

Women's Ministries Emphasis Day

June 14, 2014

"You Are the Light of the World"

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Dear Women's Ministries Leaders,

Joyful greetings. Here we are once again planning our WM Emphasis Day. As you know, this is a global event, and what a blessing it is to be part of a global family. This year the theme for WM Emphasis Day is "You Are the Light of the World," a beautiful theme and reminder for us as women who represent Jesus Christ in this dark and sinful earth.

When I think of light, I remember the wonder I feel looking up at the beauty of a starlit sky on a dark night. As my mind turns to my Maker, I praise Him and thank Him for this beauty that shines in the darkness.

When I think of my 11 million Seventh-day Adventist sisters around the world and the light that we are to shine for all to see, I visualize the dark night sky. Instead of stars I see you shining brightly, reflecting the love, the light, and the joy of Jesus all around. As others see your light, their minds will turn to their Maker, Jesus Christ. Many will thank Him for the beauty of your life, your light shining in the darkness of their lives.

My sisters, our Master has given us gifts—and a mission. The world is huge, and the task is more than we can handle on our own, but we are not alone. Jesus, the Light of the World, invites us to look to Him, to reflect His light and beauty to those around us. As we take time to know Him as our friend, His love will shine forth.

Will you accept the challenge to share the sunshine of His love? I pray you will accept. I know that across the globe millions of my sisters will reflect the Sun of Righteousness, ministering to others and pointing them to our Savior and Redeemer.

Heather-Dawn Small, GCWM Director

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About the Authors

Denise Hochstrasser is Women's Ministries Director for Inter-European Division. She is the mother of 3 adult daughters and has 3 grandchildren.

She spent several years at Newbold College, Bracknell, England. The early death of her first husband left a deep impact on her life, and she has devoted her time to a ministry to women for over 25 years.

Denise was blessed to find love again and now lives in Switzerland with her second husband. She loves the beautiful Swiss countryside, and enjoys reading, swimming and walking near the lake or in the snowy mountains.

She delights in encouraging women to find their gifts and use them to bless others inside and outside the Church. Her favourite text is Phil. 4:8, "Concentrate on what is beautiful and on what is positive in life."

Hannele Ottschowski, a native of Finland and the wife of a retired pastor, lives in Southern Germany. She has spent much of her life supporting other people—her husband, her four daughters, her grandchildren, and the church. At church she has served as an ordained elder, and as assistant to the WM director of the EUD she is helping to organize the first international WM congress in her division.

For almost 20 years Hannele has contributed to the Women's devotional books, and she has been instrumental in publishing five women's devotional books in the German language. She is a speaker on Hope Channel Ukraine and Germany with a daily morning devotional program called "Good Morning with Hannele Ottschowski." She is also active as a speaker at Women's Ministries retreats and seminars in German-speaking countries. In addition, a DVD series for women's small group ministry is being prepared to help women reach out to other women in their homes.

Featured Divisions

- **Inter-American Division**
- **Southern Asia-Pacific Division**

Inter-American Division

Cecilia de Iglesias, *Director of Women's Ministries*

Territory: Anguilla, Antigua y Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Bonaire, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, French Guiana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Island, United States Virgin Islands, Venezuela.

1. **Difficulty for leaders:** In some of our countries, women face major obstacles and a lack of support. This makes it difficult to be strong leaders and carry out their responsibilities.
2. **Poverty:** In many countries of our Division, because of political and economic instability, the women live in poverty, lack education and training, and are in danger.
3. **Abuse:** Often because of their lack of training and opportunities, the women are victims of abuse.

Objectives

1. **Care:** Churches in the Inter-American Division are concerned about prevention of abuse in all its forms in both the church and the community. We recognize the need to create support networks and offices to serve families and abuse victims.
2. **Training:** The goal is for every church in the Inter-American Division to conduct leadership training, as well as evangelism and personal growth programs which will provide women with the tools for a full life in family, relationships, and Christian service.
3. **Missionary Activities:**
 - a. Each church will be encouraged to conduct the certification program in Evangelism, including practice and the evaluation of results.
 - b. Each woman in the local churches will be provided with the information and materials needed to participate in evangelism campaigns and other out-reach activities, as suited to their gifts.

Southern Asia-Pacific Division

Helen Gulfan, *Director of Women's Ministries*

Territory: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam; comprising the Central Philippine, East Indonesia, North Philippine, and South Philippine Union Conferences; the Pakistan Union Section; the Bangladesh, Myanmar, Southeast Asia, and West Indonesia Union Missions; the Sri Lanka Mission of Seventh-day Adventists; and the Timor- Leste Mission.

