



### Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the Lord will be prospered. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered" (Proverbs 28:25, 26, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 7, The Nature of Humanity:** "Their [Adam and Eve's] descendants [all of us] share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 79-81.

### STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

"A devoted Christian, Dave Dravecky entrusted his life to God every morning. . . . When a cancerous tumor in his arm threatened to cut short his career, Dave did not demand to be healed. Instead, he committed himself to God's will, and his quiet faith was a witness to millions.

"God worked a miracle for Dave Dravecky. Although his cancer operation required the removal of muscle that he used for pitching, against all odds he came back to play again. Thousands of San Francisco fans cheered wildly when he took the mound again at Candlestick Park. Incredibly, he even won the game.

"Dave Dravecky was back! But the comeback miracle lasted less than a week. Dave was playing in Montreal, winning the game, when suddenly, as he pitched, his arm broke. He collapsed in a heap at the foot of the mound. The whole crowd heard that awful snap of the bone.

"As they carried Dave off the field he quietly affirmed his faith in God. That faith did not waver during long months of uncertainty. Finally doctors determined that they had no choice but to amputate his arm, and they did.

"Did Dave become bitter when God did not heal him . . . ? Not at all. Secular sports writers around the country marveled at his faith, solid as a rock. . . . God displayed a miracle greater than physical healing in the amazing display of Dave's contented commitment.

"The apostle Paul experienced this rock-solid faith. He too suffered from an incurable physical affliction. Three times he asked God to miraculously heal him. God's response was plain. 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness' (2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV). Paul's answer is remarkable: 'I will rather boast in my infirmities. . . . I take pleasure . . . in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong' (verses 9, 10, NKJV). . . .

"Like Dave Dravecky and the apostle Paul, God invites us to hang on to Him today with the hand of faith."—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald®, 2003), pp. 158, 159.

### Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Proverbs 16:18, 19 (NASB). "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling. It is better to be humble in spirit with the needy than to divide the spoils with the proud."
- » Keri loves to play piano. Her teacher is proud of her and has advised that she can participate in the national piano competition for her grade if she would come faithfully to her 7:00 a.m. intensive practice sessions each day for an extended period of time. This is not always possible for Keri to do. Keri lives in a single-parent home with her mom and a sister too young to be left alone. Her mom works all night and doesn't always make it home in time to take care of the little sister and get her to school on time. If you were Keri, what would you do? How would you distinguish between the world's idea of success and God's ideal plan for true success in our lives?

### Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE NATURE OF HUMANITY

- » Read Genesis 1:27; Romans 5:12-17; 1 John 4:7.
- » We were created in God's image. When Adam and Eve sinned, God's image was damaged in humanity, and all of us are born with tendencies to sin. So even though our nature, through Adam, bends toward evil, in Christ we can be made whole again and restored to God's image. When we love and put God first, we will love others and think of their needs before our own.
- » What is it in your nature that you struggle with? How can you be sure that God is first in your life?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
- » Below are two Bible verses mixed together. Can you separate them into proper verses? Verses are from the New King James Version. Write the verses below. (Hint: both are found in 1 John.)
- » 1 John He another who one does love 4: not to love ought does also not we 8 know us 4: God loved for so God God is if love 11 Beloved 1 John  
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**Tuesday**  
**REFLECTING**

- » Read Matthew 5:1-15, 43-48.
- » The world's idea of success is that of being rich, important, and powerful. In God's eyes true success is becoming more and more like Jesus, and leading others into a saving relationship with Him. The Bible asks, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26, NKJV). God does not want us to be successful by the world's standards and not be ready to meet Him when He comes. Real success is working together to save others. When God blesses us prosperously, we can help others with what we have been given.
- » God's concept of prosperity teaches us that our value is in a job well done. We should be looking on the inside and asking if we are doing well on what we know we are capable of. In Matthew 5:3-10, Jesus gave the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . those who mourn . . . the meek . . . those who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . . the merciful . . . the pure in heart . . . the peacemakers . . . those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake . . ." Ask yourself, "Do I have these qualities?"

**Thursday**  
**CONNECTING**

- » Read Matthew 7:12.
- » Review the memory text.
- » God wants to see His kingdom here on earth. As well, He wants to see His people cooperate with and love one another. He even wants us to succeed and prosper in whatever it is we choose to undertake. But remember, success to God is very different from how this world defines success. It is not about money or power or popularity. It is not about how you look. It is not about comparing yourself to someone else. Rather, it is about how you love and give away the grace that God has given you. He wants you to be a wonderful representation of Him. He knows that someday someone will look at you and determine what God is like because of how you act. What an awesome responsibility! But He will not fail you! Not one of us is worthy of the love and grace He has given us, but we can with God's help achieve what He has planned for us.
- » The devil is always trying to use our own human nature to get us to focus on the wrong things. What is it you want? What will you do to achieve your goals? Are the things you want and the goals you are setting in line with God's plan for your life and with the kingdom of God? When your desires match His, He will be right there with you to provide the power to do it through His Spirit (see Psalm 37:4). What a powerful promise!

1. What does success mean to you?

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2. Do you think that your idea of success is in line with God's idea of success?

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3. In what areas of your life do you want to ask God to help you succeed?

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**Wednesday**  
**BIBLE INSIGHTS**

- » Fill in the blanks after looking up the texts in the New International Version of the Bible. If you do not have this version, you can go to [Biblegateway.com](http://Biblegateway.com).
- 1. "So in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to others what you would \_\_\_\_\_ them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12).
- 2. "Pride goes before \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ spirit before a \_\_\_\_\_. Better to be \_\_\_\_\_ in spirit along with the \_\_\_\_\_ than to share \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 16:18, 19).
- 3. "The \_\_\_\_\_ bring \_\_\_\_\_ to their households, but the one who hates \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 15:27).
- 4. "Make it your \_\_\_\_\_ to lead a \_\_\_\_\_ life: You should \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with your \_\_\_\_\_, just as we told you, so that your daily \_\_\_\_\_ may win the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and so that you will not be \_\_\_\_\_ on anybody" (1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12).
- 5. "And the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_ must not be \_\_\_\_\_ but must be \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, able to \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_. Opponents must be \_\_\_\_\_ instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance \_\_\_\_\_ them to a \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_" (2 Timothy 2:24, 25).

**Friday**  
**APPLYING**

- » Read Proverbs 3:5, 6; Galatians 6:9.
- » How do your ideas about life, success, and the goals you want to achieve fit into God's ideas about life and success? Answer the questions below:

4. What does it mean to have a standard of excellence?

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5. What is God's standard of excellence?

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6. How does being the best you can be glorify God?

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7. How does helping and loving others fit in to your picture of success?

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