

# Contents

---

|           |  |     |
|-----------|--|-----|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Created for Community</b> — <i>June 26–July 2</i> —————             | 6   |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>“Honor Your Father and Your Mother”</b> — <i>July 3-9</i> —————     | 14  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Parenthood—Joys and Responsibilities</b> — <i>July 10-16</i> —————  | 22  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Marriage Is Not Out-of-Date</b> — <i>July 17-23</i> —————           | 30  |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Friendship</b> — <i>July 24-30</i> —————                            | 38  |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Religion in the Workplace</b> — <i>July 31–August 6</i> —————       | 46  |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Respect for Authorities</b> — <i>August 7-13</i> —————              | 56  |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Christ’s Other Sheep</b> — <i>August 14-20</i> —————                | 64  |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>How to Relate to Non-Christians</b> — <i>August 21-27</i> —————     | 72  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Loving Our Enemies?</b> — <i>August 28–September 3</i> —————        | 80  |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Brothers and Sisters in the Faith</b> — <i>September 4-10</i> ————— | 88  |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Supporting Our Leaders</b> — <i>September 11-17</i> —————           | 96  |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Embracing the World</b> — <i>September 18-24</i> —————              | 104 |

---

Editorial Office 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Principal Contributor  
Reinder Bruinsma

Editor  
Clifford R. Goldstein

Associate Editor  
Lyndelle Brower Chiomenti

Publication Manager  
Soraya Homayouni Parish

Editorial Assistant  
Larie S. Gray

Pacific Press® Coordinator  
Paul A. Hey

Art Director and Illustrator  
Lars Justinen

Concept Design  
Dever Design

The *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* is prepared by the Office of the Adult Bible Study Guide of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The preparation of the guides is under the general direction of the Sabbath School Publications Board, a subcommittee of the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM), publisher of the Bible Study Guides. The published guide reflects the input of worldwide evaluation committees and the approval of the Sabbath School Publications Board and thus does not solely or necessarily represent the intent of the author(s).

# Religion in Relationships

*Life is lived in relationships. Some are deep-rooted, others superficial; some are of short duration, others last a lifetime. Some are purely functional, others intensely personal.*

We relate to all kinds of people: to a partner, to children, to relatives, to friends and neighbors but also to the service-station attendant, to the person with whom we share a shift at work, and to the police officer who stops us for speeding. And we relate to our pastor, to the superintendent of the school in which we have enrolled our children, to our employer, and, yes, to the tax collector.

All this is true for Christians, as well as for non-Christians. The difference between us and our non-Christian counterparts is not that we live in multiple relationships but that there is an important extra dimension to those relationships: our religion.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe in a set of doctrines. Some we share with other Christians; some are unique to us and help mark us as a *special* people with a unique message and mission. Doctrines are not optional, not if our faith is going to be more than a shallow feeling or a vague awareness of some greater power or transcendent force that somehow relates to us. Doctrines rendered into words—as best as can be expressed within the confines of human language—reveal how we understand the divine self-revelation of God. They help us achieve a clearer sense of who and what God (as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is and what He has done, is doing, and will ultimately do for us as individuals and as a race. We need doctrines to grasp what the implications of our belief in God and His plan of salvation are for our perspective on life and for our daily conduct.

But Christianity—and most definitely Adventist Christianity—is more than a catalog of doctrinal statements. The Christian God is not a distant, impersonal deity who does not get involved in the daily grind of this world and of our existence. Instead, He is a personal God of love who has encountered us in Jesus Christ, in the most personal way possible.

God is a covenant God, One who goes out of His way to establish a close relationship, One who is Love Personified, and One who seeks for a reaction to that love—a response of worship, obedience, and love. Once we have established a relationship with God (or,

more correctly, once we have allowed God to establish a relationship with us), this affects every other relationship we may have.

Once we have gained a glimpse of who and what God is, once we have accepted the Lord Jesus as our Savior and have welcomed the Spirit as our Guide on our pilgrimage through life, we are able to look at the world from a new perspective. No longer is it of prime importance whether or not the people with whom we associate are of the same nationality or ethnicity or of the same political persuasion as we are. The first question we will ask about the people with whom we come in contact is whether they already share with us the knowledge of the good news!

***A religion that  
does not permeate  
daily life is dead  
and meaningless.***

Religion is not work based—in other words, our standing with God does not depend on our achievements. We live by faith through grace. Yet, a religion that does not permeate our daily lives is a dead and meaningless exercise (*James 2:17*). If our relationship with God does not impact our relationships with fellow humans, we have every reason to wonder whether this bond with God is a reality.

This quarter we will study numerous passages of Scripture with the intention of increasing our awareness of the ways by which our faith impacts our relationship to others—to those who are close to us and those who are afar. We will discuss how we can strengthen those relationships, even restore them if they have somehow broken down. We will discover that, indeed, there is more religion in relationships than many may suspect.

This quarter's *Adult Bible Study Guide* was written by Reinder Bruinsma, a native Dutchman and longtime church worker (including six years, from 1995-2001, as executive secretary of the Trans-European Division). He is also the author of 15 books in both English and Dutch. In 2001, he returned to his native Netherlands, where he serves as the president of the Netherlands Union. His pastoral concern about practical Christianity, about how we treat others, comes through in every lesson this quarter.

Ad



5 reasons why the  
Southern Asia Division  
needs classrooms,  
dormitories, dining  
halls, & libraries.

*The faces of our brothers and sisters. Faces in need.  
Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering  
will help provide for them.*

**MISSION** 

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on September 25  
supports projects in the Southern Asia Division.