It is a privilege to ask the women throughout the world to pray:

1. For Revival and Reformation among our women members and their families. May they be earnest in prayer and the study of His Word.
2. For the Holy Spirit to awaken the women to the realization that the end-time is at hand, and that we must double our efforts to touch lives and share with others the good news of hope in Jesus.
3. That "Care Group" ministries be a lifestyle for our women as they participate in the "Homes of Hope and Health" program using the *WIN! Wellness* resources prepared by the Youngbergs.
4. That even in difficulties and the coming persecution, the women members and their families will stand for the truth because of God's great love and promises of strength and hope.
5. That women and their families be serious in preparing for Jesus' return!

“You are the Light of The World”

Worship Service Outline

Musical Prelude

Entry of Platform Participants

Doxology

Invocation

Tithe and Offering

Offertory

Prayer of Dedication for Offering

Hymn of Praise: “There’s Sunshine in My Soul Today” (SDA Hymnal # 470)

Intercessory Prayer

Children’s Story: “Telling Our Friends About Jesus”

Special Music

SERMON: *“You are the Light of The World”*

Hymn of Consecration: “This Little Light of Mine” (SDA Hymnal # 580)

Benediction

Hymn of Farewell

Postlude

Children's Story
"Telling Our Friends About Jesus"

Tom snuggled nearer to his mother, and cuddled in, listening to the story she was telling. This was his favourite time of the day. He had done his homework, had his supper, and now before he went to bed his mother was telling him one of the wonderful stories of Jesus. Tom loved Jesus. Ever since he was a toddler, his mother and father had told him about Jesus, and he had never forgotten their words: "Wherever you go, remember Jesus is with you."

Mother had finished the story, and now she bent down with her children to say their good night prayers. "Dear Jesus," she said, "thank you for all these wonderful stories you have given us. Thank you that you are here with us all the time, ready to listen and help. Please help us to tell our friends about you. Amen."

When Mother prayed, she always added that last bit about telling their friends. That made Tom feel worried. He loved Jesus very much, and he also loved his best friend Harry, but he wasn't sure how to tell him about Jesus. He was worried that Harry wouldn't understand, and maybe he would find a new friend. So Tom hadn't told him about Jesus yet.

"I'll tell him one day," he would say to himself, "when the time seems right." But no time ever seemed right, so Tom said nothing.

"Are you all right?" mother asked, holding Tom close to her.

Tom looked up at his mother's gentle face, and his voice became shaky as he started to speak. "Mum, do we *have* to tell our friends about Jesus? I just can't seem to get round to telling Harry. I'm worried he'll laugh at me, and then I won't have anyone to play with."

"If you knew that the most wonderful toy shop in the world was giving away its best toy cars free, would you tell Harry?"

Tom's eyes grew wide at the thought of such a thing. "Of course!" he said.

"Well, you know, Jesus is God's greatest gift to us, and He's better than any toy car. He's just waiting for you to make more friends for Him. Don't you think that's worth sharing?"

When his mother put it like that, Tom knew that he should tell Harry straight away. "I won't put it off this time," he thought. "I'll tell Harry tomorrow."

Tom kissed his mother good night and scampered upstairs. As he climbed into bed, he started to think how he would tell Harry about Jesus.

He lay in bed staring at the ceiling. How could he go about telling Harry the good news about Jesus? Then an idea came to him.

"I know," he said, sitting straight up in bed, "I'll let Harry know about Jesus without telling him myself! That way he hears about Jesus, but I don't have to say anything!"

Tom slid back under the sheets and pulled them up to his chin. As he did so he saw on the bookcase at the far end of the room his book *Wonderful Stories of Jesus*. It was Tom's favourite book. He knew all the stories by heart, but still loved to read it and look at the lovely coloured pictures. Tom knew what he would do.

"Tomorrow afternoon," he thought, "when nobody is watching, I'll leave that book on the steps of Harry's house. He'll read about Jesus and get to know Him—and then I'll ask for my book back."

The next day after school Tom rushed home. He grabbed his book, went as fast as he could to Harry's house, and carefully laid the book on the front step where Harry would find it. Then he ran home as fast as he could.

Just then there was a faraway rumbling sound which grew louder and louder. Tom jumped out of the chair and went outside. Huge drops of rain were falling. He pulled up the collar of his jacket as he rushed back to Harry's house. When he got there, his book was wet through, but he quickly scooped it up and pushed it under his jacket. Then he raced back home. How was Tom ever going to tell Harry about Jesus?

His brother's scribbling pad, which was lying on the hearth rug, gave Tom another idea. He would write a note to Harry, pretending to be Jesus! After borrowing some paper from his brother, he started to write: "Dear Harry, I would like to be your friend. Love, Jesus."

Tom popped the note into his jacket pocket ready for the next morning.

The next day he got up very early before anyone else and slipped out of the house. He quickly rushed around to Harry's house and slipped the note under his door. Then he hurried back home. He was so excited that he could hardly eat his breakfast.

Soon Tom met up with Harry as they made their way to school.

