

GENERAL CONFERENCE YOUTH MINISTRIES

2026

WORLD
AMBASSADOR
Day

Saved to Serve



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EDITORIAL

Busi Khumalo
GC Youth Ministries Director

I had the privilege of swimming in the Dead Sea. A novice swimmer like me felt confident in swimming in the salt-infested body of water. The Dead Sea receives water mainly from the Jordan River, which results in it having a high concentration of salt. It only receives but doesn't share.

Many Christians life mirrors that of the Dead Sea. They profess to be followers of Jesus, but they fail to fulfill their mission mandate. James 1:22 (NLT) gives us a timely and apt admonition, "But don't just listen to God's Word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves."

But what is a Christian supposed to do?

I believe Jesus gave us the answer in the Bible to what every Christian should: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30-31, NIV).

Today we hope to inspire and challenge each person reading this. Yes, we are challenging each Ambassador to get out of the saltshaker and be "the salt of the earth." After all, we were "*Saved to Serve*".



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Crystal E. Ward

*Associate Ministerial Secretary
General Conference*



Crystal E. Ward's life and ministry reflect God's guiding hand and calling. After nearly two decades in corporate leadership within the banking industry, God led her into full-time ministry, where she brings deep pastoral presence alongside valuable experience in leadership, strategy, and organizational development.

As a pastor, counselor, certified life coach, and executive leader, Crystal's leadership approach is grounded in holistic care of the whole person—spiritually, emotionally, and professionally. She is deeply committed to emotional and spiritual integration, believing that personal healing, self-awareness, and wholeness are essential for effective leadership and sustainable ministry. She believes no one thrives in isolation and serves as a connector, building bridges and forging partnerships that strengthen individuals, communities, ministries, and organizations.

Today, Crystal serves as Associate Ministerial Secretary for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, supporting and equipping pastors and ministry leaders around the world.

SERMON

*Crystal Ward
Associate Ministerial Secretary
General Conference*

Have you ever dreamed about what life would be like once you become an adult? Maybe you imagine graduating from college or trade school, landing your dream job, starting your own business, getting married, starting a family, or traveling the world. These are beautiful dreams, and I am sure many of you have even more in mind. You probably wish you could fast-forward to that part of your life right now. But here is the question I want you to really think about today.

What would you do if none of your dreams turned out the way you expected?

- **Would you still trust God?**
- **Would you still pray?**
- **Would you still remain faithful?**



The Bible says in Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” And Jeremiah 1:5 reminds us that the Lord says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart.”

These verses reveal to us that God has a purpose and a plan for each of our lives. But here is the part we don’t always talk about: God’s plan doesn’t always look like our plan. God’s plan is not always smooth sailing and easy; sometimes—even in God’s plan—there are storms along the way and it’s hard. But it is important to remember that living out God’s purpose requires trusting Him, even when life does not go according to our plans. Because maybe, just maybe, God is preparing you for something bigger than you’ve ever dreamed of.

Today I want to share a message with you from the topic: *Saved To Serve*.

Pray

You may have heard about a young man in the Bible by the name of Joseph. Like you and me, Joseph had dreams too. In fact, he had big dreams, God given dreams. Through the life of Joseph, we will learn what it really means to be “Saved To Serve”.



Turn your Bible to Genesis 50:18–21.

His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. “We are your slaves,” they said. ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ²⁰You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. ²¹So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

In this story, many people like to quote verse 20, “But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good.” This text captures a beautiful turning point in Joseph’s life story. Joseph was eventually elevated to be the second in command or what we could describe as the prime minister of Egypt and was able to save the Egyptians and the Israelites from famine. Often times when we see people in leadership, we admire them and we want to be like them. We think that if our lives were just like theirs we would be great. But what we do not realize is the hardships they encountered and had to overcome along the way that shaped them to be the leaders that you see. In the midst of their hardships, God was refining their character. In the midst of our hardships right now, God is also refining our character and teaching us how to depend on Him so that we can be saved to serve!



The entire story of Joseph's life (he lived for 110 years) is captured across thirteen chapters of the Bible (Genesis 37-50). I encourage you to read those chapters on your own.

Joseph's turning point did not begin in a palace; it began in a pit. Did you know that he was betrayed by his own brothers, then sold into slavery? He was eventually falsely accused, thrown into prison and left and forgotten there. None of this looked like God's plan and I'm sure it also didn't feel fair. But over and over throughout Joseph's story, we see the phrase "but God was with Joseph".

There are a few lessons we can learn from Joseph's story. The first lesson is:

Being Saved to Served doesn't mean being spared from hardships.

