

youth messenger

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Dear Youth,

We live in a world of instant messaging. We carry our phones everywhere we go, feeling secure that we can either call, text, or connect with our friends on Facebook or Instagram any moment we feel like. But what's amazing is that we forget that the Creator of the universe, the One who watched you being formed in your mother's womb, is anxiously waiting to receive a call from you. He is more eager to talk with you than any of your friends. He wants to hear you talking to Him in prayer many times throughout the day; He wishes to counsel you, and just to talk to you about things that really matter.

In this issue of the *Youth Messenger*, you will read the experiences of young people who are experiencing a close friendship with God. You will also discover what was the secret of Enoch's walk with God, and how you too may have a vibrant relationship with your Creator. Then as you become filled with His love, overflowing with His joy and peace, you will be ready to go as His Ambassador to a hurting world.

As I think about my walk with God, I've noticed something wonderful happens. After I spend time in prayer and Bible study each morning, I go on my way doing my morning duties, and suddenly a song comes to my mind and I start singing praises to Him. I've realized this is the result of having discussed all my plans with Him for the day; I have perfect peace, not a worry in sight. You also may have this perfect joy and peace as you develop and strengthen your relationship with God as described in the song below. Try it today!

—Liliane Balbach

IN THE GARDEN

*I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses.
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.
And He walks with me and He talks with me
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there
None other has ever known.*



THE CANCELLED CONCERTS

BY OLIVER TÓTH, HUNGARY

When I was 16 years old, I transferred from a regular high school to a music high school. From the beginning, I knew that I would have difficulties there because most of the performances would be on the Sabbath. Nevertheless, I trusted that the Lord wouldn't leave me alone.

At the beginning of the school year, life at the new school was very exciting. My first orchestra class was enjoyable, and immediately I fell in love with

the harmony. The conductor, who was also the school principal, announced the date of our first concert. We were preparing for the Jubilee concert which takes place once every ten years. Playing for such an event was a great honor and privilege. Despite the anticipated excitement, my heart was beating faster, and I was sad because the concert was scheduled on a Sabbath day. Since I was new at the school, I didn't know what to do or to whom I should tell my problem.

COURAGEOUS TO SPEAK UP

I decided to first consult one of my classmates since this was his second year at this school. When I shared my problem he told me, "In this school you have no option but to attend all the concerts. You need to go and speak with the conductor immediately." After praying earnestly, I finally gathered courage to talk with the principal/conductor. When I spotted him, I tried to speak to him, but he was in a rush. So, while he was walking, I walked beside him and explained my situation.

"Mr. Istvan," I said.

"Tell me quickly," he answered. But I couldn't speak quickly as I didn't even know what to say. "I am a Seventh day Adventist and . . .," I said.

"Yes, and what?" he answered. I continued, "We keep the Sabbath holy, which is the fourth commandment, and therefore, I can't take part in the concert on Saturdays."

"No way! In this profession the concerts are usually on Saturdays. Then you'll have to choose another profession!" replied the conductor.

"I just wanted to say I can't go to this concert," I answered.

"I can't do anything about this now," he replied.

At that moment, we arrived at his office, and he told me, "Just talk to your priest about this." Although the most difficult challenge was over, I kept praying

for I didn't know how he will deal in my case.

During the next orchestra class, we had a section rehearsal, and the lead-teacher asked me if everything was alright. I answered, "Yes," but he wasn't convinced. Afterwards, some students came to me and asked if everything was alright with me. As I walked into my next violin class, my teacher also asked me if everything was okay with me. I started to tell him that we have the Jubilee concert coming up and we are preparing for it. He interrupted me and said, "which is on Saturday."

"Yes," I said. He sighed and was deep in thought. I remembered that when he accepted my application to attend this school, I had told him about my religion and that I am a Sabbathkeeper, so he understood why I was so sad. Soon after he told me, "You have to choose what's more important, your religion or your profession because there will be many more concerts on Saturdays."

"I respect your decision, and your devotion to your religion is admirable," he said. Next, he told me he will go and talk with the principal/conductor, and he left the classroom. Although I felt this was a great trial for me, I knew the Lord was working in my behalf. While my teacher was talking with the conductor, I was praying and asking the Lord to solve the problem. After 10 minutes, he came back and told me, "I was talking



with the conductor and he said you must go to the rehearsals, but you don't have to go to the concert." I could not thank the Lord enough, for I felt like a big burden fell off my back. I had no strength but to say, "Thank you, Lord!"

A few months later, we had another concert which was not on Sabbath. For that concert I was the principal second violinist and the conductor complemented me on my performance. There were other concerts later, but I didn't have to perform.

NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL COMPETITION

The next scheduled performance was the National Orchestral Competition which was on Saturday. Before we started our rehearsal, the conductor looked at me and asked, "May I say something?" I nodded, and he explained to the members of the orchestra why I couldn't participate in the concerts on Saturdays. He then expressed his regrets about the situation. After the rehearsal some of my classmates came to ask me what is my religion? In this way, I was able to share my faith and my testimony with them. While my classmates were amazed at the flexibility of the conductor, I was sure that it was the Lord who softened his heart. I thank the Lord that from then on, I had no more problems with Sabbath concerts.

"I WILL TAKE YOU OUT OF THE PERFORMANCE"

On another occasion, we were preparing for a concert series. My conductor knew I wouldn't play on the Sabbath and he took that into consideration. But on this occasion, the concert was scheduled for Friday evening. Again, I felt that I was in trouble because the conductor assigned specific parts to the different players. The orchestra played Bach's Piano Concerto No. 7. If I couldn't play in this concert, he would have to find another violinist to take my place. But, if he would do that all the other assignments would have to be overturned. Again, I prayed to the Lord and asked Him to make the arrangements for me because I didn't want the conductor to be angry with me. But most importantly, I didn't want to give up my principles. When I saw the conductor in the hallway with only a table between us, I told myself, "Here is my opportunity; and I have to go to him now.

