

Youth messenger

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"Let's Be Friends."

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EDITORIAL



A Brighter, Broader Circle of Friends

It is customary for articles to be written, discussions to take place, and seminars to be held for youth on the subject of “relationships,” romantic relationships, that is. But more could be done so that the youth can understand the importance of other aspects of interpersonal relationships as well. It seems that in secular educational centers and in churches everywhere, youth are being segregated based on age groups and are being encouraged to learn from their peers rather than from older, more experienced folks.

Yet as a child, I remember liking to listen to life stories told by war veterans and by individuals who had suffered hunger and homelessness in the 1940's. But the most fascinating stories were those I heard after my conversion, from older brethren who had experienced religious persecution in Europe. I am grateful that, back then, we as youth were mingling with the elderly, giving us a unique opportunity to learn realities we may never have had a chance to benefit from again. The most common way to learn a trade, back then, was by assisting, without pay, a professional. Boys and girls, ultimately interested also in romantic relationships eventually, would get to know each other's strengths and weaknesses in a real life setting during workshops that would combine trade and socialization.

Perhaps I'm being carried away here by nostalgia for a moment, but the point I'm trying to make is that we need to improve the way we interact with one another, to use our capacities for the benefit of all around us. By investing first in our relationship with God—who will become the source of all—we have something wonderful that we can pass on to our family, our church family, to friends, and to those who might not enjoy the privileges we have and who need salvation. May these articles be a blessing to all of you!

—Adrian Finaru





MY GOD AND I

BY INA LUKIC

While preparing for the baptism, I was asking myself how much I really know God. Do I know Him, or I just know about Him? Is He for me only God or **my** God? Do I really think of Him as of my Father, my Redeemer, Best Friend ever, or He is for me just Omnipotent, Omniscient, Almighty, Powerful God, Creator whom I respect? Then one day, I heard a beautiful song which made me think:

*My God and I go in the field together
We walk and talk as good friends should and do
We clasp our hands, our voices ring with laughter
My God and I walk through the meadow's hue
We clasp our hands, our voices ring with laughter
My God and I walk through the meadow's hue.*

So, how can we walk with God? How can we be friends with Him? How can we develop that close relationship with Him by which we can tell Him the deepest secrets of our hearts—our fears, hopes, expectations not even known to other human beings?

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES— ABRAHAM, THE FRIEND OF GOD

My journey on the path of making God my Friend has been guided by great biblical examples. I will mention here only a few most notable ones that have made a strong impression on me. Abra-

ham, the man called “the Friend of God” (James 2:23), comes first to my mind. I have known the story of Abraham from my childhood, yet it was only in my teenage years that I began to discover the deeper layers of truth mentioned in this memorable biography.

My first observation was that Abraham (known at that time as Abram), was called by Jehovah God. It was the Lord who initiated a close relationship with a man who possessed some knowledge of the true God but who was limited in his ability to know Him and to serve Him properly. “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee” (Genesis 12:1).

No one can become close with God—much less be called God’s Friend—who is not prepared to separate from the people and from the pursuits that are opposed to God’s will as revealed in the Bible. Both in Ur of Chaldea, and in Haran, Abraham was in too close association with relatives and friends who were not worshippers of the true God. In the second commandment of the Decalogue, the most sacred document written by God’s own hand, Jehovah describes Himself as “a jealous God.” This jealousy is a proper “immune” response of a healthy love relationship between God and His people. Although many of the youth in our church have Christian parents and Christian upbringing,

every child and youth needs to identify and confront any person or any issue that may draw him or her away from God. God invites each of us to a close friendship, yet this friendship is exclusive and very intimate, and it allows of no other god or pursuit that is contrary to God’s will.

THE ROLE OF FAITH

The book of Hebrews teaches us that no relationship with God can exist without faith: “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). God speaks and we listen. He speaks through His word, the Holy Scripture, and He also speaks through our conscience. Faith cannot be generated and grow without God’s word: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Abraham believed that God could fulfil His promise to him and Sarah—although, considering their age, an offspring seemed utterly impossible. We are told of Abraham’s faith: “He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God” (Romans 4:20, NKJV).

This saving faith was an active force in Abraham’s life, making him obedient to God’s commands—whether to leave his homeland and his relatives or to be prepared to offer to God as a sacrifice the



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but by the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit,
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promised son, Isaac. Therefore, God was able to say of Abraham: "And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Genesis 26:5, 6).

My study of the life of Abraham taught me several important lessons: God is the One who initiates my relationship with Him; He calls me into a loving but exclusive covenant with no other gods; and further, my covenant with God is established on God's promises and my free acceptance of those promises by faith. I have come to understand why no one can please God without faith: No close relationship can exist without trust. We can maintain friendship with people who hurt us but who acknowledge their wrongdoing, express genuine sorrow for it, and promise to act differently in the future. However, if someone acts under the pretense of being our friend but lies to us and betrays us, we lose confidence in such a person; we cannot trust that man or woman. This brings any relationship based on trust to an end.

SOME OTHER EXAMPLES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT – MOSES

Space does not permit me to bring to light all the great men and women of the Bible from whom I have learned the lessons of how to build a strong relationship with God. I will mention only a few that stand out. Let us briefly look into the lives of Moses and Elijah. All these men had very personal encounters with God that transformed their lives.

Moses obtained the highest education at the Egyptian court and was destined to become the ruler of a mighty empire. The slaying of an Egyptian who mistreated a fellow Jew completely derailed the trajectory of Moses' life. He became a fugitive in a foreign country and a shepherd in the service of his father-in-law. But one day, as he was tending the sheep on Mount Sinai, Moses was called from a burning bush by the same Master who had called his ancestor, Abraham. Moses soon realized that he was talking to a divine Being. That Being commissioned Moses to lead out the greatest rescue operation in the Old Testament—the exodus of the nation of Israel from Egypt, the house of bondage. When Moses asked the divine Person he was speak-

ing with about His name, Moses was told: “I Am That I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:14). That unique encounter with God transformed Moses’ life and made from a humble shepherd the greatest national leader and lawgiver of all times.

