

# Beginner

Bible Study Guide

A Sabbath School Bible Study Guide for Beginner Children  
GraceLink Sabbath School Curriculum

[www.gracelink.net](http://www.gracelink.net)

Year A, Second Quarter

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# About the Writers

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- **Adriana Itin Femopase** is an educator living in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She enjoys doing GraceLink workshops throughout the South American Division.
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- **Rebecca Gibbs O’fill** tries out creative and unusual ideas for children’s Sabbath School on her two

sons. Becky, a home-schooling mom, is actively involved with children at her church. • **Rob Robinson** is a child development specialist who lives in California. • **Janet Rieger** was director of children’s ministries for the South Pacific Division when working on this project. A specialist in early childhood education, Janet spends much of her time teaching others how to work with children.

### *Special thanks to . . .*

Special thanks to **Bailey Gillespie** and **Stuart Tyner** of the John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry at La Sierra University for initial work in planning the GraceLink curriculum, and to **Patricia A. Habada** for coordinating the GraceLink project and seeing it to completion.

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# Basic Needs of Children\*

All children have certain basic needs as well as needs that are specific to their age and stage of development. The basic needs of children are . . .

## Physical

- Food
- Warmth
- Shelter

## Mental

- Power—to make choices and follow plans

## Emotional

- A sense of belonging
- Approval and recognition
- Expressions of unconditional love and acceptance
- Freedom within defined boundaries
- Humor—a chance to laugh

## Spiritual

- An all-knowing, loving, caring God
- Forgiveness of wrongs and a chance to start over
- Assurance of acceptance with God
- Experience in prayer, answers to prayer
- A chance to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God

## *The Beginner Child*

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church the GraceLink curriculum for beginners targets children ages birth through 2 years. However, both the beginner and the kindergarten materials are adaptable to 3-year-olds.

A general rule applying to the beginner child is: seat children so their feet easily touch the ground. For children under 18 months use walkers (without wheels).

To better understand beginner children, ages birth through 2 years, it is helpful to note characteristics of their growth and development.

### **Physical**

- Vary greatly in their physical development
- Are growing rapidly
- Tire easily
- Cannot sit still for long

### **Mental**

- Have an attention span of only one or two minutes
- Learn by active involvement and imitation rather than by instruction
- Learn best one ministep at a time
- Focus attention on what they see and/or touch

### **Emotional**

- Are extremely egocentric—centered in themselves
- Fear separation from parents
- Cry easily; one crying child sets other children crying
- Express their needs by crying. The crying usually stops when needs are met.
- Become attached to adults who show love and acceptance of them

### **Spiritual**

- Sense attitudes of respect, joy, and anticipation in connection with church, the Bible, and Jesus
- Can identify pictures of Jesus and lisp His name
- Will fold hands (briefly) for the blessing before meals and kneel (again briefly) for prayer

## ***Developmental Needs***

In addition to the basic needs listed earlier, 2-year-olds need to experience:

- Power—to have a chance to manipulate objects, events, people
- Freedom—to make choices, to interact in learning situations, to sometimes move about at will
- Independence—to do some things unaided
- Security—to feel safe

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\**Children's Ministries: Ideas and Techniques That Work*, ed. Ann Calkins (Lincoln, Nebr.: AdventSource, 1997).

# A Letter to Parents

## Dear Friends,

In each issue of the GraceLink Curriculum *Beginner Bible Study Guide* you will find only three lessons—one for each month of the quarter. Why? To give your child a better opportunity to learn concepts emphasized throughout the month. And to offer more repetition of program elements, such as songs and fingerplays.

The beginner lessons parallel the kindergarten lessons—the same Bible stories are emphasized throughout the month in both children’s groups, but the kindergarten lessons tell the Bible story in greater detail.

Another feature is the inclusion of early childhood child development concepts that apply to very young children. Please do take a few minutes to review them.

As you sit with your child to share these lessons, take time to pray a short prayer, sing a happy song, and read with enthusiasm. Your child will respond accordingly.

Many people worked for more than four years to prepare these lessons. Writers from around the world participated. Designers and technicians collaborated to make this publication attractive. We are grateful to all for their help.

Our prayer is that these lessons will bring joy and peace to you and your child. Let us pray for one another as we work together to lead our little ones to Christ.

**Cordially,  
The Editors**