The Seventh-day Adventist Adult Sabbath School: its Purpose as Described and Perceived

Sherman McCormick

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The Seventh-day Adventist adult Sabbath school: Its purpose as described and perceived

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Andrews University
School of Education

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL: ITS PURPOSE AS DESCRIBED AND PERCEIVED

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

by
Sherman McCormick
June 1992
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A dissertation
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Sherman McCormick

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Date approved: July 21, 1992

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ABSTRACT

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL: ITS PURPOSE AS DESCRIBED AND PERCEIVED

by

Sherman McCormick

Chair: Roy C. Naden
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University
School of Education

Title: THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ADULT SABBATH
SCHOOL: ITS PURPOSE AS DESCRIBED
AND PERCEIVED

Name of researcher: Sherman McCormick

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Problem

Since about the year 1930 the vitality of the Sabbath school, as measured by membership and offerings, has been in decline. Does the adult Sabbath school still have a role to fill in the Seventh-day Adventist church? If so, what is it? The purpose of this study was to determine the objectives of the adult Sabbath school and their perceived relative importance.

Method

A study was made of the literature for the
Sabbath and Sunday schools, along with input from the Sabbath school's professional administrators, to determine the adult Sabbath school's objectives. An instrument was created and administered to determine each objective's perceived relative value. Appropriate statistical analysis of the collected data, the determination of the significance of the statistical analysis, the drawing of conclusions, and the making of recommendations completed the research.

Results

Six objectives for the adult Sabbath school were identified and ranked. In order of perceived importance they were: Bible study, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding.

A model for the adult Sabbath school, based on the findings, was suggested.

Conclusions

In both independent ratings and forced choices, respondents consistently identified Bible study as the most important objective for the adult Sabbath school. Equally significant is the fact that World-mission promotion and funding was consistently identified as the
least important of the objectives for the adult Sabbath school.

The three objectives having to do with the spiritual growth of the Sabbath school attendees (i.e., Bible study, Fellowship and support, and Nurture and character development) were consistently rated more important than those having to do with service to or evangelism of those not attending the Sabbath school (i.e., Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding).
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of This Study

Since about the year 1930 the vitality of the Sabbath school, as measured by membership and offerings, has been in decline. Sabbath school membership, as a percentage of church membership, has been decreasing since 1926. The ratio of Sabbath school offerings to tithe has been deteriorating since it reached its zenith in 1932.

In 1926 the ratio of North American Sabbath school members to church members reached its highest level at 107.3 Sabbath school members for every 100 church members. Since that time, the ratio of Sabbath school members to church members has declined. In 1990 for every 100 church members there were only 61.3 Sabbath school members (Yost, [1991], pp. 18-19).

The adult division of the North American Sabbath school constitutes 65% of the total Sabbath school membership. But adult attendance at the North American Sabbath School is only 57% of its membership (Martell, 1989). This would mean that the average church of 100
members would have a total Sabbath school membership of about 62 in all of its departments, with an adult membership of about 40. However, an actual attendance of approximately 23 in the adult division would be typical.

Offerings, as a measure of interest in the Sabbath school, tell a similar story. The year 1932 saw the pinnacle of the increasing ratio of Sabbath school offerings to tithe. In that year, for every tithe dollar, the world-wide Sabbath schools gave 31.8 cents in Sabbath school offerings. The North American Sabbath schools gave 37 cents for each tithe dollar in 1932 ("Sabbath School Statistical Summary Through 1974").

Beginning in 1933, those ratios began to decline. In 1990 the North-American Sabbath schools gave only 5.1 cents in Sabbath school offerings for each dollar of tithe. During the same year, the world Sabbath schools gave 5.1 cents for each tithe dollar. In 1932 North America was ahead of the world average, but by 1990 it had fallen behind the world rate of giving (Yost, [1991], pp. 26-27).

Purpose of This Study

No single, simplistic answer will explain the Sabbath school's declining influence in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist adult. However, one factor may be a lack of understanding or even a misunderstanding of the
objectives of the adult Sabbath school.

During the 1940s and 1950s little appears to have been written about the purpose of the adult Sabbath school aside from the official actions of the General Conference. One reason for this might be revealed in a quotation cited in Mary Ogle's book, *You and Your Sabbath School* (1949). She quoted from an outline used in a Sabbath school teachers' class held at one of the Adventist colleges. The outline began with the introductory phrase, "Things to be taken for granted," and then listed six assumptions, the third of which is, "That you feel a desire to win souls, and to keep within the message those already won" (pp. 58-59).

Could it be that the Sabbath school leaders of the 1940s and 1950s assumed that the members understood this purpose of the Sabbath school, and thus failed to emphasize or reiterate it? The generation that grew up in the 1940s and 1950s should now be the adult membership of the Sabbath schools. Could it be that while our professional leaders may understand the objectives of our Sabbath school, the average member is not clear as to why the church even has an adult Sabbath school? Could it be that they do not realize its significance, and thus find it irrelevant?

The purpose of this study was to determine the objectives of the adult Sabbath school and their...
perceived relative importance. Questions to be answered included: What are the purposes of the adult Sabbath school according to the literature? How do the Sabbath school's professional leaders perceive its objectives? How do those attending the local adult Sabbath schools understand its purposes? Do the Sabbath school's conference leaders perceive the purposes for the Sabbath school differently from those who attend? Last, do subgroups within the adult Sabbath school differ between themselves as to the understood priorities and aims for the Sabbath school?

The first three of these questions are descriptive in nature and will be determined by a study of the literature and by data collected through the use of the instrument found in Appendix C.

It is hypothesized that there is no significant difference between the purposes for the Sabbath school as perceived by the Sabbath school's professional leadership and by those attending the adult Sabbath school.

It is hypothesized that there is no significant difference between the purposes for the Sabbath school as perceived by sub-groups within the adult Sabbath school.

Significance of This Study

When the Sabbath school's objectives, as they have been historically perceived and are currently
understood, are clarified and better understood the leaders at all levels of Sabbath school administration should be able to labor more efficiently and effectively. In 1886, H. F. Phelps wrote in the Sabbath School Worker that if the leaders of the Sabbath school movement failed to understand the objective of the Sabbath school, the result would be that they would "most certainly fail to work in harmony with the Spirit of God, and . . . make an utter failure in our work" (p. 5).

A few years later, in 1892, L. Flora Plummer wrote in the same vein: "If we wish to reach a specific end, we must aim constantly at that end" (p. 172).

That the objectives of the Sabbath school are not clearly understood is suggested by the recent writing on this theme. Probably the best effort in this direction is a recent unpublished document titled "A Curriculum Plan for the General Conference Department of Church Ministries" (Department of Church Ministries, 1987). In this document of over 100 pages, only 2 are devoted to the objectives of the adult Sabbath school. After stating that the Sabbath school "exists to nurture its members in the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and as it is viewed in the setting of the Three Angels' Messages," the writers of the paper go on to cite six areas in which the adult Sabbath school should be of help to its students: commitment,
fellowship, study, mission, stewardship, and hope. A more general statement of objectives, adapted from the North American Division Department of Education, states:

Our adult Sabbath School division program will be directed toward the achievement of an intelligent, loving commitment to and admiration for Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. (Department of Church Ministries, 1987, pp. 5-6)

In the literature for the adult Sunday school, there is a similar lack of clarity and specificity in objectives. There is a broad range of perspectives as to what ought to be the primary objectives of the adult Sunday school. Richards (1974) wrote that it is "teaching the Bible for transformation" (p. 69). Towns (1979) cited the goals for the Sunday school as evangelism, Bible teaching, changing lives, and protecting and providing for the church's future (pp. 6-10). There is also the perspective that social needs ought to receive top priority in the Sunday school (Barnard, 1983; Meyer, 1911; Migneault, 1973).

Methodology

The first step was the establishment of the adult Sabbath school's objectives. These were made through a search of the Sabbath and Sunday school literature, with input and confirmation by union and local conference Sabbath school leaders from inside and outside the Mid-America Union.

The second step was the creation of an instrument
to measure the response of the population to the
determined objectives.

The third step was the administration of the
instrument and the appropriate statistical analysis of
the collected data.

The fourth step was the determination of the
significance of the statistical analysis, the drawing of
conclusions, and the making of recommendations.

Delimitations

There are 11 adult Sabbath schools in the greater
Lincoln area. These were selected for the study because
they provided economic, cultural, and ethnic variety,
while sharing a common urban background through their
geographic identity with Lincoln. They came from church
memberships ranging from 25 to 1832, with an annual per
capita tithe varying from $324.34 to $537.18 (Kansas-
Nebraska Conference, 1990). Nine of the above churches
were White. A tenth was Black and the eleventh was
Spanish. These Sabbath schools were: Allon Chapel,
Beatrice, Capital View, College View, Fairbury, Falls
city, Holland, Northside, Piedmont Park, Union College,
and Lincoln Spanish. In addition the adult Sabbath
school in Topeka, Kansas, was selected because it is
statistically representative of many Sabbath schools in
the Kansas-Nebraska conference.
For the purpose of this study the population was divided into two major groups. The first population group for this study was made up of the Sabbath school's professional administrators from the General Conference, the union conferences of the North American Division, and the local conferences who promote the "official" adult Sabbath school program. This group determines to a large extent the quantity and quality of promoted Sabbath-school standards and objectives.

The second population group was comprised of the members of the 11 Lincoln-area Sabbath schools, plus the Topeka Sabbath school. This group was analyzed as a whole, by individual Sabbath school, and along demographic lines seeking significant differences.

Definition of Terms

Adult Sabbath School Lessons: a quarterly publication of the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists containing Scripture lessons for study in the adult Sabbath school during a 3-month period.

Adventist: see Seventh-day Adventist.

Church Ministries Department: that department of the local conference, union conference, and General Conference which now administers the work of the Sabbath school. See Sabbath School Department.
Conference: a unit of church organization, which, for the purposes of administration, is comprised of local churches within a given area.


Kansas-Nebraska Conference: that conference made up of churches within the states of Kansas and Nebraska.

Mid-America Union Conference: that administrative unit comprising the Dakota, Central States, Colorado-Wyoming, Iowa-Missouri, Kansas-Nebraska, and Minnesota Conferences.

North American Division: that administrative unit of the General Conference which administers the Seventh-day Adventist church in the United States, Canada, and Bermuda.

Quarterly: see Adult Sabbath school Lessons.

Sabbath school: "The SDA equivalent, in general, of the Sunday school of other denominations" (SDA Encyclopedia, 1976, p. 1122).

Sabbath School Department: that department of the state conference, union conference, and General Conference which formerly was responsible for administering the operation of the Sabbath school, training of Sabbath school leaders, and development of all Sabbath school curriculum materials. It is now a
part of the Personal Ministries Department.

**Sabbath school Division:** one of many levels of instruction and administration within the Sabbath school. Divisions are usually based on age. Beginning with the youngest level, the Sabbath school usually includes cradle roll, kindergarten, primary, junior, early teen, youth, and adult divisions. Each Sabbath school makes combinations or subdivisions of this arrangement as best fits its membership and needs.

**SDA:** see Seventh-day Adventist.

**Seventh-day Adventist:** "The descriptive name adopted as a denominational title in 1860 by one branch of Adventists—those, specifically, who keep the seventh day as the Sabbath" (*SDA Encyclopedia: 1976*, p. 1324).

**Spirit of Prophecy:** the collected writings of Ellen G. White.

**Superintendent:** the ranking leader of the Sabbath school within any given Adventist church.

**Union:** an administrative unit made up of several conferences.

**Overview of this Study**

The dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the purpose and importance of this study, seeking to define the unusual or unique terms used and noting the delimitations of the study.
Chapter 2 is divided into two parts. The first reviews the literature pertaining to the adult Sabbath school; the second studies the literature pertaining to the objectives of the adult Sunday school.

Chapter 3 discusses the research procedures, the development of the instrument in the study, and how the data collected was analyzed.

Chapter 4 presents and analyzes the results and develops a model for more effective Sabbath school operation.

Chapter 5 summarizes the findings of this study and make recommendations for application and further research.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organization of This Review

For purposes of clarity, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first is a discussion of the purpose of the Seventh-day Adventist adult Sabbath school based on a study of Sabbath school literature. The second looks at the purpose of the adult Sunday school as described in its literature.

Sabbath School Literature

It is usually difficult to identify with precision the beginnings and endings of historical periods. However, periods do commend themselves even while overlapping and merging with the preceding and succeeding eras. Realizing the overlapping of some years, this study of the Sabbath school literature is subdivided into three time periods: 1852-1901, the Sabbath school’s inception to its incorporation into the General Conference; the 1880s-1936, the Sabbath school’s leadership by Ellen G. White and L. Flora Plummer; and the 1930s to the present.
The first of these eras is identified by a sense of grasping for and identifying the Sabbath school's purpose.

The second era overlaps in time both the preceding and the succeeding division. This period is highlighted by the writings of two ladies: Ellen G. White (1827-1915) and L. Flora Plummer (1862-1945). They were not the only ones writing about the adult Sabbath school during this period. But, probably more than any other people at that time, they identified and influenced the objectives of the Sabbath school. This time period ends with Plummer's resignation from the leadership of the worldwide Sabbath school.

The third and final period of time covers the history of the Sabbath school from the 1930s to the present. Lacking an historical perspective from which to evaluate this period's literature, it initially appears that the Sabbath school writers were unclear as to the Sabbath school's purpose. However, in the 1980s there appears to be a holistic perspective evident in the literature. The adult Sabbath school member is seen as a total person. And the stated purpose of the Sabbath school is to minister to the whole man.

1852-1901

The writers during this period perceived the
purpose of the Sabbath school as the salvation of souls. They saw this being accomplished through diligent Bible study. The effect of that Bible study was conversion, a changed life, and an evangelistic outreach. Christian fellowship was seldom presented as one of the Sabbath school's objectives.

Some of the observations noted in this section were originally written with the youth of the church in mind and not specifically adults. This was because, contrary to prior practice, the spiritual needs of the children were to be included. C. C. Lewis (1885) made this comment about the earlier lack of spiritual planning for the youth of the church:

Indeed, it was a fact that many who professed to be looking for Christ and the Judgment [sic] greatly neglected their duty to their children. They seemed to think that because Christ was soon coming they had no need to bestow much labor upon them. (p. 37)

Unlike the early Sunday schools, the Sabbath school always included adult students (Lewis, 1885, p. 151).

James White

The beginning of the Sabbath school movement within the Seventh-day Adventist Church dates from 1852, when James White (1821-1881) called for special religious instruction on the Sabbath for the church's young people. In the first issue of The Youth's Instructor he wrote:

The young, at this day, are exposed to many evils and dangers, and they must have right instruction to
enable them to know how to shun them. And although
the world never was so full of books and papers as at
the present time, yet there is but very little
written that is calculated to lead the youth to feel
the need of the Saviour, and to impress them with the
importance of shunning vice, and living a virtuous,
sober and holy life. (1852, p. 1)

Admittedly, this applies to the publishing of a
paper, but later in the article White calls for the
formation of Sabbath schools. This is evident in the
words: "We give four Sabbath Lessons (sic) in this num­
ber, one for each week, and hope the parents will
establish Sabbath Schools, even where there are but two
or three children in a place" (p. 2).

Thus, from its inception, at least in White's
mind, the purpose of the Sabbath school was to encourage
a commitment to Jesus Christ and to impress its members
"with the importance of shunning vice, and living a
virtuous, sober and holy life." This was to be
accomplished through the reading of the "sensible matter"
p. 2) included in the paper as well as through the
proposed Sabbath schools. Later some writers were to
stress the means, Bible study, over the desired result of
that Bible study--commitment to Christ and a changed
life.

Goodloe Harper Bell

Goodloe Harper Bell (1832-1899), superintendent
of the Battle Creek Sabbath school, preparer of graded
Bible lessons, organizer of Sabbath school associations, and founding editor of the *Sabbath School Worker* had considerable influence in the developing Sabbath schools of his day. His contributions to the development of the Sabbath school were well documented by Lindsay (1982, pp. 97-164).

In its initial stages, the embryonic Sabbath schools were independently operated with no unifying theme, curriculum, or organization. It was Bell in Battle Creek who was largely responsible for bringing purpose and organization to the Sabbath school movement (Lindsay, 1982, pp. 98-99).

The important purpose of the adult Sabbath school, for Bell, was the study of the Sabbath school lesson and the resultant acceptance of salvation, character transformation, and social reinforcement. In an 1869 article for the *Youth’s Instructor* he wrote: "The object of the Sabbath school should be to teach the plain truths of the word of God and thus disclose to its members the plan of salvation, and lead them to accept it" (p. 94).

In his first editorial for the *Worker* (1885), Bell repeated what he had written 2 years earlier in the *Youth’s Instructor*. Both articles were titled, "Object of the Sabbath-School," and in both cases his opening sentences stated:
The ultimate object of the Sabbath-school is the same as that of all other organized effort in behalf of Christianity; namely, the salvation of souls. Its immediate and leading object, however, is to promote earnest, thorough, habitual study of God’s word. (1883, p. 52; 1885, pp. 4-5)

Apparently Bell was the first to recognize the social purpose of the Sabbath school. Again, in both articles he wrote:

There is, too, a social enjoyment in the school, that, while it is pure and innocent, creates a desire to attend, and take part in the exercises. A common employment, with a common end in view, always gives zest to social enjoyment; and when that common purpose is the high and noble one of becoming acquainted with the character and requirements of our Creator, the privilege becomes one that does not impair the sanctity of the holy Sabbath. (1883, p. 52 and 1885, p. 4-5)

As founding editor of the Sabbath School Worker, he re-emphasized the character-transformation aspect of the study of the Sabbath school’s lesson. He wrote,

The great object of Sabbath-school teaching should be to affect the heart [sic] and the life [sic] of those who are taught. This is generally best accomplished through the lesson itself, rather than outside of it. (1887, p. 235)

Stephen M. Haskell

About this same time, the president of the Sabbath School Association, Stephen N. Haskell (1833-1922), reported the successful evangelistic outreach some Sabbath schools were enjoying. "Hundreds have thus become interested in the truths of the Bible," he wrote in the Review and Herald, "and some have been converted
to God." Writing of the evangelistic function of the Sabbath school, he went on:

It has also stepped outside the limits of our own people. In some places other children, having been invited to the Sabbath-school, have become interested, and this interest has extended to their parents, who by this means have been led to embrace the solemn truths of the message of Rev. 14:9-12. Sunday-schools have also been organized, and in a few cases converted into Sabbath-schools, and this has aided in raising up active churches. This is some of the fruit resulting from efforts that have been put forth to promote the Sabbath-school interests. (1879, p. 77)

George W. Amadon

Bible study in the Sabbath school was important to George W. Amadon (1832-1913). In 1860 he described an adult Sabbath school service in Battle Creek. A reader had written to the editor of the Review and Herald, Uriah Smith, asking for "the best mode of conducting the Sabbath school." Apparently Smith turned to Amadon to describe what was happening in the Battle Creek Sabbath school as an example of what he perceived as the "best mode."

Amadon (1860) explained that the Sabbath school lasted about 1 hour. It began with a song and prayer, then proceeded immediately into the lesson study. The lesson usually covered six to eight verses, memorized by all. After the verses had been recited, questions about the verses were asked by the teacher as well as by the
students. This took about three quarters of an hour, according to Amadon.

The final quarter-hour was used by the superintendent to review the day's lesson and to make the assignment for the next week's lesson. A final song was sung before dismissal (p. 102).

Three years later, he recommended a similar format under the title, "How to Conduct a Sabbath School" (1863, pp. 37-38).

Alonzo T. Jones

Another writer who emphasized the Bible-study purpose of the Sabbath school was Alonzo T. Jones (1850-1923). On Sabbath, July 28, 1900, Jones addressed those gathered in the Battle Creek Tabernacle. His address was later printed in the Review and Herald. In his presentation, Jones took the position that the Sabbath school 'is, plainly enough, school work--school work for Sabbath. It is a school that is held on the Sabbath in which instruction is given, in a school, by teachers.'

Jones went on to argue that this school, which met on Sabbath, had teachers whose primary goal was 'showing the way to God.' He emphasized:

That is the lesson that is sent to us to be taught, to be studied, and to be learned, in this school for the Sabbath day, the Sabbath-school. . . . It is the sole work of the school for the Sabbath to teach these things. There is nothing else to be taught. And anything that has not that lesson in it, anything
that has not in it the elements of showing how—of showing the people the way out of darkness into light, and then the way of light after they have got into light—anything that is not that, has no place in the school for the Sabbath, has no place in the Sabbath-school. (1900, p. 499)

While this statement does contain elements which might be interpreted as an evangelistic purpose, it is obvious that Jones perceived the primary emphasis of the Sabbath school to be Bible study.

W. W. Prescott

W. W. Prescott (1855-1944), writing in the last issue of 1901 and the first issue of 1902 Review and Herald described what he called "A Model Sabbath-School." He boldly asserted in his opening sentence that, "The Sabbath-school ought simply to be the Church [sic] studying the Word together." He later emphasized his point by observing: "When I speak about a Sabbath-school, I mean the church gathered together for devotion and study of the Scriptures."

Prescott was so strong in his position that he appeared to be opposed to the lesson quarterly.

There is a distinct loss in separating portions of the book from the book itself, and simply studying certain verses brought together and printed elsewhere. The book itself is the book to be studied. (1901, p. 347.)

Other Writers

During this period a number of lesser-known
writers wrote about the object of the Sabbath school. H. F. Phelps (1886), writing in the 1886 Sabbath School Worker, observed that the purpose of the Sabbath school at one time appeared to be "to commit to memory as many verses of Scriptures as possible." He went on to add that the "true object may, perhaps, be briefly stated in one short sentence: namely, the salvation of all who have any part in the work" (p. 5).

W. F. Caldwell (1897) carried the salvation concept one step farther and emphasized the evangelistic function of the Sabbath school. He even suggested that Sabbath school members engage in house-to-house visitation as a part of their missionary work. He then concluded his article by observing,

A work will be accomplished "which otherwise could not have been done." Souls will be won for Christ who would otherwise have been lost. This is the object of Sabbath school work. (E. White, cited in Caldwell, p. 53)

Apparently the editor of the Sabbath School Worker, M. H. Brown, was supportive of the missionary aspect of Sabbath school work. For the article after Caldwell's is entitled "The Relation the Sabbath School Sustains to the Missionary Work" (Mann, 1897, pp. 58-59).

