

The Bible's View About Life



SABBATH—DECEMBER 10

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Luke 2:52; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 2:12; Acts 8:4–24; 2 Peter 3:14.

MEMORY VERSE: “May the God of peace set you apart [separate you] for Himself. May every part of you be set apart [separated] for God. May your spirit and your soul [your whole life] and your body be kept complete [safe]. May you be without blame when our Lord Jesus Christ comes again” (1 Thessalonians 5:23, NLV).



God commands Seventh-day Adventists to announce this end-time message “to all the people of [on] the earth” (Revelation 14:6, NLV).

THE BOOK OF REVELATION tells us about two worldwide messages in Revelation 13 and Revelation 14. Both messages are for the end times. Revelation 13 warns about the worldwide lie that almost everyone on earth will accept. Then “everyone living on earth . . . whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life” will worship the sea beast (Revelation 13:8, ERV; read also Revelation 13:3, 7, 12, 16). Revelation 14 shows us the worldwide message of Bible truth. God commands Seventh-day Adventists to announce this end-time message “to all the people of [on] the earth” (Revelation 14:6, NLV). During these “terrible times” (2 Timothy 3:1, ERV), many “false teachers” will teach lies (Ephesians 4:14, NLV) and lead people away from Bible truth (2 Timothy 4:4). “Satan uses two lies to trick people in the end times: (1) the lie that the spirit doesn’t die and (2) Sunday worship. The first lie tricks people into believing the dead can talk to us. The second lie causes people to accept Catholic teachings.” —Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 588, adapted.

JESUS, OUR EXAMPLE (Luke 2:52)

Read Luke 2:52. Luke tells us in this verse that Jesus grew in four ways when He was a Child. What are these four ways?

Humans are living souls. We have four basic parts that make us human. These four parts are: (1) mind, (2) body, (3) spirit, and (4) heart. The Bible shows us that all four parts grew strong in Jesus when He was a Child: “Jesus grew strong in mind and body. He grew in favor with God [spiritual growth] and men [friendship]” (Luke 2:52, NLV). Jesus was the perfect Human. “Jesus’ mind was full of energy. He thought very deeply about things. Jesus was thoughtful and wise. He was wiser than other children His age. At the same time, Jesus was perfect. His feelings, thoughts, and behavior were beautiful and holy. Jesus grew the same as any other child. As a Child, Jesus showed that His heart was filled with love. His hands were always ready to help other people. Jesus was patient. Nothing ever caused Him to get upset or lose His temper. Jesus always told the truth. He never lied. He was loyal to God’s law. He was always kind to everyone.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pages 68, 69, adapted.

Read Matthew 4:23. Matthew tells us that Jesus taught, preached, and healed. How can we do this same work today?

When we understand that humans are made of four parts, we won’t limit our work to teaching Bible truth only. Bible truth is about all four parts of our lives: our hearts, minds, spirits, and bodies. Our bodies and spirits are so deeply connected that we can’t separate them. As sinners, we “all have done wrong [sinned] and all [people] are far from being as good as God” (Romans 3:23, WE). But God wants us to try to live as Jesus lived. God will help us. He will give us His grace to be holy. Grace is God’s gift of mercy, forgiveness, and power over sin. God wants to make us new. This work is part of God’s saving plan to get us ready for His coming. So, God wants us to improve our minds, bodies, spirits, and hearts as we wait for Him to come back.

Maybe you look at all the mistakes you’ve made in life and feel that you can never be as good as Jesus. How can the cross help to encourage you not to lose hope?



“As a Child, Jesus showed that His heart was filled with love. His hands were always ready to help other people.”

THE BODY IS GOD'S TEMPLE (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

During Bible times, Greek thinkers believed that the human body was a prison for the spirit.

