

youth ministry

accent

the resource for adventist youth leaders



relationships!



Baraka G. Muganda
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR
mugandab@gc.adventist.org

Jonatán Tejel
EDITOR
tejelj@gc.adventist.org

Hiskia I. Missah
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
missahh@gc.adventist.org

Maria A. Dunchie
LAYOUT & DESIGN, EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
dunchiem@gc.adventist.org

Laverne Henderson
COPY EDITOR

EDITORIAL ADVISORS

Jan Paulsen
Matthew A. Bediako
Robert E. Lemon
Armando Miranda

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Mulumba Tshimanga • East-Central Africa Division
bresilien54@yahoo.com

Corrado Cozzi • Euro-Africa Division
corrado.cozzi@euroafrica.org

Peter Sirotkin • Euro-Asia Division
psirotkin@ead-sad.ru

Bernardo Rodriguez • Inter-American Division
bernardo@interamerica.org

Balvin B. Braham • Inter-American Division
brahambb@interamerica.org

James Black • North American Division
james.black@nad.adventist.org

Manny Cruz • North American Division
manny.cruz@nad.adventist.org

Dong Hee Shin • Northern Asia-Pacific Division
joshuashin@nsadventist.org

Otimar Goncalves • South American Division
otimar.goncalves@dsa.org.br

Gilbert Cangy • South Pacific Division
grecangy@adventist.org.au

Nickolas Kross • South Pacific Division
nkross@adventist.org.au

Jobbie Yabut • Southern Asia-Pacific Division
jyabut@ssd.org

Lionel F. Lyngdoh • Southern Asia-Pacific Division
lyngdoh@sud_adventist.org

Paul Tompkins • Trans-European Division
pompkins@ted-adventist.org

Eugene Fransch • Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division
FranschE@sid.adventist.org

Emmanuel Nlo Nlo • Western Africa Division
104474.235@compuserve.com



viewT: movie/dvd review

Based on the book “Goodbye Bafana: Nelson Mandela, My Prisoner, My Friend” by the real life James Gregory, *The Color of Freedom* follows the former prison warder’s relationship with the equal rights advocate through Mandela’s nearly three decades under arrest in South Africa.

Part history lesson, part personal drama, *The Color of Freedom*, also known as *Goodbye Bafana*, serves as an primer on South African history. The featurettes on the DVD offer lengthy history lessons about the real events referenced in the film and add immeasurably to the film’s overall success. There is much to learn from this film.

Starring: Dennis Haysbert as Nelson Mandela; Diane Kruger as Gloria Gregory; Joseph Fiennes as James Gregory; Faith Ndukwana as Winnie Mandela; Terry Pheto as Zindzi Mandela; Leslie Mongezi as Walter Sisulu; and Zingi Mtuzula as Raymond Mhlaba.

Director: Bille August

Genre: Art/Foreign, Adaptation and Biopic

Runtime: 1 hour, 58 minutes

Language: English

Subtitle: Spanish

NR Please preview before showing.

In *Prince Caspian*, the sequel to *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, the Pevensie kids return to the magical land of Narnia only to discover that the land is again ruled by an evil monarch, Aslan is nowhere to be found, and the “old Narnians”—dwarves, fauns, talking animals, and dancing trees—are in hiding. And a boy prince, heir to the throne, is running for his life. Will the Pevensies save the day? And what kind of help will come?

Starring: Ben Barnes as Prince Caspian; Georgie Henley as Lucy Pevensie; William Moseley as Peter Pevensie; Liam Neeson, the voice of Aslan.

Director: Andrew Adamson

Genre: Family, Fantasy

Runtime: 145 minutes

Language: English

PG for epic battle action and violence



discuss this film, p. 11

NO ROOM IN THE INN



Whenever I hear anyone talk about Christmas one thing always comes to mind—no room in the inn. “There was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7). Our Creator. Creator of the universe. Born in a stable.

As a child I remember doing simple skits about the cattle making room for Jesus; showing the humility of the place where Jesus was born. But, the more I think about it, the more I think that the true meaning is lost on us. It fails to penetrate deeply into our souls.

In a few months we will celebrate another holiday—Christmas. But what is Christmas?

Christmas is about relationships. During the Christmas holiday we spend more time with the family. We invite friends into our homes. And, we organize special activities and events in our churches. Overall, we spend more time together enjoying the fellowship of each other.

Today, I was discussing with some co-workers, how busy our lives have become. With all the things we have to do—running here, running there, one can hardly find time to relax and just enjoy friendships. And this is the reality with almost everyone. We live in a world where there’s no room for quiet moments.

This thought brought my attention to another episode in the Bible; the story of Jesus’ visit to Mary and Martha. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, listening to Him speak. Martha rushed around the house; frantically doing all kinds of *necessary* things: preparing the food, preparing a place for Jesus to stay, making sure *everything* was perfect. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus listening—*doing nothing*. Martha became frustrated. She was the only one doing *anything*. The only one working, while her sister, Mary, apparently did *nothing*. Listen to Martha: “She came to Him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”” *Luke 10:40*.

Sometimes we feel like Martha, we think we are doing everything possible to make Jesus feel comfortable in the church, but... listen to Jesus’ answer.

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it

will not be taken away from her.” *Luke 10:41-42*.

Sometimes, because there are so many things to do, we forget to do the most important thing in our lives... relationships. Relationships with Jesus.

More often than not, we choose Martha’s way and forget that the most important thing is to have a deep and personal relationship with Jesus. We try to build a relationship with Christ with a “token” investment of two and a half hours on Sabbath mornings, sitting at His feet. This is not enough. Are our lives too busy for Jesus?

Is our “inn” is too full for Jesus to find room.

Please take time to be with Jesus every day, not just on Sabbaths. Schedule time every day for Jesus. Let Him find a place in your “inn” and your life will be much more fulfilled. I guarantee it!

Jonatán Tejel
Editor



FEATURES

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20/Friends by Miodrag Jovanovic Taking another perspective at friends and our relationship with them.

26/What Does Neighbor Mean? by Markie Bazy Taking a look at people and how we respond to them and their needs.

CORRECTION: July-September 2008 Issue, page 19

The author of the leadership enrichment workshop, *REfocus*, is Patti Emanuele, not Kimberley Tagert-Paul as was indicated. Patti is a freelance writer and author of three books who has contributed to *Guide* magazine and many other Christian and non-Christian publications.

DEPARTMENTS

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COVER ART by Silvia Sicalco

visit us online at www.youth.gc.adventist.org

contributors



Barry Gane



Patti Emanuele



Bonita J. Shields



Miodrag (Miki) Jovanovic



Hiskia Missah



Markie Bazy

Between serving the Seventh-day Adventist Church and visiting various countries in an official capacity during his 32 years in the ministry, **Barry Gane** has virtually been around the world. He has served as a youth pastor, Bible teacher, school chaplain, youth director and seminary professor in Europe, Australia and America. He holds a Doctorate in Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary and a PhD in leadership from Andrews University. [p. 20]

Patti Emanuele is a freelance writer and author of three books who has contributed to Guide magazine and many other Christian and non-Christian publications. [p. 12-19]

Bonita Joyner Shields lives in Brookeville, Maryland, with her husband Roy and two cats, Bandit and Smokey. Her finicky felines have not yet given their opinion on the Wassail. Bonita is the editor for the youth Bible study guides in the Sabbath School Personal/Ministries Department at the General Conference. [p. 30]

Miodrag (Miki) Jovanovic was born in Berlin, Germany. He spent most of his young years in Yugoslavia until 1988. He attended the Friedensau University where he graduated with a degree in theology in 2003. He and his wife, Tamara, along with their 6-month old daughter Lana, lives in Germany. Since 2003 he has been pastoring in Munich, Germany. He enjoys playing soccer, reading the newspaper, and travelling. [p. 20]

Hiskia Missah serves as an Associate Director in the General Conference Youth Ministries Department. A youth leader at heart Dr. Missah has been involved in youth work for more than 30 years. [p. 22]

Markie Bazy is a full time missionary in Bangkok, Thailand, who spends her spare time teaching English Literature and Journalism to students who come from Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim backgrounds. When she is not busy with work, she takes her students to a refugee camp on the border of Thailand and Burma to play with the displaced children, and hopefully give both students and children a hope that there is something better than this world has to offer. [p. 26]



THE POWER OF...