This missionary/evangelistic emphasis was repeated in an editorial in the April 1899 Sabbath School Worker. The editor, Brown, wrote,

The great object of the Sabbath-school is to teach the Word of God to old and young, and thus sow the
seeds of truth, which will build up the church and
win souls, especially the young, to Christ. (p. 49)

In the next issue, Brown reported the proceedings from
the 17th session of the International Sabbath-School
Association. The first recommendation adopted was, "That
the true object of our Sabbath-schools should be kept
before them, namely, the study of the Word of God, as a
means of spiritual growth to believers, and the salvation
of the unconverted" (p. 55).

Finally, this section concludes with an obser-
vation from Alma McKibbin (1899), who noted, "The purpose
of the Sabbath-school is, primarily, the study of the
Word of God." This, according to McKibbin, results in
"the conversion of the soul, and the formation of a
character in harmony with the character of God" (p. 146).

Summary

At its inception, the Sabbath school was per-
ceived as serving a salvific function. Its primary
purpose was to promote the study of the Bible. This in
turn was to bring about a change in the lives of the
students as the Bible truths were learned and applied.

It was a small step from the nurture of the
members to the evangelism of non-members as Bible-study
was the medium of both nurture and outreach. With the
exception of Bell, there was no mention of any social
function to be served by the Sabbath school.

While in most cases the purpose of the Sabbath school was seen in broader terms than just the study of God's Word, for some, Bible study seemed to be the primary if not the only emphasized purpose of the Sabbath school.

The 1880s-1936

This section looks at the writings of Ellen G. White and L. Flora Plummer. Because of the volume of their writings for the Sabbath school, as well as the number of years of their Sabbath school leadership, they have doubtlessly influenced the scope and objectives of the Sabbath school more than any other writers.

Ellen G. White

For Ellen White, the preeminent work of the Sabbath school was soul-winning. During the formative years of the Sabbath school she wrote: "The object of the Sabbath school work should be the ingathering of souls" (Sabbath School Worker, January 1892, p. 3). But the Sabbath school was not to be merely another of the many soul-winning agencies in the church. If rightly conducted, she wrote, "the Sabbath school should be 'one of the greatest instrumentalities, and the most effectual, in bringing souls to Christ'" (Sabbath School Worker, April 1886, p. 17).
How did White see the Sabbath school achieving this goal? The answer lies primarily in the work and influence of the worker in the Sabbath school and the Sabbath school's Bible-centered curriculum.

The Work and Influence of the Worker in the Sabbath School

Of the many qualities that White might have emphasized as being important for the Sabbath school worker, she repeatedly put first importance on heart preparation. For her it was an impossibility to do the necessary soul-winning work of the Sabbath school unless the worker first had a close personal relationship with God (Sabbath School Worker, April 1886, p. 19). Indeed, for White, heart-preparation was as important for the Sabbath school teacher as for the minister. In 1891 she wrote:

Entire consecration of soul must be maintained as much by the teachers and superintendents of our Sabbath schools as by the ministers in our pulpits, for all alike are engaged in the work of bringing souls to Christ. (Sabbath School Worker, December 1891, p. 211)

For White, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was necessary in order "that their [superintendents and the workers in the Sabbath school] minds may be impressed to use the very best methods, and follow the best plans to make their work wholly successful" (Sabbath School Worker, March 1893, p. 43). This was the first work of
one who would be a successful worker in the Sabbath school (see also *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 272).

One of the keys to the Sabbath school successfully reaching its soul-winning objective was the teacher who was personally watching for souls to whom he might minister. Early in the formative years of the Sabbath school, White urged the Sabbath school workers to "realize the responsibility of their position, as those who are watching for souls and must render an account to God for the influence they exert over those under their charge" (*Sabbath School Worker*, April 1886, p. 19). She described the ideal Sabbath school worker as one "who will watch and discern upon whom the Spirit of God is moving, and cooperate with the angels of God in winning souls for Christ" (*Sabbath School Worker*, July 1893, p. 115).

Because White saw "the salvation of our pupils" as "the highest interest entrusted to the God-fearing teacher," she called for the minister and the Sabbath school worker to work together for the salvation of the Sabbath school's students (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 117).

White held the role of the teacher so highly that she advised the Sabbath school leaders:

You would better double your classes under God-fearing workers than to multiply teachers whose
influence is not in accordance with the holy character of truth which we profess, for their influence will be demoralizing. (Sabbath School Worker, April 1886, p. 13)

Since White saw the work of the Sabbath school as soul-winning, she stressed that the Sabbath school work must be kept on a personal level and not allowed to degenerate to a mere system of mechanics and form. As early as 1891, she lamented:

Our Sabbath schools are not what the Lord would have them to be, for there is altogether too much dependence placed upon form and machinery, while the life-giving power of God is not manifested for the conversion of souls, for whom Christ died. This order of things must be changed if our Sabbath schools [are to] meet the purpose for which they exist. (Sabbath School Worker, December 1891, p. 211)

Apparently, it was not so much the emphasis upon the "form and machinery" which bothered White as it was the de-emphasis of soul-winning which resulted.

The object of the Sabbath school should not be lost sight of in mechanical arrangements, thus occupying time which should be given to other important matters. . . . Less should be said to the scholars about the external preliminaries and system, and much more should be said in regard to the salvation of their souls. This must be made the ruling principle of the school. (Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 151)

The Sabbath School's Bible-Centered Curriculum

In one of her earliest Sabbath school statements, White emphasized the importance of the Bible curriculum. Teachers in the Sabbath school were to teach the Bible. (Review and Herald, November 28, 1878, p. 159). Later
White described the Sabbath schools as "nothing less than Bible societies" (Sabbath School Worker, January 1389, p. 1).

Because the Sabbath school deals with the Word of God, and not the mere words of men (Sabbath School Worker, January 1389, p. 2), every effort should be put forth to impress the learner with the importance and solemnity of the Scripture lesson. In 1896 White emphasized this point when she wrote:

> The Sabbath school is no place for that class who skim the surface, who talk fluently and in a spirit of levity of eternal, testing truths, which are higher than the heavens and broader than the worlds. (Sabbath School Worker, June 1896, p. 84)

Rather "all diligence" was to be employed in working in the "garden of the Lord" (Sabbath School Worker, October 1893, p. 171).

L. Flora Plummer

Plummer joined the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in 1901. Except for one brief period, she served as the department's corresponding secretary until 1913. Beginning in 1913, until her retirement in 1936, she was the world leader of the Sabbath school work. Plummer served longer in world Sabbath school leadership than any other administrator.

Not only did she lead the world Sabbath school
work, she also wrote five books, edited the Worker for 32 years, was a regular contributor to The Youth's Instructor, and wrote numerous articles for the Review and Herald—all in the promotion of the Sabbath school. In all probability, no other leader published as much for and about the Sabbath school.

Consistently Plummer emphasized one two-fold purpose for the Sabbath school: the salvation of all within its influence. In December 1908, Plummer made a simple, one-paragraph statement of Sabbath school purpose in an editorial for the Sabbath School Worker. She wrote: "Briefly stated, the purpose of the Sabbath-school is to bring souls to Christ, and to develop the most perfect Christian growth" (p. 145). This statement of purpose was to be repeated on various occasions (see, Early History of the Seventh-Day Adventist Sabbath-School Work, [1909], p. 39; The Soul-Winning Sabbath School, [1928], p. 30; Sabbath School Worker, June 1936, p. 4). Plummer did not refer to two purposes, but used the singular noun, "purpose." In Plummer's estimation, to bring souls to Christ and to develop the most perfect Christian growth were the same thing—two aspects of the same purpose.

Plummer emphasized this single purpose of the Sabbath school—salvation for all within its influence—throughout her writings. In her third book, noting the
Sabbath school's singular purpose, she wrote:

The purpose of each school is the same, whether its members assemble in a commodious church building, in a thatch-roof jungle hut, or under the spreading branches of a friendly tree. The study of the word of God and the saving of souls is the double objective toward which each school presses. (Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, [1928], p. 5. See statement in Bibliography regarding Plummer's authorship.)

Plummer used the singular verb 'is' to emphasize that there is only one purpose for the Sabbath school though manifested in two aspects. Later in the same book, she reaffirmed her belief in the singular purpose of the Sabbath school by virtually repeating what she had written earlier: "The purpose of the Sabbath school is to bring souls to Christ, and to develop Christian growth."

This time, however, she strengthened her argument by adding one summary sentence: "Sabbath school work is pre-eminently soul-saving work" (Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, [1928], p. 30.)

In 1929 the Sabbath School Department published a leaflet entitled The Purpose of the Sabbath School, based on material from Plummer's The Soul-Winning Sabbath School. The first sentence of the leaflet states: "Sabbath school work is gospel work; gospel work is soul-saving" (p. 3). Again, 30 years after its original appearance in 1929, Plummer's statement of singular purpose for the Sabbath school was repeated: "Briefly
stated, the purpose of the Sabbath school is to bring souls to Christ, and to develop the most perfect Christian growth (p. 6).

"To Bring Souls to Christ"

From Plummer's perspective, unless souls were won for Christ, the Sabbath school was a failure (Branch Sabbath Schools, p. 30) and all the work in vain (Review and Herald, 1930, p. 110). So she challenged Sabbath school teachers:

Never should we lose sight of the supreme goal set before every Sabbath school worker. . . . In these days no teacher should rest content unless every member of his class is enjoying a close relationship with the Saviour. (Sabbath School Worker, September 1917, p. 196)

There were two important reasons why Plummer felt a salvation emphasis was important. On the one hand, it was for the recruitment and training of volunteers to work for Christ Sabbath School Worker, 1917, p. 368; 1934, pp. 102, 124). On the other hand, Plummer promoted missionary work because of its reflex effect upon the home Sabbath school. In 1909 she wrote:

We are unalterably committed to the policy of teaching Sabbath-school pupils that the time has come for sending this message to every creature in the whole wide world, and that their interest should not be bounded by the four walls of a church building. We believe that the Sabbath-school which honors God by faithfully endeavoring to fulfill (sic) the great commission, will have choice blessings at home. ([1909], p. 42)
Even those adults confined to their homes were to be included in the soul-winning mission of the Sabbath school. In 1902, under Plummer’s leadership, the Home Department was organized. The Home Department soon came to be seen as a possible opening wedge for neighborhood evangelism. The plan was for those isolated at home to invite their friends to study the Sabbath school lesson. In this way, others would be exposed to the Bible lessons and, seeing Christ’s love for them, make a decision for Christ (Sabbath School Department, "Home Department Leaflet," n.d., pp. 1-12; also "The Home Department of the Sabbath School," [1929], p. 4. See statement in Bibliography regarding Plummer’s authorship).

"To Develop the Most Perfect Christian Character"

According to Plummer, there were three means whereby the Sabbath school was to help its members develop Christian characters. The first of these was through the regular Bible lesson. The second was through the modeling and interest of the individual teachers. The third was to come through the programs of the Sabbath school itself.

Plummer saw the Sabbath school as "the church organized and equipped for the study of the Word of God." Sabbath School Worker, February 1904, p. 17; "A
Barring Call," p. 3; From Acorn to Oak, p. 53; "Why
This Special Number of the 'Review', Review and Herald,
1933, p. 3). She called for the Sabbath school to be a
real school, "where the Word of God is actually taught
and actually learned" (Sabbath School Worker, November
1906, p. 151). She was not in favor, however, of Bible
study just for the sake of Bible study. The purpose of
Bible study was the same as that of the entire Sabbath
school: "that character may be established through knowl­
edge of the Scriptures" ([1922], p. 53).

For Plummer, the study of the Bible was "the most
prominent factor in attaining the object of the Sabbath
school organization" (Sabbath School Department, [1928],
pp. 37, 54). The lesson was to have a depth of study
beyond the superficial (p. 44).

Character development "through a knowledge of the
word of God" could only be achieved if the study were
understood. Near the end of her years of Sabbath school
leadership, she wrote:

The facts of a story or of a doctrine may be
emphasized and so well taught that the pupils may be
said to have mastered them. But of no avail is the
theory of the truth unless it enters into the heart
and molds the life. Teaching fails of its purpose if
it does not affect decisions, and change the
standards and purposes of the pupil. ([1934], p. 33)

However, in no way did this emphasis upon understanding
and application diminish the importance Plummer placed
upon memorization of the memory verses and the "review"
Plummer strongly believed that the Sabbath school schedule ought to be closely followed. This was because she saw such potential in the Bible study portion of the Sabbath school. If any time could be gleaned from the other portions of the service, it was to be added to the class time (p. 44). Not even the 13th Sabbath program was to crowd the time of the lesson study (p. 207).

For Plummer, there was yet another reason why the lesson study was important—the "indoctrination" factor. "Experience," she wrote, "has proved that there is no quicker nor more effective way of reaching all of our people with any particular truth or message than through the medium of the Sabbath-school lessons" ([1909], p. 39).

Summary
Summary of White's Philosophy of the Sabbath School's Purpose

For Ellen White, the preeminent work of the Sabbath school was winning the souls of its pupils. In fact, the Sabbath school was, when "rightly conducted," to be the "most effectual" soul-winning agency of the church. White saw the work of the Spirit-filled Sabbath school worker as on an equal with that of the minister.
This Sabbath school worker would ever be on guard, watching for souls to whom he might minister.

Teachers in the Sabbath school were to teach the Bible. Superficial study was to have no place in the Sabbath school. Rather, all diligence was to be put forth in the study and application of Scripture.

Summary of Plummer's Philosophy of the Sabbath School's Purpose

Plummer consistently saw a singular purpose for the Sabbath school—the salvation of all within its influence and the nurturing of Christian growth. Unless the Sabbath school was winning souls it was a failure.

Plummer also saw the Sabbath school as having a nurturing function. This was to be accomplished through regular Bible study, the modeling and interest of the individual teachers, and through the programs of the Sabbath school itself.

The 1930s to the Present

Two important factors contribute to the complexity of the Sabbath school literature for this third era. First, there is a multiplicity of sources for the literature. Individuals representing all levels of official Sabbath school administration plus a few persons writing in a non-official capacity have all written materials for and about the adult Sabbath school. This
situation makes for a great diversity of perspectives within the literature. Second, because of the recency of this era's literature, it is not possible to evaluate it from a historical perspective.

This section will begin with those writings that come from the official Sabbath school administration. Those from the General Conference level of Sabbath school leadership will be followed by those from the union and local conferences. The final part of this section will include writings from individuals who, while credible, are not official representatives of any administrative organization.

General Conference

Typical of the diversity within this era are the writings of three leaders at the General Conference level--each writing in 1933. M. E. Kern saw five different reasons for the Sabbath school: to promote Bible study; to give a liberal education through the weekly mission emphasis; to encourage a spirit of liberality; to provide a training for service; and a place of social fellowship (1933, pp. 10-11). W. H. Branson, identified only three functions of the Sabbath school: a soul-winning agency; a stabilizing agency--that is, a means of establishing and holding the church's membership; and raising funds for the church's world-mission program (1933, p. 3). Lastly,
W. R. French simply observed that the "purpose of the Sabbath school is served to the extent, and only in proportion, as the study of the word of God receives its proper and proportionate share in the exercises of the Sabbath school" (1933, p. 14).

In 1938 the General Conference Sabbath School Department revised Plummer's *Soul-Winning Sabbath School* and republished it under the new title *The Sabbath School: Its History, Organization, and Objectives*. One cannot but note the differences in title. In the front of each book there is a picture of a banner on which is written the objectives of the Sabbath school. In *The Soul-Winning Sabbath School* the banner reads:

The Sabbath School
Serves All the Flock
The Study of the Word
of God
The Saving of Souls. (p. 3)

With the addition of the line "Serves All the Flock," the statement is remarkably similar to that written by Plummer 10 years earlier: "The study of the word of God and the saving of souls is the double objective toward which each school presses" (Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, [1928], p. 6. See statement in Bibliography regarding Plummer's authorship.).

In *The Sabbath School: Its History, Organization, and Objectives* the banner reads:
Our Objectives
Every Member of the Church
a Sabbath School Member
Every Member Present
and on Time
Daily Study
of the
Sabbath School Lesson
Personal Work for Every Pupil
Liberal Gifts for Missions. (p. 10)

Comparing the two, it can be noted that there was an added emphasis upon membership and attendance. This is not to imply that soul-winning was no longer a part of the Sabbath school's ministry--it is merely to observe a possible unconscious shift of perceived and emphasized purpose.

A still different perspective was given by W. T. Bartlett in his Sabbath School Ideals (1940). He seemed to give a service-oriented purpose for the Sabbath school. But it was a service growing out of and based on intelligent knowledge of Bible truth. So Bible study, an intelligent understanding of Bible truth, remained the ultimate purpose of the Sabbath school. Illustrative of this service-based-on-Bible-knowledge orientation is the following citation by Bartlett:

The Sabbath school is the church in preparation for service. When the church as a body grows in the knowledge and love and service of the truth, it will become a mighty force to accomplish intelligently the will of its Master. (pp. 36-37)

Later he emphasized this learning purpose of the Sabbath school even more strongly when he entitled one of
the chapters, "The Final Object of the Sabbath School."
"Final" was used in the sense of "ultimate," not "last.") In this chapter he stressed the role of the Sabbath school in helping its members to "search for truth, study it, and teach it" (pp. 133-34).

Four years later, in 1944, the Sabbath School Department published *The Supreme Objective: A Study of Sabbath School Evangelism* (Sabbath School Department, [1944]). Its title is significant. Evangelism was emphasized as the supreme objective of the Sabbath school. The book abounds with statements such as, "In the work of the church every activity has but one objective. That objective is the salvation of lost men, women, youth, and children" (p. 11).

About the year 1948, the Sabbath School Department published a leaflet entitled *Recommendations on Sabbath School Work*. This is a collection of official actions relating to the Sabbath school which were made by the General Conference in session and during Autumn Councils between 1909 and 1947. The most complete is from the December 1-5, 1946, Sabbath School Secretaries’ Council in Denver, Colorado. It reads:

> Whereas, The Spirit of Prophecy stresses the soul-winning possibilities of the Sabbath school, and
> Whereas, The church has organized the Sabbath school for soul-winning, and
> Whereas, We now face the greatest need and opportunity in our history for Bible teaching evangelism; be it therefore
> **Resolved, that Bible teaching evangelism be made**
the first and foremost objective of all Sabbath school endeavors. (p. 1)

There follows a list of five recommendations to the Sabbath schools, classes, and Adventist families.

This evangelism objective was picked up and emphasized by Gerald R. Nash in his *Evangelism Through the Sabbath School* (1964). On page 19 he began a subsection entitled "The Supreme Objective of the Sabbath School Department." After quoting two Spirit of Prophecy statements supporting his position, he added:

Therefore, the supreme objective of all Sabbath School endeavor, inside the Sabbath School and outside, should be:

1. To present the Lord Jesus Christ in such an attractive manner that men will be led to accept Him as their Lord and Saviour.
2. To instruct men so that they will be prepared to live the message and make personal preparation for the great day of God.
3. To cause men gladly to go forth and labor for others, and win them to Christ. (p. 19)

In closing the subsection, Nash again reminded his readers that "God has ordained that the Sabbath School should be an aggressive, soul-saving agency" (p. 21). Not content with this emphasis, three pages later he again wrote:

There must be no turning aside from our great Sabbath School objective--soulsaving [sic]. . . . Sabbath School evangelism must not be relegated to a side issue. It must be made the dominant note and supreme objective in the life of every Sabbath School member. (p. 24)

The next year (1965), Nash again stressed the soul-winning aspect of the Sabbath school when he wrote
Planning Better Sabbath Schools. He called soul winning the Sabbath school's "main objective," the "great Sabbath School objective," the "supreme objective" (p. 15).

Endeavoring to stress the priority of Sabbath school evangelism, he cautioned:

It is well for us to distinguish between the chief or supreme objective and the preliminary or secondary objectives of the Sabbath School. The tributary objectives are the means to the end. They are the steps needed to reach the ultimate goal. We must never permit the auxiliary objectives to supersede the vision of the main objective. (p. 16)

He then went on to identify five "tributary objectives": total church membership in the Sabbath school; every member present and on time; daily study of the Sabbath school lesson; raising of mission funds; and, what he called "soul holding" (pp. 16-23).

In his Sabbath School Special Days (1966), even when not directly writing about the Sabbath school's objective, Nash stressed that the Sabbath school was to be a soul-winning organization (p. 21).

Beginning with the January 1971 issue of the Worker, and continuing for the next three months, there was a four-part report of Sabbath school objectives for the quinquennium 1970-1975. Basically, these cover four major areas: character development, interpersonal relationships, evangelism, and support of missions (Sabbath School Department, 1971, pp. 9, 6, 5-7, 9). It is of interest that there is no mention of Bible study.
except as it might be included in the concept of character development.

William J. Harris, writing in 1972 about the purpose of the Sabbath school, saw a two-fold objective for the Sabbath school: soul-training and soul-winning (p. 8). Harris went on to remind his readers that the Adventist church was commissioned to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17). He claimed that through the Sabbath school the church possesses "one of the most useful means of accomplishing this great objective" (p. 9).

In the lead article of the July 1978 Worker, Charles L. Brooks wrote that one of the basic purposes of the Sabbath school "is to inspire and to reactivate those on the periphery or those who are slipping out of the fellowship of the family" (p. 3).

A few years later Brooks emphasized the service perspective of the Sabbath school's function in an editorial for the Worker. He defined service as loving people—with a love that translates itself into action. He wrote: "Service is one goal of our Sabbath School work. Service may be defined as meeting needs. . . . The one thing that Sabbath School classes can be expert in is loving people" (1985, p. 16).

W. Richard Lesher, in an editorial in the November 1978 Worker, identified a three-fold purpose for
the Sabbath school: "To focus on the Bible, the salvation of people, and benevolence and liberality for the preaching of the gospel" (p. 2).

In the Sabbath School Manual of 1979 and 1982 a statement of "Objectives" was included as the first chapter of each edition. The two chapters are identical in wording. The complete statement of objectives is included in Appendix A. It states in part that, "The Sabbath school was developed to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ" and to "win, hold, and train for Jesus Christ, men, women, youth, boys, and girls, in all the world."

