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**Sabbath Bible Lessons**  
Senior Division



# Walking With Jesus

A closer walk with God through  
*Steps to Christ*

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*Sabbath Bible Lessons*, a daily study program, is based solely on the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy without additional comments. The quotations are as brief as possible to provide concise, direct thoughts. Brackets [ ] are supplied in some cases to ensure clarity, proper context, and smooth readability. Further study in the source materials is strongly recommended.

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#### **U.S.A. and Canada**

Contact: Telephone 1-540-366-9400 • Website: [www.reformation-herald.com](http://www.reformation-herald.com) • E-mail: [info@reformationherald.org](mailto:info@reformationherald.org)

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# Foreword

The series of lessons for study this quarter, “Walking With Jesus,” is based on the book *Steps to Christ*. This can be read, chapter by chapter, as a commentary on the Scripture lessons.

Some Sabbath School students will remember when this subject was last covered in the first quarter of 1980. It is our delight to present it again with a fresh design and additional material, but the same deep truths told long ago.

Too often people think of their heavenly Father as cold and distant, a harsh and austere judge. They overlook the depth of His love for them, and the tender care held in His heart toward all His children.

The love of God should be the first thing that is presented. Then should follow the fact that the sinner is helpless and hopeless, and in need of a Saviour. The life of Christ, who came to save sinners, shows there is a sure way to return to the heavenly Father.

The topics covered by these lessons deal with the major experiences in the Christian life and are particularly adapted to the believer new in the faith seeking to grow in grace. All believers should review the topics from time to time—and not only for their own benefit, but also to be aware of the best path to help others come to Christ as well.

An orderly presentation of the doctrinal truths may lead to a clear understanding and acceptance of them, and enable a person to be accepted for church membership. But unless such a one is brought into connection with Christ, he has no real life—eternal life. Truly, only the one “that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life” (John 3:36).

Every Sabbath school member should have the witness of the Spirit with their own spirit that they are indeed adopted into the family of God. Each should realize that their own example, their own continual dependence upon the heavenly Father, at all times and for all things, must be real and practical. More is needed than feeble, human love. All need the love of God—God’s unselfish love—implanted in their heart and soul so that they may love as He loved.

May this be the experience of every single Sabbath school member.

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

# First Sabbath Offering

Sabbath, July 5, 2026



## Church Expansion in Chennai, India

Chennai, formerly known as Madras, is the capital and largest city of Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India. It is located on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal. According to the 2011 Indian census, Chennai is the sixth-most-populous city in India and forms the fourth-most-populous urban agglomeration. Incorporated in 1688, Greater Chennai Corporation is the oldest municipal corporation in India and the second oldest in the world after London. It has a center for trade and commerce with about 15,000 industries and is a major center for medical tourism, being termed “India’s health capital.” The city also houses a major portion of India’s automobile industry, hence its other name, “Detroit of India.” Chennai was the only South Asian city to be ranked among the *National Geographic* “Top 10 Food Cities” in 2015 and has been ranked ninth on *Lonely Planet’s* best cosmopolitan cities in the world.

The population of greater Chennai is now over 12 million, currently increasing at a steady rate of 2.34% per year. The city is home to a diverse population of ethno-religious communities. As per census of 2011, the majority of Chennai’s population was Hindu (80.73%) followed by 9.45% Muslim, 7.72% Christian, 1.27% others and 0.83% professing no religion or religious preference.

As of 2019, 40% of the 1.788 million families in the city live below the poverty line. As of 2017, the city had 2.2 million households, with 40% of the residents not owning a house. There are about 1,131 slums in the city, housing more than 300,000 households. All kinds of people dwell here, and all need to hear the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ in these last days.

Due to challenging economic factors, we have not been able to complete the construction of a church in Chennai within the time anticipated. Now, with the work underway, we have also recognized the need to expand the project with additional construction of pastor’s quarters, a conference hall, and Sabbath school classrooms for children. To accomplish this, we definitely need to appeal to the kind generosity of our beloved churches around the world.

It is our solemn request to our brothers, sisters, and youth please to offer your largehearted donations for this project.

Thank you in advance, and may the Lord richly bless you all.

*Your brothers and sisters in Chennai*

# God's Love for Man

**Memory verse:** “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not” (1 John 3:1).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 1, pp. 9–15.

“God is love. Like rays of light from the sun, love and light and joy flow out from Him to all His creatures.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 77.

## 1. GOD IS LOVE

Sun, Jun 28

- a. What evidence of God's love is given to humanity? Exodus 34:6, 7; Jonah 4:2 (last part); Jeremiah 31:3.
- 

“The word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. When Moses prayed, ‘Show me Thy glory,’ the Lord answered, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before thee.’ Exodus 33:18, 19. This is His glory. The Lord passed before Moses, and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.’ Exodus 34:6, 7. He is ‘slow to anger, and of great kindness,’ ‘because He delighteth in mercy.’ Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:18.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 10.

- b. What was God's purpose in sending His Son? Matthew 11:27; John 14:8, 9.
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“Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.”—*Ibid.*, p. 11.

- a. How did Jesus describe His earthly mission? Luke 4:16–18.
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“[Luke 4:18 quoted.] This was [Jesus’] work. He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were revealed in every act of His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man’s nature, that He might reach man’s wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees and gaze into the pensive face, benignant with love.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 11, 12.

“Jesus saw in every soul one to whom must be given the call to His kingdom. He reached the hearts of the people by going among them as one who desired their good. He sought them in the public streets, in private houses, on the boats, in the synagogue, by the shores of the lake, and at the marriage feast. He met them at their daily vocations, and manifested an interest in their secular affairs. He carried His instruction into the household, bringing families in their own homes under the influence of His divine presence. His strong personal sympathy helped to win hearts. He often repaired to the mountains for solitary prayer, but this was a preparation for His labor among men in active life. From these seasons He came forth to relieve the sick, to instruct the ignorant, and to break the chains from the captives of Satan.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 151.

- b. Although full of love and compassion, what is an example of Christ’s faithfulness in rebuking wrong? John 9:39–41; Matthew 21:12, 13.
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“Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. . . . Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 12.

- a. What heavy burden was carried by our Saviour during His life? Isaiah 53:5–7; Luke 2:48, 49.
- 

“Jesus carried the awful weight of responsibility for the salvation of men. He knew that unless there was a decided change in the principles and purposes of the human race, all would be lost. This was the burden of His soul, and none could appreciate the weight that rested upon Him. Through childhood, youth, and manhood, He walked alone. Yet it was heaven to be in His presence. Day by day He met trials and temptations; day by day He was brought into contact with evil, and witnessed its power upon those whom He was seeking to bless and to save. Yet He did not fail nor become discouraged.

“In all things He brought His wishes into strict abeyance to His mission. He glorified His life by making everything in it subordinate to the will of His Father. When in His youth, His mother, finding Him in the school of the rabbis, said, ‘Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us?’ He answered—and His answer is the keynote of His lifework—‘How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?’

“His life was one of constant self-sacrifice. He had no home in this world, except as the kindness of friends provided for Him as a wayfarer. He came to live in our behalf the life of the poorest, and to walk and work among the needy and the suffering. Unrecognized and unhonored, He walked in and out among the people for whom He had done so much.”—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 42, 43.

- b. What does the outflowing of God’s abundant love teach us concerning our heavenly Father? John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10.
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“This great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father’s heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.’ John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.’ 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 13.

- a. What is the basis of the salvation of our souls? 1 Corinthians 1:30; Acts 16:31.
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“Oh, what soul hunger and longing had Christ to save that which was lost! The body crucified upon the cross did not detract from His divinity, His power of God to save through the human sacrifice, all who would accept His righteousness. In dying upon the cross, He transferred the guilt from the person of the transgressor to that of the divine Substitute through faith in Him as his personal Redeemer. The sins of a guilty world, which in figure are represented as ‘red as crimson,’ were imputed to the divine Surety.”—*This Day With God*, p. 236.

- b. What did Christ do for our redemption that is beyond any human effort or wisdom? John 10:17; Romans 5:6–8.
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‘My Father has so loved you that He even loves Me more for giving My life to redeem you. In becoming your Substitute and Surety, by surrendering My life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to My Father; for by My sacrifice, God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.’

“None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father’s love to lost humanity.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 14.

- c. What could John testify of our advocate at the throne of God? 1 John 1:1–3.
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“There are but few who have an appreciation of the grievous character of sin, and who comprehend the greatness of the ruin that has resulted from the transgression of God’s law. By examining the wonderful plan of redemption to restore the sinner to the moral image of God, we see that the only means for man’s deliverance was wrought out by the self-sacrifice, and the unparalleled condescension and love of the Son of God. He alone had the strength to fight the battles with the great adversary of God and man, and, as our substitute and surety, He has given power to those who lay hold of Him by faith, to become victors in His name, and through His merits.”—*Christian Education*, p. 112.

- a. What qualified Christ to pay the price of our redemption? 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Hebrews 5:8, 9.
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“The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father’s love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. . . . What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name ‘sons of God.’ ”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 15.

- b. What words were used by the apostle John to express the magnitude of God’s love? 1 John 3:1, 2.
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“Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother’s yearning sympathy for her wayward child.”—*Ibid.*

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

Fri, Jul 3

1. Describe the most important attributes of the character of God.
2. How did Jesus reveal the character of God while on earth?
3. How did Christ’s mission influence His choices?
4. By becoming our Substitute, what lessons does Jesus teach?
5. Describe Christ’s ultimate gift on our behalf.

# The Sinner's Need of Christ

**Memory verse:** “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 2, pp. 17–22.

“The only hope of redemption for our fallen race is in Christ.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 147.

## 1. THE ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN

Sun, Jul 5

a. Describe man's original state in Eden. Genesis 1:26, 27, 31; Psalm 8:4–6.

“Man was originally endowed with noble powers and a well-balanced mind. He was perfect in his being, and in harmony with God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 17.

“Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is ‘the express image’ (Hebrews 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

b. How did Satan work to thwart the divine plan in the creation of man? Genesis 3:1–7; Romans 6:16; 1 John 2:16.

“Through disobedience, [man's] powers were perverted, and selfishness took the place of love. His nature became so weakened through transgression that it was impossible for him, in his own strength, to resist the power of evil. He was made captive by Satan, and would have remained so forever had not God specially interposed. It was the tempter's purpose to thwart the divine plan in man's creation, and fill the earth with woe and desolation. And he would point to all this evil as the result of God's work in creating man.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 17.

