God for a Living God
Jesus Christ!
has given us new
passion salvation all freedom
trust perseverance courage
faith glory worship humility
kept in heaven until the
can never
love
Help your youth group grow closer to God

Free download available at

http://www.gcyouthministries.org

It's time to get off the couch!

Disciples in Action
Young Adult Curriculum
An interactive curriculum to guide young people in their journey toward an authentic walk with Jesus
This is crazy, I thought. It’s the busiest time of the school year. I have a 10-page paper due in two days, 20 pages of reading to finish by tomorrow, and tests in less than a week. But somehow, as I sat down in the library, I found myself opening up my Bible.

It had been long neglected. Not that I hadn’t been spending time with it. I had, but it had been for Bible class or Sabbath school. This time was different. I needed, for my own sake, to read what God wanted to tell me.

I didn’t really know where to look, but my mind thought of the words of Paul. I always liked reading him. I turned to Corinthians: “But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:23, 24, RSV).

I realized that I had been a Greek lately. Thinking about pulling the grades. Being more successful and popular. But God was beginning to open my mind and teach me.

“Every verse of this chapter is just for me,” I told myself.

“Read it as if God intended Paul to write it for me to read at this moment.” I kept going: “For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. . . . But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong” (verses 25-27).

“But I don’t want to be a weak person—I’m not a weak person,” I protested. At least, I’d never seen myself as weak, and certainly not as foolish.

But maybe in my own self-confidence and self-assurance God was telling me that it might be better if I were. He could use me more that way.

Let it be noted

As I continued reading, I started writing down what God was teaching me. I had always taken lots of notes in class—never in personal Bible study.

My notes started with an observation: “The important thing is to know that I am one of the weak; God has saved me. The more quickly I can learn to trust in God’s ability to work things out in my life, rather than trying to do it all on my own, the happier and more successful I will be—in class, at home, and with friends.”

Time flew by. Time that I thought I didn’t have to spend with God right then. Finally I decided I’d better get my homework done. God won’t do that for me, I thought, even though it would be great if He did!

That day helped me see Bible study in a new way. I had put in serious time and concentration on school textbooks. But not on God’s Book. I had taken notes on teachers’ lectures, but never on what God was teaching me.

Now I realized all that the Bible could be. And I realized that time with God must be my top priority. I’ll admit that Bible study isn’t always as gripping as my experience that day in the library. But I know God is always by my side, and the strength I receive from time with Him helps me like nothing else can. I’ve also discovered something interesting. When I have no time to spare and think this is the worst time to spend with God, it often turns out to be the best time. ●
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cover: Jonatán Tejel
THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is the most extraordinary book in the world. It was written by the hands of men, but it was inspired by the Supreme Creator God.

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:20-2)

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

The Bible is made up of 66 books that were written more than 1600 years ago (from approximately 1500 BC to AD 100) by more than 40 kings, prophets, leaders, and followers of Jesus. The Old Testament has 39 books (written approximately 1500-400 BC). The New Testament has 27 books (written approximately AD 45-100). The Hebrew Bible has the same text as the English Bible’s Old Testament, but divides and arranges it differently.

The books of the Bible were collected and arranged and recognized as an inspired sacred authority by councils of rabbis and church leaders based on strict guidelines. The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek.

Before the printing press was invented, the Bible was copied by hand. The Bible was copied very accurately, in many cases by special scribes who developed intricate methods of counting words and letters to insure that no errors had been made. The Bible was the first book ever printed on the printing press with moveable type (Gutenberg Press, 1455, Latin Bible).

There is much evidence that the Bible we have today is remarkably close to the original writings. Of the thousands of copies made by hand before 1500, nearly 5,900 Greek manuscripts from the New Testament alone still exist today. The text of the Bible is better preserved than the writings of Plato or Aristotle. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls confirmed the astonishing reliability of some of the copies of the Old Testament made over the years.

As the Bible was carried to other countries, it was translated into the common language of the people by scholars who wanted others to know God’s Word. By AD 200, the Bible was translated into seven languages; as of the year 2006, 2,426 languages have some portions of the Scripture. (Source: The World Christian Encyclopedia; Wycliffe, International.)
PRESERVATION OF THE BIBLE

“The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.” (Psalms 119:160)

Jesus said: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” (Luke 21:33)

Millions have died upholding it, preaching it, and preserving it. One on the most amazing discoveries that demonstrate how God has been preserving the Bible was made in 1948 when a young Arab shepherd in Israel found the Dead Sea Scrolls in a cave while looking for a lost sheep.

Additional findings in ten other caves in the same Qumran region over the next decade gave the world a jigsaw puzzle of 100,000 pieces of ancient texts that were the remains of 870 scrolls representing all or portions of every book of our Old Testament.

These OT scrolls date back hundreds of years before Christ, and line up exactly word for word with our current King James Bible! (Masoretic text).

TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

English

Although John Wycliff is often credited with the first translation of the Bible into English, there were, in fact, many translations of large parts of the Bible centuries before Wycliff’s work. The English Bible was first
translated from the Latin Vulgate into Old English by a few select monks and scholars. Such translations were generally in the form of prose or as interlinear glosses (literal translations above the Latin words). Very few complete translations existed during that time. Rather, most of the books of the Bible existed separately and were read as individual texts. Thus, the sense of the Bible as history that often exists today did not exist at that time. Instead, a more allegorical rendering of the Bible was more common and translations of the Bible often included the writer’s own commentary on passages in addition to the literal translation.

Toward the end of the 7th century, the Venerable Bede began a translation of Scripture into Old English (also called Anglo-Saxon). Aldhelm (c. 639–709) translated the complete Book of Psalms and large portions of other Scriptures into Old English.

In the 10th century, an Old English translation of the Gospels was made in the Lindisfarne Gospels: a word-for-word gloss inserted between the lines of the Latin text by Aldred, Provost of Chester-le-Street. This is the oldest extant translation of the Gospels into the English language.

The Wessex Gospels (also known as the West-Saxon Gospels) are a full translation of the four gospels into a West Saxon dialect of Old English. Produced in approximately 990, they are the first translation of all four gospels into English without the Latin text.

In the 11th century, Abbot AElfric translated much of the Old Testament into Old English.

Spanish

The classic Spanish translation of the Bible is that of Casiodoro de Reina, revised by Cipriano de Valera. It was for the use of the incipient Protestant movement and is widely regarded as the Spanish equivalent of the King James Version.

The first Spanish Bible was printed in Basel in 1569, authored by Casiodoro de Reina, although some think that this Bible was a collective effort of some monks of the San Isidoro community in Spain, who, led by Casiodoro de Reyna, escaped Inquisition and persecution. This was the first version of the complete Bible in Spanish, and is known as "Biblia del Oso" because of the honey-eating bear on its title page.

The edition of the Reina-Valera Bible has been revised in the 19th, 20th, and 21st century.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible was written by about 40 men over a period of about 1600 years dating from 1500 BC to approximately 100 years after Christ. These men wrote this Scripture as they were given inspiration by God (2 Timothy 3:16).

The first recognized and accepted complete translation of the English Bible was initiated by John Wycliffe in 1382 and completed by John Purvey in 1388, called the Wycliffe Bible. Wycliffe wanted everyone to have access to the Bible, so he translated it for the common man to have direct access to Jesus. The Bible has since been translated in part or in whole into over 2500 languages and dialects.

The world’s first printing press with moveable metal type was invented in 1455 in Germany by Johann Gutenberg. This invention was perhaps the single most important influence in the spreading of the Bible.

Erasmus, a priest and Greek scholar, published a new Greek edition and a more accurate Latin translation of the New Testament in 1516. His goal was that everyone be able to read the Bible, from the farmer in the field to the weaver at the loom.

The Bible was divided into chapters by Stephen Langton in 1228. The Old Testament was divided into verses by R. Nathan in 1488 and the New Testament by Robert Stephanus in 1551.
Martin Luther translated the New Testament into German in 1522.

William Tyndale, priest and Oxford scholar, translated the New Testament from Greek (1525), but could not get approval to publish it in England. He moved to Germany and printed Bibles, smuggling them into England in sacks of corn and flour. In 1535 he published part of the Old Testament translated from Hebrew. In 1536, Tyndale was strangled and burned at the stake. His final words were, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes.”

Today the Bible stands as the highest sold book of all time.

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Historical information gathered from “How we got the Bible,” Rose Publishing, 2008.

“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

Some of the “big” chapters in the Bible

1. The Creation - Genesis 1
2. The Ten Commandments - Exodus 20
3. The Faithfulness of God - Joshua 14
5. The Shepherd - Psalm 23
6. The Confession of Sin - Psalm 51
7. The Praise of God - Psalm 103
8. The Word of God - Psalm 119
9. The Wisdom - Proverbs 8
10. The Temperance - Proverbs 23
11. The Majesty of God - Isaiah 40
12. The Messiah - Isaiah 53
13. The great invitation - Isaiah 55
15. The Sermon of the Mount - Matthew 5-7
16. The Sower and Seed - Matthew 13
17. The Service - Luke 10
18. The Protection of the Sheep - John 10
19. The Holy Spirit - John 14, 15
20. The Justification - Romans 5
21. The Sanctification - Romans 6
22. The Glorification - Romans 8
23. The Marriage - 1 Corinthians 7
24. The Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12
25. The Love - 1 Corinthians 13
26. The Resurrection - 1 Corinthians 15
27. The Fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5
28. The Faith - Hebrews 11
29. The Tongue - James 3
30. The Fellowship - 1 John 1
ONE WHOLE BIBLE

No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of private opinion. And why? Because it’s not something concocted in the human heart. Prophecy resulted when the Holy Spirit prompted men and women to speak God’s Word. 2 Peter 1:21, The Message

Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. 2 Timothy 3:16, The Message

FB 1. “Holy Scriptures: The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

“We’re a New Testament church,” the woman explained. It was her answer to why they didn’t believe God’s law was still in effect. “Paul says love is the fulfilling of the law. All you have to do is be loving.”