Moses was to have another memorable meeting with Israel’s God on the same mountain—but some time later as he was leading Israel through the wilderness to the Promised Land. At that time, the nation of Israel would make a solemn covenant with God. God made a similar declaration about His character to Moses while on Mount Sinai: “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Exodus 34:6).

THE PROPHET ELIJAH

The prophet Elijah is another major biblical figure who can teach us about having a true relationship with God. Elijah was commissioned to carry out one of the greatest reformations in Israel’s history. God sent him with a startling message to the apostate King Ahab and the wicked queen Jezebel: There would be no rain or dew but according to the prophet’s word! The inspired source tells this about Elijah: “It was only by the exercise of strong faith in the unfailing power of God’s word that

Elijah delivered his message. Had he not possessed implicit confidence in the One whom he served, he would never have appeared before Ahab.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 121. Elijah was to have several amazing experiences with God during the 3½ years of drought. He would ultimately confront the prophets of Baal and Asherah on Mt. Carmel and there obtain a major victory.

However, after a glorious success, Elijah felt threatened by the idolatrous queen Jezebel, and he lost his hold on God. He fled to the Judean wilderness and from there he journeyed forty days to Horeb, the “Mount of God.” After asking Elijah, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” God gave him an unforgettable object lesson. Placing Elijah at the entrance into a cave, God produced some powerful phenomena to appear before Elijah—tempestuous wind, an earthquake, and a fire. But God was not in them. Then came a still small voice which Elijah recognized to signify God’s presence. The significance of the still small voice for Elijah and for us, is immense: “Not in mighty manifestations of divine power, but by ‘a still small voice,’ did God choose to reveal Himself to His servant. He desired to teach Elijah that it is not always the work that makes the greatest demonstration that is most successful in accomplishing His purpose. . . . Not by eloquence or logic are men’s hearts reached, but by the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit, which operate quietly yet surely in trans-



The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself.

forming and developing character. It is the still, small voice of the Spirit of God that has power to change the heart.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 168, 169.

There are precious lessons on how to grow in a relationship with God that I have learned from the experiences of Moses and Elijah. Both great men were called and directed by God, and both accepted the divine appointment by faith. However, both Moses and Elijah had to learn something about God’s character and about their own weaknesses. The most important lesson that fallen human beings can learn is their utter helplessness and their total dependence on God. Every step on our spiritual journey depends entirely on the grace of God. Yet, in order to walk with God effectively, we need to exercise faith or complete trust in His word. That word contains precious promises revealing God’s wisdom. Closely related to faith and trust in God and in His word, is the third lesson: We can trust God only if we know Him. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). And here we are not left in the dark. God the Father could not have made a more perfect revelation of Himself than by sending His own Son to this world. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

MEETING GOD IN JESUS OF NAZARETH

Is there any better way to know God than to meet Jesus, the Son of God?! All the lessons about God and having an authentic walk with God cannot be complete without entering the school of Christ. I have embarked, therefore, on the most rewarding and exciting journey by searching for Israel’s Messiah in the Old Testament texts. I followed the example of Jesus when He taught His disciples on the way to Emmaus: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). Entering the New Testament, I have beheld Him from His humble birth, His early years, His entrance in the public ministry. . . . He has never ceased to fascinate me as I have watched him preach that the kingdom of God is near, or restore health to the sick, cast out demons, raise the dead. . . . Jesus has become so real to me that I have felt comfortable in talking to God in prayer about my joys, my disappointments and struggles, my hopes, as to my dearest Friend.

“BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD”

Ultimately, I have beheld Him in Gethsemane as He was groaning under the heavy weight of my sins. I have followed Him as He was arrested—experiencing betrayal and


denial, and the hearings before religious and secular authorities. I observed His dignified behavior as He was abused by wicked men in unfair trials. I have looked in horror as God's holy Son was ridiculed and mocked, spitted on, flogged, and then put on the cross! Why would He patiently and humbly endure all this abuse at the hand of the people He came to save? The more I have struggled with this question, the more I have realized that He did it for me. It was my sins that inflicted on Him this unspeakable physical suffering and unimaginable anguish of soul. I am so glad that He won the victory over death because the grave could not hold Him. He remained sinless, fully surrendering His will to His Father's will. According to the prophecy, He was resurrected on the third day!

This beholding of Christ's suffering taught me the most important lesson of all, the lesson that Jesus taught Nicodemus one starry night: "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). When Nicodemus asked: "How can a man be born when he is old?" (v. 4), Jesus revealed the mystery of the new birth: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15). The Holy Spirit opened my mind to this great truth: Unless I meet Jesus on this

sacred ground, unless I by faith behold Christ lifted up on the cross for my sins, I cannot experience new life. This is the place where one life ends, and a new life begins.

HOW ARE WE SAVED?

"How, then, are we to be saved? . . . The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 175, 176.

My following of Jesus to the cross and to His glorious resurrection, brought me to a major milestone in my life. At the beginning of October 2021, together with two other young people, I publicly professed my faith and made a covenant with God through water baptism. The God of the scriptures, the God of Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and of innumerable heroes of faith, is now my God also. In all my journey I also feel much indebted to my godly parents and relatives, and to my church. They have guided my steps in the path of righteousness and encouraged me to move forward when I hesitated. God is real to me, and I cannot imagine my life without being in His presence. I thank Him for giving His dear Son, Jesus Christ, for my sins and for preparing a place for me and for all those who love Him in His kingdom of glory! 

