



TELL THE WORLD: IN THE COMMUNITY

May 9, 2015

Sabbath School Program: Shoes for the Kingdom

Introduce shoes as an article of clothing all civilizations have used in some form or another. Share some interesting facts about shoes:

- Records of Egyptians, Chinese, and other early civilizations mention shoes. Footwear has been important from ancient to modern days.
- Sandals and moccasins were the first types of shoes to be used and are still being used today in one form or another.
- Sixteenth-century women wore such high heels they had to have servants help them walk.
- Louis XIV was only 5 foot 5 inches (1.65 m) in height. Due to his short stature he made high-heeled shoes popular and mandatory for men.
- Platform shoes were first used to keep above the filth of the streets. Since then they have become a fashion statement
- Wooden shoes developed in Holland because the swampy ground ruined leather shoes.
- Shoes were worn to show social class. In ancient Egypt the commoners wore sandals made from papyrus. People of higher status people wore pointed sandals. Red and yellow colors were for the highest society only, with curled toes for kings or princes.
- Imelda Marcus, the flamboyant wife of Dictator Ferdinand Marcus, left behind at least 1,220 pairs of shoes when she and her husband were driven out of the Philippines in the 1986 revolt.
- The most expensive pair of shoes sold on June 2, 2000, for US\$660,000.

Shoes are mentioned often in the Bible. They were even used to bind legal agreements. Sandals were the shoes used in the time of Jesus' ministry.

Jesus went to many places—weddings, dinners, synagogue, boat rides, outdoor meetings, the carpenter's shop, mountain tops, gardens, funerals, homes. No matter what sandals He might have worn, He was focused on His Father's business. His love overflowed at all times. Though we may not always be wearing sandals, it is our privilege to reflect His image, becoming so much like Him that we will unconsciously serve others as He did. This will be seen in every part of our lives, just as it was in His.

Ask the group to imagine living for service, as Jesus did, through the following exercise: Form breakout groups of 5 to 8 people. Make sure each group has something to write on. Distribute at least six different types of shoes or pictures of shoes to each group, or project pictures of shoes on a screen. The shoes can be different for each group.

One person will show a shoe, or picture of a shoe, and ask "What things could you do to be a blessing to someone else if you were wearing this shoe?" Write down all answers. All suggestions are acceptable. When there are no more thoughts, show another shoe or picture, repeating this process until all six shoes or pictures have been shown or ten minutes have passed. You may need more than six shoes if the audience is not organized into breakout groups.

When time is up, have someone in each group show the shoe or picture and tell what ideas were suggested.

After all groups have reported, discuss these questions:

- Did you have more trouble thinking of ideas for any one kind of shoe?
- If so, which one?"
- Why were some harder than others?
- What new suggestion did you hear that you could do?
- What one important thing did you learn from this exercise?

Mention that we have been using shoes to help us think about how we can live like Jesus, consistently showing care and compassion, so much so that it becomes automatic. Jesus described this way of life in the Bible. Instead of shoes, He talked about sheep and goats.

Have a volunteer read aloud Matthew 25:31-46. Explain that the sheep and the goats, the righteous and the unrighteous alike, were surprised by the final outcome. None of them remembered doing what Jesus described because they lived their lives doing what came naturally. The righteous automatically helped people because it was their way of life. The unrighteous never cultivated a life of service, so they did not know they had missed anything.

Reinforce the concept that forming a habitual life of service is crucial by reading aloud the following quotations from the writings of Ellen G. White:

- "When the nations are gathered before Him, there will be but two classes, and their eternal destiny will be determined by what they have done or have neglected to do for Him in the person of the poor and the suffering."¹

- "Pure and undefiled religion is . . . the doing of works of mercy and love."²

- "The love of Christ in the heart is expressed in the actions."³

- "It is because this work is neglected that so many young disciples never advance beyond the mere alphabet of Christian experience. The light which was glowing in their own hearts when Jesus spoke to them, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' they might have kept alive by helping those in need."⁴

- "When His parting words are fulfilled, 'Love one another, as I have loved you' (John 15:12); when we love the world as He has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are fitted for heaven; for we have heaven in our hearts."⁵

Paul says in Galatians 5:13 to serve one another, and in Galatians 6:10 to do good to everyone as we have opportunity. This will take perseverance and divine power.

Mrs. White tells us that "If we will come to God as little children, asking for His grace and power and salvation, not for our own uplifting, but that we may bring blessing to those around us, our petitions will not be denied."⁶

Remind the audience that, according to Ellen White, "Our religious experience will strengthen as we bring it into the daily life."⁷

Close with this challenge: Ask God to show you how you can help someone every time you put on shoes this week, then do it before you take your shoes off again. Write down what happens and report to Sabbath School next Sabbath.

Musical Selections

Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal

575—"Let Your Heart Be Broken"

579—"Tis Love That Makes Us Happy"

Church Hymnal

273—“Take My Life and Let It Be”
328—“At First I Prayed for Light”

¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 637.

² *Review and Herald*, October 15, 1901.

³ Manuscript 61, 1898, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 962.

⁴ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 640.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 641.

⁶ *In Heavenly Places*, p. 113.

⁷ *Testimonies for the Church*, p. 194.