

# THE POWER OF ONE

*written by*

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## THE POWER OF YOU

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**W**hat you do as a Sunday School leader makes a world of difference. Let me put it another way. What you do makes an eternity of difference. You make all the difference. In fact, people will remember you long after they forget what you've said and taught.

I have never heard someone say, "You know, I remember the lessons I studied in my 5th Grade Sunday School class. Those were the best lessons ever."

However, I have often heard someone say something like this: "I remember my 5th Grade Sunday School teacher, Mr. Thornton. That was a tough year for our family. Dad lost his job and things weren't good for us then. But Mr. Thornton really helped me out during that time. His cards, phone calls, and encouraging words at church... well, they meant the world to me. Occasionally, a box of groceries would show up on our front porch. There was never a note but I always knew where it came from."

That's the power of you.

Someone has referred to it this way: the leader is the lesson. What you do, what you stand for, and what you live out each day is much more powerful than the words that you say. Don't get me wrong, your words are important. But someday, after the people you have influenced no longer remember your words, they will remember an encouraging word, a kind deed, and an affirming pat on the back.

Thank you for what you do in Sunday School. Thank you for making a difference in people's lives.

## **I'M JUST A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER...**

What was that? I'm not sure but I thought I just heard you say something. Did you say, "Well, I'm JUST a Sunday School teacher" or "I'm ONLY a Sunday School department director" or "ALL I do is keep the class records?"

There is no ONLY about what you do as a Sunday School leader. There is no such thing as JUST a Sunday School teacher. Don't forget what Jesus once said, "And whoever gives just a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple—I assure you: He will never lose his reward!" (Matthew 10:42, HCSB)

A paraphrase of that might be, "Whoever helps a first grader wash her hands after painting a picture in Sunday School will never lose their reward."

I have a friend named Sheri who has spent her whole life working with kids. There is one in particular that she remembers. His name is Jeremy. She recalls the first time she met him and the first words she heard out of his mouth: "Nobody likes Jeremy."

It turns out that statement was pretty accurate. He would rake the puzzles and toys off the tables with his arms. He would knock the blocks down that the other children had assembled. It was as if his mission in life was to prove his words true: "Nobody likes Jeremy." And families were leaving the church because they didn't want their kids around Jeremy.

In her heart, Sheri prayed that first day, "God, with Your help, I am going to love Jeremy." And with her hands, she learned to redirect Jeremy's destructive actions and teach him how to play with the other children. During that first year, Jeremy learned the art of cooperation, taking turns, and being friends. He learned something else, how special he was to Miss Sheri and the other Sunday School teachers. In his presence, Sheri would always say to the other adults that Jeremy was a

very special little boy and that she loved having him in her class.

Two years later, Jeremy moved away but in the fall asked his parents if he could come see Miss Sheri at Thanksgiving, which he did. The following fall, Jeremy called to tell his former Sunday School teacher that he had accepted Christ as his Savior. Over the years, Sheri received a high school graduation announcement, a college announcement, a wedding invitation (which she accepted), and a birth announcement of Jeremy's first child. If Jeremy and Sheri were right here with us, I promise you that he would not introduce her as "JUST an old Sunday School teacher of mine." Rather, he would tell you that she was someone that God used to change his life.

Eternity will look different because one person prayed, "Lord, love that child through me!"

This is the power of one, one person reaching out to someone else who needed a loving touch. And that's what Sunday School leaders do, they let God use them to change someone's life forever.

That's what you do. That's the power of you.