

Sabbath Recorder

Even when I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid,

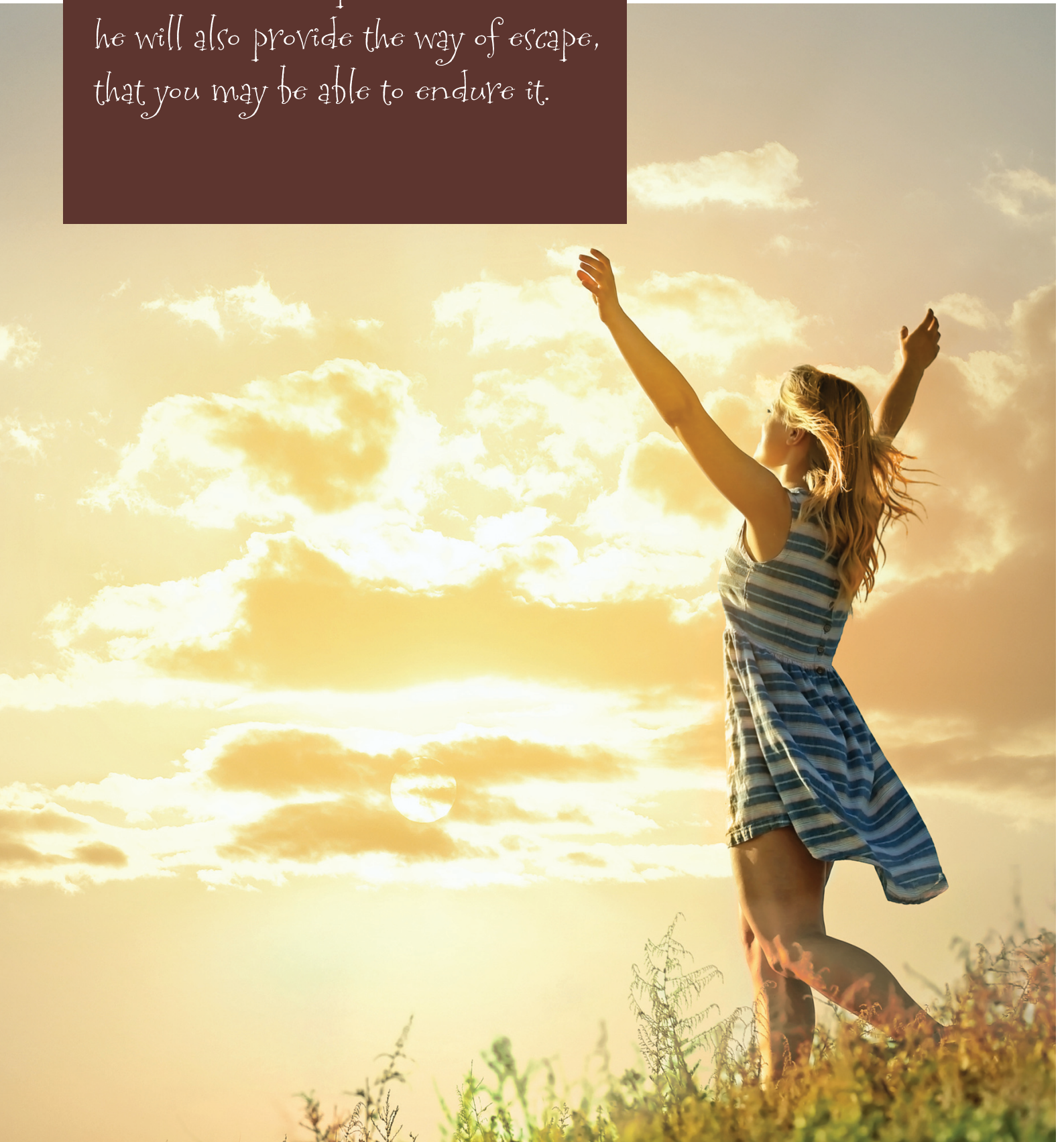
*for you are
close beside me.*

—Psalm 23:4 NLT

June 2023

A Seventh Day Baptist Publication

*...but with the temptation
he will also provide the way of escape,
that you may be able to endure it.*



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Sabbath Recorder

A monthly journey into the mind and heart.

June 2023

Patricia Cruzan, Editor

A Seventh Day Baptist Publication

Volume 245, No.6, Whole No. 7,100

The Sabbath Recorder (ISSN 0036-214X) (USPS 474460) is published monthly (combined July and August) by the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference's Tract and Communication Council, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Periodicals postage paid at Janesville, WI, and additional offices.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to *The Sabbath Recorder*, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678

This is the 179th year of publication for *The Sabbath Recorder*. First issue published June 13, 1844.

Member of the Associated Church Press.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

This publication is distributed at no cost to members and friends of Seventh Day Baptist churches and is made possible by donations from its readers. Send your mailing address to The Seventh Day Baptist Center, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678 or email contact@seventhdaybaptist.org

WRITERS:

Please email your manuscript as a Word document to the Editor at sdbsr@seventhdaybaptist.org.

Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed; however, they will be considered on a space available basis. No remuneration is given for any article that appears in this publication. Paid advertising is not accepted.

The Sabbath Recorder does not necessarily endorse signed articles.

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.

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You Must Think I'm Strong...

By Charles Meathrell

You probably know a lot of phrases that folks—even Christians—often mistake as biblical. They permeate our language to the point that we hardly question them anymore. “God helps those that help themselves” is one. That was not Jesus or Paul, but Algernon Sidney (later quoted by Benjamin Franklin). We like to say things like “God wants me to be happy!” (That one sounds fabulous out of the mouth of every prosperity preacher.) Another favorite adage is one we say when someone dies. We say, “Heaven gained another angel.” (That one sounds nice, but it’s unbiblical and terrible theology; angels are angels and people are people.)

I could go on and on, but let’s throw one more out there just for funsies: when people are suffering, and, indeed, when we are suffering, we like to say that “God never gives us more than we can handle.” Boy, that really makes you feel better, doesn’t it? The premise is that things will absolutely not get much worse than they are now. God is allowing you to go through all this stuff, but He really understands when to stop pushing all the troubles of the world onto you before you completely crack under the pressure. *You will not break. You will not be crushed.*

Well, I’ll bet you’ve really picked up on the theme that’s been laid out here: you’re a bright and clever individual, and you get it! Like the earlier adages, it sounds right but doesn’t stand up to closer study. ***The idea that God will stop allowing suffering to be added to you when you’re nearing your breaking point is nonsense.***

Continued on next page...

“this looks like more than I can do on my own...”

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You can read the Bible from cover to cover and do all the word-searches you like in the apps. *It's just not in there.* So then—what do we say about *suffering*?

Years ago, when my wife, Jessica, and I lived in South Carolina, we had a very dear friend, Cindy, who was battling leukemia for the second time. This time, it was far worse than the first time she'd had it. She was often too ill to meet up with us and when we were able to meet, we sometimes had to be extremely careful not to get too close and risk giving her germs.

I vividly recall sitting in my living room with her and her husband, Dennis, and Jessica one day. She was sharing about how hard everything was for her and we listened to the song, “*Strong Enough*,” by Matthew West. The lyrics open with these words:

*“You must, you must think I'm strong
To give me what I'm going through.
Well forgive me, forgive me if I'm wrong
But this looks like more than I can do on
my own...”*

That song really could have gone either way as far as message. It could have been this uplifting “He must not be planning to let you suffer much more than this...” kind of baloney. Instead, it came down to the simple, powerful admission, “I'm *not* strong enough to do this on my own.”