Absolutely,” agreed the questioner. “So you can commit adultery or kill if it’s the loving thing to do, right?”

The woman’s eyes widened in shock. “No!”

Generally, when people talk about grace having done away with the law, they mean one particular law—the one about the free present God made of a whole day of blessed rest per week. They may also talk about regulations, such as stoning adulterers, or food laws.

I wonder what they would think if they learned that the New Testament is largely made up of quotes from and allusions to the Old Testament? Have they thought about the fact that the Old Testament was the only Bible Jesus and His disciples had, and that they learned all they needed to about salvation and the Messiah from it?

As Adventists, we believe the entire Bible is the Word of God, and it makes infinitely more sense when seen, read, and studied as a whole. It has been truly said that one can prove lots of silly things by taking a verse out of context from somewhere in the Bible. It’s only when we look at the 3 C’s: Context, Cross-Reference, and Common Sense, that we can really learn the whole truth.

And when the church set out its fundamental beliefs, obviously belief in the Bible had to come first of all, or where would you get any beliefs?

Lord Who breathed Your Word into people who loved you, Who breathed life into written scrolls, teach me to read with understanding, to hear Your voice in every part of the Bible, and to hold it in its rightful position—high and holy, but not so high and holy as You.
Historically, the Seventh-day Adventist church has founded its existence in the Bible. Adventists are a Bible-based, Bible-believing, Bible-reading people. A new Seventh-day Adventist world church initiative titled “Revived by His Word,” coordinated by the Revival and Reformation Committee, is aimed at strengthening the spiritual experience of each church member.

“The study of God’s Word leading to a life-changing experience with Jesus is at the very heart of revival.” Mark Finley, assistant to the world church president for evangelism.

“My soul clings to the dust; revive me according to your Word.” (Psalm 119:25)

“Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible through the word of God which lives and abides forever.” (1 Peter 1:23)

“And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32)
“There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God’s word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times.” Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pg. 90

“Nothing can possibly replace listening to God speak to us through His Word.” Armando Miranda, vice president for the world church. The study of God’s Word has three major components leading to revival:

1. It provides a foundation for true revival.
2. It stimulates, fosters and sustains true revival.
3. It counteracts false revivals.

Nothing can replace listening to God speak to us through His Word. Prayerfully meditating on Scripture is a primary source of spiritual strength.

The Initiative Summarized:

Church members are encouraged to read or listen to one chapter of the Bible each day beginning April 17, 2012, the first day of Spring Meetings. The reading plan begins with world church President Ted Wilson joining the division presidents in reading Genesis 1 responsively. The presidents will conclude the initiative by reading Revelation 22 during the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.

During the 1,171 days from Spring Meeting 2012 through the beginning of the General Conference Session on July 2, 2015, participants will cover the 1,189 chapters in the Bible. By reading one chapter each day and two chapters during the General Conference Session, millions of participating members will complete their journey through the Bible. An online component, featured on the Revival and Reformation website and sponsored by the world church’s Ministerial Association, allows participants to share devotional thoughts.

United by His Word “Revived by His Word” will become much larger than reading or listening to one chapter of the Bible each day. It will direct the attention of the entire world church to the importance of knowing Jesus through His Word and encourage families to read the Bible together. In cultures where the Bible is not readily available, this initiative will encourage elders to gather the church family to read the Bible aloud. It is simple, practical and affordable.

“Revived by His Word” can unite the entire church around God’s Word and make a difference in millions of lives. It can be a catalyst for regular, systematic Bible study. The goal of “Revived by His Word” is to encourage every church member to allow the Holy Spirit to transform their lives as they meditate and pray over one chapter of the Bible a day.

“I would like to invite every church member to join the worldwide family of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in reading one chapter of the Bible a day, beginning April 17, 2012 and concluding during the General Conference Session in the summer of 2015. I am confident that this journey through the Bible together will draw us all closer to Jesus. As we prayerfully read and meditate upon God’s Word, we each will be led to a renewed experience with the Savior as we look forward to His soon second coming.”

Ted N.C. Wilson

This article was originally published on page 5 of the July/September issue of *Elder’s Digest*. 
THE BIBLE AS A TEXTBOOK

THE CHILD'S FIRST TEXTBOOK

The Bible should be the child's first textbook. From this book, parents are to give wise instruction. The Word of God is to be made the rule of the life. From it the children are to learn that God is their father, and from the beautiful lessons of His Word they are to gain a knowledge of His character. Through the inculcation of its principles, they are to learn to do justice and judgment. (Page 41)

A BOOK OF PROMISES, BLESSINGS, AND REPROOFS

The mother must keep her mind refreshed and stored with the promises and blessings of God's Word, and also the forbidden things, that when her children do wrong she may present as a reproof the words of God, and show them how they are grieving the Spirit of God. Teach them that the approbation and smiles of Jesus are of greater value than the praise or flattery or approval of the most wealthy, the most exalted, the most learned of the earth. Lead them to Jesus Christ day by day, lovingly, tenderly, earnestly. You must not allow anything to come between you and this great work. (Page 41)

Its Study Builds Character.--The lessons of the Bible have a moral and religious influence on the character, as they are brought into the practical life. Timothy learned and practiced these lessons. The great apostle often drew him out and questioned him in regard to Scripture history. He showed him the necessity of shunning every evil way and told him that blessing would surely attend all who are faithful and true, giving them a faithful, noble manhood. A
noble, all-round manhood does not come by chance. It is the result of the molding process of character building in the early years of youth, and a practice of the law of God in the home. God will bless the faithful efforts of all who teach their children as He has directed. (Page 41)

IT PRESENTS GOD’S LOVE AS A PLEASANT THEME.

The children in every family are to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Evil propensities are to be controlled, evil tempers subdued; and the children are to be instructed that they are the Lord’s property, bought with His own precious blood, and that they cannot live a life of pleasure and vanity, have their own will and carry out their own ideas, and yet be numbered among the children of God. The children are to be instructed with kindness and patience. . . . Let the parents teach them of the love of God in such a way that it will be a pleasant theme in the family circle, and let the church take upon them the responsibility of feeding the lambs as well as the sheep of the flock. (Page 42)

ITS STORIES BRING ASSURANCE TO THE TIMID CHILD.

Only the sense of God’s presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden. Let him fix in his memory the promise, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7. Let him read that wonderful story of Elisha in the mountain city, and, between him and the hosts of armed foemen, a mighty encircling band of heavenly angels. Let him read how to Peter, in prison and condemned to death, God’s angel appeared; how, past the armed guards, the massive doors and great iron gateway with their bolts and bars, the angel led God’s servant forth in safety. Let him read of that scene on the sea, when to the tempest-tossed soldiers and seamen, worn with labor and watching and long fasting, Paul the prisoner, on his way to trial and execution, spoke those grand words of courage and hope: "Be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you. . . . For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." In the faith of this promise Paul assured his companions, "There shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you." So it came to pass. Because there was in that ship one man through whom God could work, the whole shipload of heathen soldiers and sailors was preserved. "They escaped all safe to land." Acts 27:22-24, 34, 44. (Page 42)

These things were not written merely that we might read and wonder, but that the same faith which wrought in God’s servants of old might work in us. In no less marked a manner than He wrought then will He work now wherever there are hearts of faith to be channels of His power. (Page 43)

Be strong in faith, and teach your children that we are all dependent upon God. Read to them the story of the four Hebrew children, and impress their minds with a realization of the influence for good that was exerted in Daniel’s time because of strict adherence to principle. (Page 43)

MAKE THE BIBLE LESSONS SIMPLE.

The parents are to teach their children lessons from the Bible, making them so simple that they can readily be understood. (Page 43)

Teach your children that the commandments of God must become the rule of their life. Circumstances may occur to separate them from the parents and from their homes, but the lessons of instruction given in childhood and youth will be a blessing to them throughout their lifetime. (Page 43)

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Taken from the book Child Guidance by Ellen G. White, chapter five.
THE BIBLE IS A VERSATILE BOOK

In its wide range of style and subjects, the Bible has something to interest every mind and appeal to every heart. In its pages are found history the most ancient; biography the truest to life; principles of government for the control of the state, for the regulation of the household--principles that human wisdom has never equaled. It contains philosophy the most profound; poetry the sweetest and the most sublime, the most impassioned and the most pathetic. Immeasurably superior in value to the productions of any human author are the Bible writings, even when thus considered; but of infinitely wider scope, of infinitely greater value, are they when viewed in their relation to the grand central thought. Viewed in the light of this thought, every topic has a new significance.

