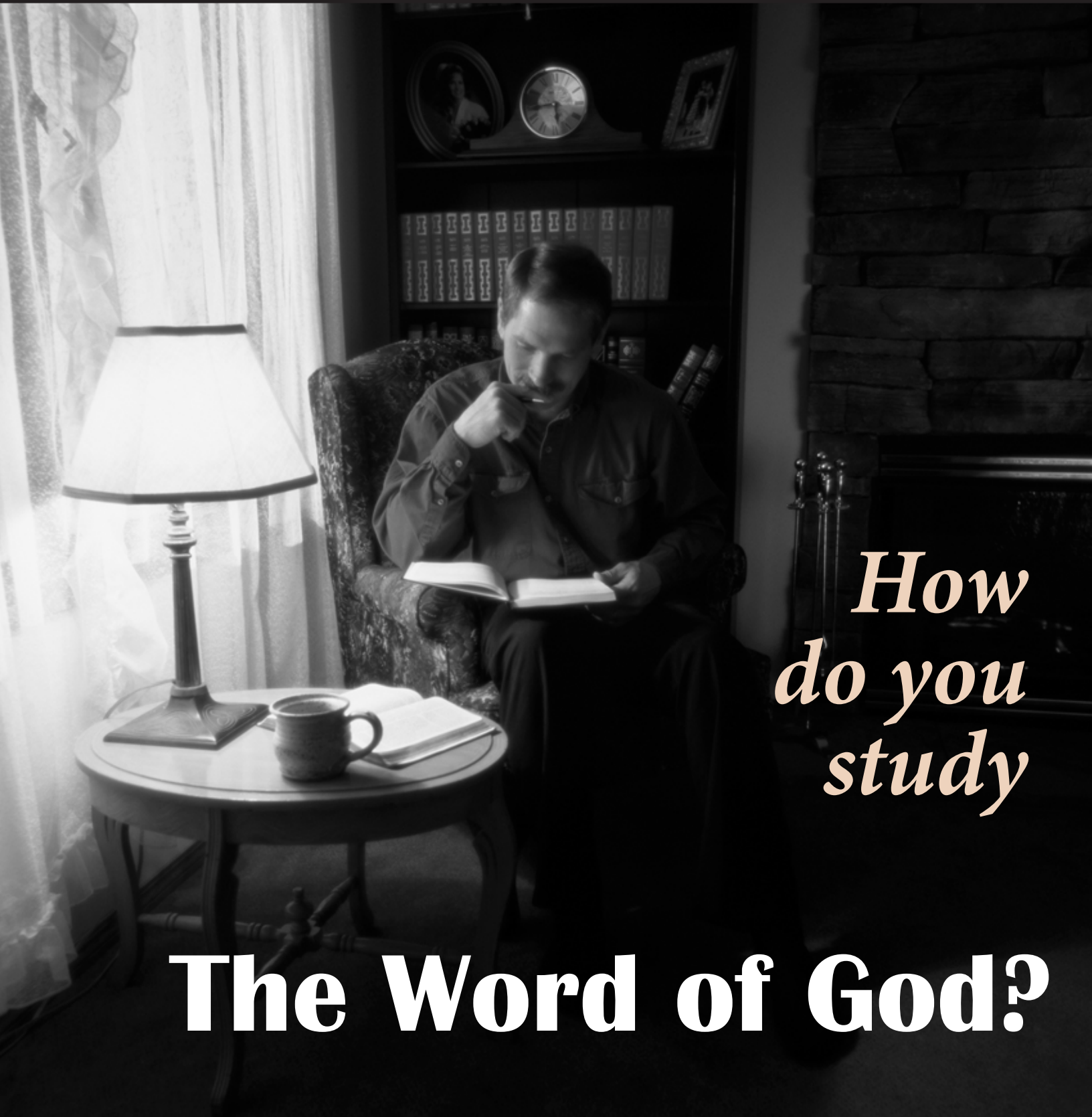


SR The Sabbath RECORDER

March 2012

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



*How
do you
study*

The Word of God?



Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a people with a difference.

For more information, write: The Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@seventhdaybaptist.org and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

The **Paint Rock, Alabama**, SDB Church is searching for a new pastor. We are a welcoming, caring congregation from many backgrounds. No one is a stranger here for long.

Paint Rock is a tiny town 15 minutes away from the Huntsville city limits, nestled in the foothills of the Appalachians. The Tennessee River's many lakes and backwaters are readily accessible within a 15-minute drive toward Scottsboro, Ala. The cities of Memphis and Knoxville, Tenn., are within 4 hours, while Nashville and Atlanta are easy 3-hour drives. Both the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts are six hours away.

We look forward to the blessings God has for our future. Contact Steve Butler (256) 723-4675 or smbutler@neh.net.



New Hymn Contest?
(see back cover)

Women's Society Robe of Achievement 2012 Nominations

The Robe of Achievement Committee is seeking nominations of a woman who is a member of an SDB Church and has had an influence or contributed "beyond the limits of her own community and church."

A complete résumé must be submitted containing a life history including her achievements and activities.

If you would like to renominate someone whom you have nominated within the last 2 years, you do NOT have to complete a new résumé form. To renominate, simply notify Karen Payne at the e-mail below that you wish to renominate the person and send her any updates to the previously completed résumé. For a new nomination, the form is available at **SDBWomen.org**.

Submit nominations to:

Karen Payne, 13528 595th Street
Claremont, MN 55924 or

Résumés may be submitted by **e-mail** to
karenpayne@hotmail.com

Deadline is March 31, 2012



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Why study the Bible?

Musings of an average churchgoer

by Liz Green
Milton, Wisconsin

Editor’s note: We ran this article exactly one decade ago. Since that time, Liz earned a Master of Arts in Christian Studies from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill. After retiring from the Dept. of Human Services in Dane County, Wis., she underwent (and passed) a rigorous ordination council at the Milton SDB Church in 2010, was ordained, and now serves there as a Staff Pastor.

We’re presenting the article as it first appeared in 2002. But I asked Liz to review her writing, wondering if her seminary training had altered her views or approach to Bible study. Her interesting comments follow the article.

Why do we study the Bible, and how should we go about it? For those of us who are average churchgoers without any special training, how do we move to higher levels, and is it even worthwhile that we do so?

My observation has been that most of us, given the option, do not aspire to be scholarly about Bible study! We view it as a dry, esoteric use of our time, which would require far too much effort. It would mean actually applying ourselves rather than relying on the wisdom of our pastor or favorite Christian author.

Shame on us! I believe that our culture has made us too casual in our estimation of the Word.

The Bible’s eternal value

There are any number of places in the Bible that speak of the eternal value of God’s Word. Pick any part of Psalm 119 and you will see why we should love, honor, and study the Word. To name a few:

- Psalm 119:9—“How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your Word.”
- Psalm 119:11—“Your Word I have

treasured in my heart that I might not sin against You.”

- Psalm 119:130—“The unfolding of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”
- Psalm 119:165—“Those who love Your law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble.”
- Psalm 119:160—“The sum of Your Word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.”

In a world where true wisdom is rare, we have this wonderful Book with unchanging Truths, which—free of charge—can actually keep us pure, give us great peace, and provide wisdom that will make us wiser than our enemies (Psalm 119:98). That should be more than enough to motivate us to move ahead in our Bible studies.

But how does the average person get there?

How about a true BIBLE study?

The Lord has put in my heart a real desire to see His Word taught in our church classes instead of simply



reading books *about* the Bible, commentaries, or pop-psychology books; for us to actually use the Bible as the textbook.

To that end, we started a Sabbath School class based on Kay Arthur’s Inductive Bible Study methods, so that we might develop and sharpen our Bible study skills.

If you might be thinking this is a good idea, be forewarned that it was not a smashing success. While this

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We should be so in love with the Lord that we simply want to learn all that we can about Him and how He wants us to conduct ourselves in His creation.

”

excellent book provides a wealth of information and tools for study, I did not find it particularly teachable, or accessible for the students. Or perhaps we just weren't ready for it.

At any rate, we ended the quarter not feeling much further ahead of where we started. That was when I began to think more about the attitude that we must bring to Bible study, as well as the attitudes that we as teachers must instill in our students toward the Word of God.

What's the purpose?

First, we must have purpose for our study of the Bible.

Why do we do it? Is it to be able to say that we've read it *all* the way through, or be able to spout verses at any convenient moment?

Well, perhaps. But we should be so in love with the Lord that we simply want to learn all that we can about Him and how He wants us to conduct ourselves in His creation. That's it—plain and simple.

One of my landmark moments in life was when I realized deep in my spirit that I did not know enough of what the Bible said. I was facing certain choices, trying to make a decision that would honor God. While I wanted to do the right thing, I didn't know what the Bible really said, even after spending a lifetime in churches. I had to have some help and do some “cramming.”

The Lord was merciful and answered my questions. However, I vowed that I would apply myself to studying what the Bible said so that I would not be caught short in the future.