A Piece of Heaven on Earth

By Cosmin Paulescu

In the garden of Eden, God established the first FAMILY. After creating Adam, “The Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Genesis 2:18).

Starting with a rib from Adam, God formed Eve. Then He told the two of them: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28).

Throughout history, families have formed the basic unit of society. The pen of Inspiration explains: “The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 18.



The foundation of a strong marriage

“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waked but in vain” (Psalm 127:1). This verse teaches us the truth that every endeavor in life must be based on a relationship with God.

“The family relationship should be sanctifying in its influence. Christian homes, established and conducted in accordance with God’s plan, are a wonderful help in forming Christian character. . . . Parents and children should unite in offering loving service to Him who alone can keep human love pure and noble.”—Ibid., p. 19.

As the love of Christ operates in the heart of a husband and a wife, the married couple is better able to love one another. I’m able to love my wife better today than I could before I knew the Lord. My love is deeper, stronger and purer because I’m able to love her with His love. People in love with Jesus are able to be channels through which His love can flow to those around us.

Being in right relation to the Lord Jesus brings a divine dimension to marriage. When both the husband and the wife are in a vital, growing relationship with the Lord, they can pray together. They can worship together. They can discuss the things of God together. Their mutual relationship with God moves their own relationship beyond the physi-

cal into the spiritual. Thus, their love is stronger, purer and more enduring than it could ever be otherwise.

The fundamentals of a strong marriage

There are several non-negotiable essentials that stand as pillars in every strong, spiritual marriage.



When we speak about love, we are not talking about the kind of love portrayed in Hollywood. Paul describes the kind of love we are talking about in 1 Corinthians 13:4–6:

- **To suffer long.** This means patient endurance even when provoked; not losing one’s temper. Love does not retaliate!
- **To be kind.** Love is kind in words and actions
- **Not to envy.** True love values gifts in another.
- **Not to be puffed up.** Love is not arrogant or proud; it does not demand to be “number one.”
- **Not to behave unseemly.** Love is never rude, but it always treats others with compassion, consideration and respect!
- **Not to seek for ourselves.** True love is never selfish and self-centered.

- **To rejoice in the truth.** This kind of love is to be mutual. The husband is commanded to love his wife with every fibre of his being. Ephesians 5:25, 28.

The wife is commanded to love her husband. Titus 2:4. A home filled with love is a home filled with the essence of Heaven!

“In every family where Christ abides, a tender interest and love will be manifested for one another; not a spasmodic love expressed only in fond caresses, but a love that is deep and abiding.”—*Ibid.*, p. 94.



“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” Ephesians 5:31 (NKJV) speaks of the law of “leaving and cleaving.” This was what God expected of the first married couple (Genesis 2:24), and it is what He expects of every other married couple. When a man and a woman are married, there is a fundamental shift in their relationships to others.

Their relationship with the parents is altered forever. It can still be strong, but the marriage relationship must have pre-eminence over the parental relationship. Children need to let go and so do parents. Few things are more devastating to a marriage than a failure to “leave and cleave.”

The word “joined” means “to be glued.” It is the idea of two things being bonded together in such a way that they cannot be torn apart. It is a bond so strong and so deep that you cannot tell where one begins and the other ends.

This kind of loyalty is spelled out in 1 Corinthians 13:7. Look at the characteristics of true loyalty:

- **Bearing all things.** – Loyal even when things are tough. It doesn’t walk out in the day of trouble.
- **Believing all things.** – Loyalty believes in one’s mate. They trust each other.
- **Hoping all things.** – Loyalty never looks for the worst in each other, but only believes the best.
- **Enduring all things.** – Loyalty sticks it out. Loyalty does not abandon the fort.

“Christians have a sacred, holy work to do in carrying forward the work that Christ came in human flesh to accomplish. Here is an open field for every family to manifest the breadth of their love and loyalty.”—Letter 37, 1898.



Mutual respect is fundamental for any marriage to have long-term success. Let’s consider some scriptures:

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing” (Ephesians 5:22-24). These verses have been among the most loved and hated of the New Testament. Some men love to hang these verses over the heads of their wives and demand that they fall down before them in obedience. (They forget verse 21 which shows submission/respect as a two-way street.) Some women read these verses and feel that they make the wife inferior to the husband. Neither interpretation is correct.

God is not establishing the husband as some kind of dictator in the home. Nor is God relegating the wife to a place of servitude. The word “submit” means “to arrange under.” The truly spiritual wife recognizes God’s order in the home. She understands that it is a reflection of God’s order in the church. Jesus is the head of the church and we are to submit to His headship. The husband has been given the responsibility of leading the home and the godly wife follows the husband’s leadership willingly and humbly.

The husband is not to demand submission from the wife. She is to offer it freely and lovingly. This submission is to her “own husband” only (not everyone else’s).

Women are not required to be subservient to men in general. They are equals, even in the home. But, God has invested leadership in the husband, who will be held responsible for the home. He will give an account for his actions as the head of the home when he stands before Jesus.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (Ephesians 5:25, 28, 29).

I willingly submit to the Lordship of Jesus in my life because I know He loves me. I understand that He gave Himself to save me sacrificially, willingly, lovingly, and unconditionally. I respond to His love by submitting to Him. The same is true in the home. When the husband loves His wife sacrificially, willingly, lovingly, and unconditionally, she will respond by respecting him.

Men, your wife will be more likely to follow your lead if she knows you love her with every fibre of your being. We saw in the passage in Ephesians 5 above that the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church—and to love her as he loves his own flesh. Husbands are to “nourish” their wives, and they are to “cherish” their wives. Let’s consider these two words for a moment.

To nourish = To bring to maturity. A godly husband helps his

wife to reach her fullest potential in God. He helps her to grow by meeting her needs and by being an encouragement to her life. To cherish = To soften with heat. The husband is to give tender love to his spouse. This is the primary “want and need” of most women. They need to feel loved and they crave special attention. They need time, attention, and a sense of security. A loving husband can easily provide all these things to his wife.

