



Sabbath
FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 11, Growing in Christ:** "By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. . . . Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 84

STRENGTH FOR OUR DAILY NEED

"God's Word is powerful. It gives us hope in times of discouragement. It brings comfort in times of affliction. It imparts life in times of despair. It brings guidance in time of confusion and peace of mind in times of doubt. It encourages our hearts in life's darkest moments.

"Recently I interviewed Pastor Mikhail Kulakov, once the leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the former Soviet Union.

"Pastor Kulakov's testimony had a profound effect on my own life.

"This godly, deeply spiritual giant of the Word has now devoted his life to overseeing the translation of the Bible into modern Russian.

"During the oppressive Communist regime, Pastor Kulakov was sentenced to prison, labor camps, and eternal banishment by the Soviet government. Sometimes he went weeks with no contact with his family.

"At the time he was a young man in his 20s. He wondered if he had any future at all.

"One day a parcel arrived at his labor camp addressed to him. His mother had sent him some simple foodstuffs. Hidden within the parcel was a New Testament. When the censor opened the package and rummaged through it, he discovered the old Bible. When he yanked it out, the cover fell off, and the pages flew in every direction. Of course the censor denied Pastor Kulakov the privilege of keeping the Bible. In the confusion of picking up the scattered pages, though, he failed to see Pastor Kulakov quickly slip one page into his pants pocket.

"Back at the barracks, Pastor Kulakov eagerly read the sacred page of Scripture. His eyes fell on John 17:24: 'Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am' (NKJV). His heart leaped for joy. This single passage of Scripture encouraged him for weeks.

"Jesus, his loving Savior, didn't want him to be in that filthy, rat-infested barracks. Jesus longed for him to be in heaven. One verse made a difference.

"One verse will make a difference for you. Let God's promises encourage your heart and lift your spirits today" (Mark Finley, *Solid Ground* [Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2003], pp. 92, 93).

No matter what our circumstances, God has a plan for you—here on earth as well as when He comes to take you home with Him to heaven. The Bible is filled with His promises of hope for the future. Turn to Him in your moments of discouragement or sadness. He's there, waiting to help and comfort you.

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read John 13:35.
- » Susanne and Alexandra are partners for their science project in school. Susanne feels frustrated because Alexandra has been absent from class a lot during the past week. "Where have you been? I heard you were sick," Susanne inquires.
- » Alexandra replies, "I haven't been feeling well. My parents think I'm depressed. I don't know what is wrong with me."
- » Susanne gently answers, "I'm sorry. Is there anything I can do to help?"
- » Alexandra looks off into space and states, "I don't think there is anything you can do to help. I understand if you want to get a new partner for the project. I'm sure I won't be able to do much." What should a person say and do? What can you do to help?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON GROWING IN CHRIST

- » Read Romans 8:38, 39; Ephesians 6:12-18; 1 John 4:4.
- » God knows we will face troubles, problems, and difficulties. Everyone does. The good news is that none of these things can separate us from God's love. We may have struggles here on earth, but God has promised to be with us. His Word is full of promises that will uplift us and bring encouragement and inspiration. When you feel life is overwhelming you, fall to your knees (you are never stronger than when you are on your knees) and hold on to Him—for He will never let you go.
- » How do the difficult things in your life lead you to trust God more and renew your relationship with Him?

- » Unscramble the following verse taken from the New King James Version.
Christ you always 1 for thanks is Jesus rejoice will in without 5: in pray
this everything ceasing 16-18 God of give the Thessalonians for

- » "Let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand" (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 72).



Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15.
- » Have you seen hurtful comments and posts on social media that were addressed to someone you knew or to you personally? What if the person who received the cruel remarks felt as if there was nowhere he or she could turn? How often do you see similar situations? How should those of us in the church respond to those who are attacked?
- » What do you think you should say or do? How would Christ expect His disciples to answer this problem? Here are a few suggestions from the Bible:
- » Read and choose the three you think apply to the situation above.