Four areas of emphasis were cited: faith, fellowship, community, and the world (Sabbath School Department, pp. 9-10).

Later, in the 1982 revision, the ultimate purpose for the Sabbath school was identified with that of true education: the restoration of the image of God in man and to prepare people to meet their Lord (p. 73).

Roy C. Naden's Let Your Sabbath School Come Alive! 1982) is a study guide for the book Counsels on Sabbath School Work. Naden stated that the Sabbath school was originally begun to meet three needs:

First, the nurture of the members--providing them with a plan of systematic study of the Word. Second, as a regular meeting where those not of the Advent faith could come and join in study and find the Lord and His truth for time's last hours. And third, as an organization where the needs of those in countries around the world could constantly be brought to the attention of the Lord's people, helping them to be
Sensitive and generous and aiding in the accomplishment of the Great Commission in all the world. (p. 5)

Later, Naden made more specific statements about the Sabbath school's purpose. Representative of these are: "In this first session we will discover that the basis for all Sabbath School work is the study of the Bible. . . . In simple terms the Sabbath School is a Bible Society" (p. 11).

He expanded this a few pages later: "The Sabbath School has a supreme task of interesting the members in the Bible by teaching both content and methods of personal study" (p. 13).

Noting the salvific function of the Sabbath school, Naden wrote: "Ultimately, Sabbath School is about salvation--personal salvation" (p. 17). He expanded this to include evangelism when he added: "This second section of the book concerns itself with the subject of the evangelical purpose of the Sabbath School" (p. 31).

Naden saw no conflict between the Bible-study purpose and the evangelical purpose of the Sabbath school. He noted:

What is the Sabbath School all about? We have already noted that it is a Bible society. That cannot be denied. The Book of Truth is the source and inspiration of all that we do in the Sabbath School, but the ultimate goal is conversion and nurture. (p. 31)

Naden explained what he meant by "conversion and nurture" several pages later when he wrote: "The Sabbath School is to lead its members closer to the Lord, and to
bring those of the community to a commitment to Jesus" (p. 46).

The importance of Bible study within a social setting was implied in a Worker editorial by Leo R. Van Dolson (1984). He stressed the importance of Bible study in the Sabbath school when he wrote: "The very essence and meaning of Sabbath School is Bible study. Without Bible study, Sabbath School would be just another pleasant fellowship hour" (p. 2).

In his December 1984 editorial, "Back to Basics," Howard F. Rampton underscored the same perspective. In a series of questions he asked: "What is the Sabbath School? What is its central function? What are the real objectives of the Sabbath School?" Rampton answered his questions with a three-fold answer:

Whatever else it is, it is primarily a school, a Bible school, where the Bible is the textbook. Second, the Sabbath School is a place for Christian fellowship. Third, the Sabbath School is not complete unless it motivates its members to share. (pp. 2, 5)

In "A Curriculum Plan for the General Conference Department of Church Ministries" (1987) there is a section dealing with the adult Sabbath school. This paper identifies what the Department of Church Ministries sees as the "overarching educational objective" of the adult Sabbath school. The wording is very similar to that used in the 1979 and 1982 Sabbath School Manual: "The Sabbath..."
School exists to nurture its members in the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and as it is viewed in the setting of the Three Angels' Messages (p. 5). It then goes on to identify six areas in which the Sabbath school should be able to help all of its members in all cultures: commitment to the gospel, Christian fellowship, spiritual growth through Bible study, catching the mission of service and witness, systematic support of the church's mission, and abiding in the hope of a soon returning Saviour (p. 5). (Significantly, these six areas are merely a restatement of the "win, hold, and train for Jesus Christ" statement in the 1979 and 1982 Sabbath School Manual.)

"A Curriculum Plan for the General Conference Department of Church Ministries" then identifies eight specific objectives: concepts, commitment, skills, unity, values, participation, service, and mission (p. 6). (It is not clear how these are distinctively different from those mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is noted in the paper that these are not original with the Department of Church Ministries, but are adapted from the North American Division Department of Education.)

The administrators in the Department of Church Ministries saw the Sabbath school as a part of the church charged with the responsibility of fulfilling Christ's commission to take the gospel to all the world (Matt
13:20) and thus to hasten the return of Christ (p. 11).

They later added: "The purpose of the Department of Church Ministries, and the Sabbath School in particular, is to nurture, strengthen, and enlarge the church, and thus to hasten the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God" (p. 14).

Ron Watts, who at the time of writing was associated with the General Conference Sabbath School Department, wrote a paper entitled "The Sabbath School Class in the Information Society" (n.d.). It discusses the de-personalization of the individual in the era of impersonal, instant mass communication, and information glut. Stressing the fellowship and support aspect of the Sabbath school, Watts noted:

When God made man he made him a social creature. . . . It is a matter of urgency that we make our Bible study classes a time of communication between members and an opportunity for members to develop interpersonal skills, the vital skills of communication that are so important at home and in the workplace. . . . To cope with the stresses of life people need a support group that provides unconditional love, caring, nurture, and affirmation. (pp. 5-8)

In a two-part editorial in the September 22 and 29, 1988, Review and Herald, Myron Widmer lamented the present lack of enthusiasm and attendance in the adult Sabbath school. At the same time, he endeavored to make positive suggestions for its improvement.

Widmer highlighted a dual role--Bible study and fellowship--for the Sabbath school by identifying the
Sabbath school's purpose as "leading Adventists into deep, systematic Bible study in a fellowship of sharing and support" (September 22, 1988, p. 4). Later in the same editorial, he again stressed the same two-fold aspect of the Sabbath school when he answered a rhetorical question: Has the concept of the adult Sabbath school outgrown its usefulness for the majority of Adventists? He answered: "I wholeheartedly believe that joining together each Sabbath morning for fellowship and study of God's Word is vital to our lives as Christians" (p. 4).

Union Conferences

In the final issue of Worker for 1971, W. E. Peeke (the Sabbath School Secretary for the Atlantic Union Conference) wrote an article entitled "Five Objectives for Your Sabbath School." These, according to Peeke, are: character development, saving of souls inside and outside the Sabbath school, membership growth, daily Bible study, and mission support (pp. 3-4).

In an editorial in the March 1977 Worker, James Hardin reminded his readers that the social aspect of the Sabbath school's program is often overlooked. Emphasizing the totality of mankind, and thus the need to minister to the whole individual, he wrote: "The Sabbath School is concerned with the development of the whole person: spiritually, mentally, and socially" (p. 13).
In 1933, in order to provide help for the "whole person: spiritually, mentally, and socially," Hardin and the Pacific Union Conference prepared some special helps for the pastor's class. These helps are in the form of 10 study guides apparently intended to be used in place of the regular Sabbath school quarterly. They stress the practices of Christian living: assurance of salvation in Christ, joy in Christian living, real-life Christian victory, how to have a meaningful prayer and Bible study experience, Christian maturity through awareness and use of one's spiritual gifts, and knowing God's will for one's life.

The next year, 1984, Hardin emphasized the importance of a well-nurtured Sabbath school and its outreach/evangelistic purpose in a series of articles. He asked whether the purpose of the Sabbath school is primarily nurture or outreach. He answered his question by contending that outreach is merely the natural development of a well-nurtured Sabbath school (Worker, 1984, March, pp. 7-8; April, pp. 8, 15; September, pp. 4-5).

C. C. Kott (1978) emphasized the soul-winning aspect of the Sabbath school's objectives. He began his article with the following quotation "The Sabbath school should be one of the greatest instrumentalities, and THE MOST effectual, in bringing souls to Christ" (White,
1938, p. 10, emphasis added by Kott). He then went on to observe, "This is our basic Sabbath School objective. Everything we contrive, create, plan, and purpose is to this singular end" (p. 3).

Enriching the totality of the adult Christian's life is the implied purpose of two booklets created for the Pacific and North Pacific Unions. In recent years, United Services has produced two booklets entitled Enrichment Materials for Adult Sabbath School Programs (n.d. and 1985). Each contains 20-30 program-enrichment ideas dealing with basic needs of the Adventist adult: self-concept, hospitality, joys of Sabbath keeping, assimilating new members, communication in a caring church, overcoming fear, and starting a home fellowship group.

W. M. Abbott, Jr., director of the Sabbath schools in the Southern Union Conference, in personal correspondence with the researcher described the adult Sabbath school's objectives as he perceived them:

1. Sabbath School is to nurture SDAs by Bible study.
2. Sabbath School is to reach out to the community and share the good news of the saving Grace of Christ --"soulwinning"!
3. Since Adventists are a world-wide people, it is also a time to present the mission goal and outreach of the church. (October 21, 1988)

Robert H. Wood (Director of the Church Ministries Department for the Southwestern Union Conference) stressed the common objectives of the recently formed
Church Ministries Department in his paper "Philosophy, Objectives and Guidelines of the Church Ministries Department" (n.d.). (This department encompasses what used to be the Sabbath School Department, but also includes what used to be the Personal Ministries, Youth, and Stewardship Departments.) Woods saw all four of these departmental divisions as having three common goals. They are: outreach (for the community), nurture (for the church), and social (for the home) (p. 10).

Local Conferences

J. William Bassham wrote in the Central Union Reaper (1976) about the 7 Sabbath school objectives his conference was promoting: to revitalize the Sabbath school program, to better organize the classes as units of evangelism, to encourage well-planned special days, promoting a sense of member responsibility for each other, more branch Sabbath schools, and a greater emphasis upon Bible study (pp. 4-5).

Lester Bennett, Sabbath School Director for the Northern California Conference, identified three goals for the Sabbath school: upreach, inreach, and outreach. He equates inreach with fellowship (1985, p. 7).

The Upper Columbia Conference has produced two papers entitled "Job Description: General Sabbath School Superintendent" and "Job Description: Adult Division

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Superintendent." The objectives of the Sabbath school were described in slightly different terms in these two papers. In the first, four major objectives were listed:

1. Every church member and child in regular attendance at Sabbath School
2. Daily study of the Bible
3. Soul-winning and soul-holding evangelism
4. Systematic liberal offerings for missions. ([1988], p. 1)

In the second description, there were 5 objectives given for the adult Sabbath school:

1. Every church member in regular attendance at Sabbath School
2. Daily Bible study
3. Soul winning
4. Systematic offerings for missions
5. Nurturing of members. ([1988], p. 1)

Comparing the two lists, there appears to be no significant differences with the exception that the list which is specifically adult in orientation includes the concept of "nurturing of members."

Kurt Johnson, Director of Personal Ministries and Sabbath School for the Oregon Conference, prepared a paper entitled "Adult Sabbath School Program Committee Established in the Oregon Conference" (1988). In this unpublished paper he did not identify objectives, per se. But he did outline three needs which the adult Sabbath school ought to meet: fellowship, support, and Bible study.

R. H. Shepard, the director of Adult Ministries for the Florida Conference, in his unpublished paper
"What Is the Purpose of the Sabbath School Class?"

(1988), emphasized only the Bible-study purpose of the Sabbath school. This would be expected, since he was discussing not the entire Sabbath school per se, but only the class period. In a cover letter he recommended "50 to 60 minutes of class time" (October 19, 1988).

Shepard was not unaware of other purposes for the Sabbath school. In response to a letter requesting a statement of purpose for the adult Sabbath school, he included a copy of a paper prepared by Ron Watts which he felt suggested other purposes. (Please see earlier comments on page 46.)

From the Michigan Conference, Calvin L. Smith has produced a half-hour video entitled "Sabbath School Action Units." This video describes a plan currently being implemented in Michigan which divides the adult Sabbath school into "Action Units" of six to eight members.

These Action Units meet for an hour during each Sabbath school. Twenty-five minutes of the hour are devoted to outreach planning, reporting, and encouragement. The remaining 35 minutes are reserved for the study of the Sabbath school lesson.

Smith identified four objectives for the Sabbath school: spiritual nurture, fellowship, community outreach, and world missions (October 6, 1988). The "Action
Units' program seeks to achieve the first three of Smith's four objectives: spiritual nurture, fellowship, and community outreach. The world missions emphasis is made during the short opening session before the Action Units meet.

The Central States Conference has produced two papers entitled "Effective Sabbath School Leadership" and "Sabbath School Superintendent's Agenda Notebook." The only statement of Sabbath school objectives included in either of these papers is an exact restatement of pages 9-12 from the Sabbath School Manual already quoted.

Tom Stafford, Sabbath School Director for the Idaho Conference, in a personal letter (November 9, 1988) wrote of his concern that the emphasis upon the Sabbath school lesson may be limiting our fellowship, and thus our effectiveness. He wrote that his 'greatest concern is that hospitality and caring for individual visitors and members is brushed by for the sake of 'getting through' every thought in the lesson.' He went on to state his conviction that a spirit of love and concern is more effective in causing people to return to the Sabbath school than mere Bible information.

Individual Writers

Lenard Dale Jaecks' D.Min. project (1976), "The Teacher-Shepherd Program: A Plan to Meet Church
Objectives Through the Adult Sabbath School Class," proposed a model for the adult Sabbath school class. He outlined the goals for his paper when he wrote:

In summary, the purpose of this project is to demonstrate a new plan whereby the goals of the church are pursued using the combined resources of ordained church leadership (elders and deacons), Sabbath School class organization and the Sabbath School plan of systematic Bible study. (pp. 3-5)

Jaecks did not specify what the objectives of the Sabbath school ought to be. However, it is clear from a reading of his work that he perceives the Sabbath school to have one basic purpose--soul-winning.

Similarly, in a general article, John Loor (1971), former senior pastor of the Collegedale Adventist Church, wrote that the "prime purpose of the Sabbath school" is evangelism (Worker, p. 5).

Summary

It appears that for the first several years of this period there was a lack of unity as to the objectives of the Sabbath school. There seemed to be no consensus. Then, beginning in 1944 and lasting through the 1960s, soul-winning seemed to become the Sabbath school's prime purpose.

In the 1970s multiple purposes for the Sabbath school were promoted. The literature revealed a two-, three-, or four-part purpose given by the writers.
With the 1980s there seemed to be an effort to be more inclusive in statements of objectives. Typical of this is the statement, already cited, from the 1982 Sabbath School Manual that the Sabbath school's purpose is "the restoration of the image of God in man and to prepare people to meet their Lord" (p. 73). The adult Sabbath school member was seen as a total person, and it was presented that the purpose of the Sabbath school was to minister to the whole man. The reasons for the Sabbath school were "to nurture, strengthen, and enlarge the church, and thus to hasten the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God" (pp. 11, 14).

Summary of the Sabbath School Literature

During the early years of 1852 through 1901 the Sabbath school was developing in the minds and lives of its members. Beginning as simply "right instruction" in the mind of James White, the Sabbath school became, by 1901, a full-fledged department in the General Conference. During this time the emphasis was on right instruction and Bible study.

It seemed to be assumed that if a person only had instruction in the Bible that this would bring about a change in his lifestyle and a commitment to Jesus Christ. The outreach aspect of the Sabbath school was not ignored in the literature of this period, but it was certainly
minimally stressed. On another front, only Bell seems to have noted the social aspect of the Sabbath school.

In the writings of Ellen White and Flora Plummer, the salvific function of the Sabbath school was repeatedly emphasized. Bible study was only a part, an important part, of the Sabbath school. Individual nurture, not only through the regular Sabbath school lesson curriculum, but also through personal work by the Sabbath school leaders and teachers and also through the Sabbath school programs was repeatedly held up as an ideal.

In addition, soul-winning at both the local and world-wide levels was stressed. The Sabbath school was to be a spiritual benefit to more than just its members. It was to reach out and become the greatest, most effective soul-winning agency of the church. Thus, the Sabbath school was to be instrumental in ever increasing the circle of salvation.

A multiplicity of objectives was emphasized during the middle and later 1900s. These ranged from as basic as "soul-winning," to as simple as "every member present and on time." At times these objectives appeared to be promoted without having been thought through. There was often no consensus.

Two exceptions stand out. During the late 1940s and through the 1950s and 1960s soul-winning was promoted
as the Sabbath school’s prime purpose. The other exception, beginning in the 1980s, was that a holistic, more inclusive statement of objectives often began to be promoted.

Sunday School Literature

For the purposes of comparing the literature of the Sunday school with that of the Sabbath school, the same three basic time periods will be used as were used in the review of the Sabbath school literature.

The purpose in this section is to demonstrate the correlation between the writings of the Sabbath and Sunday schools. Therefore, this review is not exhaustive, but representative. The bibliography contains more literature than is reviewed in this chapter.

Before 1901

A large amount of administrative and ideological similarity existed between the Sunday school and the Sabbath school of the last half of the 19th century. When James White began the Sabbath school in 1852, the idea of a special children’s class for the purpose of religious instruction and meeting on the day of worship was already accepted in Christian America. By 1852 the public school system had taken over the secular education of the children which left the Sunday schools free to
specialize in religious instruction. For the early history of the English and American Sunday schools, the reader is directed to Boylan, 1988; Butler, 1962; Harris, n.d.; Lankard, 1927; Lynn and Wright, 1980; Trumbull, 1888; and Willis, 1980.

Near the end of the 19th century when the concept of the adult Sabbath school began to gain acceptance (Cottrell, 1879, p. 80; W. C. White, 1880, p. 247; Kilgore, 1880, p. 167), the adult Sunday school also gained acceptance. Before the late 1800s, only a few isolated voices called for an adult Sunday school. The idea did not gain popularity until about 1880 or 1890 (Barclay, 1911, p. 33; Lankard, 207, 221; Trumbull, 1888, p. 194; Trumbull, [1913], pp. 561, 565-568).

In the Sabbath school of this era, there was a concern for the moral character of the Sabbath school members and a desire for them to experience a commitment to Jesus. However, in practice, there was an emphasis on the memorization of Scripture. A similar scenario is seen in the Sunday school.

One of the earliest statements of purpose for the modern Sunday school was made by the American Sunday School Union in the first issue of The American Sunday School Magazine (1924). The object of the Sunday school, it claimed, "is to teach, on the Lord's Day, all classes of persons, who may avail themselves of the privilege, to
read and understand the Bible; and to invite them to the practice of its precepts. (p. 3).

Frank Glenn Lankard (1927) quoted F. D. Huntingdon as he described the major goal of the Sunday school in 1860, "At any rate and in all cases, conversion there must be." Lankard then commented:

Very closely connected with this aim, and in reality carrying it forward, was a second or supplementary aim. The child must be acquainted with the Word of God, for, whether it was indiscriminate memorization, selected lesson, or question book, all religious materials centered in the Bible. (p. 195)

Writing from the perspective of 200 years, Willis (1980) observed the following implied objectives for the Sunday school:

During the period from 1825 to near the end of the century, the emphasis of United States Sunday Schools was on basics. First, the leaders wanted children to accept Christ. And second, they wanted to impart Bible knowledge. This is important to remember. During the rapid expansion of Sunday Schools, the emphasis was on salvation and Bible content, resulting in increased knowledge and changed lives. (p. 55)

1901-1936

In the Sabbath school literature this is the era of Ellen White and L. Flora Plummer. Both saw soul-winning as the preeminent work of the Sabbath school. Intimately associated with the emphasis was also a priority on character development. This same two-fold priority is seen in much of the Sunday school literature of this era.
Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, in his Introduction to George H. Trull’s *Missionary Methods for Sunday School Workers* (1908), made the observation that “most Sunday-school workers do not know what the Sunday-school is, and what is the real end of its effort.” He went on to ask the question, “What, then, is the end of Sunday-school work?” He answered:

Character-training for service in the extension of the Kingdom. . . . The implanting of the missionary spirit so as to give it control of the life of every pupil may fairly be said to be the chief and sole purpose of the Sunday-school. (pp. v-vii)

Trull, for his part, stressed conversion which resulted in mission outreach as the role of the Sunday school. He wrote:

Unless a scholar is led to know Christ intimately as his Saviour and Lord, and unless Christ becomes so real in his experience that he will want to make him known to others, then we are failing of our highest possibilities in our Sunday-school work. (p. 7)

In an almost identical line, H. T. Musselman (1908) wrote of the “ultimate aim” of the Sunday school. The priority purpose, according to Musselman, “is the bringing of man into fellowship and friendship with God through Jesus Christ” (p. 145). He went on to write,

We must bring our teachers to see that if they fail to bring their pupils to Christ in conversion, their teaching is . . . a failure. As already pointed out, Sunday-school teaching should find its climax in personal evangelism. (pp. 145-46)

Musselman saw the evangelistic function of the Sunday school as being accomplished through three aspects
of the teacher's work and life: "the actual teaching of the truth of the gospel," "the personal appeal of the teacher to her pupil to respond to the truth," and "the personal association of the teacher with his pupils" (pp. 148-51).

A few year later, in 1917, Ida S. Blick, in her book The Adult Department: Its Scope and Opportunity, described three objectives for the adult Bible class: Bible study, a spirit of service, and personal evangelism (pp. 29-31).

Also in 1917, the American Baptist Publication Society published Luther A. Weigle's The Teacher as the second part of its New Standard Teacher-Training Course. Weigle described the Sunday school's objective in terms which sound as if they belong to the earlier era. He emphatically stated that there is but one purpose for the Sunday school—education. He declared:

The Sunday school is a school. Its work is educational. It is a place of instruction... [Worship, giving, and social fellowship] are means to an end; and they are subordinate to the chief means which the Sunday school employs—definite instruction in the Bible. (p. 35, emphasis in original)

With an emphasis more typical of this era, J. R. Miller, in his book The Devotional Life of the Sunday School Teacher (1925), stated the purpose of the Sunday school in terms which remind one of L. Flora Plummer (who was writing at this same time): "The highest work given
Miller saw being accomplished through a two-fold process: the teacher must ever seek to assure his students that God loves them; and within the heart of the teacher there must be a love, a compassion for the unsaved (pp. 22-23).

Miller did not see the mere winning of souls as the sum of the Sunday school teacher’s work. It was also to nurture the student. He concluded a chapter entitled “The Teacher’s Aim” by noting:

The first bringing of pupils to Christ is not the whole of the teacher’s work. They are then to be watched over with new care, wisely guided, faithfully shepherded, helped in all true ways, built up into strength and led out into fields of active service. To this sacred ministry every teacher is called and ordained. (p. 25)

A little later, in discussing the aims of the International Uniform Lessons, Frank Glenn Lankard (1927) noted that their objectives were to have the student converted and to understand God’s Word. Another aspect of the Sunday school’s objective was to have that understanding of God’s Word actually lived out in the life of the student (pp. 352-353).

