



# Sunday School— Learning to Live the LIFE

by Sharon Ellard



“Learn to do right.”  
(Isaiah 1:17)

**M**any groups today want to teach children how to live—

- Many religions.
- Many entertainers.
- Many retailers.

In the midst of ALL these voices calling to children, telling children what life is all about, is Sunday School. In Sunday School, children study the Bible—story by story and verse by verse—and learn to live the life that Jesus intends.

The National Sunday School Department has introduced a new vision with the motto, “Learning to Live the *LIFE*.” *LIFE* is an acronym that can be used to describe an effective Sunday School ministry. The letters stand for:



Learning together



Including all who come



Finding others who need to know



Emerging for ministry

The four elements of the vision reflect four of the main purposes of the Church—disci-

pleship, fellowship, evangelism, and ministry.

Every week, over one million children, youth, and adults attend Assemblies of God Sunday Schools. Considering the sheer numbers of those who attend, what is learned within the four walls of Sunday School



classes holds the potential to make a huge difference in churches and communities. We believe God wants to use millions of people who are learning to live life for His purposes. We hope the vision will help Sunday School teams plan lessons with the goal of mobilizing Christians to make a difference in Jesus' name.

## Learning Together

Sunday School is known as the primary learning ministry of the church. Even though Sunday School is only a little over 200 years old, throughout the Bible God repeatedly tells adults to teach His commands to children. Sunday School lessons systematically teach the Bible at each child's level of understanding.

In the small-group setting of Sunday School, children interact with others their own age as they ask questions, practice skills, and minister to one another. The interaction of learning together helps lessons transfer into everyday life.

## Including All Who Come

In highly effective Sunday Schools, all students feel welcome and accepted. Sunday School teachers can plan strategies to draw out shy members and welcome new ones.

Teachers can tailor lessons to fit the needs and interests of children in their classes. The small-group setting of Sunday School allows teachers to plan ways for every child to feel cared for and respected.

Many adults, like Shirley Dobson, Tony Campolo, Dr. Billie Davis, and David Boyd, tell of becoming Christians in a Sunday

School class where a teacher helped them feel included.

## Finding Others Who Need to Know

Children can be highly effective at finding others and bringing them to Jesus.

As children learn and discuss the Bible in Sunday School, they practice talking about spiritual life. Over time, spiritual conversations can become as natural as discussing soccer or pizza. As they plan Sunday School lessons,

teachers can periodically include activities, songs, stories, and even crafts or snacks that children can use as bridges to sharing Jesus with family and friends.

## Emerging for Ministry

Today's children, who are sometimes called Millennials, want to improve their world, and they want to begin as children. In Sunday School, as children learn to live like Jesus, they can begin to serve others. Teachers can plan ways for children to minister

both inside and outside of the class. They can watch for churchwide ministry projects that the class can join in some way. During life application, teachers can help children decide how they can help others in Jesus' name. Teachers can also help children discover and develop personal ministry gifts.

Sunday School teaches the Bible so children can learn to live the life.

For more information about Sunday School, visit [www.sundayschool.ag.org](http://www.sundayschool.ag.org).

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### Questions for Further Study—

1. What does *LIFE* stand for in regards to Sunday School ministry?
2. What does God's Word say about Sunday School, or teaching children the Word? Find some verses to back it up!
3. In what ways can you encourage students to bring their friends to Sunday School?
4. What ministry opportunities are available for your students at your church?

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