The reason some wives have a hard time submitting to their mates is because the man is anything but Christlike in his love for her! Nonetheless, ladies, this is no excuse for rebellion in the home! You are told to “submit” regardless of how he behaves toward you. Even if your husband is not a believer, you have the duty of submission: “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement” (1 Peter 3:1-6).


Yet let us notice also the next verse: “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered” (1 Peter 3:7).

“The weaker vessel” does not mean something inferior. This phrase refers to a vessel that is delicate and of immense value. It is to be handled with love and tender care!

Marriage is one of the greatest gifts God ever gave to humanity. But it is truly beautiful when it operates as God intended.

Something to think about

Has the Lord spoken to you about your marriage—or, if you are not married—how you plan to conduct your married life? Husbands and wives may want to come and pray together today. You may want to ask the Lord to strengthen your bonds. You may want to iron out some troubled places. You might need to apologize to your spouse for acting like a jerk. You might want to come and thank God for what He has done in your home. This would be a great time to make your marriage stronger.

If you are out of God’s will in this regard, come home. If you are lost, come to Jesus. Amen. 



We Are All Brethren

By Gabriel Serban

JESUS' PLAN FOR THE CHURCH

It was the Fall of 2015 when, without a phone and with a limited amount of money, I arrived in the Land of Opportunity. Shortly after arriving at the airport, I was looking around and noticed that everything was so different compared to the way that I was used to. I realized that the only one I could trust and find support from in those moments was God. As I was thinking and waiting, someone picked me up and brought me to the place where I was accommodated to attend the public meetings of the General Conference. When the event ended, I visited different families in various places and I noticed something interesting. Even though I didn't speak the language very well, there was something that would remind me of home in each house I would visit. The food, the music, the morning and evening worships, the Sabbath and other daily details were the very ones with which I, too, had grown up.

When Jesus was on the earth, in one of His conversations with God, we find Him praying for His disciples throughout the ages. In John 17:21, Jesus prayed that His disciples might be united with one another and with God. This very unity is what I experienced by being far from home. Although I was away from friends and family while visiting the brethren in the United States, I was blessed to be welcomed by my church family. It is such a beautiful thing when, no matter where you go, God's church is the same, united in truth and in faith.

THE CHURCH AS A FAMILY

As humans, we were created as social beings. Especially as children and young people, we long for associations with those like us. We are given a glimpse into why we are relational creatures in Genesis 1:26, when "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Not only does this statement show us that we are made in God's image, but it

also points to the plurality of the Godhead. This reality isn't just a doctrine to add to our beliefs, but it also has implications for us in how we live with our relationships. If, for eternity past, God Himself had not even existed as a solitary being, it becomes obvious that creatures made in His image would thrive with the same conditions. This principle applies to the church. Whether we accept it or not, we all have an inherent need to be connected with others. We might have friends at school or at work, but these people are only friends.

Yet, on the other hand, a brother or sister of the same faith can understand our Christian walk and the battles that we are facing every day. When the apostle Peter was in prison, his church family had been praying for him all night long. Peter didn't know that they were praying for him until the Angel of God led him to them, and we can imagine his gratitude to have brethren who cared for him. It is so wonderful to know that someone understands you and prays for you!

I was just four years old when I suffered extensive burns after our home caught fire. For a couple of months, while recovering at home, there would be someone who came to visit me every day. These people would treat my wounds and oftentimes bring me different toys to distract me from the pain. My grandmother was also affected by the fire. I remember that a sister traveled about 200 miles

to live with my grandmother until she was healed. Even though I was only four years old, I was very impressed and encouraged by this love. I realized that even though they had no responsibility to be there, they still came and seemed happy to help, rejoicing with every sign of recovery.

The church family is the place where we encourage each other by sharing our experiences, supporting each other and preparing for the Kingdom of God together. "We sustain a loss when we neglect associating together to encourage one another in the service of God.... We are all children of one Father, dependent upon one another for happiness.... It is the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature that brings us into sympathy with our brethren and affords us happiness in our efforts to bless others."—

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 541.

WHY IS CONNECTION WITH BRETHREN IMPORTANT?

Many believe that the church needs them. While this belief may have aspects of truth, such a continuous mindset can cause some to forget that they also need the church. In order to form characters that reflect God's image and in order to fulfill our commission on this earth, we all need to be connected and united with our brothers and sisters. The apostle Paul pictures the church as a body where each individual is a component of the church body

and Jesus Christ is at the head of it. You and I are small members of this body.

Many times we see people with a missing arm or a missing finger walking around. We recognize that they are still alive, but have you ever seen an arm surviving by itself without being connected to a body? Or have you ever seen fingers being alive without being connected to an arm? The same is true for us in the church capacity. The church can survive and will go on without us, but we cannot survive in this world without being connected to Christ. Jesus affirms this in John 15:5 by saying, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” While some may believe that they can be connected to Christ and still be separate from the church, the Spirit of Prophecy contradicts this by commenting that, “Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church.”—*A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 68. We need to be connected with Christ and His Church in order to survive spiritually and fully fulfil our duties on this earth.

HOW CAN WE HAVE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR CHURCH BRETHREN?

After Jesus departed from His disciples, they realized that they had misunderstood their Master’s appeals for unity. While gathered in the upper room, they “all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:14). “Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this they realized what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ. Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37. The disciples also realized how childish they had acted towards each other. During the short time that they still had together, the disciples made it the best. Now they were living and working in harmony for the same purpose and with the same Spirit.

Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.



If we can't forgive one another here, how can we expect to share heaven for eternity together?