Finally, Daryl Heath, in his book The Small Sunday School at Work (1981), put this era in perspective:

A sense of purpose for the Sunday School, as perceived by Southern Baptists, has changed through the years as the denomination and society have changed. The Sunday School existed first to provide Bible teaching for children. Then came the Adult class movement. . . . In 1916, I. J. Van Ness,
corresponding secretary of the Sunday School Board, stated that the purpose of the Southern Baptist church programs was to be evangelistic in nature, reaching out to the lost and unchurched. By 1921, the Convention passed a resolution, stating that evangelistic outreach was top priority. (p. 47)

1940 to the Present

This era was marked by diversity in the Sabbath school literature. In the 1950s and 1960s there appeared to be a consensus that soul-winning was the Sabbath school’s prime objective. In the 1980s many Sabbath school writers were taking a more holistic perspective—looking at the needs of the total adult and calling for the Sabbath school to minister to these. In the Sunday school literature of this time period there is also much diversity.

C. E. Autrey, in his book Basic Evangelism (1959), noted:

The most effective method in evangelism in the twentieth century is the Sunday school... It should be the contact agency of the church. All ages and types of people are visited and enrolled in the Bible school. Here their hearts are warmed with Bible teaching. They are then led to remain for worship. They are brought into the Bible school, worship service, Christ, and church membership. (p. 93)

Commenting on this quotation, Charles H. Betz (October 1985) observed: "It is this philosophy that is largely responsible for Southern Baptist’s growth to be the largest Protestant denomination in America" (p. 17).

Ernest Joseph Loessner (1961) argued for a more
needs-oriented Sunday school. He made a study of 60 adults between the ages of 30 and 60 to determine what they felt would make their Sunday schools more meaningful. When asked how they would change the Sunday schools they were attending, over 80% agreed with the statement that they wished their teacher would show them more clearly how the Bible lessons applied to their lives (pp. 88-89). Significant, too, is the fact that when they were asked what had been the greatest contribution of the Sunday school in their past lives, fellowship ranked first with Bible knowledge second (pp. 99-100).

After decrying the decline of the Sunday school, C. B. Saevey devoted an entire chapter in his History of Christian Education (1964) to a discussion of its re-emergence. Sounding very evangelical, he wrote:

In Christian education, those who thus honor God place emphasis upon gaining a personal knowledge of God through Jesus Christ and upon knowledge of His will made known in His revealed Word. This Word is to them the only authoritative rule of faith and practice for man in this world. They teach the Bible with the threefold purpose of bringing those taught to Christ in salvation, building them up in Christ unto sanctification, and sending them out for Christ in service. (p. 275)

School is reaching, teaching, and winning people to Jesus Christ* (p. 35). Sunday school evangelism, according to Towns, is not optional (p. 133).

Conversion and evangelism were identified as the Sunday school’s functions by Gerald D. Iverson in the preface of his *Ways to Plan and Organize Your Sunday School: Adult* (1971). He wrote:

> Our Sunday schools must produce disciples of Jesus Christ.

> The primary definition of the word disciple is "a learner." Learning must take place in our Sunday schools if we are to produce disciples of Jesus Christ. Adults need to learn: they need to become disciples of Jesus Christ. . . .

> In short, adults need to learn to experience the abundant life offered by Jesus Christ. Adult Sunday school should be the medium which bridges the gap between theology and life as we live it. (no pagination in original)

Six years after writing *Grow: Your Sunday School Can Grow*, Lowell E. Brown wrote *Sunday School Standards* (1981). In his second book he cited Bible study, fellowship, and evangelism as the Sunday school’s objectives. These, according to Brown, are all equally important. He noted:

Sometimes people debate the question “Which is the Sunday Schools’s most important role--Bible study, fellowship or evangelism?” Answering this question is like answering the question “Which is more important to an airplane--its left wing, its right wing, or its tail?” The answer is that all three are essential. (pp. 5-6)

In his *Tips for Teaching Adults* (1973), Paul E. Loth, combining the salvific and practical aspects of the
Sunday school, stated three specific objectives for the teacher: "to win each member of your class to Christ;" "to see lives yielded to God and under the direction of the Holy Spirit;" and to "make every lesson lead to some act of service which implements the lesson taught" (p. 12).

Warren N. Wilbert (1980) cited what he called "three aims of major consequence" for the adult Sunday school class: proclamation, fellowship, and nurture (p. 21).

Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn did not begin with the objectives for the Sunday school class in their *Growth: A New Vision for the Sunday School* (1980). They went back beyond the goals for religious education, back beyond the purpose of the church, and asked the question, "What is God's will and purpose for His people and His church?" Their answer was:

God's unswerving purpose is that lost mankind be redeemed and brought into His church. Christ's birth, crucifixion, and resurrection were for the purpose that mankind might be saved.

Christ opened a way of salvation so that all people, everywhere, might find forgiveness of sin, reconciliation to God, new life in Christ, and become members of His Body—the Church. This primary purpose of God, proclaimed by Christ's disciples, is the motivation and power behind growing churches. (p. 27)

The Arns and McGavran then went on to apply this purpose for the church to the Sunday school and suggested that all Sunday school educators should ask themselves
the following question: "Is the purpose and nature of our Christian Education/Sunday School program accurately reflecting the mission of Christ and His church?" They contended,

This question must be asked and answered by leaders in the local Sunday School and Christian education program. Aligning the Sunday School's purpose with His is the crucial issue. This objective cannot be treated as another item on the list of educational objectives. It is not an additional purpose clause to be added. This is the most important question which the Sunday School must face—and resolve—before it can fulfill its rightful purpose. (p. 40)

Dick Murray, in *Strengthening the Adult Sunday School Class* (1981), is one of the few Sunday school writers who endeavored to apply the research dealing with life and moral stages to the goals of the Sunday school. Warning against the blanket acceptance and application of such research to the adult Sunday school, he wrote:

Our various curricula have paid considerable attention to the "Developmental Tasks" of Robert Havighurst and the "Persistent Life Concerns" of Erik Erikson. In twenty-five years of familiarity with the church's attempts to relate Christian learning to either of the above, I've become convinced that it is a mistake to take either theories or research of this kind and apply it directly to persons in the church. Interesting enough, a high percentage of the current research of persons like Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, and Sheehy, *Passages, Predictable Crisis of Adult Life*, is focused on persons on either the East or West Coasts of the United States. Few of the persons included in the research lived active church lives, and for most of them, neither religion, nor the church played a decisive role. This is simply not true of the majority of people with whom we work in the Sunday school and the church in other parts of the country. (p. 53)
This did not mean that Murray totally disregarded all such research. He wrote that, based on the research just noted, there are three definite implications for the adult Sunday school class:

1. Adults need a lot of peer support as they go through the stable and transitional periods of their lives.
2. Ongoing classes, divided roughly by age, are substantially supported by such research.
3. Levinson’s discovery of the vital role of mentor is suggestive to me of the need young adults have for older persons as teachers and sponsors, as well as the encouragement and enablement of some spiritual mentor roles we Protestants have rarely developed. (pp. 53-54)

Tom Barnard, in How to Grow an Adult Class (1983), saw the work of the adult Sunday school teacher akin to that of the pastor: "leading, feeding, and protecting the flock." He went on to point out:

The Sunday School teacher has the same responsibility to his class as the pastor has to his flock. Just as the pastor is the shepherd, so the Sunday School teacher must have a shepherd’s heart. A Sunday School teacher is the extension of pastoral ministry into the life of the class. (p. 14)

William S. Miblette, in "The Adult Sunday School Movement: History with Design" (1984), cited "changed lives" as the overriding goal of the Sunday school. He mentioned three "sub-goals," or steps, whereby lives will be changed: "Bible study that allows for personal discovery;" "fellowship that allows for purposeful sharing;" and "outreach that allows for positive growth" (pp. 33-34).
Britton Wood wrote from the perspective of the single adult and described an adult Bible-study class program which took place in the Park Cities Baptist Church, where she worshiped. The emphasis of her chapter is that the Bible-study class must be made practical and applicable before it will continue to minister to the single adult. Without actually stating the objective of the Sunday school class, it is obvious that Wood's major goal for the Sunday school is practical Bible study that meets the psychological and sociological needs of the single adult. Wood saw these needs as: a healthy self-esteem, an understanding of one's self, and an understanding of others (p. 182).

Summary of the Sunday School Literature

We have noted administrative and ideological similarities in the Sabbath school and the Sunday school of the last half of the 1900s. Both placed primacy upon the conversion of the schools' members. Both sought to achieve this conversion through the Scriptures.

During the first third of the 20th century, most writers were identifying soul-winning and character development as the two-fold objective for both the Sabbath school and Sunday school.

Like the Sabbath school literature from 1940 to the present time, there is diversity within the writings
of the Sunday school. Both sets of literature include well-thought-through and researched statements of objectives. But both also include the writings of the practitioners who simply observe what is working and what seems to be helping the members to grow spiritually. These observations are also valid.

Reactions to the Literature

Gerald R. Nash may have said it best:

It is well for us to distinguish between the chief or supreme objective and the preliminary or secondary objectives of the Sabbath School. The tributary objectives are the means to the end. They are the steps needed to reach the ultimate goal. We must never permit the auxiliary objectives to supersede the vision of the main objective. (1965, p. 16)

Is it possible, out of the hundreds of pages written about the objectives for the Sabbath school and Sunday school to pick out one purpose which ranks "supreme"? Is attendance, membership, character development, Bible study, or even evangelism worthy of the adjective "supreme"? Are any of these of any worth if salvation is not the final end?

Interestingly, Goodloe Harper Bell, in his first editorial for the Worker in 1885, was the first to suggest "salvation" as an ultimate objective for the Sabbath school. Under the title, "Object of the Sabbath-School," he wrote: "The ultimate object of the Sabbath-school is the same as that of all other organized effort in behalf
of Christianity; namely, the salvation of souls" (pp. 4-5).

But "salvation" is not a practical objective for the Sabbath school or Sunday school because it is too intangible. At the present time there is not any way of determining whether or not the school is successfully reaching that objective. One cannot objectively measure "salvation." We must of necessity go to what Nash called "preliminary or secondary objectives of the Sabbath School."

"Soul-winning" and "soul-keeping" have been suggested as the Sabbath and Sunday schools' objectives. But, like "salvation," "soul-winning" and "soul-keeping" are intangibles in some important senses and cannot be measured directly.

However, if "soul-winning" is understood in the concrete sense of declared decisions for Christ, then this objective is objective and measurable. The success of the Sabbath school or Sunday school can, in part, be measured by indicated decisions.

On the other hand, "soul-keeping" is not so easy to quantify. "Soul-keeping" describes the "shepherding" responsibility Christ gave each of his followers. It encourages and nurtures the abiding experience described by Jesus in John 15. Merely keeping record of how long a person remains a member of the Sabbath school is
insufficient. It ignores the Christian growth aspect of discipleship.

Yet, "soul-keeping" is vitally important.

Because it is human nature not to abide in Christ and because God is too loving ever to force salvation on anyone, it is insufficient to merely "win" souls for Christ. They must also be "kept" for Him. As already noted, J. R. Miller said it well:

The first bringing of pupils to Christ is not the whole of the teacher's work. They are then to be watched over with new care, wisely guided, faithfully shepherded, helped in all true ways, built up into strength and led out into fields of active service. (1925, p. 25)

Six areas of "tributary" objectives for the adult Sabbath school are evident in the literature. These are: Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, and World-mission promotion and funding.

These certainly cannot be regarded as primary goals for the Sabbath school. They are only important because they are "objective" steps which the Sabbath school can use to achieve its higher objective of winning and keeping souls. Each of these six objectives is certainly an avenue that the Holy Spirit can use. Each is important as it relates to the plan of salvation and
results in the winning and keeping of souls for Jesus Christ.

To bring people to Jesus Christ and to then do all that is possible to encourage them to remain in close fellowship with Him and to "grow in grace" (2 Pet 3:18) is the standard by which all Sabbath school or Sunday school objectives and activities ultimately must be measured.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The form of any research is determined by the information sought. In the case of this study the purpose is to answer the questions: What are the purposes of the adult Sabbath school according to the literature? What are its objectives according to its professional leadership? How do those attending the local adult Sabbath schools understand its purposes? Is there a difference between the aims of the Sabbath school as perceived by its conference leaders and its function as sensed by those who attend? And, last, is there a difference in perceived purposes between subgroups of those attending and comprising the membership of the adult Sabbath schools?

The first question, What are the purposes of the adult Sabbath school according to the literature? was approached through a study of the Sabbath and Sunday school literature. That study revealed six areas of objectives for the Sabbath school: Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian
service, and World-mission promotion and funding.

The remaining questions were answered through data collection. As explained later, two forms of the instrument were developed: one for the Sabbath school's professional leaders and one for those attending the Sabbath schools. These forms are found in Appendix C.

**Rationale and Procedure for the Development of the Instrument**

**Part I--Demographics**

This portion of the instrument was used to profile the collective makeup of the population studied. The questions in this section enabled a comparison of subgroups within the general population. It was anticipated that some subgroups would be distinctive, even within other larger subgroups. For example, it was hypothesized that Sabbath school teachers who were 50 or older would perceive the Sabbath school's objectives differently from the rest of the Sabbath school teachers, who, in turn, would perceive the purpose of the Sabbath school differently from those in the general population sample. It was also hypothesized that Sabbath school teachers in the larger Sabbath schools would see these objectives differently from those in the smaller Sabbath schools.

It was anticipated that the identification of subgroups within the general sample and the comparing of
findings between subgroups would greatly enrich the significance and applicability of the findings of this study.

**Part II--Sabbath School Attitudes**

This section of the instrument was designed to make it possible to determine a composite Sabbath school attitude profile for the population studied. Used in conjunction with the demographic information collected in Part I, it was designed to enrich the significance of identified subgroups within the total population.

Six pairs of questions made up this section, each pair made up of a positive and a negative statement to which the individual was asked to respond. The six attitude areas surveyed in this questionnaire were: (1) the practical spiritual help received from the Bible-study lesson in the Sabbath school, statements 1 and 7; (2) the perceived preparation by the Sabbath school's teachers for each Bible-study class, statements 2 and 10; (3) the practical spiritual help received from the Sabbath school programs, statements 3 and 9; (4) the perceived understanding of the Sabbath school's objectives by the Sabbath school's Bible-study class teachers, statements 4 and 11; (5) the perceived preparation by the Sabbath school's leaders for each Sabbath school program, statements 5 and 12; and, (6) the perceived understanding...
of the Sabbath school's objectives by the Sabbath school's local leaders, statements 6 and 9.

The analysis of this section provided a profile of the attitudes of those surveyed in the total population as well as in the subgroups within the total group studied.

**Part III--Perceived Sabbath School Objectives**

It was the purpose of this section to determine the relative importance attached to each of the six objectives using two different testing methods.

The first section in Part III asked the respondents to indicate the understood importance of each of the six objectives on a likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5.

The second section in Part III used paired-comparisons to determine the relative importance attached to each of the six objectives. Standard procedures for pairing each of the six objectives were used (cf: Edwards, pp. 19-50; Torgerson, pp. 166-68; Guilford, pp. 154-77).

**Part IV--Conclusion**

The final section consisted of open-ended questions.
Validation and Reliability

A pilot test of the instrument was made on September 3, 1989. The purpose of the testing was threefold: to determine the validity of the instrument, to measure the reliability of the instrument, and to determine if any questions were difficult to understand or if there were other difficulties in the administration of the instrument. Seventeen adults took part in the pilot testing. A copy of the pilot-test instrument is found in Appendix 3.

Because this was only a pilot test no data was collected from the demographics page. The first part of the pilot test was to determine the validity of the 12 questions comprising the section entitled "Sabbath School Attitudes." First, the six attitude concepts were identified. Then each of the participants in the pilot test were asked to identify which of these six was being addressed in each of the 12 attitude statements in the section "Sabbath School Attitudes."

The validity of these 12 attitude statements was verified by the fact that for each statement all of the participants correctly identified the concept being tested. All participants agreed that the statement did discuss the attitude being measured.

Reliability was measured using coefficient alpha. The obtained alpha was .372.
Methodology Used to Gather and Analyze the Data

Gathering the Data

As described and delimited in chapter 1, the population for this study is made up of two major divisions: (1) the local conference, union conference, and General Conference Sabbath school’s professional leadership in North America, and (2) the members of the local adult Sabbath schools in the greater Lincoln, Nebraska, area and the adult Sabbath school in Topeka, Kansas.

Two forms of the instrument were used. The difference between them was in the wording of some of the questions in order to make them appropriate for the group being surveyed.

Using cover letters and self-addressed, stamped envelopes, Form A of the instrument was sent to all of the Sabbath school administrators at the General Conference, union conference, and local conference levels. Each instrument was numbered in order to check who returned their completed surveys. If the instrument was not returned after 3 weeks, a follow-up letter and another instrument was mailed.

Form B of the instrument was administered to the members of the adult Sabbath schools in the greater Lincoln area and Topeka, Kansas, during one of the
regularly scheduled Sabbath school services. After a brief verbal introduction, the instruments were passed out to those in attendance. The instrument was read aloud, the respondents indicating their responses during the reading.

Analyzing the Data

Part I--Demographics. Information collected in this section was not statistically analyzed. However, it was possible to identify the proportional composition of the total population surveyed.

Part II--Sabbath School Attitudes. For scoring purposes, numerical values from "1" to "5" were assigned to each of the responses with "1" being regarded as the least positive attitude toward the concept in question and "5" indicating the most positive attitude.

Since this section used a Likert scale, and since "each interval between each point on the scale is assumed to be equal" (Tuckman, 1978, p. 179), and since analysis of data from the Likert scales was based on summated scores, it was possible to determine means, standard deviations, as well as statistically significant differences for the questions in this section.

Scores on the paired items in this section (1-7, 2-10, 3-8, 4-11, 5-12, 6-9) were compared using the t-test for difference of means on correlated samples.
Statistically significant differences were determined by an alpha of .1 or smaller.

**Part III--Perceived Sabbath School Objectives.**

The first section in Part III were analyzed according to Thurston's Categorical Scaling procedure (using the CATSCALE program in the Main Frame STAT Library at Andrews University). This analysis enabled each of the six objectives to be placed on an arbitrary interval scale.

The second section in Part III used the PAIRCOMP program in the Main Frame STAT Library at Andrews University. This program placed each of the six objectives on an arbitrary interval scale. The two resulting scales were then compared using a product-moment correlation.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to identify the objectives of the adult Sabbath school and their relative importance according to the Sabbath school's professional leaders and attendees. Six possible objectives were identified in the literature: Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, and World-mission promotion and funding.

Demographic Profile of Population

Two forms of the instrument were used to collect data for this study. (See Forms A and B in Appendix C.) The difference between these forms is in Part I, demographic information.

Form A was used to gather data from the Sabbath school's professional leaders in local conferences, union conferences, the North American Division, and the General Conference. One hundred and sixty professional Sabbath school leaders were asked to respond to the survey. This group was taken from the 1989 Seventh-day Adventist
Yearbook. Ultimately, 114 (71%) of the professional Sabbath school leaders responded.

Form B collected data from those attending the 12 selected adult Sabbath schools. Completed surveys were collected at the conclusion of the survey's administration. A total of 498 completed surveys were received from those attending the 12 Sabbath schools.

A summary of the demographic information is shown in Table 1. (See Appendices C through E for complete data.)

Sabbath school attendees showed a more even distribution of age than did the Sabbath school's professional leaders. This, it is hypothesized, was due to the fact that the attendee population included 96 respondents from the Union College Sabbath school which is comprised of mostly college youth. Also the Sabbath school's professional leaders would tend to be older individuals and would be expected to retire at age 65. Therefore, there would be few, if any, professional leaders in the younger age groups or in the 65 or older age group.

Attendance data indicated that Sabbath school attendees were more regular in attendance than professional leaders. However, the question asked "How many Sabbaths per month do you usually attend the adult division of the Sabbath school?" It may be that on some
# Table 1

## Profile of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sabbath School Which Attendees Attend</th>
<th>SS Professionals Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>SS Attendees Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allon Chapel</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital View</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>College View</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbury</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls City</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont Park</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topeka</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union College</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Attendees Regularly Attending Sabbath School Surveyed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>394</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Sabbath School Professionals' Level of Administration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local conf.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Union conf.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>NA div.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Gen. Conf.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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Table 1--Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SS PROFESSIONALS</th>
<th>SS ATTENDEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGE OF RESPONDENTS:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 or less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or more</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GENDER OF ATTENDEES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>40.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YEARS ATTENDEES HAVE ATTENDED ADVENTIST CHURCH:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 or more</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOW MANY SABBATHS PER MONTH RESPONDENTS ATTEND ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 or 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 or 5</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1—Continued

| HOW OFTEN RESPONDENTS STUDY SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON BEFORE SABBATH SCHOOL CLASS STUDY: | SS PROFESSIONALS Frequency | % | SS ATTENDEES Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Never | 3 | 2.8 | 70 | 14.4 |
| Sometimes | 24 | 22.2 | 164 | 3.3.7 |
| Often | 40 | 37.0 | 95 | 19.5 |
| Regularly | 41 | 38.0 | 157 | 32.3 |
| Totals | 108 | 100.0 | 486 | 100.0 |

| HAVE RESPONDENTS SERVED AS LOCAL SABBATH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, LEADER, OR ASSISTANT DURING PAST TWO YEARS? | SS PROFESSIONALS Frequency | % | SS ATTENDEES Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 18 | 16.7 | 85 | 17.2 |
| No | 90 | 83.3 | 410 | 82.8 |
| Totals | 108 | 100.0 | 495 | 100.0 |

| HAVE ATTENDEES SERVED AS ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL CLASS TEACHER OR ASSISTANT DURING PAST TWO YEARS? | SS PROFESSIONALS Frequency | % | SS ATTENDEES Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 111 | 22.6 | | |
| No | 380 | 77.4 | | |
| Totals | 491 | 100.0 | | |

| HAVE ATTENDEES BEEN EMPLOYED BY ADVENTIST CHURCH WITHIN PREVIOUS TWO YEARS? | SS PROFESSIONALS Frequency | % | SS ATTENDEES Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 143 | 29.3 | | |
| No | 345 | 70.7 | | |
| Totals | 488 | 100.0 | | |

For complete questions and data for all respondents, see Appendices C through E.
Sabbaths, the professional leaders are in lower divisions of the Sabbath school. Travel may also influence their attendance record.

