

# Sheila's Story

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It is so deeply rewarding and downright fun to be a part of God's work! Teaching Sunday school has become the passion of my life partly because I didn't grow up in a Bible-believing home. Let me explain...

I came to the Lord at the age of 31, after leading a very worldly life. It was the 70's, a time of experimentation with ungodly things. And, I made a lot of really bad choices. But, God got a hold of my heart and I was radically saved in 1981.

As a new Christian, I soaked up teaching like an empty sponge. I had the privilege of sitting under Bill Holdridge's teachings. I hung on every word he said. God's Word came alive to me. It was so profound; so right and good. And my life was changed from the inside out.

I didn't want to pry myself away from the adult services, but all the while, the Holy Spirit kept tapping me gently on the shoulder and encouraging me to give back a little of what I was receiving.

At first I had the idea that children's ministry wasn't my responsibility; I didn't have kids. Watching the kids was the parent's job, wasn't it? But the Holy Spirit kept telling me in His soft, gentle voice, "You can do something to help." Then one Wednesday night, the teaching focused on being a servant. My spirit was so convicted that I showed up at the children's ministry area the next Sunday and said, "I'm here to help out wherever you need me."

As is so typical in many churches, they handed me a curriculum and left me to handle a class of twenty-nine 4- and 5-year-olds without a helper! And, without any training or guidance of any sort!

Well, that was many years ago and I'm still in the classroom!

I've made a lot of mistakes, but I've also learned a great many things. First of all, I found that it's not hard to relate to kids. In fact, Sunday school is way fun! They play games and have snacks! I have also learned that anyone can serve. It doesn't take any experience or impressive credentials. All you have to do is make yourself available and God will show you what to do. I am living proof of that!

Now in the beginning, I had no clue what to do. I would just read the story out of the curriculum while the kids were running around the room and bouncing off the walls. The parents would come to pick up their kids and tell me, "The last teacher didn't let the kids get out of control!"

But, rather than getting discouraged and quitting, the Holy Spirit placed a determination in my heart to find better ways to handle the classroom. And to this day I am always on a quest for new ideas. I try to attend every children's ministry conference or workshop that I can get to and every time we go out of town and visit a new church, I make a point out of observing one of their classrooms. I'm always on the lookout for new techniques I can use in my classroom. Everywhere I go, I'm thinking "children's ministry". I'm always finding things that I think someday and in some way this will be useful in one of my lessons. For example, when we were in Chicago a few years ago I ran across a great rubber snake; I just knew it will come in handy.

Kids love funny body parts. Once I was on a quest to find a rubber brain. To a big bowl of vanilla pudding, dyed light green like slime, you can add some plastic bugs and spiders. Then, pull the brain out and start removing the bugs one by one... this is a bad word you said or a mean thought you had... Then have another bowl with some clean water. God wants us to wash our minds in the Word of God...

You can come to class dressed up in a lab coat like a doctor with rubber gloves and goggles. Do heart surgery on a volunteer. Lay him on a table and pretend to cut him open. God wants to give you a new heart. Pull out a stone. Then put in a new rubber heart and sew him back up.

Rubber chickens are great... a lot of people feel chicken about telling their friends about God.

Rubber ears... faith comes by hearing.

You can get a lot of neat stuff in the after-Halloween sales or at Novelty shops.

I'm also a bone collector. Every time we have turkey or chicken, I clean the bones and save them. I have a wonderful lesson in my Creation series where the kids go on an archeological dig in the sandbox and find bones. Then with hot glue guns, they can divine any creature they want to invent... Isn't that how they came up with the "Brontosaurus" – they put the wrong head on the body!

Ok, so now back to why growing up in a non-Christian home gives me a passion for teaching Sunday school...

Because I wasted my youth making really poor choices, one of the things that drives my passion for teaching kids is my desire for them to fall deeply in love with Jesus at an early age and to become passionate about God's Word. If they love Jesus and trust His Word, they will be more inclined to want to live their lives in a way that is pleasing to God. And, if I can be a part of helping even one child steer away from making the bad choices I did, it will be worth it all.

Now, over the years I have picked up some really great ideas. So, I thought I'd share some of them with you. That's why I have developed this Web site. I pray these materials will bless you and equip you as you tend His little lambs.

Ever since those days way back in the beginning when I was thrown into the classroom with no training and no tools, it has been my heart's desire to give other teachers the help and encouragement they need. Sometimes we minister from our "pain", not from our successes. The deep well of the "pain" that I've encountered in ministry is where I drew the water that the Lord enabled me to give you today.

It is an awesome privilege to be part of a child's spiritual growth. You are involved in the most eternally-critical work possible: leading the next generation into a deeper personal relationship with our precious Lord Jesus.

You may never truly know what He has done with your energies, but you can be sure that nothing is wasted!

1 Corinthians 15:58

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.*

Keep fighting the good fight!

Please let me know if I can assist you any further.

Joyfully Serving Jesus,

Sheila Scroggins