Tom kept waiting for Harry to tell him about the letter. Harry said nothing. They were almost at the school gates when Tom couldn't wait any longer. "Did you get any letters today, Harry?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, as a matter of fact I did," said Harry. "I wasn't going to say anything in case you didn't get one. Someone called Jesus wrote to me, asking to be my friend. I think he must be one of the new kids who moved here last week. He must be lonely. I thought I'd pop in and see him after school. Did he write to you too?" asked Harry

"Er, no," said Tom.

On his way home from school Tom felt really unhappy.

At home Tom thought again for a while. He thought of many other ways he could tell Harry about Jesus, but none would work. He thought of hiding in a bush and speaking to Harry from inside the bush. Then Harry would hear about Jesus and he would never know who had spoken to him from inside the bush. If only somebody could write on the sky "Jesus loves you, Harry." But that was way too difficult to arrange. And besides, who knows if Harry would even see it.

"If only I could think of a way of being someone else," Tom said to himself. Then a big grin spread over his face. A new plan was starting in his mind.

"It's brilliant!" he thought. "My best plan yet. Why didn't I think of it before? I'll dress up as someone else. I'll tell all the other kids about Jesus, not just Harry.

Tom printed posters in his best capital letters:

TODAY ON THE HILLSIDE
AT 3 O'CLOCK
A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON
IS COMING TO TELL YOU ABOUT JESUS
PLEASE COME AND BRING YOUR FRIENDS

Tom put up the posters at the school gate and went home quickly. He tried on his disguise. He put on Dad's old gardening coat and Mum's old wellies, and wrapped a big tartan scarf round his mouth. Then he put on his big orange sun-glasses and looked into the mirror. It was so good he could hardly recognize himself!

The next day everyone in his class talked about the important speaker coming to the hillside. "Do you know anything about him, Tom?" asked Harry.

"Well, I don't know much about him, but I know he's definitely not from here."

At last it was three o'clock. Tom changed into his disguise and made his way towards the hillside. All his school friends were there. When he saw them, Tom felt a bit nervous, but he took a deep breath and went up to the crowd.

"Hello," he shouted through the scarf. "Thank you for coming. I'm here today to tell you about Jesus. Jesus is my best friend. He wants to be your friend, too."

Suddenly Tom felt ashamed, standing there pretending to be someone else, too frightened to tell his friends just how much he loved Jesus.

Slowly Tom took off his woolly hat. Then he unwound his big scarf. Everybody started to laugh. "It's Tom!" they shouted.

“Yes,” said Tom. “I’m not the important speaker you thought you were going to hear. But one thing is still the same. I want to tell you about my best friend. I love Jesus.”

Then Tom told the children some of the wonderful stories about Jesus. When he had finished, Harry ran over to him. “Tom, that was fantastic! And dressing up like that. What a clever way to get everyone to come! And best of all, thanks for telling us about Jesus.”

Tom grinned. “Would you like to learn more about Jesus, Harry?”

“Yes, please!” Harry said.

“Come back to my house for tea, then,” said Tom. “Then I’ll tell you more about Jesus.”

Adapted from Source: ISBN 1-873796-15-3. “Rabbit’s Tale,” by Elaine L. Anderson, condensed. Printed and published by The Stanborough Press for Autumn House, Grantham, England.

“You are the Light of the World”

SERMON

Introduction

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house” (Matthew 5:14-15). (Slide#3)

Jesus’ words should cause us to lift up our heads, realizing what a glorious thing it is to be a Christian. “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8). We have not only received light, we have been made light; we have become transmitters of light.

I. The Lights’ Effect on Us

Most of us have no idea what complete darkness is like because we always have lights we can turn on. Those living in a city have streetlights. In our homes we have electric lights. When we walk at night, we have torches. Our vehicles have headlights to light up the road. And often we enjoy beautiful moonlight. But when one is without light, it is difficult to function. (Slide #4)

We need light to find our way in the dark, in order to avoid harm. How could we find our way home in complete darkness? We couldn’t even find the key hole in order to unlock the door.

Darkness is also a symbol for sin. Bad things often happen under the cover of darkness. The Bible says in Ephesians 5:11-12 NIV: *“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.”* (Slide #5)

We are called to turn away from the darkness and to look towards good and positive things. We read in Philippians 4:8 NIV: *“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”* (Slide #6)

We are to turn from darkness to its opposite, light. Let’s consider opposites:

- Good and bad.
- Sun and shade.
- Light and darkness.

We need light to dispel darkness and to help us see hidden dangers—both physical and spiritual.

Consider another pair of opposites—land and sea? They are opposites, but are linked closely. Where the land ends the sea begins. Whether it is called Land’s End or Finis Terra, Cape of Good Hope or Cape Horn, these stormy coasts pose a great danger for seafarers. Many ships have sunk there in storms, and many men have lost their lives. That is why lighthouses were built on the most dangerous coastal areas to warn of the lurking dangers. (Slide #7)

We do not know very much about the origin of the first lighthouses. But already centuries before the time of Jesus the eastern Mediterranean was buzzing with maritime commerce, and they probably used lights to help the vessels find their way home to the harbor. Early attempts to signal the way home were very simple, with torches or small fires used to show the fishermen the way at night. (Slide #8)

Today there are still many lighthouses. They were built in important shipping lanes or on dangerous coasts. Their light helped ships avoid dangerous shoals, rocks, or sandbars.