Seventy-one percent of the Sabbath school’s professional leaders reported studying their Sabbath school lessons “often” or “regularly.” Only 50% of the Sabbath school attendees reported that they studied the lessons “often” or “regularly.” There is no obvious explanation for this difference. Perhaps the Sabbath school’s professional leaders feel pressure to report that they study the Sabbath school lesson more often than is actually the case. Possibly the Sabbath school’s profession leaders, because of their position, are more committed to the Sabbath school. Thus, they study their lessons more faithfully. It is assumed that the Sabbath school’s professional leaders are committed to Christ and to discovering His will for their lives and that they have discovered that the faithful study of their Sabbath school lessons provide an excellent guide for their Bible study.

Females outnumbered males in the adult Sabbath school by about 5 to 4. This is not surprising since observation would indicate that females also outnumber males in worship service attendance.

Since the ratio of Sabbath school members to church members has been decreasing since 1926 (Yost,
(1989), pp. 13-19), it was hypothesized that those who have been church members for a longer time would be more committed to the Sabbath school than would those who had been church members a shorter time. In fact, Sabbath school attendees who had been church members for fewer than 15 years comprised approximately 20% of the Sabbath school attendance. Thus, the church brings in new members, but unless these newer members are attracted to and begin attending the Sabbath school, attendance probably will continue to suffer as older members die without being replaced by newer members of the church.

Typically, the Sabbath school professional leaders in this study were between ages 40 and 59 and administer at the local conference level. They are probably in adult Sabbath schools at least three Sabbaths each month. Three out of four reported that they study the Sabbath school lesson "often" or "regularly." They had not held a leadership position in a local Sabbath school during the previous 2 years.

The "typical" attendee in the surveyed adult Sabbath schools was female. She had attended the Adventist church for 15 or more years and attended Sabbath school at least three Sabbaths per month. She studied her Sabbath school lesson "often" or "regularly" only about half of the time. She had not been a leader or teacher during the previous 2 years, neither had she

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been employed by the Adventist church during that time.

**Attitudinal Profile of Population**

Part II of the instrument was used to gather information regarding the respondents' attitudes to the adult Sabbath school. The Sabbath school's professional leaders consistently indicated lower scores in each of the six attitude areas. It is hypothesized that this is due to a more conservative perspective rather than to a less positive attitude. The professional leaders all completed their surveys individually, away from the Sabbath school atmosphere, whereas the attendees completed their surveys during the Sabbath school hour. This may also account for part of the discrepancy.

The Sabbath school's professional leaders showed a more positive attitude toward the practical spiritual help received from the Bible study in the Sabbath school than did the attendees. This may be because most of the professional leaders are theologically educated and, thus, are more interested in Bible study than is the attendee. It also may reflect a need for practical Bible study which is better applied to everyday life as the attendees live it.

In contrast, the attendees indicated a more positive attitude toward the practical spiritual help received from the Sabbath school programs. This may be
because the superintendent responsible for the program has shared, in a more intimate way, the frustrations of the week immediately past and is in tune with the immediate needs of the attendees. (Complete data can be found in Appendices F and G.)

**Rankings of Objectives**

Part III of the instrument measured the relative value that respondents placed on each of the six objectives. Two methods were employed to measure the perceived importance of the six objectives. In the first, respondents were asked to rate independently each of the Sabbath school's objectives on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 indicated the lowest rating and 5, the highest).

The second method utilized a series of 15 pairs of forced choices. Each of the adult Sabbath school's six objectives was paired with each of the other five objectives to make a total of 15 possible permutations. Respondents were asked to identify, within each pair of objectives, which objective they regarded as more important.

**Independent Ratings**

Table 2 and Figure 1 show the results of the independent rating of the six objectives. Bible study was rated as the most important of the six objectives. Nurture and character development and Fellowship and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bible study</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nurture and character development</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fellowship and support</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.24*</td>
<td>3.93*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Training for Christian service</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. World-mission promotion and funding</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All ratings are means based on a Likert scale of 1-5. The first column, Objective, identifies the Sabbath school objective and its relative rank based on data from the second column, All, which lists each objective's mean rating by all of the respondents. The third and fourth columns, Leaders and Attendees respectively, are a breakdown of the data in the second column. They note each objective’s mean rating by 114 Sabbath school professionals and by 498 Sabbath school attendees.

The asterisks (*) indicate that differences in means are significant.

For further details see Appendix H.
Figure 1. Graph of rank and rating of the Sabbath school's objectives.

This graph is based on data in Table 2. In this, and subsequent illustrations BS indicates Bible study; N/CD = Nurture and character development; F/S = Fellowship and support; CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning; TCS = Training for Christian service; and, WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.
support were tied, with no statistically significant
difference in the ratings. Community evangelism and
soul-winning and Training for Christian service were also
tied with no statistically significant difference in the
ratings. World-mission promotion and funding was
regarded as the least important of the six objectives.
Its rating is significantly different from that of the
other objectives (see Appendix H).

There is a slight inconsistency when the ratings
of the Sabbath school's professional leaders are compared
with those of the attendees. The ratings given by the
Sabbath school's attendees rank Nurture and character
development second, above Fellowship and support. The
Sabbath school professionals reverse these two rankings.

When the ratings given by the attendees of the
individual Sabbath schools are ranked by individual
Sabbath schools, as shown in Table 3, all of the Sabbath
schools, with the exception of College View and Union
College, agree with the Sabbath school's professional
leaders and rank Fellowship and support as more important
than Nurture and character development.

Two observations are noteworthy: first, College
View and Union College Sabbath schools are the two
largest schools in this study. Together they include 271
participants, 54.4%, of the attendees who responded.

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TABLE 3
RANKING OF EACH OBJECTIVE
BY CHURCHES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>F/S</th>
<th>N/CD</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allon Chapel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital View</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College View</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbury</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls City</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Piedmont Park</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.75</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJUSTED RANK</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This means that the results from these two Sabbath schools could skew the data.

Second, both Sabbath schools meet on the campus of Union College. It is, therefore, hypothesized that these two Sabbath schools rated Fellowship and support lower than did the other Sabbath schools not because fellowship is unimportant, but because there is already an abundance of opportunities for fellowship and interaction built into the campus activities.

When the Sabbath schools were grouped by size, geography, and ethnic considerations, some differences emerged. Three objectives were rated more highly by the larger Sabbath schools than by the smaller Sabbath schools: namely, Bible study, Nurture and character development, and Training for Christian service. Both the larger Sabbath schools and the ethnic Sabbath schools rated Evangelism and soul-winning as more important than did the smaller Lincoln Sabbath schools (see Appendix I).

It is difficult to hypothesize as to why the larger Sabbath schools in Lincoln rate certain objectives more highly than do the smaller Sabbath schools. Certainly, it is not because the smaller Lincoln Sabbath schools fail to stress the importance of Bible study, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, and Evangelism and soul-winning. The ethnic Sabbath schools may simply reflect the greater emphasis
on Evangelism and soul-winning in their respective churches.

Appendix J gives complete information about the average ratings (means) for the six objectives given by the attendees of the 12 individual Sabbath schools.

Forced Choices

The results of the forced choices confirm in several ways the results of the independent ratings. Bible study is in first place. Fellowship and support and Nurture and character development are ranked second and third, in agreement with the ratings of the Sabbath school groups. Training for Christian service and Community evangelism and soul-winning ranked fourth and fifth. World-mission promotion and funding, again, was regarded as the least important of the six objectives. The rankings of Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding were significant with the Sabbath school attendees (see Appendix K for further details).

Summary of Results

Clearly, Bible study consistently is regarded as the most important objective for the adult Sabbath school. Just as evident is the fact that World-mission
promotion and funding is regarded as the least important objective for the adult Sabbath school.

Those objectives that have to do with the spiritual, mental, and social betterment of the individual attendee (i.e., Bible study, Fellowship and support, and Nurture and character development) are consistently regarded as more important than those that have to do with outreach, whether in the community or in the world (i.e., Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding).

Several observations can be drawn from the data. First, all of the objectives are regarded as important. Even the lowest-ranked objective, World-mission promotion and funding, still has an overall positive rating of 3.83 on a 5-point scale (see Table 2).

Second, the independent ratings by the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and by attendees are quite consistent, with a correlation of .95. Only in the case of Community evangelism and soul-winning are the ratings by the two groups significantly different (see Table 2).

Third, the first three objectives are similar in overall rating with a raw-score difference of only .16. The raw-score difference between the last three objectives is only .17. The first three objectives have to do with the Sabbath school’s ministry to the individual
Sabbath school member. The second group of three has to do with the Sabbath school’s outreach (see Table 2).

The six objectives will be discussed in their order as ranked by the forced choices: Bible study, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding.

Individual Objectives: Factors and Implications

The purpose of this section is to discuss the findings concerning the six objectives. Demographic and attitude responses reported here include only the information that is significantly related to the particular objective under discussion. Complete data for all relationships between demographic and attitude factors can be found in Appendices L and M.

Objective 1: Bible Study

The Sabbath school’s supreme task has been described as "interesting the members in the Bible by teaching both content and methods of personal study" (Naden, p. 13). Given its historic emphasis, it is understandable that Bible study would be the objective receiving the highest ranking.

Sabbath school professional leaders and attendees
chose Bible study as significantly more important than any other objective in the independent ratings and forced choices.

The results of the forced choices between Bible study and each of the other Sabbath school objectives are shown in Table 4 and Figure 2. If choices were not significant, one would expect that Bible study and the alternative choice would each be selected 50% of the time. This was not the case. All of the percentages in Table 4 are significantly different from 50%.

**Demographic Factors**

For all respondents, only one demographic factor is significantly related to Bible study as an objective: the study of the Sabbath school lesson during the week. As the study of the lesson during the week increases, the perceived value of Bible study as an objective also increases. This is logical. Studying the Bible lesson before class time relates to a person’s interest in and thus support for Bible study as an important objective for the adult Sabbath school.

**Attitude Factors**

For both the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and attendees, two attitudinal factors were related to Bible study: practical help received from the
TABLE 4
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CHOOSING OTHER OBJECTIVES AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN BIBLE STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship and support</td>
<td>33.0*</td>
<td>39.3*</td>
<td>31.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurture and character development</td>
<td>33.7*</td>
<td>39.3*</td>
<td>32.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
<td>34.9*</td>
<td>30.8*</td>
<td>35.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
<td>24.0*</td>
<td>29.0*</td>
<td>22.8*</td>
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<tr>
<td>World-mission promotion and funding</td>
<td>14.1*</td>
<td>8.4*</td>
<td>15.4*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates those percentages that are statistically different from 50%, and are thus significant.

Subtract the percentages given above from 100 to determine the percentage of those who chose Bible study over any of the other objectives.
Figure 2. Graph of percentage of respondents choosing other objectives as more important than Bible study.
Bible-study class and the perceived preparation of the class teachers. When both groups demonstrated a more positive attitude in each of these attitude areas, they also rated Bible study as more important.

The Sabbath school’s professional leaders also demonstrated a strong relationship between a positive attitude toward the practical spiritual help received from the Sabbath school’s programs and their perception of Bible study as an important objective for the adult Sabbath school.

Summary

Bible study is clearly regarded as the primary objective of the adult Sabbath school. This is as one would expect, given the historical emphasis on this aspect of the Sabbath school. For all respondents, its value is related to the study of the lesson during the week prior to class time and the perceived preparation of the class teacher.

There are important implications in this finding. First, the successful Sabbath school may fail, on occasions, to achieve other objectives, but if the Sabbath school is to be regarded as important and valuable by its members, it must achieve its first objective: to be a place where Scripture is studied and meaningfully applied. Nothing must be allowed to usurp
Bible study as the objective of first priority.

Second, class teachers must be well prepared. They should be encouraged to become better qualified as Bible students and skilled in looking for practical, real-life applications. Sabbath school leadership would do well to sponsor a teachers' class where both teaching methods and lesson content could be discussed.

Third, members of the Sabbath school must be encouraged to study their Scripture lesson at home during the week. It is implied in the data, and experience would confirm, that this will cause an increased valuing of the class Scripture study.

Objective 2: Fellowship and Support

The relative ranking of this objective is, at the same time, both unexpected and understandable. In a historic sense, it is the newest of the six objectives. Only in the past 20 years has Fellowship and support been generally accepted and promoted as a valid objective.

Why, then, the high rating and ranking of Fellowship and support? Its rapid rise probably is not due to its inclusion in the recent literature. Rather, its inclusion in the recent literature is probably due to its importance in life through the increasing depersonalization of society. Since we are social beings, and since society often does not provide social fellowship
and support, it legitimately falls on the Sabbath school to help to supply this need.

The decade of 1966 to 1975, when Fellowship and support was beginning to be emphasized in Sabbath school literature, was filled with events which were to have long-lasting implications for society in general and the adult Sabbath school in particular. The civil rights movement began peacefully, but soon turned violent; the controversial war in Vietnam erupted in 1964, lasting until 1975. Confidence in government was eroded in the 1970s with Watergate in 1972. Vice-President Agnew was convicted of tax evasion the next year. In 1974 impeachment proceedings were started against President Nixon. During this same decade the divorce rate in the United States almost doubled, from 2.5 per 1000 people in 1965 to 4.8 per 1000 in 1975 (Hoffman, pp. 448-450, 839-840).

The Sabbath school reacted to these social changes. Beginning with the January 1971 issue of the Worker, and continuing for the next three months, there was a four-part report of Sabbath school objectives for the quinquennium 1970-1975. One of the four major areas discussed was interpersonal relationships (Sabbath School Department, 1971, pp. 9, 6, 6-7, 9). In the 1979 Sabbath School Manual, a statement of "Objectives" included fellowship as one of the Sabbath school's reasons for being (Sabbath School Department, pp. 9-10). In a paper
entitled "A Curriculum Plan for the General Conference Department of Church Ministries" (1987) the Department of Church Ministries identified six areas in which the Sabbath school should be able to help all of its members in all cultures. One of these is "Christian fellowship" (p. 5).

Although, as shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, Fellowship and support ranks third among the Sabbath school attendees, when the objectives are ranked by each of the individual Sabbath schools, as shown in Table 3, Fellowship and support is more important than Nurture and character development for each of the Sabbath schools, except for College View and Union College. In fact, three Sabbath schools (both of the ethnic Sabbath schools and one of the rural Sabbath schools) rated Fellowship and support more important than Bible study. Two other rural Sabbath schools rated it of equal importance to Bible study.

It is hypothesized that Fellowship and support is of equal, or greater, importance than Bible study to those attending the rural and ethnic Sabbath schools because most of these people are members of a cultural minority. They may be the only Seventh-day Adventist family in a small community. They may be part of a racial minority. Thus, Sabbath school provides many of them with an important opportunity to fellowship with
other members of their religious or racial minority.

The relative importance of this objective was confirmed by the forced choices made by the participants. When asked to make a choice between Fellowship and support and each of the other Sabbath school objectives, both the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and attendees chose Fellowship and support as more important than Nurture and character development (see Table 5 and Figure 3).

Demographic Factors

Among the Sabbath school’s professional leaders, no demographic factor is significantly related to Fellowship and support. It is of equal importance to all leaders, regardless of demographic background.

Among Sabbath school attendees, age is the only demographic factor significantly related to Fellowship and support. One might hypothesize that with an increase in age there would be a corresponding increase in the perceived importance of Fellowship and support. However, it is not those 60 years and older who rate this objective most highly, but those in the 40-59 age group.

Elizabeth Hurlock, writing about middle-age adults, may explain this phenomenon. She noted:

Because middle-aged people derive more satisfaction from social contacts where there is a close personal relationship than from the greater social distance that characterizes acquaintanceships, they usually prefer the former to the latter. (p. 351)
TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CHOOSING OTHER OBJECTIVES AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN FELLOWSHIP AND SUPPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>67.0*</td>
<td>60.7*</td>
<td>68.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship and support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurture and character development</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
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<td>48.6</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
<td>39.0*</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>37.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World-mission promotion and funding</td>
<td>29.9*</td>
<td>27.1*</td>
<td>30.5*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates those percentages that are statistically different from 50%, and are thus significant.

Subtract the percentages given above from 100 to determine the percentage of those who chose Fellowship and support over any of the other objectives.
Figure 3. Graph of percentage of respondents choosing other objectives as more important than Fellowship and support.
Many sociological factors would support this observation. Middle-age is often a time of social stress, making personal fellowship and support more important. Certainly the informality of the Sabbath school format (when compared with the more formal worship service) and the potential for personal sharing and support in the Sabbath school class make Fellowship and support an important objective for the Sabbath school.

Attitude Factors

As was true for demographic factors, among the Sabbath school’s professional leaders no attitude factor is significantly related to Fellowship and support.

This is not the case with the attendees. Fellowship and support is perceived as an important objective when practical spiritual help is received from the Sabbath school lesson study, when those attending perceive that their Sabbath school leaders are well prepared, and when they believe that their teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school. It is probable that these factors are related to Fellowship and support because both are interpreted by the attendees as indicating that the teachers and leaders have taken time to think of them and endeavored to make the lesson study and program applicable to them.
Summary

Fellowship and support is a new, but important, objective for the adult Sabbath school. No demographic factors are related to the popularity of Fellowship and support except for age. It is important to all, but especially to the middle-aged.

Objective 3: Nurture and Character Development

As with Bible study, Nurture and character development has been stressed since the beginning of the Sabbath school. For Goodloe Harper Bell, the founding editor of the Sabbath School Worker, Nurture and character development was the "ultimate object of the Sabbath-school" (1885, pp. 4-5). One might expect, therefore, that Nurture and character development would be perceived as important as Bible study, but this is not the case.

The results of the independent ratings were mixed for Nurture and character development. The differentiation provided by the forced choices was slightly improved, but still not significant. Nurture and character development is an important objective. Statistically, it is not as important as Bible study. But, it is more important than World-mission promotion and funding. Its relative importance is not significantly
different from Fellowship and support. Training for Christian service, or Community evangelism and soul-winning. Table 6 and Figure 4 show the results of forced choices between Nurture and character development and each of the other five objectives.

Demographic Factors

Among the Sabbath school’s professional leaders, only the study of the Sabbath school lesson is related to Nurture and character development as a demographic factor. Those who study their Sabbath school lesson "often" or "regularly" tend to rate Nurture and character development as more important than do those who study their Sabbath school lesson "never" or "sometimes."

Among the Sabbath school attendees, no demographic factor is related significantly.

Attitude Factors

The value of Nurture and character development increases when practical spiritual help is received from the Sabbath school lesson study and from the Sabbath school program. This is true for both the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and its attendees.

In addition, when the Sabbath school’s attendees believe that their Sabbath school class teachers are well prepared, they rate Nurture and character development more highly than when they are not well prepared.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>All</th>
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<th>Attendees</th>
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<td>Fellowship and support</td>
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<td>Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
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<td>38.5*</td>
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<tr>
<td>World-mission promotion and funding</td>
<td>28.3*</td>
<td>21.5*</td>
<td>29.8*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates those percentages that are statistically different from 50%, and are thus significant.

Subtract the percentages given above from 100 to determine the percentage of those who chose Nurture and character development over any of the other objectives.
Figure 4. Graph of percentage of respondents choosing other objectives as more important than Nurture and character development.
Summary

Nurture and character development is a highly regarded Sabbath school objective, but is valued significantly less than Bible study. Its valuation for both the Sabbath school's professional leaders and its attendees is related to their perception of practical help received from both the Sabbath school program and lesson. The more people are nurtured through the Sabbath school program and lesson study, the higher they regard Nurture and character development.

Sabbath school is not an end in itself. Every aspect of the program and lesson study must be planned with the students' spiritual growth through practical application of Christian principles. If Sabbath school leaders and teachers fail to achieve this objective, the Sabbath school has failed. Members need to be nurtured, they want to be nurtured, and the Sabbath school has an obligation to provide a setting in which that nurturing can occur.

Objective 4: Training for Christian Service

The first three objectives, Bible study, Fellowship and support, and Nurture and character development focus on spiritually strengthening the individual Sabbath school member. The last three,
Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding focus on outreach--ministry to non-Sabbath school members.

Training for Christian service has long been an important objective in Sabbath school literature. Plummer strongly promoted Training for Christian service. She saw a two-fold benefit: first, it trained volunteers to work for Christ ([Sabbath School Worker], 1917, p. 268) and second, it proved to be a blessing to the Sabbath school itself ([1909], p. 42).

Training for Christian service includes modeling and instruction for Christian work and outreach. One would expect, therefore, that it would rank higher than fourth place. On the other hand, one must remember that Table 2 and Figure 1 clearly show that this objective is not regarded as unimportant. It is only less important in comparison with other objectives. Actually, there is no significant difference in the ranking of the middle four objectives. Training for Christian service is fourth only because some type of order must be made of the data, not because it is unimportant.

Table 7 and Figure 5 show the results of forced choices between Training for Christian service and each of the other objectives. The results are consistent with the pattern previously noted. That is, Bible study was
TABLE 7
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CHOOSING OTHER OBJECTIVES AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN TRAINING FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

<table>
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<th>Objective</th>
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<th>Attendees</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Nurture and character development</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>38.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World-mission promotion and funding</td>
<td>24.8*</td>
<td>28.0*</td>
<td>24.1*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates those percentages that are statistically different from 50%, and are thus significant.

Subtract the percentages given above from 100 to determine the percentage of those who chose Training for Christian service over any of the other objectives.
Figure 5. Graph of percentage of respondents choosing other objectives as more important than Training for Christian service.
identified as significantly more important and World-mission promotion and funding was identified as significantly less important than Training for Christian service. The Sabbath school’s attendees also identified Community evangelism and soul-winning as significantly less important than Training for Christian service.