Check your attitude

Second, we must have the right attitude for Bible study. We need to be humble and teachable, willing to ask for wisdom and apply it when God provides, as it says He will in James 1:5—“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

God's ways are not our own

(Isaiah 55:8). We need to see that we don't have wisdom of our own, but must instead rely on the Lord to reveal wisdom to us.

Our society teaches us to depend on what we know and have already learned. Yet God's Word shows us that we cannot rely on our own ways, but instead acknowledge His ways (Proverbs 3:5-6). *Then* he will make our paths straight.

The only reliable way that He will reveal wisdom to us is through His Word with prayer. If we are not willing to open the book, read it, and prayerfully look for His answers—and then do what it says (James 1:22)—we will not access His wisdom.

Be diligent

Third, we must be diligent. 1 Timothy 2:15 says “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

Be diligent. This word carries the flavor of making haste, being eager, and doing one's best. How contrary to what society embraces!

We make resolutions that we quickly break and forget, and look

cont. next page



for the shortcuts in “Cliff’s Notes” or on the Internet. If a project is too hard, we give up rather than see it through. But study requires hard work, and Bible study is not an exception to this rule.

We need to focus and set aside other concerns in order to set our mind on the subject to be studied. One must press through in spite of the difficulties, distractions, and sometimes even boredom, looking instead to the payoff in the end.

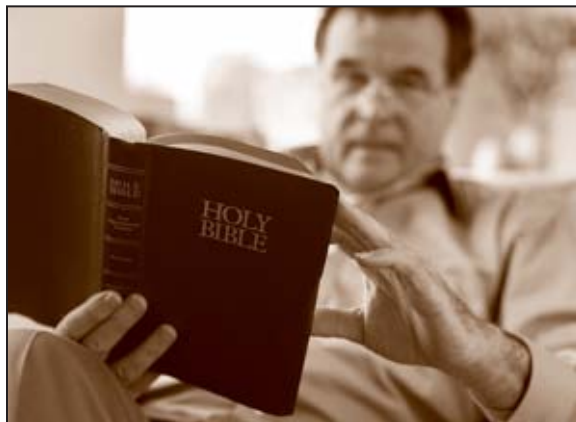
In the case of the Bible, that will mean reading, re-reading, meditating, looking at parallel translations, using a reliable Study Bible, checking noted cross-references, doing word studies, outlining, studying literary styles, using a Bible Dictionary, using a reliable commentary, and asking questions. The payoff? God’s promises that He “gives to all generously and without reproach” so that we may be “perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:4-5).

Bathe in prayer

Fourth, we must bathe our Bible Study and meditation in prayer. Without the Holy Spirit to quicken His Word in our spirits, we are without hope of real understanding.

Nor can our study be cold or clinical. We are studying a “living and active” entity, as is described in Hebrews 4:12. We aren’t doing an autopsy on a dead body when we study the Bible. Instead, we are interacting with something living and active from our loving Heavenly Father.

In order to enter into this active realm, we need to communicate spirit-to-Spirit with our God through prayer as we study. We must let Him



know of our love for Him and our need for Him.

We should tell Him that we are available and want to talk with Him. We must tell Him that we recognize that we have nothing without Him, which is why we are seeking His answers. And we must listen.

Not only is God’s Word alive, but it is life-giving, just as Jesus tells us in Matthew 4:4—“Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” So eat up and enjoy the life that He gives!

A proper respect

Fifth, we must revere God and honor His Word. Plainly speaking,

we need to have a high regard and holy respect for God and His Word.

The Bible is not like a bestseller we pick up at the grocery store checkout and discard once we’ve read it, forgetting most of what it says. It is not a book we just put on the bookshelf to impress others, or store away as an eternal fire insurance policy.

Psalm 119:82 says, “My eyes fail with longing for Your Word.” Let us value and seek after God’s Word with that kind of intensity, giving priority to our study time, recognizing that in this act of obedient study we are gaining something of eternal value.

The “why” of Bible study is well summarized in this quote from Jack W. Hayford: “God’s Word is the only source of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding concerning ultimate realities, waiting to liberate and enrich those who will pursue its wealth.”

May you be so liberated and enriched! **SR**

The author’s reaction after a seminary degree and ordination:

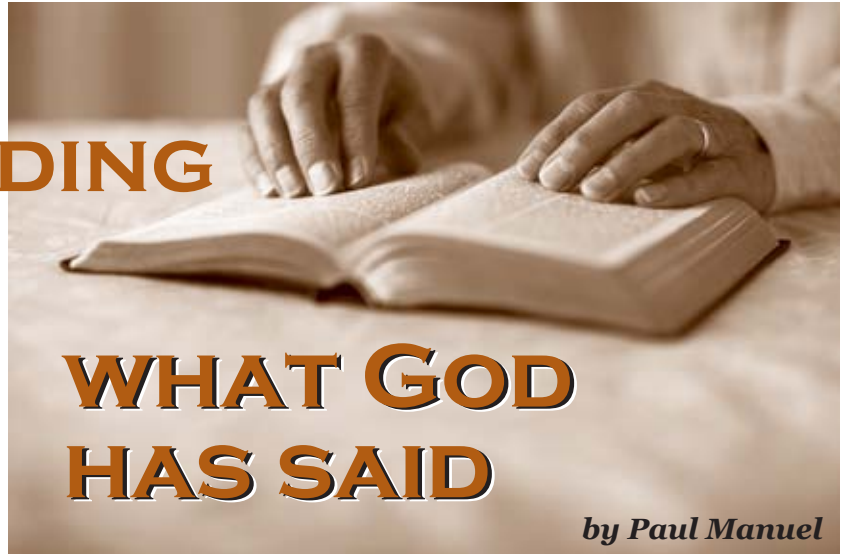
When Kevin asked me to look back at this article, I didn’t even remember writing it—a lot has happened in 10 years!

It is interesting that seven long years of seminary neither killed off my passion for Jesus nor significantly changed how I approach the Bible. Sure, I now have a few more sophisticated tools and training to apply, but now even more intensely, I study the Bible not because I want to know *ABOUT* God, but because I want to *KNOW* God. It is a major difference.

We don’t have to pass an exam of “God factoids” to get into heaven. Rather, I want to know what God is saying to me, to understand how He wants me to correct my life, to spend time enjoying His presence. I want my heart to beat with His. The best way we can get in sync with God like that is still Bible study and prayer.

—Liz Green

UNDERSTANDING



“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15 NAS).

In this admonition from Paul, the apostle indicates that there is a right way and a wrong way to deal with what God has revealed, and that the right way is not necessarily easy. In fact, it may require considerable effort—“Be diligent”—to grasp the meaning of a passage.

“
The main principle to keep in mind is that ‘context controls meaning.’
 ”

At first, the task of interpreting Scripture may seem daunting. We live hundreds of years after the people who originally received these documents. We come from a different culture and speak a different language. Perhaps we have had little or no religious training and find the Bible a maze of confusing stories that talk about people with unpronounceable names.

How can we even begin to make sense of what we read in these ancient documents?

Despite the obstacles, understanding Scripture may not be as difficult as it sometimes seems. While there are, indeed, challenges that arise with the passage of time as well as with changes in culture and language, it is possible to overcome many of those hindrances.

The most important skill to develop is simply the ability to read carefully—to pay attention to detail and to be alert for potential problems or for areas that need further study.

The main principle to keep in mind is that “context controls meaning.”

Picture the text as a flower with several petals, each of which connects to the center and contributes to the flower as a whole. These petals represent various aspects of the context that influence meaning.

Unlike a flower, though, in which all the petals are equally important to its beauty, some aspects of context may be more important for understanding the meaning of a passage than other aspects. To make that determination, we must ask a question for each petal.

What follows is a sampling of those questions as well as suggestions for additional tools that can help in understanding the context and in exposing the meaning of a passage.



• **The VERBAL context:**
What words did the author choose to make his point?

This is a difficult aspect for most people, since they depend upon a translation of God’s Word, and no transition from one language to another is word-for-

word. Moreover, some English versions attempt to simplify what the original author wrote for the modern reader to understand. They are more concerned with readability than with accuracy. Consequently, they may gloss over difficulties or interpret a passage in a way that is not correct.

The *New Living Translation* (1996) introduces a potentially misleading change in 1 Cor. 16:2.

On every Lord's Day [Greek: every first day of the week], *each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.*

By translating “the first day” as “the Lord’s day,” the NLT implies that the Corinthians were meeting for worship, but there is no evidence the early Church met regularly on that day. Quite the contrary, the evidence we have indicates that the first believers met on the Sabbath (e.g., Acts 15:21).

To avoid such problems, it is best to use a translation that does not take such liberties. The *New American Standard* (updated edition, 1995) offers a good balance between the literal and the literate. Its rendering of this passage—and the rest in this article—is far more accurate.

On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

Rather than a weekly collection, Paul is recommending private savings (“each one... is to put aside”). Even without the ability to read Greek or Hebrew, a good translation can help the modern reader understand the verbal context of a passage.



