students. The script for duplication is found on page 145 of this guide. You can either have them memorize the parts a week ahead or give them the script Sabbath morning. To introduce the Net Kids, say: The Net Kids are an imaginary international group of children ages 11-14 who communicate regularly through e-mail. Emiko and Darren met in a teen Christian chat room and found out that they were both Seventh-day Adventists. They then created a chat room for Adventist juniors and teens, and the other four joined. They get together as often as they can through the Internet.

Ulla: 11-year-old girl, Sweden
Ivan: 12-year-old boy, Russia
Tendai: 12-year-old boy, Zimbabwe
Ana: 13-year-old girl, U.S.A.
Darren: 13-year-old boy, Australia
Emiko: 14-year-old girl, Japan

Arrange the students at desks, or chairs turned around as desks if no desks are available. Have them tap as they read their part to simulate typing at a computer keyboard.

PRESENT THE SKIT.

DEBRIEFING

Ask: Who do you know who has done something similar to help another church member? (Accept responses.) Today we are going to talk about a whole church community that helped one another with their needs.

EXPERIENCING THE STORY

Have a student volunteer to read Acts 4:32-37. Then go back through the passage and have a pair or up to four students develop conversations based on the following verses: 4:32; 4:33; 4:34, 35; 4:36, 37. After a few minutes have each group report their conversation.

Debriefing

Ask: How did the disciples know who needed what? (People reported to them the needs of others; deacons found out.) How do you think the people got what they needed? (Sometimes they asked; other times people asked them, or just observed.) What is one way of getting things to people who need them without waiting for the people to ask? (Having people who are helper “spies” who keep their eyes open for needs.)

Say: Remember, our power point is:

Our church is a family of believers who take care of one another.
Exploring the Bible
Have the students find and read the following verses. Give them paper and pens/pencils and instruct them to paraphrase each text.

1 Thessalonians 5:11, 15 (Comfort each other and give each other strength. . . . Always try to do what is good for one another.)

Galatians 6:10 (We should give special attention to those who are in the family of believers.)

Ephesians 4:32 (Be kind and loving to one another.)

Romans 12:13 (Share with God’s people who need help.)

Debriefing
When all have finished, ask: Why do you think it’s so important to be extra kind to other believers? (It gives others hope and encouragement; helps us feel useful; we’re brothers and sisters.) What are some examples in the Bible of people who were kind to other believers? (David and Jonathan; Esther and Mordecai; Mary Magdalene and Jesus; David and Mephibosheth; the paralytic let down through the roof by his friends.)

Let’s say together our power text, Galatians 6:10:

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).

(Adapted from The Youth Worker’s Encyclopedia of Bible Teaching Ideas: New Testament [Loveland, Colo.: Group], p. 171. Used by permission.)

Scenarios
Say: Often we don’t help people because we don’t want to embarrass them or ourselves. Tell how you would help people in the following situations. Allow time for responses.

1. Everyone is going to camp, except for one girl. You find out the day before that she can’t go because she doesn’t have clothing suitable for camp. She is one size smaller than you, and you have lots of clothes in her size.

2. You notice that a classmate tends to disappear at lunchtime. You follow him one day and discover he didn’t bring a lunch so he drank a lot of water. Another day he had just a slice of bread, which he gobbled down in about 10 seconds.

3. A classmate has done a good job on her science project but may get a reduced grade because she can’t afford to buy poster board to display it.

Debriefing
Ask: How would you like to be treated in each of these situations? (Have someone help meet or be sensitive to my needs.) Do your best to help others by treating them the way you would like to be treated. Let’s say our power point together:

Our church is a family of believers who take care of one another.
**Goodwill Gift**
Encourage students to tell the class how they served others during the past week following the suggestions given in their Bible study guides. Ask: How did you find out what things people needed? What did you share? How did people respond? How did you help at home? How did you tell someone that you appreciate him/her? How did you talk to someone about God’s love? Say: We are told to be kind to one another. One way to do that is to encourage each other. Distribute wrapped candy/healthy snack, about five pieces per student, along with pens/pencils, small slips of paper, and tape.

Say: We are told to be kind to one another. One way to do that is to encourage each other. We’re going to do this by writing goodwill statements on the slips of paper and wrapping them around the pieces of candy/healthy snack. Then we’ll give them to church members.

They can work together in groups to determine what goodwill phrases they’ll write on the slips. Remind them to write only positive statements. These could be Bible verses or sayings, such as “You’re priceless because Jesus died for you.” Allow time for groups to share ideas for phrases.

Let everyone help decorate a box to look like a package of sweets. Drop the goodwill candy/healthy snack inside and help the students distribute it after Sabbath School, explaining the purpose.

**Debriefing**
Ask: How will this activity help us “live” our power text? (It is a way we can share encouragement with our church family.) Let’s say together our power text, Galatians 6:10:

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).

What is this week’s power point?

Our church is a family of believers who take care of one another.

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**Prayer and closing comments:**
Pray for the students’ willingness and opportunities to share with other believers.

Say: Look for opportunities to share as the early Christians did.

