



## RETREATING BEFORE YOU CHARGE

Five-Minute Retreat

May 7, 2022

### 1 PREPARING

#### A. THE SOURCE

**Lamentations 3:22-26 (NIV)** • “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, ‘The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.’ The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly.”

**Isaiah 33:2 (NIV)** • “Lord, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress.”

**Galatians 1:15-18 (NIV)** • “But when God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus. Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days.”

**1 Kings 19:11-13 (NIV)** • “The Lord said, ‘Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.’ Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the

Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.”

**Psalms 23:1-3 (NIV)** • “The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.”

**Lamentations 3:25-29 (NIV)** • “The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. Let him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust—there may yet be hope.”

**Steps to Christ, p. 94** • “Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God’s heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so

little and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

## B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT “RETREATING BEFORE YOU CHARGE”

As our world gets busier, louder, and more demanding of our free time Christians need to radically carve out moments to be alone with God. Being alone may not be a naturally easy thing for teens to aspire to. In a way, it goes against the flow of accepted behavior. Hanging out with friends is high on the value scale, while being alone raises eyebrows. But there could be nothing more right than stealing away to be quiet and alone with yourself and God. Some may see seeking solitude as one of many options, or having to do with personal style or taste. But the Savior, our example, needed the quiet times to retreat before He charged the forces of evil again. The idea many have of the word “retreating” is that you are losing, or getting sucked in and you need to re-think what you are doing. But Christ was not losing, or being sucked in. He needed the silence of retreat in order to come out victorious. So, for agents of the kingdom, the cry, “Retreat!” comes just before the victorious cry, “Charge!”

## C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH “RETREATING BEFORE YOU CHARGE”

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

1. Appreciate the value of being alone as outlined in Scripture and as required by the way people live today.
2. Learn ways to communicate with God when they are alone.
3. Set some personal goals of solitude.

## D. MATERIALS NEEDED

**Beginning** • (Activity B) glass of water, blindfold.

**Connecting** • Bibles and/or student lessons, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk

**Applying** • White/chalkboard, markers/chalk.

## 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.realtimfaith.net](http://www.realtimfaith.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** • The purpose of this exercise is to see if the students can experience “real quiet.”

No materials necessary.

**Get set • Say:** Today we are going to start by experimenting with absolute silence. What I want you to do is to be absolutely still. Close your eyes and don't make a sound until I say we are finished.

**Go •** After one minute of silence get their attention and tell them how long they were quiet.

**Ask:** Did it seem like a minute? Longer or shorter? Next I want you to listen for things you don't normally hear. Be absolutely still and quiet and listen for sounds that you never notice. Again, I will tell you when to stop. (Right now I'm hearing the hum of my computer.)

**Debriefing • Ask:** Why do you think that the time we are absolutely silent seems to take longer than it really does? What noises did you hear that you never notice? On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all and 5 being very much) indicate how much you think teens need regular moments of solitude and quiet (not sleeping) to grow spiritually? Encourage discussion.

## B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

**Get ready •** The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate how difficult it is to follow directions if everyone is talking at the same time and the one voice you are supposed to be listening to is overshadowed by the many. You will need a volunteer. The volunteer is the seeker. The seeker will choose a friend who is the guide, who will try to guide the seeker to walk to and drink a glass of water which is placed strategically in the room. The seeker will leave the room to be blindfolded. The goal will be to have the one giving directions (the guide) direct the seeker to the glass of water and then give instructions on how to take and drink it without spilling it.

**Get set • Say:** Class, your job is to continually talk at the same level as the one giving directions, but to give alternate directions to

detract the seeker from drinking the water. Your goal is to drown out the directions—no yelling or screaming; keep your voice at the same level. After a few seconds of pandemonium I will begin muting the crowd and when I mute you, you need to remain quiet. To the guide **say:** You are not to yell or scream either, just try to guide the seeker step by step.

**Go •** Bring in the seeker, and as soon as the guide begins talking so does the class. Mute them one by one after a bit so that the seeker little by little begins to hear the voice of the guide until the only one speaking is the guide.

