

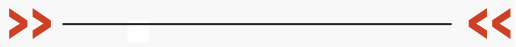


REAL-TIME FAITH is a Sabbath School curriculum offering
an application-oriented study of Scripture
for earliteens.

First Quarter 2020

>> Colliding Kingdoms >>





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WHAT THE LESSONS ARE ABOUT

These lessons are about God’s kingdom of grace and being a recruited agent (steward, citizen) of that kingdom. There is a battle going on between God’s kingdom and the kingdom of evil. Being agents of God’s kingdom requires action. We can’t just listen to what Jesus asks of us, we are to do it (James 1:22) if we want to be effective agents of the kingdom on this earth.

The first lesson of each quarter covers a different section of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount which is “at once Christ’s inaugural address as King of the kingdom of grace and also the constitution of the kingdom” (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 322).

After the first lesson of each quarter the rest of the lessons are about the different challenges, rights, or privileges in the “real-time” of being an agent of God’s kingdom. A Christian never knows what he or she will be encountering next. For additional study material, go to www.realtimefaith.net and click on Study Sheets.

Remember to go to www.guidemagazine.org/rft and explore each week’s topic with other e-teens. Find out how other young people are facing the challenge of living for God in the real world.



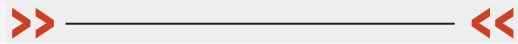
HOW TO USE THIS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

- » » **STEP 1:** Notice that this Bible study guide isn’t meant to be read like a usual magazine or book. Each lesson comes out of the binding to be used as a separate sheet for study in advance during the week in preparation for Sabbath School. Be sure to take the right lesson to Sabbath School with you each week.
- » » **STEP 2:** Use each week’s lesson in the way that is best for you. Each section has a day of the week listed beside it, but you may want to mix and match sections as you study. The sections work in any order.
- » » **STEP 3:** Review the memory verse each day of the week.
- » » **STEP 4:** Be prepared to share your thoughts and discoveries with your Sabbath School class.



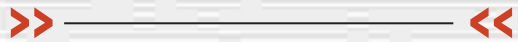
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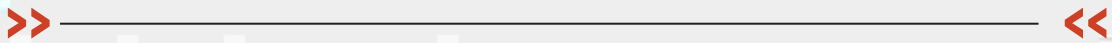
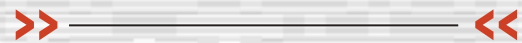
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Postmaster: Send address changes to *REAL-TIME FAITH*®, Pacific Press® Publishing Association, P.O. Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353. Single copy, US\$14.59 plus postage. One year, United States: US\$40.16; Canada and foreign: US\$48.16. Prices subject to change without notice.

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The Two Kingdoms

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ:** “No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. . . . As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 19, 20

NOT THOSE BOYS

“Dear God, please don’t send those boys to my van.”
God wasn’t listening, I concluded.
Several times a year the school devoted a day to community service. From my viewpoint, Kenny or Chris were not “service project” material. Plopping into the seats Chris complained, “Where are we going?”
Kenny chimed in, “Why do we have to do this?”
Although I wanted to say something else I calmly replied, “We’re going to work at the battered women’s shelter.”
“Work?” Kenny snorted. “I didn’t even sign up for this. I think it is stupid!”
It occurred to me that God was not answering my prayer. We arrived at the shelter and I met the director while the boys waited anxiously in the van.
“We really need help planting flowers and playing with the kids while the women go to a group session.” She peered into the van and asked nervously, “Can your team do that for us?”
Team? I thought. The two stringy-haired, saggy-dressed teenagers that were half asleep in the van were anything but a team.
“Come on, gentlemen,” I exaggerated. “I’m going to paint. Kenny, you are going to play with the kids. And Chris, you are going to plant the flowers.”
I prayed one final prayer for God to stop punishing me, saying, “God, if you are there, I’m begging you . . .”
My prayer was interrupted by six screaming children running up to the van, chanting, “Duck, duck, goose!” Kenny was being pulled from the van to play a marathon of children’s games. He looked back desperately for help as his best friend watched helplessly. I smiled and waved.
Chris looked in horror at the flats of flowers that littered the sidewalk where the fertile ground waited for their arrival. After the shock wore off, he examined the site and soberly began to plant.
As we got ready to leave, children were still clinging to Kenny’s arms and legs as he dragged them laughing in the grass. Chris was washing his hands by the side of the house as the women came out of the building to a garden of flowers. I watched his eyes as he accepted their gratitude. All three of us received a passport to another world that morning. It occurred to me that being self-absorbed has many faces.
I thanked God for not answering my prayer.—Pastor Troy.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read James 2:5.
- » Imagine it’s your first day at high school. There are, a few people you recognize but many you don’t. You start watching to see which kids hang out together. Which groups would you try to make friends with? Which groups would you feel uncomfortable to be a part of? How is the group you would like to join different from the ones you would not like to join? Why do you think you are making the choice you are?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON GROWING IN CHRIST

- » Read Psalm 23:4; Galatians 5:22-25; 2 Peter 3:18.
- » No matter where we are or what our circumstances are, God is with us. When we trust Him, we do not have to be afraid of anything in this world. As we learn more about Jesus and His love, the Holy Spirit helps us to grow more like Jesus—becoming aware and showing compassion to those who are hurting around us.
- » How can I reflect the loving kingdom of God in my life?

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troood
hdtelsaseib
sJues
drceeiev
erehfetor
ganskivghint
ihrCst

“As you _____ have _____ the Lord, so walk in Him, _____ and built up in Him and _____ in the faith, as you have been taught, _____ in it with _____” (Colossians 2:6, 7, NKJV).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read John 16:33.
- » The whole idea of a “kingdom” may seem unreal today. But even though God’s kingdom isn’t something you can touch with your hands, it is real. Jesus would even say it is more real than the world you are living in. The freedom you feel when you forgive someone is real. The joy people feel when they devote their whole lives to service is real. That’s what makes the kingdom of God real.
- » Just look at the “real” world around you. Depression is common. Suicide is on the rise. Consider the music and movies that are popular today. Are people claiming to be happy, fulfilled, full of joy and certainty, meaning and purpose? No, a lot of them are uncertain or disappointed about life.
- » Citizens of God’s kingdom face many things, but always with certainty of their future. Always with the knowledge that suffering will end. Always with the joy that being of service in a forever kingdom is better than trying to be king of one that is coming to an end. Is it possible that so many people can be misled as to which kingdom is real and which kingdom is temporary? Obviously they are, and it is for that very reason that we should wear our citizenship where everyone can see it.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Listed below are Bible texts that talk about the lesson. Match the number with the phrase to which the Bible text belongs. You can find the various Bible versions at Biblegateway.com.
- 1. Psalm 32:1, 2 (NLT)
- 2. Proverbs 16:25 (NLT)
- 3. John 16:33 (NIV)
- 4. John 14:27 (NIV)
- 5. James 2:5 (NLT)
- 6. 1 John 2:15-17 (CEV)
- 7. 1 John 4:4 (NIV)
- A. ____ “Don’t love the world or anything that belongs to the world.”
- B. ____ “Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven . . .”
- C. ____ “You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them . . .”
- D. ____ “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give . . .”
- E. ____ “There is a path before each person that . . .”
- F. ____ “Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters . . .”
- G. ____ “I have told you these things, so that . . .”

Thursday
CONNECTING

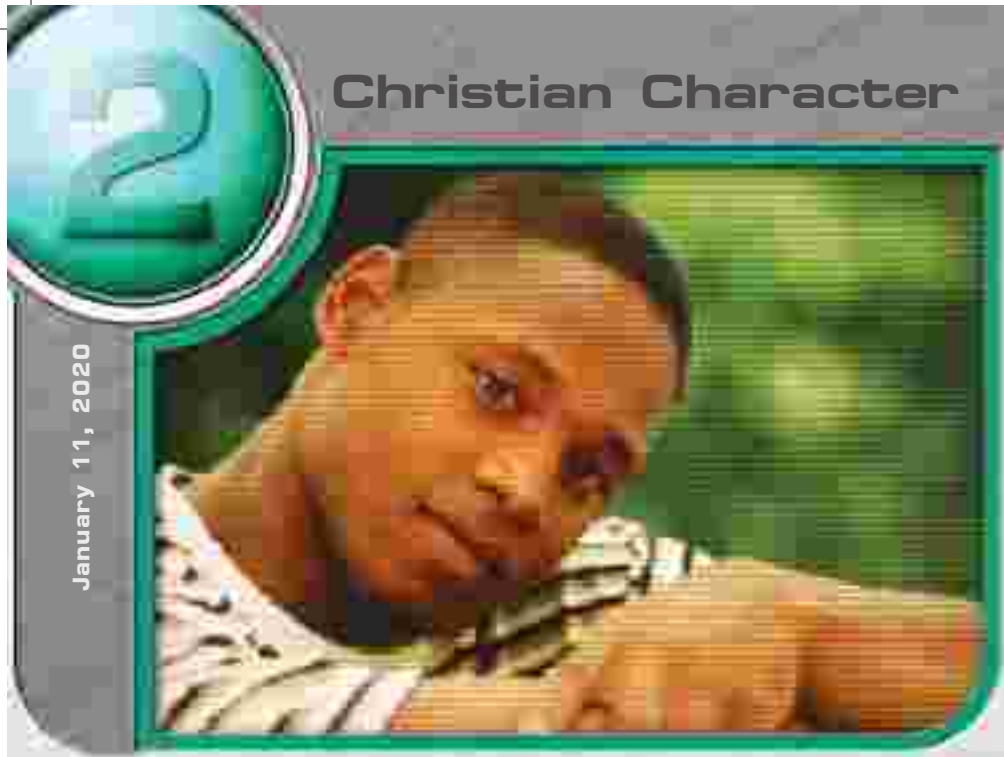
- » Read 1 John 2:15-17.
- » Review the memory text
- » The desire you have for joy and happiness is there because God put it in you. Life in God’s kingdom may seem foreign now, but the more you think about it the more real it will seem. The opposite kingdom is a place where there is never mercy, only a love of power. It’s where everyone looks out for their own interests and never thinks of others. It’s a pretty scary place.
- » In the Beatitudes God seems to be sneaking us a peek of our future home in heaven. It is almost as if God is reminding us, “Don’t make yourself at home in this world, because your home is somewhere else.” Consider the rewards of being part of that kingdom—heirs to the King, children of an awesome Father. God wants us to experience joy more than we know, and while the path of God’s kingdom has challenges, what an adventure to be a part of such a wonderful kingdom!

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Matthew 5:3-12.
- » Organize the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) in order of their relevance to your life. On the chart below, list the three beatitudes that you want most to live by this week. In the second column, focus on a specific arena of your life (example: best friend, teacher, problems with parents, someone who hates you). You might write the name of someone to whom you need to be merciful, or in what arena of your life you want to practice purity, humility, and so on. Be as specific as you can! As you practice the attitude, write in the last column your reflections on what happened and how you might continue to experience the real joy of being an agent of God’s kingdom.

BEATITUDE	ARENA OF LIFE	REFLECTION
<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>





January 11, 2020

Christian Character

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22, 23, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 91-93

“MAKE ME LIKE JOE”

Story One. Prior to his conversion, Joe had gained the reputation of being a dirty wino for whom there was no hope, only a miserable existence in the ghetto. But following his conversion to a new life with God, everything changed. Joe became the most caring person those at the mission had ever known. Joe spent his days and nights hanging out at the mission doing whatever needed to be done. There was never any task that was too lowly for Joe to take on. There was never anything that he was asked to do that he considered beneath him. Whether it was cleaning up the vomit left by some violently sick alcoholic or scrubbing the toilets after careless men left the bathroom filthy, Joe did what was asked with a smile on his face and with a seeming gratitude for the chance to help.

One evening when the director of the mission was delivering his evening evangelistic message to the usual crowd, there was one man who looked up, came down the aisle to the altar, and knelt to pray, crying out for God to help him to change. The repentant drunk kept shouting, “O God, make me like Joe! Make me like Joe! Make me like Joe! Make me like Joe!”

