



# THE ENCOURAGER

Help for Sunday School Teachers— Dedicated to those who take the Word of Life to Children Everywhere

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## John's Motivational Tip

*Why does the Bible NOT start with the "adult life" of Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Josiah, John the Baptist, and Timothy?*

*The formative years of the great "Hall of Faith"-ers were the foundation years. Each one had a significant childhood influence, which led to the establishment of their faith in God and their character. Please remember, with each lesson you prepare, there is the potential that you will be the influence that God uses in the life of some child. The child's soul is at stake, as well as the future leadership in God's testimony. May God help you to sense the dignity and the potential of what you are doing.*

JED



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## FOLLOWING UP ON THE WAYWARD

Reasons are few—excuses are many. You've heard them all or think you have, until the next one comes along! The weather - "it's too hot"—or maybe "it's too cool." The message—is "not short enough"—but sometimes "it's too long!" "Johnny's got a headcold" and the rest of the family stays home to blow that poor kid's nose! But possibly—the kids and their families are not the only ones making the excuses. It's work to get them back again. And sometimes we just don't get around to it—and for lack of effort the child is lost.

How do we woo them back? First—make a time each week when you look at the roll and check out who has been missing and pray about them. Ask the Lord for help in saying and doing the very thing that might win them all over again. Then grab up a few little things that will remind them that you care and go after them. You may not always be able to visit the home—though personal contact is preferred. If not, use the phone and let your fingers do the walking.

Call them by name. Every one likes to hear their own name. If a parent answers, make sure you know their names too and tell them your purpose and remind them who you are and why you're calling. Tell them of any upcoming events and don't count on verbal messages being passed on by the children.

Be gentle and patient in your approach, but make clear your desire to see them and when you do—tell them how much it means to you that they have come along. Just a few kind words could win the battle.

Perhaps a sickness or tragedy has intervened that you were unaware of. Express your interest and assure them of your prayers—even ask if they would appreciate you sharing the burden with others who share your interest in prayer for the class. If such has taken place or is ongoing— send a card and make sure you follow up with a visit. Your interest may well put the parents / guardians squarely on your side.

A move may be coming up—a number of reasons exist for that today. Families move more frequently than they used to. More families are splitting - that child in your care may need help now more than ever. If you can, see to it that they transfer to another Sunday School if they move at a distance. They could then be approached from that SS with a small housewarming gift and a welcoming, interested & friendly invitation.

Some of those who are missing may be those who have previously professed. Possibly, they've been discouraged or hurt even by our own. This world system is calculated to and cruel. Don't allow them to go without a fight! Don't let them be swept away. Tenderly bring Christ before them. Seek to leave tiny heart-warming nuggets of truth & encouragement with them. Remember who they belong to.... and do it for HIM.

REMEMBER THAT EYE IN THE SKY....

Heather cautioned her 8 & 10 year old children, Andrew and Sharon, that if they wanted to go outside, they must not ride their bikes while she went to the airport, just two blocks away, to give a flying lesson. On her way out, Heather left the phone on the porch. While circling the airport, they flew over her house, and she noticed Andrew cruising around on his bike. Heather called John at the airport tower and asked him to call her house and tell Andrew to get off his bike and go to his room. When Andrew answered the phone, John repeated the message just as Heather had given it. Later, when she got home, Andrew was sitting on his bed looking worried. "Mom, I'm sorry," he said, "I was playing on my bike, but God saw me and made me go to my room!"



Call them by Name