- a. After their sin, how did Adam and Eve react when they heard the voice of God? Genesis 3:8–10.
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- b. Why are sinful human beings unable to stand in the presence of the Infinite One? Exodus 33:20; Deuteronomy 4:23, 24.
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“In his sinless state, man held joyful communion with Him ‘in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.’ Colossians 2:3. But after his sin, he could no longer find joy in holiness, and he sought to hide from the presence of God. Such is still the condition of the unrenewed heart. It is not in harmony with God, and finds no joy in communion with Him. The sinner could not be happy in God’s presence; he would shrink from the companionship of holy beings. Could he be permitted to enter heaven, it would have no joy for him. The spirit of unselfish love that reigns there—every heart responding to the heart of Infinite Love—would touch no answering chord in his soul. His thoughts, his interests, his motives, would be alien to those that actuate the sinless dwellers there. He would be a discordant note in the melody of heaven. Heaven would be to him a place of torture; he would long to be hidden from Him who is its light, and the center of its joy. It is no arbitrary decree on the part of God that excludes the wicked from heaven; they are shut out by their own unfitness for its companionship. The glory of God would be to them a consuming fire.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 17, 18.

- c. Why is it impossible for man of himself to escape the penalty of sin? Job 14:4; Romans 8:7, 8; Isaiah 64:6.
- 

“It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.’ Job 14:4. . . . Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.”—*Ibid.*, p. 18.

- a. What must we realize about the human heart? Psalm 14:1–3; Romans 3:9–11.
- 

“The Word of God declares, ‘All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God’ (Romans 3:23). ‘There is none that doeth good, no, not one’ (Romans 3:12). Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realize that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character; but how fatally they fail when they do not reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 320.

- b. Why are we as human beings unable to discern the spiritual realm and see the kingdom of God? 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4.
- 

“The Saviour said, ‘Except a man be born from above,’ unless he shall receive a new heart, new desires, purposes, and motives, leading to a new life, ‘he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ John 3:3, margin. The idea that it is necessary only to develop the good that exists in man by nature, is a fatal deception. ‘The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.’ ‘Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.’ 1 Corinthians 2:14; 3:7. Of Christ it is written, ‘In Him was life; and the life was the light of men’—the only ‘name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ John 1:4; Acts 4:12.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 18, 19.

- c. Although we cannot save ourselves, what can we do? Matthew 11:28–30; John 3:3.
- 

“God was to be manifest in Christ, ‘reconciling the world unto Himself.’ 2 Corinthians 5:19. Man had become so degraded by sin that it was impossible for him, in himself, to come into harmony with Him whose nature is purity and goodness. But Christ, after having redeemed man from the condemnation of the law, could impart divine power to unite with human effort. Thus by repentance toward God and faith in Christ the fallen children of Adam might once more become ‘sons of God.’ 1 John 3:2.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 64.

- a. What was the apostle Paul's problem when he came to a full knowledge of his state as a sinner before God? Romans 7:12, 14, 24.
- 

"It is not enough to perceive the lovingkindness of God, to see the benevolence, the fatherly tenderness, of His character. It is not enough to discern the wisdom and justice of His law, to see that it is founded upon the eternal principle of love. Paul the apostle saw all this when he exclaimed, 'I consent unto the law that it is good.' 'The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' But he added, in the bitterness of his soul-anguish and despair, 'I am carnal, sold under sin.' Romans 7:16, 12, 14. He longed for the purity, the righteousness, to which in himself he was powerless to attain, and cried out, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' Romans 7:24, margin. Such is the cry that has gone up from burdened hearts in all lands and in all ages. To all, there is but one answer, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' John 1:29."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 19.

"There are many who realize their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it. . . . The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, 'Wilt thou be made whole?'"—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 203.

- b. By what means was Jacob assured by God that he was not forsaken when he fled from his brother Esau? Genesis 28:10–13.
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"[Jacob] felt that he was an outcast, and he knew that all this trouble had been brought upon him by his own wrong course. The darkness of despair pressed upon his soul, and he hardly dared to pray. But he was so utterly lonely that he felt the need of protection from God as he had never felt it before. With weeping and deep humiliation he confessed his sin, and entreated for some evidence that he was not utterly forsaken. Still his burdened heart found no relief. He had lost all confidence in himself, and he feared that the God of his fathers had cast him off.

"But God did not forsake Jacob. His mercy was still extended to His erring, distrustful servant. The Lord compassionately revealed just what Jacob needed—a Saviour. He had sinned, but his heart was filled with gratitude as he saw revealed a way by which he could be restored to the favor of God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 183.

- a. What is the lesson to be learned from the ladder that Jacob saw in the wilderness? Genesis 28:16, 17; John 1:51.
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“In the vision the plan of redemption was presented to Jacob, not fully, but in such parts as were essential to him at that time. The mystic ladder revealed to him in his dream was the same to which Christ referred in His conversation with Nathanael. [John 1:51 quoted]. Up to the time of man’s rebellion against the government of God, there had been free communion between God and man. But the sin of Adam and Eve separated earth from heaven, so that man could not have communion with his Maker. Yet the world was not left in solitary hopelessness. The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 184.

- b. Describe the connection that Christ’s mediation has established. Romans 3:23–26; Hebrews 1:14.
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“In the apostasy, man alienated himself from God; earth was cut off from heaven. Across the gulf that lay between, there could be no communion. But through Christ, earth is again linked with heaven. With His own merits, Christ has bridged the gulf which sin had made, so that the ministering angels can hold communion with man. Christ connects fallen man in his weakness and helplessness with the Source of infinite power. . . .

“The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour’s life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings—all are enlisted in behalf of man’s redemption.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 20, 21.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

Fri, Jul 10

1. Contrast the state of humanity before and after the fall.
2. After the fall, what did man do and why?
3. What was the only answer to the problem of sin?
4. Explain the meaning of the wonderful symbol given to Jacob in his dream.
5. What means of communication does God maintain with humanity?

# Repentance

**Memory Verse:** “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 3, pp. 23–35.

“God will not cast off those who have been betrayed into sin, but who have returned unto Him with true repentance.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 202, 203.

## 1. SORROW FOR SIN

Sun, Jul 12

- a. What evidence of true repentance was demanded by John the Baptist? Luke 3:7–14.

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“Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 23.

- b. What should be known about true repentance that changes the heart and life? 2 Corinthians 7:9, 10.

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“Real sorrow for sin is the result of the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit reveals the ingratitude of the heart that has slighted and grieved the Saviour, and brings us in contrition to the foot of the cross. By every sin Jesus is wounded afresh; and as we look upon Him whom we have pierced, we mourn for the sins that have brought anguish upon Him. Such mourning will lead to the renunciation of sin.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 300.

“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.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 24.

- a. What was David's plea when he realized the weight of his guilt? Psalm 51:1-4.
- 

"The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness—to be restored to harmony and communion with God."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 24, 25.

- b. What did the true repentance of David lead him to seek? Psalm 51:10-13.
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"'Create in me a clean heart.' This is beginning right, at the very foundation of Christian character; for out of the heart are the issues of life. If all, ministers and people, would see to it that their hearts are right with God, we should see much larger results from the labor put forth. The more important and responsible your work, the greater the necessity that you have clean hearts. The needed grace is provided, and the power of the Holy Spirit will work with every effort you make in this direction. If every child of God would seek Him earnestly and perseveringly, there would be a greater growth in grace. Dissensions would cease; believers would be of one heart and one mind; purity and love would prevail in the churches. By beholding, we become changed. The more you contemplate the character of Christ, the more you will become conformed to His image. Come to Jesus just as you are, and He will receive you, and put a new song in your mouth, even praise to God."—*Gospel Workers* (1892), pp. 451, 452.

- c. What does the Bible teach about repentance and full surrender to Christ? Romans 2:4; Acts 3:19; 5:31.
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"We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.

"Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 26.

- a. What was the nature of the repentance of Esau, Pharaoh and Judas when they realized the consequences of their sin? Hebrews 12:16, 17; Exodus 12:30–32; 14:3–5; Matthew 27:3–5.

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“Multitudes sorrow that they have sinned and even make an outward reformation because they fear that their wrongdoing will bring suffering upon themselves. But this is not repentance in the Bible sense. They lament the suffering rather than the sin. Such was the grief of Esau when he saw that the birthright was lost to him forever. . . . Judas Iscariot, after betraying his Lord, exclaimed, ‘I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.’ Matthew 27:4.

“The confession was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation and a fearful looking for of judgment. The consequences that were to result to him filled him with terror; but there was no deep, heartbreaking grief in his soul, that he had betrayed the spotless Son of God and denied the Holy One of Israel. Pharaoh, when suffering under the judgments of God, acknowledged his sin in order to escape further punishment, but returned to his defiance of Heaven as soon as the plagues were stayed. These all lamented the results of sin, but did not sorrow for the sin itself.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 23, 24.

“God gave to Pharaoh the most striking evidence of divine power; but the monarch stubbornly refused to heed the light. Every display of infinite power rejected by him, rendered him the more determined in his rebellion. The seeds of rebellion that he sowed when he rejected the first miracle, produced their harvest.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 268.

- b. What happens when a sinner does not repent and delays his repentance until some future time? John 12:35, 36; Hebrews 3:12–15.

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“Those professed Christians who come up to that last fearful conflict unprepared will, in their despair, confess their sins in words of burning anguish, while the wicked exult over their distress. These confessions are of the same character as was that of Esau or of Judas. Those who make them, lament the *result* of transgression, but not its guilt. They feel no true contrition, no abhorrence of evil. They acknowledge their sin, through fear of punishment; but, like Pharaoh of old, they would return to their defiance of Heaven should the judgments be removed.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 620, 621. [Author’s italics.]

- a. What is the difference between the Pharisee and the publican in Christ's story? Luke 18:10–13.
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“In the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the self-sufficient prayer, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of men,’ stood out in sharp contrast to the penitent’s plea, ‘Be merciful to me the sinner.’ Luke 18:11, 13, R. V., margin. Thus Christ rebuked the hypocrisy of the Jews.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 495.

- b. What did Jesus say about the result of the publican’s prayer? Luke 18:14.
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“The poor publican who prayed, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner’ (Luke 18:13), regarded himself as a very wicked man, and others looked upon him in the same light; but he felt his need, and with his burden of guilt and shame he came before God, asking for His mercy. His heart was open for the Spirit of God to do its gracious work and set him free from the power of sin. The Pharisee’s boastful, self-righteous prayer showed that his heart was closed against the influence of the Holy Spirit. Because of his distance from God, he had no sense of his own defilement, in contrast with the perfection of the divine holiness. He felt no need, and he received nothing.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 30, 31.