I'm not ashamed to share that the last few years have been some of the most challenging of my life for a lot of reasons, but Matthew West has the right idea when the song gets to his point. It's not “God isn't going to give me more.” It's more like “I'm not strong enough; I need you now, God.”

Let's chew on the idea of suffering for a few moments. At some point(s) we all come to that place of deepest sorrow. *Why is that?*

1. “Good People”

There's another fun trick we like to play on ourselves. It's quite funny if you know many people at all. We like to ask, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Well, the answer there is quite simple! They don't! Scripture is very clear; Romans 3:23 famously says, “for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” The only exception was Christ Jesus; that's why His sacrifice on the cross was sufficient to cover all this sin! He had been absolutely blameless.

To say that we deserve the things that happen is a stretch, but we're by no means free from the guilt of our choices. We live in a world permeated by man-made ugly. That is a simple, terrible fact. Oftentimes we suffer because we live in the very consequences of our own choices, as individuals and as humanity. Unfortunately, we also sometimes suffer because we're not always free from the choices of others.

Remember that what you are going through can be used for others.

2. Purposeful Pain

That's one of my favorite terms and my church family has grown accustomed to it. The idea, often outlined in scripture, is that the things through which we suffer are often being used for our good, for the good of others, and for the good of the Kingdom. It's tough, but useful to know and understand that.

James 1 and Romans 5 both teach that the things that we're going through grow our character. Remember that "suffering produces endurance...[then] character...[then] hope." Remember, also, that what you are going through can be used for others. God used the abuse of Joseph's brothers (Genesis 37-50) to save many, many lives. Through tears, he said to his brothers, "as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." (Genesis 50:20 ESV)

3. Closer

There are lots of reasons why we might be suffering. *There are other important ones that I'm not going to cover here*, but there is certainly one more that it would be a terrible shame for me to miss. One of my favorite parts of the story of the exodus from Egypt is a single phrase. Through all the plagues and death and sorrow—through the many trials that the Israelites went through—this one phrase stands out to me. God didn't only say, "let my people go." He said, "let my people go *that they may serve me.*" (Exodus 8:1 ESV emphasis mine.)

Isn't that something? Saying crazy things like, "God won't give you more than you can handle," isn't just scripturally unsound—it is not an honest expression of the heart of our King. He loves us *so much*. He doesn't want us to think of Him as giving us terrible loads to bear. He wants us to acknowledge the valleys through which we walk *and lean into Him*.

Sometimes when I'm praying (and especially when I feel that familiar weight and burden on my heart) I look to my King and almost visualize crawling up into His lap because that's how He loves me. Maybe that's a little weird, but I do this and think about Jesus praying and saying, "Abba," the Aramaic word for "Daddy."

There are so very many ways we are impacted by our culture. To be honest, most of them aren't all that great. Perhaps among the worst of them are when we allow the world around us to impact the way we see our faithful, loving "Abba." God's not looking to test our limits. He doesn't take any kind of sick pleasure in heaping torture upon us. He's using our pain for good and pleading with us to crawl up into His lap. He just loves us all so much. SR

Chuck Meathrell is the pastor of the Pataskala SDB Church in central Ohio. He is a life-long Seventh Day Baptist and has pastored in Ohio and South Carolina. He was raised in the Salem, WV, church and currently lives in Thornville, Ohio, with his wife, Jessica, three sons, and various animals. God is good.

It's not in there...

How often have we heard, or perhaps said, some of those pithy little statements that supposedly convey our deep theological convictions and adherence to scripture, but when we search for Biblical support of those “truths,” we cannot find them? An example of this would be that cleanliness is next to Godliness—that sounds good, but you won’t find it in the Bible. God helps those who help themselves is another one of those sayings that needs to be purged from our vocabulary. The reality is that God helps the helpless (Isaiah 25:4, Romans 5:6). These are just a couple of examples that are often spoken, yet so wrong!

One of the statements that we hear often is that God will not give us more than we can handle. When people talk of this statement, what is meant to be comforting very often just leads to more questions and discomfort. “If I am supposed to be able to handle all of these things, then why can’t I handle them?” Questions like that are discouraging and can be used to shipwreck one’s faith. Thankfully, scripture teaches the exact opposite!

1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” Within this verse is a guiding instruction for us. If we are a child of God, He will not allow any difficulty to come our way that we can not bear *in the power of Christ*. We serve a God who is faithful, and He provides for us a way to endure the trials that do come our way!

We certainly do not need to look very far to conclude that life is not easy. While there are those who would preach that all of your problems go away when you come to Christ, there is no place in Scripture that teaches that. In

fact, Scripture teaches the exact opposite! John 16:33 says that “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” We can expect it as we live from day to day. We are not immune from the challenges around us, but we can overcome them *in the power of Christ*. Our peace is found in the fact that Christ has overcome the world! Not me, but Christ!

I also believe that there is another side to this. We very often equate this statement with the challenges that come our way. How about the good things that we desire? There are times that we wish for things that we do not have, and we know that our lives would be so much better if we only had them! A newer car, a bigger home, financial independence—the list never ends. The Sovereign God knows what we need and when we need it. God is faithful—He supplies exactly what we need for our good and His glory. We most often forget about His glory... It is not about what we can handle, it is about what we can handle in the power of Christ—the challenges as well as the provision!

For the Christian, our focus is on a Sovereign God who provides for our every need. It is true that we cannot handle life on our own; however, we do serve a faithful God who provides the endurance that we need to live this life.

We don’t live in the strength of ourselves. We live in the strength of some else—Jesus Christ! [SR](#)

Tim Smothers has served as Pastor at Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church in Battle Creek, MI, for the last 9 years. He and his wife, Karen, enjoy singing together as well as time well spent with family.

We have all heard it. We have probably said it. “God won’t give you more than you can handle.” A friend loses a job, a co-worker loses a spouse, a brother loses his temper, and here it comes: “God won’t give you more than you can handle.” What does that even mean? Does our Lord cause all of those “bad” things to happen to us? Does He push us to our limits? When we feel as though life is more than we can handle, did it all come from God? Or is it possible that we have bitten off more than we should have in the first place? What we really mean (and what we should probably be saying) is: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5,6) When difficult times come, trust in Him. “The LORD is my Rock and my Fortress and my Deliverer.” (Psalm 18:2)

The Missing Piece

When I was a child, my older brother and I shared a bedroom. Most every night, my mom was the tucker-inner. She would stay in our room past our bedtime, talking and playing with us before we said our final goodnight. We shared lots of hugs and giggles in those early years. I can still hear my dad’s voice from the other room, “Linda, let those kids go to sleep!” My mom truly cherished her children. Every kid should have a mom like mine.

But some nights were less cheerful. I would sometimes lie awake at night crying or fretting over something I didn’t quite understand. When Mom asked what was the matter, my answer was always the same, “I don’t know—there’s just a piece of the puzzle missing.” Mom was always patient with me, but my little brain was not able put into words what I was feeling on the inside. All I could tell her was that something was missing. (This would become one of those little “Hey, remember when...” stories at family gatherings). The troubles of life were relatively normal for a freckled, short kid from Small Town, Florida—sunburns, fire ants and sandspur patches, a friend who wasn’t allowed to come out and play today, and of course the occasional bullying at school. However, this was something deeper, a yearning for something much bigger than myself. There had to be more to life than what I was experiencing in the day-to-day. Something was just absent—like a puzzle with a missing piece.

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Little did I know that my puzzle was coming together.