**Reminder to parents:**
Say: Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents’ Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.

**Coming up next week:**
Say: Early Christians spread the Word in spite of persecution. We can share Jesus’ love in all circumstances.

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**YOU NEED:**
- wrapped candy/healthy snacks
- small strips of paper
- pens/pencils
- tape
- box
- art supplies to decorate box

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**Closing**
Do you like organizing things and people? It’s a gift to be able to do that. The disciples had their hands full after Pentecost, with people losing homes and jobs because of their faith. But they pulled together, and everyone had food, clothing, and a place to live. Try to picture the interactions within the fellowship of believers.

After Pentecost the number of believers continued to grow. Everyone was in awe of the miracles that the disciples performed. They listened eagerly to their teaching. They spent hours together praying, praising, and studying. Since they were together most of the day, they shared their meals in one another’s homes. Those who were able sold their possessions and gave to people in need. For a while even nonbelievers were excited about the changes made in their friends and family members. The believers were a loving group of people.

Yet the priests, elders, and other religious leaders began to persecute the believers. Following Christ was becoming more difficult. The disciples decided it was time to do something.

“Peter, we’ve got a problem,” one of the disciples said when they met for their daily planning time. “Many of the new believers are being thrown out of their homes by their families, and they have no place to go.”

“That’s right,” John added. “Some of the men have lost their jobs. So they cannot provide for their families.”

“We have to find some way to help them,” Peter said.

“Why don’t we put out a general announcement?” Matthias suggested. “We can have everyone contribute what they can to help those who don’t have food, clothing, or a place to stay.”

“Will some of you organize this right away?” Peter asked. “We’ll need a list of what is turned in so we know what we have to distribute.”

In just a few days the disciples made contacts with other believers. They had plenty of things for people, but now they needed help distributing them. So they invited the believers to contribute to the distribution of the supplies.

Within a short time the volunteers were ready to start working. Some were willing to help because they wanted to work in return for the food and shelter they would be given. Others helped because they loved God and His people.

Soon those who were struggling to provide for their families received from the followers of Christ what they needed: food, shelter, clothing. With these needs taken care of, the new believers were free to share the good news of the gospel with others.

Some of the believers had sold property and donated the money to the community of believers. Several others were also planning to contribute in the same way. One man, Barnabas, from another country, sold his land and journeyed to Jerusalem to give the money he received for it to the apostles.

“I now see why Jesus commanded us to care about our neighbors as much as we care about ourselves,” Matthew said.

The apostles and the other believers were happy and grateful for the outpouring of love. It made them want to love and serve God—and one another—even more.

The description of the early Christian church recorded by Luke in the book of Acts serves as an example of authentic Christianity for us who live in the present age:

“All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:44-47).
KEY REFERENCES
- Acts 4:32-37
- The Acts of the Apostles, chap. 7, pp. 70, 71
- The Bible Story (1994), vol. 10, pp. 26-30
- Our Beliefs nos. 14, 12, 17

POWER TEXT
“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).

POWER POINT
Our church is a family of believers who take care of one another.

Sabbath
- **LEARN** Begin learning the power text.
- **DO** Do the activity on page 18.

Sunday
- **READ** Read Acts 4:32 and this week’s story, “At Home in My Church.”
- **LEARN** Begin memorizing the power text.
- **PRAY** Thank God for His church.

Monday
- **READ** Read Acts 4:33.
- **LIST** List things people in your church could share.
- **SHARE** Begin putting change in a bank at home just for helping other Christians.
- **REVIEW** Review the power text.
- **PRAY** Pray for wisdom to support others in your church.

Tuesday
- **READ** Read Acts 4:34, 35.
- **THINK** Would sharing make your church stronger?
- **DO** What are things you could offer to someone else?
- **REVIEW** Review the power text.
- **PRAY** Ask God to show you what He wants you to share with others in your church family.

Wednesday
- **READ** Read Acts 4:36, 37.
- **LIST** In your Bible study journal* list material and nonmaterial things that you can share with others.
- **SHARE** Make it your goal to daily share kindness with someone (be it just smiles and caring words).
- **REVIEW** Review the power text.
- **PRAY** Pray for other Christians around the world who are sharing what God has given them.

Thursday
- **READ** Read Acts 2:44.
- **THINK** What did Barnabas give the church in addition to the money from selling the field?
- **SHARE** Write a note or make a card that you can give to someone on Sabbath morning.
- **REVIEW** Review the power text.
- **PRAY** Pray for your Sabbath School teacher.

Friday
- **READ** Read Acts 2:45.
- **LIST** In your Bible study journal* write things you can do to actively support your church family.
- **SAY** Repeat the power text by memory.
- **SHARE** Have your family members share various needs that church members may have, as well as ways in which they could support the church family by serving others.
- **PRAY** Pray for your family members and ask God to use each of you as channels of His blessings to others.

**NOTE** *Your Bible study journal is found at the back of your Bible study guide. If you need additional space, use a notebook or open a file on your computer. Writing out your thoughts when you study the Bible helps you remember what you learned from God’s Word.