Think about the seafarers in the past who saw a lighthouse in stormy weather and were guided safely to port. How happy they must have been to see the beams from the lighthouse.

There is a song about an old lighthouse which goes like this:
*“There’s a lighthouse on the hillside that overlooks life’s sea.
When I’m tossed, it sends out a light that I might see.
And the light that shines in darkness, now will safely lead us o’er.
If it wasn’t for the lighthouse, my ship would be no more.
Everyone that lives about us says: ‘Tear that lighthouse down.
The big ships don’t sail this way. Why have it ‘round?’
Then my mind goes back to that stormy night when I could see the light.
Yes, the light from that old lighthouse, that stands up on the hill.*

*And I thank God for the lighthouse. I owe my life to Him,
For Jesus is the lighthouse and from the rocks of sin
He has shone a light around me, that I could clearly see.
If it weren’t for the lighthouse, where would this ship be?”*
(Text and Music by Ronald A. Hinson). (Slide #9)

II. Our Response to the Light

We all need spiritual “lighthouses” to help us avoid harm. We must be able to calculate our position, select a safe course. Many people today consider faith in God a thing of the past—something we moderns no longer need. They depend on other navigation systems and orient their lives with the help of various other religions or philosophies, such as humanism, esotericism or atheism. (Slide #10)

However, the old lighthouses still stand on the rocks where they were built hundreds of years ago, just as God’s Word stands like an unfailing lighthouse on the rock. Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away”* (Matthew 24:35 NIV).

This lighthouse shows us the way to the Father: *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6). We can't be safe without Jesus, our lighthouse. (Slide #11)

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life'" (John 8,12NIV). Jesus is the light that shows us the way to God. He also said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* We have this light to guide us to the Father. (Slide #12)

Ellen White says: *"We who are living in this age have greater light and privileges than were given to Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and other ancient worthies, and we are under correspondingly greater obligation to let our light shine to the World."* *Gospel Workers, p. 434.*

Not only are we to follow this light ourselves; we are also to show others how to find this way as well. That is why Jesus said in Matthew 5:13-16: *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."* (Slide #13)

We can be lights for others, as we sing in the old song:

"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine....Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine." (Slide #14)

Perhaps we don't feel as though we are major lights; that is not required. Even if our light is very small, if we let it shine in our lives, we are fulfilling the mission Christ entrusted us with.

- So, are we lights?
- Are we letting our light shine?
- Or does our presence extinguish other people's lights?
- Where does our light come from?

The light shines in the darkness. That is why we should live in the light and *be* light. Jesus gave us a mission: we are to let our light shine. Are we living in the light each day, living so close to our Lord that His light, His love shines through us?

A group of tourists visited a majestic old cathedral. They saw the beautiful stained glass windows, through which the light shone into the dark church. A child asked the guide, "What kind of people are those in the windows?" The guide replied, "They are saints, holy people."

In the evening the child told his mother, "Now I know who the saints are. They are people who let the light shine through them." This child's words are a wonderful reminder that we are all to "let the light shine through us." (Slide #15)

III. You “The Light”

Another illustration is the story of a king who had three sons. In order to find out who should be his successor, he created a test. He gave all three the following assignment: They must fill the great castle hall.

The first son was diligent. He fetched load after load of wood and filled the hall. It was a lot of hard work and he sweat profusely. Full of pride when he finished, he showed his father the hall.

The second son filled the hall with straw. The task was easy and did not take much time. With a fork he made the straw really fluffy and thought, “That will do.” The assignment was fulfilled and he showed it to his father.

The third son waited. He had time. Puzzled, the brothers asked him, “Why don’t you start? The hall has to be filled.”

Evening came and it became dark. Then he took a candle, put it in the middle of the hall and lit it. Lo and behold! The hall was filled—with light. The light drove away the darkness. There was nothing to be added. The father was so impressed by his wisdom that he said, “You will inherit the kingdom.”

Do we, each of us, want to inherit the kingdom? Really? Then let us shine. We can be a warm, bright light in the darkness of this world. We do not need to be great, beautiful, elegant or perfect. We do not need to possess many talents, and we do not need to have studied theology at a seminary. It is enough to be a little light, as long as we shine. (#Slide 16)

As we consider our Lord’s words that we are to be lights, let us learn from the moon. The moon does not shine by itself. It can’t, even if it wanted to. It merely reflects light from the sun. If the moon wanted to shine by itself, that would be impossible. But if the sun shines on it, the moon reflects that light beautifully.