"Mr. Istvan," I called. He looked up, smiled at me and asked, "What's up?"

"My Sabbath is from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown ..." I said.

He didn't wait for me to finish the sentence; his face changed, and he became very angry which was understandable.

"Then I will take you out of the performances completely. That's it!"



I replied, “I thought we can solve this if I play on the other days except on that Friday.

“Again he replied, “I will take you out, and you won’t play.”

I didn’t want to make him any more upset, but just continued praying to the Lord. I didn’t want to make any problems for the conductor. I only wanted to keep the commandments.

The next morning, I heard this announcement on the school intercom, “Attention strings! After classes are over, go to the message board. Your orchestral arrangement has changed.” Again, I heard, “Strings go to the message board because the orchestral arrangement has been changed.”


I was so curious what had changed. When I went to the message board, I saw the whole division was changed. I was not in the performance on Friday, but I was in the weekday performance. What did that mean? Some students who had learned to play the second violin part had to learn the first violin part, which was new for them. The students were upset and asked, “What is this? Why were our parts changed?” Some of them were swearing.

LOVED, THANKFUL, AND RADIANT

But my heart was so thankful because I knew that my God had influenced the conductor to make

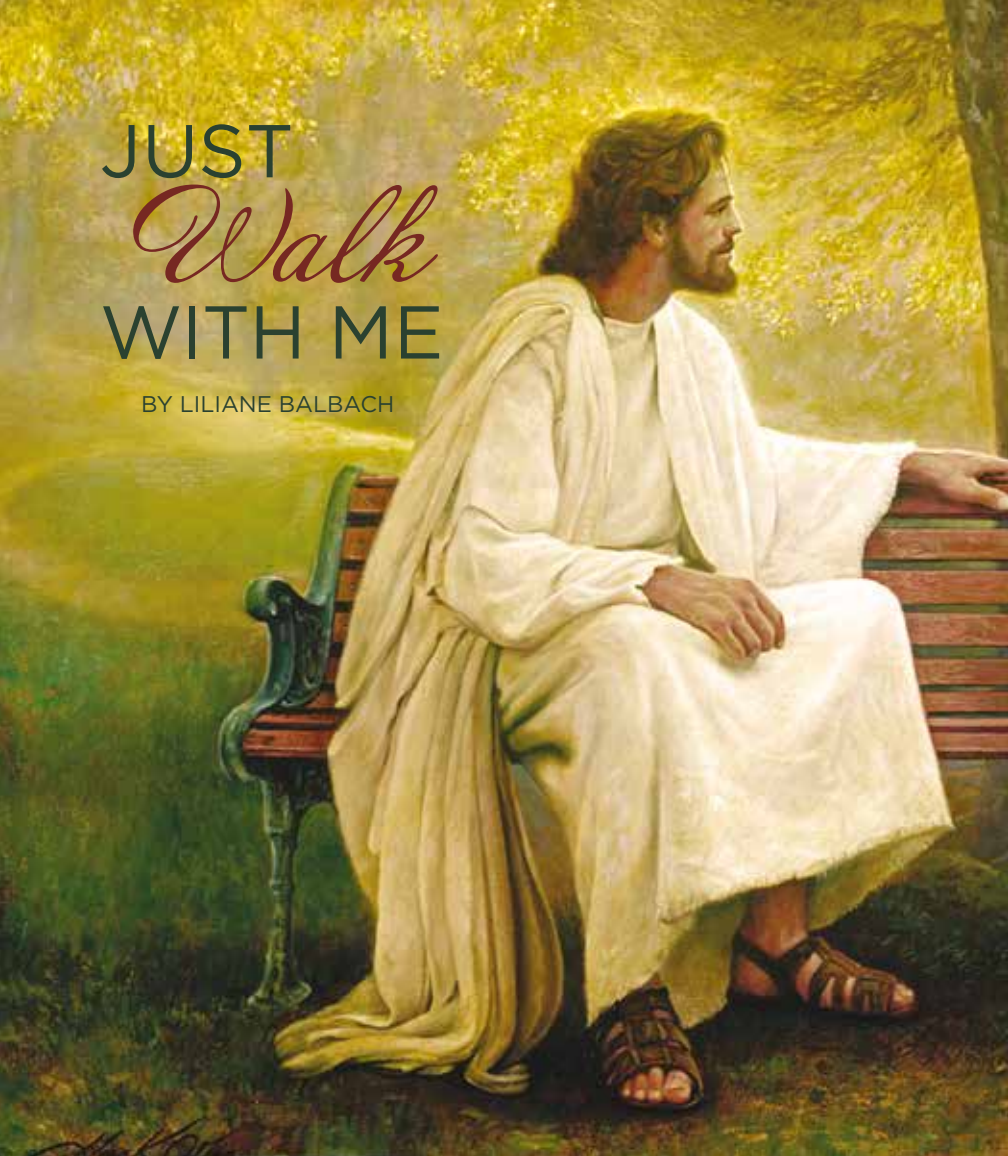
this change, and this confusion was because of me. I felt God’s inexpressible love. While everyone was dissatisfied and complaining, I slipped quietly away, my face radiating with happiness.

From this experience I have learned how precious we are to the Lord. If we stand for the truth and endure trials, He’s ready to help us. Then we can gain more precious experiences. The Lord helps us even when we don’t deserve it, because we have no merits. Yet we know, He has promised, that He “will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Let us not forget that the closer our relationship with God the stronger the temptations Satan brings to us. “I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one” (1 John 2:14, second part).