RELATIONSHIPS

in **YOUTH MINISTRY**

IF YOU ARE
PURSUING
LOST SHEEP,
YOU MUST
GO WHERE
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YOU CANNOT
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Barry Gane has served as a youth pastor, Bible teacher, school chaplain, youth director and seminary professor in Europe, Australia and America. He has a passion for developing leaders and seeing them grow. Barry and his wife lives in the Hill District of Sydney, Australia.

BY BARRY GANE

Jesus' disciples were locked in heated debate. They were more concerned about themselves than the people they shared time with in Jesus' presence. They wanted to know who would hold the most powerful position in His kingdom. Jesus then answered their question by placing a child in the middle of the warring group and He made it clear that they had to become like this child if they were even to enter the kingdom. It is all about attitude, not aptitude.

It is here in this chapter that Matthew records Christ's strongest and most pointed rebuke and it is reserved for those who cause a child to stumble. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. . . . Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in Heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in Heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost."¹ (Incidentally this is the one place in Scripture that specifically mentions guardian angels). It is in this context that Matthew places the parable of the Lost Sheep and concludes with Jesus' statement

“Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”²

Jesus commands the disciples to search for the lost sheep, who in this context are the children of the church. There may even be times when the church actively discourages you from seeking these missing young people.

If you are pursuing lost sheep, you must go where they are. You cannot avoid every appearance of evil. Our Lord didn't either. Because of His close proximity to the beer cans and potato chips of His day He was accused of being a drunkard and a glutton. Professional 'weaker brothers,' suffering from hardening of the categories, delight to criticize those who take the Great Commission seriously.³

Our model for building relationships that will last for eternity is found in the life and work of Jesus. He called himself the Good Shepherd, the Shepherd who left safety to search out the lost. His method centered on the *incarnation*. He became one of us. Our ministry for lost youth is to be *incarnational*. What does this mean?

To incarnate Jesus in this world, the Christian must experience an inner transformation in which he not only behaves as Jesus behaved, but also shares His love, His valuing

of persons, His compassion, and His zeal for justice and righteousness. This character, stamped indelibly on his heart and mind, will be read by all men (2 Cor. 3:2). The incarnation of Jesus in the LAOS (people) of God is to be an incarnation of God's love in personal relationships.⁴

Youth ministry built on this model seeks to meet young people where they are, and to offer them pastoral care, not only as spiritual guides, but also as counselors and friends, fellow pilgrims on a similar spiritual journey. With Jesus as our model we are called to ministry, a personal and relational ministry, that will involve a good deal of one to one time. Pete Ward, the London University Youth Ministry Professor, spells out just what incarnational ministry will involve.

Youth-work which is incarnational will see in the life of Jesus a model for ministry. It is essential, not only to good practice, but also to the proclamation of the gospel, that relationships are at the heart of the work. Dean Borgman says that we are called to 'waste time' with young people 'hanging out' with them. Unprogrammed social time will form the heart of our ministry as it seems to have done in the life of Jesus. Young people will learn to become Christian because they are in regular informal contact with Christian people who model the faith. The dilemmas and challenges of Christian discipleship will be dealt with as we are on the move from one informal activity to another - car journeys, conversations while going fishing, coffee in the kitchen, a post card sent from a trip abroad. The substance of incarnational ministry is the valuing of contact between adults and young people in the everyday and ordinary things of life. Friendship and relationship will not only be the means of ministry, they will be the ministry itself.⁵



Ellen White, 100 years ahead of her time, encouraged incarnational ministry with young people. She made it clear that we must enter into the feeling of the youth, working with them in their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories. She said we must meet them where they are if we are to stand a chance of keeping them. It is so easy to misjudge them because of the way they dress or speak, but we need to spend time with them, building relationships. Get to know them.⁶

One young person makes the following statement spelling out the necessity of the church's need to connect with him. "Practically, for the church to welcome me it needs to honor the truth I bring with me, welcome my energy, and bless my inexperience. For me, there is nothing more discouraging and soul-sucking than entering a church and leaving without anyone saying hello, showing interest in me, or inviting me to be involved."⁷ Once relationship is established, the story of Jesus seen in your life becomes that much more compelling. Ford tells us that teenagers are drawn by the magnetism of Jesus. He says they "are very open to the Christian story right now—if it is presented in an effective and appropriate way. They may be closed to old, outmoded evangelistic methods, but not to the story itself."⁸

The old adage "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day!" is especially true for teenagers today. They find it difficult to see past inconsistency to the story of Jesus. Through a caring connection they will better see the sermon. They want to see Jesus lived out in your life—He needs to be far more than just a part of history or part of a good argument, He needs to be real, living, present. One young person describes it this way:

My generation demands a different apologetic—an embodied apologetic, a flesh-and-blood, living and breathing argument for God. The old apologetics of previous generations assumed that the barrier to conversion was intellectual and the way to remove that barrier was to answer all cognitive doubts. But Xers live in an age of intellectual ambiguity, when cognitive answers carry considerably less weight. The question my generation asks is not "Can Christians prove what they believe?" but "Can Christians live what they believe?"⁹

ACTIVE LISTENING

There are a number of ways to bridge to kids and form relationships but they all demand time. One of the things that will create connections that will build into meaningful and lasting relationship is the ability to set your agenda aside and just listen. Just be there.

How many times have you heard a young person say, "You never listen to me," or "You never seem to hear what I have to say." Young people are hungry to be heard, and given the opportunity, they will share quickly and easily. Listening to a young person is the quickest way to build a relationship. And it will be the relationship that draws them closer to God and allows them to see Jesus in you.

I believe Scott Peck had it right when he wrote:

The principle form that the work of love takes is attention. When we love another we give him or her our attention; we attend to that person's growth. . . . When we attend to someone we are caring for that person. . . . You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time. . . . True listening, total concentration on the other, is always a manifestation of love. An essential part of listening is the discipline of bracketing, the temporary giving up or setting aside of one's own prejudices, frames of reference and desires so as to experience as far as possible the speaker's world from the inside, stepping into his or her shoes. The greatest gift that you can give anyone is your complete attention. . . . True listening is love in action.¹⁰


Harry Stack Sullivan has propounded the idea that all personal growth and healing are developed through our relationships with others.

He would suggest that what we are at any given moment in the process of my becoming a person is determined by the relationships we develop with other people.¹¹

Dr. Paul Tournier gives insight into humanity's need for connection:

How beautiful, how grand and liberating this experience is, when people learn to help each other. It is impossible to overemphasize the immense need humans have to be really listened to, to be taken seriously, to be understood. Modern psychology has brought

it very much to our attention. At the very heart of all psychotherapy is this type of relationship in which one can tell everything, just as a little child will tell all to his mother. No one can develop freely in this world and find a full life without feeling understood by at least one person.¹²

Your ability as a leader to connect and build relationships will have a profound influence on not just young people but the whole church. The church will become a contagious community, a magnetic that youth will find hard to resist. 

(ENDNOTES)

1. Matt. 18:6,10,11 NKJV

2. Matt. 18:14 NKJV

3. Joseph Aldrich, "You Are a Message," *Moody Monthly*, 1982, cited by Doug Stevens, *Called to Care*, (Grand Rapids MI.: Zondervan, 1985), p. 119.

4. Lawrence O. Richards and Martin Gib, *A Theology of Personal Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), p. 101.

5. Pete Ward, *God at the Mall: Youth Ministry that Meets Kids Where They're At* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1999), pp. 37,38.

6. Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, Washington D. C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assoc. 1948, pp 207-212. Why should not labor for the youth in our borders be regarded as missionary work of the highest kind? It requires the most delicate tact, the

most watchful consideration, the most earnest prayer for heavenly wisdom. The youth are the objects of Satan's special attacks; but kindness, courtesy, and the sympathy which flows from a heart filled with love to Jesus, will gain their confidence, and save them from many a snare of the enemy . . . Often those whom we pass by with indifference, because we judge them from outward appearance, have in them the best material for workers, and will repay all efforts bestowed on them. There must be more study given to the problem of how to deal with the youth, more earnest prayer for the wisdom that is needed in dealing with minds . . . We should seek to enter into the feelings of the youth, sympathizing with them in their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories . . . We must meet them where they are if we would keep them . . . let us remember the claim of God upon us to make the path to heaven bright and attractive.

7. Jarrett Kerbel quoted by Gary Zustiak, *The Next Generation: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Generation X* (Joplin, MO.: College Press Pub. Co., 1996), p. 165.

