General Conference
Sabbath School and
Personal Ministries
Department

Pastor Ramon J. Canals, D.Min
Director
The Amazing Influence of Sabbath School for Discipleship and Growth
“The influence growing out of Sabbath school work should improve and enlarge the church.”

Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 9
Sabbath School Alive!
Bible Study & Prayer
The Foundation of Sabbath School
“It is not the best plan for teachers to do all the talking, but they should draw out the class to tell what they know.”
Fellowship

The Format of Sabbath School
Fellowship Format

- Small class setting
- Group discussion
- Group outreach projects
- Group social interaction
- Reclaiming ministry
Mission

The Focus of Sabbath School
Personal witnessing is not a gift but a spiritual need, such as prayer or daily Bible study.
Components of Spiritual Growth

1. Bible study
2. Prayer
3. Preaching the gospel
Mission is not only an instrument of spiritual growth but also of spiritual strength.
Sabbath School:

“An Opportunity for R&R.”
Reclaiming & Retaining
1. Relationship with God
2. Relationship with one another
3. Relationship with the community
Jesus’ Model

Jesus started His ministry by calling a **small group of twelve disciples.**

-Matthew 4:18-22
God’s Plan for the Church

“The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented to me by One who cannot err.”

—Evangelism p.115
Experience God
Encouragement

“See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. **But encourage one another daily,** as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness” (Hebrews 3:12-13).
Responsibility

The small-group setting can help members overcome struggles with sin through the encouragement of sharing experiences. “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:21).
Discipleship

A small Sabbath School class can facilitate **discipleship** more effectively than the large church (Matthew 28:18-20). Small groups help fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples by offering a place to worship, pray, study the Bible, and grow.
Service

The small Sabbath School class can develop **projects to impact their community.** “Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ” (Acts 5:42).
Support

The small Sabbath School class is effective in caring for and loving one another. Small groups are an intimate place where love and care are given and received. “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).
Success

The small Sabbath School class focused on Bible study, prayer, and soul-winning is resulting in church growth wherever it is implemented (Acts 2:41-47). Wherever this methodology is carefully followed it yields fruit! It is successful in making disciples!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013 Report</th>
<th>19 Churches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Attendance</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of members engaged in church</td>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of members engaged in outreach</td>
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<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of members engaged in small group</td>
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<td>12%</td>
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Methodology for Growth
1. Improve the Church
2. Enlarge the Church
Improve the Church
I. Sabbath School Helps your Church Grow Spiritually
“The beauty and riches of the word have a transforming influence on mind and character” (Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 132).
Enlarge the Church
II. Sabbath School Helps your Church Grow Numerically
“The object of Sabbath school work should be the ingathering of souls.”
Read Acts 2:42–47.

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”. 
Read Acts 2:42–47.

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”.
Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47. (NKJV)
III. Sabbath School Keeps your Church United Theologically
Sample Sabbath School Program

1. Mission Program (20 minutes)
   - Welcome and Opening Song (5 min)
   - World Mission Report (5 min)
   - Local Testimony or Ministry Highlight (5 min)
   - Personal Ministries Training (5 min)

2. Study Classes (55 minutes)
   - Class Outreach Planning - TMI (10-15 min)
   - Prayer and Bible Study (40-45 min)
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“The church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purposes, and the Lord desires to see the entire church devising ways and means whereby high and low, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth.” --Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 29.
Make Sabbath School Attractive and Engaging
PRAYER SESSIONS:

✓ Include prayer sessions as part of Sabbath School; perhaps a special prayer session 15- to 30-minutes before Sabbath School begins. Make it meaningful and exciting.
Keep the Sabbath School program simple, spiritual, and relevant. Each Sabbath could be like an evangelistic meeting with an attractive, well-planned program. This approach will definitely improve Sabbath School attendance.
Establish TMI—Total Member Involvement—Sabbath School groups. These groups will meet during the week in addition to Sabbath morning.
Develop a strong mission emphasis. One way to do this is through the Mission Spotlight program. These free videos can be downloaded from https://am.adventistmission.org/mission-spotlight. The inspiring stories will help promote mission offerings which are so needed throughout the world.
Declare One Day Each Quarter as “Friends Day.”
Set a goal of 10-50 friends attending, the number depending on church size. Some churches can aim for 100 friends.
✓ Every friend who comes to church that Sabbath will get a gift—a book, a magazine, etc.—and a meal.
✓ Offer one-day seminars on several relevant topics: family, finances, fitness, friendship. Sabbath School must be important to you as a pastor if it is going to be important to your members.
As you pray, plan, and implement these ideas you will discover the Holy Spirit breathing new life into your Sabbath School and into your church, and empowering you to guide your congregation in the process of spiritual and numerical growth.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TMI</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship Outreach World Mission</td>
<td>15 min.*</td>
<td>Pray, plan, organize for action. Care for missing members. Schedule outreach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Study</td>
<td>45 min.*</td>
<td>Involve everyone in the study of the lesson. Ask questions. Highlight key texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plan lunch for the class after worship. THEN GO OUT AND REACH SOMEONE!</td>
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