Many false ideas come from the lie that we have a spirit that never dies inside a body that does die. During Bible times, Greek thinkers believed that the human body was a prison for the spirit. Death freed the spirit from this “prison.” Many Christians today have a belief that matches this Greek idea. These Christians believe that the spirit doesn’t die when the body dies. These Christians believe that at the Second Coming, God will not need to wake up their spirits from the dead. God will only need to give them new bodies for their spirit to live in. Pantheists believe something different. Pantheists are people who believe that God is in everything He made. So, God and everything He made are the same thing. There are many confusing ideas today about the spirit. So, we must hold on to the Bible teaching on this topic.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 and 1 Corinthians 10:31. These verses say that “your body is [the same as] a temple for the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:19, ERV). How does this teaching help us to make healthy choices and to form good habits?

God made Adam and Eve to be the same as Himself in many ways (Genesis 1:26, 27). God gave them hearts that showed His love. God also gave them bodies. Sin ruined our bodies and minds. So, God made a plan to make us new again. God wants us to become the way He first made humans to be. God wants us to have healthy minds and bodies as much as possible in this life.

God’s plan to make us new will be finished only at Jesus’ Second Coming. At that time, God will change our bodies. He will give us bodies and spirits that never die (1 Corinthians 15:53, 54).

John wrote to his friend Gaius: “Dear friend, I know that your spiritual life is going well. I pray that you also may enjoy good health. And I pray that everything else may go well with you” (3 John 1:2, NIV).

Remember, each person is made of four parts: heart, mind, spirit, and body. As we said, when we remember this Bible truth, we will understand that having good health is part of our religious duty. Let this important rule guide us: “So if you eat, or if you drink, or if you do anything, do everything for the glory [honor] of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31, ICB). Do your best, and trust in God.

THE LORD'S MIND (1 Corinthians 2:12, ERV)

Because we are sinners, sin is attractive to us. That's why we should avoid places, things, and people that make us weak and cause us to sin (Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 5:1–8). Our problem with sin can be solved in only one way: we must let Jesus change us. Jesus is powerful. He can change our thoughts and feelings. Jesus knows that our thoughts and feelings must change. That's why He says: " 'From the inside, out of the heart of men come bad thoughts, sex sins of [done by] a married person, sex sins of [done by] a person not married, killing other people, stealing, wanting something that belongs to someone else, doing wrong, lying, having a desire [wish] for sex sins, having a mind [thoughts] that is always looking for sin, speaking against God, thinking you are better than you are and doing foolish things' " (Mark 7:21, 22, NLV).

Read these verses: 1 Corinthians 2:16; Psalm 24:3, 4; Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:8; and Colossians 3:2. The Bible says we can have "the Lord's mind" (1 Corinthians 2:16, ERV) or the "thoughts of the Lord" (NLV). What does that mean?

Jesus promised under the New Agreement to put His law in the hearts and minds of His people (Jeremiah 31:31–33; compare with Hebrews 8:8–10; Hebrews 10:16). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus helps us to understand what He expects of us under the New Agreement. Sin is not something we do. Sin can be something we think or feel (Matthew 5:17–48). So, we need to keep the Ten Commandments in our hearts and minds, because that is where sin starts. We can say no to sin only by God's mercy working in our hearts and minds. So, we must ask Jesus to keep His promise to us to give us strength to stop thinking evil thoughts.

In this life, we must remember that we can choose to sin anytime. But when we let Jesus live in our hearts, He covers us with His holy life. So, when God looks at us, He sees Jesus' perfect life (Philippians 3:12–15). "When we join to Jesus, we have Jesus' thoughts. We become clean and holy. We are filled with love. Our hearts are empty of all pride. Bible truth controls our lives. Our faces change, too, because Jesus lives in us. His life changes us so that we look different. Our faces will show the peace and joy in our hearts."—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, page 337, adapted.