Dear young people and my musician friends! Trials are coming to our life. If we are faithful to the Lord at the beginning of the trial, He will protect us and won’t release our hands. The first step is the most difficult one, but if we persist in keeping God’s commandments, He will defend and bless us. “With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible” (Mark 10:27). 

JUST *Walk* WITH ME

BY LILIANE BALBACH



One of my favorite things to do in the afternoons is to go for a sprightly walk with my friend Carol. We talk about our life, our work, and family. Our walk not only makes exercise fun, but it also deepens our friendship. The Bible tells us that Jesus went on these types of walks with His disciples. How is your walk with God? Is your friendship with Him constant or sporadic?



ENOCH'S DISCOVERY

We'd like to introduce you to Enoch, the man who had a flourishing friendship with God and who kept His commandments. Enoch was an ordinary person, like you and I. He had a family, a job, and lived in a society morally corrupt more than ours. In fact, the people of Enoch's day were so wicked that God was ready to destroy them with a flood (See Genesis 6:5-7).

The Bible says, “And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: **And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years**” (Genesis 5:21, 22). So, after the birth of his first son, Enoch began his walk with God. As Enoch felt his own heart throbbing with a deep love and tenderness for his dear son, he began to understand the wonderful love of God to man in the gift of His Son. He learned to confidently trust His Heavenly Father and that’s when he started two life-changing habits:

- He meditated day and night on the measureless love of God through Christ (See Psalm 1:1, 2).
- He tried to reveal God’s love to the people around him.

As he went about the duties as a husband, father, citizen, and friend, he walked and talked with God. Have you wondered how Enoch knew so much about God considering he had no Bible scrolls? Enoch learned about Him from the first man who talked to God face to face. Adam told him the dark story of the fall, and the incredible account of God’s mercy in the promise of the Redeemer of the world. (See Genesis 3:15.)

ENOCH’S LIFESTYLE

You may say, “Sure, I would like to walk with God, but what does that mean?” The prophet Amos explains it this way, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). So, to walk with God implies agreement with God in every aspect of my life—how I worship, how I use my time, how I live, and whom I marry. So, to walk with God I must agree with Him about every decision in my life, great or small.

HOME



Enoch agreed with God in the choice of his home. He chose to live in the country away from the corrupt influences of the ungodly. He moved his family to where the moral atmosphere would be pure as it is written, “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33). (See Isaiah 32:18.)

OCCUPATION

God showed Enoch in prophetic vision how He would destroy the world by a Flood. He also revealed to him, more fully, the plan of redemption, and the second coming of Christ. “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to



execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed” (Jude 14, 15).

Then Enoch became a preacher of righteousness, sharing with others what God had revealed to him. He preached publicly about the love of God.



HOSPITALITY

Enoch was a hospitable man. (See Hebrews 13:2.) After preaching in the city, he always brought some people back home with him to show them how to live. (See *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, pp. 1087, 1088.)

ENOCH'S SECRET

What was Enoch's secret for having such a close and unbroken relationship with God? He had **faith in God, commitment** and **perseverance**. Let's look how we can develop these traits in our life.

Talk it over with God

A healthy relationship with God needs to have good communication. Enoch spent much time in meditation, and he prayed “without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). He discussed with God every aspect of his life. What about you? Do you spend quality time in prayer, discussing your plans with God at the beginning of each day? Are you asking Him to add or delete activities as His providence indicates?

When you must make an important decision such as which school to attend, which job to accept, where to move, do you consult with the Lord? Enoch consulted with God about everything. “In his home and in his business, he inquired, **'Will this be acceptable to the Lord?'**”—*My Life Today*, p. 98. [Emphasis added.]

“But you don't understand,” you may say, “I'm too busy with school and work to spend time with God.” Enoch was also a very busy man, but he constantly maintained his communion with God. In fact, the more pressing his workload, the more constant and earnest were his prayers.

Listen to God

So, you've just poured out your heart to God in prayer. Now it's time to hear Him speaking to you as in His word. As you read the Scriptures, search to get to know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour and Friend. “Search the scriptures; for in them

ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39).

Take a moment and think about how you feel when you eat your favorite food or dessert. Don’t you eat it slowly, smiling and relishing every bite? That’s what reading and studying God’s word should be like. Jeremiah experienced this and you may also! He says, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart” (Jeremiah 15:16). So, when I read God’s word I ask Him, “Lord, help my communion with you be sweet today.” And He promises to make it “sweeter than honey” (See Psalm 119:103.) Guaranteed!

Imitate Christ

As Enoch was reflecting on the character of Christ, he soon started revealing the same qualities of goodness, mercy, compassion, patience, humility and love. “His association with Christ day by day **transformed him into the image of Him** with whom he was so intimately connected.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 28, 1891. (Emphasis added.)

Would you like to change from your own selfish ways into Christ’s loving and selfless ways? By “looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2, 3), you will learn to adore and reverence Him. Then obeying Him will be your greatest joy. With David you will say, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart” (Psalm 40:8).

Make God your constant companion

Once, you’ve talked to God in prayer and He has spoken to you by His Word, you’ll want to take Him along wherever you go—to work, to school, to your leisure activities, and to your home. (See Jeremiah 33:3.)

Train your mind

In this world of many distractions are you staying focused on preparing for the kingdom of God? (See Matthew 6:33.) Enoch didn’t allow his mind to wander. “He trained his mind to devotion, to love purity.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 122. (See Psalm 119:140.) Instead of allowing our thoughts to wander on any subject, let us keep them focused on truth and purity. (See Philippians 4:8.)

Have faith

“Did he [Enoch] see God by his side? Only by faith. He knew that the Lord was there, and he adhered steadfastly to the principles of truth.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1087.


“By **faith** Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation **he had this testimony, that he pleased God**” (Hebrews 11:5). [Emphasis added.] Every Christian has a testimony which people are observing. Is yours positive like Enoch’s?

