CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
NOVEMBER192022

Scripture Story: Daniel 6:3-10; Exodus 20:8-11.
Commentary: *The Great Controversy* (or *Love Under Fire*), chapter 37.

discovering daily disciplines



Photo by A Truman

flashlight

"Satan is constantly endeavoring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves. Then, by controlling the minds of these leaders, he can influence the multitudes according to his will."

"Even youth of little experience presume to insinuate doubts concerning the fundamental principles of Christianity. And this youthful infidelity, shallow as it is, has its influence" (*The Great Controversy,* pp. 595, 600, 601).

keytext

"How can a young person live a clean life? By carefully reading the map of your Word. . . . I ponder every morsel of wisdom from you, I attentively watch how you've done it. I relish everything you've told me of life, I won't forget a word of it."

(Psalm 119:9-16, *The Message*)

what do you think?

Jesus wants very badly to have an honest relationship with you. He wants very much to give you gifts and blessings, and to help you live a fulfilled life. What does "an honest relationship with God" look like? sound like? How can you have a relationship with a Being you can never see?

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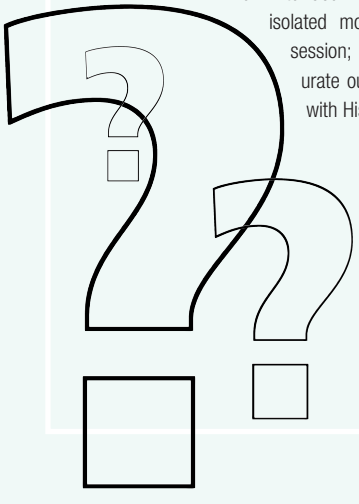
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did you know?

David's habit was to pray seven times a day (Psalm 119:164). Daniel prayed three times a day (Daniel 6:10). After Jesus' resurrection His disciples continued to pray at certain hours of the day (Acts 3:1; Acts 10:9). There are people who structure their workday around times of prayer. Others make it a point to stop in the middle of their day to take time to pray.

By including periodic times of prayer in our day, we invite God into more than an isolated morning (or evening) session; we invite Him to saturate our entire day's activities with His sacred presence.



INTO THE STORY

"Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally these men said, 'We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.'

"So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: 'May King Darius live forever! The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den. Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.' So King Darius put the decree in writing.

"Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before."

"Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy."

(Daniel 6:3-10, NIV; Exodus 20:8-11, NLT)



OUT OF THE STORY

Read Daniel 6:10. Which words or phrases stand out to you? Why?

Daniel broke the law when he went against Darius's decree. When is it appropriate for Christians to break the law?

What was the cost of disobeying Darius's decree?

What was it about Daniel's life and habits that made it so that his government colleagues found him trustworthy? (See previous chapters in Daniel.)

Daniel habitually prayed three times a day. How do you think this practice helped him to face this great pressure?

Read Exodus 20:8-11. Sabbath is about trusting God, slowing down to enjoy the gifts He gave us, resting from our schoolwork and being consciously aware of the blessings and promises God gives us—for 24 hours. What, if any, is your current practice of Sabbathkeeping?

What concerns, questions, or fears do you have that keep you from making this Sabbathkeeping practice a weekly habit?

punch lines

"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" **(Ephesians 5:15-20, NIV).**

"For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. But you should keep a clear mind in every situation" **(2 Timothy 4:3-5, NLT).**

"Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace." **(Proverbs 3:13-17, NIV).**

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" **(Jeremiah 17:7, 8, NIV).**

further insight

"Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God."

—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ,* p. 98

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read John 20:27-29.

In the *What Do You Think?* section of your lesson, you were asked to describe an honest relationship with God. Was it easy to do? difficult? Why or why not?

How can you have a relationship with a Being that you cannot see?

Sunday

Read Romans 12:1, 2.

Read the *Into the Story* section of your lesson, and do the question in the *Out of the Story* section.

Daniel didn't become trustworthy and faithful overnight. Character is not built in a moment, but as a result of many "moments."

What can you learn from these three biblical characters about developing positive habits and spiritual disciplines?

Joseph _____

Jesus _____

Mary (the mother of Jesus) _____

How can you begin today to build lifelong habits that will draw you closer to God?

Monday

Read Psalm 119:9-16.

Read the *Key Text.* What does this verse teach us about the importance of relationship in obedience? How does having a relationship with God keep obedience from being mere works?

Tuesday

Read Hebrews 13:7.

Using your own words, paraphrase what Mrs. White is saying in the *Flashlight* section of your lesson. Draw from your personal experiences and use familiar names and/or places to better illustrate your words.

How can we learn from spiritual leaders, such as pastors and teachers, without allowing them to have too much influence in our lives?

Having a relationship with someone simplifies direct communication with them. However, often we are more willing to listen to what others have to say about God than we are to hear Him personally.

Take 3 to 5 minutes to journal one small step you can take to begin to include daily communication and weekly rest with God.

Wednesday

Read 2 Timothy 4:3-5.

Read the passages listed in the *Punch Lines* section of this week's lesson. What can you learn from each verse about what constitutes a strong and healthy relationship?

2 Timothy 4:3-5 _____

Proverbs 3:13-18 _____

Jeremiah 17:7, 8 _____

Ephesians 5:15-20 _____

Thursday

Read Colossians 3:2.

What obstacles are preventing you from stopping to be with God two or three times each day? Think about someone who has an active relationship with Jesus. How does this relationship show up in their life?

Friday

Read Psalm 119.

Read Psalm 119 in its entirety. Write a letter to God about your feelings and thoughts after reading it.

this week's reading*

The Great Controversy (or *Love Under Fire*), chapter 37.

**Love Under Fire* is a special adaptation of *The Great Controversy,* created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.