- c. In telling this story, what destructive attitude was Jesus seeking to correct? Luke 18:9; 2 Corinthians 10:12; Proverbs 16:18.
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“The religion of the Pharisee does not touch the soul. He is not seeking God-likeness of character, a heart filled with love and mercy. He is satisfied with a religion that has to do only with the outward life. His righteousness is his own—the fruit of his own works—and judged by a human standard.

“Whoever trusts in himself that he is righteous, will despise others. As the Pharisee judges himself by other men, so he judges other men by himself. His righteousness is estimated by theirs, and the worse they are the more righteous by contrast he appears. His self-righteousness leads to accusing. ‘Other men’ he condemns as transgressors of God’s law. Thus he is making manifest the very spirit of Satan, the accuser of the brethren. With this spirit it is impossible for him to enter into communion with God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 151.

- a. What is the danger in ignoring conviction or delaying to respond? 2 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 3:7, 8; Luke 12:20, 21.
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“Many are quieting a troubled conscience with the thought that they can change a course of evil when they choose; that they can trifle with the invitations of mercy, and yet be again and again impressed. They think that after doing despite to the Spirit of grace, after casting their influence on the side of Satan, in a moment of terrible extremity they can change their course. But this is not so easily done. The experience, the education, of a lifetime, has so thoroughly molded the character that few then desire to receive the image of Jesus.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 33, 34.

- b. What should we do when we realize that our heart and life are not in harmony with God? Psalm 139:23, 24; 51:10.
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“Study God’s word prayerfully. That word presents before you, in the law of God and the life of Christ, the great principles of holiness, without which ‘no man shall see the Lord.’ Hebrews 12:14. It convinces of sin; it plainly reveals the way of salvation. Give heed to it as the voice of God speaking to your soul. . . .

“We have been great sinners, but Christ died that we might be forgiven. The merits of His sacrifice are sufficient to present to the Father in our behalf. Those to whom He has forgiven most will love Him most, and will stand nearest to His throne to praise Him for His great love and infinite sacrifice. It is when we most fully comprehend the love of God that we best realize the sinfulness of sin. When we see the length of the chain that was let down for us, when we understand something of the infinite sacrifice that Christ has made in our behalf, the heart is melted with tenderness and contrition.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 35, 36.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

Fri, Jul 17

1. What wonderful gift does God grant that we may receive the grace of heaven?
2. Why can’t we truly repent on our own?
3. What was lacking in the repentance of Esau, Pharaoh, and Judas?
4. Why did Jesus tell the parable of the Pharisee and the publican?
5. What is the most important step to bring man in close communion with God?

# Confession

**Memory Verse:** “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 4, pp. 37–41.

“The confession that is the outpouring of the inmost soul finds its way to the God of infinite pity.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 38.

## 1. GOD’S MERCY

Sun, Jul 19

a. When convicted of sin, what are we to do? Proverbs 28:13; James 5:16.

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“The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 37.

b. What attitude does this require in us? Proverbs 15:33; 19:23; Psalm 34:18.

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“Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced that repentance which is not to be repented of, and have not with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit confessed our sins, abhorring our iniquity, we have never truly sought for the forgiveness of sin; and if we have never sought, we have never found the peace of God. The only reason why we do not have remission of sins that are past is that we are not willing to humble our hearts and comply with the conditions of the word of truth. Explicit instruction is given concerning this matter. Confession of sin, whether public or private, should be heartfelt and freely expressed.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 37, 38.

- a. When we have offended another, whom have we also offended? Psalm 51:4.
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The apostle says, ‘Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed.’ James 5:16. Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offense to your friend or neighbor, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty freely to forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother you have wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 37.

- b. Why must we forgive others? Matthew 6:14, 15; Ephesians 4:32.
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“He who is unforgiving cuts off the very channel through which alone he can receive mercy from God. We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. It is their part, no doubt, to humble their hearts by repentance and confession; but we are to have a spirit of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults. However sorely they may have wounded us, we are not to cherish our grievances and sympathize with ourselves over our injuries; but as we hope to be pardoned for our offenses against God we are to pardon all who have done evil to us.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 113, 114.

- c. What should teach us our duty toward humanity? 1 Peter 4:8; Romans 13:8.
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“Let Christ, the divine Life, dwell in you and through you reveal the heaven-born love that will inspire hope in the hopeless and bring heaven’s peace to the sin-stricken heart. As we come to God, this is the condition which meets us at the threshold, that, receiving mercy from Him, we yield ourselves to reveal His grace to others.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 114, 115.

“The inhumanity of man toward man is our greatest sin. Many think that they are representing the justice of God while they wholly fail of representing His tenderness and His great love. Often the ones whom they meet with sternness and severity are under the stress of temptation. Satan is wrestling with these souls, and harsh, unsympathetic words discourage them and cause them to fall a prey to the tempter’s power.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 163.

- b. What sins must be confessed publicly while others are confessed to God alone? Psalm 32:5; Matthew 5:23, 24.
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“True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 38.

“Sin of a private character is to be confessed to Christ, the only mediator between God and man. . . . Every sin is an offense against God, and is to be confessed to Him through Christ. Every open sin should be as openly confessed.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 216.

- a. What is the purpose of true confession? 1 Samuel 12:19.
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“In the days of Samuel the Israelites wandered from God. They were suffering the consequences of sin; for they had lost their faith in God, lost their discernment of His power and wisdom to rule the nation, lost their confidence in His ability to defend and vindicate His cause. They turned from the great Ruler of the universe and desired to be governed as were the nations around them. Before they found peace they made this definite confession: ‘We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.’ 1 Samuel 12:19. The very sin of which they were convicted had to be confessed.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 38, 39.

- b. What practical action should follow confession? Isaiah 1:16, 17; Ezekiel 33:15.
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“Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin.”—*Ibid.*, p. 39.

“Every converted soul will, like Zacchaeus, signalize the entrance of Christ into his heart by an abandonment of the unrighteous practices that have marked his life. Like the chief publican, he will give proof of his sincerity by making restitution.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 556.

- a. When the Lord asked Adam and Eve about their sin, how did they imply that it was not really their fault? Genesis 3:12, 13.
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“Adam could neither deny nor excuse his sin; but instead of manifesting penitence, he endeavored to cast the blame upon his wife, and thus upon God Himself: ‘The woman whom *Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*’”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 57. [Author’s italics.]

“After Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion. ‘The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.’ The woman put the blame upon the serpent, saying, ‘The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.’ Genesis 3:12, 13. Why did You make the serpent? Why did You suffer him to come into Eden? These were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 40.

- b. Why does self-justification make confession ineffectual? Job 9:20; Luke 16:15.
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“The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit and will not be acceptable to God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy.”—*Ibid.*, p. 40.

“We should not try to lessen our guilt by excusing sin. We must accept God’s estimate of sin, and that is heavy indeed. Calvary alone can reveal the terrible enormity of sin. If we had to bear our own guilt, it would crush us. But the sinless One has taken our place; though undeserving, He has borne our iniquity. ‘If we confess our sins,’ God ‘is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ 1 John 1:9. Glorious truth!—just to His own law, and yet the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus. ‘Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy.’ Micah 7:18.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 116.

- a. How did Paul humbly and specifically acknowledge his sin? Acts 26:10, 11.

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“The examples in God’s word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin or attempt at self-justification. Paul did not seek to shield himself; he paints his sin in its darkest hue, not attempting to lessen his guilt. [Acts 26:10, 11 quoted].”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 41.

- b. What did Paul declare in his first epistle to Timothy? 1 Timothy 1:15.

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“In ourselves we can see nothing but weakness, nothing to recommend us to God, and Satan tells us that it is of no use; we cannot remedy our defects of character. When we try to come to God, the enemy will whisper; It is of no use for you to pray; did not you do that evil thing? Have you not sinned against God and violated your own conscience? But we may tell the enemy that ‘the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ 1 John 1:7. When we feel that we have sinned and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray. Ashamed we may be and deeply humbled, but we must pray and believe. [1 Timothy 1:15 quoted]. Forgiveness . . . is a gift unto us, having in the spotless righteousness of Christ its foundation for bestowal.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 115, 116.

- c. If we confess our sins, what has God promised? 1 John 1:9.

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“The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, [1 John 1:9, quoted].”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 41.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

Fri, Jul 24

1. When we faithfully confess our sins to God, how do we stand before Him?
2. In what circumstances must some confessions be made to other people, and why?
3. Why is it important that confession be specific?
4. Describe the danger of self-justification.
5. What is the result of humble confession?



# First Sabbath Offering

Sabbath, August 1, 2026

## General Conference Education Department

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

We live in solemn times. In the midst of an increasingly secularized society, the responsibility of educating our children and youth in the fear of the Lord has become more urgent than ever. As parents, educators, and members of the body of Christ, we have a sacred mission to prepare a generation that will be able to defend the faith with firmness, humility, and conviction.

“The science of true education is the truth, which is to be so deeply impressed on the soul that it cannot be obliterated by the error that everywhere abounds.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 131.

In this context, the General Conference Education Department has been working diligently to strengthen and expand our missionary schools around the world. Many of our educational centers lack adequate infrastructure, modern curricula, and materials adapted to the spiritual reality of our students. Furthermore, several countries have requested the opening of new educational institutions that promote not only academic knowledge but also the principles of the everlasting gospel.

This special offering will therefore support three key areas:

1. The restructuring of existing missionary schools;
2. The establishment of new schools in regions in need of access to SDARM Christian education;
3. The advancement of the translation and adaptation project of the educational materials developed by our pedagogical team to serve both secular and missionary schools in various languages and cultural contexts.

“True education is missionary training. Every son and daughter of God is called to be a missionary; we are called to the service of God and of our fellow men; and to fit us for this service should be the object of our education.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 395.

Therefore, we appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, to present your offering with generosity and missionary vision. Investing in the education of our children and youth is investing in the future of the church, in the proclamation of the gospel, and in the final harvest.

May the Lord multiply your contribution and strengthen this vital ministry—and may our schools truly be lights shining in the darkness, preparing a faithful generation for the imminent return of our Saviour.

— General Conference Education Department

# Consecration

**Memory Verse:** “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:13).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 5, pp. 43–48.

“It is impossible for us in our own strength to maintain the conflict; and whatever diverts the mind from God, whatever leads to self-exaltation or to self-dependence, is surely preparing the way for our overthrow. The tenor of the Bible is to inculcate distrust of human power and to encourage trust in divine power.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 717.