LESSONS FOR US

For 300 years, Enoch walked with God seeking purity of heart and mind. Each day he longed to get just a little closer to Him. Now he stood at the threshold of the eternal world; there was only a step between him and heaven. God could not bear to be separated from His faithful son, so one day He opened the heavens, and Enoch ascended into the clouds, and entered the gates of the Holy City. “And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him” (Genesis 5:24). Now the walk that he so long pursued on this earth continues for eternity.

ENOCHS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Enoch is a prototype of last-day believers. His godly character represents the state of holiness which we must attain before being redeemed from the earth at Christ’s second coming. (See Matthew 5:8.) Like Enoch, we must warn the world of God’s judgments and be a witness by our lives. Then, if faithful, we will be translated to heaven.

Are you ready to have a radical change in your life? You may if you will accept the privilege of daily talking and counseling with the Creator of the universe. He is looking for dedicated young men and women who will study and believe His word, talk to Him in prayer, and please Him in every aspect of their lives. God is looking for ambassadors who will demonstrate, to the world, that it is possible to keep His commandments. Are you ready to take on the job? 

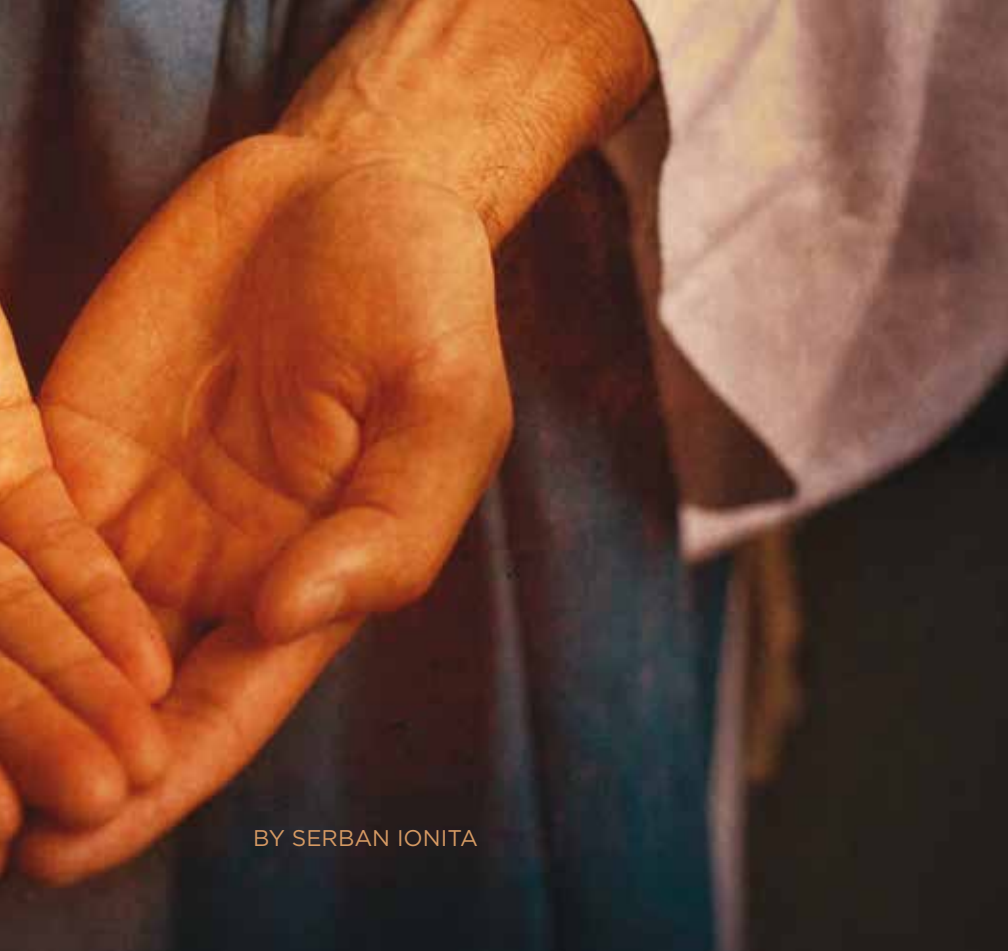




My Steps to Christ

One day as I was reading, I was shocked to discover what is the most important knowledge I should be getting right now. These are the words that instantly grabbed my attention as I read them; they would stir my mind for what felt like an eternity during the next few weeks:

“It is certainly important that we become acquainted with the reasons of our faith, but **the most important knowledge to be gained is the experimental knowledge of what it means to be born again.**”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 64. [Emphasis added.] These words made me shudder and ultimately lead me to the most honest encounter I have ever experienced with the Lord. But to help you understand fully, let me back up a bit.



BY SERBAN IONITA

Just two months before hearing these words, I left my home in California in the United States to go to missionary school in Australia. I had grown tired of meeting objections I could not answer, and looked forward to coming to missionary school to learn the reasons for my faith and to become grounded in the truth. Throughout our missionary course we would learn this and more. We would spend the first month at “Boot Camp” as our

school principal liked to call it. We covered the fundamental doctrines of our church, did some practical gospel work, learned how to research, and to give Bible studies.

But above all these, there was a most important lesson that God wanted to teach me and all the other students. And so, on that crucial morning, as we all came to class, a simple sentence was read that would change everything for me. “The most important knowledge to be gained is the

*"I believe it; it is so,
not because I feel it, but
because God has promised."*

experimental knowledge of what it means to be born again."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 64. Like a stroke of thunder, these words sent shockwaves through the deepest recesses of my heart, as I realized that I was **not born again**. And how could I keep pretending and going from door to door inviting people to come to church to experience something which I did not have? How could I be born again?