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At age 11, I was invited to the Good News Club that met at the local Baptist Church. At first it was all about the cookies and punch, but eventually, a sweet, elderly woman led me to the Lord as we prayed together sitting in a church pew. I don't remember her name, and I don't remember her face. (Was she even elderly? To an 11-year-old, 30 could seem elderly!) I just know that this nameless, faceless saint shined the Light of Christ in my direction, and I will always be grateful for her gentleness and kindness, her genuine Christian love for me. With her help, I had discovered something BIG! I found Jesus! Or maybe He found me?

Wouldn't it be great if the story ended there? "11-year-old boy finds Jesus and does a 180—his life changed forever—no more questions or doubts—The End." But that's not the way it works, at least not for me. The innocence of those pre-teen and teen years combined with small town American culture can be a dangerous mix, especially when church-related activities are not a priority. Cookies and punch became less interesting, but the cute girls kept me relatively involved in youth groups and "church stuff."

But then something amazing started to happen. The more time I spent in the presence of believers, the more the Lord began to open my young heart. I wanted to hear more about Jesus and His disciples—the shepherd boy turned king, the three boys in the fire who didn't even get burned! Jesus sacrificed His life? For me? And every story was true. Every story pointed to God's love for His people. His love for ME! Little did I know that my puzzle was coming together.

"There's a God-shaped hole in all of us." Isn't that so true? There is a place within us that only He can fill. As I sit in my office and write, looking back at this amazing

journey that has gotten me to where I am today, I see how faith is developed over time. Faith is a long process of walking with Him, learning to trust Him, and allowing Him to refine us day by day, little by little, as we seek and learn and grow. I want to know Him more and more and more. Oh, what joy we experience when we truly know Him! What peace we find when we truly trust Him! We can let go of all the guilt, all the shame, all the doubt. "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us!" (Romans 8:37). So, we don't have to listen to the lies of the enemy anymore. No one can take away that joy and peace that can only come from an authentic relationship with our loving Savior, Jesus! He makes us COMPLETE.

In more recent years, it has been a wonderful experience watching my family grow in faith together. When your church family is made up of mostly blood family, unique challenges come—but so do great rewards. Shortly before my mother passed away in January, 2022, after Parkinson's had done most of its damage, a handful of us were casually sitting around discussing family, and faith, and just life in general. Mom had been mostly quiet, as she usually was, but as the discussion was coming to a close, she spoke. In that sweet and gentle southern drawl, she asked me a question that she had never asked before, "So, did you ever find the missing piece of your puzzle?" She had a big, proud smile on her face. She already knew the answer.

I love you and miss you, Mom. I'll see you soon. SR

Pastor Keith McCall is the former pastor of the SDB Church of Edgewater from 2008-2022. He and his wife, Audra continue to host Sabbath services and teach Bible study in their home.



“The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.”

—Psalm 28:7(NIV 1984)

The spring flowers are up and the weather seems to be getting warmer... well, for the most part. I am thankful there is not as much snow blasting in my face right now! I am thankful the days are becoming longer as the sun rises earlier and sets later. When the sun is out it feels warmer!

Sometimes it is hard to find that glimmer of happiness and joy the LORD gives each of us when we see the sun less for months at a time. Some of us go through times of depression during the winter months. Times like these tend to make it feel as though challenges seem to stack up. I imagine many of us relate to those times where the list of things to do and the list of problems keep getting added while we are unable to cross any done items off the list! Just keep adding one after another... and another... and another! If you have no idea what I am talking about, I need to know how you are doing it!!

The world we live in can make us feel overwhelmed and weak. Demands of family schedules, church life, and careers can make us feel like we are being pulled in so many directions we struggle to navigate and keep up with demands. This is when the enemy swoops in and can take hold of us. We become run down with feelings of being overwhelmed and discouraged—sometimes to the point that we may give up entirely. The enemy comes at us from all directions to distract us and make our lives feel more like mountains looming over us waiting to collapse upon us. We find ourselves needing strength...and not of our own. Jesus warns us, ***“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*** John 16:33. Peace is found in the LORD’s strength. This is when we need to fall on our knees and TRUST in HIM. We need to trust that HE is there through it all. We need to pour out our hearts to communicate with our LORD, even if we have no clue what to do or say!

I lost my mother last year. I was her pastor and as she was declining in health, I would ask “The Questions.” For example, “Is Jesus your LORD and Savior,” “Are you worried about dying,” and others. My Mother responded to me, “The LORD will not give you more than you can handle.”

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Knowing this was not scripture, I inquired what she meant by that statement. Her response was, “I trust HE knows what HE is doing!” I began reflecting on her life. She was married for 18 years before getting divorced, worked usually more than two jobs, was a single mother, got married a second time to an alcoholic, survived breast cancer, survived lung cancer... twice, and dealt with COPD and emphysema—the latter two being what took her life. I am not saying there were not any wonderful things in her life, because there were many. However, she chose to trust in the LORD with all her ups and downs as she processed her upcoming death.

GOD knew we would go through temptation and adversity in our lives. HE knew there would be times that we would fall flat on our faces and the only thing we could do was roll over and look up to HIM! My Mom had a strong faith that she used as a shield just as CHRIST reminded us to do in Ephesians 6:16. We know Our LORD and Savior is ready to answer the call on our behalf any time we call. It is up to us to take hold of that shield and use it!!

This is one of our roles in this partnership. We are in this battle *together* with GOD. HE is doing the heavy lifting and fighting for us. It is GOD’s shield that is offering protection over our hearts, our minds, and our souls. We have been tasked with holding onto the shield of faith as our lives depend on it! We need to use HIS word as the battle goes on reminding us and others Who is doing the fighting: The Rock, Refuge, Defender, Strong Tower, Light, Redeemer, Good Shepherd, and Our Deliverer!! We can repeat HIS Truth over and over in our minds as we go through our days and nights! With each battle we can hold on and grow by learning to TRUST in HIM. Remember that when one skirmish is over, the war still rages on. As Paul writes in Colossians 2:7: **“Rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as we were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”**

This is one of those moments when the saying, “Do as I say and not as I do,” applies. Each day brings a whole new set of problems and I struggle, just as everyone else, to hold tight to the shield and trust. I am learning... reminded each day...that I have very little strength on my own. However, GOD has blessed me in so many ways. HE has placed people in my life who speak encouraging words to me as we continue to win one battle after another. Many of us find it difficult to sing for joy or be overflowing with thankfulness when we are in the midst of battle. However, we need to remember who is doing the fighting! We can trust and pick up the Shield, hold tight and praise the LORD for HE has already won!

Please pray with me: LORD, I ask for GOD-given rest, strength to get through whatever is thrown at me with GOD at my side, discernment to judge well, and humility when I need to acknowledge my mistakes! But most of all, forgiveness and wisdom when I think I can do it all on my own!! Amen.

For the love of HIS service! SR

JR Shick serves as pastor in the community of White Cloud, MI. GOD has blessed him with an amazing wife, Sarah, two wonderful children, Kashya and Keith III; and an encouraging congregational family in the White Cloud Seventh Day Baptist Church.



The Biblical Response to Problems

By Pastor Barry Dailey

We all face problems every day because we live in a fallen world. Job 14:1 speaks to this, “*Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.*” This article will give the reader a biblical perspective of understanding and responding to problems.

There is a well-known saying, “God will not give you more than you can handle.” The implication is, God will not allow problems to overwhelm us. Paul speaks to this in 1 Corinthians 10:13 where he writes, “*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*” The word “temptation” in Greek means adversity, trial, or problem. So, here is a question, do we seek, find, and follow the way of escape provided by God in response to adversities, or do we just pray for problems to go away? God has an exit path for us to follow in times of adversities or problems.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines problem as, “an intricate unsettled question” or “a source of perplexity, distress, or vexation.” In Deuteronomy 1:12, Moses spoke to the children of Israel saying, “*How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints?*” A problem can be conceptualized as a shift in a person’s perceived wellness and equilibrium in life which requires remediation. Therefore, such words as adversity, trouble, affliction, sickness, challenges, and struggles can practically describe our understanding of a problem.