## 1. THE WARFARE AGAINST SELF

Sun, Jul 26

- a. How did Paul describe Christian warfare and the equipment needed for it? Ephesians 6:12–18.

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“Satan assailed Christ with his fiercest and most subtle temptations, but he was repulsed in every conflict. Those battles were fought in our behalf; those victories make it possible for us to conquer. Christ will give strength to all who seek it. No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan. The tempter has no power to control the will or to force the soul to sin. He may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 510.

- b. Where is Satan trying to obtain complete dominion? Proverbs 4:23.

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“As man ‘thinketh in his heart, so is he.’ Proverbs 23:7. The heart must be renewed by divine grace, or it will be in vain to seek for purity of life. He who attempts to build up a noble, virtuous character independent of the grace of Christ is building his house upon the shifting sand. In the fierce storms of temptation it will surely be overthrown.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 460.

- a. What must be given up in order to be a disciple of Christ? Luke 14:33; Matthew 6:24.
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“In giving ourselves to God, we must necessarily give up all that would separate us from Him. Hence the Saviour says, [Luke 14:33 quoted]. Whatever shall draw away the heart from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. The love of money, the desire for wealth, is the golden chain that binds them to Satan. Reputation and worldly honor are worshiped by another class. The life of selfish ease and freedom from responsibility is the idol of others. But these slavish bands must be broken. We cannot be half the Lord’s and half the world’s. We are not God’s children unless we are such entirely.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 44.

- b. What divine invitation does the Lord extend to all who desire a renewal of heart and life? Isaiah 1:18; Jeremiah 29:13; James 4:7-10.
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“The government of God is not, as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission, an unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and the conscience. . . . God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 43, 44.

“Christ was manifested as the Saviour of men. The people were not to trust in their own works, in their own righteousness, or in themselves in any way, but in the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. In Him the Advocate with the Father was revealed. Through Him the invitation was given, ‘Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’ This invitation comes sounding down along the lines to us today. Let not pride, or self-esteem, or self-righteousness keep any one from confessing his sins, that he may claim the promise.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 239.

- a. What has given Christ the right to take His children to heaven? Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 7:25.
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“Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him. He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father’s favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 756.

“In the gift of Jesus, God gave all heaven. From a human point of view, such a sacrifice was a wanton waste. To human reasoning the whole plan of salvation is a waste of mercies and resources. Self-denial and wholehearted sacrifice meet us everywhere. Well may the heavenly host look with amazement upon the human family who refuse to be uplifted and enriched with the boundless love expressed in Christ. Well may they exclaim, Why this great waste?

“But the atonement for a lost world was to be full, abundant, and complete. Christ’s offering was exceedingly abundant to reach every soul that God had created. It could not be restricted so as not to exceed the number who would accept the great Gift. All men are not saved; yet the plan of redemption is not a waste because it does not accomplish all that its liberality has provided for. There must be enough and to spare.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 565, 566.

- b. What does Jesus require of all who desire to be His children and want to be able to receive His Spirit? Proverbs 23:26.
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“[Jesus] is waiting with pitying tenderness to hear the confessions of the wayward, and to accept their penitence. He watches for some return of gratitude from them, as the mother watches for the smile of recognition from her beloved babe. The great God teaches us to call Him Father. He would have us understand how earnestly and tenderly His heart yearns over us in all our trials and temptations.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 210.

“What do we give up, when we give all? A sin-polluted heart, for Jesus to purify, to cleanse by His own blood, and to save by His matchless love. And yet men think it hard to give up all! I am ashamed to hear it spoken of, ashamed to write it.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 46.

- a. What was the earnest desire of Paul for the believers? Romans 12:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
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“Though addressed to ancient Israel, these words contain a lesson for the people of God today. When the apostle appeals to his brethren to present their bodies ‘a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,’ he sets forth the principles of true sanctification. It is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies, not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but ‘a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.’”—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 27, 28.

“We are to give ourselves to the service of God, and we should seek to make the offering as nearly perfect as possible. God will not be pleased with anything less than the best we can offer. Those who love Him with all the heart, will desire to give Him the best service of the life, and they will be constantly seeking to bring every power of their being into harmony with the laws that will promote their ability to do His will.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 352, 353.

- b. When the multitude heard the discourse of Peter on the day of Pentecost, what was the burden on their hearts? Acts 2:37, 38.
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“[The multitude] heard the disciples declaring that it was the Son of God who had been crucified. Priests and rulers trembled. Conviction and anguish seized the people. ‘They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Among those who listened to the disciples were devout Jews, who were sincere in their belief. The power that accompanied the words of the speaker convinced them that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. . . .

“Peter urged home upon the convicted people the fact that they had rejected Christ because they had been deceived by priests and rulers; and that if they continued to look to these men for counsel, and waited for them to acknowledge Christ before they dared to do so, they would never accept Him. These powerful men, though making a profession of godliness, were ambitious for earthly riches and glory. They were not willing to come to Christ to receive light.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 43, 44.

- a. What brings the conviction that we may be fully consecrated to the Lord and able to bear the image of Christ? Philippians 2:12, 13.

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“God does not bid you fear that He will fail to fulfill His promises, that His patience will weary, or His compassion be found wanting. Fear lest your will shall not be held in subjection to Christ’s will, lest your hereditary and cultivated traits of character shall control your life. ‘It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.’ Fear lest self shall interpose between your soul and the great Master Worker. Fear lest self-will shall mar the high purpose that through you God desires to accomplish. Fear to trust to your own strength, fear to withdraw your hand from the hand of Christ and attempt to walk life’s pathway without His abiding presence.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 161.

- b. How can steadfastness of faith and complete surrender to right principles be maintained? Galatians 2:20; Matthew 16:24, 25.

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“Those who would gain the blessing of sanctification must first learn the meaning of self-sacrifice. The cross of Christ is the central pillar on which hangs the ‘far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 560.

“You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. . . .

“Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 47, 48. [Author’s italics.]

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Jul 31

1. What is necessary for success in the battle against the enemy of our souls?
2. What is the real battle in order to have victory over an already-defeated foe?
3. What can we learn from Christ’s gift for our salvation?
4. What is the purpose of God for the believers, both physically and spiritually?
5. If our will is in accordance with the will of God, what will be experienced daily?

# Faith and Acceptance

**Memory Verse:** “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 6, pp. 49–55.

“You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 51.

## 1. FORGIVENESS AND PEACE

Sun, Aug 2

a. What is God’s wonderful promise of forgiveness and peace? 1 John 1:9.

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“You see that your life has been filled with selfishness and sin. You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him—what can you do to obtain it?

“It is peace that you need—Heaven’s forgiveness and peace and love in the soul. Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot procure it, wisdom cannot attain to it; you can never hope, by your own efforts, to secure it. But God offers it to you as a gift, ‘without money and without price.’ Isaiah 55:1. It is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 49.

b. What is another important promise that will transform the entire being into a new man in harmony with God? Ezekiel 36:26.

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“You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this *because He has promised*. This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 49, 50. [Author’s italics.]

- a. What did Jesus tell the paralytic at Bethesda to do, and what can we learn from this experience? John 5:1–9.

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“Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.’ The sick man might have said, ‘Lord if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.’ But, no, he believed Christ’s word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he *willed* to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 50. [Author’s italics.]

“Jesus had given him no assurance of divine help. The man might have stopped to doubt, and lost his one chance of healing. But he believed Christ’s word, and in acting upon it he received strength.

“Through the same faith we may receive spiritual healing. By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are palsied. Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a holy life than was the impotent man capable of walking. There are many who realize their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it. In despair they cry, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?’ Romans 7:24, margin. Let these desponding, struggling ones look up. The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, ‘Wilt thou be made whole?’ He bids you arise in health and peace.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 203.

- b. What is promised to the sinner through Christ? 2 Chronicles 7:14; Hosea 14:4.

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“You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You *believe* that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You *will* to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it.

“Do not wait to *feel* that you are made whole, but say, ‘I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.’”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 51. [Author’s italics.]

- a. When Jesus is accepted as Saviour, what happens to past sins? Romans 3:24, 25; 5:1, 9, 10.
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“Jesus says, ‘What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.’ Mark 11:24. There is a condition to this promise—that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we *have* received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 51. [Author’s italics.]

- b. What standing does the believer have before God? Romans 8:1.
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“While the Christian’s life will be characterized by humility, it should not be marked with sadness and self-depreciation. It is the privilege of everyone so to live that God will approve and bless him. It is not the will of our heavenly Father that we should be ever under condemnation and darkness. There is no evidence of true humility in going with the head bowed down and the heart filled with thoughts of self. We may go to Jesus and be cleansed, and stand before the law without shame and remorse.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 477.

“When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. . . . We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute. Ye are accepted in the Beloved.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 32, 33.

- c. What change should be recognized by all who have entered into this covenant relationship with God? 1 Peter 1:18, 19; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; Galatians 3:26.
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“Henceforth you are not your own; you are bought with a price. [1 Peter 1:18, 19 quoted.] Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 51, 52.

- a. How is the believer expected to conduct himself? Colossians 2:6.
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“Now that you have given yourself to Jesus, do not draw back, do not take yourself away from Him, but day by day say, ‘I am Christ’s; I have given myself to Him;’ and ask Him to give you His Spirit and keep you by His grace. As it is by giving yourself to God, and believing Him, that you become His child, so you are to live in Him. The apostle says, ‘As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.’ Colossians 2:6.

“Some seem to feel that they must be on probation, and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But they may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot resist evil. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 52.

- b. What is the provision for mistakes made in the learning process? 1 John 2:1, 2.
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“Put away the suspicion that God’s promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live and not die.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 52, 53.

- c. Explain how we are strengthened on this journey. 1 John 1:7; Galatians 5:16, 17, 25.
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“Those who walk in wisdom’s ways are, even in tribulation, exceeding joyful; for He whom their soul loveth, walks, invisible, beside them. At each upward step they discern more distinctly the touch of His hand; at every step brighter gleamings of glory from the Unseen fall upon their path; and their songs of praise, reaching ever a higher note, ascend to join the songs of angels before the throne.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 140.

- a. What are the conditions for acceptance by God? Isaiah 55:7; 44:22.

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“God does not deal with us as finite men deal with one another. His thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tenderest compassion.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 53.