• GRAMMATICAL

•The GRAMMATICAL context: *How do the words relate to each other?*

Sometimes even those who have studied the original languages have difficulty understanding precisely what the biblical author was trying to convey. In such cases, the best

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No transition from one language to another is word-for-word.

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solution may simply be to recognize the different possibilities that are present.

As with the previous aspect of context, a good English translation can alert the reader to potential ambiguity. Paul writes in Rom. 8:9, *...you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*

Even if “the Spirit of God” is the same as “the Spirit of Christ,” it is possible to interpret the English phrase “Spirit of” in different ways: as the Spirit who *belongs* to them, who *acts* with them, who *comes*

from them, or who *is* them (i.e., God or Christ). Paul probably had one of these in mind but which one?

This passage may not have been ambiguous to the Roman Christians, but the uncertainty for us means that we must not be dogmatic and insist upon a particular meaning, at least not without also considering other aspects of context.



• CULTURAL

•The CULTURAL context: *How do the traditions or practices of the day illuminate the passage?*

In obedience to Jesus’ command (Matt. 28:19), most Baptists—including SDBs—mark the beginning of a person’s commitment to God by immersion in water.

...make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Some Christian denominations practice other modes of baptism, such as effusion (pouring) or aspersion (sprinkling). Does the Bible enjoin a particular form, or is it up to the individual?

Baptists, to support their position, typically appeal to the verbal context, stating that the Greek verb

(*baptizo*) means “to dip,” not to pour or sprinkle. What many do not consider, yet which offers even stronger support, is the place of this custom in Judaism.

A good Bible dictionary or encyclopedia will often treat cultural issues. On this matter, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1992) notes, “[r]ites of immersion [were used for] proselyte baptism.”

Jesus did not invent baptism. Rather, he advocated this common means of ceremonial cleansing for his followers, the first of which were all Jews. (Other modes were probably introduced later by Gentile Christians.) Understanding the cultural context of Jesus’ command clarifies that what he intended and what we should practice is immersion, not pouring or sprinkling.



• HISTORICAL

• **The HISTORICAL context:** *What events were on people’s minds at the time?*

When Babylon fell to the Medo-Persian Empire, the new ruler, King Cyrus, permitted the Jewish exiles to return to Canaan. Ezra records the decree in the opening verses of his book (1:2-3).

“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is

“

We must not be dogmatic and insist upon a particular meaning, at least not without also considering other aspects of context.

”

among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel....”

From this account, it seems that Cyrus believed in Israel’s God, and that is why he allowed Jews to re-settle their ancestral home. The Lord, through the prophet Isaiah (45:4), presents a different picture of the Gentile monarch.

“For the sake of Jacob My servant, and Israel My chosen [one], I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor though you have not known Me.”

If Cyrus did not believe in the true God, why did he let God’s people go back to their land?

In an article on Cyrus, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* states that this generous act was part of a larger “policy of remarkable tolerance based on a respect for individual people, ethnic groups, [and] religions,” which generated broad public support for the king. In other words, Jews were only some of many that he freed.

This incident illustrates God’s sovereignty, that He controls the course of history whether those

who make history acknowledge Him or not. Cyrus acted politically for his own interest, which God used providentially for His own interest.



• THEOLOGICAL

• **The THEOLOGICAL context:** *How did existing beliefs shape people’s thinking?*

In Peter’s speech at Pentecost, he notes that many Jews in Jesus’ day did not recognize him as their messiah, even having witnessed the miracles he performed. Acts 2:22-23—

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst... you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put [him] to death.

How could so many people have missed what was so obvious? The

cont. on page 26

Our Foundation is in the Word

by Ruth Burdick
Auburn, Washington

Ruth Burdick, wife of Pastor Ken Burdick in Auburn, Wash., served as our Conference President in 2007. Sessions were held at George Fox University in Newberg, Ore. Her theme for that year was “Tell the Truth... the WHOLE Truth.”

The following was her President’s Page shared in October 2006. I believe that this message could apply to all believers during every Conference year.

One of Jesus’ most moving prayers is found in John 17. Verses 17 and 18 find him praying to the Father for his disciples: “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world” (NIV).

As we make Christ’s mission our mission, we as Seventh Day Baptists have been called apart to share the whole truth of God’s Word with the world.

We need to develop a true hunger for Scripture, which in turn will inspire us to share it with others. With faithful reading and diligent study, we gain a burden for the lost and an intense desire to see God make changes in our lives and the lives of our family, our church family, our neighbors, our co-workers, our community, and our state, country, and world. Yes, even changes in our enemies!

This solid and essential foundation in the Word gives us the confidence to share the Gospel and lay the truth before unbelievers, as well as urge fellow believers to seek the whole counsel of God.

There are several areas of concern that have me thinking about the need for the “whole truth” among the body of believers. Many are not seeing

the Bible from beginning to end as the *truth* of God’s revelation for mankind. Every part is important to our understanding of who He is.

Many don’t acknowledge His sovereignty or know what that means. Some aren’t even willing to acknowledge Christ’s divinity, but still think of themselves as “believers.”

Others seem to disregard the indwelling Spirit of God and neglect His counsel and guidance. Many forget to take seriously the fact that all non-believers are eternally damned, and we could make a difference as God intended.

It hurts to see some believers leaving the Holy Sabbath Day due to incorrect teaching and a weak Sabbath commitment. These concerns have led me to choose as my daily themes for Conference:

- God’s Word is Truth
- God is Sovereign
- Christ is Divine
- The Holy Spirit Indwells
- The Lost are Really Lost
- Worship God in Spirit and Truth

At Conference last summer in Houghton, N.Y., Pastor Scott Hausrath challenged us to read the Bible daily. The very next day, I gave my challenge to read God’s



Holy Scripture from beginning to end before next Conference. This will help us to see the whole picture, to gain hunger for the Word, and to become thoroughly equipped to share the Gospel and handle His Word correctly.

I am doing it. Join me. At least take time to read Psalm 119 and memorize the Bible verses chosen for this year by the SDB Board of Christian Education.

As we reach out into our communities—as our young adults have challenged us to do—let us “Tell the Truth... The WHOLE Truth.” **SR**



Prayer: An Answer to Stress

by Barb Green, Parish Nurse
Milton, Wis.

We all experience stress in life. Stress is a normal physical response to events that make us feel threatened, and is the body's way of protecting us. When working properly, it helps us stay focused.

In emergency situations, stress can save lives by giving us extra strength to defend ourselves; for example, spurring us to slam on our brakes to avoid an accident. Beyond a certain point, stress stops being helpful and starts causing major damage to health, relationships and quality of life.

Stress warning signs and symptoms include memory problems, inability to concentrate, constant worrying, irritability, inability to relax, aches and pains, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, eating more or less, sleeping too much or too little, nail biting, and isolation from others. Our ability to tolerate stress depends on a support network, our sense of control, attitude and outlook, and how we deal with emotions.

Many things contribute to our stress-filled lives. Both parents working outside the home, single-parent households, and caregiving for both children and aging parents are all on the list. There are financial difficulties, a lack of time for family communication and relaxation, diminishing health, and a growing distance between our faith values

and the way we "spend" most of our time and energy. Undeniably, one big way we can deal with life's burdens is to stay connected with our power source—the Holy Spirit.

God has designed prayer as a specific and doable way to deal with all that life can offer. New research demonstrates that people who meditate or pray actually change their brain chemistry in a way that promotes more health and well-being, lowers blood pressure, and helps to enhance the quality and length of life. This new area of science is called "Neuro-Theology."

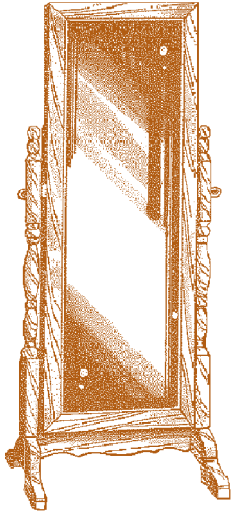
When we pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17), we are developing a healthy and spiritually enriching life pattern. Other benefits of an active prayer life include relaxation and peace, better focus and concentration, better vision and gaining God's perspective, and an improved ability to set our burdens at the cross and *leave them there*.

Although each of us may have our own method of dealing with stress, I would encourage you to consider the following stress management plan as a complement to it:

- Be a student of your own stress: Know "where it hurts," what causes the pain in your life, and the real choices you have. Would you want your children to live your lifestyle?
- If you as a parent model a consistent prayer life, think what a powerful influence that has on your children.

- Make a pledge to yourself to spend some quiet time in prayer every day, not as a burden, but as a mini-vacation.
- Consider praying the Psalms or other meaningful parts of Scripture and integrate the sacred into all of your life.
- Set aside a special place in your home, where you go to be with God. This can be your bedroom, a chair away from the hustle and bustle of your household's life or even a prayer closet!
- Include various aspects in your prayer such as ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication). Remember to follow the Holy Spirit's lead.
- Don't forget to share all that is on your heart, as well as quieting yourself to hear God's voice.
- If speaking out loud with God is difficult for you, try journaling instead.
- Try praying aloud or with other people. Join a prayer group that you can be accountable to.
- Pray for others on a regular basis and let them know you are lifting them up in prayer.