Problems will stay with us until Christ returns. Let’s look at five ways in which we can understand and respond to problems:

Chastening: The purpose of chastening is to bring correction, promoting characteristics associated with righteousness. The term chastening comes from the Greek word *paideuo* which means, “to be taught” or “caused to learn.” This follows the notion of a father correcting his child to bring about desired traits. Chastening may be viewed as a problem because it can soak up our joy and it tends to be painful. However, we can trust that God chastens those whom He loves and has pure motives that point His children towards holiness. Hebrews 12:11-13 gives us the purpose and answer as to how we should respond to being chastened by the Lord, “*Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.*”

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The intended response is for us to “pull up our socks” and endure the process of chastening, without allowing it to discourage us. We should seek to change to align with the fruit which is the desired outcome of our loving, heavenly Father.

Trials: James 1:2-4 provides teaching on trials that stress or test our faith, *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”* We should see testing by trials as that which brings about patience. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Patience moves us towards maturity in our Christian walk. Trials should invoke a sense of gladness as we know that they are allowed by God for His purposes.

Although trials incur the problem of hardship, we should have the response and perspective of joy because there is knowledge that God is maturing us towards the character of Christ for His glory. Here is a parallel—our muscles grow stronger as they are met with resistance during weight training. Likewise, our faith is strengthened by various trials which are forms of resistance.

Sinful Responses: We live in a sinful, fallen world. Our default is to respond in sinful ways. We are all subject to the consequences of sin which is foundational to the problems we face. Our sins and consequences are given context in James 1:13-15 which says, *“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”* Sin separates us from God and there is a wide range of problematic consequences in addition to the final wage of death. Our sins and the sins of others against us are the major source of problems that we face in this life. As one professor puts it, “sin blinds, sin binds and sin grinds.”

Whether we or others are the source of sin-based problems, God always call us to respond in obedience to His will. Therefore, we must follow His Word and His Spirit to turn from sin and take God-honoring actions to address problems.

Buffeting: Paul’s experience with the “thorn in the flesh” provides additional teaching regarding God’s purposes for adversities. In 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Paul refers to having a thorn in his flesh, a messenger of Satan which he asked to be removed three times.

God’s response was not to eliminate Paul’s problem, but to tell him that His grace was sufficient to provide endurance and strength. Paul understood that the buffeting he endured kept him humble as God gave him “the abundance of revelations.” We must consider the possibility that what we perceive as a problem may be ordained of God to promote humility; in this condition of weakness, God’s strength is demonstrated.

Our response in this scenario is to know that God’s grace is sufficient to keep us and we should remain humble as God works His power in our weakness for His glory.

God-ordained: Some problems exist so that God’s work may be demonstrated. We see this in John 9:1-3, *“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.’”*

In cases like these, our response should be to pray and believe that God will demonstrate His mighty work in correcting the problem for His glory!

The normal tendency is for us to pray that any adversity or problem we face be removed. As we can see in scripture, we must pray to hear what God is saying as to the cause of the problem and what our response should be. If we lack wisdom, we have an invitation of God to ask Him for wisdom (James 1:5). One thing is sure: in all cases, we need Jesus and the discernment of the Holy Spirit to understand what God is doing through our problems. This does not necessarily mean that we will avoid problems, but as His children, He will take us through them and He will never leave or forsake us in them! Turn every problem over to Christ Jesus to hear what He is saying and doing. Rest in Him, knowing that, “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” SR

Pastor G. Barry Dailey of Southeast Atlanta SDB Church, McDonough, GA: “I have been married to Sharon Gaye (Samuels) for 37 years. We have two sons, Corbin and Jayson, and daughters-in-law, Rochelle and Brianna.

“My desire is to promote the Gospel of Jesus and see God’s children live in the fullness of their inheritance for His glory.

“I’ve served in ministry for over 30 years in various capacities such as: the leader of the Voices of Praise Choir in the Toronto SDB Church; the founder of a street ministry, Cafe Adonai; worship leader at various church events.”

Serving the god of Utility

By Carl Greene

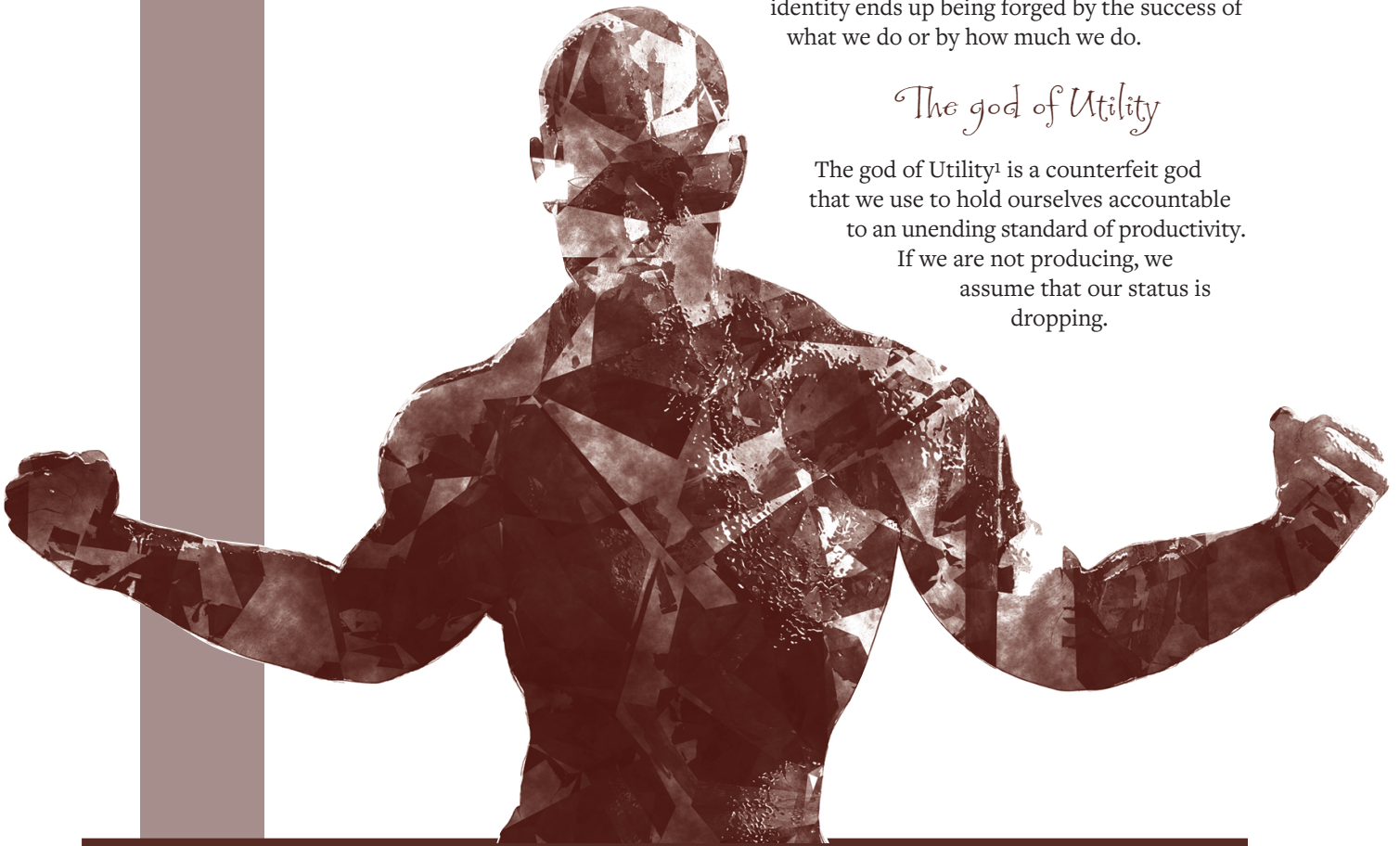
Our microwave died. This appliance was not exactly an old family pet that was deeply loved. We simply inherited this preparer of instant foods when we purchased our home. But we came to need it. Because it served us.