The same applies to us. If **we** try on our own to shine, to do good—knowing all 28 doctrines by heart, sacrificing ourselves for others, having a perfect knowledge of the Bible—then we will probably burn out. All these things are good, and it is wonderful if we are able to do them. But we have to consider that we cannot light all the rooms of a house at the same time. The light of a candle has its limitations, and we do too. God’s light, however, is limitless. And if we live in a loving relationship with God, allowing Him to fill us, then we will reflect His light. We will shine. Let us stay close to our Lord and reflect His holiness.

We can also be faithful lights as we fellowship with other believers. We strengthen each other, sharing the wonderful light of the gospel and encouraging one another. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians (chapter 2, verse 19 NIV), “*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.*” (Slide #17)

We are fellow citizens and members of God’s household. The Apostle Peter confirms this with the words “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special

possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1Peter 2:9).

We are called into His light. We are part of the holy nation. So we are also saints, devoted to God, called to His light. What a wonderful image! We must let God’s light shine through us like the saints in the stained glass windows of the cathedral. We cannot shine of ourselves. We should turn towards God’s light and let Him fill us with His love. Thus we will shine.

- Do you love Jesus?
- Do you live with Jesus?
- Have you made Him the number one priority in your life?
- If so, you are a disciple of Jesus.
- Have you accepted the salvation offered by Jesus? Then you are holy, *holy* in the sense of being set aside or devoted for a special purpose. You are chosen of God to reflect His love, to shine. (Slide #18)

The early Christians called themselves saints because they were disciples of Christ. They had devoted their lives to Him. They permitted God to shine through them, so that His light would make it obvious that they were Christians. How did others see that? The people were so impressed by the first Christians that they said, “Look how they love one another!” Christ’s followers were recognized by their love. God’s love shone through them like the light of the sun through the saints in the stained glass windows. (Slide #19)

One of these Saints is Lucia of Syracuse. Born around 283 in Syracuse, Sicily, she became a Christian at an early age. She decided to devote her life to Jesus.¹ We are told that she spent her life lovingly caring for the poor.² Her name Lucia means “the shining one,” from the Latin word “lux” meaning *light*. (Slide #20)

In Sweden people commemorate her life on Saint Lucia Day on December 13 with a traditional ceremony. In the darkness of the early morning, a girl representing Lucia, wearing a white robe and red sash, with a crown of lighted candles on her head, passes through the dark streets. She is accompanied by other girls also dressed in white robes and carry burning candles who follow her and sing the Lucia song.³ (Slide #21)

The candles shine in the darkness of the early morning, and everyone enjoys a special holiday, but hardly anyone thinks of the spiritual dimension of Saint Lucia day, even though they know the story. In a similar way, the love of Christ shines in the darkness of this world, but many people do not recognize it.

¹ According to available sources, Lucia was the daughter of a rich Roman citizen of Syracuse who had died relatively young.

² Her mother Eutychia wanted to marry her off but Lucia had sworn to stay a virgin for Christ’s sake and put off the engagement. When her mother was healed of a disease during a pilgrimage Eutychia agreed to honor Lucia’s vow. But Lucia’s betrothed accused her of being a Christian in the persecution of Diocletian. She was condemned to death and finally killed by a wound to her throat from a sword. December 13, 304 A.D., is said to be the date of her death. An inscription on a grave around 400 in the catacombs of San Giovanni in Syracuse and her mention in all Martyrologies are proof that she lived.

³ The red sash symbolizes her death as a martyr, the burning candles her love for Christ and others.

Jesus is the light of the world. *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"* (John 1:4-5 KJV). Even in His day, the people didn't understand it. (Slide #22)

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life'" (John 8:12). (Slide #23)

Jesus has brought light into this world, and it shines even today. He wants us to walk in His light and to come to Him with our sorrows and burdens in order to live in His glory. Today we need God's love more than ever, but unfortunately we are often diverted from this light of the world. So many things in our hectic lives make it difficult for us to have a real relationship with our Lord and Savior. Often we do not make the time to let His light shine on us. As a result, it cannot shine *through* us.

Jesus said both "I am the light of the world" and "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). Thus he gave us a task. Like Lucia, who expressed Christ's love in deeds of charity, we should also be a light in this world. Even though we may be only small lights compared to God's great light, we should let our little light shine in our corner of the world in order to dispel the darkness.

Jesus does not want us to cover up our light. He wants us to be a light that shines into the whole world. If every Christian lets his or her light shine, the world will be filled with light. The world needs the light of Christ's followers so that it will become bright for everyone. Even a small light can illuminate the way and prevent someone from stumbling and falling. (Slide #24)

Christ expects that men will become partakers of His divine nature while in this world, thus not only reflecting His glory to the praise of God, but illumining the darkness of the world with the radiance of heaven. Thus will be fulfilled the words of Christ: "Ye are the light of the world." *Lift Him Up*, p. 289.