We may sometimes find ourselves in their experience. We may have attended church since childhood or have been a member for a long time, and yet, we can still have many areas in which to grow with regard to our associations with others. By holding envy against our brethren, or always reminding them about the wrongs they have done to us, or even talking about some behind their backs, we can fall short of the commissions Christ gave to us. The Bible mentions that “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15). The disciples were happy to have another chance to do things right; yet, they regretted the past. Do we know for sure that we might have another chance? Day by day, we hear news that those who we knew have lost their lives. No one has tomorrow guaranteed to them. Therefore, we are advised in the Word of God that, “if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23, 24). And, “be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath” (Ephesians 4:26)!

1. REMEMBER

“Christ had bidden the first disciples love one another as He had loved them. Thus they were to bear testimony to the world that Christ was formed within, the hope of glory. ‘A new commandment I give unto you,’ He had said, ‘That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another’ (John 13:34).”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 547. Man was created perfect, but through disobedience, he lost this virtue. “Through disobedience, [man’s] powers were perverted, and selfishness took the place of love.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 17. The lack of love brings out all these wrong things that we hold against each other. “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent” (Revelation 2:5)!

2. BE HUMBLE

Humility is the medicine for hypocrisy. When we stop looking at ourselves and stop thinking that we might be better than those around us, we allow Christ to work in our hearts and He will strengthen our relationships with one another. In Galatians 2:20, the apostle Paul says, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and 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.” The Spirit of Prophecy gives additional insight into Paul’s experience by commenting that,

“After association with the Son of God, the humble follower of Christ is found to be a person of sound principle, clear perception, and reliable judgment. He has a connection with God, the source of light and understanding.”—

Christian Education, p. 199.

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).


3. FORGIVE

Forgiveness also plays an important role in our relationships with one another. When we hold a grudge upon a brother or sister, our souls are poisoned and anytime we see the person, we would judge every act, and we place the same judgment upon all those who associate with them. “ ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ The conditions of obtaining mercy from God are simple and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order to gain forgiveness. 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. He that ‘confesseth and forsaketh’ his sin ‘shall have mercy.’ ” Proverbs 28:13.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 552. If we can’t forgive one another here on earth, how can we ex-

pect to share heaven for eternity together? Our sins are forgiven based on how much we forgive. In Colossians 3:13, we are advised: “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

CONCLUSION

“John, realizing that brotherly love was waning in the church, urged upon believers the constant need of this love. His letters to the church are full of this thought. ‘Beloved, let us love one another,’ he writes; ‘for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.’ ”—*Ibid.*, p. 548.

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:5–8). 

LOVE NOT THE WORLD

By Noemi Babai



Love our peers but do not love the world! Is it possible?

I'm at a stage in my life right now where I have classmates, friends, and also colleagues coming from non-Christian families. Why can this be an issue to talk about? Can our surroundings affect our lives, behavior, actions? Maybe the question really is—**should** it affect these?

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE FROM THE BEGINNING

Everyone who is at least 15–20 years old has probably had 3 environments in which to meet non-Christian peers: kindergarten, school, and friends from afternoon activities.

You typically go to kindergarten at a very early age, somewhere between the ages of 3–7. Until that time, children

usually have been under the care of their parents and the influences they have received came from the home. Kindergarten is often the first place where they may encounter some badly learned behavioral patterns. Dealing with classmates coming from another kind of environment that is different than that to which they're accustomed, calls for new patterns and solutions to problems of everyday life. These are sometimes not ideal.

In my observation, children today are already learning to pick on each other, to mock, to argue and even utter their first curse words in these early age environments.

When we talk about this age, it's the parents' responsibility to tell their children about why these things are not good and why their

kind and good Heavenly Father does not love this kind of behavior. At the same time, this is where children need to be advised that this does not mean to hate their peers, but rather to not love the way they act.

THE 2ND PHASE

This phase is the age of school and early work. We can say that it is somewhere between the ages of 7 and 20–26. These are the years where our personality becomes fully established. It's really important to be awake and take heed to ourselves and realize who we are becoming. That being said, we need to watch who is around us. From this, you might think we therefore should just separate ourselves from our classmates. No, not necessarily.

STANDING FIRM

Let me remind you of something from the Word of God: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 19:19). This is one of God's most important commandments. Love your neighbor, love your friend, love your classmate . . . and it goes on and on. Spend time with them. But can you still manage to stand firm and not bend like a tree in the storm?

We know of a good example who was brought up in sinful environment but still was a really good child of His parents:

"The life of Jesus was a life in harmony with God. While He was a child, He thought and spoke

as a child; but no trace of sin marred the image of God within Him. Yet He was not exempt from temptation. The inhabitants of Nazareth were proverbial for their wickedness. The low estimate in which they were generally held is shown by Nathanael's question, 'Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?' John 1:46. Jesus was placed where His character would be tested. It was necessary for Him to be constantly on guard in order to preserve His purity. He was subject to all the conflicts which we have to meet, that He might be an example to us in childhood, youth, and manhood."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 71.

"Thus as He grew in wisdom and stature, Jesus increased in favor with God and man. He drew the sympathy of all hearts by showing Himself capable of sympathizing with all. The atmosphere of hope and courage that surrounded Him made Him a blessing in every home."—*Ibid.*, p. 74.

A "blessing in every home!" He was going around filled with the love of God. He had a good relationship with Him and therefore it was evident for Him to be kind and loving with everyone. When we follow His example—the best ever shown—we can go around and make friendships with our peers. We are able to love them and be a blessing to them. Yet, we are still to stand firm in our faith. We need to see and act by faith, because in our own strength we will fail. But if we are able

to build connections with these intentions, later we can reveal God to them as the apostles did:

“The apostles endeavored to impart to these idolaters [the Lystrians] a knowledge of God the Creator and of His Son, the Saviour of the human race. They first directed attention to the wonderful works of God—the sun, the moon, and the stars, the beautiful order of the recurring seasons, the mighty snow-capped mountains, the lofty trees, and other varied wonders of nature, which showed a skill beyond human comprehension. Through these works of the Almighty, the apostles led the minds of the heathen to a contemplation of the great Ruler of the universe.