As soon as the appliance stopped working, we unloaded it. We shed no tears, though we did impart a few harsh words about the timing of its demise. We are ready to move on. The microwave is easy enough to replace.

Notice the value of the microwave. When it served a purpose it had value, when it was no longer useful it became disposable. We often use the same measuring stick for ourselves. Our identity ends up being forged by the success of what we do or by how much we do.

The god of Utility

The god of Utility¹ is a counterfeit god that we use to hold ourselves accountable to an unending standard of productivity. If we are not producing, we assume that our status is dropping.



¹Mark Buchanan. 2007. *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

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We use verses such as Colossians 3:23-24 as a proof text of earning our value “*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.*” We miss the fact that we are serving the Lord Christ and not a god of Utility that wants us doing stuff all the time.

Serving the god of Utility leads us to think that everything relies on us. We end up assuming that our performance will make or break everything that we are involved in. The worship service. The children’s ministry. A family gathering. The profitability of our place of work.

While God invites us to partner with Him in His work in ways that we can shape and impact that work, the outcome does not ultimately rely on us. The god of Utility is the one who tells us the lie that the success or failure of everything is dependent on our performance. Not only that, but this ‘little g’ god also convinces us that success or failure is solely measured by metrics of achievement and accolades.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

—Philippians 4:13

Philippians 4:13 is often used as the commando call to perform in ways that prove how tough we are. Maybe even justifying our out-of-balance life. In reality though, this passage reminds us that everything in life does not depend on our performance.

There are two subtleties worth noticing. First, we rely on Jesus Christ while doing all things (verse 13). We are not going it alone and resolutely demonstrating our personal resolve. We are joining Jesus in His work.

Second, Philippians 4:13 has context. Right after talking about doing all things, Paul states “*Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble*” (verse 14). Paul makes it clear that he was not going it alone, that God had placed people in his life to share or maybe more specifically, to fellowship in his trouble. We do not go it alone.

Remembering

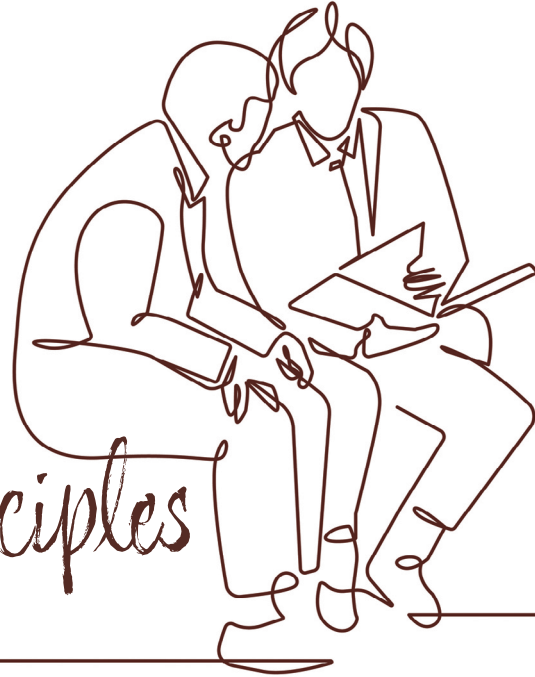
We can get so wrapped up in the demands of life that we listen to the siren song of the god of Utility. We try to forge our identity based on how successfully we do too much. We convince ourselves that our calling in life is meant to be stretched thin and in isolation from others because we are so busy.

Thankfully, God offers us a weekly reminder to move us away from the god of Utility. God invites us into a weekly rhythm of rest in which we recognize our limits. God invites us to Sabbath where we need to trust Him. A full day where we are not measured by utility.

So, I am not a microwave. My value is not determined by being on call to work at all times. I have been given a value that is far greater than I can futilely try to earn. I am reminded of my value by resting in community because together, we multiply rest. SR

Full of Purpose

Part 6 of a Sermon Series at Shiloh SDB Church
by Pastor Tyler Chroniger



How to Make Disciples

I have been trying to show you that you were created on purpose, with purpose, for a purpose, since the beginning of these articles. Over the last few months, I have been trying to show you areas in which we exist to bring God glory. I have talked about worship, giving, and serving. I have been using the statement *We exist to bring God glory* through those various thoughts. The next area that I want to discuss comes from the fact that we are called, directed, given the command to make disciples. We exist to bring God glory through reproducing followers of Christ.

This idea of bringing God glory by reproducing followers of Christ starts with the Great Commission from Matthew 28:16-20.

16Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Most of us who have grown up in church have heard this passage preached over and over. The reason for this is because these verses are deeply important in the life of the believer. Jesus says "go" which from the Greek means to lead over, to carry over, to pursue the journey on which one has entered to continue one's journey. This means that the disciples are to continue to pursue the journey that they entered. They entered the journey the moment they dropped their nets and started following Jesus. They are to go and make disciples. The King James Version says to teach all nations. The idea is that the disciples are to make disciples or to be a disciple of one, to follow his precepts and instructions. If they continued the journey they entered by teaching, they would have taught this message to those that came after them. This would continue for us today. The point is this: as I pursue the journey on which I have entered, I am to follow His precepts and instructions. By doing so, I impact the nations by also inviting them on a journey to follow His pre-

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If you don't know what the Bible teaches, how are you going to be able to present the knowledge to someone else?

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cepts and instructions. As I continue to do what God has called me to do, as I continue to follow the instructions of Jesus, I impact those I come in contact with while providing opportunities for them to join me on this same journey. I only do this by teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded through the power of the Holy Spirit. The challenging thing for most of us is that it is hard to go and teach when we don't really know what the Bible says.

Many of us have been in church our entire lives and yet we have very limited Bible knowledge. That knowledge is necessary to teach. Without that knowledge, dare I say, it will be impossible to teach anyone. We must have a solid foundation. Luke 6:46-49 tells us that everyone who comes to Jesus and hears His words and puts them into practice will have that strong foundation. You can tell if you don't have Bible knowledge by how you live, by how you practice those things. As you do, you will be able to teach others when you practice the words of Jesus. The question is what did Jesus teach?

Jesus taught things about faith and salvation. He taught about how the kingdom of God functions and how we are supposed to live as part of the kingdom of God. This isn't necessarily everything Jesus taught, but the principle point is we need to be pursuing the things Jesus taught. We need to put into practice the things Jesus taught. If you don't know what Jesus taught, what the Bible teaches, how are you going to be able to present the knowledge to someone else? Furthermore, sometimes the Bible is hard to understand—this is where the Holy Spirit comes in.