In the most simply stated truths are involved principles that are as high as heaven and that compass eternity. (Page 505)

The Word of God abounds in precious jewels of truth, and parents should bring them forth from their casket and present them before their children in their true luster. . . . In the Word of God you have a treasure house from which you may draw precious stores, and as Christians you should furnish yourselves for every good work. (Page 505)

IN IT GOD PROVIDES A RICH BANQUET.

In giving us the privilege of studying His Word, the Lord has set before us a rich banquet. Many are the benefits derived from feasting on His Word, which is represented by Him as His flesh and blood, His spirit and life. By partaking of this Word, our spiritual strength is increased; we grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. Habits of self-control are formed and strengthened. The infirmities of childhood--fretfulness, willfulness, selfishness, hasty words, passionate acts--disappear, and in their place are developed the graces of Christian manhood and womanhood. (Page 506)

The beautiful lessons of the Bible stories and parables, the pure, simple instruction of God's Holy Word, is the spiritual food for you and your children. (Page 506)

Oh, what a work is before you! Will you take hold of it in the love and fear of God? Will you put yourselves in communication with God through His Word? (Page 506)

It is the Standard of Rectitude. The Word of God should be judiciously brought to bear upon the youthful minds and be their standard.
of rectitude, correcting their errors, enlightening and guiding their minds, which will be far more effectual in restraining and controlling the impulsive temperament than harsh words, which will provoke to wrath. This training of children to meet the Bible standard will require time, perseverance, and prayer. This should be attended to if some things about the house are neglected. (Page 506)

The truths of the Bible, received, will uplift the mind from its earthliness and debasement. If the Word of God were appreciated as it should be, both young and old would possess an inward rectitude, a strength of principle, that would enable them to resist temptation. (Page 506)

The Holy One of Israel has made known to us the statutes and laws which are to govern all human intelligences. These precepts, which have been pronounced "holy, and just, and good," are to form the standard of action in the home. There can be no departure from them without sin, for they are the foundation of the Christian religion. (Page 506)

**IT STRENGTHENS THE INTELLECT.**

If the Bible were studied as it should be, men would become strong in intellect. The subjects treated upon in the Word of God, the dignified simplicity of its utterance, the noble themes which it presents to the mind, develop faculties in man which cannot otherwise be developed. In the Bible a boundless field is opened for the imagination. The student will come from a contemplation of its grand themes, from association with its lofty imagery, more pure and elevated in thought and feeling than if he had spent the time reading any work of mere human origin, to say nothing of those of a trifling character. Youthful minds fail to reach their noblest development when they neglect the highest source of wisdom--the Word of God. The reason why we have so few men of good mind, of stability and solid worth, is that God is not feared, God is not loved, the principles of religion are not carried out in the life as they should be. (Page 507)

God would have us avail ourselves of every means of cultivating and strengthening our intellectual powers. . . . If the Bible were read more, if its truths were better understood, we should be a far more enlightened and intelligent people. Energy is imparted to the soul by searching its pages. (Page 507)

**IT IS THE FOUNDATION FOR HOME, SOCIAL, AND NATIONAL PROSPERITY.**

The teaching of the Bible has a vital bearing upon man’s prosperity in all the relations of this life. It unfolds the principles that are the cornerstone of a nation’s prosperity--principles with which is bound up the well-being of society, and which are the safeguard of the family--principles without which no man can attain usefulness, happiness, and honor in this life, or can hope to secure the future, immortal life. There is no position in life, no phase of human experience, for which the teaching of the Bible is not an essential preparation. (Page 507)

**KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCRIPTURES IS A SAFEGUARD.**

From a child, Timothy knew the Scriptures; and this knowledge was a safeguard to him against the evil influences surrounding him and the temptation to choose pleasure and selfish gratification before duty. Such a safeguard all our children need, and it should be a part of the work of parents and of Christ’s ambassadors to see that the children are properly instructed in the Word of God. (Page 508)

**LOVE FOR THE BIBLE IS NOT NATURAL.**

Youth are ignorant and inexperienced, and the love of the Bible and its sacred truths will not come naturally. Unless great pains are taken to build up around them barriers to shield them from Satan’s devices, they are subject to his temptations and are led captive by
him at his will. In their early years children are to be taught the claims of God’s law and faith in Jesus our Redeemer to cleanse from the stains of sin. This faith must be taught day by day, by precept and example. (Page 508)

**YOUTH ESPECIALLY NEGLECT BIBLE STUDY.**

Both old and young neglect the Bible. They do not make it their study, the rule of their life. Especially are the young guilty of this neglect. Most of them find time to read other books, but the book that points out the way to eternal life is not daily studied, idle stories are attentively read, while the Bible is neglected. This book is our guide to a higher, holier life. The youth would pronounce it the most interesting book they ever read had not their imagination been perverted by the reading of fictitious stories. (Page 508)

Youthful minds fail to reach their noblest development when they neglect the highest source of wisdom—the Word of God. That we are in God's world, in the presence of the Creator; that we are made in His likeness; that He watches over us and loves us and cares for us--these are wonderful themes for thought and lead the mind into broad, exalted fields of meditation. He who opens mind and heart to the contemplation of such themes as these will never be satisfied with trivial, sensational subjects. (Page 509)

**PARENTAL DISREGARD IS REFLECTED IN CHILDREN.**—Even when quite young, children notice; and if the parents show that the Word of God is not their guide and counselor, if they disregard the messages brought to them, the same reckless spirit of, "I don't care; I will have my own way," will be shown by the children. (Page 509)

**GIVE THE WORD ITS HONORED PLACE.**

As a people who have had great light, we are to be uplifting in our habits, in our words, in our domestic life and association. Give the Word its honored position as a guide in the home. Let it be regarded as the counselor in every difficulty, the standard of every practice. Will my brethren and sisters be convinced that there can never be true prosperity to any soul in the family circle unless the truth of God, the wisdom of righteousness, presides? Every effort should be made by fathers and mothers to bring their own minds up from the lazy habit of regarding the service of God as a burden. The power of the truth must be a sanctifying agency in the home. (Page 509)

Parents, give your children, line upon line, precept upon precept, the instruction contained in God’s Holy Word. This is the work you pledged yourself to do when you were baptized. Let nothing of a worldly character keep you from doing this work. Do all in your power to save the souls of your children, whether they are bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, or whether they have been received into your family by adoption. (Page 510)

**MAKE IT THE HOME TEXTBOOK.**

Parents, if you would educate your children to serve God and do good in the world, make the Bible your textbook. It exposes the wiles of Satan. It is the great elevator of the race, the reprover and corrector of moral evils, the detector which enables us to distinguish between the true and the false. Whatever else is taught in the home or at school, the Bible, as the great educator, should stand first. If it is given this place, God is honored, and He will work for you in the conversion of your children. There is a rich mine of truth and beauty in this holy book, and parents have themselves to blame if they do not make it intensely interesting to their children. (Page 510)

"It is written" was the only weapon that Christ used when the tempter came with his deceptions. The teaching of Bible truth is the great
and grand work which every parent should undertake. In a pleasant, happy frame of mind place the truth as spoken by God before the children. As fathers and mothers, you can be object lessons to the children in the daily life by practicing patience, kindness, and love, by attaching them to yourself. Do not let them do as they please, but show them that your work is to practice the Word of God and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Page 510)

**STUDY DILIGENTLY, SYSTEMATICALLY.**

Observe system in the study of the Scriptures in your families. Neglect anything of a temporal nature, . . . but be sure that the soul is fed with the bread of life. It is impossible to estimate the good results of one hour or even half an hour each day devoted in a cheerful, social manner to the Word of God. Make the Bible its own expositor, bringing together all that is said concerning a given subject at different times and under varied circumstances. Do not break up your home class for callers or visitors. If they come in during the exercise, invite them to take part in it. Let it be seen that you consider it more important to obtain a knowledge of God's Word than to secure the gains or pleasures of the world. (Page 511)

If we would study the Bible diligently and prayerfully every day, we should every day see some beautiful truth in a new, clear, and forcible light. (Page 511)

Let All Study Sabbath School Lessons.--The Sabbath school affords to parents and children an opportunity for the study of God's Word. But in order for them to gain that benefit which
they should gain in the Sabbath school, both parents and children should devote time to the study of the lesson, seeking to obtain a thorough knowledge of the facts presented and also of the spiritual truths which these facts are designed to teach. We should especially impress upon the minds of the youth the importance of seeking the full significance of the scripture under consideration. (Page 511)

Parents, set apart a little time each day for the study of the Sabbath school lesson with your children. Give up the social visit if need be, rather than sacrifice the hour devoted to the lessons of sacred history. Parents as well as children will receive benefit from this study. Let the more important passages of Scripture connected with the lesson be committed to memory, not as a task, but as a privilege. Though at first the memory be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight thus to treasure up the words of truth. And the habit will prove a most valuable aid to spiritual growth. (Page 511)

Parents should feel it a sacred duty to instruct their children in the statutes and requirements of God as well as in the prophecies. They should educate their children at home and should themselves be interested in the Sabbath school lessons. By studying with the children they show that they attach importance to the truth brought out in the lessons, and help to create a taste for Bible knowledge. (Page 512)

BE NOT SATISFIED WITH SUPERFICIAL KNOWLEDGE

The importance of seeking a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures can hardly be estimated. "Given by inspiration of God" able to make us "wise unto salvation," rendering the man of God "perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:15-17), the Bible has the highest claim to our reverent attention. We should not be satisfied with a superficial knowledge, but should seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, to drink deep of the spirit of the Holy Oracles. (Page 512)

APPLY LESSONS TO CHILD'S EXPERIENCE.