“Having made plain these fundamental truths concerning the Creator, the apostles told the Lystrians of the Son of God, who came from heaven to our world because He loved the children of men. They spoke of His life and ministry, His rejection by those He came to save, His trial and crucifixion, His resurrection, and His ascension to heaven, there to act as man’s advocate. Thus, in the Spirit and power of God, Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel in Lystra.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 180, 181.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE BEND?

Once I heard a really good illustration: It is easier to pull someone off the table than to lift

someone up onto the table. This thought stayed in my mind ever since.

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

This Bible verse states that if you go around with those friends or colleagues of yours that don’t know about nor are even interested in your faith, it can cause a big mistake in your life.

As I “discovered” new things, new friends/groups in my life, it always affected me. Hopefully mostly for good—but unfortunately, I can mention some examples where I loved the people around me, truly, but I also started to like not only them but their actions as well (which weren’t always so good). Growing up in Christian family with Christian friends, it was easy to make friends. My friends were similar to me and enjoyed the same things as I did. Only later did I understand more thoroughly that although I am to love my friends from the world with the same love, I can’t love their actions.

There is a man in the Bible whose bad example we can learn from. His name is Lot. He lived near the city of Sodom, and as he and his family had probably heard a lot about the city, they started to like it.

“Fairest among the cities of the Jordan Valley was Sodom, set in a plain which was ‘as the garden of the Lord’ in its fertility and beauty. Here the luxuriant vegetation of



When we follow the example of Christ, we can make friendships with our peers and be a blessing to them, yet still stand firm.

the tropics flourished. Here was the home of the palm tree, the olive, and the vine; and flowers shed their fragrance throughout the year. Rich harvests clothed the fields, and flocks and herds covered the encircling hills. Art and commerce contributed to enrich the proud city of the plain. The treasures of the East adorned her palaces, and the caravans of the desert brought their stores of precious things to supply her marts of trade. With little thought or labor, every want of life could be supplied, and the whole year seemed one round of festivity.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 156.

We can easily fail in this trap set by Satan. We can, and have to love our peers, but cannot start loving the fame of the world as Lot did.

BROKEN, BUT HEALED

That previous paragraph might seem to you that you either have to shut yourself in with the church only or you have failed God and sinned.

Even if you feel like right now you are loving the world too much, even if you feel that you did wrong to love all your peers and then you fell in a trap and now you love the world, it is not too late. You still have time to change the behavior of your love and choose the never-ending divinely-inspired love and help for the souls of your peers.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: SOLOMON

“Solomon flattered himself that his wisdom and the power of his example would lead his wives from idolatry to the worship of the true God, and also that the alliances thus formed would draw the nations round about into close touch with Israel. Vain hope! Solomon’s mistake in regarding himself as strong enough to resist the influence of heathen associates was fatal. And fatal, too, the deception that led him to hope that notwithstanding a disregard of God’s law on his part, others might be led to revere and obey its sacred precepts. . . .

“So gradual was Solomon’s apostasy that before he was aware of it, he had wandered far from God. Almost imperceptibly he began to trust less and less in divine guidance and blessing, and to put confidence in his own strength. Little by little he withheld from God that unswerving obedience which was to make Israel a peculiar people, and he conformed more and more closely to the customs of the surrounding nations. Yielding to the temptations incident to his success and his honored position, he forgot the Source of his prosperity. An ambition to excel all other nations in power and grandeur led him to pervert for selfish purposes the heavenly gifts hitherto employed for the glory of God. The money which should have been held in sacred trust for the benefit of the worthy poor and for the extension of principles of holy living throughout the world, was selfishly absorbed in ambitious projects.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 54, 55.

“Solemn are the lessons of Israel’s failure during the years when ruler and people turned from the high purpose they had been called to fulfill. Wherein they were weak, even to the point of failure, the Israel of God today, the representatives of heaven that make up the true church of Christ, must be strong; for upon them devolves the task of finishing the work that has been committed to man, and of ushering in the

day of final awards. Yet the same influences that prevailed against Israel in the time when Solomon reigned are to be met with still. The forces of the enemy of all righteousness are strongly entrenched; only by the power of God can the victory be gained. The conflict before us calls for the exercise of a spirit of self-denial, for distrust of self and for dependence on God alone, for the wise use of every opportunity for the saving of souls. The Lord’s blessing will attend His church as they advance unitedly, revealing to a world lying in the darkness of error the beauty of holiness as manifested in a Christlike spirit of self-sacrifice, in an exaltation of the divine rather than the human, and in loving and untiring service for those so much in need of the blessings of the gospel.”—*Ibid.*, p. 74.

Here we can see how Solomon bent and turned not only himself but all Israel away from God. There seemed to be no hope, but with our God on the throne, there is always hope indeed.

“In gratitude Solomon acknowledged the power and the loving-kindness of the One who is ‘higher than the highest’ (Ecclesiastes 5:8); in penitence he began to retrace his steps toward the exalted plane of purity and holiness from whence he had fallen so far. He could never hope to escape the blasting results of sin, he could never free his mind from all remembrance of the self-indulgent course he had been



The conflict before us calls for the exercise of a spirit of self-denial, for distrust of self and for dependence on God alone, for the wise use of every opportunity for the saving of souls.

pursuing, but he would endeavor earnestly to dissuade others from following after folly. He would humbly confess the error of his ways and lift his voice in warning lest others be lost irretrievably because of the influences for evil he had been setting in operation.