IV. Conclusion

If we as Christians live with God, our light will shine. We will reflect His love, His glory, His light. Just as the moon reflects the sun, we can shine only when we let God's light shine on us.

It is pleasant to enjoy the warmth and light of the sun. It is just as pleasant and beneficial to enjoy God's presence. Our hearts are warmed, and His light brightens our thoughts. We recognize that God is speaking to us, giving us new ideas and insights as to how we can carry His love to the world. As we spend time with our Master, we will be filled with His love and will share it with all around us. (Slide #25)

Do we find saints, holy people, only in the windows of cathedrals? Let us rather *become* the saints, the holy people who let His light shine through our lives. People will see that in our

dealings, our actions, our radiance, our joy. Let us shine daily. Let us become saints who—in ways both large and small—share God’s light with our world. (Slide #26)

I invite you to pray: *Lord, we thank you for showing us the way to the Father. Help us to follow the light that shines on our path. Thank you for the salvation you offer us. Lord, thank you that you have given us the light of life. Let your light shine through us so that people who see us will see a reflection of your love and know that you are the light of the world. Amen.* (Slide #27)

Additional Materials
(Optional for Sabbath Afternoon Workshops)

“Be the Light of the World”

I. Face your Fears

Is there anybody who would like to tell us their experience? Have you ever felt afraid to acknowledge that you are a Christian?

In the book written by Morris L. Venden, *Why Didn't They Tell Me? Sharing Jesus Isn't Something We Do, It's Who We Are*, he shares three kinds of fears we may face when we decide to be “Light of the World.”

Are we afraid to tell others about our faith because we imagine that there are lions out there waiting to devour us? In Proverbs 22:13 NIV we read, *“The sluggard says, ‘There’s a lion outside! I’ll be killed in the public square!’”*

a. First Lion: Lack of assurance of salvation

If we think that our salvation is somehow dependent on what we do, we will always lack assurance. We may think, “I am not good enough. I still make so many mistakes....How can I tell others of my faith?” Perhaps the following Bible verses will help us gain assurance.

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (John 3:17 NIV)

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV)

God does not call qualified people; He qualifies the people He calls.

I have learned by experience that God leads in a special way and gives me the right words to get my point across, although I always prepare my presentations well. I only need to put myself at His disposition and God will do His part. I have to take the first step as did the people of Israel on the banks of the Jordan. They had to take the first step but God lead them to the other side. They had to be willing to get their feet wet!

b. Second Lion: Deficient knowledge

We may hesitate, thinking, “I don’t know all the Bible texts and don’t know how to prove what I believe from the Bible. I don’t know all 28 doctrines well enough.”

To lessen this fear, remember that witnesses are those who have experienced something themselves. We cannot talk about the state of the dead out of our personal experience, but

we can tell what it's like to have a living relationship with Jesus. If we help others to understand the Bible, we will also learn more ourselves. When I prepare Bible studies, I am usually the one who ends up profiting the most.

Consider this story in Luke: *"The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, 'Return home and tell how much God has done for you.'* So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him." (Luke 8:38-39). Jesus told the man to go back home and tell his friends. When we have tasted how good God is, we have something to tell.

"No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell. Like Philip when he found the Saviour, we shall invite others into His presence." (*Steps to Christ*, p. 78)

c. Third Lion: Fear of failure

In the familiar story of the talents, we read, *"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'"* (Matthew 25:21 NIV)

Notice the wording. Jesus did not say *"successful servant."* We are not responsible for success. All we have to do is be faithful in our part. However, we often bury our talents. Our experience says, *"It doesn't work here. Nobody will be converted. We won't be successful."* Of course it is wonderful to have success and see results. But if we do nothing we will certainly not see any results. The best result might be that we start studying the Bible ourselves.

**Adapted from Why Didn't They Tell Me? Sharing Jesus Isn't Something We Do, It's Who We Are, by Morris L. Venden (Feb 1, 2005)*

II. What is evangelism?

Who is an evangelist? Maybe we should examine our preconceptions. Evangelism includes much more than what we traditionally understand to be evangelism, such as evangelistic meetings and sermons. We will benefit by defining this concept in a much broader sense. Evangelism is a mission-oriented lifestyle which tries to help as many people as possible, in various ways, to get to know God. That is the real Christian lifestyle. Evangelistic meetings are only one aspect in a myriad of different possibilities.

The gospel is like a catchy tune. Maybe it is only a little rhythm at first but it will stick in our minds. We can't keep it quiet; eventually we have it in our heads all the time. May the

gospel become a tune stuck in our heads that we can't keep from humming; then other people will hear and the tune will catch on with them as well. In others words, we will be Evangeliving, as the believers in Central America say. We will be living the gospel. That is living evangelism.