For two weeks I was stirred and troubled within, realizing I had no answers for the only question that really mattered. I saw how great my own sinfulness truly was. I wanted change, I wanted restoration, and peace with heaven; unity with God was what I craved. I needed Jesus and I needed Him now more than ever before. And so, I started looking in a place where just maybe I could find Him—the book *Steps to Christ*.

One night, as I was doing my devotional, I opened to a chapter that made an impact on me and that has defined my Christian experience ever since. This chapter is entitled "Faith and Acceptance" in the book *Steps to Christ*. The very first paragraph, I read, described perfectly my state of mind and my struggle:

"As your conscience has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, you have seen something of the evil of sin, of its power, its guilt, its woe; and you look upon it with abhorrence. You feel that sin has separated you from God, that you are in bondage to the power of evil. The more you struggle to escape, the more you realize your helplessness. Your motives are impure; your heart is unclean. 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?"—*Steps to Christ*, p. 49. Immediately I knelt down and prayed, "Lord, if you have an answer for this question, please open my heart to receive it."

How could I gain an experimental knowledge of what it means to be born again? How could I be in harmony with heaven? "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., 49, 50.

Jesus says, “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). And further inspiration intreats us, “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.’”—Ibid., p. 51. I knelt down once again, and quoting these very words I prayed and all my anxiety, fear, and worry melted away, as I read even further, **“Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart.”**—Ibid., p. 52. [Emphasis added.]

It was this sentence that opened the floodgates of relief, peace, and confidence in God’s forgiveness and presence in my life. The conscious awareness that God is by my side to talk with me and counsel me, and to ask Him questions, had a profound effect on almost every aspect of my life. For example, there was the time when I woke up at 3 A.M. to study for a Trigonometry test that I absolutely needed to ace to keep alive my hopes of getting an A in the class. It was the Lord’s answer to my prayer right before the exam that netted my one and ONLY 100% score on any exam in my life. Another time, it was God who heard the cry of my heart



when I was overwhelmed because I took 21 units at school, a looming career choice, and a broken heart. God paved the way for me to go on a mission trip and to revitalize my spirit.

It is God to whom I pray and listen to every morning in my devotional time. He fills my day with satisfaction and gives me peace of mind that makes me smile for no apparent reason at all. It is Jesus Christ whom I have come to know and appreciate as my older Brother, Counselor and Friend, who brings me true joy as He occupies my thoughts. I just don’t know how I’d live without Him in my life.

Do you, dear reader, desire a deeper experience with the Lord, even an experimental knowledge of His power? He is only a prayer away. So, I encourage you to pray and believe; believe and pray, because Jesus has promised, “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). 🌀

Why Go REMEMBER

Have you ever been asked by a friend or acquaintance, “Why do you go to church on Saturday?” or a similar question? Growing up, my answer was usually along the lines of “because it’s the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.” Although this answer is not untrue, I later discovered that there is a much deeper meaning to the Sabbath for an individual who has given their heart to Christ.

In the beginning, before sin, the Sabbath was given to Adam and Eve when God rested on

the seventh day, blessed it, and sanctified or set it apart as holy (Genesis 2:2, 3). This day was a weekly memorial of God’s creative power and His love in giving them life and a perfectly beautiful natural world. On that first Sabbath, “the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them” (Genesis 2:1), “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). As the human family continued in their walk with God, their love for Him increased, and this Sabbath experience became even more meaningful and delightful.



God Said REMEMBER

BY JORDAN CHAPMAN

SABBATH, A MEMORIAL

After sin, the Sabbath took on an even deeper significance, it became a beautiful memorial of the plan of salvation. The fourth commandment tells us that we are to “remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8). But what does it mean to keep the Sabbath holy? Speaking to His people, God says “Ye shall be holy . . . and keep my sabbaths: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:2, 3). Through the prophet Isaiah, God tells us that true Sabbath observance involves refraining “from doing any evil” (Isaiah 56:2). We also

read in the New Testament that God desires us to be holy “in all manner of conversation [or behavior]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15, 16). If we are to truly keep the Sabbath holy, we must **be** holy in our character and actions. Here we encounter a problem!

Our sinful heart or mind, is “deceitful above all things,” “desperately wicked.” It is at “enmity against God,” and “is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 8:7). This condition is evident in “evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness," as well as "idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings . . . drunkenness, revellings, and such like" (Mark 7:21, 22; Galatians 5:20, 21).

WE NEED TO BE RECREATED

How can we ever possibly keep the Sabbath holy in such a miserable and unholy condition? We need to experience another divine act of creation! This is the creation David spoke of when he pleaded, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). When we trust in Christ's atoning sacrifice for us and accept the new heart He offers (See Ezekiel 36:26, 27) to give us, we can be sure that "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). The evil thoughts and actions listed above are replaced by "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23). Once we experience this spiritual recreation, the Sabbath reminds us of the Creator of the world and the Creator of our new heart, "created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). The fourth commandment not only tells us to keep the Sabbath holy, it also directs our attention to the

powerful Creator, the only One who can make us holy (Exodus 20:11).

DELIVERANCE FROM THE SLAVERY OF SIN

When the commandments were repeated in Deuteronomy, God again instructed His people to "keep the sabbath day to sanctify it" (Deuteronomy 5:12), but this time He also said, "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:15). So, the Sabbath was also a sign of God's power in delivering His people from Egyptian slavery and bondage. But how does this deliverance from slavery relate to me?

Like the Jews of Christ's day, we may proudly say that we "were never in bondage to any man!" (John 8:33), but Christ plainly states, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:34). He then went on to say, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (verse 36). The same Deliverer who brought His people out of Egyptian slavery offers to bring us out of slavery to sin with a "mighty hand" and "stretched out arm." What wonderful love and power!