The director of the mission leaned over and said to the man, “Son, I think it would be better if you prayed, ‘Make me like Jesus!’”

The man looked up to the director with a quizzical expression on his face and asked, “Is He like Joe?”—Wayne Rice, *More Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), pp. 114, 115.

Story Two. At a national spelling contest in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., an incident occurred that made me wonder. In the fourth round of the contest Rosalie Elliot, then an 11-year-old from South Carolina, was asked to spell *avowal*. In her soft Southern accent she spelled it. But did the seventh grader use an *a* or an *e* as the next-to-the-last letter? The judges couldn’t decide. For several minutes they listened to tape recording playbacks, but the critical letter was accent-blurred. Chief judge John Lloyd finally put the question to the only person who knew the answer, “Was the letter an *a* or was it an *e*?” he asked Rosalie. Surrounded by whispering young spellers, she knew by now the correct spelling of the word. Without hesitating, she replied that she had misspelled it. She walked from the stage.

The entire audience stood and applauded, including half a hundred newspaper reporters, one of whom was heard to remark that Judge Lloyd had put quite a burden on an 11-year-old.—James S. Hewitt, *Illustrations Unlimited* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1988), pp. 62, 63.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read John 1:47.
- » While shopping in a store, you notice a young boy acting suspiciously. Standing in the toy section, he hides an item in his pocket, thinking no one has seen him. What would you do? You could do nothing and let the kid learn his lesson the hard way. You might say something to him. If so, what would you say?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read Philippians 4:8; 1 John 2:6; Philippians 2:4
- » Our purpose in life isn’t to satisfy our own desires. We should find fulfillment in helping others learn of Jesus. The more time we spend with Jesus, the more we become like Him. And the more we become like Him, the more others will see Him in us.
- » In what ways do you reflect God and His love to those around you?

- » Use the word chart to write out the text that tells us how we should treat others. To find the first word, find the word in the chart that correlates to E7. The second word will correlate to A5. Each word will follow the same pattern. Not all words are used.

“E7 A5 D2 F4, C2, B1 E3 C7 D4 B3, B6 D2 D6 A2 F3 A3 F7 A6, F5, C3 F1 B3, D8 E5 A2 C8 A1. E1 B4 D1 D3 E6 F1 F6 B7, E2 D3 C4 D7 E3 C6 D4 A2 B2, B6 D2 B5 F8 E4 E5 B6 D5 E1 C3 E1 A4 A8 D4 B3” (C5 C1 A7, F2).

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	service	by	12:	not	and	to
2	your	mind	brethren	you	but	NKJV
3	a	God	acceptable	be	the	bodies
4	perfect	do	transformed	of	what	therefore
5	beseech	may	Romans	good	is	holy
6	sacrifice	that	renewing	present	conformed	this
7	1, 2	world	mercies	by	I	living
8	will	said	reasonable	which	love	prove



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Ephesians 5:1, NKJV.
- » Young people are clearly heard by the Savior when they ask, “What’s the point of all this?” The Savior smiles and says, “I knew you were going to ask that! I made you in such a way that you would ask that question!” (Read **Deuteronomy 6:20**.) God’s goal has never been for us to mindlessly obey a bunch of rules. God wants us to know Him, and to be changed into His image by getting a look at Him *through* His rules. God has given us some windows into His living room to see what He is like. So the question “What’s the point?” should be “Who’s the point?” Often the question “Who gets to make the rules?” is asked in a sassy, confrontational way—challenging authority and demanding independence. But if it becomes an honest question about knowing the “who,” then there is a God who is eager to reveal the answer to us.
- » In every culture there are values—written or unstated rules that people live by. Also in every culture there are heroes, people who are the very picture of what that culture believes to be good, right, and true. Christ is our greatest hero, who banishes the ridiculous claim that Christianity is all about rules. Christians are all about a Person. The marks of that Person (love, kindness, goodness, honesty, peace, courage, etc.) make the world a better place.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Matthew 22:36-40.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Have you ever looked at a three-dimensional picture and tried to see the hidden picture? It can be difficult at times, but the more you do it, the better you get at seeing through the picture to the image behind. Sometimes we forget to see the person of God in the rules and the qualities of truth, purity, faithfulness, justice, and so on. But remember that God wants to reveal Himself to you through His Word. He isn't interested in your seeing "just" the rules. Even knowing why we should be honest is not enough for God. He wants you to discover Him! He is not some mystical cloud or a ghostlike force. He is our loving Father. He knows we will be better off becoming more like Him. He doesn't want us to become like others who are only preoccupied with their own pursuits. What an honor to be a child of God. What a joy it is to follow in His footsteps. What a day it will be to see Him face to face and recognize Him because He is everything you have chosen to become.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Look up the following Bible texts and fill in the blanks.

1. "But the _____ of the _____ is _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,
_____ and _____. Against such things there is no law"
(Galatians 5:22, 23, NIV).

2. "When they saw the _____ of Peter and John and _____ that they were _____, _____, they were astonished and they took note that these men had _____ _____" (Acts 4:13, NIV).

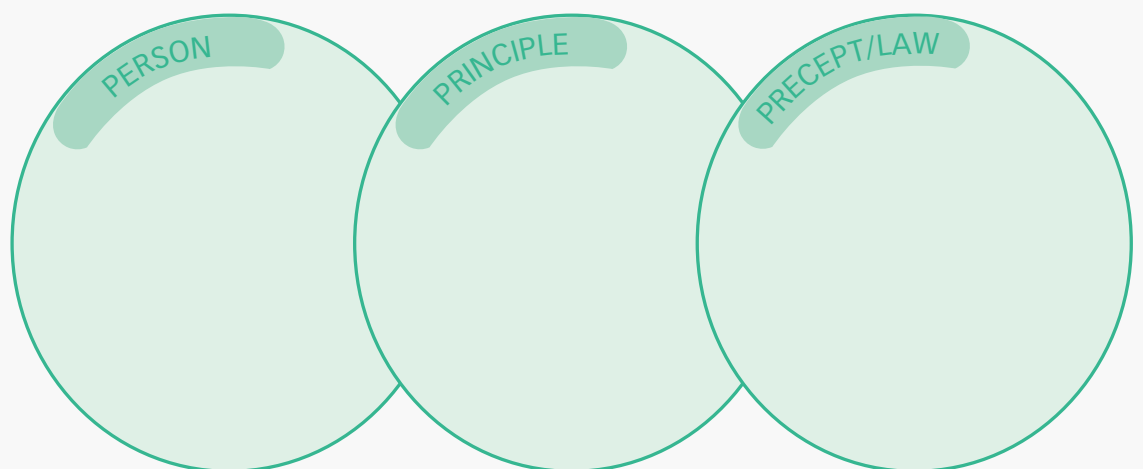
3. "And we have _____ and _____ the _____ that God has for us. _____ is _____, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is _____ in love; but _____, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love" (1 John 4:16-18, NKJV).

4. "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your _____ to indulge the _____; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire _____ is fulfilled in keeping this one command: '_____ your neighbor as _____. ' If you bite and _____ each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other" (Galatians 5:13-15, NIV).

5. "Beloved, let us _____, for love is of God; and _____ is born of God and _____ God. He who does not love does not know God, for _____. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might _____" (1 John 4:7-9, NKJV).

Friday APPLYING

- » Read Titus 2:11, 12.
- » Choose one character quality you feel God is calling you to work on. Who do you know today that demonstrates that quality? How? Who in the Bible demonstrates that quality? How? How do you see that quality in the person of God? Reflect on other rules you live by and trace them back to the person of God, or, start with what you love about God and work your way toward what He says to do.
- » Choose a kingdom citizen/person you know that you want to be like. In the first circle, write their name and what you love most about them (**person**). In the second circle, write a general principle of life they live by (**principle**). In the third circle, write out a law that you think they would write about that principle if they were asked to write a law (**precept**).





The Great Controversy

Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 8, The Great Controversy:** “All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. . . . To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 109, 110

THE BLIND MEN
AND THE ELEPHANT

“It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

“The *First* approached the Elephant,
And, happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl,
‘God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!’

“The *Second*, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, ‘Ho! What have we here
So very round and smooth and
sharp?
To me ‘tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!’

“The *Third* approached the animal,
And, happening to take
The squirming trunk within his
hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
‘I see,’ quoth he, ‘the Elephant
Is very like a snake!’

“The *Fourth* reached out his eager
hand,
And felt about the knee.
‘What most this wondrous beast
is like

Is mighty plain,’ quoth he;
‘Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!’

“The *Fifth*, who chanced to touch
the ear,
Said, ‘E’en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!’

“The *Sixth* no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Then seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
‘I see,’ quoth he, ‘the Elephant
Is very like a rope!’

“And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the
right,
And all were in the wrong!

“So oft in theologic wars
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!”

—John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887)

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 5:12.
- » The main reason people stay away from Christianity is that they have a hard time with what other people say about God and what they think they see God doing or not doing in our world. Here are three questions that young and old have shared as to why they don’t believe in God or choose to follow Him:
 1. If God is good, then why do evil and bad seem to reign in the world?
 2. If God is all-powerful, why doesn’t He do something about pain and suffering?
 3. If God is supposed to be so close, why do I feel only His absence?How would you answer these questions? You may choose one or all.

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON
THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

- » Read Genesis 3:15; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Peter 5:8.
- » There has been enmity [hostility] between God and His children and Satan and his followers since Adam and Eve’s sin in the Garden of Eden. The devil does not want us to trust and know God. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that we are able to resist the devil and follow God.
- » What do these verses say to you about the great controversy?

- » Unscramble the scrambled words and use them to fill in the blanks in the verse below.

lanelf	naeekdwe	rstsa	nudrog
iLurfce	tehra	rogenoctiang	torhen
nngormi	escand	nrtoh	ehhgsit

“How you are _____ from heaven, O _____, son of the
_____! How you are cut down to the _____, you who
_____ the nations! For you have said in your _____: ‘I will
_____ into heaven, I will exalt my _____ above the _____
of God; I will also sit on the mount of the _____ on the farthest
sides of the _____; I will ascend above the _____ of the clouds,
I will be like the Most High’” (Isaiah 14:12-14, NKJV).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Romans 8:19-22.
- » Have you heard songs on the radio or listened to people talk about prayer in the news, magazines, and in movies? The world is not afraid to talk about God anymore, but what are they saying? The problem is that many know that there is a God, but rarely do people agree on what He is like. While many speculate, Christians have a message about God, and it is not just a snapshot; it is a view of the big picture. If you stand in front of a painting on the wall with your nose two inches from the canvas, you see up close but only a small portion.
- » The great controversy, as explained in the Bible, has been the most amazing topic for many because it paints the big picture, and when you step back to see it, you can make sense out of the little parts in the scene. What if someone had the answer to “Why is this world so bad?” Do you think people might listen? What if someone had the answer to the question “Will there ever be a time when there is no pain?” Do you think people might be curious? What if someone had a good answer to the heart cry “Is God really there, and does He know me?” Do you know some people who might listen? God has spoken to us through His Word, and while we don’t know everything, we see enough of the truth to say, “Choose God. He’s worth it.”

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Joshua 24:15.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Young people often say, “I don’t care what others think of me. If they don’t like me for who I am, then forget them!” Is it really true that we don’t care what others think of us? We do care. In fact, God created us with the capacity to care and feel hurt if others don’t care. We may choose to live as if their opinions don’t affect us, but we do care, especially if we are being misunderstood or falsely accused.
- » Be sure that God cares what you think about Him. The most important thing a human can learn is what they believe about God. Why do you think God has stepped into our world to communicate to us what He is like and what His thoughts about us are? What about the times when God has spoken—at the Red Sea? in the fire from Mount Carmel? through David and Goliath? during Gideon’s miraculous victory? with Daniel in the lions’ den? at the feeding of the 5,000? the healing of the leper? the calming of the sea? What about Calvary?
- » God has spoken to you through His Word, and although everything has not been explained, you have enough information to say yes to God. God has more than said yes to you. He has endured centuries of people’s misunderstanding Him just for your love and friendship.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the words that go with the texts from the New International Version of the Bible. When you match the correct words with their texts, draw a line from the words to their text.