“Whoever under the reproof of God will humble the soul with confession and repentance, as did David, may be sure that there is hope for him. Whoever will in faith accept God’s promises, will find pardon. The Lord will never cast away one truly repentant soul.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 726.

- b. What is our heavenly Father’s true attitude toward all who have gone astray? Ezekiel 18:32; Luke 15:18–20.

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“Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say, ‘Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. . . . The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received: [Luke 15:18–20 quoted].

“But even this parable, tender and touching as it is, comes short of expressing the infinite compassion of the heavenly Father. The Lord declares by His prophet, ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love: *therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.*’ Jeremiah 31:3. While the sinner is yet far from the Father’s house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father’s heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of His Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father’s heart of love.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 53, 54. [Author’s italics.]

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Aug 7

1. What enters the soul whose sins are pardoned?
2. Why was the paralytic at Bethesda suddenly able to walk?
3. When we accept Christ as our Saviour, what promise is ours?
4. What is the secret of a victorious walk with Christ?
5. Describe the contrast between Satan’s malice and the Father’s redeeming love.

# The Test of Discipleship

**Memory Verse:** “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 7, pp. 57–65

“The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 57, 58.

## 1. THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT

Sun, Aug 9

- a. What lesson did Christ teach in describing the work of conversion? John 3:5–8.

“A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or trace all the chain of circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. . . . Like the wind, which is invisible, yet the effects of which are plainly seen and felt, is the Spirit of God in its work upon the human heart. That regenerating power, which no human eye can see, begets a new life in the soul; it creates a new being in the image of God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 57.

- b. What changes will appear in the life of the truly converted? Romans 12:9–18; 2 Corinthians 5:17.

“While we cannot do anything to change our hearts or to bring ourselves into harmony with God; while we must not trust at all to ourselves or our good works, our lives will reveal whether the grace of God is dwelling within us. A change will be seen in the character, the habits, the pursuits. The contrast will be clear and decided between what they have been and what they are. . . .

“It is true that there may be an outward correctness of deportment without the renewing power of Christ. The love of influence and the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well-ordered life. Self-respect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart may perform generous actions. By what means, then, shall we determine whose side we are on?

“Who has the heart? With whom are our thoughts?”—*Ibid.*, pp. 57, 58.

- a. What fruit is produced by those filled with the Spirit? Galatians 5:22, 23.

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“Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. . . . The things they once hated they now love, and the things they once loved they hate. The proud and self-assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become serious and unobtrusive. The drunken become sober, and the profligate pure. The vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside. Christians will seek not the ‘outward adorning,’ but ‘the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.’ 1 Peter 3:3, 4.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 58, 59.

“The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1112.

- b. What is the evidence of genuine repentance? Ezekiel 33:14, 15.

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“There is no evidence of genuine repentance unless it works reformation. If he restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, confess his sins, and love God and his fellow men, the sinner may be sure that he has passed from death unto life.

“When, as erring, sinful beings, we come to Christ and become partakers of His pardoning grace, love springs up in the heart. Every burden is light, for the yoke that Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness, becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness.

“The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Saviour’s life. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. ‘We love, because He first loved us.’ 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 59.

- a. What dangerous errors are accepted by many professed Christians? Philippians 3:9; Romans 10:3; James 2:17.
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“There are two errors against which the children of God—particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace—especially need to guard. The first, already dwelt upon, is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy.

“The opposite and no less dangerous error is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 59, 60.

- b. How does the new covenant promise make it evident that the grace of Christ does not exempt us from obedience to God’s law? Hebrews 8:10; 10:16.
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“The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled [Hebrews 10:16 quoted]. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship.”—*Ibid.*, p. 60.

“God requires at this time just what He required of the holy pair in Eden, perfect obedience to His requirements. His law remains the same in all ages. The great standard of righteousness presented in the Old Testament is not lowered in the New. It is not the work of the gospel to weaken the claims of God’s holy law, but to bring men up where they can keep its precepts.

“The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. ‘Believe, believe,’ is their cry; ‘only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do.’ While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1073.

- a. What is expected of candidates for eternal life? 1 John 5:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 7:19.

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“If you give yourself to [Christ], and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

“More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.’ Galatians 2:20. So Jesus said to His disciples, ‘It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.’ Matthew 10:20. Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works—works of righteousness, obedience.

“So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 62, 63.

- b. Although the Lord has made provision for all to obtain salvation, why do some miss the way? Ephesians 2:8, 9; Acts 4:12; Romans 9:30–33.

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“Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. . . .

“That so-called faith in Christ which professes to release men from the obligation of obedience to God, is not faith, but presumption. ‘By grace are ye saved through faith.’ But ‘faith, if it hath not works, is dead.’ Ephesians 2:8; James 2:17. Jesus said of Himself before He came to earth, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. And just before He ascended again to heaven He declared, ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.’ John 15:10. The Scripture says, ‘Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. . . . He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.’ 1 John 2:3–6. ‘Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.’ 1 Peter 2:21.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 60–62.

- a. How did the apostle Paul live victoriously? 1 Corinthians 15:30, 31.

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“You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 62, 63.

“Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. ‘All our righteousness are as filthy rags.’ Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God ‘was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.’ . . . Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. . . . By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 311, 312.

- b. What joy did the psalmist express in his own life? Psalm 119:97.

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“When we speak of faith, there is a distinction that should be borne in mind. There is a kind of belief that is wholly distinct from faith. The existence and power of God, the truth of His word, are facts that even Satan and his hosts cannot at heart deny. The Bible says that ‘the devils also believe, and tremble;’ but this is not faith. James 2:19. Where there is not only a belief in God’s word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 63.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Aug 14

1. Describe the evidence of conversion.
2. What is the contrast between the old man and the new man?
3. Describe two dangers to be avoided in our spiritual life.
4. When living under grace, what is the place of obedience?
5. What thoughts, desires, and motives are cherished when Christ abides in the heart?

# Growing Up Into Christ

**Memory Verse:** “To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified” (Isaiah 61:3).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 8, pp. 67–75.

“You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 69.

## 1. KEYS TO GROWTH

Sun, Aug 16

- a. How does Scripture illustrate Christian development? Isaiah 61:3; 1 Peter 2:2; Ephesians 4:14, 15; Mark 4:26, 27.

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“Not all the wisdom and skill of man can produce life in the smallest object in nature. It is only through the life which God Himself has imparted, that either plant or animal can live. So it is only through the life from God that spiritual life is begotten in the hearts of men.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 67.

- b. What illustrates our dependence on Christ for growth and development? Hosea 14:5–7; 1 Corinthians 3:6, 7.

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“In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

“As the flower turns to the sun, that the bright beams may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should we turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven’s light may shine upon us, that our character may be developed into the likeness of Christ.”—*Ibid.*, p. 68.

- a. What important point did our Lord emphasize to His disciples just before He finished His earthly ministry? John 15:4–7.

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“Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, ‘Without Me ye can do nothing.’ Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly—by abiding in Him—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 69.

“If you are willing to learn meekness and lowliness of heart in Christ’s school, He will surely give you rest and peace. It is a terribly hard struggle to give up your own will and your own way. But this lesson learned, you will find rest and peace. Pride, selfishness, and ambition must be overcome; your will must be swallowed up in the will of Christ. The whole life may become one constant love sacrifice, every action a manifestation, and every word an utterance of love. As the life of the vine circulates through stem and cluster, descends into the lower fibers, and reaches to the topmost leaf, so will the grace and love of Christ burn and abound in the soul, sending its virtues to every part of the being, and pervading every exercise of body and mind.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, pp. 1091, 1092.

- b. What is the secret of growing in Christ? Colossians 2:6; Hebrews 10:38.

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“You gave yourself to God to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believe that He for Christ’s sake did all this for you. By *faith* you became Christ’s, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking. You are to *give* all—your heart, your will, your service—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must *take* all—Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper—to give you power to obey.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 69, 70. [Author’s italics.]

- a. What is the first duty of God's children as they begin each day? Psalm 5:3.
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“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

- b. What invitation is Christ extending daily? Matthew 11:28, 29.
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“A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection, of His character. Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love—this is the subject for the soul's contemplation. It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71.

- c. What is the key to experiencing peace of mind? Isaiah 26:3, 4; 30:15.
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“Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. . . . Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory.

“As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

- a. What is the result of letting the mind dwell upon Jesus instead of looking to self? 2 Corinthians 3:18.
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“By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.

“When the mind dwells upon self, it is turned away from Christ, the source of strength and life. Hence it is Satan’s constant effort to keep the attention diverted from the Saviour and thus prevent the union and communion of the soul with Christ. The pleasures of the world, life’s cares and perplexities and sorrows, the faults of others, or your own faults and imperfections—to any or all of these he will seek to divert the mind. Do not be misled by his devices. Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, he too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved. All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72.

- b. What can we learn from the change that came upon the disciples after they had been with Christ in daily missionary work? Acts 4:13.
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“In constantly beholding [Jesus], we ‘are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.’ 2 Corinthians 3:18.

“It was thus that the early disciples gained their likeness to the dear Saviour. When those disciples heard the words of Jesus, they felt their need of Him. They sought, they found, they followed Him. They were with Him in the house, at the table, in the closet, in the field. They were with Him as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from His lips lessons of holy truth. They looked to Him, as servants to their master, to learn their duty. Those disciples were men ‘subject to like passions as we are.’ James 5:17. They had the same battle with sin to fight. They needed the same grace, in order to live a holy life.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73.

- a. What wonderful promise has Jesus left for His followers facing the challenges of a hostile world? Matthew 28:20.

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“When Christ ascended to heaven, the sense of His presence was still with His followers. It was a personal presence, full of love and light. Jesus, the Saviour, who had walked and talked and prayed with them, who had spoken hope and comfort to their hearts, had, while the message of peace was still upon His lips, been taken up from them into heaven, and the tones of His voice had come back to them, as the cloud of angels received Him— ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’ Matthew 28:20.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 73, 74.

- b. What important instruction did Jesus leave His disciples so they would know what to do in time of need? John 16:23, 24; 14:16-18.

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“As they met together after the ascension they were eager to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. . . . They extended the hand of faith higher and higher with the mighty argument, ‘It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.’ Romans 8:34. And Pentecost brought them the presence of the Comforter, of whom Christ had said, He ‘shall be in you.’ And He had further said, ‘It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.’ John 14:17; 16:7. Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the hearts of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them. The light, and love, and power of the indwelling Christ shone out through them, so that men, beholding, ‘marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.’ Acts 4:13.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 74, 75.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Aug 21

1. If we are growing like plants, why do we need help from heaven?
2. As the plants need showers in order to grow, what do we need in order to grow in the Spirit?
3. What makes daily consecration important to us individually?
4. Why does God desire us to put self out of mind and think on Jesus always?
5. What promise should be a daily reality in the life of every believer?