**Debriefing • Ask the seeker:** How did you feel when you were trying to listen for the voice of the guide? What are some of the things you heard or thought you heard? When did you start to get the instructions more clearly? What was it like to be able to hear only the guide?

**Ask the guide:** How did you feel in this process? How do you think God feels when trying to communicate with us above the noise of our everyday lives?

## 4 CONNECTING

### A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

**In your own words, share the following:**

While we are a part of God's kingdom and in many ways tied to one another in a community, the value of a citizen is not necessarily who they are in the crowd but who they are when they are alone. When the King Himself was on earth He created time to be alone.

Have the students read the verses listed in the Bible Insights section of the student lesson and answer the following questions (they will need to use their Bibles to read around the context of the passages referred to in the student lesson):

- >> Why do you think He was trying to be alone?
- >> What were the circumstances surrounding His stealing away to solitude?

>> What was the result?

Now list the following questions on the white/chalkboard:

- >> What big events in the apostles' lives would bring them to a place where they would need to be quiet and alone?
- >> What do you think they did when they were alone with God? (pray, sing, talk, listen, etc.) Why?
- >> How do you think solitude had an impact on their effectiveness in promoting God's kingdom? (1=big difference; 5=not so much of a difference.) Why?

Discuss David's, Elijah's, and Paul's experiences in the light of those questions. Have students find and read the following references (some of which are found in The Source section of this teacher's guide).

1. David
  - Psalm 23:1-3
  - 1 Samuel 16:6-11
  - 1 Samuel 17:34-49
  - 1 Samuel 18:6-11
2. Elijah
  - 1 Kings 19:11-13
  - 1 Kings 17:2-7
  - 1 Kings 18:16-21
  - 1 Kings 18:22-38
  - 1 Kings 19:1-5
3. Paul
  - Galatians 1:15-18
  - Acts 7:57-60 and Acts 8:1-3
  - Acts 9:1-9
  - Acts 22:4-19

## B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

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

**Debriefing • Ask:** When you consider the circumstances that Viktor Frankl endured in the death camps, is it difficult to imagine someone "needing" solitude? How does the story of Viktor Frankl underline the impor-

tance of solitude? Why do you think that time was so precious to him?

**What do you think would be harder to accomplish in today's world: making time to be alone with God or making people sense a need to be alone with God? Is it possible to be alone even if you are in a crowd?**

**Where would you go to be alone with just yourself and God? What is your favorite place? What do you need for quiet time with God?** (peace, quiet, communion, prayer, listening, thinking, choosing)

## C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

**Say:** Pair up with someone in the class and take a minute to go over your daily schedule on Monday. Think of four options during the day from which you could choose to take a retreat/charge.

**When would you take a few moments?**

**Where would you go to do this?**

**How do you think it would change the course of your day if you took time out?**

When the pairs have discussed, ask volunteers to share responses with the larger group.

## 5 APPLYING

### A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

**In your own words, share the following:**

There are at least two ways to begin thinking about quiet time alone with God. One is scheduling or taking real chunks of time to be apart and alone. You could spend this time anywhere you can be alone and quiet. Sometimes taking time to journal where you are in your walk with God can be helpful.

The other way is to have moments in which you quiet your heart and mind and listen to God—smaller moments in which you are open to talk with and listen to Him. It can happen on your way to school, when you're walking home, or even when you're waiting in line at lunchtime.

**Say:** The desire to spend quiet time with God had been on Jeff’s mind more and more this year. He made some choices about his relationship with God and wanted to make good on his commitments. When it came to spending time with God in prayer or Bible study he would always forget. It wasn’t because he didn’t care, he just didn’t develop the habit of a devotional life. His schedule is busy, which made it harder for him to talk to God consistently and regularly. So he asked several people he knew who spent quality time with God what he should do. Here are the suggestions he was given:

**Write the following on a white/chalkboard:**

- a. Create reminders such as notes or symbols that will continually remind you that God is waiting to spend time with you.
- b. Get a partner who wants to do the same thing and set up a daily system by which you communicate and remind one another of your commitments.
- c. Just spend time with God when you remember to; it doesn’t have to be so strict. Just take time with God whenever you feel like it.