Revelation 12:7-11	LORD hearts serve Philistines
Romans 7:21-25, NIV	Israel Ahab Baal follow
Matthew 6:24, NIV	worshiped LORD customs nations
2 Kings 17:33, NIV	fallen throne clouds Most High
1 Kings 18:20, 21	ancestors Euphrates Amorites household
1 Samuel 7:3	heaven war Michael blood testimony
Joshua 24:15, NIV	serve masters God money
Isaiah 14:12-14	law work body Jesus Christ Lord sin

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Romans 7:21-25.
- » The internal war for your loyalty to God is like having two lions living inside you, the lion of good, and the lion of evil. Here’s a challenge. Pick three things you want to do to feed the good lion (things that feed and strengthen your connection to God). Also, consider what you normally feed the bad lion (things that draw you away from God and others) and choose to starve it this week. See how things go, and then reflect on the week and the way it has affected your awareness of the war between God and Satan and the role you play in that battle zone.



» What am I going to do to feed the good lion?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



» What am I going to do to starve the bad lion?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ILLUSTRATIONS: TERRY CREWS





Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 10, The Experience of Salvation:** “Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. . . . Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God’s law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 103-106

ROCK BOTTOM

Bill was a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army when he had his first drink. At 22 years of age he had a good career ahead of him. He was well on his way to making a success from a life that had gotten off to a rough start. His father’s alcoholism had broken up Bill’s parents’ marriage when he was just a kid, and he’d been raised by his grandparents. But it looked as if Bill would overcome that rough start until he found out that, just like his dad, he loved to drink.

By the time he was in his 30s Bill was a wreck. Whereas once he used to drink to celebrate a successful business deal, now he couldn’t hold down a job. He and his wife were living in her parents’ house because they couldn’t afford a home of their own. Bill was so down and out that he sometimes begged for cash on the street. He was hospitalized four times to try to quit drinking.

One day in 1934 Bill gave up. He admitted that he couldn’t do anything to break the power of alcoholism in his life. It was up to God to help him out.

Seventy years later the organization Bill W. founded, Alcoholics Anonymous, has more than 2 million members in 150 countries, as well as dozens of spin-off groups including Alateen. The very first steps of the program are to admit that you are powerless over your problem and to ask a higher power for help.

As Christians, citizens of God’s kingdom, we know God is our higher power. Alcoholics talk about having to hit rock bottom, even if that means begging for money on the street, before they realize how much they need help. But we’re not all homeless or down-and-out. Many of us are pretty well-off, popular, clean-living people, aren’t we? Do we all need to hit rock bottom before we can accept God’s offer to help us?

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read John 3:16.
- » It’s the last evening of your church’s Week of Prayer meeting, and the pastor’s making an appeal for people to give their hearts to God. The lights are low, the music is playing, the Holy Spirit is working.
- » But from your place in the back row you feel confused. Lately nothing seems to be going right at school, at home, even with your friends. You wonder if “giving your heart to Jesus,” like the preacher says, would make a big difference. What would it even mean? What would your friends think if you stood up and walked to the front? How will your life change if you take this step?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE
EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION

- » Read John 3:3-8; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Titus 3:3-7.
- » God loves you. He sent His Son to die in your place so you might live forever with Him. He has also sent the Holy Spirit to help you resist the devil and live a life filled with His goodness and love.
- » What in your life is holding you back from making the life-changing decision to live a life for Him instead of yourself?

- » Unscramble the words below and write out the verse on the lines below.

power forgiveness us have 13, 14 the conveyed whom blood His delivered NKJV we kingdom He through of 1: has of us of and love His of darkness Colossians from in sins the redemption the Son into the

Bill and wife, Lois, with his Harley; a page from the original draft of the Big Book in Bill’s handwriting; Bill later in life.



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Ephesians 2:8, 9.
- » What does it mean to “accept Jesus” or “give your heart to God”? Do you have to “hit rock bottom” first?
- » If you grew up in church, you’ve probably heard about “salvation” for as long as you can remember. Now it’s time to find out what it means for you, personally.
- » It isn’t just about getting baptized because you’re “old enough” and all your friends are doing it. It isn’t even about going up to the front after a special meeting when the preacher has everyone feeling kind of guilty.
- » It’s about knowing in your own heart that *you need God*. That doesn’t mean you have to “hit rock bottom.” It just means knowing you can’t live a perfect, holy, happy life all on your own strength. You need God to make you complete. You need God’s power to become the person you were created to be. Most of all, you need Jesus’ death on the cross for your sins as your only ticket to heaven.
- » See, eternal life isn’t something we can earn or deserve, no matter how good we are. We’re human, sinful, born to die. Imperfect beings can’t live forever in a perfect world unless we accept the prepaid ticket Jesus bought for us at Calvary.
- » “Accepting Jesus” means you get His power in your life today and the promise of eternal life in the future. All you have to do is admit you can’t do it alone.
- » “But when the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God’s holy law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 24).

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Revelation 3:20.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Sometimes we hear about someone's "search for God." Really, it should be the other way around. God is searching for *you*. He'll do anything to get your attention; He'll stop at nothing to make sure you notice Him.
- » Why does He love you so much? He made you. Only He knows you inside out. He knows the worst about you and loves you anyway. And only He knows the person you're capable of becoming, with His help.
- » What is He waiting for? Well, He won't force His way into your life. He's waiting for one simple thing: for you to respond to His Spirit and admit that you need Him, that you want Him in your life.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Look up the Bible verses in the New King James Version and fill in the blanks.
1. John 3:16. "For God so _____ the _____ that He _____ His _____ begotten _____, that _____ in _____ should not perish but have _____ life."
 2. Ephesians 2:8, 9. "For by _____ you have been _____ through _____, and that not of _____; it is the _____ of _____, not of _____, lest anyone should boast."
 3. 2 Corinthians 5:17. "Therefore, if _____ is in _____, he is a _____; old things have _____; behold, _____ things _____."
 4. Romans 5:8. "But _____ demonstrates _____ own _____ toward _____, in that while we were still _____, Christ _____ for us."
 5. Romans 6:23. "For the _____ of _____ is _____, but the _____ of God is _____ in _____ our Lord."
 6. Romans 3:23. "For _____ have _____ and _____ of the _____ of _____."

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Psalm 51:10.
- » Sit down and take a few minutes to write a letter to God. Write it out by hand in the space below, or type it on your computer as if you were sending God an email. Tell Him the worst things that are going on in your life, and the best. Tell Him about the areas in which you need His help.
- » Finish up your letter by telling God that you need Him, and that you're willing to do whatever it takes to give Him first place in your life. Thank Jesus for dying on the cross for your sins, and tell Him you accept His sacrifice—His payment of your debt.
- » When you've finished, go back and read the Bible verses from Wednesday's section. Imagine God is answering your letter. Beneath your message, write God's reply. What would He say to you?

[illegible]



Growing in Grace

Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him” (Colossians 2:6, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ:** “Jesus’ victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us. . . . Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 98-100

WILMA GOES FOR GOLD

“I’m sorry, but your daughter will never walk again.” The words sounded like a final sentence to the little girl and her mother. But they weren’t. Wilma’s left leg was twisted and weakened by polio. But her mother was determined Wilma would someday walk.

Week after week Wilma’s mother brought her 50 miles from home to do physical therapy. At home her mother, brothers, and sisters helped her exercise her leg. Throughout her childhood Wilma went to school with a heavy metal brace on her left leg. She used the brace, crutches, and a corrective shoe. And despite the doctor’s prediction, she walked.

When she was 12, Wilma was finally able to walk without any assistance at all. That was when she made an important decision. She had already overcome tremendous odds. She was walking, even though doctors had told her she never would. But Wilma wanted to do more than walk. She wanted to run. She wanted to become a world-class athlete.

It might have seemed like a crazy dream for a poor African-American girl in the southern United States in the 1950s. Poverty, racial discrimination, and physical disability were all stacked against Wilma Rudolph, saying she’d never become a success.

But a strong will, a supportive family, and determination were on Wilma’s side. Day after day she hit the track running, training to make her left leg as strong as her right. She ran until she could run as well as any other teenage girl, and then she ran until she was a lot better.

When she was 16 years old, Wilma went to her first Olympic Games and came home with a bronze medal. Four years later, in Rome in 1960, she became the first American woman ever to win three Olympic gold medals.

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 5:48.
- » “I don’t want to be a Christian,” your friend at school says. “It’s too difficult, and it’s no fun. Following all those stupid rules, and never getting away with anything!”
- » You’re about to open your mouth when a friend who attends a different church says, “You’re nuts! Being a Christian is not; it’s easy! Jesus saves us. I got saved in church when I was 10, and I don’t have to do anything else about it. What’s so difficult about that?”
- » What do you think? Which friend do you agree with—or do you have another opinion? Is being a Christian hard, easy, or would you explain it some other way?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON
GROWING IN CHRIST

- » Read Romans 8:38, 39; Ephesians 6:12-18; 2 Peter 3:18.
- » How wonderful that God has made a way for us to live and grow in His will. When we accept Him as our Savior, He sends the Holy Spirit to help us overcome sin. The Holy Spirit also works in us to transform us into God’s image so we can live the lives God intended for us.
- » List the ways you have seen the Holy Spirit work in your life.
- » Put the words of this verse back in their proper order.

me	is	with	longer	NKJV
it	for	no	crucified	I
flesh	Christ	Himself	who	been
I	the	live	gave	have
2:	live		live	and
Christ	but	by	20	me
in	lives	loved	faith	In
Galatians	who	In	the	I
God	I	Son	which	and
now	of	life	the	me



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.
- » Is being a Christian difficult or easy? On the one hand, it's easy. Accept Jesus and you're saved. God does all the work.
- » On the other hand, sometimes it seems as if there are so many rules and expectations. Go to church. Follow the rules. Set a good example.
- » If it's so easy, why is it so difficult? The secret is that being a Christian is both the easiest and the most difficult thing you'll ever do. Getting right with God is easy. Just let Him know you want your sins forgiven. He does all the rest.
- » But then God begins the work of shaping you into the person you were created to be. He takes you just as you are. But He loves you too much to let you stay in your sinful state. And just like an Olympic athlete in training, you put in the effort to run the race, keep your rebellious muscles surrendered to the program, stay in top form. Not because you want to earn God's approval or buy your way into heaven, but because you're starting to catch His vision of the kind of person He wants you to be—a gold-medal Christian, someone transformed into His image.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the text with the phrase that has been taken from the corresponding verse. You can find the different versions of the Bible at Biblegateway.com.
 - A. 2 Timothy 4:7 (NIV)
 - B. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NCV)
 - C. 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)
 - D. 2 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)
 - E. Matthew 5:48 (NLT)
 - F. Hebrews 12:1 (CEV)
- _____ "But grow in the grace and knowledge . . ."
- _____ "But you are to be perfect, even as your Father . . ."
- _____ "Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us!"
- _____ "I have fought the good fight . . ."
- _____ "You know that in a race all the runners run . . ."
- _____ "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ . . ."

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Maybe sometimes you're the one who says, "Christianity's too difficult." You may look at the kind of life adults in church expect you to lead, and feel judged or criticized.
- » That's not God's attitude. God has high expectations for us, but He's pleased with every step we take toward Him. Remember Wilma Rudolph's story? When she first began to walk with her crutches and brace, do you think her mom said, "Pick it up, Wilma! You're not as fast as the other kids! And lose that limp!"?
- » Of course not. A loving parent wants their child to become the best they can be. But that same parent stands beside you, supporting you at every step, helping you overcome difficulties, cheering you on.
- » That's the kind of parent that God is. He won't rest until you're the best you can be. But He doesn't expect you to do it alone. He gives you His Holy Spirit power every step of the way. And He doesn't criticize or judge you when you slip and fall. He's right there, helping you up again, cheering you on.