In teaching children the Bible, we may gain much by observing the bent of their minds, the things in which they are interested, and arousing their interest to see what the Bible says about these things. He who created us, with our various aptitudes, has in His Word given something for everyone. As the pupils see that the lessons of the Bible apply to their own lives, teach them to look to it as a counselor. . . . (Page 512)

The Bible has a fullness, a strength, a depth of meaning, that is inexhaustible. Encourage the children and youth to seek out its treasures, both of thought and of expression. (Page 513)

EACH MUST STUDY FOR HIMSELF.

Mothers and fathers carry a heavy responsibility in regard to their children. Those parents who believe and study the Scriptures will realize that they must obey the commandments of God, that they must not walk contrary to His holy law. Those who allow anyone, even the minister, to lead them to disregard the Word of God must at the judgment meet the result of their course. Parents are not to trust their own souls and the souls of their children to the minister, but to God, whose they are by creation and by redemption. Parents should search the Scriptures for themselves, for they have souls to save or to lose. They cannot afford to depend for salvation upon the minister. They must study the truth for themselves. (Page 513)

MAKE BIBLE STUDY INTERESTING TO CHILDREN.

Let the youth be taught to love the study of the Bible. Let the first place in our thoughts and affections be given to the Book of books, for it
contains knowledge which we need above all other. (Page 513)

In order to do this work, parents must themselves become acquainted with the Word of God. . . . And instead of speaking vain words and telling idle tales to their children, they will talk with them upon Bible subjects. The book was not designed for scholars alone. It was written in a plain, simple style to meet the understanding of the common people; and, with proper explanations, a large portion of it can be made intensely interesting and profitable to very small children. (Page 513)

Do not think that the Bible will become a tiresome book to the children. Under a wise instructor the Word will become more and more desirable. It will be to them as the bread of life; it will never grow old. There is in it a freshness and beauty that attract and charm the children and youth. It is like the sun shining upon the earth, giving its brightness and warmth, yet never exhausted. By lessons from Bible history and doctrine, the children and youth can learn that all other books are inferior to this. They can find here a fountain of mercy and love. (Page 514)

Parents, let the instruction you give your children be simple, and be sure that it is clearly understood. The lessons that you learn from the Word you are to present to their young minds so plainly that they cannot fail to understand. By simple lessons drawn from the Word of God and their own experience, you may teach them how to conform their lives to the highest standard. Even in childhood and youth they may learn to live thoughtful, earnest lives that will yield a rich harvest of good. (Page 514)

GIVE FRESHEST THOUGHT; USE BEST METHODS.

Our heavenly Father, in giving His Word, did not overlook the children. In all that men have written, where can be found anything that has such a hold upon the heart, anything so well adapted to awaken the interest of the little ones, as the stories of the Bible? (Page 514)

In these simple stories may be made plain the great principles of the law of God. Thus by illustrations best suited to the child’s comprehension, parents and teachers may begin very early to fulfill the Lord’s injunction concerning His precepts: "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deuteronomy 6:7. (Page 514)

The use of object lessons, blackboards, maps, and pictures will be an aid in explaining these lessons and fixing them in the memory. Parents and teachers should constantly seek for improved methods. The teaching of the Bible should have our freshest thought, our best methods, and our most earnest effort. (Page 514)

TAKE THE BIBLE AS THE GUIDE.

You must make the Bible your guide if you would bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let the life and character of Christ be presented as the pattern for them to copy. If they err, read to them what the Lord has said concerning similar sins. There is need of constant care and diligence in this work. One wrong trait tolerated by parents, uncorrected by teachers, may cause the whole character to become deformed and unbalanced. Teach the children that they must have a new heart; that new tastes must be created, new motives inspired. They must have help from Christ; they must become acquainted with the character of God as revealed in His Word. (Page 515)

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Taken from the book Child Guidance by Ellen G. White, pages 505-515.
As Seventh-day Adventists, we have often defined ourselves as “the people of the book.” In view of reinforcing this noble trait of our self-identity, the global church has recently launched the ‘Revived by the Word’ initiative, which is designed to encourage believers around the world to read the Scriptures through, one chapter a day. Beginning with Genesis in April, 2012, the project will culminate and conclude at the 2015 General Conference in San Antonio, Texas. It is the hope of leadership that this renewed commitment to the Word will contribute in bringing the Revival and Reformation that is being prayed for.

There is one aspect of engaging with the Scriptures that, in a way, constitutes the church’s main approach to the reading of the Bible; we would commonly refer to it as ‘Bible study,’ or the informational reading of the Word. This is verified in the way the Sabbath school lesson is generally structured and in the way we prepare our young people and new believers for baptism. We turn to the Bible with the purpose of increasing our knowledge of truth, gaining understanding, and bringing intellectual conviction.

While this informational approach does provide a reliable way to impart our doctrinal teachings, it does not necessarily bring about transformation in the lives of believers. The Bible itself refers to a complementary approach that is designed to bring about character transformation and spiritual growth; namely, what can be referred to as the formational approach. It is the one that is very common to biblical tradition and is epitomized in the first Psalm:

\[
\text{Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.}
\]

\[
\text{But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. [3] He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. (Psalm 1:1-3)}
\]
Here is the picture of a tree that is offered as a metaphor for someone who delights in the Word of God and has made a sacred habit of continually meditating upon it and is shaped or formed by it. That tree produces the expected fruits at the expected time and its leaves never lose their tenderness. David is describing the life-giving and transforming influence the Word of God has upon our lives as we embrace the discipline of meditation.

Commenting on David’s own preparation for leadership, Ellen White writes “His Opportunities of contemplation and meditation served to enrich him with that wisdom and piety that made him beloved of God and angels (My Life Today, p. 159.4).

We allow the Word to probe deeper levels of our being with the view of teaching, reproving, correcting, and training (2 Timothy 3:16-17). This process demands time, and without that time, the Word will not be encountered and we will not be formed through it.

3. In formational reading, instead of attempting to master the text, we allow the text to master us. We come to it with an openness to hear, receive, respond, and be its servant.

4. In formational reading, instead of the text being the object of our scrutiny, it is the subject of the reading experience. We are the objects that are shaped by the text. “We stand before the Word and await its address, ready for the Word to exercise its control over our being.”

The nature of formational reading, which the rest of this article will discuss. Robert Mulholland provides an insightful discussion on the difference between informational and formational reading that I will refer to.¹

THE NATURE OF FORMATIONAL READING

1. Formational reading is not concerned with the quantity of reading, but with the quality. The importance is not to get through a book, but to meet God in the text. “The goal is not to get through the Scriptures. The goal is to get the Scriptures through us.”²

2. Formational reading moves beyond the informational surface of the text to engaging it with the view of uncovering the depth of its meaning.

5. Formational reading requires a humble, detached, receptive and loving approach, instead of an analytical and critical one. It calls for a different inner disposition. When we are genuinely open and receptive to the Word that confronts our innermost being, we realize that we need more than a simple behavioral adjustment. We sense the need of transformation of a deeper nature.

6. Formational reading recognizes and embraces mystery instead of problem solving. Instead of approaching the text with the purpose of finding a solution to another problem, we are open to the deep mystery of God, while recognizing the very nature of our human limitations. Eventually, we may discover that tremendous solving abilities emerge from that encounter; however, we do not enter the encounter to get problem solving results.
Informational and formational readings of the Bible are not mutually exclusive; they are complementary. A balanced interplay between the two approaches is necessary. We must have a certain level of information about the biblical passage, some sense of the meaning of the text in its original context, some sense of what God was saying to the intended readers before it can become formational. That informational dynamic is important as a foundation of understanding, but it is the formational dimension that creates the opportunity to experience the encounter with God.

If the informational mode is the entry point into the text, the formational mode beckons us to go within, to enter into that deeper encounter with the Word. It is by entering that we are shaped towards wholeness in the image of Christ.

THE WORD THAT TRANSFORMS US

Scripture is the revelation of the Word as an agent of transformation. Paul’s words in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 unfold this concept:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (KJV). “All Scripture is God-breathed” (NIV). The dynamics of inspiration are not only operative at the time the Scriptures were actually written, but also at the time when the reader encounters the same Scriptures. “Scripture can only be understood through the same Spirit it was given.” When Jesus encountered His disciples after His resurrection, it was only after their eyes were opened that they could truly understand.

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

The Spirit of God at work in our lives brings us into fellowship with the text in such a way that the Word begins to shape our word unto wholeness.

When this dynamic process is in operation, Paul tells us that four things happen:

(i) The Scriptures become profitable for teaching – the reader becomes teachable.

Our lives become open to the reality of the new life of Christ. The possibility of a radically new kind of being is revealed in us.

(ii) The ‘God-breathed’ Scripture is profitable for reproof.

It brings light to the hidden corners of our lives and challenges the thoughts, motives, and intentions of our hearts. It reveals to us the poor reflection of Jesus that we have become. We begin to see the distance between what we are and what God designed us to be.