# The Work and the Life

**Memory Verse:** “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name’ (John 1:12).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 9, pp. 77–83.

“The spirit of Christ’s self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss. This is the spirit that Christ’s followers will possess, the work that they will do.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 77.

## 1. THE LIFE AND THE LIGHT

Sun, Aug 23

a. What is ignored by the natural heart—and with what result? John 1:4, 5.

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“God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, like the streams of water bursting from a living spring, blessings flow out from Him to all His creatures. And wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 77.

b. When the love of Christ is cherished in the heart, what will be seen in the life? 2 Corinthians 2:14, 15; 5:14.

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“When the love of Christ is enshrined in the heart, like sweet fragrance it cannot be hidden. Its holy influence will be felt by all with whom we come in contact. The spirit of Christ in the heart is like a spring in the desert, flowing to refresh all and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the water of life.”—*Ibid*.

“Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests, but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ, minister as He did for the benefit of men.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 152.

- a. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, what need is supplied? John 1:12, 13; 1 Corinthians 1:4, 5; Romans 5:1, 2.
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“Those who are the partakers of the grace of Christ will be ready to make any sacrifice, that others for whom He died may share the heavenly gift. They will do all they can to make the world better for their stay in it. This spirit is the sure outgrowth of a soul truly converted. No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell. Like Philip when he found the Saviour, we shall invite others into His presence.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 78.

- b. When we are faced with problems and difficulties, what is the counsel of the apostle Paul? Hebrews 4:16.
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“Jesus knows the needs of His children, and He loves to listen to their prayers. Let the children shut out the world and everything that would attract the thoughts from God, and let them feel that they are alone with God, that His eye looks into the inmost heart, and reads the desire of the soul, and that they may talk with God.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 121.

- c. Once we become a child of God, what do we owe to others? Romans 1:14, 15.
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“In what sense was Paul debtor both to the Jew and to the Greek? To him had been given the commission, as it is given to every disciple of Christ, ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’ In accepting Christ, Paul accepted this commission. He realized that upon him rested the obligation of laboring for all classes of men—for Jew and Gentile, learned and unlearned, for those occupying high positions and for those in the most lowly walks of life.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1067.

- a. If the Holy Spirit is in our hearts, what will be one of our first actions? John 1:41, 42.
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“We shall seek to present to [others] the attractions of Christ and the unseen realities of the world to come. There will be an intensity of desire to follow in the path that Jesus trod. There will be an earnest longing that those around us may ‘behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ John 1:29.

“And the effort to bless others will react in blessings upon ourselves. This was the purpose of God in giving us a part to act in the plan of redemption. He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Creator.

“God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to the heavenly angels. He might have employed other means for accomplishing His purpose. But in His infinite love He chose to make us coworkers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry.

We are brought into sympathy with Christ through the fellowship of His sufferings. Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others strengthens the spirit of beneficence in the giver’s heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world, who ‘was rich, yet for your sakes. . . . became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.’ 2 Corinthians 8:9. And it is only as we thus fulfill the divine purpose in our creation that life can be a blessing to us.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 78–80.

- b. What example of Christ should guide us in our relationships with relatives and neighbors? Galatians 6:9, 10; John 9:4.
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“If you will go to work as Christ designs that His disciples shall, and win souls for Him, you will feel the need of a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness. You will plead with God, and your faith will be strengthened, and your soul will drink deeper drafts at the well of salvation. Encountering opposition and trials will drive you to the Bible and prayer. You will grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, and will develop a rich experience.”—*Ibid.*, p. 80.

- a. Name one great danger for us as members of the church today. Malachi 3:8–10.
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“At present [Sabbathkeeping Adventists’] greatest danger is in their accumulations of property. Some are continually increasing their cares and labors; they are overcharged. The result is, God and the wants of His cause are nearly forgotten by them; they are spiritually dead. They are required to make a sacrifice to God, an offering. A sacrifice does not increase, but decreases and consumes. . . . Much of the means among our people is only proving an injury to those who are holding on to it.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 492.

- b. What Christian virtues help believers develop in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? 1 Peter 4:8–10; Hebrews 13:2.
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“The privilege granted Abraham and Lot is not denied to us. By showing hospitality to God’s children we, too, may receive His angels into our dwellings. Even in our day, angels in human form enter the homes of men and are entertained by them. And Christians who live in the light of God’s countenance are always accompanied by unseen angels, and these holy beings leave behind them a blessing in our homes.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 342.

- c. What need must be filled by believers today? 2 Corinthians 10:16.
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“The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which, as yet, they have scarcely begun. None should move into new places merely for the sake of worldly advantage; but where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. They should feel a love for souls, a burden of labor for them, and should make it a study how to bring them into the truth. They can distribute our publications, hold meetings in their homes, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to these meetings. Thus they can let their light shine in good works.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 245.

“Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 111.

- a. What is expected of all those entrusted with the Gospel—and especially the workers? 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2; Revelation 2:10.

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“It is the privilege of the watchmen on the walls of Zion to live so near to God, and to be so susceptible to the impressions of His Spirit, that He can work through them to tell sinners of their peril, and point them to the place of safety. Chosen of God, sealed with the blood of consecration, they are to rescue men and women from impending destruction. Faithfully are they to warn their fellow men of the sure result of transgression, and faithfully are they to safeguard the interest of the church.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 15.

- b. What example did Daniel set for today's youth? Daniel 1:8, 15.

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“The Lord would have us learn a lesson also from the experience of Daniel. There are many who might become mighty men if like this faithful Hebrew they would depend upon God for grace to be overcomers, and for strength and efficiency in their labors. Daniel manifested the most perfect courtesy, both toward his elders and toward the youth. He stood as a witness for God, and sought to take such a course that he might not be ashamed for heaven to hear his words or to behold his works. When Daniel was required to partake of the luxuries of the king's table, he did not fly into a passion, neither did he express a determination to eat and drink as he pleased. Without speaking one word of defiance, he took the matter to God. He and his companions sought wisdom from the Lord, and when they came forth from earnest prayer their decision was made. With true courage and Christian courtesy, Daniel presented the case to the officer who had them in charge, asking that they might be granted a simple diet. These youth felt that their religious principles were at stake, and they relied upon God, whom they loved and served.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 263.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

Fri, Aug 28

1. What condition of the world made it necessary for God to infuse light into it?
2. What marvelous change will be seen in the life of believers?
3. When a blessing is received, what should be the response?
4. Describe some ways by which each of us can serve others.
5. How is Daniel's faithfulness an inspiration to me?

# First Sabbath Offering

Sabbath, September 5, 2026



## Bible Missionary Training School in the Philippines

As we are reminded of the great commission to go into all the world and make disciples, we are to take action. The Bible Missionary Training School is an institution dedicated to preparing and equipping workers for the Lord's vineyard. Since its founding in February 1984, this school has been a beacon of faith, shaping the hearts and minds of those eager to spread the gospel to all nations. Many students who have completed the two-year missionary training program this institution offers have gone on to become missionaries abroad, and several are leaders and ministers spreading the message of salvation throughout the densely populated islands of the Philippines.

Located in Cabatang, Tiaong, Quezon Province, Philippines, the Bible Missionary Training School has tirelessly worked to provide a solid biblical foundation for aspiring missionaries both in the Philippines and throughout the Pacific Region. This facility has provided a place for students to stay, learn English and to be trained as missionaries, canvassers, health workers and administrators so greatly needed in this country and abroad. It has also served as a facility where training seminars, youth conventions, and conferences can be held.

As the work of reformation has grown throughout the Philippines, expansion and improvements of this facility are now urgently needed so it can continue to serve the needs of God's cause going forward. In light of these needs, plans are also underway to hold a General Conference Session right here at this very institution. What a blessing it would be to host this gathering of believers, where visions for evangelism and spiritual revival will take center stage!

Your generous First Sabbath School Offering today will be instrumental in building the much-needed expansion for this institution. As we give, let us remember the words of 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

May your gifts uplift this school, empower its mission, and bring forth workers ready to proclaim the everlasting gospel. Let us give with faith and joy, knowing that our contributions will bear eternal fruits for God's kingdom.

Thank you, and may the Lord bless you abundantly as you give!

*Your brethren in the Philippines*

# A Knowledge of God

**Memory Verse:** “Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord” (Psalm 107:43).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 10, pp. 85–91.

“In a knowledge of God all true knowledge and real development have their source.”—*Education*, p. 14.

## 1. GOD REVEALS HIMSELF

Sun, Aug 30

- a. By what things in this world is the Lord seeking to draw men to Himself? Psalm 19:1–6; Proverbs 2:1–5.

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“Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with Him who made them all.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 85.

- b. What did Jesus use to fix truth in the minds of His hearers? Matthew 13:3, 34.

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“Our Saviour bound up His precious lessons with the things of nature. The trees, the birds, the flowers of the valleys, the hills, the lakes, and the beautiful heavens, as well as the incidents and surroundings of daily life, were all linked with the words of truth, that His lessons might thus be often recalled to mind, even amid the busy cares of man’s life of toil.

“God would have His children appreciate His works and delight in the simple, quiet beauty with which He has adorned our earthly home.”—*Ibid.*

- a. What lesson may be learned from nature—for example in the flowers, birds, and stars? Romans 1:20; Acts 14:17.

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“In the study of the sciences . . . we are to obtain a knowledge of the Creator. All true science is but an interpretation of the handwriting of God in the material world. Science brings from her research only fresh evidences of the wisdom and power of God. Rightly understood, both the book of nature and the written word make us acquainted with God by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which He works.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 599.

“If we will but listen, God’s created works will teach us precious lessons of obedience and trust. From the stars that in their trackless courses through space follow from age to age their appointed path, down to the minutest atom, the things of nature obey the Creator’s will. And God cares for everything and sustains everything that He has created.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 85, 86.

- b. When we contemplate the beauty and peace of unspoiled nature, what should be remembered of the promised new earth? 1 Corinthians 2:9; Revelation 21:1.

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“Let your imagination picture the home of the saved, and remember that it will be more glorious than your brightest imagination can portray. In the varied gifts of God in nature we see but the faintest gleaming of His glory.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 86, 87.