When you give your heart to Christ, the Sabbath becomes a memorial of His work as your


THE SABBATH IS LIKE AN ANNIVERSARY OF MY RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST. OF COURSE, I CAN THINK ABOUT HIM EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK, BUT ON THE SABBATH, I RECEIVE A DOUBLE BLESSING!

Creator and Redeemer. God gives the Sabbath to all who accept Christ and receive the new heart, as “a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them” (Ezekiel 20:12). Keeping the Sabbath is not a way to **be holy**, it is a sign that you **have been made holy** by accepting Christ. The Sabbath is not meant only for the Jews, but for **all** who accept Christ as their personal Saviour, from Adam until today. Christ Himself taught that “the sabbath was made for man,” and, “the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath” (Mark 2:27, 28). For those who have been redeemed, the Sabbath will extend into eternity as we worship and praise our Saviour and King: “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord” (Isaiah 66:23).

SABBATH, AN ANNIVERSARY

Now that I have a deeper understanding of the Sabbath, and have accepted Christ as my Creator and Redeemer, the Sabbath is more than just a commandment!

It is a day when I can reflect on His love, the power in His Word, in nature, and in my personal experience. I also use the Sabbath to share Christ’s love with others, so that they can have the same experience. The Sabbath is like an anniversary of my relationship with Christ. Of course, I can think about Him every day of the week, but on the Sabbath, I receive a double blessing! Even better than an anniversary, the fact is that the Sabbath comes not just once a year but once a week! I am so grateful to Christ for His creation and deliverance in my spiritual life, but I know that you can have this experience too!

You may ask, how can I accept Christ as my personal Creator and Redeemer? All you must do is pray, confess your sins, and ask Him to create a clean heart in you and deliver you from the slavery of sin. Then, trust in Him for power to live in harmony with His holy law and ask for a new heart each day. Next time the seventh day of the week comes around, lay aside your secular work, studies, and leisure activities, and be prepared to enjoy the rich blessings of the Sabbath as a memorial of Christ’s love and power in your life! 

What do you call Him?

BY JARED CHAPMAN



*God
Heaven
Salvation*



Words that often sent shivers of fear running down my spine . . .

As I began questioning "When will I be saved?"

*How is it even possible for me to make it to heaven
when I can't stop making mistakes?"*

*These questions, doubts of your ability to save,
constantly repeated over time,*

*Created raging seas that would send waves of fear
crashing throughout the corners of my mind*

*'Cause I had wandered like the prodigal and had become content
feeding swine . . .*



*Delusional, unaware that in Your very existence lied
the power to enter a heart hardened with resistance!*

*The power to change it, rearrange its broken pieces of fear and shame
Into a work of art that glorified your name—Jesus*



The Soul Seeker

The Soul Keeper

All the while I drove the holes deeper,

Piercing the nails through the flesh of those healing hands—

His hands,

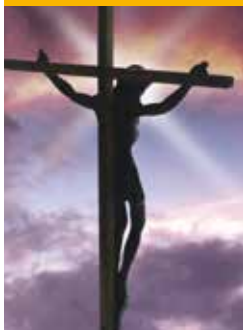
Which simply with a touch could give sight to the blind,

Where lepers would find restoration,

The hands which made paralytics whole

That reached out to save Peter's sinking soul

Where hopeless sinners would find hope



*At the cross, the scene at Calvary right before He died
In tears of agony, it was there my Saviour finally cried,
"Father why hast thou forsaken me?"
You see, the physical pain was hardly felt, hardly shown
It was the weight of the sins of every person throughout history,
The mystery that can only be felt to be known
The weight that tore apart the heart of the Son of man
While His Father turned His face from His place upon the throne!*



*Even though His feet were now nailed, His eyes were still searching,
His heart was still open to nursing the dying,
the hopeless the hurting heart of the thief
Whose original rebellion had slowly turned into the belief that the One
by his side was the Saviour and he was the chief of sinners,
Who was now well aware of his own heart's inadequacies
While faced with the Creator of the universe,
all of its stars and its galaxies
The Creator of new hearts, new desires, new motives, new
mentalities.*



*You see, I was the thief
Who had wandered a little too far from
what my conception of "God's reach" fully entailed
Unfamiliar with the notion that a Saviour had already sailed
Through the waters of the deep where I continually tried—
but always failed
Where He was continually tempted but always prevailed.*



*You see, His salvation was assured through the power
which is now accessible to all,
For our battles have been fought our victories have already been won
The moment He whispered the words "It is finished"
the work was done!
Now by faith in His word and His word alone, we are made righteous,
We become partakers of this divine nature
Through the One who came to call us His sons and His daughters*



*Though sadly today it's Christians who have begun to water down
the message of the Water of life . . .*

*Another gospel, watered down into "No matter what you do,
Jesus still loves you,"
Which is true
But Jesus loves you more than just to leave you living in sin.
He came, died and rose again,
Revealing His majestic love so you could be drawn to be born again
To walk in newness of life with "Jesus" not as a mere name,
but as a power dwelling within;*

*Where you can experience restoration of the broken bridge
lost between the divide.
Today you can walk next to your Saviour, hand in hand, side by side
Without fear,
Dwelling in appreciation under the robe of His righteousness
He lovingly supplied.*

*And today is the day, now is the time to stop wondering
Before you begin wandering any farther—
Away from the Rock, the Cornerstone, our Harbor
Jesus, my Saviour, the One who still called me His child
While still a sinner, worn, torn and defiled.
He calls out to you, "My child"
And if you're thinking, "maybe I've wandered too far," remember
He's not just any Father . . .
He's my Father, my Saviour, Creator, my Redeemer, my heart's Healer
The Light of the world, my best Friend . . .
What do you call Him?*





Breakfast Banana Split

Why not surprise your parents and siblings this Sunday morning and make a special healthy breakfast for them? Here's a great fast and fun breakfast recipe.