You might be tempted to think that because God is love, life should be easy. Or because you have followed all the rules, everything should be smooth. But that clearly wasn't the case with Joseph. God had a purpose and a plan for his life, yet Joseph still struggled. He was chosen by God, and he still experienced suffering. Throughout Joseph's story, you will notice that God did not remove Joseph from hardship, instead He used hardship to shape Joseph's character.



You might be tempted to think that because God is love, life should be easy. Or because you have followed all the rules, everything should be smooth. But that clearly wasn't the case with Joseph. God had a purpose and a plan for his life, yet Joseph still struggled. He was chosen by God, and he still experienced suffering. Throughout Joseph's story, you will notice that God did not remove Joseph from hardship, instead He used hardship to shape Joseph's character.

And through it all, Joseph never stopped serving. Whether he was in his father's house, Potiphar's house, or the prison, Joseph served with excellence. He did not wait for life to get better before being faithful. He did not say, "once things improve, then I'll serve God." He served right where he was.

The second lesson is:

Being saved to serve is not about titles or positions, it's about being faithful no matter the circumstance.

Joseph understood that no matter what the circumstance, he was going to remain faithful. While his circumstances and his location changed, his devotion to God remained the same. Whether he was in prison or the pit, Joseph continued to rely on God. In fact, because Joseph was faithful during the hardships, God trusted him with even greater responsibilities.



When Joseph was elevated to being prime minister, it wasn't about power or fame, it was about living the purpose and plan that God had for his life.

The final lesson we can learn from Joseph's story is:

Being saved to serve is not for ourselves, God saves us for the sake of others.

As we read before, in Genesis 50:20, Joseph tells his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

While he did not understand God's plan as it was unfolding, Joseph now recognized that his pain had a purpose. What others meant for evil, God used it to bless many, even those that meant evil towards him. When Joseph was elevated, he still remained faithful to God. He didn't use his power for revenge; he used it to save others; he chose forgiveness over bitterness.

Joseph's life is an example of what it means to be saved to serve. God doesn't just save us from something; He saves us for something. Something greater than ourselves. Something where the world will see and know that God is in total control.



We are saved to serve so that we can bring light where there is darkness, joy where there is sadness, and healing where there is brokenness. As Joseph lived his life, he didn't know how the story would end, but he learned to trust God through every experience.

As you reflect on Joseph's story, maybe God is speaking to you today and encouraging you to trust Him, too. Don't just trust Him when things are going well or when your dreams are clear. He wants you to learn to trust Him even when things are not going well and it does not seem fair or make sense.

Just like with Joseph, God is not saving you to be comfortable; He is saving you to serve!

I invite you today to make a commitment to say "Lord, even when I do not understand your plans, I will still trust you because I know I am saved to serve!"

****Pray****



SERMON REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some dreams and plans you have for your life?
2. Have you prayed and asked God what is His will and plans for your life?
3. What do you do when things are not going according to plan?
4. What are some ways you can remain faithful while you wait on God?
5. How do you think God has saved you to serve?
6. In what ways will you use your experiences to serve others?



SUGGESTED PROGRAM OUTLINE

1. *Opening*

- Song Service/Praise Group
- Welcome and Introductions
- Opening Prayer
- Review Mission Statement, Aim, and Motto
- Review your goals
- Opening Song

2. *Scripture Reading*

If this is a multi-language group, have the young people read in at least two languages.

Use youth as readers.

Depending on the size of your group read a few or all the Bible texts in the next column.

1. 1 Samuel 3:10
2. Jeremiah 1:7
3. Psalm 119:9
4. Ecclesiastes 12:1
5. Deuteronomy 6:6-7
6. Proverbs 3:5-6
7. Lamentations 3:27
8. Joshua 1:9
9. 1 Timothy 4:12
10. 2 Timothy 2:22
11. Titus 2:6
12. 1 Peter 5:5
13. 1 John 2:14
14. Luke 2:52
15. 1 Samuel 17:45
16. Luke 1:38



SUGGESTED PROGRAM OUTLINE

3. *Team Building Activities*

Do one or two get-to-know-you Icebreakers to welcome everyone. Use your own or choose from the list available at the back of each Ambassador manual.

4. *Video*: if available, show 2–4 minutes video of Ambassador groups meetings/activities in session

5. *Special Music*

6. *Offering*

7. *Worship Service (sermon provided)*

8. *Altar Call and Music*

9. *Closing Prayer*



AFTER LUNCH PROGRAM OUTLINE

SUGGESTED PROGRAM OUTLINE after lunch activities

****LUNCH****

AFTERNOON PROGRAM OPTIONS

1. Ambassador Session

Ahead of time choose leaders who can lead small groups through a session of the Ambassador's manual. The suggested session the first one, Discipleship Module #1. During this time you will have participants create their *Individual Discipleship Plan (IDP)*. This is a good experience for everyone.

