



Cheryl was number eleven in her Sunday school class. There were only ten spaces in the teacher's roll book. Ten girls came regularly and since Cheryl wasn't there every week her name was listed in the margin at the bottom of the page. Each week there were ten student chairs set up in their room, so when Cheryl came to church she had to go find her own chair.

Number eleven doesn't always get to sit in the "circle." Number eleven is often missed when the teacher calls the girls to invite them to the teacher's house for the Christmas party or the sleep over or the outing to the zoo. Some of the other girls forgot her name, and, of course, number eleven wasn't asked to join the youth group that sat altogether in the church.

I never met Cheryl until she was a young woman and I was a Sunday School superintendent. She asked me if she could teach a class of sixth grade girls and she told me that story. She became a loving, listening teacher. She told me there would never be a "number eleven" girl in her class. And there never was.