1 banana (one for each family member)

Cooked oats or millet

1. Peel one banana and cut it in half lengthwise. Place banana halves in banana split dish or an elongated cereal bowl.
2. Using a small ice cream scoop, place three mounds of hot, cooked cereal into the banana split dish.
3. Top two of the mounds with fruit topping. Cover the third mound with Carob "Hot Fudge" Topping.
4. Place a few spoons of frozen coconut cream or Tofu Cream topping and sprinkle with chopped nuts.
ENJOY!



Cooked Millet

4 cups water

1 cup millet

1 tsp. salt

1. Bring water and salt to a boil. Stir in millet. Cook for 30 minutes until soft.
2. If you have leftover cereal, use it the next day with milk.

Berry Fruit Sauce

2 cups frozen blueberries or mixed berries

12 oz. apple juice or white grape juice concentrate

1 cup water

3-4 Tbsp. cornstarch

1. Dissolve cornstarch in 1/2 cup water.
2. Heat juice and remaining water in saucepan until boiling.
3. Add cornstarch mixture and stir over medium-high until thickened.
4. Add frozen berries. Remove from heat.



Carob "Hot Fudge" Topping



2 cups water
¾ cup raw cashews
1/3 cup carob powder
1 ½ cup chopped dates
2 tsp. vanilla
½ tsp. salt
1 tsp. Pero or other coffee substitute

1. Bring one cup of water with the dates to a boil.
2. Turn off the heat and let the dates soften for a few minutes.
3. Blend the other cup of water with the rest of the ingredients until creamy.
4. Add cooked dates and blend until smooth.
5. If topping is not thick enough, pour into a saucepan and cook lightly until it thickens.
6. Yield: 2 1/2 cups

Tofu Cream

1 package *Mori Nu tofu, firm or extra firm*
1/3 cup raw cashews
1/3 cup sweetener
1 tsp. vanilla
18 tsp. salt

1. Blend all ingredients together for 2 minutes.
2. Serve immediately or chill. Yield: 2 cups



A Musically Spoken Gospel





On January 7 to 14, the 2nd National Music Congress was held in Itú, Brazil; an hour and forty minutes to the southeast of São Paulo city. It was held at our church property known as *Chácara Ebenezer*. This was the perfect place to inspire and host around 200 musicians from all parts of Brazil, including a few from Peru and the United States.

The week-long event provided all the participants with comprehensive training on their instruments and helped them in their sectional rehearsals. On the first day, the musicians were settling in and being oriented to their schedule. At sunset, they took a quick music theory test and were auditioned before the judges so they could be assigned to their respective rehearsal groups.


Each day started with morning worship at 7:00 AM followed by a healthy vegan breakfast. Next was the music theory class. Then the advanced and beginner orchestras rehearsed their repertoire for the final concert scheduled for Sabbath and Sunday.

During the morning and evening worships, one single theme resounded: missionary work and worship through music. This sentiment was transmitted to every child and youth as they played their instruments and used

their talents to tell the story of Christ's redeeming love.

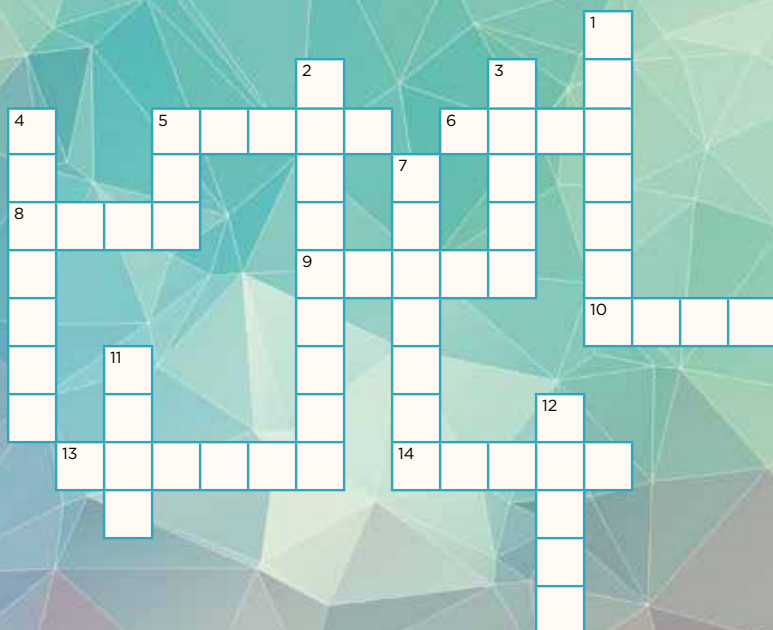
As the weekend was approaching, one could hear musicians practicing in the hallways and rooms. Such dedication inspired the congregation as they listened to the hymns and classical pieces presented by our youth.

The Music Congress was a success and the musicians as well as the concert guests were greatly blessed with the sacred music. There was also sadness of separating from the wonderful friends we had made and the instructors and conductors who had patiently rehearsed with us for many hours. As we sang the hymn "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," many hearts were touched with the blessed hope of the second coming of Jesus when we'll never part again.

As I reflect on the benefits of the Music Congress, personally, I can say that being in nature and disconnected from the social media distractions, this proved to be a great blessing for my spiritual life. Also, I was greatly benefited by the morning and evening worshiptime presented from God's word. We were all reminded that the goal of true music ministry is not showmanship, but rather the musical communication of one's personal encounter with God. 

BIBLE CHARACTERS PUZZLE

WHICH ONE OF THE PEOPLE BELOW DO YOU MOST RESEMBLE IN CHARACTER?