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LED BY GOD'S SPIRIT (Acts 8:4–24)

The Holy Spirit is God's powerful Helper. The Holy Spirit fills our hearts with God's love (Romans 5:5). The Holy Spirit leads us into a real, saving experience with God (John 16:7–11). The Holy Spirit guides us to all Bible truth (John 16:13). He also helps us to do God's work. The Holy Spirit helps us to share the Good News with other people (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit also stops the evil work of Satan. So, we shouldn't be surprised to learn that Satan tries to confuse us about the Holy Spirit and the work He does. Some Christians don't believe the Holy Spirit is a real Person. Other Christians believe the Holy Spirit is a Person. But they are interested only in the spiritual gifts the Holy Spirit gives them. These Christians aren't interested in the Spirit's power to change their lives.



The Holy Spirit fills our hearts with God's love.

Read the story about Simon the magician in Acts 8:4–24. Simon was from Samaria. Simon wanted the gifts from the Holy Spirit. But Simon didn't want to be changed by the Spirit. How is this very same thought and feeling being shown by Christians today?

Who are God's children? They are the people who let the Holy Spirit control their lives (Romans 8:14). God's children let the Spirit teach them Bible truth (John 16:13; John 17:17). Jesus warns us about people who pretend to be His followers. But they really are not. Jesus says, " 'Not everyone who calls me Lord will enter God's kingdom. The only people who will enter are those who do what my Father in heaven wants. On that last Day many will call me Lord. They will say, "Lord, Lord, by the power of your name we spoke for God. And by your name we forced out demons and did many miracles." Then I will tell those people clearly, "Get away from me, you people who do wrong. I never knew you" ' " (Matthew 7:21–23, ERV). Jesus shows us that the Holy Spirit never leads anyone away from the Bible. The Holy Spirit led men to write the Bible, right? So, the Spirit always leads us to accept and live Bible truth.

The same Holy Spirit also helps us to lead other people to accept Bible truth (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8). While we do God's work, God promises us that He will send us the Holy Spirit to help us do it. So, we need to kneel before the Lord each morning and give our lives to Him. Then God will give us His Spirit, who will make us new.

READY FOR JESUS! (2 Peter 3:14)

Our lives are filled with too many things that steal our attention from Jesus. If we're not careful, these things can take all our time. They also can cause us to make the wrong things in life important. Christians always must guard against Satan's tricks to keep them from the things that really matter in life.

If we look away from Jesus, we will be in danger of thinking only about the things on this earth. In the end, these things can't make us happy. Worse, these things can destroy us.

What does it mean to get ourselves ready for the Second Coming? How is that different from being ready for that day? Read 2 Peter 3:14 and 1 John 3:1–3 for the answer.

Some people put off getting ready for the Second Coming. They see that Jesus hasn't come back. So, they feel His coming is delayed. They use this "delay" as an excuse not to get ready at this time. They relax like the evil servant, who says, " 'My master will not come just now' " (Matthew 24:48, WE).

Read Psalm 95:7, 8; Hebrews 3:7, 8, 15; and Hebrews 4:7. What do these verses say to us about why we need to be ready right now?

The Bible teaches us that we must be ready today. We must accept Jesus and be saved today and not tomorrow (read Psalm 95:7, 8; Hebrews 3:7, 8, 15; and Hebrews 4:7). There's more. Age doesn't help the sinner get better. So, if we don't change now, we may never change. We may continue our bad behavior forever. So, we must keep growing in faith and God's mercy. We must keep saying no to sin. If we don't say no to sin, we may turn away from God. Then our hearts will become hard and full of doubt.

Each day of our lives is really a sample of our whole life. So, we should be ready every day for Jesus to come back, because today may be the last day of your life.

What if Jesus came back today? How can you, today, be ready for Him? Talk about your answer in class on Sabbath.



Our lives are filled with too many things that steal our attention from Jesus.



“You must live for the time you are in now. Live for this day only.”

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Read Ellen G. White, “Mind Cure,” pages 241–259, in *The Ministry of Healing*; “True and False Theories Contrasted,” pages 7–16, in *The Sanctified Life*.

“The worldwide war between God and Satan is almost finished. Every report of disaster by sea or land shows us that the end of all things is near. Wars and unproved reports about wars announce that the end is near. . . . The Lord is coming. We hear God’s footsteps approaching.”—Ellen G. White, *Maranatha*, page 220, adapted.