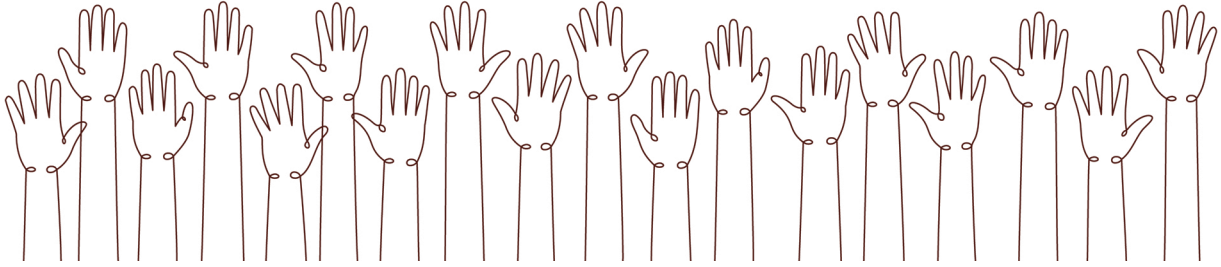
John 14:25-27 talks about how the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, will teach you all things and remind you of everything. The key is realizing that the Holy Spirit is teaching you. As you read the words of Jesus, as you read the Bible, the Holy Spirit will teach you. He will start writing the words of God on your heart and in your mind. Let me ask these questions to help you think about this. How many of you have experienced times when Bible verses come to mind? How many of you were having a hard time understanding what the Bible was teaching, then in another moment you had this light-bulb moment? Those types of moments are when the Holy Spirit reminds you

and teaches you. The promise is that as we study the word of God, as we build the foundation on the word of God, putting those things into practice, we have the Holy Spirit who will continually remind us and even teach us as we go through that process. Teaching us would also happen at the point of correction. How many of you have ever stolen something from the store? If you were caught, what was the feeling you had? How many of you have ever been caught in a lie? When we experience a point of correction, this is where the Holy Spirit will convict us, not condemn us. We lean into the conviction and repent. When we practice what Jesus taught, we learn and remember by the power of the Spirit. He will convict us to help us to repent. All of this is how we start reproducing followers of Christ. The challenge is not to walk on this journey without the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Finally, we need to understand that making disciples starts and ends with intentionality in relationship.

We read how the first church started in Acts 2:42-47. Peter preaches a gospel message, people are transformed by the power of the gospel, and the results speak for themselves. Verse 46 tells us that *every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.* I am using this passage to illustrate that every day was intentional. Breaking bread was intentional. Eating together was intentional. The story doesn't stop there. In Acts 3, Peter heals a lame beggar. Peter intentionally went out of his way to start a relationship. In Acts 8, Philip preaches and casts out demons. The results are a sorcerer is converted. In Acts 16, Lydia's whole family comes to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. All these examples have to do with the early church—Peter, Paul, and Philip were intentional in their relationships. The Holy Spirit directed their steps and sent them on a mission, but they had to trust the plan and purposes of God and be able to be intentional when the moments presented themselves.

I want to walk through the different areas that would help encourage people in their walk with Christ. The goal is simple. Be the catalyst for the Holy Spirit to work through in order that someone can move from unsaved to saved, to thriving as a follower of Jesus. There are some simple steps or questions to ask to help be intentional.

We can reproduce followers of Christ but it's by God's will and design.



First, do they believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and did they repent of their sins before God? Scriptural examples to back up this question are John 3:16-17, Romans 10:9-13, and even Romans 10:17 (to name a few). Read those passages and ask yourself: how are you to know if someone is saved if you don't preach/teach—or how do you know if someone is condemned to Hell or is going to Heaven? There must be an intentional conversation talking and sharing about Jesus. The next is, are they baptized?

In Acts 2:38-39 and Acts 8:34-38, both Peter and Philip give the next step once someone comes to the saving knowledge of Jesus. It is to be baptized. It is to publicly proclaim that you are a follower of Jesus Christ.

There is another area that a person can be discipled in—communion. In the gospel of Luke, chapter 22, verse 17 through 23, we see the implementation of communion. People should be encouraged to partake in communion as a remembrance of what Jesus has done for them. This should happen after they confess Jesus is Lord because the only reason for someone to participate in communion is if they believe in Jesus Christ. Why? As Luke puts it, “do this in remembrance of me.” I can't remember something I haven't received. If I don't believe that Jesus died for my sins, if I don't believe that Jesus saved me, what is there to remember? I am going to say it's your call, but the only prerequisite in my mind for participating in communion is believing in Jesus Christ. It is knowing and understanding that He died for your sins, and you repent of your sins. You might say a kid probably doesn't have any sins to repent of. That's not the point. The point is to help them understand that through the celebration of communion, God gives us an opportunity to repent or to make a declaration before God in remembrance.

The next area is teaching them to understand that participation in a local church is not only declared in scripture, but it is also incredibly helpful. We see in Acts 2 again: this was a group of people who gathered for the common good. They didn't just participate with one another haphaz-

ardly. They got involved with each other, they belonged. In discipleship, you need to get plugged into a small group. Make sure you have people in your life whom you can go to when the storms of life come. As the writer of Proverbs 27:17 says, *Iron sharpens Iron, so one person sharpens another.* Where do you go for support when life is tough? Where do you go for resources when life kicks you? Where you should be going is to your local church—a group of believers that can help meet the needs you have. There are people we know who believe in Jesus and have been baptized but have rejected being part of a local church. They are missing a huge opportunity to keep them on the right path. Quite frankly, the devil wants them stuck there. He knows if they stay away from any group following Jesus, they become more complacent. They will strive less for holiness and righteousness because there is no one to keep them accountable. I think there are a lot of people in our lives who fit into this category. This would be a place to encourage them. The writer of Hebrews says that we have an assurance because of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:24-25: ²⁴And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

This is also an area where people have been hurt by the church. They have deep wounds that most people don't even know about. They have become jaded about a particular church so for them all churches are wrong. They might believe but are now not fellowshiping with anyone. Encourage them, pray for them, or be intentional with them.

All these areas are to encourage people from salvation to maturity in Christ. This only happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. This only happens when we continue to seek the will of God for those we come in contact with. We can reproduce followers of Christ but it's by God's will and design. Pay attention and “Go make disciples.” SR



Another Africa Bible College Seminar in Rwanda

SDB Missionary Society

By Andrew Samuels
Executive Director



*Pastor Mathew Mweleka from Zambia preaching
to the ABC class*

In March 2023, Pastor Garfield Miller and I traveled to Rwanda to lead a Seminar for the Africa Bible College (ABC). The Seminar sought to reinforce the study materials on Evangelism and Preaching and Worship, in which the students had been engaged over the previous three months. As part of the practical outworkings of their studies, each student was required to prepare and deliver a 10-minute sermon using the Bible Interpretation and Expository Preaching method we had been studying. Most students presented their sermon to the entire class, while a few had the opportunity to present theirs during the daily evening worship times at the nearby Maranatha SDB Church. The class was able to provide constructive critique to the sermon presenter, for the purpose of encouraging them and helping them to improve. All students did a very good job with their sermons, and it is a pleasure to see their progress in the training they are receiving. While all the training, reading, and instruction for the Africa Bible College is done in English, it is noteworthy to point out that for all 19 of the students, English is not their first or native language. So, in addition to reading and writing in English, they also are being prepared to engage in public speaking in English.

One of the ABC students is John Ryakitimbo from Tanzania. John proposed that his wife and sister could travel with him from Tanzania to Rwanda, and while the ABC Seminar was taking place, they could lead and do ministry among the SDB women in Rwanda. We worked out the logistical and other details for such unprecedented ministry and it became a reality. The Tanzanian sisters journeyed to Rwanda, and while the ABC Seminar was taking place, each day they visited a different SDB Church and had much needed rap sessions with the women of those particular congregations. From all reports, the discussions were empowering, liberating, introspective, and Biblically based. Ladies from the Maranatha, Cyeru, Nyamutera, and Nyarutovu SDB Churches benefited from the ministry of these two powerfully anointed, skilled, and gifted sisters in the faith.