“The true penitent does not put his past sins from his remembrance. He does not, as soon as he has obtained peace, grow unconcerned in regard to the mistakes he has made. He thinks of those who have been led into evil by his course, and tries in every possible way to lead them back into the true path. The clearer the light that he has entered into, the stronger is his desire to set the feet of others in the right way. He does not gloss over his wayward course, making his wrong a light thing, but lifts the danger signal, that others may take warning.”—*Ibid.*, p. 78.

What really needs to happen here now is for us to discern how we can be like the successful heroes in the Bible. It really takes a strong person to stand in a heavily polluted environment. It’s possible, but sometimes it’s not easy; sometimes you feel like you have failed. Solomon felt like that, but he realized afterwards that he was completely able to help his peers with love that flows forth from God.

May the Lord help us to be like Christ—and even if our peers have sometimes pointed us away from the narrow path, we may determine to stand firm and be like the house built on the rock. In God’s strength, we can love with the help of our Saviour. And even if we have been bent or even broken at times, with Christ there is hope and eternal love for us and for our peers, too. 🌿



The Gospel of Love

By Adrian Barnea

For many years there has been talk of a gospel of peace and love! It has been cherished by many people, and today it does nothing but penetrate our hearts and transform us into people that can be pleasing to God. The Gospel of Love!

It was through the spirit of love that the gospel was brought to you, and to all those who have a knowledge of God. We are required not merely to admire those whom God has used, but also to wish that we had such men now, and to yield ourselves to be used of God as His human agents. It was His Spirit that inspired their efforts, and He can abundantly bestow upon His workers today the same courage, zeal, earnestness, and devotion. It was Jesus who gave these men grace, power, fortitude, and perseverance, and He is willing to do the same for every one who would be a true missionary.

IN THE BEGINNING

The gospel of love had its beginning in the council of heaven.

By sin man was shut out from God. Were it not for the plan of redemption, eternal separation from God—the darkness of unending night—would have been the fate of the entire human race.

The angels prostrated themselves before the Majesty of Heaven. They offered their lives. Jesus told them that He would by His death save many, that the life of an angel could not pay the debt. His life alone could be accepted of His Father as a ransom for the fallen race. Jesus also told them that they would have a part to act, to be with Him and at different times strengthen Him; that He would take man's fallen nature, and His strength would not be even equal with theirs; that they would be witnesses of His humiliation and great sufferings; and that as they would witness His sufferings and the hatred of



THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST AMONG MEN

My dear ones, I would like to look to Jesus Christ in human nature coming into this world to carry on the love of the gospel. Let's look into His eyes full of peace and dedication. He gave up His own comfort to fulfill a plan He had made with His Father! The gospel of love transmitted to humanity by its own example from the cross on the hill of Golgotha. If we really want to talk about this gospel, all we have to do is open this gospel.

The Bible describes the practical gospel of Jesus as shown in Scripture: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

The night before His crucifixion, in the retreat of Gethsemane, Jesus "fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own tempted, agonized soul. The awful moment had come—that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. It was not yet too late. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave man to perish in his iniquity. He might say, Let the transgressor

men toward Him, they would be stirred with the deepest emotion, and through their love for Him would wish to rescue and deliver Him from His murderers; but that they must not interfere to prevent anything they should behold; and that they should act a part at His resurrection; that the plan of salvation was devised, and His Father had accepted the plan.

Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven. And the heavenly host sang a song of praise and adoration. They touched their harps and sang a note higher than before, in appreciation of the great mercy and condescension of God in yielding up His dearly Beloved to die for a race of rebels. Praise and adoration were poured forth for the self-denial and sacrifice of Jesus—that He would consent to leave the bosom of His Father and choose a life of suffering and anguish, and die an ignominious death to give life to others.

(Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 64, 65.)

receive the penalty of his sin, and I will go back to My Father. Will the Son of God drink the bitter cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequences of the curse of sin, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, 'O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.' ”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 690.

This is Jesus Christ. In His human nature, He went through various problems, helplessness and discouragement! Through all this ordeal, He asks God in a troubled voice that in all things the will of the Father be done. We could talk a lot about this gospel lived out in practical life! But we should also look a little at the life of the disciples to understand how the gospel of love could transform the lives of the disciples. Let's look at Peter, yes the apostle Peter! A disciple who is ready to walk with Jesus to the death, puts his hand on the sword, takes it out of its scabbard and cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant, a Peter who is ready to fight for Christ! We could say: Wow, this is a powerful gospel! No! This is not the gospel of love! Peter understood it later, in the outer courtyard when he looked

Jesus Christ in the eye and could see only love and forgiveness. Yes, there in the outer courtyard when he renounced the beloved Jesus for whom he was ready to go to death. He later ran into the garden, where he was supposed to have prayed a few hours ago . . . now he ran there and cried bitterly. This is the gospel of love.

NOT I, BUT CHRIST!

The apostle Paul explains the secret of victorious Christian life: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and 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).

Paul realized that his sufficiency was not in himself, but in the presence of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influence filled his heart, bringing every thought into subjection to Christ. He spoke of himself as "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (2 Corinthians 4:10). In the apostle's teachings Christ was the central figure. "I live," he declared, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).



Self was hidden; Christ was revealed and exalted. All who profess faith in the name of Christ should work for Him with heart and mind and soul and strength; and they will work if they believe the great gospel of truth. The heartiness of their zeal for Christ's sake will testify to the measure of their faith. Self will be swallowed in Christ if they are truly united with Him. "I live," said the great apostle, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and 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."

The messenger of the Lord tells us: "The light given over and over again by the Spirit of God is, Do not colonize. Enter the large cities, and create an interest among the high and the low. Make it your work to preach the gospel to the poor, but do not stop there. Seek to reach the higher classes also. Study your location with a view to letting your light shine forth to others. This work should have been done long since. Do not make the Sabbath question your first specialty. You must reach the people with practical subjects, upon which all can agree."—

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 400.