**Ask:** What would you recommend? What else might be a suggestion for Jeff?

Ask a volunteer to add items to the list on the board as they are suggested by the students.

**Debriefing • Ask:** Which of these ideas might work for you? Lead students in a discussion of things they will try in the coming week to get their retreat/charge time on track. Refer students back to the Friday section of their lesson for some good ways to focus during their time with God.

## B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think are the big roadblocks that keep people from taking time to be alone?
2. Who do you know who is a better per-

son for taking time to be alone with God regularly?

3. If you were to plan moments in which you would “retreat/charge” into solitude, what would be the reasons that would drive you?
4. To what degree do you think solitude makes or breaks a person’s walk with God?
5. Can we spend too much time alone? Explain.

## 6 CLOSING

### SUMMARY

**In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:**

Our citizenship in the kingdom of God has everything to do with our relationship with the King. Diving into quiet spots of communion with God is like working in the sulfur pits and occasionally getting to climb a mountain and breathe the fresh air and feel the breeze of God’s Spirit on your face. The purpose of solitude is to get quiet long enough so that the Holy Spirit can make contact with the “real you.” Your most important thoughts can be developed and encouraged by the Spirit. The goals God has placed in your heart can emerge above the agenda of everyday life in the “other” kingdom. More than anything else, solitude brings you face to face with God in ways that you won’t regret. Anyone who has taken a time out knows how much they needed it, especially when they are done.



## STUDENT LESSON

### RETREATING BEFORE YOU CHARGE

Five-Minute Retreat

May 7, 2022

#### Sabbath

#### FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 20, The Sabbath:** “The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God’s kingdom.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 84-86.

#### FIVE-MINUTE RETREAT

Viktor Frankl miraculously endured the seasons of horror in the Nazi death camps during World War II. One of his most basic needs, however, was to experience quiet moments of solitude. Even under the most grueling circumstances he would find a sweet release and the presence of mind to endure the hardship and the horror that confronted him daily. Viktor Frankl recalls finding opportunities to take five-minute retreats of quietness on the way to and from tasks in the camp. He worked in a place where dozens of peo-

ple were crowded into one spot, so any chance he had to retreat behind the mud hut he seized. There, surrounded by barbed wire and covered by a canvas tarp, corpses were thrown for disposal. Amid the stench of rotting bodies and the constant reminder of death he would sit alone and gaze out at the Bavarian countryside. In the quietness of those moments he would leave behind the hopelessness of the death camps and be renewed enough to survive until the next opportunity to spend five more minutes came along. He recalls the dire circumstances and the reminders of death all around him. While the sight and the stench of decaying bodies might have been difficult to ignore in his moments of solitude, more distracting than anything else were the footsteps of guards coming, marking the end of his time alone with God.

#### Sunday

#### RESPONDING

- » Read 2 Timothy 4:2.
- » Jenna is in the eighth grade. She writes: “I invited my neighbor Cassandra to spend the weekend at my house while her parents were away. I take time to reflect and pray every night before I go to bed. Cassandra noticed I was praying and said her mother does the same thing because of yoga classes. ‘It’s all the same,’ she said. I didn’t know what to say. I don’t want her to think that spending time with God is the same thing as yoga. But I didn’t want to offend her

by telling her she was mistaken. What could I have said? Was it right just to leave it alone? It just seemed like a good opportunity to share, and I think I blew it.”

## Monday

### BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE SABBATH

- » Read Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13, 14; Ezekiel 20:12.
- » Rest. Our minds and bodies need it to be healthy. Our spirit needs it to remain in contact with our Lord and Savior. Every day we need to spend time with God. When we spend time with God, He helps us to make decisions and to know what is right. And God has given us the Sabbath—a day to set aside our worldly interests and get to know Him and His will for us. It is a day to celebrate not only creation but salvation! Time spent with God during the week and on Sabbath restores our minds, bodies, and spirit for the work God has for us to do.