“The church of God has been given revelations of the eternal purpose of Jehovah. His people have been permitted to look beyond the trials of the present to the triumphs of the future, when, the warfare having been accomplished, the redeemed will enter into possession of the promised land. These visions of future glory, scenes pictured by the hand of God, should be dear to His church today.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 722.

“In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called ‘a country.’ Hebrews 11:14–16. There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God’s people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 675.

- a. What precious lessons may be learned from the prophets to encourage us in times of discouragement and temptation? James 5:17; Romans 8:28; 1 John 5:14.
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“In our circumstances and surroundings, in the changes daily taking place around us, we may find precious lessons if our hearts are but open to discern them. . . . [The patriarchs and prophets] men ‘subject to like passions as we are.’ James 5:17. We see how they struggled through discouragements like our own, how they fell under temptation as we have done, and yet took heart again and conquered through the grace of God; and, beholding, we are encouraged in our striving after righteousness.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 87, 88.

- b. If God provides for the things of nature, how much more for His children? Psalms 107:43; 145:15, 16.
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“Nature and revelation alike testify of God’s love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator’s love.”—*Ibid.*, p. 9.

- c. On what should the promise of God’s care lead us to focus? Matthew 6:30–34.
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“When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. We are taking upon ourselves the responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place. We may well have anxiety and anticipate danger and loss, for it is certain to befall us. But when we really believe that God loves us and means to do us good we shall cease to worry about the future. We shall trust God as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, for our will is swallowed up in the will of God.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 100, 101.

- a. Wherein has Christ placed the clearest revelations of God's plan for the salvation of men? John 5:39; Isaiah 34:16.
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“God speaks to us in His word. Here we have in clearer lines the revelation of His character, of His dealings with men, and the great work of redemption.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 87.

- b. What should be done daily by all who desire to grow in the strength and power of God? John 6:53, 63; Colossians 3:1, 2.
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“The theme of redemption is one that the angels desire to look into; it will be the science and the song of the redeemed throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Is it not worthy of careful thought and study now? The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for the most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 88, 89.

- c. How are we to take God's word into our hearts? Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 2:15.
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“No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought. But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, ‘here a little, and there a little.’ Isaiah 28:10.

“When thus searched out and brought together, they will be found to be perfectly fitted to one another. Each Gospel is a supplement to the others, every prophecy an explanation of another, every truth a development of some other truth. The types of the Jewish economy are made plain by the gospel. Every principle in the word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion.”—*Education*, pp. 123, 124.

- a. What brought comfort and help to Jeremiah in his tumultuous time? Jeremiah 15:16.

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“There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God’s word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 90.

“He who gives the Scriptures close, prayerful attention will gain clear comprehension and sound judgment, as if in turning to God he had reached a higher grade of intelligence.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 95.

- b. How should the Scriptures be studied and what must precede such Bible study? Psalm 119:9, 11, 16.

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“The truth of God, like gold, is not always lying right on the surface; it is to be obtained only by earnest thought and study.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 76.

“As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure find truths of the greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as streams flowing from the fountain of life.

“Never should the Bible be studied without prayer. Before opening its pages we should ask for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and it will be given. . . . Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 91.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Sep 4

1. What teaching method was used by our Saviour to reach the people?
2. What provision has God made to reveal Himself to all—including those who have no access to His Word?
3. What may be learned through the providences of God?
4. Describe the attitude we are to have toward the Bible as the revelation of God.
5. What experience of Jeremiah with reference to the scriptures should be repeated?

# The Privilege of Prayer

**Memory Verse:** “When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:6).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 11, pp. 93–104.

“Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 93.

## 1. THE GREAT SUPPLIANT

Sun, Sep 6

- a. As the Son of man, what did Jesus find necessary? Luke 5:16; Mark 6:46.

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“Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with Heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race, He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit’s aid in the battle against sin.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 511.

- b. How is Christ’s practice of prayer an example for us? Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12.

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“Jesus Himself, while He dwelt among men, was often in prayer.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 93.

- a. How did Jesus teach His disciples to pray? Luke 11:1–4.
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“When Jesus was upon the earth, He taught His disciples how to pray. He directed them to present their daily needs before God, and to cast all their care upon Him. And the assurance He gave them that their petitions should be heard, is assurance also to us. . . .

“He is a brother in our infirmities, ‘in all points tempted like as we are;’ but as the sinless one His nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. And if the Saviour of men, the Son of God, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 93, 94.

- b. How does the Bible describe Christ's devotion, and the reason this was so important? Isaiah 50:4; Hebrews 2:10; 5:7–9.
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“As the human was upon Him, He felt His need of strength from His Father. He had select places of prayer. He loved to hold communion with His Father in the solitude of the mountain. In this exercise His holy, human soul was strengthened for the duties and trials of the day. Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 201, 202.

“I saw that there is not one in twenty of the youth who knows what experimental religion is. They serve themselves and yet profess to be servants of Christ; but unless the spell which is upon them be broken, they will soon realize that the portion of the transgressor is theirs. As for self-denial or sacrifice for the truth's sake, they have found an easier way above it all. As for the earnest pleading with tears and strong cries to God for His pardoning grace and for strength from Him to resist the temptations of Satan, they have found it unnecessary to be so earnest and zealous; they can get along well without it. Christ, the King of glory, went often alone to the mountains and desert places to pour out His soul's request to His Father; but sinful man, in whom is no strength, thinks he can live without so much prayer.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 504, 505.

- a. How did Jesus reveal to us the attitude of His Father toward human need? Matthew 6:6; 7:7–11.
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“Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. . . .

“God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon His sure promise, ‘Ask, and it shall be given you.’ ”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 94, 96.

- b. What prevents our petitions from being heard by the Lord? Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:13.
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“Our minds may be drawn out toward [God]; we may meditate upon His works, His mercies, His blessings; but this is not, in the fullest sense, communing with Him. In order to commune with God, we must have something to say to Him concerning our actual life. . . .

“What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God’s heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God, they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence.

“The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. . . .

“If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. Our own merit will never commend us to the favor of God; it is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us, His blood that will cleanse us; yet we have a work to do in complying with the conditions of acceptance.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 93–95.

- a. What are the important elements of prevailing prayer in contrast with weak and ineffective prayer? Hebrews 11:6; Mark 11:24.
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“When we do not receive the very things we asked for, at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears and that He will answer our prayers. We are so erring and shortsighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us, and our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see all things as they really are. When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 96.

- b. In order for prayer to be heard by the Lord, what spirit must we have? Matthew 6:12; Mark 11:25, 26.
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“When we come to ask mercy and blessing from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our own hearts. How can we pray, ‘Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,’ and yet indulge an unforgiving spirit? Matthew 6:12. If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent as we hope to be forgiven.”—*Ibid.*, p. 97. [Author’s italics.]

- c. What can we learn from Elijah’s prayer for rain? 1 Kings 18:41–45.
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“The servant watched while Elijah prayed. Six times he returned from the watch, saying, There is nothing, no cloud, no sign of rain. But the prophet did not give up in discouragement. He kept reviewing his life, to see where he had failed to honor God, he confessed his sins, and thus continued to afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that his prayer was answered. As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1035.

## 5. PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER

Thu, Sep 10

- a. What important counsel do the apostles give concerning prayer? 1 Peter 4:7; Philippians 4:6.
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“There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain. They will improve every opportunity of placing themselves where they can receive the rays of light from heaven.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 98.

- b. Like any parent, what does the Lord expect His children to do? Luke 11:10, 13; John 14:13, 14.
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“‘In My name,’ Christ bade His disciples pray. In Christ’s name His followers are to stand before God. Through the value of the sacrifice made for them, they are of value in the Lord’s sight. Because of the imputed righteousness of Christ they are accounted precious. For Christ’s sake the Lord pardons those that fear Him. He does not see in them the vileness of the sinner. He recognizes in them the likeness of His Son, in whom they believe.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 667.

“There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. There is nothing that can prevent us from lifting up our hearts in the spirit of earnest prayer. In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes. A closet of communion may be found wherever we are.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 99.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Sep 11

1. What example of constancy in prayer has been given to all believers?
2. What prophecy shows the importance of prayer every morning?
3. What is a prerequisite for successful prayer?
4. Why keep praying while waiting for an answer?
5. Describe what it means to pray in the name of Jesus.

# What to Do With Doubt

**Memory Verse:** “Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James 1:6).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 12, pp. 105–113.

“God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 105.

## 1. WHAT IS DOUBT?

Sun, Sep 13

- a. What should we remember when tempted to vacillate between faith and doubt? James 1:5–7.

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“[The Saviour’s] promise is only to those who are willing to follow the Lord wholly. God does not force the will of any; hence He cannot lead those who are too proud to be taught, who are bent upon having their own way. Of the double-minded man—he who seeks to follow his own will, while professing to do the will of God—it is written, ‘Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.’ James 1:7.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 384.

- b. What has the Lord given in order to overcome doubt? Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 11:1, 3, 6.

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“Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 105.

“God has given in His word sufficient evidence of its divine character. The great truths which concern our redemption are clearly presented. By the aid of the Holy Spirit, which is promised to all who seek it in sincerity, every man may understand these truths for himself. God has granted to men a strong foundation upon which to rest their faith.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 526, 527.

- a. How should we relate to mysteries which God has not explained? Deuteronomy 29:29; Job 38:4-11.
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“The word of God, like the character of its divine Author, presents mysteries that can never be fully comprehended by finite beings. The entrance of sin into the world, the incarnation of Christ, regeneration, the resurrection, and many other subjects presented in the Bible, are mysteries too deep for the human mind to explain, or even fully to comprehend. But we have no reason to doubt God’s word because we cannot understand the mysteries of His providence.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 106.

“God does not compel men to give up their unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which they will accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Had the Jews laid by their prejudice and compared written prophecy with the facts characterizing the life of Jesus, they would have perceived a beautiful harmony between the prophecies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean.

“Many are deceived today in the same way as were the Jews. Religious teachers read the Bible in the light of their own understanding and traditions; and the people do not search the Scriptures for themselves, and judge for themselves as to what is truth; but they yield up their judgment, and commit their souls to their leaders. The preaching and teaching of His word is one of the means that God has ordained for diffusing light; but we must bring every man’s teaching to the test of Scripture.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 458, 459.

- b. How is it recognized in the Bible that there are things hard to be understood? 2 Peter 3:16.
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“The difficulties of Scripture have been urged by skeptics as an argument against the Bible; but so far from this, they constitute a strong evidence of its divine inspiration. If it contained no account of God but that which we could easily comprehend; if His greatness and majesty could be grasped by finite minds, then the Bible would not bear the unmistakable credentials of divine authority. The very grandeur and mystery of the themes presented should inspire faith in it as the word of God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 107.