Prayer is our two-way communication system with God. As the year progresses, don't neglect this important stress-relief measure that is a free gift from God. **SR**
(Adapted from *Seasons for Wholeness, Vol. 5* by Ruth Dan-kanich Daumer)



Reflections

by Leanne Lippincott-Wuerthele

*"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror;
then we shall see face to face." —1 Cor. 13:12*

As the world—and my ankle—turns

This past December, I missed the last step on our basement stairs and injured both of my feet. An Urgent Care physician diagnosed "a left foot sprain and a sprained/strained right foot with contusions, a possible hairline fracture, and a possible tendon avulsion."

Immediately after I fell, I didn't move because the intense pain made me sick to my stomach. Meanwhile, my 3-year-old granddaughter, Jacey, hurried upstairs and told everyone, "Noni fell down the stairs. She's dead." To paraphrase Mark Twain, *"The report of my death was greatly exaggerated."*

In hindsight, I wish King David's words in the Bible had applied to me as I stood at the top of our basement steps: "He [God] makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to stand on the heights. ...You [God] broaden the path beneath me, so that my ankles do not turn" (2 Samuel 22:34, 37).

As painful as that experience was, the Lord taught me two important lessons. First off, I no longer take the ability to walk for granted. Secondly, using a wheelchair—or even a motorized cart—is "for the birds."

Immediately after my accident, I tried to stay off my feet as much as possible. The doctor's orders formed the acronym, "RICE": Rest, Ice, Compress, Elevate.

I sprawled on our living room



couch's pullout bed, elevating my ace-banded "tootsies" on mountains of pillows. Periodically, I covered my feet with ice packs or bags of frozen peas. It was difficult to stay supine, especially since my list of "Things to Get Done Before Christmas" kept growing.

Eventually, I tried using crutches, but with little success. I didn't have the strength in my wrists and arms to use them correctly, plus I felt unsteady on them. All I needed was to fall again and break a hip or my head. I ended up borrowing a wheelchair from a relative, which proved both a blessing and a bane.

On the plus side, the wheelchair was fairly light and easy to maneuver. It was also much more comfortable than crutches, and I didn't feel unsteady.

The downside was the wheelchair didn't have any footrests. That meant my feet were vulnerable to being re-injured as I wheeled through our house and area stores. I also quickly realized that wheelchairs take a lot

of strength to propel.

While at a local mall, one business allowed me to use one of its hefty store wheelchairs. I alternated between "power spinning" the wheels—creating quick bursts of speed and then coasting—and slowly but steadily turning the large wheels. Both methods left my limp arms feeling like strands of spaghetti. More than once, I came close to asking complete strangers to push my chair for a few minutes.

Whenever I spotted other people (including children) using motorized wheelchairs, I shamefully admit I had to use every ounce of restraint to keep from mugging them and "borrowing" *their* chairs.

Several area stores supply motorized carts for disabled customers, but many of the carts I tried to use needed recharging. I also discovered those bulky carts are difficult to handle. So what if I almost hit three old ladies, two toddlers, and a partridge that fell out of its pear tree?

In early January, I began using my late father's timeworn wooden cane while shuffling around in old, tattered, moccasin-type bedroom slippers. Frankly, I looked like a skid row bum or a bag lady. But at least I wasn't tumbling off of crutches, straining my arms, or mowing down innocent shoppers with a motorized cart.

Apparently, God still finds me "teachable." I just hope He has fewer lessons for me to learn this year. **SR**



Women's Society page by Kristin Camenga
www.sdbwomen.org

Why my kids are 19 months apart

by Donna S. Bond
Shiloh, N.J.

All of us have experienced answered prayer—sometimes direct, and sometimes not so obvious. My experience has convinced me that intercessory prayer from the right person can work miracles.

This right person in my prayer life was Mrs. Madge Coon, an SDB pastor's widow who lived with her daughter, Doris Rood, and grandchildren, Phil and Alice, who attended Milton (Wis.) College with me. During my sophomore year, Phil and Alice initiated a bi-weekly prayer group in their home. By the end of that year we had become a close-knit family hosted by "Mom" Rood and "Grandma" Coon.

When Conference met in Milton that August, one conferee was a young man from Denver who returned at Christmastime with an engagement ring for Alice. On this occasion, one of the other girls commented, "Grandma Coon prayed that Alice would meet someone at Conference."

Three years rolled by. *Every one* of the other four girls was married or engaged. When Conference came to Milton again in 1973, I cornered Grandma Coon with this question: "Grandma, don't you think it's time you prayed for me?" She assured me that she had been.

That Friday evening, a handsome, bearded preacher's son from Shiloh, N.J., "stole" his brother's car from the campus parking lot and persuaded

me to play hooky. We made a commitment that night and were married on Easter Sunday eight months later, whereupon I made my home in New Jersey, too.

You would think that I'd have been satisfied. But no, I wanted more. Three more years went by, while I prayed, like Hannah. On April 29, 1977, I happened to run into Grandma Coon while I was visiting in Milton. I said, "Grandma, you prayed for God to send me a husband and He did. Now I would like to make another request...."

Bingo! Exactly nine months later I checked into Bridgeton Hospital where the world's most wonderful baby boy was born the following day.

Levi was the answer to many people's prayers and I did not intend to ask God or Grandma Coon for any more big favors right away. Grandma must have known that she didn't have much time to wait for me to ask. By the time Levi was a year old, I knew that my unspoken question was well on her way by special delivery. Her intercessory work on my behalf done, Grandma Coon went to be with her Lord just six months before Levi's sister Sylvia broke the "Bond tradition" of three-son families.

More than three decades have passed since Grandma Coon "prayed up" a complete Christian family for me. I can no longer ask her to intercede for me and, I might add, with tongue-in-cheek, there have been no more "blessed events" of such magnitude since her death

(although we recently welcomed a nearly perfect son-in-law into our family circle).

As Baptists, of course, we realize that we don't necessarily need an intercessor, but Grandma Coon gave me a fine example of what can result from a daily walk with Christ, prayer without ceasing and unquestioning faith. **SR**



Donna Sanford Bond, a member of the Shiloh (N.J.) SDB Church, is a school secretary. She represented Seventh Day Baptists at the 1995 session of

Baptist World Alliance in Buenos Aires, Argentina, while she was our Women's Board President. She will always be grateful to Seventh Day Baptists for their prayers when she was sent home from General Conference in 1992 for a biopsy that diagnosed her with Hodgkin's disease.

Kristin's note: Do you have others who intercede for you in the deepest desires of your heart? Are there others that you hold up in prayer and intercede for? I challenge you to find others that can pray for you intimately and for whom you can pray!



Relationally Engineered Part 1: Two models

There are few better ways to start an argument than to ask a group of people how something got to be the way it is. Quickly, you will hear people who normally agree on a great many things start to loudly and defiantly argue with one another, suggesting competing theories about why something functions as it does.

This rule applies in many settings. Politics, science, sports, and the arts are just a few of the realms where people have these arguments. In astronomy, biology and geology, debate tends to center on whether or not natural systems are the result of a series of unpurposed, agentless actions or whether there was some agent who purposed to create the known universe and its constituent parts.

In psychology, the discussion is about whether people are—to quote the lyrics from a popular song—“born this way,” or whether it is their environment that determines how people develop. In sports, people often debate how the game was won or lost, or by whom.

We shouldn’t be surprised, then, that similar debates arise when SDBs consider the origins and development of our General Conference. For 210 years, Seventh Day Baptists have had a robust discussion about what the Conference is, what it *should* be, how it functions, and how it *should* function.

In truth, the answers to all of these questions are complex and interrelated, and are the result of history: the history of North America, of Baptists, of local SDB congregations, and of strong personalities.

There are two primary organizing factors that have shaped our history as a Conference: the Associational principle and the Society model. The Associational principle suggests that it is good and proper for local congregations to cooperate to achieve together what they cannot do separately. In SDB life, this is lived out both through our 10 geographic Associations and through the General Conference itself, which is simply a larger geographic association.

The Society model suggests that likeminded indivi-

duals should band together to do work which reflects their shared interests. Each board and agency of the General Conference represents a manifestation of this belief, tied to a specific area.

For more than a century and a half, these two organizing principles have provided SDBs with the necessary structure to do everything from camp ministries to sending missionaries around the globe. We are dependent on both principles.

Perhaps not surprisingly, these two models do not always neatly interact when applied simultaneously, despite the fact that the people involved in the Associations (including Conference) and the Societies are frequently the same!

How can we account for the tension that surrounds the relationships of ministries inside the Conference? One possible reason for this tension can be tied to competing values. To put it bluntly: different SDBs have different priorities for what work they believe is most vital. Tensions arise when values collide.

