
Growing in a Relationship With God



Whether you've grown up a Seventh-day Adventist or are new to the faith; whether you've read many or few *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guides*; and, finally, no matter where you find yourself spiritually today, the topic of how to grow in a meaningful relationship with God is crucial.

This topic affects all others. Your picture of God may have become tainted or blurred; if so, pray for greater clarity as you study. You might be wondering how to refresh your devotional life (prayer and Bible study), or you might be pondering other areas that impact your relationship with God, such as the role of pride and humility, faith and knowledge, sin and God's law, repentance and forgiveness, how to overcome strongholds and setbacks, and how to encourage others in their walk with God.

Your relationship with God is your most important relationship. Don't delay in building it, in fortifying it, in making it as strong as it can be. Now—not sometime in the future—is the time to work on this relationship, which will impact everything else: your marriage (if applicable), your parenting (if applicable), your friendships, your financial decisions, your leisure, your aspirations—and, of course, your eternal future.

Because this topic—that of God's desire to be in a relationship with humankind—encompasses the entire Bible, there are many different angles, stories, and Bible pas-

sages that could have been chosen to teach this important topic. Given the nature of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, we can follow only a limited number.

Whatever your relationship with God is like today, these lessons are written with you in mind. Ultimately, the desire is that these 13 short, focused lessons will reawaken your love and commitment to Jesus Christ as you seek Him anew this quarter.

Because the nature of this topic is about relationships, this *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* reads a little differently from previous ones. The lessons are written in a more personal style because they are about a personal God who wants to know you personally.

Ellen G. White says that “a consistent life in Christ is a great miracle.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 407. The Bible uses the metaphor of a race to describe life’s journey with God. Our reward is an imperishable crown (*1 Cor. 9:24, 25*) and eternal life with our God. Our spiritual race is a marathon, not a sprint. There may be times we stop running or even fall flat on our face. It happens, and when it does, we just get up and keep moving. We must stay the course, in spite of trials and hardships that inevitably come (*Heb. 12:4–11*). And we don’t run this race alone; other runners who love Jesus and His Word run with us. Most important, Jesus promised to give us the Helper. “ ‘And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you’ ” (*John 14:16, 17, NKJV*).

We do not run life’s race alone—the Helper is not only with us but dwells in us in order to strengthen and sustain us as we run and as we fix our eyes on “Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith” (*Heb. 12:2, NET*).

As I write, I am praying that the Holy Spirit will move upon us individually and as a worldwide church to draw us closer to God as never before. For surely there could be nothing more important than having a strong relationship with God.

So, let’s study together—to learn, to love, and to abide in Him.

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