8. Kevin Graham Ford, *Jesus For a New Generation: Putting the Gospel in the Language of Xers* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1995), p. 173.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

10. M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth* (London: Arrow Books, 1993), pp. 135, 136.

11. John Powell, *Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am?* (Hong Kong: Fontana/Collins, 1990), p. 43.

12. Paul Tournier in John Powell, *Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am?* (Hong Kong: Fontana/Collins, 1990), p. 5.

relationship

UP A NOTCH

I am very privileged to work with a team that is never satisfied with the status quo and always tries to maximize their efforts. They like each other, and to my knowledge, have never exchanged any harsh words among themselves. So, how does a leader push himself and his team in an environment like that? The answer came to me in one word, relationship. For me, everything in life is about relationships—how we make them and how we keep them.

A leader, who fosters trust and challenges you to bring your best to the table, is a leader who empowers you. And a leader who empowers and affirms you is one that will not only get your trust and loyalty, but also your complete respect, a key component in good relationships.

Up a Notch

Eight months ago, in January, we returned from a hosting our 2nd World Conference on Youth and Community Service in Taiwan all pumped-up and ready to go. The meetings were a success. People were blessed, lives were changed. And then came the “debriefing”. The time when all the tough questions are asked. The local in-house evaluation. “What happened?” How can we do it different and better the next time?

When I watch football or basketball, I can almost always count on someone calling time-out when they are loosing and need to regroup. In sports, time-out is: “A brief cessation of play at the request of a sports team or an official for rest, consultation, or making substitutions” <http://www.answers.com>. I felt I was headed

into a “time-out” when I walked into that room. Personally, I was a little nervous going into this meeting. I kept thinking and thinking... All the “What ifs” popped up in my head.

Our leader, Dr. Baraka Muganda, immediately told us that, “This meeting is not to point out any faults. Instead, it is to help us see what needs to remain the same and what we can change the next time round [Impact 10/40 in South Africa, 2013].” In other words, it’s to help us move it up a notch. But, I was still nervous. The meeting went well. Everything was put out in the open; what can be changed, what process should remain, and what should be completely done away with.

I walked away from that meeting with a different viewpoint. I learned two important things. First, that it’s okay to air our differences. Just make sure you do it in a way that will not cause offense. Do it amicably. Secondly, a leader who values relationship, fairness, and honesty, will always get the respect of those they lead.

Help Keep it Real

As you form your AY committees in your local church, there is one question you should ask yourself: Where do I stand on relationships? Are they important to me? Because, if not, you can self-sabotage. A lack of respect for others and their feelings may be the elephant in the room. You may not see it, but everyone else will. You may just become your own worst enemy. A committee minus the relationship and respect factor is headed for derailment before it even begins. Help keep it real. Relationships matter!!!! ☐

discuss this

After viewing the DVD, *Narnia: Prince Caspian*, have an open discussion on these topics:

JEALOUSY. How do we deal with jealousy and pride? (Proverbs 27:4, 17; Mark 10:35–45; Galatians 5:19–23; James

PRIDE. How do we deal with jealousy and pride? (Proverbs 27:4, 17; Mark 10:35–45; Galatians 5:19–23; James 4:6)

GRACE. How do we deal with jealousy and pride? (Proverbs 27:4, 17; Mark 10:35–45; Galatians 5:19–23; James

MERCY. What do grace and mercy look like, especially when one wants revenge? (1 Samuel 24:6, 12–15; Romans 3:23, 6:23)

CHILDLIKE FAITH. What does it mean to have the faith of a child? (Mark 10:13–16; Matthew 11:25)

IDEAPAC

pages 11–19 

A couple weeks ago my son and I visited a friend of his church. It was supposed to be a wonderful weekend for him and his friends—after all, they had arranged with another friend to meet at the church that Sabbath. We arrived. I looked around. There were literally no teenagers to be seen. Nada. None. After meeting the Pathfinder leader I discovered that they have only about six youth, 10 – 18 years old, in this church of about 50. A *Peter, James and John* group.

My son still wants to go back there.


It's about relationship. It's about friendship. To him and his two friends, the 40 minutes drive into another county is worth it.

So, does your youth group seem like a *Peter, James, and John* youth group?

As a leader form friendships with the youth in your church. Your friendship with them, even if it's only three, will give you visibility and credibility. You can become a part of their "life". You can be an influence in their spiritual growth.

These small groups will give you many opportunities to have discussion times, as well as doing many of the skits on the following pages.

Working with your group, whether it is three or 100 still requires the same amount of creativity, determination, and focus.

Contact your local conference youth director to get your copy of the 2009 Discussion Questions, as well as the 2009 Starter Kit. They are also available for free download at our Website. 

DISCUSS
transform

your youth group

through small group discussions

download from www.youth.gc.adventist.org

4 SKITS ON **CAREER CHOICES** *By Patti Emanuele***SKIT I**

Life Issue: Determining future career paths.

Bible Passage: *1 Corinthians 7:7:* "Each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that."

Central Bible Truth: Each of us has special God-given talents.

Teaching Aim: Determine what our gifts are and seek to use them to glorify God.

Characters: Jake, Katie, Lauren, Mary, and a career counselor

Four friends are visiting Career Day at school with their class so that they can start thinking about their future careers.

Setting: Career Day at school

Jake: "I can't believe that they made us go to this. How are we supposed to know what we want to do when we grow up?"

Mary: "Yeah, that's really lame."

Katie: "My mom wants me to be a doctor,"

Mary: "That's cool."

Katie: "But I hate the sight of blood."

Jake: "Ugh."

Jake: "I think you should just tell her that you don't feel like being a doctor is something you want to do."

Mary: "After taking all those tests to determine our abilities, medical doctor just didn't fit with "Artistic gifts."

Katie: "It bothers me sometimes that the only gifts I have seem to be in the arts. I really want to be a writer. I always have, ever since I was little."

Mary: "I remember when you made up all those stories and told our kindergarten teacher."

Jake laughs.

Jake: "Yeah, those sure were whoppers."

Mary: "Have you asked God to show you what your gifts are, like the pastor told us to do?"

Katie: "I did. Telling stories seems to be one of them. When I write about something I feel peaceful, and I have happiness knowing others are reading it and it gives them enjoyment."

Jake grinning: "Just like when I play my electric guitar, right?"

His friends groan at his statement.

Lauren: "The truth is, we are all unique. God has given us all unique and special gifts."

Katie: "I know you're right."

Jake *thinks a little and then says:* "You know the Bible says that we are all one body. Each of us has unique gifts and put together, we are whole. No one is like you Kaitlin."

Mary: "Nor is anyone like you, Jake."

Mary giggles, Kaitlin joins her and laughs also.

Jake ignores his friends and continues: "Anyway, I think, that it's important that you follow up on the way God has made you. If you want to be a writer, then be one. Just be the best writer you can be."

Mary: "Jake's right. Pastor says that in everything we do we should give it our best. It points to Jesus."

The four friends move up in line and reach the academic counselors sitting at the tables.

Counselor to Katie: "So, what can I do for you? What area are you thinking of going into?"

Katie glances at her friends. They give her a smile and a nod for encouragement.

Katie: "I want to be a writer. Could you give me an idea of what kind of jobs would use those skills?"

SKIT 2

Life Issue: Seeking God's answers for our future

Bible Passage: *1 Proverbs 3:5:* "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding and He will direct your ways."

Central Bible Truth: We must turn all of our life and its decisions over to the Lord.

Teaching Aim: Pray and ask God how He would have you use your talents and let Him show you.

Characters: Stephanie, Devin, Presley, Ryan

Stephanie is cleaning tables after her customers have left. She picks up the nickel off the table and sighs.

Setting: Family restaurant

Stephanie: "Another day, another nickel."

Devin walks by and hears her.

Devin: "What's wrong?"

Stephanie: "Look at this tip."

Devin laughs.

Devin: "I hope you are not planning on going to Disney World anytime soon."

Stephanie rolls her eyes.

Stephanie: "After this summer I won't have to do this awful job anymore."

At that moment Presley and Ryan walk in and sit down at her table.

Presley waves at Stephanie. Stephanie walks over to the table.

Presley: "Is it fun working here?"

Stephanie: "I'm just doing it for the summer. My mom always wants me to volunteer or work in the summers. She told me I will learn what I like to do and don't like to do for a career."