On a related note, people often feel responsible for championing their preferred causes over other causes, which can lead to conflict. In addition, SDBs have frequently distrusted structure—occasionally to the point of paranoia—for reasons of historical precedent, relational distrust, or theological disagreement.

Finally, there is a disagreement among Seventh Day Baptists about what makes a structure appropriate for use in our contexts. The most ubiquitous debate concerns the wisdom of appropriating portions of secular organizational theories for use in our churches, ministries and Associations.

Over the past 210 years, our structures have developed in the tension between these two models. In the coming installments of this column, we will explore what both models have given us, as well as the development of Conference as an organic whole as means of further informing what is an ongoing discussion in SDB life. **SR**



T.I.M.E. Program continues

by Gordon Lawton, Dean
Director of Pastoral Services

How the T.I.M.E. program works

The purpose of the Training In Ministry by Extension (T.I.M.E.) program is to provide theological and ministry training for pastors (and their spouses) who are not able to go to seminary. This is training for those who are in ministry now as the Pastor, Associate, Assistant or Youth Pastor of an SDB church.

The applicant must be a member in good standing of an SDB church for at least two years, at least 25 years old, and be a high school graduate. If the applicant already has a bachelor's degree there are other programs that can be implemented.

The local church must recommend the pastor for the T.I.M.E. program, and a Covenant between the pastor and the church is signed as part of the admission form.

Specific classes are taken by distance in a set order and from schools already chosen by the Council on Ministry. The Senior Pastor track has over 70 semester hours of courses. Associate, Assistant and Youth Pastor tracks have 24 credit hours of courses. In addition the three SDB Institutes (History, Polity and Sabbath Theology) are required.

Tuition costs and the cost of required books and materials for distance learning courses (specified under one of the three T.I.M.E.

programs) will be covered. Courses repeated due to academic failure must be taken at the student's own expense.

An online course will challenge the student's time management skills and requires support and encouragement from the family and congregation. For more information about T.I.M.E., contact the Dean at dean@sdbministry.org or call him at the SDB Center.

Currently there are three students taking T.I.M.E. courses:



Saul Alonzo



Ericessen Cooper



Haywood Floyd

And in other COM news:

Pastors Retirement Offering Project (PROP) Update

Last month we spoke of this need. We want to keep it before us.


Contributions are needed for continuing support of the 11 remaining recipients who are covered by the "old" retirement plan. These recipients are retired SDB pastors, SDB denominational workers, and surviving spouses. Contributions to PROP are tax deductible. Give to those who gave so much.

SDB History Institute 2012

Ten students are registered and participating in the online portion of the SDB History Summer Institute.

Pastoral Changes

Jeff Bloedel is the new pastor at the Albion, Wis., SDB Church. He had been the interim pastor and became the pastor in January 2012.

Tim Smothers is the new associate pastor at the Battle Creek, Mich., SDB Church. 



Directors serve to Educate

In terms of organization, the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education, Inc., is a not-for-profit corporation comprised of 14 directors who serve 2-year terms.

Half of the directors are elected each year at the corporation's annual meeting. The directors begin their service on January 1 in the year after their election.

While the timing of the annual corporation meeting can vary, this meeting is generally scheduled during the week of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference at the Conference site. At some point after the election, the directors choose officers for the following year.

For 2012, here are the people serving as directors:

- Paul R. Andries, *President*
- Peggy Chroniger, *Vice President*
- Sandy Layton, *Recording Secretary*
- Andrew J. Camenga, *Corresponding Secretary*
- Allen Hauber, *Treasurer*
- Susan Bond
- Charlotte Chroniger
- Kory Geske
- Cindy Greene
- Nathanael Lawton
- Joshua Michaels
- Matthew Olson
- Dawn Palmiter
- Omari Rhoden

Two people concluded their service as directors at the end of 2011.

Gus Tucker (Paint Rock, AL) served for six years and chaired our Young Adult interest committee for the last three years. **Ann Pangburn** (Verona, NY) served for two years. We are grateful for the time, wisdom, and energy that they were able to contribute to the ministry and mission of Seventh Day Baptists through the Board of Christian Education.

The organizational pieces are important only if the mission and ministry are successfully carried out. The Board provides programs and materials to encourage and equip Seventh Day Baptist Churches to teach evangelism, nurture, discipleship, and stewardship. If you know of ways that we could do this better, please contact one of the directors or the Board office. *SR*

Sabbath School Teacher of the Year

Nomination forms are mailed to churches in February. If you'd like more information or need another copy of the form, just go to our website:

<http://educatingchristians.org/Information/CrystalAppleAward>



FOCUS on Missions

The Great Omission

by Clinton R. Brown

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 28:19)

“Not everybody [Christians] in America believes in Jesus the teacher.”¹ This opening statement by a former Romanian exile, Dr. Joseph Tson, caught my attention when I heard him speak at a Perspectives lecture I attended recently near Hartford, Conn.

Dr. Tson was born to believing parents who had broken away from the Eastern Orthodox faith. He was exiled from Romania after a prolonged, extensive persecution by the Communist regime. After the fall of Communism he was able to return to start a Bible Institute, FM radio ministry, and a publishing company.

Dr. Tson explained that as he began to write on the great teachings of Jesus, many Christians would tell him that Jesus was born to die for our sins and that was Jesus’ only function—to redeem us so that we might go to heaven. Dr. Tson answers that assertion with an example from one of the commentaries written by Erasmus of Rotterdam. The commentary stated that if you are a Platonist you follow the teachings of Plato. If you are an Aristotelian you keep with the teachings of Aristotle. So if you are a Christian it would follow that you should live by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It seemed illogical to me that evangelical Christians would reject the teachings of Jesus, but Dr. Tson suggested that in many of our mission strategies we may be doing just that.

Tson pointed out that when Jesus began His ministry He started a school. Our Lord gathered disciples and taught them for three years to produce people who were trained to bring the Kingdom of God to the world. Jesus lived an example of how you make disciples, and His final command provided “two simple specifics about discipling the peoples: baptizing and teaching.”²

I don’t think Tson meant to suggest that we should not bring saving knowledge on street corners, at revival altar calls, and in every opportunity we have to share Jesus (“to open their eyes” as Jesus told Paul in Acts 26). However, it seems to me that our efforts to bring God’s glory to the world may be “simple addition” if we stop working when the lost know just enough to receive forgiveness of sins. That way, we are part of bringing them to know God one by one.

But if we obey—and teach them to obey—Jesus’ teachings to go and make more disciples, we may open the door for the Holy Spirit to multiply the harvest as they in turn make more disciples, and so on (Luke 6:40).

The title of this article refers to a book by Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission*. Dr. Tson referenced it in his presentation. Willard’s book also focuses on this sometimes neglected portion of the Great

Commission, the call to “make disciples.” Willard writes that we cannot be Christians without being disciples, and we cannot call ourselves Christians without applying Christ’s teachings to every aspect of our lives.

I was glad I got to hear Dr. Tson speak on the topic. It has stirred me to encourage others (and myself) to continually focus on what Jesus teaches in the Scriptures and to be deliberately open to the Holy Spirit’s leading to make more than just converts. We must be and make disciples.

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:20) SR

“When Jesus began His ministry He started a school. Our Lord gathered disciples and taught them for three years to produce people who were trained to bring the Kingdom of God to the world.”

¹Dr. Joseph Tson, *Your Kingdom Come* – Avon Perspectives Lecture, Feb 2012

²Steven C. Hawthorne, *Mandate on the Mountain* - Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, 2009



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship

March 2012

Just the latest fad on the old iPad

by Rebecca Olson
Berlin, N.Y.

Lately, everyone at my school has become absolutely obsessed with the game “Temple Run.” It’s a free app for iPod Touch, iPad, and other devices not affiliated with Apple. (For all you gamers out there, I must confess that it is a pointless and addictive game, so if you’re into that kind of thing, I highly recommend it.)

As I watched one of my friends playing this game during lunch, I thought about how “Temple Run” probably won’t last long as the favorite game of my school community. Some other computer nerd will program some other free game, and the people of Berlin Central will start to play that game without ceasing.

That got me to thinking about all of the pointless apps on my iPod that I don’t play anymore.

Exhibit A: “The Moron Test.” That was the game everyone loved back in 7th grade, before just about everyone beat it—and those who couldn’t beat it claimed they did.

Exhibit B: Doodle Jump. This game was popular when I was in the 8th grade. I still don’t get the point of this one. You play as a little green monster and you jump up and down from platform to platform trying to get as high as you possibly can. It’s not like you can ever win—you just keep on jumping forever.



That doesn’t really matter, though, considering I haven’t played it in about a year. Believe me, the list of games that no one cares about anymore goes on like the levels of Doodle Jump.

My point here is that just as all these apps and games go out of style, everything we know, love, and may (or may not) be obsessed with right now will not last. No matter how much you think you *need* your favorite object to live, at some point it will be destroyed.

Scripture reinforces that we need to remember what really matters.

If all our earthly possessions will fade away, then why do we focus on those possessions so much? Shouldn’t God, the one constant—the one thing in our lives that will never leave—be the focus of our attention?