III. "Touch a Heart – Tell the World."

The motto of Women's Ministries is "Touch a Heart - Tell the world." We have to first reach the heart before people are ready to make changes in their lives or in their faith. We should show people in a simple and practical way that we are interested in their well-being. We can only reach people if we become their friends.

a. Ways we can reach out to people (see the *Friendship Evangelism activity*)

1. Friendship evangelism. This means an encounter that calls forth trust and understanding. Strangers become friends when we invite them into our homes. There they can see the love of God that reigns in our home. And they will have questions. Friendship evangelism means to be a friend and answer the questions your friends have. And the questions will surely come. We do not have to overwhelm them with the truth. All we have to do is nurture our friendships.

Usually friendship evangelism has the following aspects:

- Meeting a felt need
- Becoming friends
- Opening of the heart to the Holy Spirit, so that He can convince.

Friendship evangelism is the most effective form of evangelism. We reach people with whom we have something in common, such as common interests, hobbies, children of the same age, etc.

2. Opening our homes. Hospitality can turn our homes into centers of evangelism if we open our hearts and our doors. Hospitality is a mighty instrument of evangelism.

But even hospitality may become a burden. We may think we have to show others how well we can cook and how beautiful our house is. If we believe that, it means every invitation brings with it a huge workload. If we look at hospitality like this, we will probably give up out of pure exhaustion.

Hospitality should be different. When do guests feel at ease? When they are treated like family. For family we do not have to exhaust ourselves. And we can accept help that is offered. We should have open hearts and open homes. Then our guests will become friends with whom we can talk comfortably.

3. Homes of Hope and Healing: Open your home to women with different needs. Be hospitable. Start a small group ministry without applying too much pressure. Just let

God's love shine through you. That is *evangelizing*. (See *Touch a Heart, Tell the World WM Planning Guide* for more information)

4. Evangelism and seminars: If you feel called to public evangelism, you can learn how to do it. There is study material available on how to do outreach, how to hold seminars, how to present classes that meet community needs, etc. (See *Outreach is for Everyone, Women's Evangelism Manual*)

5. Develop "Welcome Baby" brochures and activities: Be a friend to young parents. Visit them each month with a new pamphlet. These brochures accompany the parents during the first year of their child's life with good information. If you see a pregnant woman in your neighborhood, try to make contact with her in an appropriate and courteous way. When the baby is born, you might visit her with a rose and a card and give her the first brochure. This could be the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Parents with newborn babies are ready to make changes in their lifestyle more easily than at any other period of their lives.

6. Practical methods to win others to Christ*

- **Intentionally build relationships with five people every year.** They should be individuals within your circle of regular contact. Far better your nearby relative, friend, coworker, or neighbor than your dear old aunt across the country.
- **Pray for them every day, asking God to intervene in their lives and to lead them to Himself.** Ask the Lord to keep you faithful in your intercessory prayer and passionate about reaching them with the gospel. Minister to their needs: physical, spiritual, and social. Take the time to be a true friend. Make them feel loved and special.
- **Share your values with them, such as why you do certain things and why you don't do others.** Always link everything to Jesus. Help them see that the Christian faith is not a set of rules, but a relationship with a wonderful God.
- **At the right time, offer your testimony with them. Tell them how much Jesus changed your life and how much He means to you.** There is perhaps no evidence more persuasive than this.
- **Introduce them to Jesus.** Tell them His story and how He is the hope of the world and the only way to God. Give them a gospel presentation.
- **At the appropriate time, invite them to church,** a concert, a special program such as Easter or Christmas, an evangelistic meeting, a small group, a Sabbath school class or

anything else that they might enjoy. .

- **Study the Bible with them so that they can understand the Christian faith** and what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.
- **Nurture the new believer.** Disciple them. Help them grow in the Christian faith. Become their pastor and encourager.
- **Teach them to reach others.** Reproduction is essential to the work of God.
- **One day you will be walking on the streets** of gold, holding the hand of Jesus, and someone will come to you and say, “I am here because of you.”
- **Have a positive relationship with Jesus.** God is responsible for conversions. (We are only the instruments. He calls you and He will also qualify you.

*Adapted from *The Big Four*, by Dr. J. Kidder, pp.117-120

IV. Whom Can You Reach Best?*

We can reach people more easily who have the same temperament as we do. Why? Because we automatically communicate in the language of our temperament. A sanguine looks for the fun in Bible study. And other sanguines can understand that. And so he will automatically try to lead others to see through his sanguine glasses. For others that could be difficult. Two melancholics who start studying the Bible will get all kinds of commentaries and study Bibles. They love to find out what the original language expressed. A sanguine does not want to be bothered about words he can't even pronounce.

Opposites are attracted to each other in love, but most of our friends will have a temperament similar to ours. In our mission endeavors, we will tend to reach people who have a similar temperament.

God has given us different talents and gifts. But we have to realize that not every gift reaches every other person. Some people will only be reached by a person of the same temperament. That's why it is good that there are many different people in our churches who can reach different people.

Not all clothes fit everybody; there are different sizes and colors. Similarly, we should have a variety of mission approaches.