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Hebrews 12:1.
- » It's not New Year's Eve, but it's time to set some goals. This is a little different from making "resolutions," things you're determined you'll try to do even if it kills you! That's relying on your own strength. Growing as a Christian is different—you rely on God's power to get you there, even though you have to constantly choose to stay in touch with Him.
- » Take a few minutes to make a list of five things you'd like to change, accomplish, or improve in your life over the next six months. When you've finished making your list, go to a quiet place and pray out loud, telling God what you'd like Him to change in your life and asking for His strength to do it. To finish your prayer time, read 2 Corinthians 5:17 and claim God's promise to make you a new person.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)





February 8, 2020

Our Identity in Christ, Part One

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth’ ” (Genesis 1:27, 28, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 7, The Nature of Humanity:** “Man and woman were made in the image of God. . . . When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position. The image of God in them was marred and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 76-78

A CASE OF MISSED OR TAKEN IDENTITY

Story One. “Name Shouldn’t Be Sold.” Mark Cuban, owner of the NBA’s Dallas Mavericks, recently offered WGN Chicago radio sports-talk host David Kaplan \$50,000 to change his name legally to “Dallas Maverick.” When Kaplan politely declined, Cuban sweetened the offer. Cuban would pay Kaplan \$100,000 and donate \$100,000 to Kaplan’s favorite charity if he took the name for one year. After some soul searching, and being bombarded by emails from listeners who said he was crazy to turn down the money, Kaplan held firm and told Cuban no. Kaplan explained: “I’d be saying I’d do anything for money, and that bothers me. My name is my birthright. I’d like to preserve my integrity and credibility.”

—Skip Bayless, “Radio Host Prefers Class Over Crass,” *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 10, 2001.

Story Two. FBI agents conducted a raid of a psychiatric hospital in San Diego that was under investigation for medical insurance fraud. After hours of reviewing thousands of medical records, the dozens of agents had worked up quite an appetite. The agent in charge of the investigation called a nearby pizza parlor with delivery service to order a quick dinner for his colleagues.

The following telephone conversation took place and was recorded by the FBI because they were taping all conversations at the hospital.

Agent: Hello. I would like to order 19 large pizzas and 67 cans of soda.

Pizza man: And where would you like them delivered?

Agent: We’re over at the psychiatric hospital.

Pizza man: The psychiatric hospital?

Agent: That’s right. I’m an FBI agent.

Pizza man: You’re an FBI agent?

Agent: That’s correct. Just about everybody here is.

Pizza man: And you’re at the psychiatric hospital?

Agent: That’s correct. And make sure you don’t go through the front doors. We have them locked. You will have to go around to the back to the service entrance to deliver the pizzas.

Pizza man: And you say you’re all FBI agents?

Agent: That’s right. How soon can you have them here?

Pizza man: And everyone at the psychiatric hospital is an FBI agent?

Agent: That’s right. We’ve been here all day and we’re starving.

Pizza man: How are you going to pay for all of this?

Agent: I have my checkbook right here.

Pizza man: And you’re all FBI agents?

Agent: That’s right. Everyone here is an FBI agent. Can you remember to bring the pizzas and sodas to the service entrance in the rear? We have the front doors locked.

Pizza man: I don’t think so.

Click.

—Go to <http://www.snopes.com/medical/asylum/fbipizza.asp> to get more details of this true incident.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read 1 John 4:7, 8, 11, 20.
- » Carlos is known for being funny, even though his jokes come at the expense of others. Nobody really gets close to him personally, but many want to be around him. How would a kingdom citizen go about reaching out to someone who seems “untouchable” and communicate what God thinks about him? How would you show Carlos his identity in Christ?
- » Share the specific problems in reaching people like Carlos. You may want to ask someone older what they think and share what you like about their answer or how that response may not be realistic.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE NATURE OF HUMANITY

- » Read Genesis 2:7; Jeremiah 17:9; 2 Corinthians 5:19, 20.
- » It is important that we realize we belong to God. We were created in His image, and He loves us more than we can realize. When our first parents sinned, the propensity [tendency, inclination] to sin became a part of us. However, God did not leave us in sin. He sent His Son to save us. When we accept Him, we are covered in Christ’s righteousness [perfection]. When Jesus comes, God’s image will once again be fully seen in us.
- » When you look in the mirror, whom do you see?
- » What can you do today to reflect God’s image in your life?
- » Can you match the concepts below to the correct verse?

Genesis 1:26, 27	Psalm 8:4-8	Romans 5:12-17	Acts 17:24-28	Psalm 51:10
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We are sons and daughters of God _____

God’s grace is a gift that gives us eternal life _____

We are made in God’s image _____

God crowned humanity with glory and honor and made him a little lower than the angels _____

A prayer for God to make us clean and committed to living for God _____



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Ephesians 1:4-14.
- » Have you ever tried to join a conversation but not been able to get a word in? It's frustrating to have something to say and not be able to say it because everyone is talking. Imagine how God feels watching His children wander around wondering who they are and whom they belong to.
- » First of all, it's not easy to listen to what God thinks about you when the world is screaming at you. Also, if your identity is based on what you can do, how you look, or who likes you, then you have more than enough to keep yourself extremely busy.
- » Think about a world where you are valued simply because you are alive. What would it be like if we lived in a world where everyone focused on our potential instead of amplifying our mistakes? Can you imagine how loneliness and hatred and despair would just fade away? It's a world where we are valuable simply because the King died for us and claims us; not only claims us, but makes us children; not just children, heirs!
- » Back to the real world. Maybe our real world is in desperate need of a change in the way we think about ourselves. It seems as if we have an identity crisis on our hands. And our making it through the crisis is based on the choice of to whom we listen. Don't you think it is time we gave God a chance to tell us who we are to Him?

Thursday
CONNECTING

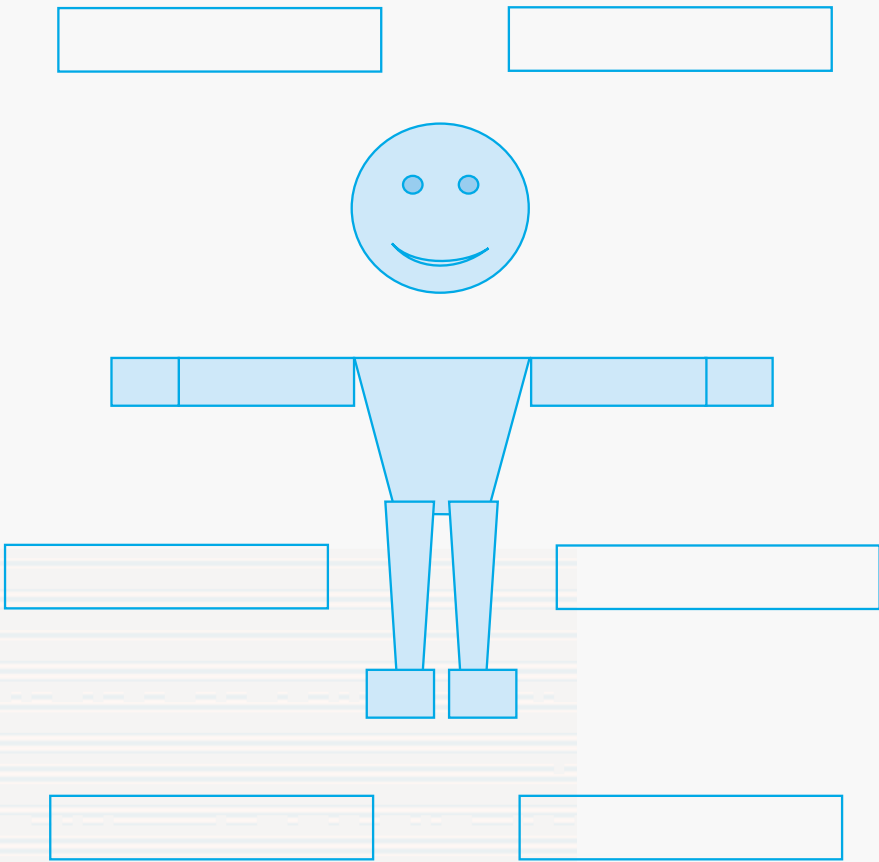
- » Read Luke 12:7.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Try to stump God! Ask Him a question about you that He doesn't know. Give it a try. He knows things you don't even know: how many hairs are on your head, what you are most afraid of, what you wish your friends liked about you, what you want your parents to be able to say about you, and so on. And what God thinks about you has everything to do with "who you are."
- » For professional ball players to become famous, they have to become the best at playing ball. For musicians to get noticed, they practice and practice and hope for someone to notice them. Sometimes they get it; most of the time they don't; but ultimately "who they are" is defined by what they can do.
- » Not so with God. Who you are is defined by what Jesus did. You have a legal and undisputed relationship to the King of the universe through His Son. You have rights as His child to live joyfully without fear, worry, or anxiety about anything, even death. You have the right to call upon God anytime for anything in Jesus' name.
- » You also have a responsibility to expand the family name beyond yourself. You have the responsibility to wear your family name proudly in the open. Think of it as a citizenship oath. Raise your hand and pledge allegiance to God.

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 1 Peter 2:9.
- » If you think about the stories of your life, can you come up with a few incidents that have made the most impact on you for better or for worse (spiritually or emotionally)? Think of five to 10. Fill in a very short description of that event in one of the body parts in the person on the right. In the boxes that surround the figure place Bible passages from this lesson that you feel define you. Write a paraphrase of the verses, starting with the words "God says I am . . ."

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Consider your identity, from God's point of view.
- » Read Psalm 139:13-18 (NIV) and answer the following questions.
 1. What phrase in Psalm 139:13-18 shows you what God thinks about you?
 2. Is there something in this text that tells you God is always with you?
- » What about our relationship, rights, and responsibilities? Read Paul's letter to the Ephesians 1:4-14, NIV, and answer the following questions.
 1. According to this passage, what is our relationship to God?
 2. Because of our relationship to God, what rights do we have?
 3. What are our responsibilities?





Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34, 35, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 12, The Church:** “The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. . . . The church is God’s family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 136, 137

THERMOSTATS AND THERMOMETERS

Thermometer. Have you ever heard of Bob Hayes, the man who was named “World’s Fastest Human”? He was a hero of the 1964 Olympics, bringing home the gold medal in the 100-meter run, and being clocked at an incredible 8.6 seconds in the final 110 yards of the 400-meter relay run. After the Olympics he became an all-pro wide receiver for the Dallas Cowboys football team in the United States. His college coach said that if there had ever been a young man he wished was his, it was Bob Hayes.

Then, in April 1979, Bob was convicted of selling narcotics to an undercover agent. He received two five-year prison sentences. He went from the pinnacle of success to prison. According to Hayes and those who cared most about him, his downfall was caused by his inability to choose good friends. The people he hung out with gave him bad advice and got him into trouble. As a rule, we usually reflect the thoughts and lifestyles of the people we spend the most time with.—*From Sermonnotes.com published online by Alderson Press.*

Whom are you spending time with?

Thermostat. Charles Osgood told the story of two women who lived in a convalescent center. Each had suffered an incapacitating stroke. Margaret’s stroke left her left side restricted, while Ruth’s stroke damaged her right side. Both of these women were accomplished pianists but had given up hope of ever playing again. The director of the center sat them down at a piano and encouraged them to play solo pieces together. They did, and a beautiful friendship developed. What a picture of the church’s need to work together! What one member cannot do alone, perhaps two or more could do together—in harmony.

How do your strengths and weaknesses relate to the body of Christ?



