



WALKING WITH GOD, PART 2

Run On

April 23, 2022

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Mark 3:13, 14 (NIV) • “Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.”

John 7:37 (NIV) • “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.”

Acts 20:24 (NLT) • “But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.”

1 Corinthians 9:24, 25 (NLT) • “Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.”

Hebrews 12:11 (NLT) • “No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “WALKING WITH GOD, PART 2”

Walking with God is simply another way of talking about living our lives in connection with God. Developing a walk with God is a result of our choice and is further developed through our intentional decisions, committing our time and priorities to seeking a relationship with God, and being open to His Holy Spirit. It is not that God is hiding from us, but we as weak and sinful people are too easily distracted from the opportunities for communion with God.

When we look at the lives of God’s people through history—and especially in the Bible—we are given a demonstration of how ordinary people can choose to live extraordinary lives in a growing friendship with God. This does not mean they were perfect saints; indeed the Bible often includes stories of their failures. However, we are given a glimpse of a connection with God that made a difference to their lives and to those around them.

Learning these stories can give us examples and encouragement to “run the race” of a life-long friendship with God and to become people whom God will call His friends, forever.

C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “WALKING WITH GOD, PART 2”

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Recognize that God wants to have a

- friendship with us, which impacts upon our lives and the lives of those around us.
2. Appreciate some of the different ways God works with His people today and has worked in the Bible.
 3. Show a renewed commitment to running the race set before us with God.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) paper, pens and pencils; (Activity B) clay, paper, construction paper, scissors, white paper, crayons, markers, colored pencils.

Connecting • Bibles and/or student lessons, paper, pens or pencils, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk.

Applying • Students lessons from this week and last week, paper, pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN

Allow 10 minutes at the beginning of class for students to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • This activity is designed to have students recognize the footprint they leave behind them wherever they go and to aspire to leave a positive impression.

Get set • Have paper and pens or pencils available for each student.

Go • Ask students to line up in order of the size of their feet. Allow a few moments of interaction as they arrange themselves in the right order. Then go along the line with everyone telling their shoe size. Hand out paper and pens or pencils to each student. Ask them to trace around their shoe or foot—showing the size of their footprint.

Ask: What would you like to be remembered for? What lasting impact or footprint would you like to make on the world around you and those you come into contact with?

Instruct them to write their hoped-for impact inside their “footprint” on the piece of paper and keep it, perhaps in their Bible, to remind them of the footprint they make every day.

Debriefing • Ask: How much impact can we make on those around us? (We can make a huge impact, perhaps on just one life, perhaps on countless lives.) **How can we ensure we leave positive footprints in our world?** (Walking with God is our assurance of walking well through all aspects of our lives. If we are true to Him, we are doing the best for everyone with whom we come into contact.)

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • This activity will introduce students to running the race of life with God.

Get set • Explain the meaning of Isaiah 40:6-8. Grass in the springtime is new, healthy, and often a vibrant green. It is soft and pliant—when it is stepped on, it bounces back. And flowers are fragrant and colorful. Flowers are used to bring joy to our senses and are often used as decorations. But over time, they fade and die. And just like the grass and flowers, we all have a limited time on earth. Youth fades over time. Each year people grow a little older. They become weary in old age. They may move slower and suffer more pain than they did in their youth. Being 70 years old may seem like a long way off to you, but ask someone who is 68, and they will tell you that time has gone by very quickly! Point out that the time to make a difference is while they are young and have youth on their side. At the same time, no matter how young or old, in God both are given strength and energy to be used by and for Him (see Isaiah 40:29-31).

Go • Have the students use the clay or art supplies to depict how they want their lives to be seen by others using the references from Isaiah 40.

Debriefing • Ask: How do you see youth being an advantage to being a witness for God? (Someone who is young has more time to get to know God and be a witness for Him.) Have a student read Hebrews 12:1. **Ask: What does it mean to run the race in the context of our Christian lives?** (It suggests the need to put in an effort and go into training to become better friends with God. As with any friendship, to fully grow our relationship with God it needs time and attention.)

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

Share the following illustration in your own words.

There is power in walking. Perhaps one person going for a walk does not look like a significant event, but when thousands of people do it together, they can change the world. In most Western countries, protest marches are common occurrences. They are one way people can make their feelings known to a government with whom they disagree. For example, consider some of the great protest marches of the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1960s, led by Martin Luther King, Jr., and others. People with limited rights and opportunities were able to make a difference in their world simply by walking together with a common purpose. This is a difference that can happen powerfully when we choose to walk with God. When we walk with God, we will be changed and we will be empowered to influence the world around us.

