

# Contents

|           |  |     |
|-----------|--|-----|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>A Family of Families</b> — <i>December 31–January 6</i> —————       | 5   |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>God’s Word on Family Living</b> — <i>January 7-13</i> —————         | 17  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Restoration</b> — <i>January 14-20</i> —————                        | 29  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Living With Lambs</b> — <i>January 21-27</i> —————                  | 41  |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Disciples Making Disciples</b> — <i>January 28–February 3</i> ————— | 53  |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Wise Words for Families</b> — <i>February 4-10</i> —————            | 65  |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>The Royal Love Song</b> — <i>February 11-17</i> —————               | 77  |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Keys to Family Unity</b> — <i>February 18-24</i> —————              | 89  |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Homes of Peace and Healing</b> — <i>February 25–March 3</i> —————   | 101 |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Families of Faith</b> — <i>March 4-10</i> —————                     | 113 |
| <b>11</b> | <b>What Have They Seen in Your House?</b> — <i>March 11-17</i> —————   | 125 |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Turning Hearts in the End Time</b> — <i>March 18-24</i> —————       | 137 |

---

**Editorial Office** 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Come visit us at [www.absg.adventist.org](http://www.absg.adventist.org)

**Principal Contributor**  
Ronald M. Flowers

**Editor**  
Clifford R. Goldstein

**Associate Editor**  
Lyndelle Brower Chiomenti

**Publication Manager**  
Soraya Homayouni Parish

**Editorial Assistant**  
Larie S. Gray

**Pacific Press®  
Coordinator**  
Paul A. Hey

**Art Director and Illustrator**  
Lars Justinen

**Concept Design**  
Dever Design

- ▶ **Key Text, Lesson Aim, and Outline:** Tresa Beard, freelance writer, Beavercreek, Ohio, U.S.A.
- ▶ **The Commentary:** Sue and Don Murray, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich., U.S.A.
- ▶ **The Inductive Bible-Study Method:** Stephen Chavez, managing editor, *Adventist Review*, Silver Spring, Md., U.S.A.
- ▶ **The Focus-on-Witnessing Approach:** Brian Jones, freelance writer, Chloe, W.Va., U.S.A.
- ▶ **The Life-Application Approach:** Fylvia Fowler Kline, freelance writer, Burtonsville, Md., U.S.A.

The *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* is prepared by the Office of the Adult Bible Study Guide of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The preparation of the guides is under the general direction of the Sabbath School Publications Board, a subcommittee of the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM), publisher of the Bible study guides. The published guide reflects the input of worldwide evaluation committees and the approval of the Sabbath School Publications Board and thus does not solely or necessarily represent the intent of the author(s).

# FAMILIES *in the*

***Love for God  
cannot be  
manifested  
in any other  
way than love  
for others.***

In response to the lawyer's question about which was the greatest commandment, Jesus said: “ ‘ “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself” ’ ” (*Matt. 22:37-39, NIV*).

Obviously, God cares about our relationships; otherwise, He would not have named loving others as the most important command besides loving Him. It's no coincidence Jesus linked these two commands: Love for God cannot be manifested in any way other than love for others.

God created people as individuals with unique character traits that make them who they are. Yet, He created them also as social beings who enter into relationships with others. And nowhere is our relationship with others more important, more fraught with both temporal and eternal consequences, than in the family. Here so much of who we are, either for good or for ill, is determined.

Though living as a Christian at home is crucial, it can be challenging, even harder than in public, where it is easier to put on façades. At home, generally, the masks come off. It is a lot easier to fool others than to fool those with whom you share the same table, the same rooms, the same bed day after day, year after year. If you can be a Christian at home, you can be one anywhere.

Families fit into God's design as centers in which individuals experience intimate association with others and are prepared for the greatest intimacy of all—a relationship with God. In the family both children and adults may have a warm experience that reflects the Creator and that encourages them in loving discipleship. On the other hand, because of pseudolove or indifference, people may leave their home with emotional and spiritual problems that are often difficult to erase.