(iii) The inspired Word is profitable for correction.

It bridges the gap and brings alignment between what God calls us to and what we can actually become. It is here that we see how profitable God’s Word is for us. Not only does the Word point us to the possibility of a new kind of being, but it provides us with the opportunity of becoming that which it points us to.

(iv) It is profitable for training in righteousness.

The word “training” employed here is the word from which we get pedagogy. It refers to the process by which a child, in the Greek culture of the time, was nurtured, educated, trained, disciplined, guided, and instructed. As the child grew from infancy to maturity, they gained full participation in all aspects of society. Paul, as well as other New Testament writers, draws from this model to describe the work of God in the lives of His people through the Word. By the daily, steady, and consistent nurturing of our lives by the Word, we are increasingly
shaped unto wholesomeness and full participation in the Kingdom of God.

In conclusion of his description of the role of the Word in our lives, Paul spells out a twofold purpose of the operation. The first: “In order that the person of God might be complete.” The word rendered ‘complete’ or ‘perfect’ here, is the word artios, which means ‘that which is perfectly suited to its nature.’ The initial purpose of this shaping by the living Word is to nurture us into being all that God has designed us to be in the image of Christ.

The second: that God’s person might be “equipped for every good work.” Paul makes the point that, when our life is shaped by the Word, our word will become the word God speaks in the lives of others.

MEDITATION: THE WAY TO FORMATIONAL READING

“Although the use of scripture for meditation involves using the mind, its main purpose is
to shape the soul, the entire person.” God calls for us to be transformed through the
renewing of our minds and immersing our minds in Scriptures as an indispensable practice towards that renewal. “Meditation upon holy things will elevate and refine the mind, and will develop Christian ladies and gentlemen” {CE 109.1}.

Paul gives us an insight in this renewing function of the Word in his discussion of the work of Christ, who loved the church, gave himself for her, “cleansing her by the washing with water through the word and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (Ephesians 5:27-28).

All the imperfections that stand in the way of life that is fully devoted to God, whether they be false beliefs and attitudes, damaging feelings and motives, self-centered plans and aspirations, they all stand in the need for cleansing. To be washed by the Word is to let the Word of Christ dwell richly in us” (Col. 3:16) in a way that will release us to love God and love our neighbor as Christ commands. Meditation on the Word helps us to learn how to live in the Kingdom of God here and now and is an indispensable part of transformation.

The meditative reading of Scripture shapes us, guides us, and nourishes the heart and mind. In meditation, Scripture is read with the intention of hearing and acting out what is heard. Reading Scriptures in and of itself will not change us, but responding to the Scriptures will. “By careful reflection on them, that word becomes active in us, forming and reforming us into the divine likeness and by increasing our knowledge of the power, wisdom and goodness of God.”

APPROACHING SCRIPTURE IN MEDITATION

Practical Guidelines

1. Set apart a daily time for meditation on Scripture. That time ought to be (a) a time when we give of our best; (b) physically in a place that is conducive to the opening of our lives to God; (c) set apart internally from the distractions, pressures, and tensions of our daily life. “Jesus had often resorted to Gethsemane with His disciples for meditation and prayer. They were all well acquainted with this sacred retreat” (2T 203.3).

2. The focal intention of the reading should be the encountering of the will of God for our life. We bring our whole life before God and seek expectantly and receptively God’s will for all of its aspects.

3. The whole of God’s will is sought with the determination to embrace it. This is the key to the formational approach to Scripture. It is an inner resolve at the very core of our being to embrace whatever God speaks into our life.
4. The thematic and holistic unity of Scripture is kept in mind. We are interacting with God’s Kingdom plan: His purpose, power, and presence in our lives and in the world.

5. The reading of Scripture is entered into prayerfully. Prayer opens us to the Spirit who brought that Scripture into being in the first place.

6. The reading is marked with frequent pauses that allow the Word to speak to who we are and what we are about. We examine both the external actions (our behavior at home, work, society in general) and the inner dynamics (attitudes, habits, perceptions, emotions) of our lives.

The words of Psalm 46:11, “Be still and know that I am God,” can serve as an introduction to your time of meditation. The intention is to focus on God and to come in a state of readiness to listen and to hear what He wants to say to you personally for the day and for your circumstances. Ask God what He wants to say to you and what it is that He would have you hear and embrace.

**READ/LISTEN – HEAR THE WORD**

It is vitally important to read Scriptures aloud. It helps us slow down and take in what we read in greater measure.

Listen for a word or phrase that draws your attention.

Meditate/Reflect on the word or phrase

How is your life touched by this word?

Make the connections to your life.

3. Pray/Respond – Ask “Is there an invitation here for me?”

Discover an invitation relevant for the next few days.

Ponder in silence.

4. Contemplate – Rest in the presence of God for a time after you have prayed.

We encourage all to join those involved in leading our young people to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and leading them to embrace His call to discipleship to be men and women of the Word. Join with the world church in reconnecting with the Scriptures with the ‘Revived by the Word’ initiative. In so doing, go beyond the seeking of information, let the Word of God form and shape you unto the image of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ – that is the way of Revival and Reformation.

**REFERENCE**

2. Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, 188.
4. Mulholland, 43.
6. Op cit., 44.
7. Ibid., 45.
8. 2 Tim. 3:17 (KJV)
9. Mulholland, 46.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:17, 18, NIV

“Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God’s Holy Word.”

God’s Word can never change. However, human understanding of it changes as we grow, as shown throughout the Bible and exemplified in our text above. This fact, too, was written into our opening statement of belief, which sets us apart from many denominations.

Among Christians, there are generally two attitudes toward change. Some never change, holding fast to something their parents and pastors taught them, refusing even to ask questions. Questions are seen as disbelief or unfaithfulness, and are often feared. “God said it, I believe it, that settles it.” Very true—if you’re sure of what He actually said!

Even if they can see that a certain cherished belief is not scriptural, Christians taught this rigid way have a very hard time changing, because they feel that if they were wrong, maybe they weren’t saved at all. Maybe they never even knew God before!

Adventists are in a unique position to comfort these folks.

Other Christians and churches change all the time. They change because a belief is unpopular, because it doesn’t match the culture in which they find themselves, because society pressures them. They may even change to keep up with the XYZ denomination.

These churches may see themselves as “progressive,” while completely leaving aside the role of our only reliable creed, the Bible, which may be seen as outmoded, itself. Just a collection of fables with good morals. Or even bad morals. You can pick and choose, leaving out the ones that don’t fit your present, ever-changing view of reality.

Adventists have something to offer these folks, too. We do see truth as being progressive. We don’t like static rigidity, either. And we are able to recognize the changing nature of human understanding without throwing out the only true measuring stick we have—the eternal Word of God.

Unchanging One, keep guiding our wavering steps. Keep us in the path, but keep us from being proud about it. Make us willing to explore, but pull us back from exploring outside Your limits.”
OVERVIEW
Jesus had many followers beyond his team of twelve close disciples. At one point in his ministry the crowds who followed Jesus were so large that he had to stay outside the towns in isolated areas (Mark 1:45, 3:7-12). These followers included Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council who came by night; Zacchaeus, who repaid four fold those he cheated; Mary and Martha, who were good friends (and whose story we will study in sessions seven and eight); and the rich young ruler, whose story we examine in this session. By examining how others came to Jesus, we learn how we, too, come to Jesus. In the case of this young man, we are confronted with the profound power that possessions have over us, and the challenge this is to the spiritual life.
You will open by discussing how to spend a million dollars as a fun way to think about the role of wealth in our lives. You will then study Mark 10:17-27, the encounter between Jesus and the rich young ruler.

**OPEN (20-30 minutes)**

*A Million Dollars*

If you had a million dollars that you had to spend on one or more causes or projects, how would you spend it?

1. I would give a million dollars to (explain your answer):
2. Now that you have given away a million dollars to worthy causes, you get to spend another million dollars on yourself! I would use a million dollars to:
   - travel
   - buy a great house
   - start an art collection
   - start a retirement fund
   - start my own business
   - buy a farm
   - start an auto collection
   - retire
   - develop a wildlife sanctuary
   - fund my own research
   - other:
3. Alas, you probably do not have a million dollars to give away or to spend. But you have money to donate. Which project has given you the most joy to support?

**THE PASSAGE (5 minutes)**

17. As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
18. “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered.
19. No one is good—except God alone.
20. “You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”
21. “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”
22. Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”
23. “At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.
24. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”
25. The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”
26. The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”
27. Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” (Mark 10:17-27)

**ANALYSIS (10-15 minutes)**

*The Young Man*

4a. Describe the young man. Who is he? What issues concern him? What type of person is he?
4b. What is the value in keeping the commandments? What is the problem in keeping the commandments?
4c. What is the problem of wealth? What is the value of wealth?
The Disciples

5 a. What amazes the disciples?

b. What is Jesus’ response to their amazement? What does he mean by these words?

Jesus

6 a. What does Jesus feel about this young man? About the Twelve? About all who would follow him?

b. What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?

c. What do you learn about following Jesus from this passage?

RESONANCE (10-15 minutes)

What We Love

7 a. In what ways is your story like the story of the young man?

b. What sparked your interest in the spiritual life (eternal life)?