When a new game comes along, the old one is dropped. But we can never drop God. If anything, we should drop everything else to meet with Him. As Matthew 6 tells us, when we spend time with God we are storing up treasures in heaven. Those treasures won’t ever fade away, so they never go out of style.

This also reminds us that where our treasure is, our heart is. So if we want our hearts to be with God in heaven one day, then our treasure needs to be there, too. Our treasures here won’t last, just like all those old games. But our treasures with God will last forever. **SR**

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

(Matthew 6:19-21 NIV)

“To you much was given”

by Daniel Lovelace
Dallas, Georgia

Picture this: On Valentine’s Day you gave a loved one a nice, expensive jacket as a gift. The loved one responded to your generosity by using this jacket to sweep the floor, wash the dishes, and get the fire going in the fireplace. Well, at least the person put it to good use, right?

God has also graciously gifted us. He chose to love us and call us into a loving, intimate, eternal relationship with Himself purchased only through Christ Jesus our Lord and His atoning work. Eternal life in itself is a gift that far surpasses any other—and yet in addition to it He has blessed us with many more gifts here on earth.

Keep in mind, with all these, He has intended purposes for how we are to use them. The danger is that a lot of times we use these gifts without realizing or respecting their purposes.

1 Peter 4:10 refers to Christians as stewards of God’s grace. A steward is basically someone who manages something that doesn’t belong to him, yet has been entrusted to him.

When we view ourselves as stewards, we’re less likely to be prideful. We don’t really “own” anything but we will give account before God as to how we used our time, money, possessions, spiritual gifts, talents, abilities, relationships, work, Sabbath time, etc. God has entrusted these to us for His purposes, and calls us to be diligent stewards in our use of them.

This lesson is in Luke 12 where Jesus teaches us the parable of the faithful and unfaithful servants:



“To whom much was given, of him much will be required.” Yes, God wants us to be joyful and cheerful as we enjoy what He’s blessed us with. Yet He also desires us to be cheerfully and generously serving Him with those blessings—“for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corin. 9:7).

Use what God’s entrusted to you in your spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit, in your natural abilities, or with your possessions. Use even the things we don’t often think about to serve Him—things like being single, musical talents, basketball skills, Facebook, time with friends, cell phones, cameras, decks of cards, video games, skateboards, fishing poles, and the list goes on and varies with each person.

Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears write this in their book, *Doctrine*:

“Practically, stewards have a very distinct mentality. Rather than wondering how they should spend their time, talent, and treasure, they ask how they should *invest* God’s time, talent, and treasure. This means, as an example, that rather than asking why they should give their money to God, or wondering

how much of their money they should give to God, they instead prayerfully consider how much of God’s money he wants them to keep as well as what he wants done with that portion not used for bills and such.” (p. 374)

In Christ we have been called to be God’s Kingdom workers. We are to use what He’s entrusted to us for the advancement of the Gospel and His Kingdom on earth. Colossians 3:23-24 says, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

Remember, at times it will get hard. We may get discouraged and we’ll face opposition from our own sin nature and the enemy. But we are serving Jesus, our King and Judge.

His purpose is most important, not our individual feelings or plans. And by the power and leading of His Holy Spirit, we can use our time, talents, and treasures as He intends—for His glory, for our joy, and for the good of others. SR



The President's Page
by John Pethtel

Buckhannon, WV July 29–Aug. 4, 2012

Are you ready for good works?

“Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work.” (Titus 3:1)

How do we get ready for **every** good work? What are the good works we need to be ready to do? They are the “good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

God’s Word shows us what these good works are. His revealed Word causes us to be “equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Our submission to Him allows us to do them in His name and for His glory. Without submitting to God and those authorities that He has placed above us, we sully our good works for Him.

The American culture at large seems to be having an authority crisis. We like to snipe, criticize, humiliate, and flat out disobey the people who have been placed in authority (whether elected, appointed, or biological). If you don’t believe me, start one conversation about your president, or your pastor, or your parents. See how long it takes this conversation to go from “constructive” to “destructive.”

Being under authority and showing respect is not easy for us. Like our forefathers, our sinful nature tells us that “we know how to do everything better than everyone else.” Nobody likes being told what to do or how to do it. We start to believe that authority is only granted to those to whom we want to give it.

Biblically (Romans 13), it seems that all authority has been put in place by God (nationally, locally, ecclesiastically) for our benefit and good—whether you voted for the guy or not. This is a tough teaching of the Bible. It’s pointed out so we can be aware that we are a people under authority. If we are rebellious in submitting to our parents, will we then curb our rebellious behavior with God?

I want our churches to be ready for the good works of church revitalization and church planting that God has for us in the near future. He has been doing great things among our Seventh Day Baptist leaders and people. *Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?* (Isaiah 43:19a)

ARE YOU READY to make Jesus not just your Savior but your Lord? **ARE YOU READY** to follow, serve,

submit to, and wait for Him? It’s through His authority that our good works are able to advance His Kingdom. **ARE YOU READY** to honor, respect, submit, and obey those He has placed in authority over you?

This summer during our Conference sessions we will be challenging our churches to get ready for what God will do through them with our theme, “ARE YOU READY?” We will be studying 1 Thessalonians in our morning sessions and use the gathered worship times to discuss themes like Repentance, Revitalization, and His Return, among others. Of course, there will be the fantastic fellowship times and other activities that we have grown to love during that week.

We are placing an emphasis on church planting and revitalization during this year’s Conference as well. If that is an area of ministry that you are being called to explore or discover or have questions about, please contact the Center office, the Missionary Society, or myself so we can be praying for you and include you in these discussions.

There is still time to offer input into our yearly meeting. Please feel free to contact me through **e-mail** (john.j.pethtel@gmail.com), **Twitter** (@jjpethtel), or **Facebook** ([facebook.com/jjpethtel](https://www.facebook.com/jjpethtel)).

On behalf of myself, our denominational executives, our Boards and Agencies, and our Conference Host Committee, we want to invite you to join the **ARE YOU READY?** conversation at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, WV from July 29-August 4, 2012. **SR**



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

Bible Basics: 101

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on His law day and night.” (Psalm 1:1-2)

Do you make use of the great resource God has given you? Do you read His Word and make it a part of your daily life?

It does take dedication to the Lord by making a **Commitment** to read your Bible daily and making it an essential part of your life. There comes a time when you have to make a decision and a commitment to carry through what you know needs to be done. However, to make that commitment to read God’s Word, I believe you have to be convinced of its importance!

When he started his trek across Africa, the famous missionary, Dr. David Livingstone, had 73 books loaded into three packs. These three packs weighed a total of 180 pounds. After traveling 300 miles, fatigue had overtaken those carrying the collection and Livingstone discarded some of the books. As they continued on their journey the library kept diminishing. At the end, Livingstone had one book left—his Bible.

We need to view our Bible, and

the time spent in studying it, as indispensable. If you have not made a commitment to spend time daily in God’s Word, I challenge you to do so. Make that commitment today. I will make it with you. We can keep each other accountable. If you aren’t willing to make that commitment, you can stop reading right here.

If you made the **Commitment** above, the next thing we must do is to be **Consistent!** It’s important to make reading the Scripture a habit in your life. It needs to become a part of your routine, just like dressing yourself, or brushing your teeth, or looking in the mirror before you go out.

Bible reading must become something that if you don’t do it, you won’t feel complete without it. Our time in the Word of God needs to be consistent if we hope to be spiritually healthy and growing.

Finally, we need to do something with what we read in God’s Word. We need to be **Compliant.** In Joshua 1:8 it says, “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” And you thought you never studied law!

The purpose of spending time in God’s Word is to simply get God’s Word into us. That’s what we do at Awana each week in the Milton, Wis., Church. We work with the boys and girls on the verses that they should “hide” in their heart—then they will be able to refer to them when they need God’s assurances.

If we allow God’s Word to truly get into us, we then allow the Holy Spirit to get into us, and that should change the way we do things. In reading God’s Word, you are actually reading God’s voice, and that in turn gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to do His work in you.

But we must partner with God in order for this to happen! We have to make an effort. God is not going to sprinkle us with some magical pixie dust and make everything perfect! We must make the first move as it states in James 4:8, “Come near to God and he will come near to you.”

God’s blessing rests in our lives when we become His followers. When we become followers of Jesus’ example, we are His students! When we are His students then the Holy Spirit can use us to recruit more followers.

If we study God’s Word, He grows in us and we become more and more like Jesus. We live in His blessing! And who wouldn’t want that? **SR**



The cost of knowledge

by Morgan Shepard

*“To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth.”
(Proverbs 1:2-4 ESV)*

How much is college worth? How much would you pay for an education? Check out these numbers:

- In 2011-12, public four-year colleges charge, on average, \$8,244 in tuition and fees for in-state students. The average surcharge for full-time out-of-state students at these institutions is \$12,526.
- Private nonprofit four-year colleges charge, on average, \$28,500 per year in tuition and fees.
- Public two-year colleges charge, on average, \$2,963 per year in tuition and fees.