Sunday

RESPONDING

- » Read Hebrews 3:13, 14.
- » Ken’s best friend, Mark, thinks he is in love. While Ken is happy, he is concerned that Mark is becoming consumed with his new girlfriend. Mark is failing classes. He is not getting along with his parents either. Ken watches as his best friend changes, and he doesn’t want to say anything because he doesn’t want to seem jealous. He doesn’t want to drive Mark further away, but he feels it is his responsibility to remind Mark of his other friendships. As time goes by they grow further and further apart. What do you think Ken should do? What would you say—knowing that *how* you say something is as important as *what* you say?

Monday

BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE CHURCH

- » Read Matthew 18:18; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:9.
- » We are adopted sons and daughters of God. He loves His church, and when we have His Spirit in us, we will love others. He has given us gifts to use in helping others with their daily struggles as well as to tell others about Him. The church working together has a great responsibility in telling others of His soon coming.
- » How do you see yourself working as part of the church team in helping and telling others about Jesus?
- » Fill in the blanks using the words from the word bank.

accomplished	all	be	church	eternal
fellowship	given	Ephesians	God	grace
8-11	Jesus	known	least	made
make	now	of	preach	3
purpose	see	through	wisdom	NKJV

“To me, who am less than the _____ of all the saints, this _____ was _____, that I should _____ among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to _____ what is the _____ of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things _____ Jesus Christ; to the intent that _____ the manifold _____ might _____ by the _____ to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the _____ which He _____ in Christ _____ our Lord” (_____.:_____, ____).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Romans 12:10-13.
- » One teen said, “Why can’t I just keep my relationship between God and me? It’s personal.” There is a difference between personal and private! There aren’t any Bible passages that say, “Just believe and be quiet. Everyone will get there sooner or later.” No, quite the opposite is true. God has made us to work together. We work best in teams, because our weaknesses get strengthened by others’ strengths, and our strengths help other people who have weaknesses. We are not whole unless we are united.
- » Have you considered what God may be asking you to bring to the table? Are you wondering how to be someone who sets the temperature and doesn’t just record it? The answer to our quest for boldness in Christ is in community. We are braver together than we are alone. We are smarter as a team than we are as individuals. Each new member that we add to the family makes us more loving and compassionate, because each new member has a unique experience with God’s grace. Each person is expected to participate. Each person is needed, but the whole is more effective than the individual parts. Why do you think Christ sent the disciples out in twos? Because when one is weak, the other can be strong.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read 1 John 1:5-7.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Everyone is hearing voices! No, it’s not that we are all crazy. But we tend to become what we listen to. If you think that God listens to your prayers only when you behave properly, then you are not listening to God. If you think that the only way to really “be someone” is to get noticed, then you are not listening to God. If what others think about you is what will make or break you, then you are listening to someone other than God.
- » God has spoken, and He has declared you not just valuable but precious. He has announced publicly your honored position as His child. Your future is sure if your desire is to be counted as His child. Be counted, along with the many others who are signing up for the kingdom of God. Those who truly sense the surge of joy are those who step out and become agents of change around them. Thermostats, and not just thermometers! It’s not always easy, but it makes all the difference. What about you?

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Read the texts and match each one with a description. Some descriptions correspond to more than one text.
 - _____ Romans 12:10-13
 - _____ Romans 15:7
 - _____ Ephesians 4:32
 - _____ Hebrews 3:13, 14
 - _____ 1 John 1:5-7
 - _____ 1 John 4:11, 12
 - _____ John 13:34, 35
 - _____ Luke 10:1, 2
 - _____ Luke 22:31, 32
 - _____ Acts 13:2, 3
 - _____ Romans 12:5
 - _____ 1 Corinthians 1:11, 12
 - _____ 2 Corinthians 1:21
 - _____ Galatians 3:26-28
- A. Brotherly love
- B. Kind, compassionate, and forgiving
- C. Encourage one another
- D. Fellowship and loving one another
- E. Harvest and laborers
- F. Sift as wheat
- G. One body and perfectly joined, united
- H. All sons of God

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 1 John 4:11, 12.
- » Choose the three friends you love and respect the most. Answer the following questions about them.
 - » What are some goals you want to set for these particular friendships?

 - » How do you want to pray for your friends specifically?

 - » What things do you want to pray about for them this week?

 - » What do you want to thank them for (by letter, email, or in person) for the way they inspire you to be what God has designed you to be?

- » How are you like them in the following areas?
Lifestyle: _____
Beliefs: _____
Personality: _____
- » In what ways are you different?
Lifestyle: _____
Beliefs: _____
Personality: _____
- » How do you help each other grow closer to God?

- » In what ways do you get in each other’s way in your walk with God?





February 22, 2020

Your Own Prejudice



LOOK BEYOND THE BARRIERS!

Several decades ago, in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., an American teacher developed a simple classroom exercise to illustrate the power of prejudice to her students. She told the children that having blue eyes meant they were more intelligent, and gave greater privileges to the blue-eyed children. Very quickly she observed that the blue-eyed children were bullying and oppressing the brown-eyed children, while those with brown eyes demonstrated fear and low self-esteem—even though she conducted the exercise for only one day! The next day, Ms. Elliot returned to her class and told the children that what she’d told them the previous day was untrue—it was actually brown-eyed children who were more intelligent and would have more privileges. The same experience happened in reverse—now the brown-eyed children began to oppress the others.

The experience opened students’ eyes—both blue and brown!—to the power of prejudice and the divisions we create between people. It is very wrong to divide people up on the basis of race, language, culture, religion, and many other categories. We should never make distinctions between people based on our differences, nor try to determine who’s “in” and who’s “out,” who’s cool and who’s not. Jesus saw past all those barriers. He chooses His followers from every race, culture, and background, and He asks us to look past those barriers too. A major part of being like Jesus is to accept others because Jesus loves each of us and wants to welcome everyone into His family.



Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ:** “The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 35-38

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Proverbs 28:21, GNT.
- » Is your school like Chapin High School was at the beginning of the school year? Do groups of people sit together and exclude others from joining them? List the various groups in your school and what binds each group together. Do you belong to a group? Why or why not? What are the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to a group?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

- » Read Romans 12:4, 5; Galatians 3:27-29; Acts 17:26, 27.
- » Even though God has created us unique and individual from others, we are still one in Christ. All of us are united in Christ as brothers and sisters. Just as we care for and love our families, we should care for and love our world family. When we see someone different than ourselves, we should realize they are a child of God and that He loves them. Our hearts should be touched, and we should treat them as we would Christ Himself.
- » How do I see and treat others that are different from me?

- » How can I show and share my love for God with others?

- » Fill in the missing words.
“ ‘Go therefore and make _____ of all the nations, _____ them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, _____ them to observe all things that I have _____ you; and lo, I am with you _____, even to the end of the _____.’ Amen” (Matthew 28:19, 20, NKJV).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Acts 10:34, 35.
- » Although words such as *racism* and *sexism* (and in most translations even the word *prejudice*) aren't in the Bible, it's clear that God wants everyone to be treated equally. God gives us example after example of how to treat those members of society whom other members of society reject. This is so important to Him that it's even part of the law given to Moses.
- » Speaking of Moses, we see one clear example of prejudice in Moses' own family, when his brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, spoke against Moses' foreign wife. Miriam paid for her unkindness with seven days of shame living outside the camp with leprosy.
- » Jesus confronted every -ism there was in the three years of His public ministry. Anyone was welcome to follow Him: women, children, tax collectors, old people, foreigners, those sick with contagious diseases, those who were crippled, and even traitors. He gathered around Him everyone that society said to avoid or ignore. Not only that, He told His disciples that it would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around their neck than to hurt someone He called "the least of these."
- » Prejudice is part of human nature, sometimes learned from our families, and absorbed from the society in which we live. But by God's power and grace we can become defenders, protectors, and friends to anyone.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read 1 Timothy 5:21.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Now is the time in your life that friends are becoming the most important people (MIP) in your life. Soon they may even edge out your family for that position. This is also the time you are finding out who you are. That's difficult, because you are changing rapidly every day (maybe even every hour!). Since you are so focused on this task, it may be harder than ever to be around people who are really different. But you must, because that's the way life is.
- » Dealing with people from various backgrounds is necessary in a global society and a global church. Even though it's difficult, now is the time to look at what you've been taught about others and challenge those things you have found not to be true. Ask God to show you where you might have prejudices against someone or a group of people. Ask Him for the power to at least once a week seek out someone who is totally unlike you to interact with. Then stand back and watch Him work.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Fill in the blanks after looking up the texts (if you don't have a particular version of the Bible, you can go to Biblegateway.com).
- 1. "But the wisdom from above is first _____, then _____, _____, _____, full of _____ and good _____, unwavering, without _____" (James 3:17, NASB).
- 2. "I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you _____ these things _____ prejudice, doing nothing with _____" (1 Timothy 5:21, NKJV).
- 3. "There is neither _____ nor _____, there is neither _____ nor _____ man, there is neither _____ nor _____; for you are all one in _____" (Galatians 3:28, NASB).
- 4. "Then Peter replied, 'I _____ very clearly that God shows no _____. In every _____ he accepts those who _____ him and _____ what is _____'" (Acts 10:34, 35, NLT).
- 5. "Jesus said to his disciples: 'Things that cause _____ to _____ are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a _____ tied around their neck than to cause one of these _____ to stumble'" (Luke 17:1, 2, NIV).
- 6. "To show _____ is not _____" (Proverbs 28:21, NIV).
- 7. "God sees not as _____, for _____ looks at the _____, but the LORD _____ at the _____" (1 Samuel 16:7, NASB).
- 8. "So you, too, must show _____ to _____, for you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of _____" (Deuteronomy 10:19, NLT).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 1 Samuel 16:7.
- » Grab a pencil and finish the following sentences quickly, without stopping long to think about your answer. Put the first thing that comes to your mind.

Elderly people are _____

Immigrants always _____

Girls can't _____

When boys _____ they

My country is _____

Other countries are _____

- » Now go back through and think carefully about your responses. Using a different-colored pen or pencil, change your responses to fit how an agent of the kingdom of God should respond. Realize that we often react to people and situations according to the way we have watched others

react or the way we have been told to. That's not always the best way because in God's kingdom a different kind of thinking is needed. Ask God to live in you so that you can treat others as He does—without prejudice or favoritism.





Withholding Judgment

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?” (Matthew 7:1-3, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 24, Christ’s Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary:** “The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 125, 126

THE REAL ISSUE

“As a captive in a foreign land, Daniel determined in his late teens to be true to God. Ushered into the luxurious banquet hall of the Babylonian king, he refused to worship the king’s idols, drink the king’s wine, or eat the king’s unclean delicacies. Yet he did it with such grace that he eventually won the hearts of his captors.

“Daniel’s spiritual integrity continued throughout his life. When he was in his mid-80s, he faced perhaps his greatest test. Conniving co-workers schemed against him. They slyly influenced the king to pass a decree forbidding worship of any god except himself for 30 days. Obviously Daniel could not comply. The price for disobedience was high.

“The prophet did not make his decision based on the consequences of his actions. He made it based on faithfulness to God’s Word. Had he considered the consequences, death in the lions’ den, he might have yielded. Being torn apart limb by limb by ferocious bloodthirsty lions is not a very pleasant thought. Anytime the consequences of a decision become the driving force in making a decision, we are likely to yield.

“One of the most successful coaches in the history of professional football was Vince Lombardi, of the Green Bay Packers. A reporter asked why they gave so much of themselves each Sunday. He queried, ‘Why is your team notably different? Why do you leave everything out on the field?’ The players responded, ‘We are not playing for the crowd in the stands or the millions in the television audience. We aren’t overly concerned about what the news media says. We are playing for one thing: “the coach’s eyes.” When we review the film Monday mornings, we want to know we have satisfied Coach Lombardi.’

“Daniel did not play to the crowds. He lived to please his heavenly Father. He played for the ‘Father’s eyes.’