- a. What is a particular danger for the believers in these last days? Hebrews 3:12; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.
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“When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message. The fearful judgments denounced against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9–11), should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it. But the masses of the people turn away their ears from hearing the truth and are turned unto fables. The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days: ‘The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.’ 2 Timothy 4:3. That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 594, 595.

- b. What is prophesied of the attitude of the two classes in the last days? Daniel 12:10; Revelation 22:11.
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“God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain ‘Thus said the Lord’ in its support.”—*Ibid.*, p. 595.

“New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God. But light is not given simply to be a strength to the church, but to be shed upon those who are in darkness.”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 34.

- a. How can we distinguish between the important and the unimportant? 2 Corinthians 13:5; Titus 3:9–11.
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“While God has given ample evidence for faith, He will never remove all excuse for unbelief. All who look for hooks to hang their doubts upon will find them. And those who refuse to accept and obey God’s word until every objection has been removed, and there is no longer an opportunity for doubt, will never come to the light.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 527.

- b. What blessings will come to the humble? James 4:6, 10; 1 Peter 5:6, 7.
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“‘Every want was supplied, the hunger of my soul was satisfied; and now the Bible is to me the revelation of Jesus Christ. Do you ask why I believe in Jesus? Because He is to me a divine Saviour. Why do I believe the Bible? Because I have found it to be the voice of God to my soul.’ We may have the witness in ourselves that the Bible is true, that Christ is the Son of God. We know that we are not following cunningly devised fables.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 112.

- c. How does the apostle Paul describe the experience of the believer now and in the future? 1 Corinthians 13:12.
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“In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. The length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of redeeming love are but dimly comprehended. The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 651.

“By faith we may look to the hereafter and grasp the pledge of God for a growth of intellect, the human faculties uniting with the divine, and every power of the soul being brought into direct contact with the Source of light. We may rejoice that all which has perplexed us in the providences of God will then be made plain, things hard to be understood will then find an explanation; and where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken purposes, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. [1 Corinthians 13:12 quoted.]”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 112, 113.

- a. In what remarkable way has the Lord been unfolding His word in this time as the end approaches? Revelation 10:2, 6, 7.

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“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. . . . [Daniel 12:4 quoted.] When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, “Time shall be no longer.” (See Revelation 10:6.) The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 105.

“Many have entertained the idea that the book of Revelation is a sealed book, and they will not devote time and study to its mysteries. They say that they are to keep looking to the glories of salvation, and that the mysteries revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos are worthy of less consideration than these. But God does not so regard this book. . . .

“The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe. . . .

“The Lord Himself revealed to His servant John the mysteries of the book of Revelation, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. In this book are depicted scenes that are now in the past, and some of eternal interest that are taking place around us; other of its prophecies will not receive their complete fulfillment until the close of time, when the last great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven will take place.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 954.

- b. What are believers to do in studying Scripture? 2 Timothy 2:15; John 7:17.
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## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

Fri, Sep 18

1. What attitude must we have in order to understand what is truth?
2. Explain why not all parts of the Scripture can be fully understood.
3. Why do many not want to accept Bible truth?
4. What will those who really wish to doubt always find?
5. Why is a willingness to obey necessary to an understanding of truth?

# Rejoicing in the Lord

**Memory Verse:** “Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:13).

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, chapter 13, pp. 115–126.

“The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 124.

## 1. LIGHT BEARERS

Sun, Sep 20

- a. What responsibility did Jesus say that His disciples have in this world? Matthew 5:13–16.

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“Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 115.

- b. What are believers to be to all men? John 17:18, 23; 2 Corinthians 5:20.

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“In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ’s follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him.”—*Ibid.*

- c. How only is it possible to fulfil this mission? 2 Corinthians 3:2–5.

- a. What is the highest demonstration God's of love toward His children? John 3:16; Romans 5:6–10.
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“When we seem to doubt God's love and distrust His promises we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. How would a mother feel if her children were constantly complaining of her, just as though she did not mean them well, when her whole life's effort had been to forward their interests and to give them comfort? Suppose they should doubt her love; it would break her heart. How would any parent feel to be thus treated by his children? And how can our heavenly Father regard us when we distrust His love, which has led Him to give His only-begotten Son that we might have life? The apostle writes, ‘He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?’ Romans 8:32. And yet how many, by their actions, if not in word, are saying, ‘The Lord does not mean this for me. Perhaps He loves others, but He does not love me.’”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 118, 119.

- b. What proves that God wants to give His children all things? Romans 8:32.
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“You who feel the most unworthy, fear not to commit your case to God. When He gave Himself in Christ for the sin of the world, He undertook the case of every soul. ‘He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?’ Romans 8:32. Will He not fulfill the gracious word given for our encouragement and strength? ‘Christ desires nothing so much as to redeem His heritage from the dominion of Satan.’—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 174.

- c. How may this love be reflected in us? 1 John 4:9–12.
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“Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked.

“‘Let us not love in word,’ the apostle writes, ‘but in deed and in truth.’ The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life unto life and enables God to bless his work.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 551.

- a. What characterized the life of Christ in His work for the salvation of men? Isaiah 53:10, 7.
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“[Christ’s] life was one of constant self-sacrifice. He had no home in this world, except as the kindness of friends provided for Him as a wayfarer. He came to live in our behalf the life of the poorest, and to walk and work among the needy and the suffering. Unrecognized and unhonored, He walked in and out among the people for whom He had done so much.”—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 42, 43.

“[The Son of God’s] tears were not for Himself, though He well knew whither His feet were tending. Before Him lay Gethsemane, the scene of His approaching agony. The sheepgate also was in sight, through which for centuries the victims for sacrifice had been led, and which was to open for Him when He should be ‘brought as a lamb to the slaughter.’ Isaiah 53:7. Not far distant was Calvary, the place of crucifixion. Upon the path which Christ was soon to tread must fall the horror of great darkness as He should make His soul an offering for sin. Yet it was not the contemplation of these scenes that cast the shadow upon Him in this hour of gladness. No foreboding of His own superhuman anguish clouded that unselfish spirit. He wept for the doomed thousands of Jerusalem—because of the blindness and impenitence of those whom He came to bless and to save.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 18.

- b. In His suffering and trial, what gave Jesus the courage to complete His work? Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2.
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“The result of the Saviour’s conflict with the powers of darkness is joy to the redeemed, redounding to the glory of God throughout eternity. And such is the value of the soul that the Father is satisfied with the price paid; and Christ Himself, beholding the fruits of His great sacrifice, is satisfied.”—*Ibid.*, p. 652.

“It is often said that Jesus wept, but that He was never known to smile. Our Saviour was indeed a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, for He opened His heart to all the woes of men. But though His life was self-denying and shadowed with pain and care, His spirit was not crushed. His countenance did not wear an expression of grief and repining, but ever one of peaceful serenity. His heart was a wellspring of life, and wherever He went He carried rest and peace, joy and gladness.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 120.

- a. When temptation confronts the believer, what is provided so that he may overcome in this spiritual warfare? Ephesians 6:11–18.
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“All have trials; griefs hard to bear, temptations hard to resist. Do not tell your troubles to your fellow mortals, but carry everything to God in prayer. Make it a rule never to utter one word of doubt or discouragement. You can do much to brighten the life of others and strengthen their efforts, by words of hope and holy cheer.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 119, 120.

- b. Why do many hesitate between faith and doubt when tempted and tried? What should they do? Matthew 14:28–31; James 1:2.
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“There is many a brave soul sorely pressed by temptation, almost ready to faint in the conflict with self and with the powers of evil. Do not discourage such a one in his hard struggle. Cheer him with brave, hopeful words that shall urge him on his way. Thus the light of Christ may shine from you. ‘None of us liveth to himself.’ Romans 14:7. By our unconscious influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged, and repelled from Christ and the truth.

“There are many who have an erroneous idea of the life and character of Christ. They think that He was devoid of warmth and sunniness, that He was stern, severe, and joyless. In many cases the whole religious experience is colored by these gloomy views.”—*Ibid.*, p. 120.

- c. How is the path of the just bright even in the midst of trial? Proverbs 4:18; Philippians 4:4.
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“The road may be rough and the ascent steep; there may be pitfalls upon the right hand and upon the left; we may have to endure toil in our journey; when weary, when longing for rest, we may have to toil on; when faint, we may have to fight; when discouraged, we must still hope; but with Christ as our guide we shall not fail of reaching the desired haven at last. Christ Himself has trodden the rough way before us and has smoothed the path for our feet.

“And all the way up the steep road leading to eternal life are well-springs of joy to refresh the weary.”—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 140.

- a. What promise of Jesus should give us reason for joy and for praise to our heavenly Father? Isaiah 41:10; Luke 12:32; I Peter 4:13.

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“It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, ‘Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path.’ He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 122, 123.

- b. Name some other wonderful promises of peace and joy that Jesus has given. John 14:1-3, 27; 15:11; 16:20.

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“We cannot but look forward to new perplexities in the coming conflict, but we may look on what is past as well as on what is to come, and say, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.’ ‘As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ Deuteronomy 33:25. The trial will not exceed the strength that shall be given us to bear it. Then let us take up our work just where we find it, believing that whatever may come, strength proportionate to the trial will be given.

“And by and by the gates of heaven will be thrown open to admit God’s children, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall on their ears like richest music, ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’ Matthew 25:34. . . .

“In view of the glorious inheritance that may be his, ‘what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?’ Matthew 16:26. . . . The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven in the presence of God and the holy angels over one soul redeemed, a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

Fri, Sep 25

1. How will all—even those ignorant of the Bible—be reached with the truth?
2. How does the Lord demonstrate His unbounded love toward men?
3. What was Jesus’ source of assurance when facing His sufferings and death?
4. What provision should we remember when we face trials?
5. In daily life, what should ever be in the mind of the believer?

# First Sabbath Offerings



**Sabbath, July 5, 2026**

## Church Expansion in Chennai, India

Let us rally around to support the completion of this church in a city of 12 million souls! (See page 4.)



**Sabbath, August 1, 2026**

## General Conference Education Department

We are called to educate, educate, educate, and funds are needed to do this effectively. (See page 25.)



**Sabbath, September 5, 2026**

## Bible Missionary Training School in the Philippines

Let us strengthen this school to become all that God intends for it to be. (See page 51.)