» How do you spend quiet time with God?  
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» What can you do to guard against distractions during your quiet time?  
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- » The Bible story from Mark 1:29-35 (NKJV) shows how Jesus honored the Sabbath rest and how He took time to spend with His Father early in the morning. Indicate with numbers the correct order of the verses.

\_\_\_\_\_ “So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the

house of Simon and Andrew.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “And the whole city was gathered together at the door.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed.”

\_\_\_\_\_ “But Simon’s wife’s mother lay sick with a fever.”

## Tuesday

### REFLECTING

- » Read Mark 1:35.
- » At first, spending quiet time with God may feel unusual. But, if you keep doing it, you will discover a joy and peace that nothing else gives.
- » Think you are too busy just to sit and listen for God to speak to you? Look at how busy Jesus was in Mark 1—the whole chapter is fast-paced. But Jesus gets up before the sun because more than sleep He needs to know what His Father has planned for Him on this day. He also wants to be sure His life is in the hands of His Father. After His prayer time, He knows what His Father wants Him to do. God may have instructed Jesus that it was time to move on. Perhaps He would say, “Let’s move on to the next village—we have work to do there.”
- » Time with God is a precious privilege. What are the obstacles in your life? A few minutes of extra sleep? A phone call cut five min-

utes short? One less e-mail or text message to write? What would our church be like if young people became involved? Imagine a whole generation of teenagers who make Jesus a priority in their lives. What might happen if young people would take time out of their busy lives to get in touch with the One who bought them eternal life? What is holding you back from making God first in your life?

## Wednesday

### BIBLE INSIGHTS

» Look up the following texts in the New International Version of the Bible, and answer the questions.

1. Matthew 14:13—How did the crowds follow Jesus?

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2. Mark 1:35—When did Jesus go out to pray?

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3. Mark 6:32—How did they go away by themselves?

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4. Luke 4:42—What time of day was it when the people tried to keep Jesus from leaving?

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5. Luke 22:39-44—Where did Jesus pray this prayer: “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done”?

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6. John 7:53-8:1—Where did Jesus go?

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7. John 6:15—Where did Jesus go this time and why?

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8. Mark 6:30, 31—What did Jesus say to His apostles and why?

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“Christ’s words of compassion are spoken to His workers today just as surely as they were spoken to His disciples. ‘Come ye yourselves apart, . . . and rest awhile,’ He says to those who are worn and weary. . . . While we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost, we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the Word of God. Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 362).

## Thursday

### CONNECTING

» Read Mark 6:30, 31.

» Review the memory text.

» The image of God waiting for us to spend time with Him is powerful. God is waiting for His children—you and me—to want to be with Him. We don’t spend time with God because it is required. We do it because we enjoy it so much and want to spend time with Jesus! God is not interested in us having “devotions” as much as He is interested in our “devotion” (loyalty, faithfulness, dedication, and love). Devotions have a beginning and an end. Devotion is a lifetime commitment.

» In the Bible we clearly see Jesus hanging out with sinners all the time. The Pharisees would ask, “Why does He eat and drink with



sinner?” The religious leaders may have snarled at Jesus, but His Father was smiling. No matter how busy Jesus was, He made sure to take moments of solitude—away from the people and teaching—just to be with God. No one, not even Jesus, could keep going day after day without quiet moments with God. And God smiles when we demonstrate our love to Him by sharing time with Him.

» God waits for you. He patiently watches you. When you hear God calling you, answer and give Him some of your time. Ask God to remind you if you need help doing this. He is more interested in moments alone with you than anything else. You will be amazed at how much He can do for you and through you when you invite Him to spend time with you.

Friday  
**APPLYING**

- » Read John 7:53-8:1.
- » Schedule or spontaneously spend some time apart in the quietness with God. You might want to focus on one thing at a time and journal some of your thoughts and experiences as you go throughout the week.



Ear: What did you hear?

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Bible: What verses came to your mind/did you read?

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Heart: What honest communication did you have with God from your heart?

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Eye: What did you “see” and learn about God, yourself, or others as you spent time with Him this week?

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Illustrations by Terry Crews