Debriefing • Ask: Why are people more powerful when they walk together? (In a democracy, their combined statement is stronger than their individual voices. They can also support one another to continue their protest—and their walk.) **Does a large group mean they are right?** (No, the majority is not always right—but as far as possible we should try to understand other people's concerns.) **How can we use our influence to make a difference about things that concern us or on behalf of those who are voiceless?** (Get involved with groups who share our concerns, write letters, even attend a peaceful protest concerning an issue about which we feel strongly.)

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

In your own words, share the following:

Throughout history God has had His special people whom He has been proud to call His friends. They have been the “kingdom people,” who have remained faithful to God no matter what their circumstances. Sometimes they have been popular; often they have been persecuted.

Often those with special leadership responsi-

bilities have been given extra moments of closeness with God. **Ask: Can you think of some special friends Jesus had?** Perhaps one of the best examples of this extra-close relationship with God was that of Jesus' disciples. Of the thousands of people who followed Him, Jesus selected 12 men "that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach" (Mark 3:14, NIV). It is interesting to note that within this group there was another group—Peter, James, and John (the disciples Jesus loved)—who enjoyed an even closer friendship with Jesus.

Yet within both these groups of close friends—the 12 and the three—were those who betrayed, denied, and questioned Jesus. This in-crowd status was not a shortcut to a perfect life or perfect relationship with God.

Ask: Does this mean God is exclusive in His friendships, leaving some shut out? God is not exclusive. He does not have special friends for the purpose of shutting others out. Jesus said, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink" (John 7:37, NIV).

Look over the "faith hall of fame" in **Hebrews 11** with the class. Point out that these were real people who lived real lives. We should not be intimidated by their stories; instead we should be inspired to choose and seek a closer walk with God.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath's section of the lesson.

Point out that as this story reminds us, it is easy to start a race well, but life with God is a race with no finish line. A good start is great, and perhaps that might come in the form of being born into a Christian family and being taken to Sabbath School for as long as you can remember. Or it might be the enthusiasm with which a person new to the church embraces their new-found faith and begins to "run the race." But a good start is just the beginning. At times, living an enduring life of faith can be

more like running a marathon.

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group one of the following Bible characters. Give them the list of verses, along with paper and pens or pencils, and ask each group to report back to the whole class on the experience of faith of each of these real-life people.

>> **Enoch:** Genesis 5:18-24; Hebrews 11:5; Jude 14 (see also quote in Bible Insights section of student lesson).

>> **Noah:** Genesis 6:9-14, 22; Genesis 9:8-17; Hebrews 11:7.

>> **Abraham:** Isaiah 41:8; Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19; James 2:23.

>> **Daniel:** Daniel 1:18-20; 2:19-23; 6:1-5; 12:13.

>> **Peter:** Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:28-36; Matthew 26:69-75; John 21:15-23; Acts 2:38, 39.

>> **John:** Luke 5:9, 10; Mark 9:2-8; 1 John 1:1-3; Revelation 22:8, 9.

>> **Paul:** Acts 9:4-9; 26:12-18; 20:24; Ephesians 3:17.

Discuss the similarities and differences between these characters' experiences.

Each of these people had different experiences with God, but all are heroes of the faith and friends of God. They chose to run the race with God.

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Say: It is unfortunate that the Bible tells us so little of the story of Enoch. Although he lived at a time in history when many people were doing evil, he walked so closely with God that the Bible simply says, "God took him" (Genesis 5:24). It seems he became such good friends with God that God let Enoch come over to His place so they could be together forever. It would be amazing to get full details of how Enoch spent his 300 years on earth.

On a white/chalkboard, make a list of students' suggestions as to how a modern-day "Enoch" might spend his daily life. **Ask:** What kind of things might he do? Would he have a specific job? Where might he live?

Could he be a missionary in an obscure country or could he be an ordinary person you pass each day on the street? Compose a daily planner for someone walking with God Enoch-style in today's world.

Have students read **Deuteronomy 10:12, 13** and **Micah 6:8**. **Ask:** What do these verses tell us about walking with God? Are there any changes or additions we would like to make to the "Enoch daily planner"? Suggest to students the link between "walking with God," loving God, and doing right by and looking to help those around us, particularly those in need of justice and mercy.