“Live the life of faith day by day. Don’t become worried and stressed about the time of trouble ahead. If you do, you will have a time of trouble before the real one happens. Don’t keep thinking, ‘I’m afraid I won’t stand strong or pass the test that God will give us.’ You must live for the time you are in now. Live for this day only. Tomorrow is not yours. Today, your job is to win the war against sin. Today, live a life of prayer. Today, fight the good fight of faith. Today, believe that God blesses you. As you win the war against evil and doubt, you will do everything that God wants you to do. You will become a blessing to everyone around you.”—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, October 20, 1887, adapted.

“The Lord will come soon. We must be prepared to meet Him in peace. Do everything in your power to share Bible truth with the people around you. Don’t be sad. Be happy. Keep Jesus always in your thoughts. . . . Be ready for Him to come back. Wait for Him. We shall see Him. He shall welcome us as His saved people. That day will be beautiful! We have waited a long time. But we must not let our faith become weak. If we can see Jesus our King in His beauty, we will be blessed forever. I feel as if I must shout aloud, ‘I am on my way to heaven. Heaven is my home!’ We are near the time when Jesus will come with power and glory. Then He will take us to heaven to live with Him forever.”—Ellen G. White, *Heaven*, pages 165, 166, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① As humans, we have minds, spirits, bodies, and hearts. How does this idea help us to understand better why our choices in life are so important?
- ② Read the picture story about the religious leader and the tax man (Luke 18:9–14). How does this story show that real religion and spiritual change come from God, and not from our own good behavior?

JESUS BEATS THE DRAGON

Kue lives in northern Laos. Something strange happened to Kue late in 2020. Her body became swollen. Her belly swelled up the worst.

Kue's husband, Cheng, took her to the local witch doctor. The witch doctor said that a dragon filled Kue with his baby. The dragon planned to carry Kue away to live with him under the water. The witch doctor said, "You need to kill animals and offer them to the dragon. Maybe then the dragon will let Kue's spirit leave his underwater cave."

Cheng gave the shaman everything he asked for. But Kue became more sick. Cheng asked for help from other healers in his village. They tried to heal Kue for the next two months. But nothing changed. Cheng spent all his money on witch doctors and village healers. But Kue's health continued to get worse.

Finally, Cheng decided to ask a Christian pastor to pray for Kue. Two Seventh-day Adventist leaders were visiting Kue's village. They prayed for Kue. Then they decided to send Kue to a hospital in Laos's capital, Vientiane. At the hospital, a doctor said that Kue had a kidney disease. This disease caused her belly to swell with liquid. But after weeks in the hospital, Kue fell into a deep sleep and didn't wake up. Another doctor put Kue on life support machines to keep her alive. The doctor said there was a 50% chance that Kue might die. The doctor asked Cheng who was going to pay for the medical bills to keep Kue under his care.

Cheng spoke with his family. They didn't have any money. The Adventist leaders, who paid her first bills, didn't have any more money. Cheng had no money. He didn't have any hope that Kue would live. So, he made a difficult decision. He removed his wife from life support and brought her home. He expected her to die at home.

Later, a church leader said, "It was painful to send Kue back home to die. But we couldn't do anything for her. We hoped that God would show mercy to Kue and do a miracle for her."

Days later, Cheng invited the Adventist pastor to pray for Kue in their home. The pastor lived far away. He arrived with several Bible workers. The pastor decided to stay for a few days to help with Kue's funeral. While the family waited for Kue to die, the pastor and the Bible workers prayed and went without food each day. Kue got better. She started to breathe easily on her own. The swelling went away. By May 2021, Kue was able to walk all by herself without anyone's help.

Today, Kue is a living miracle to the people of northern Laos. She is proof that there is a God in heaven. Thank you for your Sabbath School offerings that help share the Good News in Laos and around the world.

INSIDE
Story
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



The witch doctor said that a dragon filled Kue with his baby.

