

# 4

## Finding My Place

January 28, 2023



### Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ:** “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.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 55-59.

### A PLEA FOR HELP

Marcus was born with a frail physical constitution. As a result, he could not participate in many activities that required strenuous physical effort. Although Marcus succeeded in his schoolwork, he was unable to participate in most sports with the other boys because of his weak health. Pretty soon the boys started to pick on him. They threw hurtful remarks at Marcus, and he became the target of school bullies.

One day during recess some strong boys cornered him from every side and started to harass him by shouting at him. Marcus frantically tried to escape, but it was too late. The only thing Marcus could do was to back off as the bullies advanced closer and closer, constantly sneering and throwing demeaning threats at him.

All of a sudden, as Marcus was walking backwards, he hit a wall. He was terrified to find that he had no more room to retreat and no place to turn. To his disappointment, nobody in the schoolyard seemed to notice what was happening to him. Nobody stepped in to stop the harassment. The boys began to push him around and threatened to hurt him. Just when Marcus thought that all hope was gone, a shout was heard right behind the big bullies.

“Stop it! Leave him alone!”

The intervention had an immediate effect. The grip of the bullies loosened on Marcus. In fact, they let go of him completely as they started to back off in defeat. A tall boy stepped into the circle and stood between Marcus and the bullies.

“Don’t you dare hurt or touch my brother,” the older brother of Marcus demanded boldly. “You may fight me if you want, but leave my brother alone!”

The bullies turned around and immediately left the scene.

— Pastor Robert Ross

We all face the attacks of the enemy at one time or another. But Jesus is our big brother who has defeated Satan and has provided a way of escape by dying on the cross for each one of us. He is our example, and He asks you to be a big brother to others who need protection. If you see someone being hurt or bullied, don’t hesitate to step in and protect your neighbor.

Belonging to a group of friends is one of the greatest feelings in the world. Being on the outside of a group is one of the most painful and miserable. While you may never feel as desperate as Marcus did, you have probably felt lonely at times. Maybe you’ve found it hard to fit in with a group—or maybe you’ve been the one excluding someone else.

The words of Jesus offer hope when facing life’s painful situations: “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Jesus can heal the heartaches you might experience. He also offers second chances to those who have hurt the feelings of others. He invites all to live in harmony with Him and with each other. Best of all, Jesus wants to be your personal Savior and Friend!

### Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Proverbs 18:24, and Proverbs 22:11, 24.
- » The need to have friends who accept and include you is important. It is equally important that you include others in your circle of friends. God’s Word offers guidelines for positive friendships and for treating others with respect. How can you resist negative peer pressure and do what is right for Jesus at all times? If you know of a bully or of someone who is being bullied, what steps can you take to help? According to the Bible passages for today, how should we treat others?

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

- » Read John 17:20-23; Colossians 3:12-15; Galatians 3:27-29.
- » The Bible tells us that although we are all different, we are equal in the eyes of Jesus who is the Savior of all who accept Him.
- » How does being a friend fit with being one in Christ and being members of His body?

#### Great Friendships of the Bible

- » Choose names from the list below the table to match the friends to the names in the first column of the table. Two names in the table will correspond with the names of three friends from the list below.

Jonathan	
Daniel	
Paul	
Jesus	
God	
Ruth	
Elijah	
Philip	

Abraham      David      Hananiah      Martha      Nathanael      Mary  
Azariah      Elisha      Lazarus      Naomi      Philemon      Mishael

Here are Bible references to help you.

Daniel 1:6, 7	1 Samuel 18:3	John 1:45
James 2:23	John 11:5	2 Kings 2:1-13
	Ruth 1:11, 16, 17	Philemon 1, 19

- » “In calling God our Father, we recognize all His children as our brethren. We are all a part of the great web of humanity, all members of one family” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 105).

**Tuesday**  
**REFLECTING**

- » Proverbs 12:26.
- » Sure, everyone wants to belong. It's great to have friends that you feel comfortable with. But what do you do if you don't have that? Maybe you've just moved to town or changed schools, and you're finding it hard to get to know people. Maybe your interests, your tastes, or your values make you a little different from most people you know, and it's hard to find a group that's "just right" to hang out with.
- » A lot of times we're tempted to change ourselves in order to fit in with friends. Sometimes change can be a good thing. For example, you can learn to be more tactful, more thoughtful, more outgoing, all of which will help you get along better with people. You might even take up a new sport or hobby just to make new friends. But other times change can carry very negative consequences to you and to others. When you replace good values with bad choices just to please your friends and be accepted, that is a very dangerous path that is self-destructive. Drinking or smoking because your friends do, impairs your thinking, and negatively impacts your relationships, your health, and ultimately your connection with God. Also criticizing others so you can stay part of the popular crowd is offensive to God.
- » Jesus experienced what it is like to be loved by some, but hated by others. He is a trusted friend to whom you can always turn for help. What can you do today to show your gratitude to Jesus for His wonderful friendship? How can your words and actions reflect your love for God?

**Thursday**  
**CONNECTING**

- » Read John 15:13-15.
- » Review the memory text.
- » We all need friends, but friends come and go. The one Friend who will always stick with you if you accept Him is Jesus. His love is unchanging and unconditional.
- » The best friends to have are friends who will encourage and support you in your walk with Jesus—because they're walking with Him too! But what if there aren't many kids your age at church?
- » Pray about it. Talk to your parents, your Sabbath School teacher, any adult who knows you and cares. Yes, you can be friends with a wide variety of different kinds of people—in fact, it's good for you! But to grow as a Christian, you need to find Christian friends. Maybe you need to reach out to a friend at church you haven't gotten to know that well.
- » Maybe you can broaden your horizons and include friends who share your beliefs even if they're a little "different" from you in other ways. God has people for you—people who'll pray for you and build you up instead of tearing you down as a Christian. Ask Him to help you find them.

**Wednesday**  
**BIBLE INSIGHTS**

- » Match the phrase with the text. All Bible passages are taken from the New King James Version.
  1. "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." \_\_\_\_\_
  2. "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." \_\_\_\_\_
  3. "... we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free..." \_\_\_\_\_
  4. "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works..." \_\_\_\_\_
  5. "... all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another." \_\_\_\_\_
  6. "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another..." \_\_\_\_\_

A. 1 Corinthians 12:12-14  
 B. Romans 12:4, 5  
 C. Proverbs 17:17  
 D. 1 Thessalonians 5:11  
 E. Hebrews 10:24, 25  
 F. Proverbs 27:17

**Friday**  
**APPLYING**

- » Read Luke 6:31; Matthew 7:12; Romans 15:5, 6.
- » "Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go" (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 119).
- » Think of a friend who has been helpful and encouraging to you. Take a few minutes to write that friend a letter, thanking them for the help and encouragement. Tell your friend you are praying for them. Practice here what you will say in the letter.

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