(Source: “What It Costs to Go to College” www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/add-it-up/4494.html)

Seventh Day Baptists have always placed an importance on education. Whether it was Alfred (N.Y.) University, Milton (Wis.) College, Salem (W.Va.) College, or the Academies in Albion, Wis., DeRuyter, N.Y., or Fouke, Ark., these institutions instilled SDB distinctives and Christian values. While most of these schools are gone, their legacy lives on.

The Memorial Fund administers three scholarships that continue this emphasis on education. Basic requirements include: 1) Applicant must be a person of high moral character and integrity, who lives a clean, wholesome, Christian life, an example to others; 2) Applicant must be an active member of a Seventh Day Baptist Church for three or more years.

**Spiritual Leadership
Development Scholarship**

Participate in either SCSC or a pre-approved church dedicated service project. Scholarships vary by years of service:

- 1st Year - \$1,500
- 2nd Year - \$2,000
- 3rd Year - \$2,500
- 4th-5th Year - \$3,000

Applications due via SCSC.

**Lois M. Wells
Music Education Scholarship**

Available to any Seventh Day Baptist student attending a college, university or vocational training institute pursuing a career in the field of Music Education. Scholarship amount depends on funds available and applications received.

Applications due to the Memorial Fund by General Conference.

**The Margaret Allen Bond
Memorial Scholarship**

Available to any Seventh Day Baptist student attending a college, university or vocational training institute pursuing a career in education. Minimum \$1,000 scholarship or more dependent on funds available.

Applications due to the Memorial Fund by General Conference.

While these scholarships won't cover all the costs of a higher education, they can help. Thankfully the best education we can receive is free—it's the Bible.

*“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”
(Proverbs 9:9-10 ESV) **SR***

“Camp came to Cottage”

Raising up children in Jamaica with Servant Leaders’ Ministry

by Marjorie Palmer
and Carmen McLean

What made the event one to remember was the evidence of emotions etched on the faces of over 100 children that greeted the team as they entered the grounds of the church.

The detour through Breadnut Hill in St. Ann, Jamaica was worth it all for the facilitators of *Servant Leaders’ Ministry* as they journeyed from various states and countries to celebrate Jesus through a leadership training camp on August 4-6, 2010.

The weather cooperated and so did the ladies of the church who were very diligent in their support for the ministry. It was a time of great celebration. The children were beside themselves as they reveled in the various activities designed solely for them.

Nestled in the sleepy community of Walkerswood is the Cottage Seventh Day Baptist Church—a quaint, aptly described “little brown church in the vale.” Enriched by the liveliness and warmth of its congregants, Cottage SDB is one of the seemingly forgotten gems of our Jamaican/Caribbean churches.

This venue was specifically chosen as the site for the **Summer Leadership Training Camp** as a church that people need to know more about. The dirt path of rich brown soil that leads to its door tells the story of its journey through the years. This church is bordered on the right by rich, green farmlands boasting crops of scotch bonnet peppers, yams, sweet potatoes, sugar cane and other sundries. To the left, houses with founda-

tions embedded in rich brown soil, depict the same quaintness as our little brown church. It is indeed a church to pay attention to.

But what made the event one to remember was the evidence of anxiety, curiosity and delight etched on the faces of over 100 children that greeted the team as they entered the grounds of the church. Children congregated from Run-away Bay and St. Ann’s Bay, along with the local invitees of Walkerswood, to participate in this summer event.

They were divided into three groups under the able tutelage of Sis. Joy Fuller from the South East Atlanta (Georgia) SDB church who facilitated the senior group. “Locals”—Sis. Marjorie Palmer from the St. Ann’s Bay Church and Sister Olive Solomon from the Kingston (Charles St.) Church—led the junior group, and Sister Perkins from the Cottage Church facilitated the primary group. Sister Carmen McLean from the Toronto, Canada, SDB Church kept

the project and everyone on their toes to make sure it all ran smoothly.

It was our pleasure to watch the children as they enjoyed the snacks and sumptuous hot lunches prepared for them by the church ladies. They participated in the games, quiz sessions, songs, leadership training, and other activities with a heightened level of excitement.

One of the high points was hearing the children bellow out some of the newer foot-stomping Gospel songs in vogue, such as one by Jabez: “a nuh one praya mi pray....” They knew them all and participated in all zest, singing and making melodies in their little hearts unto God.

The crowning moment of the training came when they realized that they were getting gifts of backpacks, books, school supplies, toys, and items of clothing. The lines were long but orderly as the children thankfully received these treasures.

“Camp came to Cottage!” was one of the thankful responses of a parent. “Our children could not afford to go

cont. next page

Camp came to Cottage, *cont. from p. 23*

to camp, but camp came to them.” It is the delightful encounter of meeting and sharing with children like Mojo, Jada, Rasheed, Whitney (to name a few) that made this experience so pleasurable, worthwhile and accomplished.

As servant leaders we are very grateful to everyone who contributed to the project to make it such a worthwhile venture. Help of all kind is needed as we plan for the next Servant Leaders’ Training Mission Trip in Jamaica for this summer, 2012. Let us make it all the more

interesting and Spirit-filled as we also celebrate 50 years of Jamaica’s Independence on August 12, 2012.

“Toot, toot!” The Servant Leaders’ train is coming. It is an annual summer event. Look out, children, your church could be the next stop. To God be the glory—how amazing is His love!

Servant Leaders’ Ministry was borne out of “**Camp Through the Ages.**” A group of past campers came together to honor three of the founders of Camp Maiden

Hall—Reverend and Sister Joseph and Joyce Samuels, and Sister Jasmine Lynch—and also to reconnect with each other. These stalwarts saw an opportunity to bring young people together during the long summer break, to bond, to share and learn more about Jesus Christ through various Christ-centered activities.

Please consider supporting this vital outreach. You may direct your questions regarding the ministry to carmenHUDSON@rogers.com. We look forward to hearing from you. **SR**

Update on Nancy’s “extended family”

by Nancy Davis, Shiloh, N.J.

*Editor’s note: I invite you to re-read the inspiring first installment of this story by Nancy Davis in the **May 2011 SR**. Nancy started to visit a relative in the nursing home and developed a bond and ministry among many other residents. Opening one’s heart and life to others can be a great blessing, and an occasional painful challenge. Nancy again shares from her heart.*

Nobody knows what changes will be happening in our lives, and I’m sure it’s much better that we don’t know. I also know that we are here for a reason—and with the Lord’s direction and help we need to rest on Him for support and strength.

During the last year, I have experienced a lot of changes with my “extended family.” Nathan, Frank and Alejo passed away.

Losing three of my friends was tough on me and also on all the residents of the nursing home.

They all passed within a two-month period. But in July, I really wasn’t ready for what was about to happen.

The Lord was with me when I received the call at my office, dropped everything and went to the nursing home to be with my former neighbor, Mr. Sharp (Roger). Mrs. Sharp, his wife, had just passed away. It’s hard to put into words how I felt. But when I arrived, I again realized how everything was in the Lord’s timing.

I was touched by the support from the staff, but mostly the support from the patients. One by one several came and just touched Mr. Sharp and sat by him and me. They were also hurting and sharing their hurt with us.

Not many words were spoken but I could feel the love that was being shared. They were all taking care of each other in their own way. I’m very thankful that I was able to share this time with my “extended family.”

When I visit the nursing home we continue to share the happy times we had together with Nathan, Frank, Alejo, and Mrs. Sharp. Memories are great and I’ll continue to hold on to them as they are made. And yes, new friends have come to live there, so this story will be continued... **SR**

**The SDB
Historical Society’s
2012 Annual Meeting**
will be held at the
**SDB Center,
3120 Kennedy Rd,
Janesville, WI at 2:00 pm
on May 20, 2012.**
All interested Seventh
Day Baptists are
invited to attend.

New members

Battle Creek, MI

Kory Geske, pastor

Joined after baptism

Kyle Rothchild

Joined after testimony

John F. Lawhead

Peggy Rothchild

Tim Smothers

Roger Throop

Milton, WI

George Calhoun, pastor

Joined after baptism

Barbara Kavanaugh

Joined after testimony

Sarah Cagney

Kennedy Ochs

Alexandra Rudawski

Karissa St. Clair

Shiloh, NJ

Don Chroniger, pastor

Joined after baptism

Carla Burlingame

Jose Quiro

Joined by letter

Donna Marlette

Richard Marlette

Death Notices

Katherine Louise (Junnila) Sholtz, 80, passed away on February 3, 2012. "Katie" was the wife of Paul Sholtz, Golden Valley, Minn., for nearly 60 years.

Jean B. Davis, 83, of Bradenton, Fla., died on February 8, 2012. Jean was the widow of Rev. S. Kenneth Davis. Her obituary will appear next month.

Obituaries

Westbrook.—Raymond Austin

Westbrook, 98, of The Oaks in

DeLand, Fla., passed away on

September 29, 2011. Ray was

born on December 14, 1912 in

New Jersey to Mr. and Mrs.