“When the final films of life are shown, living life to please God is what will truly count. The great heroes of faith all lived for a purpose. They stood above the masses. They viewed life from a different perspective. They did not live to please themselves or the crowd. The prime purpose of their life was to please God. In making this fundamental decision, Daniel lived a centered life. God’s formula for true peace and lasting success is still the same today.”—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, p. 206.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 2:1.
- » Joshua’s dad and mom divorced. In the years after the divorce Joshua acted out his anger at his situation by getting into trouble with the law. After a few years he straightened out his life. He was doing well in school, had an after-school job, and was being considered for an athletic scholarship for a local private school. Eventually he might even receive a college scholarship, which would mean that his mother wouldn’t have to worry about paying for college. Then some money was stolen from the place where he worked. Everyone acted as if Joshua had gone back to his old ways. Was that fair of them? Why or why not?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRIST’S MINISTRY IN THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

- » Read Hebrews 4:14-16; Revelation 20:12; Revelation 22:11, 12.
- » Jesus was tempted just as we are. Through prayer and trust in His heavenly Father He resisted the devil and lived a sinless life. He understands what we face and go through. He offers us help in dealing with our struggles to overcome sin. He has the right to be our judge because He lived without sinning. And He knows us—everything about us! He knows what is in our hearts. We cannot deceive Him. He has begun the investigative judgment that will determine our faithfulness to Him.

- » What does God know about you and your heart?

- » How can you prepare to meet Jesus?

- » Fill in the blanks.

“Therefore, brethren, having _____ to enter the Holiest by the _____ of _____, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and _____ a _____ over the _____ of God, let us _____ with _____ in full assurance of faith, having our _____ from an evil conscience and our _____ with _____ water” (Hebrews 10:19-22, NKJV).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read James 2:12, 13.
- » These are the years when what your friends think of you is probably more important than even what the adults in your life think of you. At this time in your life you probably have a specially chosen group of friends you like to be with. They probably share your interests, likes and dislikes, way of dressing, things to do in your free time, and music that you listen to. And there may not seem to be room in your life for many other people. And that's OK up to a certain point.
- » Good friends will help you get through this difficult time in your life when it seems as if your mind and body aren't in agreement with each other about anything. Because you may feel awkward within yourself, you may not want to be around someone else who seems awkward in your social setting. Unfortunately, instead of being compassionate toward those who are unlike you, you may tend to exclude those people from your life based on what they seem like on the outside.
- » Jesus says we have to get over it. He was the ultimate example of not judging and not excluding. He treated everyone with respect and concern—even when He pointed out things in their lives that were clearly against God's law. You can make sure that people are included in group gatherings, that you refuse to participate when others talk about them, and that you give gentle hints that might help them get along better with others.
- » And if you don't? One day you may be in their position, and they may treat you the same way you've treated them. God says so.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read John 5:22.
- » Review the memory text.
- » God says He, through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the only one who can judge people. And rightly so. They created us, and Jesus lived the life that is ours in this world. No one else in history has had the range of experience of being tempted and rejected as He has. Only He understands the experience of every person who has ever lived and will ever live.
- » So if we can't have Jesus' experience, what gives us the right to judge? Nothing and no one. All we can do is to ask Him for the grace to look at others through His eyes, to listen to others' stories about their lives and act accordingly. Even when we can tell that they are doing something God forbids, Jesus asks us not to condemn but to help.
- » And what if we don't? Jesus Himself tells us that in the same way we judge others, we will be judged. Think of a time when you've had the experience of being wrongly judged. How did it feel? How would you do things differently next time?
- » Remember, God is a God of second chances, if you've judged someone unfairly before, determine through His power to not do it again.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » In the Bible are texts telling us how God feels about judging. Below are a few of them. Please fill in the blanks.
- 1. "Do not _____, or you too will be _____. For in the same way you _____ others, you will be _____, and with the _____ you use, it will be _____ to you. Why do you look at the _____ of _____ in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the _____ in your _____?" (Matthew 7:1-3, NIV).
- 2. "The Father _____ no one, but has _____ all _____ to the _____" (John 5:22, NIV).
- 3. "Stop _____ by mere _____, but instead _____" (John 7:24, NIV).
- 4. "You _____ by human _____; I pass _____ on no one" (John 8:15, NIV).
- 5. "At whatever point you _____ another, you are _____ yourself, because you who pass _____ do the same things" (Romans 2:1, NIV).
- 6. "Speak and act as those who are going to be _____ by the law that gives freedom, because _____ without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been _____. _____ triumphs over _____!" (James 2:12, 13, NIV).
- 7. "Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks _____ a brother or sister or _____ them speaks _____ the _____ and judges it. When you _____ the _____, you are not keeping it, but sitting in _____ on it. There is only one _____ and _____, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to _____ your neighbor?" (James 4:11, 12, NIV).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read James 4:11, 12.
- » Remember the proverb "Don't judge any man until you have walked two moons in his moccasins"? Think of experiences you have had being judged or judging others. Think of some other ways to express experiencing what someone else has experienced in order to understand them. For example, *Don't judge a person until you have eaten the food they have eaten*. Grab a pencil and write out some of your ideas in the following space.





March 7, 2020



Transforming the Critical Spirit

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Blessed are those who keep justice, and he who does righteousness at all times!” (Psalm 106:3, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. . . . We are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 24-27

A BLUE-RIBBON ATTITUDE

A teacher decided to honor each of her students by telling them the difference they had made in her life. Then she presented each of them with a blue ribbon that read “Who I Am Makes a Difference.” Afterward she decided to do a class project to see what kind of impact positive recognition would have on a community. She gave each of the students three more ribbons to go out and do the same for others. They were to follow up on the results, see who honored whom, and report back to the class.

One of the boys in the class went to a junior executive in a nearby company who had helped him with his career-planning project. The boy gave the junior executive a blue ribbon. Then he gave him two extra ribbons, and said, “We’re doing a class project on recognition, and we’d like you to go out and find somebody to honor. Give them a blue ribbon, then give them the extra ribbon so they can honor a third person. I’ll call you in a few days to see what happened.”

Later that day the junior executive went in to see his usually grouchy boss. He told his boss that he admired him for being a creative genius. The boss seemed very surprised. The junior executive asked him if he would accept the gift of the blue ribbon. His surprised boss said, “Well, sure.” As he gave him the last extra ribbon, he said, “Would you do me a favor? Would you take this extra ribbon and pass it on by honoring somebody else? The young boy who first gave me the ribbons is doing a project in school, and we want to keep this going and find out how it affects people.”

That night the boss came home to his 14-year-old son and sat him down. He said, “The junior executive came in and told me he admired me and gave me a blue ribbon for being a creative genius. Imagine. He thinks I’m a creative genius. Then he gave me this blue ribbon that says ‘Who I Am Makes a Difference’. He gave me an extra ribbon and asked me to find somebody to honor. As I was driving home tonight, I started thinking about whom I would honor with this ribbon and I thought about you.

“My days are really hectic, and when I get home I sometimes scream at you for not getting good enough grades in school and for your bedroom being a mess. But tonight I just want you to know that you do make a difference to me. Besides your mother, you are the most important person in my life. You’re a great kid, and I love you.”

“Thanks, Dad,” the boy managed quietly. “I was just thinking about whether or not it was even worth living, since I didn’t think I’d ever be able to please you and make you love me.”

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Colossians 3:8-12.
- » You and your friends are teasing each other, calling each other names, talking about your lack of abilities in various areas, and about family members. Then someone says something that hits a little too close to home. Suddenly things get ugly; a physical fight is about to start. How do you defuse the situation? Should you call in an adult? Why or why not? What do you do to keep it from happening again?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read 2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 2:4; 1 John 2:6.
- » In everything we do, we should be like Jesus. Only kindness and care should ever come from us in dealing with others. In every situation and interaction, the person(s) we are with should see Jesus in us—including our parents. Jesus always demonstrated love. His words were always kind and loving. This is evidence of whom we belong to and spend time with.
- » In what areas do you need the Holy Spirit’s help in transforming your critical spirit?

- » How can you display the love and kindness Jesus did when in a difficult situation?

- » Unscramble the following words and place them in the correct blank.

ttiamrios
rhidecln
oelv
isleHmf
feifngor
srficeaic

“Therefore be _____ of God as dear _____. And walk in _____, as Christ also has loved us and given _____ for us, an _____ and a _____ to God for a sweet-smelling aroma” (Ephesians 5:1, 2 NKJV).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Colossians 4:6.
- » “I was just joking.” How many times have you said that? A wise man once said that half of all jest is the truth. For Christians, half-truths won’t do. The put-downs, the comebacks, the wisecracks, the double messages have no place in the Christian’s life—or in the life of anyone who is a member of the human race, for that matter. An organization called No Put-downs is dedicated to wiping out the practice.
- » On the organization’s website, put-downs and their destructive results are thoroughly analyzed. According to the organization, “put-downs take many forms, both verbal and nonverbal, including: dismissal or rejection, in the form of critical or slighting remarks; body language—rolled eyes, curled lip, shrugged shoulders, sneer; mimicking or mockery; words or actions used as weapons; self-put-downs; tone of voice, such as sarcasm or insincerity; stereotyping.” (For more information, visit www.noput-downs.org.)
- » One way to get over our nasty human habit of besting each other with our tongues is to be careful of what we put into our brains. Since the way of the media is often to put people down and go for the negative, we have to be careful of what we watch, listen to, and read. We have to make a conscious effort to take in good stuff. Just as good food makes a strong body, good thoughts make a strong mind.
- » You’ve got to, as Philippians 4:9 says, “put it into practice” (NIV). And when you’ve gotten into the habit of filling your mind with the good, the good will come out in your speech and actions.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Ephesians 4:29-32.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Are your mouth and your face getting you into trouble? Have your parents or other adults asked you to straighten your face, stop rolling your eyes, watch your mouth, adjust your attitude, or not talk to them in “that” tone of voice? And have you felt frustrated because you didn’t realize what you were doing? Just like anything else, changing these habits of responding will take some effort on your part. After all the devil loves to get us to give in to our human nature. You may have to spend some quiet time thinking about what you do and why you do it, then praying that the Spirit will help you come up with alternatives. God (and hopefully the adults and friends in your life) is willing to forgive and give you the strength to adopt new and more positive ways of communicating.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Fill in the blanks to discover what God wants us to know about “Transforming the Critical Spirit.”
- 1. “Let your _____ be _____ full of _____, seasoned with _____, so that you may know how to _____ everyone” (Colossians 4:6, NIV).
- 2. “Whatever is _____, whatever is _____ whatever is _____, whatever is _____, whatever is _____, whatever is _____—if anything is _____ or _____—think about such things. . . . Put it into practice” (Philippians 4:8, 9, NIV).
- 3. “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others _____ according to _____ needs, that it may benefit those who listen. . . . Get _____ of all _____, _____ and anger, brawling and _____, along with every form of _____. Be _____ and _____ to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God’s _____. . . . Among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of _____, or of greed. . . . Nor should there be _____, _____ or _____, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. . . . Be filled with the _____, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit” (Ephesians 4:29–5:19, NIV).
- 4. “But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: _____, rage, malice, slander, and filthy _____ from your lips. Do not lie to each other. . . . Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly _____, clothe yourselves with compassion, _____, _____, _____ and _____” (Colossians 3:8, 9, 12, NIV).
- 5. “Let your _____ be _____ to _____ men. The Lord is at _____” (Philippians 4:5, NKJV).

Friday
APPLYING

(Consider doing this activity on a day other than Friday.)

- » Read Philippians 4:8, 9.
- » Our society seems to honor the put-down. Over the next several hours, keep record of all the put-downs you hear and all the things that build others up. These can be from people you live with or what you hear in the media (TV, internet, radio, magazines, or newspapers). Use the following chart to help you keep track. Put a star by the put-downs or buildups coming from your own lips. Whatever the ratio, ask God to help you eliminate put-downs and practice building others up. In fact, you can start by thinking of alternatives to the put-downs you have delivered or that you have heard. Remember, silence is always an option.

PUT-DOWNS		BUILDUPS	ALTERNATIVES
6:00 A.M. - 8:00 A.M.			
8:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.			
12:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.			
4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.			
8:00 P.M. - 12:00 P.M.			