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Say: On a personal level, Christianity is best described as a relationship between God and an individual. However, from a human perspective, the practicalities of such a relationship developing—and being maintained—with a God who seems invisible and untouchable, are daunting and puzzling. This is where God's offer of a simple friendship—walking together, eating together, spending time together, and ultimately living together—is so important.

Distribute paper and pens or pencils. Using the texts in the Bible Insights in this week's and last week's sections of the student lessons, instruct students to work in small groups and plan a day to spend connecting with God. **Discuss the different activities that might be suggested** (possibilities include: time spent alone in prayer, Bible reading/study, reflection and time spent together in worship, prayer, serving others). Encourage students to plan to spend such a day and refer them back to Friday's Applying activity.

Debriefing • Ask: Is such a day possible in everyday life? (Perhaps sometimes, and some elements may be incorporated into ordinary days, but there may not be time available for completely planned days.) **How can we walk with**

God more in our everyday lives? (Be open to a variety of suggestions, including intentional and spontaneous events. Perhaps suggest prayer triggers: every hour or when waiting at various times during the day or when they see something that reminds them to turn their thoughts to God.) Encourage students to plan regular moments with God in the course of their everyday lives.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Does it seem that other people have a better relationship with God than you do? Should we feel that way? How should we react to such feelings?
2. Are the Bible stories of great people intimidating or encouraging? Why?
3. Should we live an isolated life (away from other people) so we can live a more godly life?
4. How important is it that we balance our quiet times alone with God with our service for humanity? Why?
5. How can we, as a part of our walk with God, have a greater impact on our world? List some possibilities.
6. Do you spend enough time with God?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

Walking with God is a lifelong commitment, involving all aspects of our lives and all the days of our lives. We can choose to be a part of God's group of friends: God asks us to come to Him. The Bible is filled with examples of ordinary people who made that choice and in connection with God made a positive difference in their world. In the same way, we need to choose to run the race with perseverance and to let God use us as a part of His kingdom in our everyday walk.



STUDENT LESSON

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Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 15, Baptism:** “By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior, become His people, and are received as members by His church. Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, and our reception of the Holy Spirit.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 19, 20.

RUN ON

For many high school students the annual school cross-country race is a less than inspiring occasion. English sports journalist Ian Stafford—admitting he has never had a fondness for running for the sake of running—tells of similar experiences in his school cross-country runs. In fact, one year Stafford and a group of friends tried to set the record for the slowest time for the school cross-country. However, in his final

year of school he decided he would see how well he could do. He hatched a plan to start the race as fast as he could—at least he could say he had led the race for a part of it—and see what would happen. As the race progressed, Stafford was unable to keep up the pace but it took some time for any of the other competitors to catch up with him. He was eventually caught but was surprised to finish a creditable eighth.

Some years later Stafford—still not a fan of running—was persuaded by a friend to enter the Lambeth Half Marathon in south London. Since he was not a regular runner, on the entry form he had to guess at his time for the distance. Upon arriving at the start of the race, he discovered that his estimated time put him among the fastest entrants and so he was assigned a starting place right at the front of the 3,000 entrants.

On seeing this situation and realizing he had no hope of seriously competing at that level, Stafford decided to adopt the tactics from his school running “success.” At the starter’s gun, he took off as fast as he could. Only this time, the serious runners around him were keeping pace with him and he soon dropped back through the field, eventually finishing about 300th.

Some months later Stafford was amused to pick up a copy of a new book, *Fitness: Training Tips for Distance Runners*. “In one of the most blatant cases of fraud I can think of,” Stafford writes, the cover photo was of the Lambeth Half Marathon, showing him leading the runners away from the start line.