Ryan grins.

Ryan: "I can really tell this is your calling."

Stephanie: "This is really hard work. The pay is awful, and sometimes the customers are impossible."

Presley: "How's that?"

Stephanie: "Yesterday a woman came in and ordered soup. When the soup came she said it was cold. I took it back and returned with a hot bowl of soup. Then she said it was salty. After a new bowl she said it tasted funny. She left me a zero tip."

Presley: "Wow, that's tough."

Stephanie: "I've been asking God to show me what I want to do with my life. Guess what I don't want to do?"

Ryan: "I think sometimes God lets us do tough things to teach us about ourselves."

Stephanie: "Let's just say that the idea of a hospital with me saving lives dressed in a doctor's uniform is looking real good."

Devin joins them. His apron is covered in ketchup. His right sleeve is soaked.

Stephanie notices Devin's clothes.

Stephanie: "What happened to you?"

Devin: "Washing dishes kinda makes you wet."

Presley: "Do you want to be a busboy for a living?"

Devin grunts and walks away.

Presley: "Devin is really good in Math. He should be a teacher or something that uses his Math skills."

Stephanie: "I told him I'd pray for God to direct him. Our pastor told us that the Bible says if we trust in the Lord with all our heart, and not trust in ourselves for answers, He will direct our paths."

Presley: "Makes sense to me."

Ryan blurts out. "So what should I be when I grow up?"

Presley and Stephanie

together: "A professional clown."

SKIT 3

Life Issue: Using our gifts in the right places.

Bible Passage: *Proverbs 12:15*, "The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice."

Central Bible Truth: It is important to listen to the advice of others who may discern something God wants for us.

Teaching Aim: Youth should seek many ways including talking and listening to others about using their gifts in the future.

Characters: Youth leader John, Kelly, Andrea, and Dan.

Setting: Youth group meeting. Youth are putting on a play.

John enters. He looks around notices that the scenery is messy and yells out for Kelly.

John: "Kelly! Who's working on the painting here? The trees are half done, the dogs look like rats, and the people look like mutants."

Kelly: "Don't yell at me. I just organize it. Andrea and Dan are on scenery."

Kelly continues: "Andrea? Dan?

Where are you?"

Andrea and Dan enter the stage carrying Cokes and chips. They are talking and laughing together.

Kelly: "Andrea? Where were you guys? The play is tomorrow and the background is only half finished."

Dan: "What's the point?"

Andrea catches Dan's eye and giggles. Kelly sighs.

Kelly: "We've got to get this finished. Andrea where were you all morning?"

Andrea: "Actually, I didn't realize that it was all morning. I was with Kathy in wardrobe helping her to pick out costumes. The time went so fast."

Dan: "I met Andrea after I helped Larry nail the balcony together for the last scene. It wasn't fitting right so I measured it for him. It fits together great now."

Kelly: "That's great guys but we still have this back drop to finish painting. I have to say, um, that maybe the people should be reworked. They kinda look like aliens."

John has been standing to the side and has heard everything. A boy runs up to John.

Boy: "I like to paint. I can finish that. It would be fun. I don't like the woodworking."

John thinks a moment and looks at the kids in front of him.

John: "Wow. I have made one big mistake here."

Kelly: "What do you mean?"

John: "Well, Andrea seems to love to be in wardrobe, and Dan is great putting things together. This guy, (John points to the boy at his elbow), is eager to paint. I think everyone is doing the wrong job here."

Kelly: "Me too?"

John: "You? No way. You were born to lead."

John: "God has given each of you a special and unique personality and talent. I think we've learned here that when you are not using the right talents, you probably are not going to be that happy with the job until you are using your gifts."

John: "We're going to put everyone where their heart seems to be leading them. I know that the play will come together quickly and give you joy."

Andrea and Dan: "Alright! I'm psyched now!"

Andrea and Dan run off the stage toward their new responsibilities. Kelly begins to boss the new boy around.

John walks offstage shaking his head.

SKIT 4

Life Issue: Accepting and being thankful for the gifts that God has given us.

Bible Passage: *James 1: 17*, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

Central Bible Truth: Each of us have unique gifts and we are perfect in His sight.

Teaching Aim: Don't covet another's gifts because you think that their gifts are better or more important to God.

Characters: Jill, Mary, Karen, and Brenda

Stephanie is cleaning tables after her customers have left. She picks up the nickel off the table and sighs.

Setting: After school club.

Jill: "I really can't wait until I can do this debate."

Mary laughs: "Yeah, you do seem to like a good fight."

Karen: "I don't know why I let you guys drag me to this debate meeting. I can't do this, I'm uncomfortable."

Brenda: "It'll be fun. You are smart and you can think quick on your feet. We know that you can give a great comeback."

Karen: "I don't know."

Jill: "Come on. You always do such great research in history class. You seem to know so much about so many things. Besides, look at that team. They don't stand a chance."

Karen: "Not really."

Mary: "Jill's right. Whenever we get a group project you always study all the information and put it together for us."

Karen: "It's not hard, I like to study stuff. I enjoy all that reading."

Jill: "Not hard for you but miserable for me. I hate to have to read books and stuff on topics I'm not really interested in."

Karen: "You guys are so lucky. I wish I was more outgoing like you. I am just so shy. I'd rather be in the library reading books."

Brenda, Jill, and Mary grow quiet.

Karen speaks out again.

Karen: "I have to be honest here. I really don't like who I am. I'm a little jealous of your gifts. I want so much to be more like you."

Brenda: "You're kidding, right?"

Karen: "No, I mean it. I wish I could be bolder and be good at some of the things you're good at. For example, Brenda, you have a great singing voice. Mary, you always lead us and Jill, well, it's obvious that someday you will probably be a famous lawyer with your debating skills."

Jill: "We'll see."

Brenda: "Okay, we've got to pull this together. I say we let Karen stand behind us and just help us with the answers. She's probably read all about it anyway."

Karen: "That's a plan I can live with."

4 SKITS ON **BUILDING TRUSTS WITH ADULTS** *By Patti Emanuele***SKIT 1** (*Honesty*)

Life Issue: Keeping our word so that parents can trust us.

Bible Passage: *Psalm 15:2*, He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart He who does these things will never be shaken.

Central Bible Truth: God expects us to speak truth to others.

Teaching Aim: We must be honest and keep our word to our parents and others.

Characters: Christina, James, Brooke, Eric, and Brooke's mother

Setting: The shopping mall

Christina: Okay, lunch was great, I've shopped all I want to. Now what shall we do?

Brooke: I don't know. There's never anything fun to do in this town.

Eric: You said it. This town is so lame. My mom tells me that it's a great place to grow up, great schools, little league, sports to do.

James: Yeah, but after the mall, what else is there to do?

Brooke: We could go back to my house, I guess. Play some video games, watch TV.

The group moans. Eric starts pitching rolled up napkins into a waste basket.

Eric: He aims, he shoots, and he scores!

Eric and James start pitching paper balls in the basket. It's a competition.

One doesn't quite make it in. It bounces off the side and lands on the floor.

Christina: We could walk down to that new movie complex. I think there are some cool movies playing this week. It's kind of far, but we could do it.

James: Yeah, it can't be that far, let's go. *James gets excited and begins to crush drink cups in his hands. Now he tries to toss them into the basket.*

Christina: If we start walking now I bet we can make the next show.

Brooke: I don't know...

Christina: What's wrong?

Brooke: Well,

Christina: What's bothering you? All three kids lean forward toward Brooke and wait for her answer.

Brooke: I promised my mom that

I wouldn't walk on that busy street.

Brooke's friends are quiet.

James: Brooke, your mom is at work. She's not gonna know if you did it or not.

Eric: Don't be a wuss, you'll be home by supper time.

Christina: It's okay if you don't want to go Brooke. I know you're a Christian and you want to be honest.

Brooke: My parents trust me. I just can't go.

Later that night at Brooke's house:

Brooke's mom: Brooke, I saw something odd today.

Brooke: What's that mom?

Brooke's mom: I saw your friends walking along Main Street. Didn't you go shopping with them?

Brooke is quiet.

Brooke: I knew that you didn't want me to walk there.

Brooke's mom gives Brooke a hug.

Thanks Brooke, you did what God expected of you. You kept your word to me. I am proud of you.