2. Team Building Activities

Do one or two get-to-know-you Icebreakers to welcome everyone. Use your own or choose from the list available at the back of each Ambassador Manual.

Video: if available, show 2–4 minutes video of Ambassador groups meetings/activities in session.

As a group, **go through the IDP instructions and create your IDP** (instructions on the next page)

Goals: creative thinking; making do with what you have; working as a team and sharing/pooling ideas.



AFTER LUNCH PROGRAM OUTLINE

SUGGESTED PROGRAM OUTLINE after lunch activities

****LUNCH****

AFTERNOON PROGRAM OPTIONS

3. Small Group Discussion

- Icebreakers to get to know each other better (use your own or choose one from the back of the Ambassador manual)
- Build bridges and network for future activities
- Brainstorm on Global Youth Day ideas.....ways to do something good for humanity-beyond bringing canned food to a food drive
- Discuss how teens/youth can make a difference in the world
- Be reminded that as Christians we are called to serve others
- As a group, go through the IDP instructions and create your IDP (instructions on page 10)

4. Concert

Ahead of time plan a concert.

CREATING YOUR INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN (IDP)

As a human being with a nature that naturally tends to move away from God, growing to reflect Jesus as an Ambassador will rarely happen by chance or without much thought. That's why for each of the Ambassador's modules; you will be creating your own IDP. The focus of each IDP will relate to the theme of your current module and last for the duration of that module.

Here is an example of what an IDP will look like. Fill in your own IDP on the form provided.

1 IDP Module Name: CHRIST-CENTERED DISCIPLESHIP

2 Spiritual Companion: Who is the spiritual companion who will encourage and support you in the next stage of your spiritual journey of growing as an Ambassador of Jesus? They will remain your spiritual companion throughout the current module. JOHN WILCOX (*Your choice of spiritual companion is added in session three. Leave blank for now.*)

3 Personal Vision Statement: This includes two parts:

- (a) What do you see in your life today that you would like to change in order to become more effective as an Ambassador for Jesus?
- (b) Describe how you would like to see yourself in the future. Before you start writing, take a moment to pray for God to guide your thoughts.
 - *Currently, I do not have a regular or very meaningful devotional life.*
 - *I would like to develop a devotional life that can equip me spiritually to be an effective ambassador for Jesus.*



CREATING YOUR INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN (IDP)

4 Expected evidence of change: After looking at your personal vision statement, list the evidence you might expect to see that reveals you are growing in Christ.

I think an effective Ambassador is someone who is always praying for opportunities to reveal the character of Jesus wherever they go. That is what I want for my life.

5 Next steps: List the practical steps you will take to accomplish your personal discipleship vision. Think about how these steps will also shape your daily devotions with God.

- *Set my alarm clock for 6:30AM to start my devotions.*
- *Spend thirty minutes in prayer and Bible Reading.*
- *Repeat before I go to sleep.*
- *Find a book to read that teaches different ways to study the Bible.*
- *Pray each day for opportunities for God to use me as His Ambassador.*

6 Reflection/How did I do? This is completed at the end of the module. It gives you a chance to reflect on what worked well and what you would like to improve in the future. You can compare your expected evidence of change to what actually happened.

- *I really enjoyed these last few weeks. The more I read and understood, the more confident I became to pray for opportunities for God to use me.*
- *I think I will expand the time for devotions I have in the evening, and now that I have read a book on Bible Study, I would like to read another on intercessory prayer. I have found that I really enjoy praying for others.*





MY IDP

MY INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

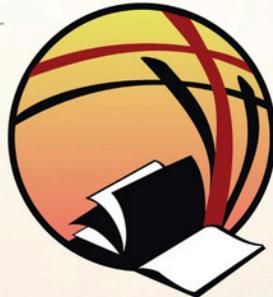
IDP MODULE NAME:	
SPIRITUAL COMPANION:	
PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT:	
EXPECTED EVIDENCE OF CHANGE:	
NEXT STEPS:	
REFLECTION:	

My Commitment

*So we are Christ's Ambassadors;
God is making His appeal through us.
We speak for Christ when we plead,
"Come back to God!"*

2 Corinthians 5:20, NLT

Date



AMBASSADOR

Date

SPIRITUAL PARTNER

Ambassador

DAY 2026

So we are Christ's
ambassadors; God is
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2 Corinthians 5:20