



### Sabbath

#### FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit" (Proverbs 17:27, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ:** "The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 134-137

### WORDS SOFTLY SPOKEN

An elderly couple purchased a home and moved into it. As they were arranging their furniture they had their first visitor. He was the man living next door, and he had fire in his eyes. He had come to talk to them about a tree in the front yard of the newly acquired home. He wanted that tree out of there. The recent arrivals regarded the angry neighbor in silence for a few moments. Then the husband said,

"Sir, this tree is on our property, but I can see it irritates you. My wife and I would like to keep it, but you are our neighbor and your friendship is worth more than the tree. After we have gotten settled and have rested a little, you and I will take axes and shovels and remove it."

Those conciliatory words softly spoken took all the wind out the sails of the irate neighbor. He gulped and said, "I don't want to be nasty about it. The tree may not be so bad, really. Anyway, let's wait and see."

This once-angry man turned out to be a splendid neighbor, and the tree was never mentioned again.

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1, NKJV).

—Adapted from Henry Feyerabend, "Words Softly Spoken," *Slices of Life* (Oshawa, Ont.: It is Written, 1995), pp. 27, 28.

### Sunday

#### RESPONDING

- » Read Matthew 7:1-5.
- » A group of your school friends have been bullying a new student. They have ridiculed his/her old clothes, bad haircut, and physical appearance. You see the hurt this is causing the new student. Wanting to fit in, you do not say anything. But sitting with your friends at lunch, you still feel bad about what has been happening.
- » Should you speak up? Why or why not? How can you communicate to your friend in a tactful way that everyone needs to be treated with respect regardless of the differences between us?

### Monday

#### BIBLE ANSWERS ON UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

- » Read Psalm 1:1, 2; Matthew 20:25-28; Galatians 5:22-25; Philippians 4:8.
- » "There is a wonderful power in silence. When impatient words are spoken to you, do not retaliate. Words spoken in reply to one who is angry usually act as a whip, lashing the temper into greater fury. But anger met by silence quickly dies away. Let the Christian bridle his tongue, firmly resolving not to speak harsh, impatient words. With the tongue bridled, he may be victorious in every trial of patience through which he is called to pass" (Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People*, pp. 135, 136).

Find the hidden words within the grid of letters. You will then discover the hidden message in the first two lines of the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward, up, down, and diagonal.

D E X T E R I T Y S S A Y S I R  
 N N G I T W I T K S H T A U C T  
 O T N H S D Q I S E R Q Q B Y C  
 I S A M Y S L O O N X B I T D A  
 T D S C C L E K L L N X I L I U  
 P Z I Z A Z N N W U N V H E P T  
 E V B N C R T N E F I G R T L I  
 C O N S I D E R A T I O N Y O O  
 R L F E L H V P I H I O Q J M N  
 E L Y T E H Y S R G H L Z G A E  
 P A V C D I N X D U J A O O C L  
 J U D G M E N T E O L K O P Y T  
 T H G I S N I T C H K B Z M M N  
 J M W D I S C R E T I O N X R E  
 T N E M N R E C S I D H O W B G

- care
- diplomacy
- judgment
- dexterity
- gentle
- sensitivity
- discretion
- insight
- thoughtfulness
- perception
- politeness
- consideration
- skill
- subtlety
- discernment
- caution
- delicacy



Tuesday

**REFLECTING**

- » Read James 1:19.
- » All relationships are built upon communication. So when, how, and what we communicate has a significant impact upon the nature of our relationships. A number of Bible passages highlight the power that speaking has to change our lives and affect the lives of others.
- » So before we even begin to speak, we need to ask ourselves such questions as: Should I say anything? How will the person react? Should I speak up even if what I say won't be popular? Sometimes we may not recognize it, but we make choices every day about how we will communicate with others.
- » The word "tact" can at times be used to mean simply telling people what they want to hear so they do what we want. But intelligent and honest tactfulness is an important part of good communication. Tact is a part of efficient relationships and can make us a better friend.

Thursday

**CONNECTING**

- » Read Esther 4:14.
- » One of the best stories of relating to others as a Christian and knowing how to speak tactfully is the story of Queen Esther (see Esther 4; 5; 7). First of all, the secret of her success was found in a genuine relationship with God. She prayed and fasted for three days before she went to see the king. What other steps did she take that demonstrate her wisdom and tact? How can you use some of the lessons from the Bible to speak and act with tact in your interactions with others?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- » Review the memory text.
- » In any aspect of our lives—but perhaps more in sharing Jesus with our friends—we need to practice tact. Ellen White wrote, "In the work of soul-winning, great tact and wisdom are needed. The Savior never suppressed the truth, but He uttered it always in love. . . . He exercised the greatest tact, and He was always kind and thoughtful" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 117).

Wednesday

**BIBLE INSIGHTS**

Read the texts and fill in the blanks. Texts are from the New International Version of the Bible.

1. "For if you \_\_\_\_\_ silent at this time, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for the Jews will arise from another \_\_\_\_\_, but you and your father's \_\_\_\_\_ will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your \_\_\_\_\_ position for such a \_\_\_\_\_ as this?" (Esther 4:14).
2. "Whoever of you loves life and \_\_\_\_\_ to see many good days, keep your \_\_\_\_\_ from evil and your lips from telling \_\_\_\_\_" (Psalm 34:12, 13).
3. "Sin is not ended by \_\_\_\_\_ words, but the \_\_\_\_\_ hold their \_\_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 10:19).
4. "Even fools are thought \_\_\_\_\_ if they keep \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ if they \_\_\_\_\_ their tongues" (Proverbs 17:28).
5. "My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and slow to become \_\_\_\_\_, because human anger does \_\_\_\_\_ produce the righteousness that God \_\_\_\_\_" (James 1:19, 20).
6. "We all \_\_\_\_\_ in many ways. Anyone who is \_\_\_\_\_ at fault in what they \_\_\_\_\_ is perfect, able to keep their \_\_\_\_\_ body in check" (James 3:2).

How many times was the word "silent" used in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_  
How should we listen?  
\_\_\_\_\_

When should we refrain from talking?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Which one of the above verses speaks to you in a special way?  
\_\_\_\_\_

How is Bible teaching us about being tactful? Explain.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Friday

**APPLYING**

- » One of the most difficult aspects of tactfulness is when to say something and when to keep quiet—and then if you do say something, what do you say? Jesus taught that we should "do to others what you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12, NIV). Think of a scenario in which something unexpected happens that causes you to feel embarrassed. Ask yourself the following questions and write down your answers on the lines provided:

Would you like a friend to say something to you?            Y            N

If yes, how would you suggest they tell you?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is this how you would treat a friend in similar circumstances? Explain.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