SKIT 2 *(Consistency)***Life Issue:** Speaking truth consistently**Bible Passage:** *Matthew 3:8*, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance."**Central Bible Truth:** Keeping our word consistently builds trust with others.**Teaching Aim:** We should teach youth that God expects us to speak truth, and He will be our witness and reputation to others.**Characters:** Play Director Mr. Jones, actors Jerry, Larry, Grace, and Paula.**Setting:** Rehearsal for a school play.**Director:** Let's go, we only have two days until show time. We still have so much to do.**Jerry:** We're getting there Mr. Jones. Hey, where are those props that we need for scene two?**Grace:** Larry is in charge of that. He said that he knew someone from his church who would lend them to us.**Paula:** Boy, I hope so. Opening night is getting close.

Paula and Grace fidget with their costumes.

Director calls out frantically:

Larry, where are you? I need an update on those props. You're my go to man.

*From the back of the stage Larry emerges. He's carrying some props in his arms. He keeps dropping things. A ball bounces across the stage and lands in the audience.**Grace, Jerry, Paula laugh.**Larry grins back at them. The director rolls his eyes when he sees Larry. He taps his foot on the stage impatiently.***Larry:** I'm here. I've got this stuff like you wanted. What's the problem?*The Director's face brightens. He points to stage left.***Director:** Put those props over there okay? Is that everything we needed?**Larry:** This isn't all of it. My youth pastor said I could borrow the rest this afternoon. I think they need to use some of them today. We'll have it all later. When he promises me something I believe him.*Director sighs. He glances at Larry over the top of his glasses.***Director:** Larry, do you promise

me that we'll have everything we need for this play?

Paula speaks up: Mr. Jones, this is Larry. He's a Christian. We know that when Larry says something we can trust that he will do it.**Grace:** Yeah, don't worry. It will happen. We've known Larry for a long time. He always tries to do what he says.**Director listens to girls and then says:** Okay Larry. It looks like your reputation precedes you. I'll just trust you to get the job done. I'm not going to worry about this anymore. It's in your hands.**Larry:** Thanks Mr. Jones. No problem. Everything will be here this afternoon.


Website: youth.gc.adventist.org
 Email: dunchiem@gc.adventist.org
 Phone: 301-680-6170 • Fax: 301-680-6155
 12501 Old Columbia Pike
 Silver Spring • Maryland • 20904 • USA

SKIT 3 (Responsibility)

Life Issue: Showing responsibility in all that we do.

Bible Passage: *1 Timothy 3:7*, "He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap."

Central Bible Truth: We must strive to do everything in our lives that will represent ourselves as believers in Christ, including honesty and truthfulness. If we are consistent in our behavior it will be a witness for our faith. That includes being responsible and respectful in our homes with our parents. In this way, our character will build trust with our parents.

Teaching Aim: To teach youth that we have a responsibility as witnesses for the Lord to have a good reputation and be responsible and reliable.

Characters: Dora, Liz, Jenny, and Cara

Setting: Store

Dora works in a store after school. Her friends arrive to talk with her when her boss is out for the afternoon.

Liz: Hey Dora, how's work going?

Dora is sweeping the floor. She looks up and sighs.

Dora: Okay I guess. It's been really slow today. It's so sunny outside I guess everyone is out doing something fun.

Jenny: Yeah, we thought fun would be a good thing. We thought it would be a great day to go to the beach.

Cara: I got a new swim suit. Wait until you see it.

Jenny looks around the store. She checks behind the clothing stacks, under the tables, and peeks into the back room.

Jenny: Where's Mr. Snow, your boss?

Dora: Mr. Snow? Oh, he had a dentist appointment, and after that he's going home. His son is in a game playing baseball.

Jenny: That's nice. Is Brenda here?

Brenda, the other sales girl emerges from the back room. She is older. She pushes back her glasses on her nose and glares at the girls.

Dora: I guess you got your answer. Why do you want to know about Mr. Snow?

Liz glances around the room and watches Brenda refold a shirt. Lowering her voice she whispers to Dora.

Liz: Come with us to the beach. Tell Brenda that you're sick and need to go home. Mr. Snow isn't even here.

Dora is silent.

Jenny: Oh come on. Don't be so straight. Mr. Snow will just think that you got sick.

Dora: I can't. Mr. Snow trusts me. He knows I do my work. He knows that I'm a Christian. I have a reputation to keep. I try to be responsible and honest. It's not only my reputation but the reputation of Jesus Christ. I'm sorry guys, but you'll have to leave without me.

Jenny: I knew you'd say that. Have fun working today. We're going to go. Come on guys.

The girls leave and Dora goes back to work.

SKIT 4*(Self-Seeking)*

Life Issue: Choosing to do right even if it's not for our benefit.

Bible Passage:
Romans 2:8, "But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth, and follow evil there will be wrath and anger".

Central Bible Truth:
We will build trust with adults if we put aside our desires and do what God expects us to do.

Teaching Aim: We must teach youth how to show adults that we can be less self-centered and can be relied upon to think of others and do the right thing.

Characters: Mary, her brother Johnny, and friend Nick.

Setting: Counting money after church in the church basement.

Johnny: Hurry up Nick. We've got to get this money counted before church ends.

Nick: Okay, okay. Wow, look at all those bills.

Mary: Calm down. Remember, it's not yours.

The three begin to count out coins and bills. Mary writes the numbers down on a pad. Johnny and Nick goof around and run their hands through the coins. The coins make a jingling sound in the quiet of the church basement. Upstairs, the pastor is still speaking.

Mary: You knuckleheads need to finish the job. When we hear the music we know that service is almost over.

Johnny and Nick go back to counting money.

Nick looks at Mary and Johnny.

Nick: You know, we could have a lot of fun with this money—even with just a little. We counted it, who's going to know how much was collected?

Mary looks up and stares at Nick.

Johnny winces: Come on Nick that would be really wrong.

Nick: Really, just think. You could get that new CD you've been gaping at, and Mary, come on, new clothes? How does that sound?

Mary takes a deep breath.

Johnny stops counting.

Mary: Nick, new clothes would be great. I'm sure Johnny would love to get that

new CD your talking about. Truth is, it would be stealing. It's not our money. God would know.

Johnny: Yeah, these people trust us not to steal. I've got a good reputation here. Why do you think they let us count the money?

Mary: Our parents would be so upset if we stole money, not to mention God. I'm going to pass on taking this money. I'll buy those clothes another day.

Johnny: Me too. Sorry Nick. Maybe you should wait for us upstairs.

Nick hangs his head and quietly walks up stairs.

Nick: It could have been great you guys.

Mary: It would have been a disaster

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*A journal for Seventh-day Adventists
who like to think!*



FRIENDS

AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM



Miodrag Jovanovic is a pastor from Munich, Germany. He enjoys playing soccer, reading the newspaper, and travelling.

BY MIODRAG JOVANOVIĆ

What is a friend? Friends are people with whom you dare to be yourself. Your soul can be naked with them. They ask you to put on nothing; only to be who and what you are. They do not want you to be better or worse.

When you are with friends, you feel free; like a prisoner feels when he is declared innocent. You do not have to be on your guard. You can say what you think, as long as it is honest and true. Friends understand those contradictions in your nature that lead others to misjudge you. With friends you breathe freely. You can show your little vanities and envies and hates and vicious sparks, your meanness and absurdities, and in opening them up to friends, they are lost, dissolved on the white ocean of their loyalty. They understand. You do not have to be careful. You shouldn't, but sometimes you even abuse them, neglect them, and tolerate them. But best of all, you can keep still with them. It makes no difference. They like you. They are like fire that purges to the bone. They understand. You can weep with them, sing with them, laugh with them, and pray with them. Through it all—and underneath—they see, know, and love you. A friend! Who is a friend? Just one, I repeat, with whom you dare to be yourself.

If this were the definition of friendship, how many people do you know that you can really be yourself around? How many people know everything about you, and still love you? How many people would lend you \$20,000 if you needed it badly? Or wait, do you know at least one person who would donate their kidney if you needed it? How many people in your life can you consider to be a real friend? Let me guess—not too many.

You don't have to be a scientist to conclude that the quality of life increases with the quality of the social network in which we live. No friends—hard life. Many friends—hard life, but with friends.

Besides family, friendship is the other foundation necessary for our social and mental development. For religious people, faith is the third. In all three areas the basis is the experience of trust.

But why is it so difficult to maintain friendships over a longer period of time. We move across town, to another city—then our friendships are disconnected. We fall in love, get married, start a family—and before you know it, the friendships we had are oftentimes disconnected as well.