March 14, 2020



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FIRING SQUAD?

At only 19 years of age, Bruce Olson knew exactly what he was meant to do. God was calling him to become a missionary to Colombia. Despite knowing little about Colombia, Bruce courageously left his home with the faith that God had plans for him.

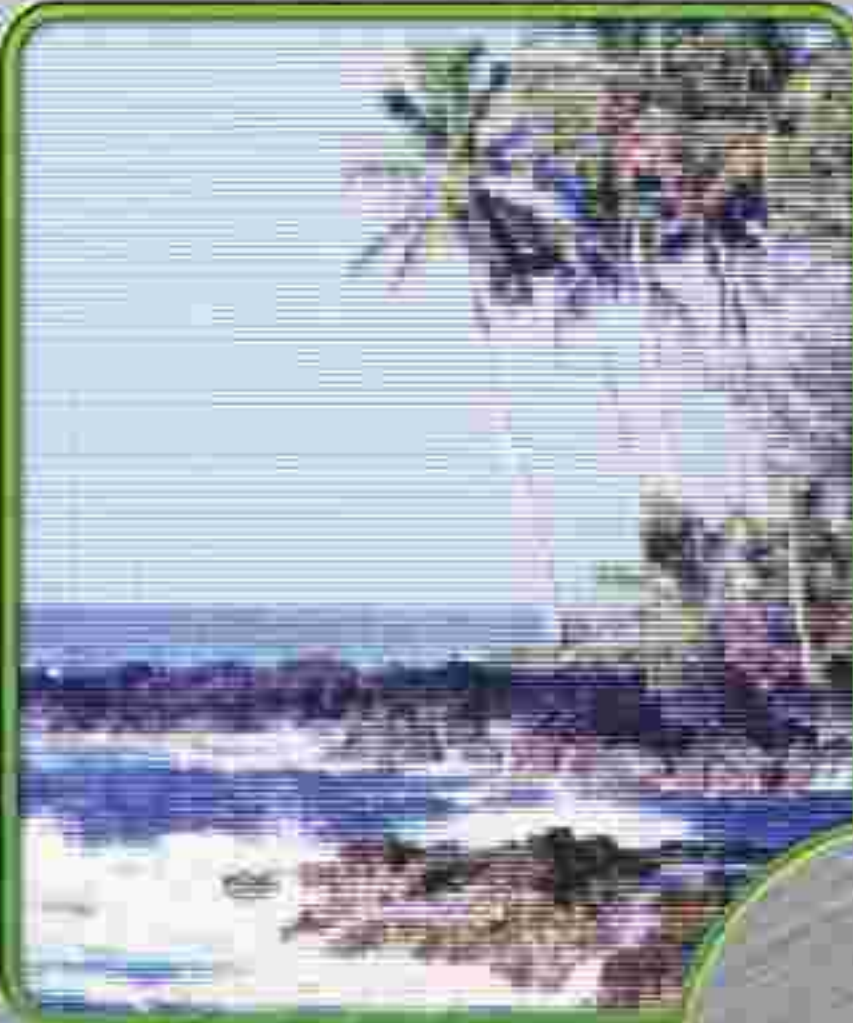
He began his work in Colombia with the Motilone tribe. For 28 years he worked with these people. Through great struggles and tremendous joy, God was with him. At 47 years of age he was captured by two dozen Communist guerrillas. They accused him of being a CIA agent for the United States and a helicopter pilot who had killed thousands. He was taken to a camp deep in the jungle, where he was tortured and beaten.

But through this ordeal, Bruce’s faith remained strong. He earned the trust of his captors and taught them to read and study the Bible. Every time he was caught evangelizing, he was moved to another location. Bruce was moved 12 times, but during all that he witnessed to around 200 of his captors.

After eight months of captivity he was sentenced to be executed. Tied to a tree, he faced 18 guerrillas—some of whom he had led to Christ. He knew, however, that they would be put to death if they didn’t carry out their orders. Crying for their friend, they lifted their guns and fired.

How do you think this story ends?

(If you haven’t heard, ask your teacher. The teacher’s lesson contains the rest of the story.)



Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “I will remember the works of the LORD; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of Your deeds” (Psalm 77:11, 12, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ:** “In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. We are also called to follow Christ’s example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 82, 83

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Proverbs 14:12.
- » Suppose there is an artist whose music is very popular. Everyone you know is listening to him, and he is getting great reviews. You listen to him, and his music is definitely something you enjoy. But the lyrics aren’t anything you’re sure you agree with. Because you like the music so much, however, you feel you can just listen to it and tune the words out. What are the dangers in doing so?
- » Now switch from music to people. Is it possible to pick and choose just the specific characteristics of a person (hero) that you would like to emulate? Explain.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON GROWING IN CHRIST

- » Read Matthew 20:25-28; Matthew 25:31-46; James 1:27.
- » Jesus came to “seek and save that which was lost.” He left His Father and home in heaven and came as a “missionary” to earth. He didn’t come seeking comfort and looking for servants. He came to serve, help, and save. He is our example. As children of God we should be looking for opportunities to serve help others.
- » How has Jesus’ example and the things He did touched your life?

- » As you look around, what types of service can you do for your family, neighborhood, school, church, and community.

- » Below are two verses that have been mixed together. Can you separate them? Hint: The first word belongs to the first verse; the second word belongs to the second verse; and each word will follow the same order. Follow this pattern to separate the verses.

But As grow you in therefore the have grace received and Christ knowl-
edge Jesus of the our Lord Lord so and walk Savior in Jesus Him Christ

Verse 1: _____

Verse 2: _____



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read John 13:15.
- » Like many people surveyed, you may not think you have any heroes. This lesson is not meant to make you feel that if you don't have a hero, something's wrong with you!
- » Whether or not you've ever had a hero, what is important is that you see the importance of where you look and whom you look to for guidance. Whose opinions do you value? If you had to imitate someone's life, whose would it be? Do you really have what it takes within you to be completely sure that you are doing the best thing without guidance?
- » So even if you're a person who doesn't have specific heroes, it is important to be around different people who support you with their knowledge and experience.
- » Think of instances in the past six months when you relied on feedback from someone else.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Matthew 5:14.
- » Review the memory text.
- » It is important to realize that there is someone you can look to as an example. Christ is a flawless role model. There is nothing in His character that is questionable or undesirable. And just as He sets an example for us to follow, we also should be examples for others. In other words, your role as a citizen of God's kingdom is to be a hero to someone. You may ask why anyone would consider you a hero. But think about it: you may have a little brother or sister, or a friend who looks up to you. Even an adult may see a reflection of Jesus in you. Being a hero in God's kingdom is about reflecting Jesus.

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Colossians 3:17.
- » *The Clear Word* paraphrases the Beatitudes in a way that helps us understand the qualities considered heroic in God's kingdom:

"Happiness comes from having a humble attitude. If you feel your need of God and trust Him, you have the kingdom of God within you" (Matthew 5:3).

"Happiness comes from grieving when you sin. Confess your sins and you will be forgiven and peace will spring up in your soul" (Matthew 5:4).

"Happiness comes from being submissive. When you acknowledge God as the source of life and abilities, you will feel heaven's joy. One day, people like this will fill the whole earth" (Matthew 5:5).

"Happiness comes from longing to do what is right. Those who do right will have an inner satisfaction that nothing else can give" (Matthew 5:6).

"Happiness comes from being compassionate and forgiving. People will remember your loving kindness and return the same to you" (Matthew 5:7).

"Happiness comes to those with pure hearts and motives. Such people will one day have the privilege of seeing God and talking to Him face to face" (Matthew 5:8).

"Happiness comes from being a peacemaker, for such are God's children" (Matthew 5:9).

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Fill in the blanks below. You can go to Biblegateway.com to look up the verses.
 1. "The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the _____, but the LORD looks at the _____" (1 Samuel 16:7, NIV).
 2. "There is a _____ that _____ to be _____, but in the _____ it leads to _____" (Proverbs 14:12, NIV).
 3. "Now _____ from youthful lusts and _____ and _____, with those who call on the Lord from a _____ heart" (2 Timothy 2:22, NASB).
 4. "I have set you an _____ that _____ should _____ as I have _____ for you" (John 13:15, NIV).
 5. "But select _____ men from all the _____—men who fear God, _____ who _____" (Exodus 18:21 NIV).
 6. "And _____ you do, whether in _____ or _____, do it _____ in the _____ of the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3:17, NIV).

- "Happiness even comes from being treated badly for doing what's right. Just remember that no matter what happens, your place in heaven is secure" (Matthew 5:10).
- "Strangely enough, you'll find yourself blessed even when people insult you, persecute you and lie about you because you have accepted me" (Matthew 5:11).
- » This is a description of the kind of heroes that heaven applauds. Make a list of adults in your church that fit one or more of the descriptions. Think of a way to let them know that they are heroes of God's kingdom, and carry out your plan (e.g., Mr. Lee; thank him for the time he takes to coach soccer).

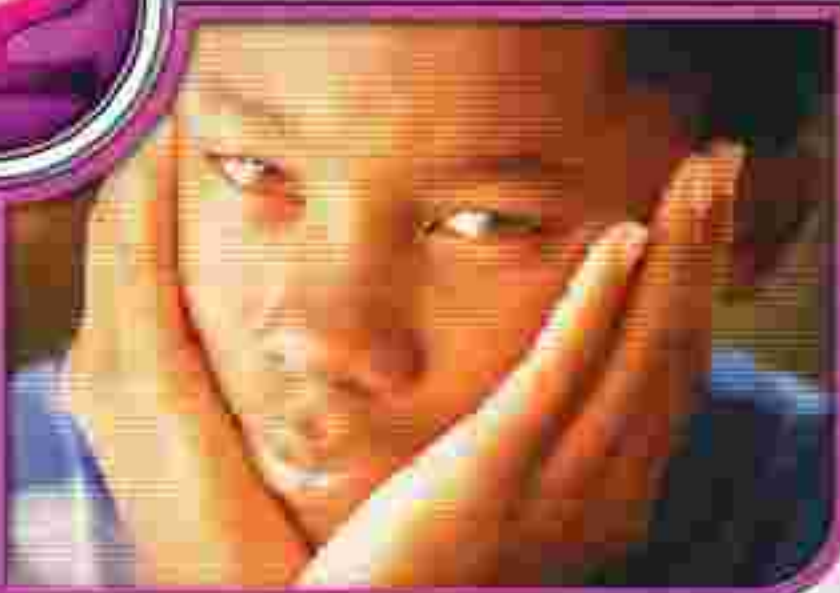
Adult's Name	Ways to Let the Adult Know They Are a Hero





March 21, 2020

Jesus, the Ultimate Hero



Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 4, The Son:** “He [Jesus] lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God’s power and was attested as God’s promised Messiah.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 134, 135

WE KNOW HIM!

When Efe was a child, he was drawn to adventure stories. This fascination continued through his secondary school years. In high school his father would give him money to buy textbooks, and with the left-over change, Efe would purchase novels. He enjoyed unraveling plots and mysteries. When Efe enrolled in university-level studies, he became acquainted with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He experienced the joy of salvation as he learned about Jesus through His Word and was baptized!

Through the years Efe had built up a small library that mostly contained novels. After his conversion, he discovered that such books were not helping him grow spiritually. Thus, he decided to review all the titles in his little library and burn any book that he knew had a negative effect on his appetite for spending time with Jesus in prayer and studying His Word. So, into the fire went the novels!

Efe believes that God rewarded his stand for Jesus because shortly afterward he received a shipment of books by Ellen G. White. He had requested some used or donated books, and in reply he received more than he requested. Efe donated in turn many of those books to others. Then he wrote, asking for more, and again he received boxes full of precious books. The second shipment contained a great variety of Ellen G. White’s books. They were all hardcover books, designed to last! Efe now had volumes of books about Jesus and the love of God in his library that he could share with others who were thirsty for the water of life.