How We Struggle

8 a. With which of the six issues (commandments) do you struggle, if any?

b. In what ways do you wrestle with the question of wealth: its acquisition, its maintenance, and its use?

c. In what ways are your possessions an impediment to your spiritual life? An aid to your spiritual life?

What Jesus Says to Us

9 a. With what statement of Jesus do you identify the most? Explain.

- Why do you call me good?
- You know the commandments.
- I love you.
- Go sell...
- Give to the poor.
- Come, follow me.
- How hard it is to enter the kingdom of God.
- All things are possible with God.

PRAYER (5-10 minutes)

10. Let each person identify in thirty seconds or less one thing God has been saying to him or her personally through this study.

11. Go around the circle a second time and let each person pray for the small group member on his or her right, based on what that person just shared about the impact of the text.

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

Context: When Luke tells this story, he identifies this man as a ruler (a leader in the Jewish community, Luke 18:18); Matthew tells us he is young (Matthew 19:20); and all three gospel writers say he is rich. Only Mark tells us that Jesus loved him (Mark 17:2)! The young man’s sincerity and his feeling about Jesus are clear: he knelt, and he called Jesus “good teacher.” But his commitment to his possessions is even stronger.

What Jesus asks of this young man can sound harsh and unreasonable to our ears, and we struggle to make sense of his words. We are troubled by this passage because we in North America possess so much in comparison to the rest of the world.
We devote so much of our energy to securing a comfortable lifestyle. And while we are often generous with our money, we are also haunted by our need for it. But the issue in this passage is not so much wealth itself, but our attitude toward it.

Verse 17: The young man calls Jesus “good,” implying that some people (presumably like Jesus and the young man himself) are moral (keep the law) and therefore deserve heaven. Jesus refuses to accept such a distinction. He has just said to his disciples (in verses 14-15) that to enter the kingdom of God we must become like little children—like children in their openness and dependence. The kingdom is received by faith. In contrast, the young man wants to know what to do. He does not yet understand that salvation is a gift to be received, not a reward to be earned.

Even when we know that God’s acceptance of us is “by grace through faith,” we act as if it depends upon our efforts. On the other hand, to say, “I trust Jesus for my salvation,” and then live without regard to any of his teachings is a contradiction and makes our profession of faith suspect. The call is to trust Christ and to love him by living as he would live.

Verses 21-22: Before Jesus, riches were not considered a hindrance to spiritual pursuit. In fact, wealth was thought to be a sign of God’s blessing (see Job 1:10, 42:10; Psalm 128:1-2; Isaiah 3:10). But here Jesus points out that wealth can hinder participation in God’s kingdom. Possessions are this man’s problem, so Jesus tells him to get rid of them. Jesus contrasts treasure on earth (which the man has) with treasure in heaven (which he wants). The young man professes an interest in the one but, when pressed, will not give up the other. Jesus’ words do not appear to be a universal prohibition against wealth. The primary call to this young man is not to follow poverty but to follow Jesus. However, it is a strong warning about the negative power of possessions.

The rich man turns away. The demand is too great. He refuses the call to follow Jesus. By walking away he demonstrates Jesus’ point: wealth can be a snare preventing us from discipleship. There is sadness to this story both in the young man (his face fell) and in Jesus (who loved him and who comments wistfully on the power of riches over people).

When St. Anthony (born in A.D. 251) heard these words: “Go, sell everything ... follow me,” he understood them to be a personal call from God. He withdrew into the desert for a life of solitude. When he emerged twenty years later, the crowds flocked to him because they recognized in him the holiness of life. St. Anthony is considered to be the father of the monastic movement.

Jesus’ words, “One thing you lack ...” pinpoint the issue that impedes the young man from following of Jesus. What issue in your life hinders you from following Jesus?
Verses 23-25: The camel was the largest animal in Israel, and a needle had the smallest opening. Thus the absolute impossibility of anyone (the reference to the rich is dropped here) entering the kingdom of God through his or her own efforts.

Wealth is the issue in North America today. So much time and energy is given to its accumulation. So much evil is justified by its acquisition. So much pain is caused by its pursuit. It is very hard for North Americans to get the balance right between money as a good gift from God and the love of money as the root of all kinds of evil (as the apostle Paul says). How does the desire for money affect you?

Verses 26-27: Jesus responds to the disciples’ fear. Eternal life cannot be earned by men and women, but it will be given by God. We are all dependent upon God and must rest in the good pleasure of a good God who loves us.

The call is to rest in the love of the God of the impossible. Are you resting in that love?

SESSION 2 (Session six in book, Contemplative Bible Reading)
A FORMATIONAL EXERCISE FOR MARK 10:23, 27

OVERVIEW
In the “Checking In” exercise for this session you will share insights from your experience with daily meditation. Then you will use Mark 10: 23, 27 for your meditative exercise. The concluding essay focuses on the second step in contemplative Bible reading: the process of meditation.

OPEN (20-30 Minutes)
Checking In

Begin by checking in with each other. Take up to two minutes per person to share what you have been learning and hearing as you have worked on the daily meditation experience. When it comes to experiential exercises such as meditation, it is very important to process your experience with others.

GROUP MEDITATION (30-40 Minutes)

Because you are becoming familiar with the group meditation process, the steps are only summarized in this session. If you wish, you may refer to the full instructions in session two (pages 31-40). The passage you will use is a compilation of Jesus’ words in Mark 10:23,27.

Decide who will read the passage each time. Then be sure to spend enough time preparing for the experience. Take time to get in touch with God by doing the centering exercise.

1. Prepare: Relax, slow your breathing, use a centering prayer if you wish. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you.
2. Listen: Read the passage aloud twice. After one minute, share your word or phrase.

   Jesus ... said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! ... With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” (Mark 10:23, 27)
3. **Ask:** “How is my life touched by this word?” Read the passage aloud. After two or three minutes, share your reflections.

4. **Ask:** “Am I being invited to respond?” Read the passage aloud. After two or three minutes, share the invitation you sense.

5. **Pray:** Pray for the person on your right, for the ability to respond to his or her invitation.

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**DISCUSSION** *(20-30 Minutes)*

By now the process of contemplative Bible reading should be familiar to you. Use this time to discuss what you are hearing God say to you—both from today’s exercise and from the other meditative experiences. Become “friendly ears” for each another; helping each other with the struggle to know and do God’s will. Also be alert to what does not sound like it comes from God. In a discipline such as contemplative Bible reading, it is essential to offer our “hearing” up to others’ scrutiny and to process it with the wisdom of the gathered community. Our compulsions and our history sometimes get in the way of hearing God accurately, and the community can help us recognize this. Ponder what God is saying to people in the group. Listen to one another. Discern together. Support one another.

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**ESSAY**

**Step Two: Meditation**

Meditation is a key spiritual exercise. It is not an esoteric art as it is sometimes thought to be. In fact, it’s quite natural. It’s something we engage in all the time though we may not call it by that name. To meditate is to think about a subject. It is to focus on a topic, turning it over in your mind until it becomes clear or until you have new insight. Meditation is a form of reflection; it is a way of learning. Meditation is rumination, the use of imagination to gain new insight.

What sets meditation apart (in the sense that we use it here) from everyday rumination is the subject matter. Meditation focuses on spiritual matters: the meaning of a particular verse, how to deal with a present temptation, the sense of God’s presence, and so on. To meditate is to make use of a natural skill for a spiritual purpose.

To meditate is to give free rein to our imagination in order to grasp what God is saying to us in Scripture. In meditation, we are invited to “see” the passage, that is, to imagine what is happening: to see how people dress, to hear the conversation, to notice the color, to feel the breeze, to smell the wood smoke, to watch the motion of the crowds. We listen to Jesus speaking (rather than just read His words). In this way we are open to the experience of God’s love and not just the knowledge that God loves us. Using our imagination in Bible study is a powerful way to encounter the text.

It needs to be added that some people are more adept at using their imagination in this way than others. If this form of meditation works for you, by all means use it. If not, don’t worry. There are other forms of prayer appropriate for you. For example, you may find it a powerful experience simply to repeat Jesus’ words from the text, letting them sink into your soul. Or meditation may mean for you to write the phrase you are focusing on in your journal, then put down related thoughts or try to summarize what that phrase means to you. This, too, is a form of meditation.

There is a second distinction that can be made between meditation and ordinary reflection. Meditation is not just a question of subject matter. It is also a question of outcome. To meditate is to think about a subject in order to do it. It is to practice a thing by thinking about it. It is to desire it in your mind even
as you seek to express it in your life. In other words, this is not idle rumination, but rumination with a purpose. To meditate on a text is to understand that text so deeply that you live it out. It is to incorporate a concept into your everyday existence. This is why meditation is so valuable as a spiritual practice. It is a way of translating the Bible into life.

But I find more in meditation than just connections to my life. I also learn more about God. I am struck by a variety of things concerning who God is or what God is saying about himself. I feel drawn to God in a certain way. I experience the presence of God or the love of God or the peace of God as I meditate. Therefore, meditation is not just a means of doing, but also a means of being.

DAILY MEDITATION

In the week ahead, work through Matthew 11:25-30 using the meditative method. This passage consists of three parts: a prayer of thanksgiving, a wise utterance, and an invitation from Jesus.