Why?

One reason is that we are deeply self-centred. We love ourselves more than anyone else in the world. The best of us only allow family members to join in and come close to our throne of love. But friends? Humans are selfish, that's the virus we carry in ourselves ever since we came into contact with the King of selfishness. Every trace of kindness and unselfishness that we possess is only a reflection and a distant echo of God's grace and character.

Jesus is the best example of friendship and what it is all about. The key word is *equality*. "I don't call you servants any

longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing: but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my father" John 15:15

Of course, Jesus is still God and we are the ones that need to be saved. But Jesus made the boundaries disappear by taking us into His inner circle of trust. Because He had made known to us "everything He has heard from His father." It is difficult to imagine that Jesus trusts us that much—but it is also hard to imagine that He would give His life for us, isn't it?

To understand true friendship, we must understand it from God's perspective. "...but I have called you friends..." John 15:15.

Another aspect of importance in our understanding of friendship: devotion. At least once in most people's lifetime they will experience a situation where friendship is put to the test. A situation where, maybe, you will experience a disadvantage because you have to help a friend. A story tells us about that:


Two men were out hunting somewhere in the northern United States when suddenly one yelled, the other looked up, just in time to see a grizzly bear charging at them. The first started to frantically put on his tennis shoes and his friend anxiously asked, "What are you doing? Don't you know you can't outrun a grizzly?"

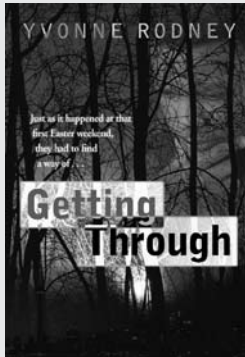
"I don't have to outrun a grizzly. I just have to outrun you!"

It's in moments like these that we will really understand what friendship is. Jesus' statement on devotion in friendship is very clear: In John 15:13, he says, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friend." He proved this ideal on the cross in an amazing way. He would have left his tennis shoes in the bag, that's for sure, so that we could run. He would not expect thanks or payment in return. He would "lay down his life," just for one reason—because we are His friends and He is our friend.

In the end, the question is not who my friend is; following Jesus' standards we must ask, "To whom am I a friend?" Thinking about others before I think about myself is something that is hard for me to learn—it is a special gift that we receive from God. The best way to make a real friend is to be a real friend—without any expectations.

Jesus describes the way to Heaven as a way of becoming like a child again. Children don't usually evaluate a friendship on the basis of advantages or disadvantages. They are just simply friends—no matter what colour they are, what social background they are coming from or what religion they belong to.

Marlene Dietrich said: Friends that you can call at 4:00 am, they count. Let's be good friends. 



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PEER PRESSURE

Prepared by: Hiskia I. Missah

SMALL GROUP COVENANT MISSION STATEMENT

By the Grace of God, as a member of the Bible Study Group:

I will value our time together.

I will be punctual.

I will bring a Bible and notebook to each meeting.

I will be an attentive listener.

I will not impose my own opinions on the group.

I will not judge others by what they say.

I will honor the diversity of thought and feeling among group members.

I will have my own personal Bible study at home.

I will spend at least 30 minutes a day reading and meditating on the Word of God.

I will share what I learn from the Bible with others.

I will develop a close relationship with God in my own daily life.

I will allow God to open my heart to understand and obey what I learn from the Bible.

Read Me First

1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV) Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

Introduction

Charles Swindoll in his book Living Above the Level of Mediocrity, p. 223-4 wrote this interesting story: Once a spider built a beautiful web in an old house. He kept it clean and shiny so that flies would patronize it. The minute he got a “customer” he would clean up on him so the other flies would not get suspicious. Then one day this fairly intelligent fly came buzzing by the clean spider web. Old man spider called out, “Come in and sit.” But the fairly intelligent fly said, “No, sir. I don’t see other flies in your house, and I am not going in alone!”

But presently he saw on the floor below a large crowd of flies dancing around on a piece of brown paper. He was delighted! He was not afraid if lots of flies were doing it. So he came in for a landing. Just before he landed, a bee zoomed by, saying, “Don’t land there, stupid! That’s flypaper!” But the fairly intelligent fly shouted back, “Don’t be silly. Those flies are dancing. There’s a big crowd there. Everybody’s doing it. That many flies can’t be wrong!”

Well, you know what happened. He died on the spot. Some of us want to be with the crowd too badly that we end up in a mess. What does it profit a fly (or a person) if he

escapes the web only to end up in the glue?

Proverbs 4:14-16, NIV: ¹⁴ “Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. ¹⁵ Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way. ¹⁶ For they cannot sleep till they do evil; they are robbed of slumber till they make someone fall.”

Romans 12:2, NIV: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Everyday Life

1. Definition of “Peer Pressure.”

a. It is a term used to describe the influence of a social group on an individual, that can affect people of all ages and backgrounds, particularly young people.

b. Not all peer pressure are negative and bad. Peer pressure can give positive influence and motivation, such as to excel in sport or study and academic performance, to be active in some religious activities, etc.

c. Peer pressure can give negative influence as well, such as leading

youth to smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, using illicit drugs and doing some other risky activities.

2. Proverbs 13:20: “He who _____ with the _____ grows wise, but a companion of _____ suffers harm.”

a. It is beneficial to associate with wise people and to make the right choice of good friends.

b. Find friends who value highly spiritual things.

c. Associate yourself with those who live a high level of morality.

3. Proverbs 1:10-19, NIV: ¹⁰ “My son, if _____ entice you, do not give in to them. ¹¹ If they say, “_____ along with us; let’s lie in wait for someone’s _____, let’s waylay some harmless _____; ¹² let’s _____ them alive, like the _____, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; ¹³ we will get all sorts of _____ things and fill our _____ with plunder; ¹⁴ throw in your lot with us, and we will share a common _____” ¹⁵ my son, do not go along with them, do not set _____ on their paths; ¹⁶ for their _____ rush into sin, they are _____ to shed blood. ¹⁷ How useless to _____ a net in full view of all the _____! ¹⁸ These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! ¹⁹ Such is the end of all who go after _____

gain; it takes away the _____ of those who get it.”

a. Keep away from any situation which can cause you to feel uneasy. Avoid young people who smoke, if you do not want to involve yourself in smoking. Smoking is the gateway to using illicit drugs.

b. Shun away from associating yourself with friends who do drugs, who love to do violation of school regulations, traffic laws, etc.

c. Learn to say no to temptation. You should be able to practice saying: “Thanks, but no thanks” to any temptation.

d. Those who start doing violations earlier in life will generally do worse in later life.

e. Avoid joining any youth gangs who love to do violence, because without realizing it they are laying in wait for their own blood and commit violence against themselves.

4. Proverbs 4:14-17, NIV: “Do not set _____ on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. ¹⁵ Avoid it, do not _____ on it; turn from it and go on your way. ¹⁶ For they cannot _____ till they do evil; they are _____ of slumber till they make someone _____. ¹⁷ They eat the bread of

_____ and drink the wine of _____.”

a. It is safe to stay away from people who are planning to do evil against others.

b. This kind of people will not stop designing deceitful things to cause harm on innocent people.

c. They should be avoided and stay away from them.

5. Proverbs 20:1, NIV: “Wine is a _____ and _____ a brawler; whoever is led _____ by them is not _____.”

a. United States Department of Health and Human Services gave its 2004 reports that — Alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents killed someone every 30 minutes and injured someone every 2 minutes, further it stated that 41% of all traffic-related deaths are alcohol related.

b. In many families, violence are done by people who often used alcohol or drugs when they attack their victims.

c. Alcohol drinking will impair the quality of life at school, work and family responsibilities and caused a great possibility of losing the ability to work and will lead people to losing their jobs.

d. Alcohol drinking will affect medical conditions — such as having the high risk of liver disease and various forms of cancer.

e. The Bible is right when it says that wine is a mocker, whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

f. Learn to say No, even to an invitation to attend a cocktail party where the temptation to sip only a little alcoholic beverages is strong.

6. 1 Timothy 4:12, NIV: “Don’t let _____ look down on you because you are young, but set an _____ for the believers in _____, in life, in _____, in faith and in _____.”

a. As a young person, you have to create positive peer pressure by setting up an example for the believers in all aspects of your life.

b. This is God’s Word to you today: Pay close attention to the admonition, for by doing this, you will save both yourself and others.