On Sabbath, the entire group of students, instructors, and Tanzania sisters divided into four smaller groups and visited four SDB Churches to fellowship, minister, and encourage. The four churches visited were Rubengera, Nyarutovu, Akayange, and Maranatha. The preachers for those services were the ABC instructors and two selected ABC students.



Pastor Garfield Miller leading a meeting with SDB leaders in Rwanda

Again, the evidence is that in all four churches, there was a strong and unmistakable anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Rwanda has four students in the Africa Bible College, the most by any single country. Those students, Jean de Dieu Karimutumye, Eron Bakundugiyi, Samuel Siborurema, and Fidele Mpiranya, are all top quality leaders in the Rwanda SDB Conference, serving as Legal Representative, Assistant Legal Representative, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary respectively. They provide excellent leadership for the conference which consists of 22 active churches. Among those 22 churches are six whose facilities remain closed due to inability to attain the new government building requirements after COVID-19. Seventh Day Baptists began in Rwanda in September 1997, and the Conference has been growing steadily since then.

We left Rwanda with a clear sense that the Lord had done marvelous things through his visiting servants. We are very grateful to our SDB leaders in Rwanda, led by Brother Jean de Dieu Karimutumye, who did an outstanding job of preparing for and hosting the guests from eight different countries.

As the Africa Bible College moves through the final four modules, with a view to completion in November, 2023, we ask for continued prayers and for continued financial support to enable us to have all the resources necessary to see the program through to a successful conclusion. [SR](#)



A section of the congregation at the Rubengera Church



Pastor Napier Banda from Malawi preaching, with Bro. Jean de Dieu translating

Interested in donating to Africa Bible College? Simply scan or go to andy@sdbmissions.org, and select Africa Bible College during checkout.



Study Lesson 27 by Dennis Coleman,
Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, NJ



The Book of Revelation: The Seventh Seal

What does the number 7 mean in the Bible? I did a quick Google search asking the question, “What does 7 mean in the Bible?” Every website listed in the results described the number seven as representing completion and perfection with some websites saying that it represents “divine fulfillment,” or “spiritual perfection.” From the bibleproject.com to christianity.com to biblestudy.org, there is quite a bit of agreement that in the Bible the number 7 means that things were done the right way.

The number 7 also takes on an important role in what we believe as Seventh Day Baptists. If we believe what the Bible says then we believe that the earth was completed in 7 days. We believe that God rested on the 7th day, marking the completion of all the work He had done (Genesis 2:1-2).

*“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,
because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”*

—Genesis 2:3

Exodus 20:8-11 tells us that because God rested on the seventh day and because He hallowed it, the Sabbath rest falls on the seventh day. True, we do not see the word “Sabbath” in the book of Genesis but it is clear that when God establishes the Sabbath Day of the Commandments, that day is a result of what He did on the seventh day during creation.

Is the commandment the first time that we see the word “Sabbath” used in conjunction with the seventh day in the Bible? In fact, we see the connection being made between the two even before the Ten Commandments are given. In Exodus 16:23 Moses speaks of a holy Sabbath to the LORD. This occurs in conjunction with the instruction given to the people of Israel on how to collect manna. They are told to collect twice their daily quota on the sixth day because the seventh day was, “a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD.” (Be honest! If you didn’t know how things turned out, would you have gone out of your tent in search of bread on the seventh day?)

I believe that both the 7th day rest and the seventh day Sabbath predate the giving of the Ten Commandments and the covenant between God and the people of Israel that the commandments represent. In fact, I believe that these prior examples of the seventh day rest are the basis for the commandment. As a result, I believe that these examples should factor into why and how we keep the seventh day Sabbath.

*All of Heaven stands silent before the scroll
which is now completely unsealed.*

Prayer Time

Father, help us to remember the Sabbath Day, for without You and without the sacrifice You made for us on the cross we could not keep the Sabbath Day holy. Open our understanding that we may walk blameless before You and that we might understand what You are teaching us as we study Your Bible.

Jesus Opens the 7th Seal

I know I took a bit of a detour but I thought it important to understand both the meaning of the number 7 as used in the Bible and to remind you to consider how you approach the seventh day Sabbath. The number 7 is also important to where we are in the Book of Revelation.

In Revelation 8, Jesus opens the seventh seal. As a reminder, before we got caught up in that last worship service, Jesus had opened the other six seals and with each there was revealed a vision of something happening on earth. When He opens this seventh seal the Bible tells us that, “there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.” (Revelation 8:1) The commentaries describe this silence as either a time of expectation, looking forward to something to happen, or as a time of peace for God’s church. All of Heaven stands silent before the scroll which is now completely unsealed as we transition from the events that accompanied the opening of the seven seal judgments to the coming trumpet judgments which begin in chapter 8.

As mentioned in *Ellicott’s Commentary*, there is some debate over whether or not the scroll is opened and read as would be normal when a king’s scroll is opened, or if it is simply unsealed but remains closed. I agree with the writers of *Ellicott’s Commentary* that this would seem like a “harsh” way to proceed if the scroll were to be unsealed but its contents never revealed. Remember that John wept when he thought that nobody was able to open the seals (Revelation 5:4). It would seem odd that he would be encouraged when the Lion of Judah “prevailed to open the scroll...(Revelation 5:5) only to have the contents of the scroll hidden from view.

I agree with *Ellicott’s* and with a number of the other commentaries that the visions that accompany each seal are somehow linked to the contents of the scroll. As a reminder those visions are:

- The first seal: The white horse and rider—who shoots an arrow representing the Gospel which pierces the heart and brings conviction over sins.
- The second seal: The red horse and rider—Takes peace away from the earth resulting in wars and death.
- The third seal: The black horse and rider—a great famine.
- The fourth seal: The pale horse that is ridden by death with Hades following behind.
- The fifth seal: The cry of the martyrs calling for judgment.
- The sixth seal: Destruction—possibly cosmic, possibly spiritual, most likely both.
- The seventh seal: A half hour of silence in Heaven.

Each vision represents judgment as do the visions that accompany the trumpet judgments that we will read about in chapters 8-11. These judgments are pronounced upon all mankind because God hates sin and it would be unjust for Him not to pass judgment in response to sin.

The book of Revelation is a reminder that God sits as the ultimate judge and by opening the seals the Lion of Judah insures that these judgments will be carried out. We’ve joined in worship as all of Heaven acknowledges God on His throne. We’ve seen the Lamb revealed and acknowledged that He alone is worthy. We’ve also acknowledged that “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:10) We’ve recognized Him as worthy of praise, as the Lamb who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood (Revelation 1:5). Now, as we move forward, I believe we will see that the testimony against mankind establishes a strong case for a guilty verdict and that our God is justified in carrying out His judgment against those who deny the truth. SR



How Great Is Our God!

By Charlotte Chroniger, Conference President

Conference Workshops

While we are at Conference in Grand Rapids, MI, (hopefully you have already registered) you will have the opportunity to choose a workshop to attend. Here is a brief description of the workshops that will be available.

“The Prophetic Intercessor for Our Time”

led by Julia Coleman

God must believe intercessions, prayers, supplications, and thanksgivings are very important. Look at the emphasis He places on it in 1 Timothy 2:1:

“Be made for ALL AND MEN.” In every situation and for all humankind, this must be done. Therefore, the Body of Christ has to put an emphasis on what God deems vital to the life of the believer. As such, we need to learn what He means by this—how it impacts the kingdom of God in Heaven and the Kingdom of God on the earth.

Our workshop will take a look at the instructed pleasures of prayer. Areas of interest are:

The Throne Room of God: the Supreme Court of Divine Justice

Divine Restraining Orders

The Prophetic Intercessor

Fasting, the Believer’s Discipline

Much more—Join us.