Demographic Factors

For the Sabbath school’s professional leaders, only one demographic factor is related to Training for Christian service: the frequency of study of the Sabbath school lesson before the class study time. As the frequency of personal study increases among the leaders, so does their support for Training for Christian service as an important Sabbath school objective.

For Sabbath school attendees, the only factor which related significantly to Training for Christian service was their frequency of attending the adult division of the Sabbath school. As attendance of the adult Sabbath school became more regular, the support for Training for Christian service increased among the attendees.

Attitude Factors

When the respondents perceived that the class study of the Bible lesson was practical and helpful their support for Training for Christian service increased.
Among the Sabbath school’s attendees, two additional attitude factors were also related to the perceived importance of Training for Christian service as an objective. When they perceived that the Sabbath school leaders and teachers were well prepared and when they felt that the Sabbath school leaders clearly understood the purpose of the Sabbath school, the attendees perceived this objective as being more important. In addition, when the Sabbath school’s attendees believed that the Sabbath school leaders understood the objectives for the Sabbath school, then their valuing of Training for Christian service increased.

Summary

Training for Christian service is the first of the second set of three objectives, all of which deal with the influence of the Sabbath school beyond its immediate membership. Its position in the fourth rank is not because it is unimportant.

No cause-effect relationships can be drawn from the demographic and attitude factors. However, the results indicate that if the position of this objective is to be strengthened, there needs to be a promotion both of the study of the Sabbath school lesson before the organized class study and of regular attendance. Everything possible should be done to ensure that the class
Bible study is practical, that leaders and teachers are well prepared, and that they understand the objectives for the Sabbath school.

Objective 5: Community Evangelism and Soul-Winning

There has been an almost constant flow of Sabbath school literature promoting the importance of Community evangelism and soul-winning since it began to be promoted at beginning of the 20th century.

This is the only objective for which the Sabbath school's professional leaders and its attendees gave significantly different independent ratings. On a 5-point scale there is a difference of .31 between the ratings of the two groups (see Table 2 and Figure 1 and Appendix H for complete data). The Sabbath school’s professional leaders regard Community evangelism and soul-winning as significantly more important than do the Sabbath school’s attendees. Since the Sabbath school’s professional leaders continue to promote Community evangelism and soul-winning in their writings, it is not surprising that they rate this objective more highly.

When the Sabbath school’s professional leaders were asked to choose between Community evangelism and soul-winning and each of the other objectives, they followed the pattern previously seen and chose Bible
study as significantly more important than Community evangelism and soul-winning and World-mission promotion and funding as significantly less important than Community evangelism and soul-winning. There was no significant difference between Community evangelism and soul-winning and the other three objectives.

However, those actually attending the Sabbath schools consistently identified all of the other objectives as significantly more important than Community evangelism and soul-winning, except for World-mission promotion and funding which was regarded as less important (see Table 8 and Figure 6).

**Demographic Factors**

Both the Sabbath school’s professional leadership and its attendees indicated that as the amount of study during the week increased, so did the relative importance of this Sabbath school objective. In addition, for the Sabbath school attendees, age and frequency of attendance are related to Community evangelism and soul-winning. As age increases and as frequency of attendance increases so does the relative importance of this objective.

**Attitude Factors**

Both the Sabbath school professionals and those attending tended to rate this objective more highly when
## TABLE 8

**PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CHOOSING OTHER OBJECTIVES AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN COMMUNITY EVANGELISM AND SOUL-WINNING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>76.0*</td>
<td>71.0*</td>
<td>77.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship and support</td>
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<td>55.1</td>
<td>62.4*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurture and character development</td>
<td>59.3</td>
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<td>Training for Christian service</td>
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<td>49.5</td>
<td>61.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
<td>29.5*</td>
<td>20.8*</td>
<td>31.5*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates those percentages that are statistically different from 50%

Subtract the percentages given above from 100 to determine the percentage of those who chose Community evangelism and soul-winning over any of the other objectives.
Figure 6. Graph of percentage of respondents choosing other objectives as more important than Community evangelism and soul-winning.
they felt that they received practical spiritual help from the lesson in Sabbath school. This would be expected since when people feel that they are receiving practical spiritual help they are more willing to invite others to share in the blessings of the lesson study.

The professional leaders of the Sabbath school also rated this objective highly when they received practical Christian help from the Sabbath school programs.

Additional attitudinal factors for the Sabbath school’s attendees, which were significantly related to Community evangelism and soul-winning, included those which related to the perceived quality of preparation by Sabbath school leaders and teachers. When it was understood that the leaders and teachers were better prepared, there was an increase in the valuation of this objective. In addition, as it was perceived that the teachers have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school objectives, there was an increase in the importance attached to Community evangelism and soul-winning.

**Summary**

The professional leaders saw Community evangelism and soul-winning as more important than did those attending the Sabbath school. Because the older attendees regard this objective as more important than
the younger attendees, it is possible that in the past there was not this difference between the professional leaders and the attendees. The negative aspect of this observation is that as the older attendees are replaced by younger ones the discrepancy between the professional leaders and attendees may increase.

The results of the study and experience both indicate that as an individual discovers more of God’s love through a study of His Word that there follows a desire to share that love with others. Therefore, it is anticipated that if the attendees were encouraged to study more before class time that their appreciation of Community evangelism and soul-winning would increase.

In every attitude factor, except for practical spiritual help received from the Sabbath school programs and the perceived understanding of the Sabbath school’s objectives by the Sabbath school leaders, as the positive attitude of the Sabbath school attendee increases so also does the valuation of Community evangelism and soul-winning.

This finding ought to be encouraging to every Sabbath school leader, because if the perceived practical help received from the Sabbath school Bible-study class is increased, if the perception of preparation by the Sabbath school leaders and teachers is increased, and if the attendees perceive that the class teachers understand
the Sabbath school objectives, then it is anticipated that there will also be a greater interest in Community evangelism and soul-winning.

**Objective 6: World-mission Promotion and Funding**

World-mission promotion and funding was consistently ranked as the least important of all of the Sabbath school's objectives. This perceived low importance is not due to a lack of promotion in the literature. Under the Plummer's leadership at the 1903 General Conference, it was voted to give all of the Sabbath school offerings to foreign mission work. Prior to this, Sabbath school offerings went for the expenses of the local Sabbath school unless the individual Sabbath school decided differently (Plummer, [1909], pp. 33-34). Under Plummer's leadership, the Sabbath school mission offerings reached an all-time high in 1932 of 31.8 cents for each dollar of tithe (Summary of World Sabbath School Statistics, p. 2).

Though still regarded as an important Sabbath school objective (see Table 2 and Figure 1) the importance of World-mission promotion and funding has been superseded by other objectives. This is despite continued strong support in the Sabbath school literature.
Table 9 and Figure 7 show the results of the forced choices between World-mission promotion and funding and each of the other objectives. Both the Sabbath school's professional leaders and its attendees consistently chose all other objectives as more important than World-mission promotion and funding.

**Demographic Factors**

Age was the only significantly related demographic factor which both the Sabbath school's professional leaders and the attendees shared. As age increased, so did support for World-mission promotion and funding. It is hypothesized that this reflects an attitude gained in younger years when, judging by the ratio of tithe to Sabbath school offerings, this objective was more highly valued.

A second demographic factor was significant among the Sabbath school's professional leadership: frequency of studying the Sabbath school lesson. As the reported frequency of study before Sabbath school class time increased, so did support for this objective.

**Attitude Factors**

For both the Sabbath school's professional leaders and its attendees there was a significant relationship between practical Christian help received
TABLE 9
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CHOOSING OTHER OBJECTIVES AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WORLD-MISSION PROMOTION AND FUNDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible Study</td>
<td>85.9*</td>
<td>91.6*</td>
<td>84.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship and support</td>
<td>70.1*</td>
<td>72.9*</td>
<td>69.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurture and character development</td>
<td>71.7*</td>
<td>78.5*</td>
<td>70.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
<td>75.2*</td>
<td>72.0*</td>
<td>75.9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community evangelism and soul-winning</td>
<td>70.5*</td>
<td>79.2*</td>
<td>68.5*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates those percentages that are statistically different from 50%

Subtract the percentages given above from 100 to determine the percentage of those who chose World-mission promotion and funding over any of the other objectives.
Figure 7. Graph of percentage of respondents choosing other objectives as more important than World-mission promotion and funding.
from the study of the Sabbath school lesson and World-mission promotion and funding. In addition, when both groups perceived that the Sabbath school’s objectives were understood by the local Sabbath school leaders, they valued World-mission promotion and funding more highly.

For the Sabbath school’s professionals, receiving practical help from the Sabbath school program was related to the value of World-mission promotion and funding. In addition, there was also a relationship between the perceived understanding of the Sabbath school’s objectives by the local Sabbath school class teachers and the way World-mission promotion and funding was valued.

For the Sabbath school’s attendees, when the perceived preparation by the leaders and teachers increased, there was a higher relative valuation of World-mission promotion and funding.

Summary

Though rated as important in the independent ratings, World-mission promotion and funding was consistently ranked less important than any of the other objectives.

Among Sabbath school’s attendees, age was the only demographic factor relating to World-mission promotion and funding. As age increased, so did the
relative valuation of this objective. Unfortunately, this fact may have a negative impact in the future as older members now supporting World-mission promotion and funding are replaced by those who do not regard this objective with the same degree of importance.

On the positive side, practical help received from the Bible-study class, preparation by the Sabbath school leaders and teachers, and perceived understanding of the Sabbath school's objectives were related to the importance placed upon World-mission promotion and funding as a Sabbath school objective. While one cannot prove a cause-effect relationship, it is hypothesized that as attitudes in these areas are improved, support for this objective will increase.

**Suggested Objectives**

Objectives Suggested by the Sabbath School's Professional Leadership

When asked, "Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?" nearly 90% of the Sabbath school's professional leaders had no response. The responses that were made can be divided into two basic groups: amplifications of the six previously stated objectives, and valid additional suggestions.

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Amplifying Suggestions

The concept of Bible study was expanded by comments such as "make the Sabbath school lesson more relevant."

Fellowship and support was augmented by suggestions such as "small group fellowship."

Training for Christian service was amplified by several comments: "culture awareness in Christian service," "Christian service should include health and healing and Dorcas, etc.," "involvement with local mission projects, Christian service rather than overt evangelism," "training for Sabbath school personnel--leaders, teachers," and "some type of leadership skill for lay leaders, such as Sabbath school superintendents."

"Unite the world church in doctrine and truth. Support and sustain the world church," was a suggestion made by one of the respondents. This is an augmentation and variation of Bible study and World-mission promotion and funding.

Other Suggestions

Suggestions for a possible additional objective were all in the area of worship. Comments included: "praise, worship, singing," "worship --part of the process which continues into the 'worship' service," and
"creating the worshipful atmosphere through praise and song."

Objectives Suggested by the Sabbath School’s Attendees

Only about 10% of the Sabbath school attendees responded when asked, "Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?" Their suggestions can be divided into two basic groups: amplifications of the six previously stated objectives, and valid additional suggestions.

Amplifying Suggestions

The concept of Bible study was expanded by comments such as: "more reading and study of Bible" and "taking the Word as it says."

Nurture and character development, as an objective, was amplified by comments such as: "to have Jesus as the total focal point of the Christian life," "meeting Christ," "learning how to receive the Holy Spirit," "healing for wounded souls," "dealing with life as it is today--day to day in specific areas."

Fellowship and support was augmented by comments such as: "caring for each other--calling to check on those not attending," "prayer groups," "care and nurturing of new members," "getting to know each other better."
Community evangelism and soul-winning was enriched by: "reclaiming non-attending members and former members," "conducting Revelation Seminars," "testimony, witnessing," and "sharing God’s love."

Training for Christian service was expanded by comments such as: "development of leadership skills," "put new members to work," and "joy of Christian service."

Other Suggestions

Additional suggestions included: "praise/worship/personal testimony time," "funding education" and "review of Seventh-day Adventist history."

An evaluation of the comments by the subjects leads to several questions: Why were there several suggestions in the area of worship? Is there a perceived lack of worship during the Sabbath school? or during the regular church service? Are the objectives for the Sabbath school different from those of the regular worship service? Should they be different?

Each of the six previously identified Sabbath school objectives may legitimately be included in the concept of worship. And, certainly, worship ought to be included in the context of the Sabbath school.

A Preliminary Model

The research shows that leaders and members agree
that there must be three areas of emphasis in the total Sabbath school program: Bible study, Fellowship and Nurturing, and Outreach beyond the Sabbath school. Bible study warrants emphasis by itself because of its perceived importance and that a major portion of the total time in Sabbath school is usually spent in Bible study. Fellowship and Nurturing activities are those which minister to the emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the Sabbath school members. Outreach includes any activity or emphasis which makes the Sabbath school members more aware of the physical, social, or spiritual needs of those outside the Sabbath school--both in the local community and in the world. These three areas of emphasis are combined into a suggested model in the following pages.

Bible Study

Bible study has been identified as the Sabbath school’s primary objective. Demographic and attitudinal factors support the primacy of this objective. The Sabbath school, if it is to survive as a viable entity in the Seventh-day Adventist church, must give top priority to this aspect of its mission.

Since Bible study seems to be correlated to many of the objectives, the leaders would do well to give greater promotion to this aspect of the Sabbath school.
But the data indicated that it is practical Bible study applied to the attendees’ everyday lives that is both needed and desired. The Sabbath school’s leaders must find more effective ways of assisting its teachers to present and discuss the Sabbath school lesson in terms of the everyday realities of the members’ lives.

Fellowship and Nurturing

The rapid rise of Fellowship as a Sabbath school objective indicates a very real felt need by both the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and its attendees. It is a need that is not addressed well under the traditional Sabbath school format.

The adult Sabbath school can play an important role in the church’s impact upon its members and guests if it will improve its service in this area. A spirit of loving support and acceptance within the Sabbath school must be fostered. But this will never happen unless the Sabbath school’s leaders make a deliberate effort to reorganize the Sabbath school. Efforts must be made to provide a time and setting for social interchange between the members.

The concept of Nurture as a specific objective for the Sabbath school may be easily overlooked because it is so obvious. It is easy for the Sabbath school to become merely a time of religious entertainment or
academic study. Nurture does not happen unless prayerful and conscious efforts are put forth to that end.

Fellowship and nurture must ever be pervasive in the leader’s or teacher’s plans if the Sabbath school is to achieve its ultimate purpose of winning and keeping souls for Jesus Christ.

Outreach

It is a spiritual law that in order to grow spiritually a disciple of Jesus must share the Good News about Him. Therefore, an outreach emphasis and its resultant activities are essential for the Sabbath school.

The Sabbath school, if it is to achieve its ultimate objective of winning and keeping souls for Jesus Christ, must recognize the outreach aspect of Christian growth. It must reserve time in the total schedule for discussion, planning, and promotion of activities which encourage and demonstrate how to share the love of Jesus. This time would include training for and promotion of both community and world-wide mission projects.

But there must be more than mere talking and planning about outreach. There must also be active support through the involvement of the Sabbath school members—spiritually, physically, and financially. The reflex benefit—the spiritual benefit to the individual
who is spiritually and financially committed to Christ’s sharing His love--is certainly as important, if not more important, than the actual gathering in of funds to support foreign missions.

Despite the spiritual benefits of involvement in both community and world-wide missions, World-mission promotion and funding ranks significantly below all other objectives for both the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and its attendees. To compound the dilemma, there is a significant difference between the older and younger respondents regarding the perceived importance of this objective.

A Model

There will always be some who wish to maintain the status quo. However, the attendance and involvement patterns in the adult Sabbath school demand that changes be made. The suggested model includes each of the adult Sabbath school’s six objectives previously identified by this study.

This model presupposes the existence of adult Sabbath school units. Each unit ideally would be no larger than could be seated in a large circle and speak easily to each other. This would necessitate more than one Sabbath school unit for the larger adult Sabbath schools. Ideally, but not necessarily, each Sabbath
school unit would have its own room in which to meet for the entire time of 9:30 to 10:40.

Even as there are three areas of emphasis in the ranked objectives, so there are three basic modules which would make up the program for each Sabbath school unit: Bible study, Fellowship and Nurturing, and Outreach.

Each Sabbath school unit would be led by a co-ordinator with three assistants. It would be the responsibility of the co-ordinator to ensure that each of the modules received its allotted time and that any unused time would be given to Bible study. Each of the three assistants would be responsible for guiding the activities within their assigned module.

**Fellowship**

The first of the modules, lasting from 15 to 20 minutes, is Fellowship. The structure within this module would of necessity be flexible with an emphasis on getting to know, accept, and support each member of the unit. Informal ice-breakers that encourage self-disclosure would fit in well with the intent of this module. This is a time of sharing victories and concerns, a time when Christian love can be expressed informally by a hug or an arm on the shoulder. It would be a time of laughing and crying together--but always in a setting of trust and support.
Outreach

The purpose of this second module, lasting from 10 through 15 minutes, is to encourage the Sabbath school members, individually and as a unit, to become actively involved in sharing Christ’s love outside of the Sabbath school setting. It is a time to look beyond the needs of the members and to discover needs that can be addressed in the community and in the world.

There certainly is no shortage of individuals or groups within any community who need special help. This may include a lady who needs to have her lawn mowed and hedge trimmed or a group of unwed mothers who need to learn the basics of infant care or adults who need to learn to read. The time for this second module could well be spent discussing how the class members could minister in their community.

This would also be a time when reports from world missions are shared. The Sabbath school unit may wish to alternate their efforts between a local and a foreign mission project. They might wish to adopt some aspect of a foreign-mission project as theirs to support financially.

Bible Study

The third module, Bible study, consisting of 40 to 45 minutes, would conclude the time spent as a Sabbath
school study unit. The purpose of this module is to provide a setting where Bible principles can be discovered, shared, and applied to life. Some classes may wish to choose not to use commercially-prepared study guides. Some classes may choose to use a study guide other than the traditional Sabbath school quarterly. But, since Bible study is the purpose of this module, as long as Bible principles are discovered, shared, and applied to life the purpose of this module will be achieved.

This aspect of the total program was consistently ranked as the most important of the six basic objectives. Nothing must be allowed to infringe upon the time allotted to Bible study. The unit's co-ordinator and each of the assistants must be absolutely committed to the primacy of this module.

Co-ordinating Multiple Units

If there are two or more adult Sabbath school units which meet within the same building, the adult Sabbath school division would do well to elect a chairperson and three associates to work with each of the unit co-ordinators and assistants. One of the associate chairpersons would be assigned to meet regularly with each of the units’ Fellowship assistants. The purpose of this meeting would be to share the successes of and
concerns about the Fellowship module of the Sabbath school program.

A second associate chairperson would be assigned to meet regularly with each of the units' outreach assistants. They would share ideas and plans so that each of the units might work more efficiently.

The third associate chairperson would meet weekly with each of the Bible study discussion leaders. This weekly meeting would become a teachers' meeting in which methods and ideas can be shared and where teaching skills can be improved.

None of these suggestions are original. Many Sabbath schools intuitively attempt all or some of these ideas. The model is suggested merely to formalize the three identified elements so that they are given an appropriate emphasis through an assigned/elected person every Sabbath of the year.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the objectives of the adult Sabbath school and their relative importance as perceived by the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and attendees. Many writers have attempted to define the objectives of the Sabbath school, but never before has the definition of objectives been based on a comprehensive study of adult Sabbath and Sunday school literature and submitted to the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and attendees for evaluation.

As the objectives for the Sabbath school are better understood, it is anticipated that the leaders at all levels of Sabbath school leadership will be able to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

Methodology

The first step in identifying the Sabbath school’s objectives was a review of the Sabbath and Sunday school literature. The second, was to collect data pertaining to the perceived relative value given to
each of the objectives. An appropriate instrument was developed and pre-tested to determine its validity and reliability. Reliability was measured using coefficient alpha. The obtained alpha was .872.

Copies of the completed instrument were mailed to 160 Sabbath school professional leaders. Ultimately, 114 (71.25%) of the professional Sabbath school leaders responded. A total of 498 completed surveys were received from attendees at 12 adult Sabbath schools.

**Literature Surveyed**

The literature was divided into two parts: the first pertaining to the adult Sabbath school and the second to the adult Sunday school. Within each section the literature was discussed within three somewhat equal time periods of Sabbath school history: 1852-1901, the Sabbath school’s inception to its incorporation into the General Conference; the 1880s-1936, the Sabbath school’s leadership by Ellen White and Flora Plummer; and the 1930s to the present.

**Sabbath School Literature**

During the early years of the period 1852 through 1901, the Sabbath school was developing in the minds and lives of its members. At its inception, "right instruction," the promotion of the study of the Bible seemed to
be the Sabbath school’s primary objective. While in most cases the purpose of the Sabbath school was seen in broader terms than just the study of God’s Word, for some, Bible study seemed to be the primary if not the only emphasized purpose of the Sabbath school. It seemed to be assumed that instruction in the Bible would bring a change in lifestyle and a commitment to Jesus Christ. With the exception of Bell, there was no mention of any social function to be served by the Sabbath school.

The second era of Sabbath school literature was dominated by the writings of White and Plummer. During this period, they emphasized the salvation of all within the Sabbath school’s sphere of influence. In this regard, the work of the Sabbath school teacher was equated with that of the minister. Unless the Sabbath school accepted the responsibility for the salvation of its students, it was thought of as a failure.

Diligent and applied Bible study was advocated. In addition, teachers were encouraged to nurture their students through modeling and a personal interest in their spiritual growth. Sabbath school programs encouraged commitment to Christ and Christian outreach. During this time, the Sabbath school’s financial support of world-wide mission outreach reached its per capita peak.

The first several years of the third era showed a
lack of clarity and little consensus in the objectives of the Sabbath school.

For the first two decades beginning in the 1940s, soul-winning was promoted as the Sabbath school’s primary purpose. In the 1970s multiple purposes were promoted. The literature revealed two-, three-, or four-part purposes enunciated by the writers.

With the 1980s there seemed to be an effort to be more inclusive in statements of objectives. The adult Sabbath school member was described more as a total person, and thus the Sabbath school was called to minister to the whole person.