What The Church Believes

a. Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs # 22 says: “. . . Since alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies, we are to abstain from them as well. Instead, we are to engage in

whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness.”

b. Romans 12:1, 2, NIV: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

c. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NIV: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”

What I Believe

a. I believe that I am fearfully and wonderfully made (PSALM 139:14), so I have to try my best to live a clean life, following the Bible principles of healthy living.

b. I need to set an example by creating a positive peer pressure, leading others to attend Bible Study Program to learn the will of God that is to have His people to enjoy life to its fullest.

c. There is a great reward in following what God says as it is written in Exodus 15:26, NIV: “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”

Open Questions

a. What evidence of peer pressure exists in this Bible Study?

b. How can peer pressure get young people into trouble?

c. What will be my role in creating a positive peer pressure that lead others to walk in the right direction in life?

Sharing Time

a. Share with your classmates your struggles, your dreams, your plans to influence your fellow young people to live a victorious life.

b. What can you do together with your church to implement your plans?

At Home Study Time: Journaling

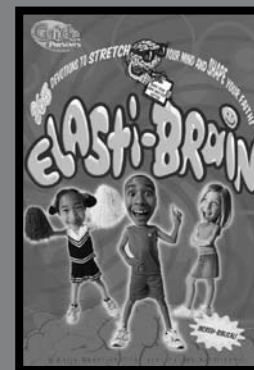
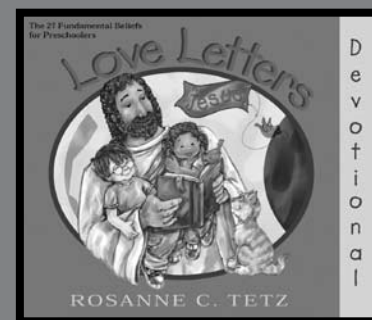
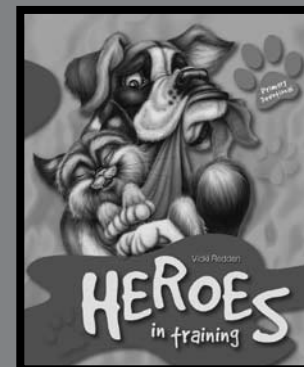
Write a one-page of weekly journal about the defeat and victory you experienced.

These youth devotionals are available at your local Adventist Book and Health Food stores.

You may also order online at

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2009 YOUTH DEVOTIONALS





WHAT DOES NEIGHBOR MEAN

CONTRARY TO WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, GOD DOES NOT WANT US TO SACRIFICE OURSELVES FOR OTHER PEOPLE. WHAT HE EXPECTS FROM US IS TO SHOW COMPASSION AND MERCY TO THOSE AROUND US.

©dynamicgraphics

Markie Bazy has a passion for mission and making a difference in the world. She believes that lasting relationships can start with the simple sharing of a Sprite in a bag, and end with a heart for mission. A full-time missionary, she writes this article from Bangkok, Thailand.

BY MARKIE BAZZY

Here in Thailand, I can set my clock by my neighbors—even though I'd rather not. It's 5:30 a.m. when I hear the gate across the street open. It's 6 a.m. when the guards direct traffic with their whistles. When everything gets quiet after 7 a.m., I'm late for school. It's 6:30 p.m. when the neighbor on my right leans on his horn asking for his gate to be opened. It's 2:30 a.m. when the guard dog in my building encounters the neighbor's guard dogs. I never need to buy a watch, unless my neighbors move.

But I must be honest; the neighbor who annoys me the most is the one who leans on his horn every day at 6:30 p.m. I want to yell out my window, "Get out of the car and open the gate yourself!" But enclosed in his car he wouldn't hear me. And since he wouldn't understand English, there's no point in yelling at him.

So how should I treat my neighbors? Jesus tells a parable about how to treat our neighbors, and I don't remember yelling at them for being lazy as part of the parable. You remember the story. A man is walking from Jerusalem to Jericho and gets jumped by thieves who steal everything of value and beat him nearly to death. Two religious figures pass by and leave him on the side of the road—not wanting to get their hands dirty. Then

an unlikely figure, a Samaritan, arrives, stops, and has compassion on the man. He gives him water, bandages his wounds, takes him to a nearby motel, and pays for his care while he recovers.

But what is truly fascinating is what happens when Jesus is finished telling the parable. Jesus asks those listening, "Who was a neighbor to the man?" An expert in Judaic law answers, "The one who had mercy on him." To which Jesus responds, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:36-37, NIV).

In Bangkok, Thailand, where I live, one would never help a man lying unconscious on the side of the road for fear of being sued—even for helping the man to safety. Mercy

is rarely a part of our world—no matter where one lives—definitely not between my neighbor and me. I have no compassion for the guards who direct traffic with their whistles.

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, and in the aftermath as the water poured from Lake Pontchartrain into the city, thousands of people were stuck at the Louisiana Superdome and the New Orleans Convention Center. A plethora of stories clogged the news reports of people complaining about not being immediately rescued and who had been left there to suffer. At the same time vivid images of people who thought they had the right to break into and loot Wal-Mart, also were reported.

In May 2008, a typhoon hit Myanmar leaving more than 133,000 people dead or missing. First, the military junta refused to let volunteers into the country to help the victims. Finally, aid was allowed into the country, but most was redirected to “aid” the military junta (apparently they were suffering). Then word came that the Myanmar army was prevented from helping victims in order to continue fighting a 60-year civil war against the Karin in the northwest. Many people died because of the greed of a few people.

Less than two weeks later, an earthquake hit China killing 70,000 people. Immediately, the Chinese

government opened its typically closed doors to allow people into the country to help clear away debris and, hopefully, find survivors buried beneath the rubble. Aid poured in from other nations to give food, blankets, and fresh water to those affected by the earthquake.

All this begs a question. Who is my neighbor? Is the horn honker my “neighbor?” Are the people in the country next door my “neighbor?” Are the people in a country halfway around the world my “neighbor?”

Maybe a more important question is what kind of neighbor am I?

Am I a neighbor like some of the people during Hurricane Katrina who took advantage of my neighbor’s misfortunes? Am I a neighbor like those in Myanmar where I close myself off to those around me? Or am I a neighbor like China where I encourage people to help where there is a need?

In Matthew 9:13, Jesus says, “. . . Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’” Contrary to what we have been taught, God does not want us to sacrifice ourselves for other people. What He expects from us is to show compassion and mercy to those around us.

HURRICANE KATRINA AND THE PRIEST

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the southern coastline, the local people and the rest of America were unprepared for the coming disaster. No one foresaw the dykes breaking and water from Lake Pontchartrain seeping into the city. While aid poured in, it was stuck at the city outskirts waiting for the water level to subside. In the meantime, thousands of people were stranded at the Superdome and the Convention Center. There was no way to reach them, nor was there any place to take them even if they had been rescued. Everyone was unprepared.

The priest was also unprepared. He came across the man on the side of the road beaten and badly bleeding. Even with as much training as he had, his heart was unprepared to help such a person. He had no compassion for his neighbor. So he walked on by.

But that doesn’t mean you have to do the same. Take a look at the people around you—those whom you encounter on a daily basis. The student who lives across the hall. The barista at Starbucks® where you get your morning venté, double, low-fat, no-whip, caramel latté. Or what about the person you pass by everyday on the side of the road holding a sign saying, “Spare Change.”

Or even the concierge you pass by every morning on the way to work. They may have smiles plastered on their faces, but these people may be experiencing their own disaster—on the inside.

Often, just a simple smile will make a person feel welcome. Or a sincere, “How are you today?” Take time to open your eyes and see the people around you. See who they really are, learn their needs, and respond with compassion.

TYPHOON NARGIS AND THE LEVITE

Typhoon Nargis hit the Irrawaddy Delta in Myanmar causing bamboo bungalows to dismantle on contact. Millions were immediately homeless. The mix of earth, water, and debris polluted the water making it unfit to drink. Food became scarce as salt water from the sea rendered the rice paddies unplantable. As the winds died down, the people who survived patiently waited for help and supplies. But none came, and if it did, it was too late. The military junta who ruled the country wouldn't allow foreign aid to assist the survivors. They closed the country even tighter, making sure no one helped. In a report to the Thai Prime Minister, the Burmese military junta said there was no outbreak of disease, no food shortage, and no contaminated

water—nor was there any need for help.