“Becoming the Parent God Wants You to Be”

Frank and Maura Mazza will be hosting a workshop based on the book *“Becoming the Parent God Wants You to Be”* by Kevin Leman. The workshop will help

encourage parents and grandparents to build the skills needed to raise kids in the real world. You will learn about how birth order affects your family, the difference healthy authority can make, and the power of parenting with love and limits. We hope to see you there for a time of learning, sharing and prayerful encouragement!

“Genesis to Revelation— A Biblical Overview of Passover

led by Eric Bofinger

In Exodus 12:14 God says these words: “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD, throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.”

During this seminar we will take a detailed look at the first Passover, which took place just prior to God delivering Israel from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. Another objective is to uncover how the Passover celebration evolved over the course of the Bible. In addition, we’ll study several main themes surrounding Passover, such as the theme of the firstborn as well as the theme of salvation vs. judgment.

“Singing to the Lord using ASL— American Sign Language”

led by Reyna and Marianna Mazza

Marianna and Reyna Mazza have been learning American Sign Language (ASL) for the past four years. They are using this skill to host a workshop to teach the hymn “Because He Lives” in ASL. The

workshop will teach participants to worship in a different style. You will learn how to read a gloss (ASL translation of the hymn), and how to sign the chorus of this hymn favorite. We hope to see you there!

Women in Ministry and SDBs

led by Miriam Berg

How can SDBs maintain unity in the body while also exercising liberty of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as it relates to this issue? Unhindered study and open discussion of Scripture are necessary because how we understand its teaching affects leadership development in the local church, association, and conference. Come hear an overview of the Biblical support for Women serving in all leadership roles in the church along with some ideas about how to live out unity in diversity.

Team Leadership: Partnering Together to Display the Greatness of God

led by John Pethtel

God intended for us to do life and ministry together. Learn about how creating a structure of shared leadership in the context of your local congregation can both display the greatness of God to your church and geographic community and multiply the ministry and mission of your local church.

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made


This workshop is still developing, but we will learn about how God's perfect design of the human body is utterly amazing. Several healthcare professionals will lead this workshop.

Two sessions will be presented to the entire group of conferees:

Softly and Tenderly: SDB Musical Evangelism since 1900

led by Nick Kersten

Seventh Day Baptists have a long history with music and outreach from the Stennetts to Stained Glass in North America, especially in the last 130 years or so. SDBs have sought opportunities to publicly witness to their faith through music ministries. In this session we will have a chance to survey the circumstances and ministries which attempted to make Christ known through music since around 1900. After surveying those ministries, we will take what we have learned and try to apply it to our modern contexts as we seek to share our faith whether we have musical gifts or not.

As you can see, there is a variety of workshops and seminars to choose from. I hope that you can find one to be blessed by. As we get closer and closer to the week of Conference, please ask God to help us finalize the details, grow in our anticipation and excitement, and be prepared to meet the Lord and our dear friends of our SDB family. 

LAST CHANCE to Register for SDB Conference Week!!!

Conference President Charlotte Chroniger and the Conference Week team are looking forward to Conference Week 2023 in Grand Rapids, MI, from July 23-30 on the campus of Calvin University.

The **LAST CHANCE to register** for Conference Week is **JULY 1**. There will be **NO WALK-UP** registration at Calvin College—so you must register by July 1 if you plan to join us for this wonderful program at Conference!!

You can access links to register at:
seventhdaybaptist.org/conferenceweek2023

There you will also find other information including a Registration FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) related to most questions you might have about Conference Week 2023.

For further details, or if you have questions, please contact our Conference Week team at:
registrar@seventhdaybaptist.org
or 608-752-5055 ext. 708.

**We look forward to seeing you
this summer!**

CHURCHES SEEKING PASTORS

DODGE CENTER, MN

The Anchor of Hope Church located in Dodge Center, MN, is prayerfully seeking its next pastor to lead its congregation forward in its mission to “Invite people to know Christ, Invest in people’s Christian growth, and Inspire people to reach out.” We are a rural community nestled in Southeast Minnesota. We are the oldest church in Dodge Center with a small, but committed congregation.

The ideal candidate for this role would have:

- Biblical knowledge (Bible College or Seminary preferred)
- Previous pastoral ministry experience (preferred)
- Ability to be bi-vocational or raise support to pursue this ministry
- Willingness to live in a rural community
- Ability to work with others and equip them to serve to their potential
- Goal oriented, self-motivated, and innovative

Duties may include (but are not limited to):

- Preaching
- Visitation
- Discipleship
- Teaching
- Counseling

Those interested in being considered for this role should submit a cover letter indicating their interest and a resume or CV of ministry and work experience to:

Anchor of Hope Church
PO Box 340
Dodge Center, MN 55927
dcsdbchurch@gmail.com

Candidates may send questions concerning the role to the same email address.

DEATH NOTICES

BASS—Leroy Charles, pastor of Paint Rock, AL; Nortonville, KS; and New Auburn, WI, SDB Churches; missionary to Guyana. Instrumental in founding of Madison, WI, SDB Church; SDB World Federation Recording Secretary; resided in Washington Island, WI; died there March 6, 2023, at age 98; memorial service is scheduled for June 26 followed by burial in Washington Cemetery on that island.

CONDINZIO—Mildred Ruth (Brooks) Klug Condinzio, member of Waterford, CT, SDB Church; resided in Waterford, CT; died March 22, 2023, at age 101; burial in Great Neck Cemetery in Waterford.

MIDDLE ISLAND, WV

Middle Island SDB Church of New Milton, WV, is seeking a pastor. Middle Island SDB Church is a small gathering of believers from various communities who come together on Sabbath in rural Doddridge County in West Virginia. We have a desire to serve the Lord and to serve others as well. We are praying for a minister who has a similar desire.

Ideal requirements:

- Biblically knowledgeable (formal training preferred)
- Previous pastoral ministry experience preferred, not required
- Ability to be bi-vocational

If you feel a calling to serve God in this church, please send a resume including your ministry experience and educational background, along with a cover letter to:

Middle Island SDB Church
5915 WV Rt 18 South
New Milton, WV 26411

ALFRED STATION, NY

We are looking for a person who has some Christian post-graduate training and pastoral experience, is compassionate, who preaches by bringing the Bible teachings to today’s living, and is attentive to congregational needs.


Our church has a membership of 100+ members with an average attendance of 50 +/- . We support five Sabbath school classes and two Bible studies each week.

Anyone interested can watch our services weekly on YouTube and Facebook by looking for Alfred Station Seventh Day Baptist Church. There are live broadcasts as well as past services.

Our Church is located in Alfred Station, in the southwestern part of New York State. Our town is a couple of miles from Alfred, home of Alfred University and Alfred State College. Alfred was recently identified by WaPo as the Number One Ultimate College Town out of 150 candidates.

It is a few more miles from Houghton University. Houghton is the Christian college that has trained many of our pastors and other SDB students and has employed several Seventh Day Baptist faculty members over the years.

For information you may email: Lyle Sutton at lbsutn@verizon.net



I love the Lord,
because he listens to
my prayers for help.
He paid attention to me,
so I will call to him for help
as long as I live.

-Psalm 141:2 NCV

Periodicals postage paid
at Janesville, WI
and additional offices

SDB Conference Week 2023 July 23-30

Calvin University, Grand Rapids, MI



LAST CHANCE

TO REGISTER IS

JULY 1

**NO Walk-up
Registration.**

Registration information and updates can be found at
seventhdaybaptist.org/conferenceweek2023