The passage begins with a prayer of Jesus. Throughout the Gospels we hear that Jesus has prayed or is praying, and we read some of his prayers. That prayer stood at the center of Jesus’ spiritual life is the strongest possible indication that prayer should be at the heart of our spiritual life. Meditation is a process of prayer.

After His prayer, Jesus comments on how the spiritual life functions. We are totally dependent upon God’s grace. Salvation may be impossible for us to achieve on our own, but with God all things are possible.

This passage ends with a warm and gracious invitation to us in our weariness. Jesus calls us to Himself. This is not a call to passivity or inaction. We are invited to take upon ourselves a “yoke.” But this is not like the yoke of the law which weighs down and binds us. This is a yoke of gentleness and humility, of discipleship. It means to be bound together with Jesus in our pilgrimage.

The central image here is a yoke. This may refer to the kind of yoke that linked two oxen together to pull a plow, or it may be the yoke placed by the victor on his captives to parade them through town. Regardless, the image is clear: we are bound by this yoke together with Jesus. But this is not a burdensome binding. Jesus’ yoke is easy (because He is pulling most of the weight) and His burden is light (unlike the weight of the Law the Pharisees placed on people). This is the yoke that enlivens, not the yoke that deadens.

Notes
SHORT SKIT: Instructions, Instructions
By Kimberley Tagert-Paul

Focus:
The Bible is God’s Word. We need to study it to glean the beautiful truths He has for us.

Central Bible Truth:
As we learn from God’s Word, we need to apply the principles we learn to our everyday life.

Scripture:
“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1:22, NIV).

Program Target:
To help young people learn to apply Bible truths to everyday life.

Cast:
Two teens. (As written it would be a boy and a girl. You can easily adapt it to either boys or girls according to the availability of your youth.)

Jason, having trouble putting together a bookcase

Lilly, his sister who has some wise advice

Props:
A box with spare parts scattered over the area near Jason. Some tools, such as a hammer, screwdriver, etc., and a chair and a Bible for Lilly.

Setting:
The stage is bare except for Jason sitting on the floor, a box and various pieces of lumber sitting around him. Papers (instructions) lie near him. Jason is trying to put a bookcase together. Lilly enters and sees that he is frustrated.

Lilly: What are you up to, Jason?

Jason: (He gives her a look of frustration.) I’m putting together a bookcase. Can’t you see that?

Lilly: Sorry. Looks like a mess to me. (She sits in the chair by him and picks up the instructions.) Where are you at?

Jason: (Working on the bookcase, obviously frustrated.) What do you mean, “Where are you at?” I’m putting together this stupid bookcase.

Lilly: (She holds up the instructions.) I meant which step are you on in the instructions?

Jason: Oh. I’m not following those. I’m doing it my way.

Lilly: Sorry, but it doesn’t seem to be working out too well.

Jason: Oh, I’ll get it. Eventually. (He picks up a board and turns it around trying to figure out what it is.)

Lilly: The instructions are important, Jason. They tell you where to start, and how to go from there.

Jason: (Stopping to look up at Lilly) But sometimes they are hard to understand and it gets confusing. I find it’s just easier to do it my way. What were you doing, anyway?

Lilly: I was reading from God’s Word. You know, they are His instructions to us. I was just reading in James. He gives us a lot of good instructions.

Jason: Such as?
Lilly: Such as, here, in chapter one, verse 21. (She opens her Bible and reads.) “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Jason: See, even that is a little hard to understand.

Lilly: But Jason, when things are hard, you can get out another version, or a thesaurus, or concordance and look up the words. There are so many ways to understand if you just try. Like, “The implanted word,” I wasn’t really sure what that meant so I looked it up in a study Bible, and I found out it means having a teachable spirit. If we receive God’s Word with meekness, that word will get implanted in us, and it means we will be teachable. We won’t try to do it our way. Does that make it easier to understand?

Jason: Yeah, it does. I guess if I studied that way, then I could understand more.

Lilly: That and always starting your study with prayer. The Holy Spirit is a great guide to help us as we read the Word and apply it in our own lives.

Jason: O.K. How about you read the instructions for this thing to me (Holding up part of the bookcase) and I’ll get this done the right way. Then maybe we can study God’s Word together and I’ll learn how to apply it to my life. That would make for a very good day!

Lilly: O.K. (Lilly starts to read from the instructions.) Place board A on its side and insert. . . (Her voice fades as the scene ends.)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
(Leaders - Don’t forget prayer, the Holy Spirit, different versions of the Bible, Thesaurus, and Concordances and Study Bibles.)

1. How important are the instructions we are given for things in our everyday life? (Like how to take a test, how to put something together, a recipe, etc.)

2. Do we always need to follow simple instructions? Or is it easier to do things your own way? Is it easier to make a mistake when you do it your way?

3. Is God’s Word full of instructions that we need to apply to our daily lives? What are some of them?

4. If we follow God’s Word and apply what we learn to our lives, will it always make things easier?

5. What tools do you have that can help you apply God’s Word to your daily life?
SHORT SKIT : GPS Me!

By Kimberley Tagert-Paul

Focus:
The Bible is one way that God communicates with us.

Central Bible Truth:
When reading through God’s Word, we need to listen for His Spirit guiding us.

Scripture:
“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10, NIV).

Program Target:
To help young people understand that they need to listen for the Spirit’s guidance when reading in God’s Word.

Cast:
Cameron, the driver,
Chelby, the front seat passenger,
McKala, the backseat passenger.

“Mechanical” Voice: someone off stage that sounds like a GPS device.

Props: A cell phone, an Ipad (or something to look like one), and a laptop computer.

Setting:
The three students are in a car. Set four chairs to look like a front seat and a backseat at a slight angle on the stage so you can see each person clearly. Cameron is driving and has a cell phone, Chelby is sitting beside him with an Ipad, and McKala is in the back holding her laptop. All are working on their tools, looking for a GPS program.

Cameron: O.K. It says to turn left here.
Chelby: No, mine says there is road construction down that lane. Go straight.
McKala: I think we should turn right here. I think it would be faster.
Cameron: I’m just going straight.

Mechanical Voice: “You just missed your turn. Go straight 500 feet and turn left on Rudi Avenue.”
Cameron: Oh, I don’t like Rudi Avenue. Too many pot holes.
Chelby: My GPS is telling me to go straight to McKelvy Street, then turn right.
McKala: No, no, no. You know the traffic on McKelvy Street is very busy. We should take this down to Franklin and turn left.

Mechanical Voice: “You have missed your turn. Proceed to Franklin Street and turn right.”
Cameron: I don’t like Franklin Street. The last time I drove down that is when I almost hit the cat. I’m staying away from Franklin.

Chelby: Mine says to take Lakeshore. At least that will be a scenic route.
**McKala:** If we take Lakeshore, it is going to take a long time getting there and we are late now. Take Henry, that’s what my GPS is saying.

**Cameron:** Which way on Henry?

**McKala:** (Both McKala and Chelby say the next lines together.) Right.

**Chelby:** Left

**Cameron:** (Says with clear frustration) Which way?

**Chelby:** I don’t know. I was busy telling you and I didn’t hear what the GPS said.

**McKala:** Let’s just turn around and go back. We can find the way from my house.

**Cameron:** At this rate, we are never going to get there.

**Mechanical Voice:** “You have missed your turn. Proceed to . . .”

**Cameron, Chelby, McKala:** (Together with much frustration.) Augh!

---

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. The three students had several devices to help them find their way. Did those devices help them or hinder them?

   ___________________________________________

2. Why were the instructions that the devices were giving them not helpful?

   ___________________________________________

3. Is there a difference between hearing and listening? Please describe what you mean.

   ___________________________________________

4. Is it easier to hear God’s voice when you are quiet or when you are in chaos?

   ___________________________________________

5. God speaks to us all the time. How can we train ourselves to listen for His voice and leading?

   ___________________________________________

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For information on receiving our eNewsletter contact Erica Richards at RichardsE@gc.adventist.org
The Messiah Has Come

By Michael Durant

Narrator:
Out of the mists of time, a promise was made and kept when a baby was born in a manger. The baby was the fulfillment of the promise that sin would be crushed, but in doing so the child would bruise his heel ... and so it was that the heavenly hosts shouted for joy at the birth of the promised Messiah—the Messiah who would one day teach, heal, feed the hungry, raise the dead, be crucified on a cross, and would Himself finally be raised from the dead. But that was 30 years ago, and we haven’t heard much about Him since then. In fact, someone said He was out of the country for a while—Egypt, I believe they said. Then there was that incident in the temple a few years later, talking with the priests and getting lost from his parents. That was the talk of the temple that night. But now with the business of the temple, and all the sickness and sadness around, and the Romans—the hated Romans here—what does it matter that there is a Messiah...will He free us from the Romans? Will He heal our diseases? It doesn’t look like that will happen. Let’s visit some people in the area and see what they have to say about all this...

Sarah: Jairus, welcome home ... you look so tired. Was it busy at the temple today?

Jairus: Yes, my dear Sarah. With Passover next week, there are so many people coming for sacrifices, and some are even coming for healing...

Sarah: Healing, Jairus? You are not a doctor.

Jairus: No, my dear, they come to pray for healing... sacrifice a lamb, and pray for forgiveness of their sins...

Sarah: Jairus, do you sometimes feel that the sacrifices don’t have much meaning anymore?