The Levite who encountered the beaten and bleeding man on the side of the road closed himself off as well. Did he even see the man on the side of the road? The Levite walked on by, not looking at the man. He may have even girded his robes about him so they wouldn't be stained by the man's blood. He just walked on by as if nobody was there.

Look around you. How many people do you see with little white cords hanging from their ears? Technology has done that for us. Most people walk around with earphones stuck in their ears listening to their iPods, not hearing or seeing the people around them, virtually closing themselves off from any human interaction.

When we close ourselves off from the people around us we become blind. We become selfish, concerned with our own needs. Compassion and mercy become lost to us—so lost that we no longer see the human suffering around us.

EARTHQUAKE IN CHINA AND THE GOOD SAMARITAN

On May 12, 2008, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Sichuan, China, killing 70,000 people and leaving five million homeless. The response to

the earthquake, even by the Chinese government, was outstanding as people immediately began clearing the rubble looking for survivors. China stunned the world by welcoming foreign aid immediately with open arms. In an even more radical move, the Chinese government allowed families who lost their only child in the earthquake to have a second child. China, ordinarily closed to Christianity and to the Western world, opened itself to the world to let its needs be known. And the world responded with compassion.

The Samaritans were considered subhuman and unlikely to help a Jew. Yet this Samaritan looked beyond the blood. He looked beyond the culture. He looked beyond the nationality. He saw a person. He saw a person who needed help. And he responded with compassion.

My mom taught me a valuable lesson the day she helped the “drunk lady.” This lady was carrying a 12-pack of beer while swerving and swaying. In the rush of Friday afternoon, my mom stopped to help this lady. We gave her the front seat, put her “purchases” in the trunk, and drove her home. Our car reeked of alcohol for days after. Still, at Christmas time later that year, we went to sing Christmas carols at her house.


Just read the newspaper headlines or online news headlines. Suffering has touched every corner of the

earth. No place is exempt. Jesus desires mercy from His people.

Remember the story of the lady who touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was instantly healed? The real story is not that she was healed, but that Jesus recognized her as a person. When Jesus called her daughter, she became a daughter, a part of a family. Jesus saw real people with real needs, desires, and hopes. He healed them because He saw past the outside and into their hearts and saw their need for human contact. Maybe you can't physically heal people, but you can make them feel like somebody by acknowledging their presence on this earth.

Open your eyes, hands, and heart to see the needs of people. See beyond the outward appearance. See beyond the stench. See the person, then respond with compassion.

So a priest, Levite, and Samaritan pass by a man beaten and bleeding on the side of the road. Only one stops to help. "Who was a neighbor to the man?" Jesus asks. An expert in Judaic law answers, "The one who had mercy on him." To which Jesus responds, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:36-37, NIV).

How will you respond? 

witnessing

2009 is the year of

SHINING



SHINING
AY-2009

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble, and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."
—Matthew 5:16 (KJV – Amplified)

2009 Small Group Discussions for adventist youth

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Free copies are also available online at youth.gc.adventist.org.

listenIT: CD info

There's always something for everyone. Solely instrumental, **Michael W. Smith** discovers that worship is more than just words; rather the passion that comes from our heart. Seen in this album, Michael's passion discovers a worship that is without words.

1. Freedom
2. The Offering
3. Carol Ann
4. The Giving
5. Hibernia
6. Letter to Sarah
7. Freedom Battle
8. Cry of the Heart
9. Prayer for Taylor
10. The Call
11. Thy Word
12. Free Man



“When God leads the way, anything you dream, can happen,” says this bi-lingual 19 year old from Brownsville, Texas, USA.

Giving her life to Christ at a young age and touring on her own regionally and internationally, **Ana Laura** developed a passion for sharing Christ through music.

Daring to dream about her future with a prayerful heart, she asked God to give her His dreams for her life. She wondered if the passion she felt for ministering through music could become her career. Now, that dream has become reality with her self-titled label already released. Rich pop-orchestral sounds weave a beautiful background for Ana Laura's soaring vocal style and pervading message of hope. Her tender spirit speaks to the soul both lyrically and musically, making this a breakout debut you will not want to miss.

eatIT: recipe

Wassail

(pronounced wossayl or woss'l)

Wassail has a rich history. The most well-known custom involves groups of people going singing door-to-door, either bearing wassail or begging for it, sometimes dressed in costume. This is believed to be a custom of helping the poor without placing them in the category of “beggars.”

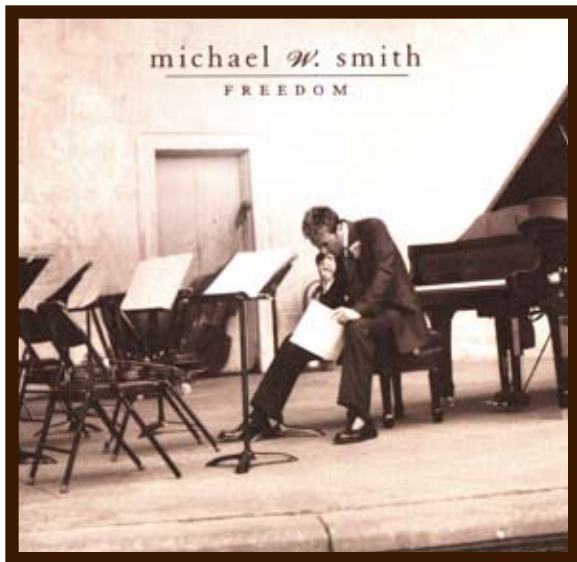
YOU WILL NEED:

6 cups	apple juice or cider
1-1/2 cups	unsweetened pineapple juice
3 TB	lemon juice
1 ea	cinnamon stick
1 tsp	grated lemon peel
1/4 tsp	nutmeg

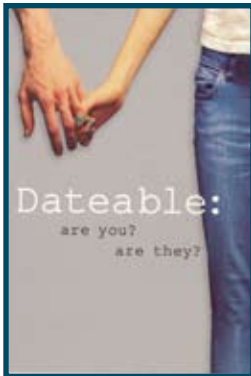
Heat juice or cider and cinnamon stick to boiling. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for five minutes. Uncover and stir in remaining ingredients. Simmer for five minutes longer. Serve.

Orange stars: Take whole oranges and poke cloves in them. Bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. (I don't always bake the orange.) Float in Wassail.

Bonita Joyner Shields lives in Brookeville, Maryland, with her husband Roy and two cats, Bandit and Smokey. Her finicky felines have not yet given their opinion on the Wassail.



readIT: GOOD BOOKS TO READ ON RELATIONSHIPS

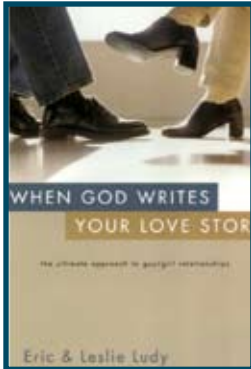


DATEABLE: are you? are they?

by Justin Lookadoo and Hayley Morgan.

CLUELESS ABOUT THE OPPOSITE SEX?

You won't be once you read *Dateable*. This book has the scoop on guys and girls—the stuff they never wanted you to know. It'll be like you're a fly on the wall of the locker room, listening in on all the conversations you've always wanted to hear. [Junior and Senior High Students]



WHEN GOD WRITES YOUR LOVE STORY by Eric & Leslie Ludy

is the **ULTIMATE APPROACH TO GUY/GIRL RELATIONSHIPS**. Best selling authors Eric and Leslie Ludy challenges young adults around the world to pursue a life completely devoted to Jesus Christ. This book invites you to discover how beautiful your love story can be when the Author of romance scripts every detail. Available at <http://www.adventistbookcenter.com> or amazon.com. [Young Adults]



HOLDING HANDS, HOLDING HEARTS by Richard & Sharon Phillips

helps you **REDISCOVER A BIBLICAL VIEW OF CHRISTIAN DATING**. Biblical, practical and down-to-earth, this book show you how, by the grace of God, love is really supposed to work. (Paperback) Available at <http://www.adventistbookcenter.com> or amazon.com. [Young Adults]



accent: resource for Adventist Youth Leaders

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and pants, is kneeling in a grassy field. She has her hands clasped in front of her and is looking upwards towards a cloudy sky. To her left is a large, leafless tree. The background shows rolling hills under a grey, overcast sky.

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