Maybe at times we have failed because we have given our friends too much to chew on. We give them a whole cake and expect them to swallow it, but hardly anybody can eat a whole

cake on one go. However, offering one piece after the other is possible. When we offer spiritual food, we should give our friends one piece at a time.

If we do not understand how much “cake” somebody can digest, they may stop eating altogether (studying the Bible), or they may never accept the truth we are offering. It is important that we not put too much pressure on people or expect them to see things the same way we do.

Paul understood how different people are: “For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel. Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.” (1 Corinthians 9:16-23 NIV)

Paul knew that it was his mission to reach out to people everywhere. Had he been silent he would not have completed his assignment. But he needed the right key to reach different people.

We all have our Lord’s commission: *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20 NIV)

Every disciple of Christ should have the desire to tell others about his experiences with his Savior. That is why we should find the type of evangelism that fits us.

Jesus said: “I will make you fishers of men.” How have we fished in the past? The disciples had tried to catch fish the whole night without success. (see Luke 5; John 21)

What nets have you already used? Colporteur ministry? Public evangelistic meetings? Social help networks? Professional help? Cooking classes? Tutoring? Prison ministry?

We should not give up just because we have tried once and were not successful. But one thing is certain. We will not catch any fish if we just lie down on the river bank and tie a line to our big toe, waiting for fish to bite.

We each have our own net, our own talent, our own approach. Jesus told his disciples to throw their nets on the other side. Maybe we should listen to what Jesus is telling us today and try something new.

**Adapted from Why Didn't They Tell Me? Sharing Jesus Isn't Something We Do, It's Who We Are, by Morris L. Venden (Feb 1, 2005)*

V. Appeal

Having considered these various ways of reaching people for Christ, what will we do about it?

Some may produce programs for the Hope Channel. Others might start a small group in their home or in their church. Another may invite people to do sports or go walking. Still others will work with people from different cultures. Some will present cooking classes or health seminars. And maybe some of us might even volunteer to help with household chores or babysitting so that a woman can prepare an evangelistic campaign. What a wonderful way to help.

God has created us all individuals, with varied gifts and talents so that we can function in our various roles. As Paul reminds us, "But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be?" (1Corinthians 12:18-19 NIV) He wants us all to take our places as different parts of His body and to function where He has placed us.

- **SOME HE MADE TO BE FEET – to move, organize and achieve**
- **SOME HE MADE TO BE HANDS – to serve, soothe and comfort**
- **SOME HE MADE TO BE MOUTHS – to speak, teach and encourage**

If we love Jesus and have a close relationship with Him, our mission will be a joy. We can hold on to Jesus and let Him give us His power. We do not have to do it by our own efforts. It is a privilege to be a yoke partner with Christ. He wants to lead you, teach you and give you strength.

Then we will act like the woman at the well in Samaria. She was so excited about her conversation with Jesus that she ran into the town straight away, in order to tell everybody. And the townspeople came to see what kind of person had made such an impression on the woman.

"So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, 'We

no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world'." (John 4:40-42 NIV)

Have you had an experience with Jesus like that of the woman at the well? Are you inspired, as she was, to tell people about Him? Do you want to walk this path with me?

This is my wish for you and me. Then we will experience life to the fullest.

Please close your eyes.

Are you parched and tired? Do you wish for God's light to shine through you like it shines through the stained glass windows? Is that your desire? If it is, please stand.

Do you want to be one of God's instruments but have not yet had the courage to place your life at His disposition? Would you like to do that now? If so, please stand.

Are you sometimes afraid of the "lions"? Now that you realize that these lions are only in your mind, would you like to trust Jesus to help you to share your personal story? Then please stand with me.

Do you want to pray for a friend so that he or she will find Jesus? If you want to commit yourself to praying for this person on a daily basis, please stand.

Let us pray:

Lord, thank you that we do not have to be perfect and omniscient in order to work for you. Thank you for accepting us as we are, with all of our strengths and weaknesses. Thank you for seeing us and calling us to become what you want us to be. Thank you for the assurance that you will qualify us. Thank you for your incredible love that we can share with those around us. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you, knowing that you will always be at our side. Amen.

CRAFT ACTIVITY

1. Star

This is a simple pattern that even small children can use. Very small children would use only one color of transparent paper and glue this onto the whole star. Older children and adults can use another color for each part of the star.

2. Lighthouse

This pattern is more complicated, and we recommend this for adults only.

What you need for this activity:

1. Thick black paper
2. Colored transparent paper
3. Pencil or crayon in a light color
4. Scissors or cutter
5. Cutting pad
6. Glue
7. Pattern

Procedure

1. Copy the pattern onto black paper and cut it out. (Illustration 1 & 2)
2. Apply glue to the edges. (Illustration 3)
3. Attach colored transparent paper to the backside. (Illustration 4 & 5)
4. Hang it into a window. Light will shine through it. (Illustration 4-6)

Have fun!