Jairus: Sarah, I am surprised that you would say that. You know the sacrifices point us toward the coming of the Messiah.

Sarah: Yes, I know, and I believe that, but it is hard to see the lame begging for money and food on the temple steps ... when is the Messiah coming?

Jairus: He might be here right now, just waiting for the right moment. I remember many years ago, a boy came from Nazareth and talked to me and other priests in the temple. I wonder what ever happened to Him...I have always wondered if He was the Messiah...

Jairus’ daughter, Martha: Papa, you’re home...

Jairus: Hello my daughter. How was your day?

Narrator: Jairus, what a beautiful daughter you have. I know she is the answer to a prayer you made. You believed in God then, and trusted that He wanted the best for you. You even believed in the prophecy of the Messiah. I also know that you have gotten tired of the same old thing, working in the temple every day and never seeing anything changing ... Is there anyone in this town still looking for—still longing—for the Messiah to come?

Diana: Rebecca, are you still not feeling well?

Rebecca: No, Diana. I am not.

Diana: What did the doctor say this time?
**Rebecca:** What do they say every time? They take my money, they give me a mixture of herbs, and then send me on my way. And here I am...

**Diana:** Have you tried going to the priests at the temple?

**Rebecca:** They're not doctors, Diana.

**Diana:** No, they're not, but they do have a connection with God... maybe they can suggest something...

**Rebecca:** A connection with God? I thought I had a connection with God, but now I wonder... He doesn't seem to be answering my prayers...

**Diana:** Maybe He will answer you, but the time isn't right, at least not yet...

**Narrator:** A priest who has become discouraged and questions his faith, a woman seeking healing and not finding it... Is there any reason to keep believing, to keep hoping that the Messiah will come? Or maybe as Diana said, maybe the time isn't right, at least not yet... sometimes it seems as if the longed for day will never come, and then finally, at just the right time, it's here.

**Sarah:** Jairus, did you hear what happened at Micah's wedding?

**Jairus:** No, my dear, but I do know they are very happy to finally be wed.

**Sarah:** Yes, the wedding went very well, but Mary told me that afterwards they ran out of new wine for the guests to drink...

**Jairus:** What did they do?

**Sarah:** Well, Mary went and told her son Jesus about the problem, and do you know what He did?

**Jairus:** Maybe the Messiah has finally come...

**Narrator:** Changing the water to wine was just the first of many miracles. Others were to come—most more dramatic and life changing than the first.

**Diana:** Rebecca, you are so pale, are you feeling ok?

**Rebecca:** I am so tired all the time now. I have no energy to do any of the things around the house I need to do... I feel like I am letting my family down because I just can't do all the things I am responsible for.

**Diana:** Did you try another doctor today?

**Rebecca:** I tried to see one that Elizabeth told me about, but he was so busy... but I did see something else...

**Diana:** What was that?

**Rebecca:** When I was in the market place, I saw a man jumping up and down for joy...

**Diana:** How could that happen? How is it possible?

**Rebecca:** Someone said that Jesus had passed by and healed him...
is just a carpenter; He can’t heal anyone.

**Rebecca:** But He did. Diana. He healed a man who hadn’t walked for 30 years...

**Diana:** What do you think this means?

**Rebecca:** I’m not sure, but I wonder if it means that the Messiah has come.

**Diana:** Jesus? The Messiah? How could it be?

**Rebecca:** Maybe the Messiah has been here for a while, and we just didn’t recognize Him.

**Diana:** Maybe you’re right . . .

**Narrator:** The Messiah, coming and living among us, and we just didn’t recognize Him? Could Jesus really be the Messiah? I wonder if we should investigate this further . . . Let us now travel to the mountain side. Someone is speaking there, and I hear He has quite a few important things to say...

**Jesus:** Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

**Narrator:** They shall be filled...every longing of their being satisfied. What more did He have to say? Let’s listen...

**Jesus:** Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

**Narrator:** Words of comfort, words of hope, and so much more... the very words that Jairus and Rebecca need to hear and believe. But before that can happen, tragedy comes. The enemy doesn’t want to lose the hold that he has, and he lashes out, striking the very ones who are listening the closest...

**Sarah:** Jairus, come quickly, Martha is sick, so very sick...what are we to do?

**Jairus:** Take care of her, Sarah. Daniel, stand by in case S’arah needs you for anything. I am going to find Jesus.

**Sarah:** Find Jesus? What can He do?

**Jairus:** He can heal our daughter. That’s what He can do...

**Narrator:** That’s right, Jairus. Run—run after the One with healing in His wings... is your faith strong enough? Do you really believe that He can heal your precious Martha? With faith all things are possible. And now yet another wonders whether healing can come her way. Her energy is waning, her strength is almost gone, yet her faith beckons her to go and also find healing.... and so she seeks after the One who can do what none other has... Let us watch and see what happens...

**Rebecca:** I must see Him, talk to Him, plead with Him...He can heal me...Oh there are so many people around Him. If I can get through the crowd, if I can try to talk to Him... Too many people, I will never make it. .If only I could touch His garment, just the hem...that would work... Excuse me, please let me pass...almost there, just a touch, just touch the hem...there, I've done it...

**Jesus:** Who touched Me?

**Disciples:** Who touched you? Master, the crowd is pressing and you are being touched on all sides...

**Jesus:** I felt healing power leaving Me.
**Rebecca:** It is I Master . . . just me, a poor servant girl hoping to be healed...

**Jesus:** Daughter, go thy way, your faith has made you whole...

**Narrator:** Had healing really come after all these years, after so many failed visits to those who could do nothing? One has the power to heal...and it was because of her faith, her faith in the simple touch of the hem of His garment. She believed, she had faith, and her faith was rewarded in her restoration...but what is that I hear? It’s the cry of one coming closer . . .

**Jairus:** Master, Master! You must come and heal my daughter! She is so very sick, and I have no one else to turn to... Please come and heal her. I know you can.

**Narrator:** He pleads with the Master, but then another comes running up with news he never wanted to hear.

**Daniel:** Jairus, don't bother the Teacher. Your daughter died shortly after you left...

**Narrator:** With bitter tears, Jairus hesitates, but then, falling on his knees, his plea continues, his faith strong...Jesus can overcome this, Jesus can still work a miracle. And so Jesus, the disciples, and Jairus make their way forward...when they arrive at the house of Jairus, Jesus and three of His disciples enter the house where Martha lays.

**Jesus:** Child, I say unto thee—arise!

**Narrator:** And she arose, no longer dead, but alive and hungry... but was it really hunger for food, or for the bread of life that only Jesus can give? Either way, she was alive and her parents rejoiced...The healing of the woman, the healing of Jairus’s daughter were just some of the miracles that happened when Jesus was here... but the biggest was yet to come... .

It was not very long after that there was a trial and a crucifixion. Along with two thieves, Jesus was hung on a cross, and it was there that He died, forever sealing the fate of the enemy, forever ensuring that you and I could be forgiven of our sins. The Promise had been fulfilled... but I thought that the Serpent’s head would be crushed, forever destroying him, but that Jesus would only bruise His heel . . . but He's dead, sealed in a borrowed tomb. So has the promise really been fulfilled, or is there more to come? The crucifixion was on a Friday, Jesus rested on Saturday, and then on Sunday morning...

**Soldier 1:** Nothing's going to happen. I’m going to rest.

**Soldier 2:** All right, Selius. I will watch...

**Narrator:** Watch soldier, watch as the angel comes, rolls back the stone, and calls for Jesus to rise...Watch as Jesus exits the tomb... watch as Mary meets Him and then runs to tell the disciples what she has seen.

**Mary:** Jesus has risen! He who was dead is now alive... Praise God, He is risen!

**Narrator:** And so our story ends, or does it really? We wondered if the Messiah would ever come, we wondered if there was hope of healing, we wondered and we waited... and now our faith is made whole. And the promise goes on to ensure us life eternal—not with a Messiah, but with a Friend, a Friend who made us, redeemed us, and who will spend an eternity with us...world without end...what a world that will be.... ●

The End
readIT: book review

The ABC’s of Bible Study by Gary E. Ford

There are more than 300 Christian denominations, each one claiming they have the truth and all other religions are wrong. Ten Christians of different faiths can read the same verses from the same source—the Bible—and come up with ten different doctrines about the same subject!

The ABC’s of Bible Study provides tools to help you “rightly divide the Word of Truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). The author shares years of study and exciting discovery about the Bible.

Bible Study Methods: Twelve Ways You Can Unlock God’s Word By Rick Warren

In this special edition, Rick Warren will guide you through twelve methods for exploring the riches of God’s Word. At least one of them is exactly what you’re looking for—an approach that’s right for you, right where you’re at.

Learn to Study the Bible: Forty different step-by-step methods to help you discover, apply, and enjoy God’s Word By Andy Deane

Has your Bible study time every felt dry and unorganized? Do you ever walk away forgetting what you just read? Have you lost your excitement and joy in Bible reading? This book contains more methods, how-to illustrations, and study aids than you will find in any one resource. Whether you are just getting started in your walk with the Lord or a mature believer, you will find a number of Bible study methods that will add enjoyment to your study time.
2013
July 1-13
Pretoria - South Africa
impact South Africa
Jesus in the city
3rd World Conference on Youth and Community Service
www.gcyouthministries.org