Romans 15:7	Philippians 2:3	James 5:16
Galatians 5:15	1 Thessalonians 5:15	Galatians 6:1, 2
Hebrews 3:13		

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Read John 14:1-4.
- » Review the memory text.
- » As you go through the day, begin making a list of people you can begin praying for and reaching out to. Choose the ones that seem to be more alone than others, and extend a message of friendship to them. You may simply ask them how they are doing, or perhaps you could make a positive comment and bring some affirmation to their lives.
- » Think of another group of people to add to your prayer list. Sometimes even the ones who seem to have it all together and are well connected, successful people need the kind of Christian friendship that comes without expectations. Begin praying for opportunities to reach out and give encouragement to those who don't seem to need it.
- » Finally, stand up for someone who is bearing the brunt of slurs and sarcastic remarks. Gather a group of friends who can agree to the importance of coming to a victim's defense. Be willing to be a positive role model to those who antagonize others. And finally, always inform an adult or a teacher/leader of your commitments that they might be a source of wisdom and support for you.

Friday

APPLYING

- » Read Deuteronomy 33:27.
- » Dan noticed that his friend Mike seemed to be acting different. He asked Mike if he felt OK. Mike tried to change the subject, but Dan put his arm across his shoulders and said, "Hey, Mike, I've been your friend a long time. I know you. Something is up. Let's talk about it."

Mike told Dan, "Listen, don't say anything to anyone else, but I just don't feel like myself. All the things I used to enjoy, just seem like a waste of time. I just want to close my bedroom door and sleep."

"Mike," Dan said, "let's go see Pastor Steve and tell him what's going on. I think he'll know how to help." And that is exactly what Dan did. He took Mike to see the pastor, and Mike got the help he needed. He is doing much better today and is excited to get up in the morning and is planning on joining Dan on his next camping trip.
- » If you think a friend or family member is deeply depressed, talk openly with them about their thoughts and feelings. You can make a positive difference in their life. People who are depressed and hopeless often display the following signs:

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Fill in the missing words to complete the verses.
- 1. "Peace I _____ with you; My peace I _____ to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not let your heart be _____, neither let it be _____" (John 14:27, NKJV).
- 2. "By this _____ will know that you are my disciples, if you _____ one _____" (John 13:35, NIV).
- 3. "The _____ God is your _____, and _____ are the _____" (Deuteronomy 33:27, NIV).
- 4. "I _____ the LORD, and he _____ me; he _____ me from _____ my _____" (Psalm 34:4, NIV).
- 5. "In my _____ I _____ upon the LORD, and cried out to my God; He _____ my voice from His temple, and my _____ came before Him, even to His ears" (Psalm 18:6, NKJV).
- 6. "The LORD himself goes _____ you and will be with you; he will _____ leave you nor _____ you. Do not be _____; do not be _____" (Deuteronomy 31:8, NIV).
- 7. "The LORD is a _____ for the oppressed, a _____ in times of trouble" (Psalm 9:9, NIV).
- 8. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have _____ that they may _____, and have it to the _____" (John 10:10, NIV).
- 9. "It shall come to pass that _____ they _____, I will _____; and while they are _____, I will _____" (Isaiah 65:24, NKJV).
- 10. "He shall _____ upon Me, and I will _____ him; I will be with him in _____; I will _____ him and _____ him" (Psalm 91:15, NKJV).

- » • Talking as though things in life are "hopeless" or about "unbearable" feelings.
- Demonstrate dramatic mood swings.
- Displaying a loss of interest in day-to-day activities.
- Showing an abnormal neglect of his or her appearance.
- Revealing noticeable changes in eating or sleeping habits.

» You can show that you care by:

1. Listening: Let them know that he or she is not alone and that you care. Don't promise that things will improve, and don't promise that you will not tell anyone about their depression. Sometimes you need to seek help from specialists, such as medical professionals, pastors, and counselors.

2. Responding quickly: Don't ignore the signs of depression or hopelessness. Talk to them. Let them know there are people who can help. Tell them it's OK to seek help from a professional.

3. Offering help: Offer to go with them and take them to a professional to keep them safe.

- » If you are feeling hopeless and are depressed, seek help immediately. Talk and confide in your parents, your pastor, a teacher, or a counselor, but talk to someone right away.
- » "Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. 'The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.' James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice" (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 100).