Sunday School Literature

There was considerable administrative and ideological similarity between the adult Sabbath and Sunday schools of the last half of the 19th century. During this period, both gained in popularity and acceptance. In both the Sabbath and Sunday schools of this era there was a concern for the moral character of the schools’ members. There was an expressed desire for them to experience a commitment to Jesus. In practice, however, there was a great emphasis upon the study and memorization of Scripture.

The similarities between the Sabbath school and the Sunday school continued during the first decades of
the 1900s. Both saw soul-winning as the preeminent objective. Intimately associated with this was a priority on character development. In contrast, the Sunday school literature of this era, while emphasizing personal evangelism, did not stress world-wide missionary work as did the Sabbath school literature.

Like the literature of the Sabbath school, the Sunday school literature of the 1940s through the 1960s stressed evangelism its primary objective. This continued in the 1970s and 1980s with the additional emphasis on fellowship and nurture.

Both the adult Sabbath and Sunday school literature of this era included well-thought-through and researched statements of objectives. But, predictably, both also included the writings of the practitioners who simply observed what was working--that is, what seemed to help the members to grow spiritually.

Conclusions

From the Literature

The study of the Sabbath and Sunday school literature revealed six basic objectives for the adult Sabbath school: Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, and World-mission promotion and funding. These objectives became
the basis of this study among the Sabbath school’s professional leaders and members.

From the Study

Demographic Factors

The study of the Sabbath school lesson during the week is more closely related to the Sabbath school objectives than any other demographic factor studied. For the Sabbath school professionals, all of the objectives, except Fellowship and support, were significantly related, at the .05 level, to the frequency of study of the Sabbath school lesson. If the level of significance were increased from .05 to .1, then, for the Sabbath school attendees, all of the objectives, except Fellowship and support and Nurture and character development, were significantly related to frequency of study of the Sabbath school lesson (see Appendix L). As lesson study increased during the week so did support for each of the objectives.

That individual factors are statistically correlated does not prove a cause-effect relationship. However, since the study of the Sabbath school lesson during the week is significantly related to the objectives more than any other demographic factor, it would suggest that this aspect of the Sabbath school ought to be strongly promoted. The results of this study
indicate, and experience would confirm, that as the study of the Sabbath school lesson during the week increases, so also does interest in and support of every other major aspect of the Sabbath school.

The adult Sabbath schools in Lincoln and Topeka are not currently attracting the young adults in the Adventist church. If the Union College Sabbath school is removed from the studied population, 74% of the Sabbath school attendees are 40 years of age or older.

Nor is the adult Sabbath school attracting those who join the Adventist church after reaching their adult years. Eighty-one percent of the Sabbath school attendees reported that they have been members for 15 years or more.

While some young adults may have been serving in children's divisions of the Sabbath school and thus were not included in this survey, this does not adequately explain the diminishing presence of young adults in contemporary adult Sabbath schools. In its recently published report, "The Adult Sabbath School: A Needs Assessment," the Church Ministries Department for the North American Division of the General Conference observed,

Younger adults—the Baby Boom generation, now 26 to 45 years of age—need to be helped to buy into the Sabbath School. Otherwise it is in danger of becoming an institution identified entirely with the generations born before 1946. (p. 3)
If the adult Sabbath school does not discover how to attract and hold young adults, its future is in jeopardy.

As a demographic factor, age is related to World-mission promotion and funding for both the Sabbath school professional leaders and its attendees. As age increases, so does support for this objective. The reverse, unfortunately, is also true. Younger respondents tended to give this objective less support. If this pattern is not reversed Sabbath school support for World-mission promotion and support will continue to decline as supportive older Sabbath school attendees are replaced by those less supportive.

For the Sabbath school attendees, age is also strongly related to Fellowship and support. Interestingly, it was not the youngest nor the oldest age groups which tended to rate this as most important, but those 40-59 years of age.

Developmental psychology has confirmed the social needs of this age group (Hurlock, p. 351). Ernest Joseph Loessner’s dissertation (1961) noted that when a group of 30 through 60 year-old adults were asked what had been the greatest contribution of the Sunday school in their past lives, fellowship ranked first, with Bible knowledge second (pp. 99-100).

One third of the Sabbath school’s attendees were
in the 40-59 age bracket. With the high placement of Fellowship and support as an objective, and with the strong support this received among the middle-aged respondents, certainly the Sabbath school needs to give special attention to fostering a climate where fellowship, support, and mutual ministry in the Sabbath school is encouraged.

Attitudinal Factors

When Sabbath school attendees felt that they were receiving practical spiritual help from the Sabbath school classes, they tended to rate all of the objectives more highly than when they did not believe that they were receiving practical spiritual help. The Sabbath school must continually encourage its teachers to come to their classes well prepared and make the class lesson a time when the focus of Bible study is applied to daily life. This is especially true when one recalls the observation noted above that the study of the Sabbath school lesson during the week is positively related to the support for the Sabbath school’s objectives. The data indicated that increased study of the Sabbath school lesson during the week will encourage support for all of the Sabbath school’s objectives.
Rankings of the Objectives

In both independent ratings and forced choices, respondents consistently identified Bible study as the most important objective for the adult Sabbath school. This was true for both Sabbath school professional leaders and attendees.

Equally significant is the fact that World-mission promotion and funding was consistently identified as the least important of the objectives for the adult Sabbath school. Again, this was true for both the Sabbath school professional leaders and attendees.

Between Bible study (the most important objective) and World-mission promotion and funding (the least important objective) ranked in order are Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, and Community evangelism and soul-winning. Usually the scores for these four objectives were not significantly different from each other.

The three objectives having to do with the spiritual growth of the Sabbath school attendees (i.e., Bible study, Fellowship and support, and Nurture and character development) were consistently rated more important than those having to do with service to or evangelism of those not attending the Sabbath school (i.e., Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and...
funding). Since the essence of Christ's character is self-renouncing love manifested in ministry to others, those objectives dealing with service to or evangelism of those not attending the Sabbath school are vitally important to the spiritual growth of the Sabbath school's attendees. The means of promoting these final three objectives must be found if the adult Sabbath school is successfully to fulfill its ultimate mission of bringing people to Jesus Christ and then doing all that is possible to encourage them to remain in close fellowship with Him.

The Sabbath school serves a distinctively different function from that of the church worship service. Those attending the Sabbath school must be actively involved to a degree not usually possible in a typical church service. Through the involvement of its members in the study, discussion, and application of the lesson; through active fellowship, support, and sharing; through nurturing each other; through learning to better serve; through involvement of its members in outreach to the community and to the world; through the regular emphasis of our church's world-wide mission—in all these ways the adult Sabbath school is unique and deserves a valued place in the Sabbath program of the Seventh-day Adventist church.
Recommendations

As Bible study is the primary purpose of the Sabbath school, the lesson period in the Sabbath school must be devoted to Bible study.

The study of Scripture by classes must be applied to the lives of each of the Sabbath school students.

Individual Sabbath school study classes should to be organized around either common life-stages, or the felt needs of the specific groups of Sabbath school members.

The Sabbath School department should prepare a menu of Bible-study guides--each set to meet common spiritual, social, or emotional needs.

Classes should be free to choose the course or type of Bible study which meets their felt needs.

The time reserved for Bible study in the individual classes must be jealously guarded.

The total Sabbath school program must be revised so that fellowship becomes a real and regular planned part of the program.

Local- and world-community outreach activities which actively involve the Sabbath school members need to be planned and carried out by the members themselves.

For Further Study

Are the objectives of the Sabbath school, as
presented in its literature and ranked by the Sabbath school's professional leaders and attendees, common to the perceived objectives of those who do not attend the adult Sabbath school?

What are the felt needs of the members of the adult Sabbath school, both those who attend, and those who do not attend?

How can the study of the Bible be made more applicable and appealing to the members of the Sabbath school?

Would a variety of Bible study guides increase interest in Bible study among different age groups or populations?

How can the Sabbath school better attract and minister to adults between 20 and 40 years of age?

How can the Sabbath school be made more attractive to those who become members of the Adventist church as adults and who do not have a background of attending the adult Sunday school?

How can the Sabbath school be made more attractive to men?
APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF SABBATH SCHOOL OBJECTIVES
FROM THE 1979 AND 1982
SABBATH SCHOOL MANUAL

This is a statement of Sabbath school objectives found in the 1979 and 1982 Sabbath School Manual.

The Sabbath School was developed to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ in response to the command of Jesus, and in the setting of the three angels’ messages. In loyalty to this original purpose the Sabbath School continues to communicate the good news with objectives to win, hold, and train for Jesus Christ, men, women, youth, boys, and girls, in all the world.

These objectives are carried forward through the following four areas of emphasis:

**Faith Emphasis**

1. Make the saving gospel of Jesus Christ central in all Sabbath School plans, projects, and programs, ensuring that all activities and materials are Christ-centered, Bible-based, and person-oriented.

2. Cultivate the attitude of prayer and devotion on the part of all members.

3. Foster spiritual growth through regular study of the Word of God, and sharing the faith with others.

**Fellowship Emphasis**

1. Foster Christian fellowship in every aspect of the weekly Sabbath School program.

2. Work together to develop and implement programs and projects for recruiting new members.
3. Enlist the help of all elders, teachers, and regular members in helping to restore inactive members of the church and Sabbath School to regular attendance and active participation in the life of the church.

4. Carefully nurture the spiritual lives of newly baptized members.

**Community Emphasis**

1. Make every part of the Sabbath School program and class contribute to the Christian experience of each member so that he serves as a spiritual magnet to draw others to Christ.

2. Make certain that all teaching is soul winning and soul holding in nature.

3. Be alert to opening providences that present to the Sabbath School, or its individual members, opportunities for soul winning.

**World Emphasis**

1. Maintain a clear vision of the global mission of the church.

2. Constantly foster in children, youth, and adults a desire to serve in gospel promulgation wherever the Lord may lead.

3. Teach and promote systematic and self-denying stewardship in support of world missions (Sabbath School Department, pp. 9-10)
APPENDIX B

PILOT TEST OF
SURVEY OF SABBATH SCHOOL ATTITUDES
AND PERCEIVED PURPOSES

DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL ASKED TO DO SO!

This survey is about the ADULT division of the Sabbath school. Please answer all questions with the ADULT division in mind. This is not about all of the Sabbath school divisions--just the adult division. When any question refers to the Sabbath school, it is asking about only the adult division, its leaders, and its teachers.

Please complete this questionnaire as quickly as possible without forcing yourself to rush. Move smoothly through the questions by not spending time thinking about each response. Your first impression is probably correct. Answer each question, then move on to the next one.

Do not go back to check how you answered previous questions.
Part IA--Identifying the Attitude Surveyed

The following twelve questions are endeavoring to determine attitudes about six different areas of the Sabbath school: (1) The practical help received from the Sabbath school program--that portion of the Sabbath school which is not a study of the Sabbath school lesson and is usually conducted from the front; (2) The practical help received from the study of the Sabbath school lesson; (3) The extent to which the leaders of the Sabbath school understand the purpose of the Sabbath school; (4) The extent to which the Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school; (5) The extent to which the Sabbath school leaders come to Sabbath school with their programs well prepared; and (6) The extent to which the Sabbath school teachers come to Sabbath school with their lessons well prepared.

Please circle "A," "B," "C," "D," "E," or "F" below to indicate which of these six topics is being surveyed by each statement.

1. "Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons
2. "I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

3. "Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

4. "The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

5. "Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons
6. "I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

7. "I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

8. "In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

9. "I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week." This statement is discussing:
   A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
   B. Practical help received from the lesson study
   C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
   E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
   F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

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10. "I believe most Sabbath school teachers don’t know why we have a Sabbath school." This statement is discussing:
A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
B. Practical help received from the lesson study
C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

11. "Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared." This statement is discussing:
A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
B. Practical help received from the lesson study
C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

12. "I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school." This statement is discussing:
A. Practical help received from the Sabbath school program
B. Practical help received from the lesson study
C. Extent to which leaders understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
D. Extent to which the teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school
E. Extent to which leaders prepare their programs
F. Extent to which teachers prepare their lessons

STOP! DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL ASKED TO DO SO!
Part IB--Your Actual Sabbath School Attitudes

Please indicate the degree to which you disagree or agree with the following statements. Five response levels are indicated. Please circle "1," "2," "3," "4," or "5" to indicate whether you strongly disagree, merely disagree, are undecided, simply agree, or strongly agree.

1. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose.
   - disagree
   - agree

2. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.
   - disagree
   - agree

3. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.
   - disagree
   - agree

4. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.
   - disagree
   - agree

5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs.
   - disagree
   - agree

6. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.
   - disagree
   - agree

7. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week.
   - disagree
   - agree

8. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time.
   - disagree
   - agree

9. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.
   - disagree
   - agree

10. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don't know why we have a Sabbath school.
    - disagree
    - agree

11. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.
    - disagree
    - agree

12. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school.
    - disagree
    - agree
Part II--Perceived Sabbath School Objectives

In Part III six possible objectives for the adult Sabbath school are noted. In alphabetical order they are: Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, World-mission promotion and funding.

For purposes of this study these six objectives are defined as follows: Bible study--scripture study, discussion, and application. This usually takes place in a Sabbath-school class setting. Community evangelism and soul-winning--any Sabbath school activity specifically designed to bring the local community into contact with Jesus Christ. Fellowship and support--social interaction and sharing of real-life experiences, both good and bad, for the purpose of better understanding and encouraging all those attending the Sabbath school. Nurture and character development--any activity, exclusive of Bible study, which has for its purpose to encourage spiritual and moral growth and application. Training for Christian service--specific instruction designed to help the person attending the Sabbath school to become better skilled in Christian work and outreach. World-mission promotion and funding--any activity designed to make the Sabbath school’s membership more aware of the mission work of the Seventh-day Adventist church and to encourage its financial support.

Please indicate the level of importance you feel should be attached to each of these objectives by encircling a number from 1 to 5 for each objective cited. "1" indicates that the objective has a very low ranking of importance. A "5" indicates a very high ranking of importance.

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<th>Objective</th>
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<td>Training for Christian service</td>
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<td>Bible study</td>
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<td>Nurture and character development</td>
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Below are fifteen couplets of Sabbath school objectives. Please rank these according to what you understand their relative importance ought to be. Place an "x" before the objective in each couplet which you think is more important. Do not put any mark before the objective you think is of lesser importance. Each pair of objectives is to be ranked individually. Each couplet of objectives must be ranked independently.

1. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
   ___ Training for Christian service

2. ___ Fellowship/support
   ___ Nurture/character development

3. ___ Bible study
   ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning

4. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
   ___ Bible study

5. ___ Fellowship/support
   ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning

6. ___ Training for Christian service
   ___ Fellowship/support

7. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
   ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning

8. ___ Bible study
   ___ Nurture/character development

9. ___ Training for Christian service
   ___ Bible study

10. ___ Nurture/character development
    ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning

11. ___ Training for Christian service
    ___ Nurture/character development

12. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
    ___ Fellowship/support

13. ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning
    ___ Training for Christian service

14. ___ Nurture/character development
    ___ World-mission promotion/funding

15. ___ Fellowship/Support
    ___ Bible study

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Part III--Conclusion

We have evaluated six possible objectives for the adult Sabbath school: Bible study, Community evangelism/soul-winning, Fellowship/support, Nurture/character development, Training for Christian service, and World-mission promotion/funding.

Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?

Yes  No

If yes, what would they be?

What suggestions would you have for making the adult Sabbath school more meaningful for you?

Do you have any additional comments or observations about your Sabbath school and its influence in your life?

Thank you for your help.
APPENDIX C

TWO FORMS OF THE INSTRUMENT

This appendix contains copies of the two forms of the instrument used to collect data for this study. Form A was used to survey the professional Sabbath school administrators. Form B, which is identical except for the demographics page, was used to collect data from the Sabbath school members.
SURVEY OF SABBATH SCHOOL ATTITUDES
AND PERCEIVED PURPOSES

Form A: for the Professional
Sabbath School Administrator

This survey is about the ADULT division of the Sabbath school. Please answer all questions with the ADULT division in mind. This is not about all of the Sabbath school divisions—just the adult division. When any question refers to the Sabbath school, it is asking about only the adult division, its leaders, and its teachers.

Please complete this questionnaire as quickly as possible without forcing yourself to rush. Move smoothly through the questions by not spending time pondering each response. Your first impression is probably correct. Answer each question, then move on to the next one.

Do not go back to check how you answered previous questions. Do not change answers once they are recorded. Your honest response is essential and valuable!

The only purpose of this study is to determine how the professional Sabbath school administrators and the laity in the adult division of our Sabbath schools value and rank the Sabbath schools objectives.
Part I--Demographics  Please circle the most appropriate response for each question below.

Age?
29 or less 30-39 40-59 60+

Level at which you administer the Sabbath schools?
local conf. union conf. NA Div. General Conf.

How many Sabbaths per month do you usually attend the adult division of the Sabbath school?
1 or less 2 3 4 or 5

How often do you study your Sabbath school lesson before Sabbath school class time?
never sometimes often regularly

Are you, or have you within the past 2 years served as an adult Sabbath School superintendent, leader, or assistant?
Yes No
### Part II--Your Actual Sabbath School Attitudes

Please indicate the degree to which you disagree or agree with the following statements. Five response levels are indicated. Please circle "1," "2," "3," "4," or "5" to indicate whether you strongly disagree, merely disagree, are undecided, simply agree, or strongly agree.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don't know why we have a Sabbath school.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>
Part III—Perceived Sabbath School Objectives

In Part III six possible objectives for the adult Sabbath school are noted. In alphabetical order they are; Bible study, Community evangelism and soul-winning, Fellowship and support, Nurture and character development, Training for Christian service, World-mission promotion and funding.

For purposes of this study these six objectives are defined as follows: Bible study—scripture study, discussion, and application. This usually takes place in a Sabbath-school class setting. Community evangelism and soul-winning—any Sabbath school activity specifically designed to bring the local community into contact with Jesus Christ. Fellowship and support—social interaction and sharing of real-life experiences, both good and bad, for the purpose of better understanding and encouraging all those attending the Sabbath school. Nurture and character development—any activity, exclusive of Bible study, which has for its purpose to encourage spiritual and moral growth and application. Training for Christian service—specific instruction designed to help the person attending the Sabbath school to become better skilled in Christian work and outreach. World-mission promotion and funding—any activity designed to make the Sabbath school's membership more aware of the mission work of the Seventh-day Adventist church and to encourage its financial support.

Please indicate the level of importance you feel should be attached to each of these objectives by encircling a number from 1 to 5 for each objective cited. "1" indicates that the objective has a very low ranking of importance. A "5" indicates a very high ranking of importance.

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<tr>
<td>Fellowship and support</td>
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<td>Community evangelism/soul-winning</td>
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<td>Training for Christian service</td>
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<td>Nurture and character development</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below are fifteen couplets of Sabbath school objectives. Please rank these according to what you understand their relative importance ought to be. Place an "x" before the objective in each couplet which you think is more important. Do not put any mark before the objective you think is of lesser importance. Each pair of objectives is to be ranked individually. Each couplet of objectives must be ranked independently.

1. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
   ___ Training for Christian service
2. ___ Fellowship/support
   ___ Nurture/character development
3. ___ Bible study
   ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning
4. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
   ___ Bible study
5. ___ Fellowship/support
   ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning
6. ___ Training for Christian service
   ___ Fellowship/support
7. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
   ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning
8. ___ Bible study
   ___ Nurture/character development
9. ___ Training for Christian service
   ___ Bible study
10. ___ Nurture/character development
    ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning
11. ___ Training for Christian service
    ___ Nurture/character development
12. ___ World-mission promotion/funding
    ___ Fellowship/support
13. ___ Community evangelism/soul-winning
    ___ Training for Christian service
14. ___ Nurture/character development
    ___ World-mission promotion/funding
15. ___ Fellowship/support
    ___ Bible study
Part IV--Conclusion

We have evaluated six possible objectives for the adult Sabbath school: Bible study, Community evangelism/soul-winning, Fellowship/support, Nurture/character development, Training for Christian service, and World-mission promotion/funding.

Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?

Yes  No

If yes, what would they be?

What suggestions would you have for making the adult Sabbath school more meaningful for you?

Do you have any additional comments or observations about your Sabbath school and its influence in your life?

Thank you for your time and effort. A complete report of this study will be made available upon request.
PLEASE, DO NOT OPEN THIS SURVEY OR LOOK INSIDE
UNTIL ASKED TO DO SO!!

SURVEY OF SABBATH SCHOOL ATTITUDES
AND PERCEIVED PURPOSES

Form B: for the Sabbath School Member

This survey is about the ADULT division of the Sabbath school. Please answer all questions with the ADULT division in mind. This is not about all of the Sabbath school divisions--just the adult division. When any question refers to the Sabbath school, it is asking about only the adult division, its leaders, and its teachers.

Please complete this questionnaire as quickly as possible without forcing yourself to rush. Move smoothly through the questions without pondering each response. Your first impression is probably correct. Answer each question, then move on to the next one.

Do not go back to check how you answered previous questions. Do not change answers once they are recorded. Your honest response is essential and valuable!!

Thank you so much for your help in this matter. A complete report of the findings of this study will be made available to your pastor and Sabbath school leaders as soon as all the information is analyzed.

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Part I--Demographics  Please fill in the blank or circle the most appropriate response for each question below.

Sabbath school being surveyed? ________________________________

Is this the Sabbath school you usually attend?
Yes  No

If not, where do you usually attend Sabbath school?

Age?
29 or less  30-39  40-59  60+

Sex?
male  female

How many years have you been attending the SDA church?
0-4  5-9  10-14  15 or more

How many Sabbaths per month do you usually attend the adult division of this Sabbath school?
1 or less  2  3  4 or 5

How often do you study your Sabbath school lesson before Sabbath school class time?
never  sometimes  often  regularly

Are you, or have you within the past 2 years served as an adult Sabbath School superintendent, leader, or assistant?
Yes  No

Are you, or have you within the past 2 years served as an adult Sabbath School class teacher or assistant teacher?
Yes  No

Are you, or have you within the past 2 years, been employed within the Seventh-day Adventist organization?
Yes  No
Part II--Your Actual Sabbath School Attitudes

Please indicate the degree to which you disagree or agree with the following statements. Five response levels are indicated. Please circle "1," "2," "3," "4," or "5" to indicate whether you strongly disagree, merely disagree, are undecided, simply agree, or strongly agree.

1. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose.

2. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.

3. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.

4. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.

5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs.

6. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.

7. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week.

8. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time.

9. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.

10. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don't know why we have a Sabbath school.

11. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.

12. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school.
### Part III--Perceived Sabbath School Objectives

In Part III six possible objectives for the adult Sabbath school are noted. In alphabetical order they are; Bible study, evangelism and soul-winning, fellowship and support, nurture and character development, training for Christian service, world-mission promotion and funding.

For purposes of this study these six objectives are defined as follows: **Bible study**--scripture study, discussion, and application. This usually takes place in a Sabbath-school class setting. **Community evangelism and soul-winning**--any Sabbath school activity specifically designed to bring the local community into contact with Jesus Christ. **Fellowship and support**--social interaction and sharing of real-life experiences, both good and bad, for the purpose of better understanding and encouraging all those attending the Sabbath school. **Nurture and character development**--any activity, exclusive of Bible study, which has for its purpose to encourage spiritual and moral growth and application. **Training for Christian service**--specific instruction designed to help the person attending the Sabbath school to become better skilled in Christian work and outreach. **World-mission promotion and funding**--any activity designed to make the Sabbath school’s membership more aware of the mission work of the Seventh-day Adventist church and to encourage its financial support.

Please indicate the level of importance you feel should be attached to each of these objectives by encircling a number from 1 to 5 for each objective cited. "1" indicates that the objective has a very low ranking of importance. A "5" indicates a very high ranking of importance.

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</table>

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Below are fifteen couplets of Sabbath school objectives. Please rank these according to what you understand their relative importance ought to be. Place an "x" before the objective in each couplet which you think is more important. Do not put any mark before the objective you think is of lesser importance. Each pair of objectives is to be ranked individually. Each couplet of objectives must be ranked independently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Couplet</th>
<th>Importance 1</th>
<th>Importance 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>World-mission promotion/funding</td>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fellowship/Support</td>
<td>Nurture/Character development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bible study</td>
<td>Community evangelism/Soul-winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>World-mission promotion/funding</td>
<td>Bible study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fellowship/Support</td>
<td>Community evangelism/Soul-winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
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<td>Fellowship/Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>World-mission promotion/funding</td>
<td>Community evangelism/Soul-winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Bible study</td>
<td>Nurture/Character development</td>
</tr>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
<td>Bible study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Nurture/Character development</td>
<td>Community evangelism/Soul-winning</td>
</tr>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
<td>Nurture/Character development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>World-mission promotion/funding</td>
<td>Fellowship/Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Community evangelism/Soul-winning</td>
<td>Training for Christian service</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Nurture/Character development</td>
<td>World-mission promotion/funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Fellowship/Support</td>
<td>Bible study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part IV--Conclusion

We have evaluated six possible objectives for the adult Sabbath school: Bible study, Community evangelism/soul-winning, Fellowship/support, Nurture/character development, Training for Christian service, and World-mission promotion/funding.

Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?

Yes  No

If yes, what would they be?

What suggestions would you have for making the adult Sabbath school more meaningful for you?

Do you have any additional comments or observations about your Sabbath school and its influence in your life?

Thank you for your time and effort. A complete report of this study will be made available to your Sabbath school leaders and pastor. Feel free to contact them for information about the results of this study.
APPENDIX D

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL’S PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

One hundred fourteen completed surveys were returned from the Sabbath school’s professional leaders. The charts which follow indicate the demographic composition this group.

AGE:

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<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>29 or less</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>83.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>60 or more</td>
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LEVEL OF ADMINISTRATION:

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<td>Union conf.</td>
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<td>12.1</td>
<td>89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA div.</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
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<td>91.9</td>
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<td>Gen. Conf.</td>
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### ATTENDANCE:

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<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Valid Percent</th>
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<td>0 or 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>43.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 or 5</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
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### STUDY LESSON:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>How Often?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Valid Percent</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
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<td>21.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
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<tr>
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### LEADERSHIP:

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<th>Frequency</th>
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<th>Cum. Valid Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
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<td>78.9</td>
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<td>Missing</td>
<td>5</td>
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APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL'S ATTENDEES

Four hundred ninety-eight completed surveys were returned from those attending adult Sabbath schools. The charts which follow indicate the demographic composition of this group.

CHURCH:

<table>
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<td>Allon Chapel</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital View</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>College View</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbury</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls City</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>53.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont Park</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>70.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topeka</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>80.7</td>
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<td>Union College</td>
<td>36</td>
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REGULAR ATTENDEE:

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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>92</td>
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<td>18.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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AGE:

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<td>30-39</td>
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<td>12.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>40.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-59</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or more</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>30.4</td>
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<tr>
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SEX:

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<td>Female</td>
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YEARS ATTEND:

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<td>0-4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15 or more</td>
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### ATTENDANCE:

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<td>9.7</td>
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### STUDY LESSON:

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<tr>
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<td>67.7</td>
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### LEADERSHIP:

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<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum. Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>17.2</td>
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<td>77.4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Response</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Valid Percent</td>
<td>Cum. Valid Percent</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<td>29.3</td>
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<td>345</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO SABBATH SCHOOL ATTITUDE STATEMENTS BY THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

The first column cites the statement to which the response was made. The second reports the mean scores for the Sabbath school's professional leaders. A higher score, on a scale of "1" to "5," indicates more agreement with the statement. The third column reports the degree of positive attitude, on a scale of "1" to "5," as indicated by the response. (Sentences 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, and 12 reflect a negative attitude. So to disagree with the statement would indicate a positive attitude toward that aspect of the Sabbath school. Thus scores on these sentences have been reversed to indicate the degree of positive attitude indicated by the response. A higher score indicates a more positive attitude.)

The population for this part of the study was 114 professional Sabbath school leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Positive Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Agreement Level</td>
<td>Positive Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs.</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week.</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose.</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don't know why we have a Sabbath school.</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
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</table>
COMBINED POSITIVE ATTITUDE RATINGS OF SABBATH SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR SIX AREAS MEASURED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude Subject Area</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The practical spiritual help received from the Bible-study lesson in the Sabbath school, statements 1 and 7</td>
<td>3.2902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The perceived preparation by the Sabbath school’s teachers for each Bible-study class, statements 2 and 10</td>
<td>2.4386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The practical spiritual help received from the Sabbath school programs, statements 3 and 8</td>
<td>3.1417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The perceived understanding of the Sabbath school’s objectives by the Sabbath school’s Bible-study class teachers, statements 4 and 11</td>
<td>2.8317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The perceived preparation by the Sabbath school’s leaders for each Sabbath school program, statements 5 and 12</td>
<td>2.8062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The perceived understanding of the Sabbath school’s objectives by the Sabbath school’s local leaders, statements 6 and 9</td>
<td>2.4649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO SABBATH SCHOOL ATTITUDE STATEMENTS BY THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL'S ATTENDEES

The first column cites the statement to which the response was made. The second reports the mean scores for the Sabbath school attendees. A higher score, on a scale of "1" to "5," indicates more agreement with the statement. The third column reports the degree of positive attitude, on a scale of "1" to "5," as indicated by the response. (Sentences 2, 3, 6, 7, 11, and 12 reflect a negative attitude. So to disagree with the statement would indicate a positive attitude toward that aspect of the Sabbath school. Thus scores on these sentences have been reversed to indicate the degree of positive attitude indicated by the response. A higher score indicates a more positive attitude.)

The population for this part of the study was 386 Sabbath school regular attendees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Positive Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Agreement Level</td>
<td>Positive Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>programs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objectives of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school’s purpose.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don’t know why we have a</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbath school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anything the leaders can find to fill the time.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
## COMBINED POSITIVE ATTITUDE RATINGS OF ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL ATTENDEES FOR SIX AREAS MEASURED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude Subject Area</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The practical spiritual help received from the Bible-study lesson in the Sabbath school, statements 1 and 7</td>
<td>3.8243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The perceived preparation by the Sabbath school’s teachers for each Bible-study class, statements 2 and 10</td>
<td>3.7377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The practical spiritual help received from the Sabbath school programs, statements 3 and 8</td>
<td>4.0344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The perceived understanding of the Sabbath school’s objectives by the Sabbath school’s Bible-study class teachers, statements 4 and 11</td>
<td>3.9913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The perceived preparation by the Sabbath school’s leaders for each Sabbath school program, statements 5 and 12</td>
<td>3.8786</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The perceived understanding of the Sabbath school’s objectives by the Sabbath school’s local leaders, statements 6 and 9</td>
<td>3.7071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX H

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN INDEPENDENT RATINGS OF THE SIX OBJECTIVES FOR THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL FOR ALL OF THE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>NCD</th>
<th>F/S</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
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<td>.16*</td>
<td>.56*</td>
<td>.64*</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NCD</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.59*</td>
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<tr>
<td>F/S</td>
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<td>.40*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
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<td>.57*</td>
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<tr>
<td>CE/SW</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.17*</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.09</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The asterisks (*) indicate that the indicated differences of means are significant.

BS = Bible study, F/S = Fellowship and support, N/CD = Nurture and character development, TCS = Training for Christian service, CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning, and WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.
FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BS</th>
<th>NCD</th>
<th>F/S</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>.13</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.68*</td>
<td>.72*</td>
</tr>
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<td>(.05)</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/S</td>
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<td>.55*</td>
<td>.59*</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE/SW</td>
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<td>.29*</td>
<td>.33*</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMP/F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The asterisks (*) indicate that the indicated differences of means are significant.

BS = Bible study, F/S = Fellowship and support, N/CD = Nurture and character development, TCS = Training for Christian service, CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning, and WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.
The asterisks (*) indicate that the indicated differences of means are significant.

BS = Bible study, F/S = Fellowship and support, N/CD = Nurture and character development, TCS = Training for Christian service, CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning, and WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.
APPENDIX I

SABBATH SCHOOL OBJECTIVES AS RATED BY THE CLUSTERED SABBATH SCHOOLS

The following are the mean ratings on a scale of "1" to "5," with "1" being low and "5" being high, for each of the six Sabbath school objectives as rated by four clusters of adult Sabbath schools.

Cluster 1 includes Piedmont Park and College View--the two largest Lincoln Sabbath schools in this study. Cluster 2 includes Northside and Capital View--small Sabbath schools in Lincoln. Cluster 3 is made up of Holland, Fairbury, Falls City, and Beatrice--rural Sabbath schools. Allon Chapel and Spanish make up cluster 4 and are ethnic Sabbath schools in Lincoln. For this analysis only the Union College and Topeka Sabbath schools were omitted because the college Sabbath school is unique in its composition. Topeka is not within the greater Lincoln area and did not lend itself to any of these clusters. Scores for the individual Sabbath schools may be found in Appendix J.

An asterisk, *, denotes pairs of Sabbath school clusters significantly different at the .05 level. Numbers along the top line correspond to the four Sabbath school clusters identified in the left-hand column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1: Bible study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
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195
## Objective 2: Fellowship and Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
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<td>Cluster 3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Cluster 1</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>4.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.17</td>
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</table>

## Objective 3: Nurture and Character Development

<table>
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<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
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<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
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<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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## Objective 4: Training for Christian Service

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
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</thead>
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<td>3.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
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<td>3.40</td>
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</table>

## Objective 5: Community Evangelism and Soul-Winning

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<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>4.05</td>
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<td>Cluster 3</td>
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<td>3.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
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<td>3.40</td>
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</table>

## Objective 6: World-Mission Promotion and Funding

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
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<td>Cluster 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.68</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX J

SABBATH SCHOOL OBJECTIVES AS RATED BY THE INDIVIDUAL SABBATH SCHOOL GROUPS

The following are the mean ratings on a scale of "1" to "5," with "1" being low and "5" being high, for each of the six Sabbath school objectives as rated by each of the twelve adult Sabbath schools.

Objective 1: Bible study An asterisk, *, denotes pairs of Sabbath school groups significantly different at the .05 level.) Letters along the top line correspond to initials for each of the twelve Sabbath schools as listed in the left-hand column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>FC</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>UC</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>AC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont Park</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls City</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Topeka</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.67</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>College View</td>
<td>171</td>
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<tr>
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<td>94</td>
<td>4.57</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital View</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allon Chapel</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective 2: Fellowship and support. For this objective, there were no church groups which were significantly different at the .05 level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piedmont Park</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.44</td>
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<td>4.43</td>
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<td>Union College</td>
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<td>Allon Chapel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fairbury</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 3: Nurture and character development. An asterisk, *, denotes pairs of Sabbath school groups significantly different at the .05 level.) Letters along the top line correspond to initials for each of the twelve Sabbath schools as listed in the left-hand column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>4.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>College View</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Piedmont Park</td>
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<td>Union College</td>
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<td>4.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allon Chapel</td>
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<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbury</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Objective 4: Training for Christian service**

An asterisk, *, denotes pairs of Sabbath school groups significantly different at the .05 level.) Letters along the top line correspond to initials for each of the twelve Sabbath schools as listed in the left-hand column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>FC</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>UC</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>AC</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 5: Community evangelism and soul-winning**

An asterisk, *, denotes pairs of Sabbath school groups significantly different at the .05 level.) Letters along the top line correspond to initials for each of the twelve Sabbath schools as listed in the left-hand column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<th>S</th>
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<th>CV</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>CV</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Objective 6: World-mission promotion and funding For this objective, there were no Sabbath school groups which were significantly different at the .05 level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>4.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>College View</td>
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<td>Piedmont Park</td>
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<td>3.88</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX K

MATRICES OF FORCED CHOICES BY
ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS

OBJECTIVES INDICATED BY PERCENTAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>F/S</th>
<th>N/CD</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>56.3*</td>
<td>65.1*</td>
<td>76.0*</td>
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<td>F/S</td>
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<td>54.2</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>71.7*</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCS</td>
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<td>45.8</td>
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<td>CE/SW</td>
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<td>39.0*</td>
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<td>40.5</td>
<td>70.5*</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMP/F</td>
<td>14.1*</td>
<td>29.9*</td>
<td>28.3*</td>
<td>24.8*</td>
<td>29.5*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To read this matrix: The letters in the left column and along the very top correspond to the adult Sabbath school's objectives as ranked by those attending the adult Sabbath school. BS = Bible study, F/S = Fellowship and support, N/CD = Nurture and character development, TCS = Training for Christian service, CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning, and WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.

The figures in the matrix indicate the percentage who ranked the objective at the left of each row over the objective at the top of each column. For example: 76.0% of all of the respondents, when forced to choose, rated Bible study, BS, as a more important objective than Community evangelism and soul-winning, CE/SW.

All percentages indicated by an asterisk (*) are significantly different from 50%.
MATRIX OF FORCED CHOICES BY THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

OBJECTIVES INDICATED BY PERCENTAGES

<table>
<thead>
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<th>F/S</th>
<th>N/CD</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
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<td>59.8*</td>
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<td>91.6*</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/CD</td>
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<td>78.5*</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCS</td>
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<td>WMP/F</td>
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<td>20.8*</td>
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</table>

To read this matrix: The letters in the left column and along the very top correspond to the adult Sabbath school’s objectives as ranked by those attending the adult Sabbath school. BS = Bible study, F/S = Fellowship and support, N/CD = Nurture and character development, TCS = Training for Christian service, CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning, and WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.

The figures in the matrix indicate the percentage who ranked the objective at the left of each row over the objective at the top of each column. For example: 71.0% of the Sabbath school’s professional leaders, when forced to choose, rated Bible study, BS, as a more important objective than Community evangelism and soul-winning, CE/SW.

All percentages indicated by an asterisk (*) are significantly different from 50%.
MATRIX OF FORCED CHOICES BY THE SABBATH SCHOOL ATTENDEES

OBJECTIVES INDICATED BY PERCENTAGES

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<th>N/CD</th>
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<th>CE/SW</th>
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<td>54.6</td>
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<td>TCS</td>
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To read this matrix: The letters in the left column and along the very top correspond to the adult Sabbath school's objectives as ranked by those attending the adult Sabbath school. BS = Bible study, F/S = Fellowship and support, N/CD = Nurture and character development, TCS = Training for Christian service, CE/SW = Community evangelism and soul-winning, and WMP/F = World-mission promotion and funding.

The figures in the matrix indicate the percentage who ranked the objective at the left of each row over the objective at the top of each column. For example: 77.2% of the adults attending Sabbath school, when forced to choose, rated Bible study, BS, as a more important objective than Community evangelism and soul-winning, CE/SW.

All percentages indicated by an asterisk (*) are significantly different from 50%.
APPENDIX L

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND VALUATION OF THE OBJECTIVES FOR THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL

THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

All significant relationships are demonstrated by the indicated probabilities. If no probability is shown it indicates that there is no significant relationship between the demographic data and the objective. Indicated probabilities are rounded to the nearest hundredth.

Information BS F/S N/CD TCS CE/SW WMP/F

Age .03

Level of Administration

Frequency of attending adult Sabbath school

Frequency of .05 .02 .01 .00 .05 studying Sabbath school lesson

Served as Sabbath school leader

As age and frequency of attendance of the adult Sabbath school increased, so did support of World mission promotion and funding as a Sabbath school objective.

Those who reported a more frequent study of the Sabbath school lesson also tended to rate the indicated objectives more highly than did those reporting less frequent study of the lesson.
THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S ATTENDEES

All significant relationships are demonstrated by the indicated probabilities. If no probability is shown it indicates that there is no significant relationship between the demographic data and the objective. Indicated probabilities are rounded to the nearest hundredth.

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<td>.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequency of studying Sabbath school lesson</td>
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<td>.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

As age increased, so did support for Fellowship and support, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding as Sabbath school objectives. For Fellowship and support this was especially true for those in the 40-59 aged group.

As frequency of attendance at the adult Sabbath school increased, so did support for Community evangelism and soul-winning and Training for Christian service.

As frequency of Sabbath school lesson study increased, so did support for Bible study, Training for Christian service, Community evangelism and soul-winning, and World-mission promotion and funding.
APPENDIX M

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ATTITUDE STATEMENTS
AND VALUATION OF THE OBJECTIVES
FOR THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL

THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

All significant relationships are demonstrated by
the indicated probabilities. If no probability is shown
it indicates that there is no significant relationship
between the attitude and the objective. Indicated
probabilities are rounded to the nearest hundredth.

In all cases a significant relationship indicates
that a more positive attitude is related to a higher
valuation of the objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>F/S</th>
<th>N/CD</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statement | BS | F/S | N/CD | TCS | CE/SW | WMP/F

4. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.

5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs.

6. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school.

7. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.

8. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week.

9. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose.

10. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.
11. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don’t know why we have a Sabbath school.

12. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time.
THE SABBATH SCHOOL'S ATTENDEES

All significant relationships are demonstrated by the indicated probabilities. If no probability is shown it indicates that there is no significant relationship between the attitude and the objective. Indicated probabilities are rounded to the nearest hundredth.

In all cases a significant relationship indicates that a more positive attitude is related to a higher valuation of the objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>F/S</th>
<th>N/CD</th>
<th>TCS</th>
<th>CE/SW</th>
<th>WMP/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I find practical Christian help from the study of the Sabbath school lesson each week.</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that most class teachers put too little preparation into their Sabbath school lessons.</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find the Sabbath school programs to be mostly a waste of time.</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Most Sabbath school teachers understand the purpose of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>BS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Most Sabbath school leaders have well prepared Sabbath school programs.</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I believe most Sabbath school leaders are unaware of the real objectives of the Sabbath school.</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The class lesson study offers little real help for my problems.</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I find practical Christian help from the Sabbath school program each week.</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Most Sabbath school leaders have a clear understanding of the Sabbath school's purpose.</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Most Sabbath school teachers are well prepared.</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I believe most Sabbath school teachers don't know why we have a Sabbath school.</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. In most Sabbath schools, the programs appear to be made up of anything the leaders can find to fill the time.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX N

OBJECTIVES AS SUGGESTED BY THE SABBATH
SCHOOL'S PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

When asked, "Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?" nearly 90% made no response. The responses that were made can be divided into two basic groups: those which are really amplifications of the six previously stated objectives, and valid additional suggestions.

Comments which represent amplification of previously stated objectives include the following: "make the Sabbath school lesson more relevant." (This is seen as an extension of "Bible study" as an objective.) "Small group fellowship" was mentioned. (This is included in the concept of Fellowship and support.)

"Training for Christian service" was amplified by several comments: "culture awareness in Christian service," "Christian service should include health and healing and Dorcas, etc." "involvement with local mission projects, Christian service rather than overt evangelism," "training for Sabbath school personnel--leaders, teachers," and "some type of leadership skill for lay leaders, such as Sabbath school superintendents."

The objective of "World-mission promotion and funding" was expanded by this suggestion: "unite the world church in doctrine and truth. Support and sustain the world church."

Suggestions for a possible additional objective are all included in the concept of worship. Comments included: "praise, worship, singing," "worship--part of the process which continues into the 'worship' service," and "creating the worshipful atmosphere through praise and song."
Responses to the question "Do you see other objectives which should have been included in this study?" can be divided into two basic groups: those which are really amplifications of the six previously stated objectives, and valid additional suggestions.

Comments which represent amplification of previously stated objectives include the following: "more reading and study of Bible" and "taking the Word as it says," (These are seen as part of the "Bible study" objective.)

"Nurture and character development," as an objective, was amplified by comments such as: "to have Jesus as the total focal point of the Christian life," "meeting Christ," "learning how to receive the Holy Spirit," "healing for wounded souls," "dealing with life as it is today--day to day in specific areas."

"Fellowship and support" was expanded by comments such as: "caring for each other--calling to check on those not attending," "prayer groups," "care and nurturing of new members," "getting to know each other better."

Several comments were made which were really a part of the "Community evangelism and soul-winning" objective. Some of these were: "reclaiming non-attending members and former members," "conducting Revelation Seminars," and "sharing God’s love."

Comments such as, "development of leadership skills," "put new members to work," and "joy of Christian service" seem to be part of Training for Christian service.

"World-mission promotion and funding" was not amplified by any of the suggestions made.

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The concept of worship was also included as a possible additional objective. Comments included, "testimony, witnessing" and "praise/worship/personal testimony time." Other suggestions included, "funding education" and "review of Seventh-day Adventist history."
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