We would do well to study carefully the first and second chapters of 1 Corinthians. "We preach Christ crucified," the apostle declared, "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:23–31). The human being who undertakes to become



wisdom for another will find himself coming short.


THE PRACTICAL GOSPEL OF LOVE

“If we represent the character of Christ, every particle of selfishness must be expelled from the soul. In carrying forward the work He gave to our hands, it will be necessary for us to give every jot and tittle of our means that we can spare. Poverty and distress in families will come to our knowledge, and afflicted and suffering ones will have to be relieved. We know very little of the human suffering that exists everywhere about us; but as we have opportunity, we should be ready to render immediate assistance to

those who are under a severe pressure.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 370.

The practical gospel of love, in addition to the care we give to the poor, should also be the care of the poor in spirit. Let us offer words of encouragement, let us talk about the crucified Jesus Christ, and about the hope of forgiveness and the renewal of life in Christ! Love will never condemn, but will treat, care for, heal and transform!

My prayer is for this love to embrace each of us. And when we are tempted to compare ourselves with others, let's just look to the cross at Golgotha! This is our gospel.

May God bless you! 

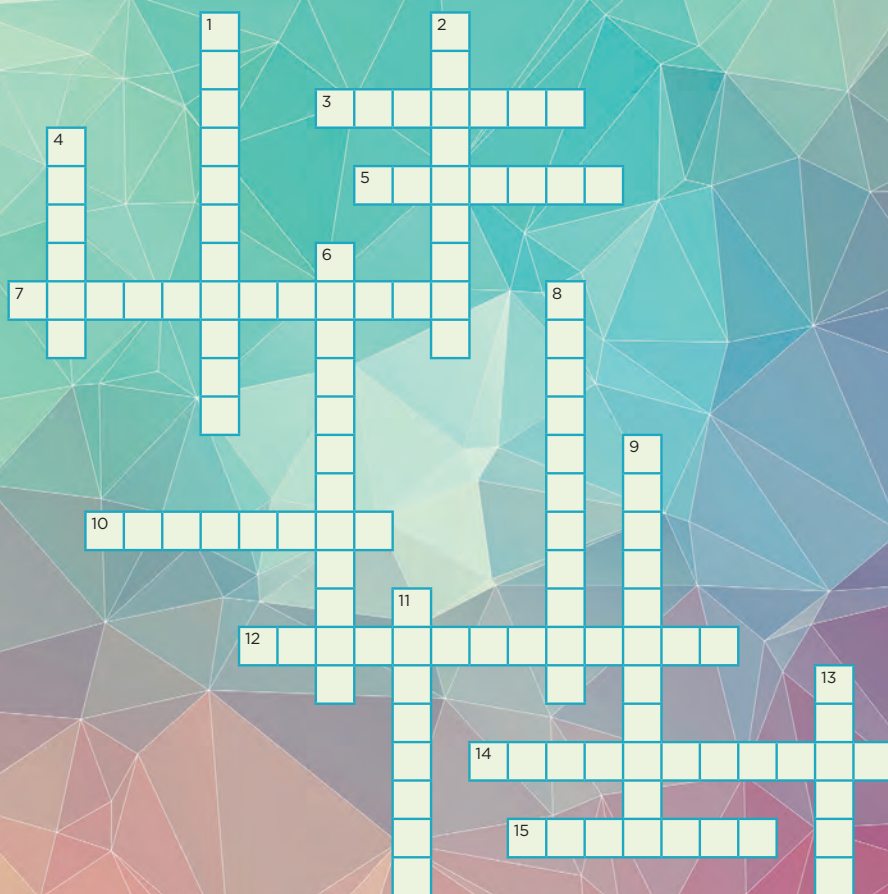
ACROSS

- _____ was known as the “Friend of God.”
- _____ began to trust less in divine guidance and in his own strength.
- Through _____, selfishness took the place of love.
- _____ is the medicine for hypocrisy.
- The apostles led the minds of the heathen to a _____ of the great Ruler of the universe.
- If we represent the character of Christ, every particle of _____ must be expelled from the soul.
- If we can't _____ one another on earth, how can we share heaven for eternity together?

DOWN

- Paul realized that his _____ was not in himself.
- Self will be _____ in Christ if we are truly united with Him.
- The word _____ means “to arrange under.”
- Elijah was commissioned to carry out one of the greatest _____ in history.
- Respect is _____ for any marriage that expects long-term success.
- The family relationship should be _____ in its influence.
- The truly _____ lifts the danger signal, that others may take warning.
- Moses was commissioned to lead out the greatest _____ operation in the Old Testament.

Did You Learn More About How to Be Friends?



Editor Adrian Finaru, **Layout** Bethany Muresan.

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ACROSS
1. SILENCE
2. SWALLOWED
3. DISOBEYANCE
4. SILENT
5. REFORMATION
6. SILENCE
7. SILENCE
8. SILENCE
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The Blessing of a Song

"What a friend we have in Jesus,"
Sang a weary child one day;
And a weary woman listened
To the darling's happy lay.

All her life seemed dark and gloomy,
And her heart was sad with care.
Sweetly rang out baby's treble,
"All our sins and griefs to bear."

She was pointing out the Saviour,
Who could carry every woe;
And the one who sadly listened
Needed that dear helper so!

Sin and grief were heavy burdens
For a fainting soul to bear;
But the baby, singing, bade her
"Take it to the Lord in prayer."

With a simple, trusting spirit.
Weak and worn she turned to God,
Asking Christ to take her burden,
As He was the sinner's Lord.

Jesus was the only refuge;
He could take her sin and care;
And He blessed the weary woman
When she came to Him in prayer.

And the happy child, still singing,
Little knew she had a part
In God's wondrous work of bringing
Peace unto a troubled heart.

—Anonymous