Just as our homes have the greatest potential to do the most good, they also can do the most harm. No wonder that the Bible says so much about family life. So much depends upon it.

# FAMILY *of* GOD

Christian families face the challenge of seeking to live according to God's will for life and for relationships, even as each individual member finds himself or herself falling short of that will (*Rom. 3:23*). That's why, first and foremost, true Christians grasp by faith the sinless life of Christ and claim that life as their own, the foundation upon which they can build a relationship with God that will enhance their relationships with their own family (*Eph. 5:2*).

The wonder of our faith is the good news that God knows all about us. He sympathizes with our weaknesses and is full of compassion and longsuffering. Knowing this about Him, even experiencing for ourselves His love for us despite our faults, we do the same to others, especially those in our own family. Through family relationships God wants to show His love to the world. As families learn to live together according to the Word of God, His grace is diffused to all whose lives they touch, winsomely drawing others to Jesus.

Marriage and family, along with the Sabbath, are two institutions passed to humankind from Eden. Equally the work of the Creator's hand, they are indissolubly linked and meant to bring glory to God and blessings to humanity. As creationists raised up to give voice to Revelation's call to worship the One who made all things (*see Rev. 14:7*), Seventh-day Adventists have lifted up the Sabbath, reminding the world of the Creator's rest. Marriage and family, in their own way, also recall Creation, when a merciful Maker prepared a place for humanity to rest, a haven where the power of His love draws diversity into oneness, where a promise is a promise and commitment means commitment. This place of rest, this haven, is the home.

However, this quarter's study has been written in the sad recognition that for many, this haven doesn't exist as it should. Our goal, if nothing else, is through study of the Word to help homes and families be what God would have them to be: more loving, more secure in Christ.

*Ron Flowers, author of this quarter's study guide, has worked in the department of Family Ministries at the General Conference since 1980. He has been teaching and writing on family issues for many years. He and his wife, Karen, have two adult children.*

# How to Use This Teachers Edition

The teachers comments demonstrate different methods of teaching the adult standard edition Bible study guide. Five parts make up the teachers comments:

- ▶ **Key Text, Lesson Aim, and Outline:** The key text is taken from the standard edition guide. The lesson aim is designed to (a) help class participants understand and know about the lesson material, (b) evoke an appropriate feeling about the lesson material that complements the lesson content and helps to internalize it, and (c) help class participants apply the lesson material to their daily lives. The lesson outline may not always follow exactly the material that appears in the standard guide. It may reflect additional perspectives as it attempts to stimulate class discussion.
- ▶ **The Commentary** follows the traditional teaching methods of Sabbath School. It explains Bible passages and provides appropriate information leading to spiritual applications.
- ▶ **The Inductive Bible-Study Method** emphasizes careful, methodical discovery of the meaning in a text. The teacher encourages and supports the learner's investigation and discovery, using distinctive approaches: (a) Study a text thoroughly and systematically before drawing a conclusion. (b) Look for textual meaning carefully and thoroughly, understand the passage in context, avoid misquoting the author. We must not develop opinions without biblical proof. (c) Share insights through group discussion as students examine a Bible passage together. (d) Apply the text to life today. (e) Allow the Holy Spirit to minister to class members during Bible study.
- ▶ **The Focus-on-Witnessing Approach** should be used in conjunction with other methods of Bible study to demonstrate how particular passages of Scripture can be used to encourage people to commit their lives to Christ and to nurture spiritual life once it has been awakened.
- ▶ **The Life-Application Approach** demonstrates how issues that grow out of Bible study can be shared in a small-group setting. This section uses an approach suitable for discussion in a small group in which interpersonal sharing and dialogue are key elements.

*Use a combination of teaching methods. Within one class period it often is possible to draw from all five methods demonstrated in the teachers comments. Some teachers will prefer to focus on one method of teaching, drawing heavily on the material in the teachers comments.*