ACROSS

- 5. **Deceiving, conniving** – Matthew 26:47, 48
- 6. **Zealous, faithful** – 2 Timothy 4:7
- 8. **Cowardly, treacherous** – 1 Kings 21:1
- 9. **Cruel, hateful** – Matthew 2:16
- 10. **Trustful, obedient** – Genesis 6:22
- 13. **Skeptical, doubting** – John 20:24, 25
- 14. **Meek, submissive** – Numbers 12:3

DOWN

- 1. **Wise, discerning** – 1 Kings 4:29, 30, 34
- 2. **Repentant, generous** – Luke 19:1-9
- 3. **Courageous, valiant** – 1 Samuel 17:32-36
- 4. **Hard-hearted, stubborn** – Exodus 5:2
- 5. **Patient, long-suffering** – James 5:11
- 7. **Faithful, dependable** – Genesis 18:19
- 11. **Loving, affectionate** – John 13:23
- 12. **Impulsive, blundering** – John 13:37, 38; 18:10, 27

YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

YOUTH
messenger

- * Write to us and tell us which articles you like in this issue and why.
- * Tell us which article topics you would like to have us publish in the future.
- * Send us your articles, experiences, stories, and poems.
- * Ask us for our "Writer's Guidelines."

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ANSWERS TO THE PUZZLE ON P. 30.

1. Solomon	5. Judas
2. Zachariah	6. Paul
3. David	8. Ahab
4. Pharaoh	9. Herod
5. Job	10. Noah
7. Abraham	13. Thomas
11. John	14. Moses
12. Peter	

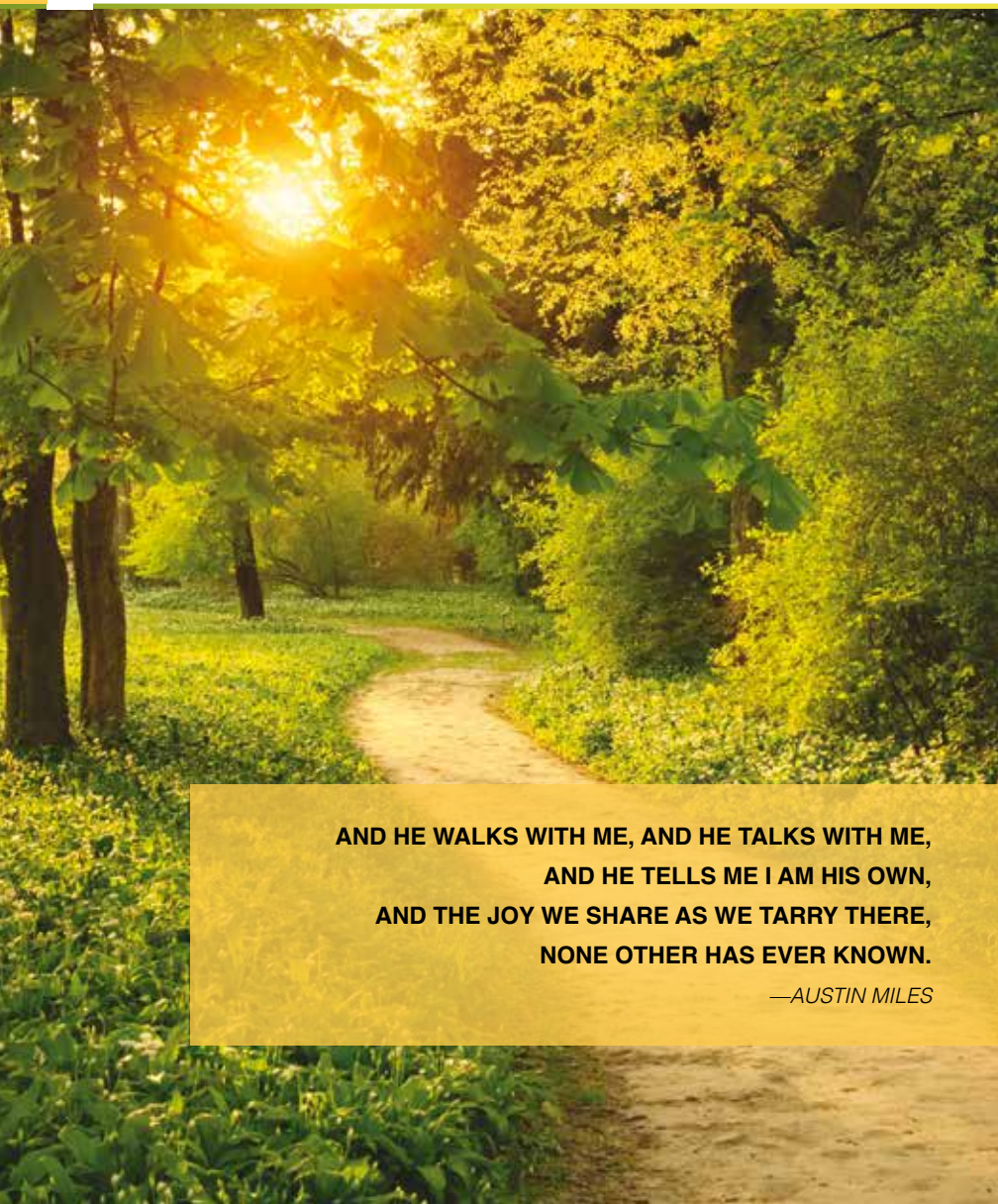
DOWN

Editor Liliane Balbach, **Layout** Bethany Montrose.

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**AND HE WALKS WITH ME, AND HE TALKS WITH ME,
AND HE TELLS ME I AM HIS OWN,
AND THE JOY WE SHARE AS WE TARRY THERE,
NONE OTHER HAS EVER KNOWN.**

—AUSTIN MILES