Efe has a deep concern for today’s young people who are missing the blessing of Christ-centered books. He writes: “I urge you, dear friend, to read that which nourishes the soul.” Take time today to read the Bible and a book by Ellen G. White and you will grow closer to Jesus. In turn He will enable you to be a light for Him in this world!—Adapted from *Encountering God’s Grace*, p. 156.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Ephesians 5:1, 2.
- » Even adults would find it difficult to stand up and speak of Jesus in certain settings—such as a board meeting. Why do you think this is so? It’s not as if He’s a bad guy or has a bad rep. When you are asked in school to stand up and talk about your hero, do you say Jesus? If so, why, and if not, why not?
- » As Christians, adults and young people alike, sometimes we hesitate to be identified as part of the Jesus Fan Club. From your perspective, why is that? Any suggestions to fix this problem? Share your thoughts.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE SON

- » Read Isaiah 53:4-6; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19.
- » First, Christ left His Father and His heavenly home to come and live among humanity. Second, He loved, cared, and served the people around Him who were suffering. And He wanted to give us an example of how we should live and be of service to others. Third, He suffered and died for sinners. He wanted to give us the opportunity to be restored to God’s image. Can there be a better description of a hero?
- » How have Jesus’ life, example, and death changed your life?

- » What can you do today to follow Jesus’ example of service to your family, neighborhood, school, church, and community?

- » Puzzle

“Finally, _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, if there is any _____ and if there is anything _____—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8, NKJV).



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Peter 2:21.
- » Some old Roman coins have a picture of an ox on them. The ox faces two things—an altar and a plow. On the coin is also an inscription that reads: “Ready for either.” The ox symbolized the fervor of Rome. It was ready either for the supreme moment of sacrifice on the altar or the long labor of the plow on the farm.
- » We can learn something about Christian living from this. Like the ox, ready for both slaughter and service, when you earnestly follow Jesus as your hero, you must be ready for anything. There may be times when you suffer, when you are ridiculed, when you are left alone, when nothing seems to be going your way. After all, Satan will do his best to keep you from Jesus. But in spite of it all, you will be totally content with life. Does this sound strange—hard to believe? But think about it. Ask yourself how much Jesus is worth to you. This week, take time to talk to the adults in your life about the hardships they have faced for the sake of their Christian life.

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Luke 2:40.
- » Review the memory text.
- » The most important thing about being a part of God’s kingdom is knowing that you belong in that kingdom. It is not enough just to feel as if you’re part of it some of the time—such as when you are in church or reading your Bible. God’s kingdom needs soldiers—ready for battle at any time. Being part of His kingdom means that you believe 100 percent that you belong with Him. No doubts, no maybes. Just confidence in who you are in Him.
- » Study the life of Jesus—if not straight from the Bible, remember the stories you’ve heard growing up. Jesus knew, without doubt, who He was, what He was to do, when He was just 12 years old. Not because He was God, but because He was a kid just like you—but a kid who was always connected to the Person He belonged to. The secret is “connection” with the kingdom through Jesus.

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » In this week’s lesson we are learning about what makes following Jesus worth our while. Fill in the blanks using the New International Version.
- 1. “In your _____ with one another, have the same _____ as Christ Jesus: who, being in very _____ God, did not consider _____ with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself _____ by taking the very nature of a _____, being made in human likeness” (Philippians 2:5-7, NIV).
- 2. “For we are God’s _____, created in Christ Jesus to do _____, which God prepared in _____ for us to _____” (Ephesians 2:10, NIV).
- 3. “Follow God’s _____, therefore, as dearly loved _____ and walk in the way of _____, just as Christ _____ us and gave himself up for us as a _____ and _____ to God” (Ephesians 5:1, 2, NIV).
- 4. “You show that you are a _____ from Christ, the result of our _____, written not with ink but with the _____ of the _____, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of _____ hearts” (2 Corinthians 3:3, NIV).
- 5. “Though I sit in _____, the LORD will be my _____” (Micah 7:8, NIV).
- 6. “For even the _____ of Man did not _____ to be served, but to _____” (Mark 10:45, NIV).
- 7. “And the child grew and became _____; he was _____ with _____, and the _____ of God was on him” (Luke 2:40, NIV).
- 8. “To this you were called, because Christ _____ for you, _____ you an example, that you should _____ in his _____” (1 Peter 2:21, NIV).

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 2 Corinthians 3:3.
- » You believe that Jesus is the answer to all the world’s problems. So you decide you will be His publicist, His agent. You are going to sell the ministry of Jesus—now, today, in this society. What would you do? How would you go about it? Would you advertise on TV or the internet? How would your marketing ideas differ from those you would have used if you had been His agent in Jerusalem during Jesus’ time?

LOGO: _____

SLOGAN: _____

STRATEGY: _____

MARKETING TECHNIQUES: _____





You, a Hero?

March 28, 2020



Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries:** “God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. . . . These gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 41-44

THE DIFFERENCE OF ONE

One makes a difference. After years of service in South Africa, the famous missionary Robert Moffat returned to Scotland to recruit helpers. When he arrived at the church, he was disappointed that only a small group was there to hear him. What bothered him even more was that only women were there. They wouldn’t be able to leave and go as missionaries without their husbands and families. He was hoping to challenge men. Even his text for the sermon was “Unto you, O men, I call” (Proverbs 8:4). Way in the back, in the loft of the church, was a little boy pumping the bellows of the organ. He was too young to be a missionary in Africa, but he listened with great interest. Meanwhile Moffat preached with frustration, knowing that no one in the audience would be following him back to Africa.

But God works in mysterious ways. Years later that little boy who pumped the organ during Moffat’s service went and ministered to the unreached tribes of Africa. His name was David Livingstone! Because of David, millions today know Jesus.

One could have made a difference. A Christian baroness lived in the highlands of Nairobi, Kenya. Being very wealthy, she had many people working for her. One was a young boy who ran errands for her. One day the boy came to the baroness saying that he was not going to be working for her anymore and that he would like a reference letter. The baroness was surprised. She paid the boy well. He had a comfortable home. She really liked him. So she offered to pay him more if he’d stay. But the boy replied that he was not leaving for more money. He told her that he had come to work for her three months earlier to observe the ways of a Christian. Now he was ready to work for a Muslim to observe their ways. At the end of the next three months he was going to decide to become a Christian or a Muslim. The baroness was flustered. She began to think of all the things she would have done differently over the past three months had she known she was being watched so closely. And all she could do now was exclaim, “Why didn’t you tell me at the beginning?”

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Philippians 4:6, 7.
- » Sometimes surviving in school is all about “camouflage.” You try to blend in, not stick out. You don’t want to do things that make you seem different. Unfortunately, you cannot be a Christian hero and go unnoticed. There is no such thing as an “invisible” disciple of Jesus. First, with all the pressures in your school and social life, is it even possible to be a hero in the popular sense, and a disciple of Jesus at the same time? If your answer is yes, give at least one example of a situation in which this is possible. If your answer is no, explain why.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

- » Read Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 4:11-16.
 - » Jesus was our example. He daily used the gifts and talents He was given. He healed the lame, restored sight and hearing, raised the dead, and preached hope of a better life. In following His example, we are to learn what our gifts and talents are. We are to use our gifts helping others. And we have been given the commission to tell others who Jesus is. We can tell them about a better life—a life without sin, suffering, and death. And we can tell them that Jesus is coming soon and that anyone ready to meet Him will go and live with Him eternally.
 - » What are you doing to develop the gifts and talents God has given you?
- _____
- _____
- » Unscramble the following words and place them where they go in the verse below.

lal	ytiliba	sretsanim	deifirolg	seilppus
kaeps	deviecer	noinimod	retsinim	teepr
sdrawets	selcaro	rehtona	enoyna	yrolg

“As each one has _____ a gift, _____ it to one _____, as good _____ of the manifold grace of God. If _____ speaks, let him _____ as the _____ of God. If anyone _____, let him do it as with the _____ which God _____, that in _____ things God may be _____ through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the _____ and the _____ forever and ever. Amen” (1 _____ 4:10, 11, NKJV).

David Livingstone, missionary to Africa.



Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Hebrews 11.
- » Notice the items reported in the media. Nobody talks about the ordinary, everyday things that go on. The world takes note of things out of the ordinary. And this phenomenon is not limited to this world. Heaven also takes note of the extraordinary that some people will let God do through them. Enoch walked with God, and Heaven noticed. Noah stood out among his peers, and Heaven noticed. Moses led a nation, and Heaven noticed. Throughout history you can find ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Whether those things were stupid or heroic, the world stood up and paid attention.
- » Be a hero of any kind, and the world will surely take notice. But be a hero and an agent for God’s kingdom, and both earth and heaven will take notice. What this means is that being a Christian and following God will take you places you have never dreamed of. You will have adventures that you know God led you through. It means God will use you to make a difference in this world and in the next!

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Judges 6.
- » Review the memory text.
- » In Judges 6 an angel visits Gideon, who at the time was hiding from the armies of Midian. He calls upon Gideon to be a mighty warrior and deliver Israel from her captors. Think about that for a minute. An angel asks a guy hiding in a cave to be a mighty warrior and deliver a nation from an entire army of fierce soldiers? It doesn’t make sense. But to God it made perfect sense. For He sees us through divine eyes. He sees the potential in us to be used by Him. When God looks at you, He sees a young person full of potential. Will you let God use you and fulfill the plans He has for you?
- » God is still looking for Gideon-type leaders today. They may not be obvious leader material. They may be hiding in a cave. But God sees beyond the cave and into hearts. He can tell who will let themselves be used by His Spirit. Today’s war is not one fought on a battle-field—it is one fought between good and evil. And it is not a war over land, but one fought over souls. You are an agent in this battle. God used Gideon thousands of years ago, and He can use you today. Will you join His team and let Him use you?

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » This week you are learning that God is looking for persons of integrity. If you find yourself doubting that you could ever do anything great, remember the stories in the Bible. They are about people, most of them just as ordinary as you and me. What made them stand out as heroes? What kept some from becoming heroes? Fill in the blanks of the Bible verses that follow; then on the line following the text, answer this question for each verse: What did they do or not do that made them heroes?
- 1. “I have found _____ son of Jesse a man after my own _____; he _____ do everything I want him to do” (Acts 13:22, NIV). _____
- 2. “And the boy _____ continued to _____ in _____ and in _____ with the LORD and with people” (1 Samuel 2:26, NIV). _____
- 3. “The king talked with them, and he _____ _____ to _____, _____, _____ and _____” (Daniel 1:19, NIV). _____
- 4. “Now _____ was a very _____ man, more _____ than anyone else on the _____ of the _____” (Numbers 12:3, NIV). _____
- 5. “Ahab son of Omri did more _____ in the eyes of the LORD than _____ of _____ before him” (1 Kings 16:30, NIV). _____
- 6. “Eli’s sons were _____; they had _____ for the LORD” (1 Samuel 2:12, NIV). _____
- 7. “There was a man _____ from God whose name was _____. He came as a _____ to _____ concerning that _____, so that _____ him all might believe” (John 1:6, 7, NIV). _____
- 8. “Therefore _____ and _____ disciples of all _____, baptizing them in the _____ of the _____ and of the _____ and of the _____” (Matthew 28:19, NIV). _____

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read Matthew 28:19, 20.
- » Good disciples make good heroes. So figure out if you have what it takes to be a disciple and a hero. Below are texts that describe the disciples of Jesus. First, decide on the trait that the text is describing. Next, on a scale of 0 to 10 (0 being nothing, 10 being a lot), mark how much of this quality you think you have. Finally, ask yourself—What does this say about the kind of disciple Jesus is looking for?

TEXT	DISCIPLE TRAIT	HOW MUCH OF IT DO YOU HAVE
1. Matthew 10:42	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Mark 4:40	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Luke 12:22	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. John 8:31	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Matthew 17:14-21	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. John 13:35	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Luke 11:1-4	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Matthew 16:24-26	_____	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