Lewis Westbrook.

He received his engineering training at Rhode Island State College and married the former Esther Pinder.

They resided in New Jersey where he worked for the Westinghouse Corporation. Employment opportunities led the family to Schenectady, N.Y., where Ray worked as an engineer with General Electric and AT&T. They moved to Central Florida in the 1980s after his retirement.

Ray served his country as an Army veteran in the Philippines during World War II. He was a man of many talents. He tinkered with electronic applications, and repaired radios and TV in the days of vacuum tubes. He was also an accomplished "bass fiddle" player in New Jersey restaurants and clubs in his youth.

Ray was a member of the Daytona Beach SDB Church and did much hospital volunteer work. He was predeceased by his wife of 64 years, Esther, whom he will be laid to rest by in Berne, N.Y. He is survived by nephew Dale Vandermark of New Jersey; and brothers-in-law Clayton and Carlton Pinder, both of DeLand.

A memorial service was held on October 4, 2011 at The Oaks Community Center in DeLand with Pastors Clayton Pinder and David Meyers officiating.

DeMond.—Donna Lou DeMond, 63, of Battle Creek, Mich., died on December 19, 2011. She was born in Battle Creek on December 8, 1948, to Joseph and Cornelia DeMond.

After graduating from high school in 1968, Donna worked at the Fed-

eral Center in Battle Creek from 1971-1979. She also worked various jobs in housekeeping and babysitting, and enjoyed making her own clothes and collecting angels.

Following her mother's death in 1982, Donna and sister Laura moved in to care for their older sister, Frances, who was confined to a wheelchair with spina bifida. When Frances passed away in 1992, Donna and Laura became acquainted with Agape Haus Association and the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church. Donna joined the church, was part of the Ladies Aid and loved to sing.

Donna was a loving daughter, sister, aunt, great aunt, and friend to many. Donna was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters, Frances DeMond and Doris Vandam; a brother, Norman, who was stillborn; one niece and one nephew. She is survived by sister Laura DeMond, a niece and a nephew, two grand-nephews and a grand-niece.

Funeral services were held at the Battle Creek SDB Church on December 31, 2011 with Rev. Kory Geske officiating. *SR*

Marriages

Monroe – Goldstein. Timothy Monroe and Emily Goldstein were united in marriage on June 4, 2011 in Jacksonville, AR. The groom's father, Pastor Jeffrey Monroe officiated.

Williams – Booth. Myron Williams and Kelli Booth were united in marriage on July 23, 2011 in Little Rock, AR. Pastor Kevin Allen officiated.

“

Because some passages contain only a partial transcript, the modern reader will often need to consult other passages to get a complete picture.

”

answer lies, in part, in what they expected the Messiah to be, the way earlier portions of Scripture described him.

A topical Bible organizes verses thematically and is a good source for such information. The standard is *Nave's Topical Bible*, which lists many OT prophecies in the entry for Jesus. Of the seven passages most clearly and directly referring to the person of the Messiah, six describe him as a conquering king (Psa. 2; 110; Isa. 9:3-7; 11:1-4; Dan. 7:13-14; Mic. 5:2), but only one describes him as a suffering servant (Isa 53:3-6).

These are the passages that excited people in the first century, yet as the majority of them predict a monarch and not a martyr, it is understandable why many rejected Jesus' messianic claims. He did not meet their expectations.



• **THE CANONICAL context:**
What does related material elsewhere in Scripture say?

Because some passages contain only a partial transcript of an event, or because an author may not repeat material his audience already knows, the modern reader will often need to consult other passages in the canon of Scripture to get a complete picture.

This means that it is inadvisable to base our understanding, especially of doctrinal matters, on a single verse. Rather, we should formulate an opinion after considering what God has said in other places.

In John's gospel, Jesus seems to give his disciples a "blank check" for their petitions (16:23).

*Truly, truly, I say to you,
if you ask the Father for
anything in My name,
He will give it to you.*

Some Christians take this to mean that whether there is a *need* for a particular thing or simply a *desire* to possess it, they have only to "name-it-and-claim-it," and God will grant their request. Is this assumption consistent with what God has revealed elsewhere?

As with the earlier section on cultural context, *Nave's Topical Bible* is a good tool to locate other passages on the same subject. In the section on prayer, two verses in John's first epistle indicate that God is quite particular about the petitions He answers. According

to the apostle, who was present for Jesus' instruction and would certainly have understood Jesus' intention, the *source* of the request must be a person who respects God's will (3:22), and the *substance* of the request must itself reflect God's will (5:14).

...whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

The purpose of prayer is not to gratify us but to glorify God.

Conclusion

These six aspects of context—**Verbal, Grammatical, Cultural, Historical, Theological, and Canonical**—are not the only ones that can help explain the meaning of a passage, but they are among the most important.

Along with diligent effort, a few good tools, and dependence on the leading of God's Spirit, a Christian (even with little or no formal training) can be one who is "accurately handling the word of truth" and who, thereby, meets with God's approval. **SR**

Dr. Paul Manuel is pastor of the German Seventh Day Baptist Church in Salemville, Pa. This feature first appeared in the March 2002 Sabbath Recorder.

K E V I N ' S

O R N E R

Choosing the right path

“There is a way [path] that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” (Prov. 14:12)

Choices. We face them every day, nearly every moment.

I’ve enjoyed gaining more insights from Ray Vander Laan’s latest video series, “Walking With God in the Desert.” When most of us North Americans hear the term “desert,” we imagine the vast Sahara with miles and mounds of smooth, fine sand.

The desert region near the Holy Land is almost the opposite. (The video is shot on location.) That “desert” region has some dry and barren areas, but it also includes rocky and mountainous terrain. Flash floods rushing down from those hills have claimed more lives there than deaths caused by heat, thirst and exposure combined. Wow, floods in the desert. You must be careful where you walk.

Through the centuries, narrow footpaths have carved their way through the harsh and rocky land. Other paths have been attempted but those can end in death. The wise traveler sticks to the proven path.

This comes from Ray’s study guide: “Many times the Bible mentions ordinary paths—the routes a person walked in order to travel from one place to another—as a metaphor to describe human experience and God’s intentions for his people. To walk on a path, both literally and figuratively, involves choosing it and remaining on it until the individual arrives at the intended destination.

“So the paths on which we choose to ‘walk’ (or ‘live,’ in our English usage) reveal our focus and portray the character of our lives. We either walk on God’s path and choose to obey and trust him faithfully, or we take another path and make different choices.”

David begins Psalm 16 with, “Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge” and he ends it with, “You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”

Too often we want to stray from the “path of life” to seek treasures and pleasures of another sort. Do you fall into the trap of the latest trends or toys, as I sometimes do? (He says as he glances at his iPad and contemplates his next cell phone upgrade.) They are so temporary, and a far cry from the Lord’s “eternal pleasures.”

I hope we can read and take to heart these other reminders of choosing the proper path:

“Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways. It [wisdom] will save you... Thus you will walk in the ways of good men and keep to the paths of the righteous. For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the unfaithful will be torn from it.” (Prov. 2:12-14, 20-22)

“Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many. I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble.... Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way.... Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.” (Prov. 4:10-12, 14-15, 26-27)

“It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to stand on the heights.” (Psalm 18:32-33)

The Lord offers His wisdom for us to choose the right path. May He guide us along the straight path and keep us safe.



2012 Sabbath Hymn and Praise Song Contest

What's this about?

We are looking for new and original Sabbath hymns or praise songs for Seventh Day Baptists. Sharing of the best entries will coincide with this year's Sabbath Renewal celebration in May.

The Contest

Your song must:

- Be new and previously unpublished
- Pertain to the Sabbath (God's giving it, its benefits and blessings, His grace and love behind it. Let's praise *the Lord* through this, not just the Sabbath.)

The song will be judged on:

- Singability
- Biblically correct
- Understandable to laypeople
- Glorifying to God
(Rhyming scheme helpful)

Contest Entrants

- Composer/author names or faces will not be revealed to the judges. (So, we're not looking for perfect audio or flashy videos—yet.)
- Those who enter must be current members of an SDB church.
- Teamwork is allowed.
- Each entrant agrees to grant permission to have the hymn/song printed in the May 2012 *Sabbath Recorder*. The *Recorder* will ensure copyright protection with the © symbol.



Categories

Depending on the response, entries may be divided into categories:

- “Words Only” (matching existing hymn or praise song tune; please, no secular tunes)
- “Hymn words and original music”
- “Praise words and original music”

Deadline

Hymn or Praise Song entry must be received by **March 15, 2012**.

How to enter

All: Send your song words to editor@seventhdaybaptist.org

Audio files can be Windows Media or mp3
If you plan to send a video (up to 2GB), e-mail us and we will link you to the upload server.

Or mail your entries (paper, CD, DVD) to SDB Center, Sabbath Hymn Contest, PO Box 1678, Janesville WI 53547.

Prizes

We're still working on the prize package, but the winner can expect at least one Apple product (and we don't mean cider...)