As any runner will attest, the beginning of

a race does not tell the full story. One of the joys of sports is the uncertainty in a race or a game. Until it is finished or the time runs out, there is always room for an upset, a comeback, a last-minute play, or some other turnaround. A good start is important, but the focus must be maintained until the race is run or the game is won.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 5:8.
- » Moses asked God, "Please, show me Your glory" (Exodus 33:18, NKJV). God told Moses that He would have all His goodness pass before Moses. But Moses could not see His face and live. God covered Moses until He had passed by, and then He removed His hand and Moses could see God's back—but not His face. Do you know why? It is because of sin. Sin cannot exist in the presence of God, and all of humanity is sinful. (See Exodus 33:18-23.)
- » If you had the chance to see God face to face and see all His glory, but it meant your death, would you? We can know God, without seeing His face, through prayer, Bible study, and walking with Him each day. And one day, when Jesus comes again, we will see Him face to face.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON BAPTISM

- » Read Acts 16:30-33; Romans 6:1-6.
- » You will make many important decisions in your life, but the most important one of all is choosing to be a child of God. Baptism shows your family, your church, your community, and the world that you have decided to follow Jesus—to be part of His family. Baptism is symbolic of being buried in death

(to our sins) and being raised to new life (a new person) in Jesus.

- » Jesus is waiting for your decision. Will you accept Him as your Savior today and walk with Him as a child of God? If you have made the decision to follow Jesus, talk to your Sabbath School teacher, leader, pastor, and your parents and make arrangements to take baptismal classes and be baptized.

- » I have decided to follow Jesus and be baptized.

Signed: _____

- » In the table below are two Bible verses mixed together. Can you separate the blocks into the correct Bible verses? Both verses are from the New King James Version. (Hint: find the verses by using every other block to form the individual verses.)

"And now	"For	why are	as	you
many	waiting?	of	Arise	you
and be	as	baptized,	were	and wash
baptized	away	into	your sins,	Christ
calling	have	on the	put	name
on	of the	Christ"	Lord"	(Galatians
(Acts	3:	22:	27).	16).

Verse 1: _____

Verse 2: _____

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read 2 Peter 3:18.

- » Learning about the people whose stories are recorded in the Bible is an amazing thing to do. We need to continually stop to remind ourselves that these were real people. They had hopes and dreams. They were sometimes tired, afraid, and sad. But, most important, they chose to follow God and become better friends with Him.
- » The stories in the Bible challenge us and let us know how we should live our lives. We see how the men and women of Bible times lived either faithful lives, like Abraham, or unfaithful lives, like Cain. Can you think of others who were faithful to God and set good examples for us to live by? How about Noah? Joseph? Daniel? Ruth? Jesus? Peter? Paul? Dorcas? John? In reading the Bible we see how God interacts with men and women, not only in Bible times, but today. We learn how much He loved them and how much He loves us! God calls us to repentance and faithfulness. He asks us to be examples to those around us—to help others come to know His love, goodness, mercy, and grace.
- » So, the stories of God’s faithful men and women are not just stories to be learned for a Bible quiz or exam. They are real-time examples of what a relationship with God can look like. These people are all different, and at different times in our lives we might be better able to understand parts of their stories. The God in the Bible is the same God who wants to walk with us and have a forever relationship with us.

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Look up the texts listed below. Write the positive characteristic(s) found in each of these verses that talks about a person’s relationship with God. (Hint: sometimes there are more than one.)

Genesis 5:24 (Ex.: Enoch walked with God.)

Genesis 6:9

Deuteronomy 10:12, 13

Daniel 6:4, 5

Micah 6:8

Matthew 5:8

Hebrews 11:5

Hebrews 11:13, 14

1 John 1:1-3

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read Deuteronomy 10:12, 13.
- » Review the memory text.
- » The Bible regularly uses the idea of running a race as a picture of living life as a Christian. We are urged to “run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (Hebrews 12:1, NIV).

Paul writes with certainty of his motivation in this race: "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever" (1 Corinthians 9:25, NIV). For Paul, the manner of our running and even the ultimate result is a matter of choice—"Run in such a way as to get the prize," he writes (verse 24, NIV). We choose the play, God ensures the result. Those who put their trust in God, "will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31, NIV).

- » Read 1 John 1:1-3.
- » Make a list of all the different ways you can learn about God. For example, Bible study, God's providential workings, the influence of the Holy Spirit, life circumstances, talking with other people, and spending time in nature.
- » Over the next week, try to do each thing on your list and record what you learn about God. Decide if certain activities help you connect with God more than others and plan to do those things more regularly for the next month. Keep writing down the things you learn, and you will begin to see that you are getting to know God more. By spending quality time with God, you are developing a deeper relationship with Him that will last through all eternity.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. At the bottom center, there is a small, stylized orange circular icon with a black outline, resembling a lightbulb or a decorative element. The background is a solid light gray.