

# SABBATH FLOW

## *Cascading the Sabbath into the Week Ahead*

"No Shortcuts in the Light" sermon, April 4, 2026, Auburn SDA Church.  
For April 5-11. Sermon and guide by Pastor Mel Baga, D.Min.

## GROUP STUDY GUIDE

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, bring us into the light without fear. Save us from denial, pretending, and despair. Teach us to be honest about what You are showing us about ourselves, and hold us together in grace as we walk in the light. Amen.

**Open:** When people feel spiritually uncertain, where do they usually look for assurance?

**Read:** 1 John 1:6-10 aloud together.

**Discuss:** Pick as many as time allows.

1. In verse 6, what does it mean to claim fellowship with God while still walking in darkness?
2. Why is it so tempting to want God's comfort without full surrender to his light?
3. In verse 8, why is "I have no

sin" such an attractive claim for sincere Christians?

4. How do some believers tie their assurance to how well they are handling sin at the moment?

5. Why does that create fear and instability instead of assurance?

6. In verse 10, how is "I have not sinned" even deeper than "I have no sin"?

7. According to verses 7 and 9, what is true about people who walk in the light?

8. Why is confession not the opposite of assurance, but part of the pathway of assurance?

9. What does it mean to tell the truth about what God is showing you about yourself?

**Reflect:** John does not lead us to assurance by teaching us to hide better, perform better, or

pretend better. He leads us into the light, where God reveals what is true about us, not to destroy us, but to heal us. As we stop resisting what God shows us about ourselves and keep returning to Jesus together, we discover that real assurance grows not through shortcuts, but through honest life in the cleansing presence of the risen Christ.

**Pray:** Risen Lord Jesus, thank You that Your cleansing is not for the perfect, but for those who walk in the light. Teach us to stop hiding. Teach us to confess. Teach us to walk honestly with You and with one another. Hold us in Your grace, and lead us into the newness of life that only You can give. Amen. 🍀

## DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### SUNDAY

#### No Shortcuts Here

*“If we say...”*

**Reflect:** Assurance begins outside of you. Before you ever believed, God had already acted in Jesus Christ to do everything necessary to save you. Your feelings rise and fall, but Christ’s work is finished and unchanging. Today is an invitation to shift your focus—from yourself to Him.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:6–10 slowly. Notice the repeated phrase “if we say.” What do those words reveal about the danger of spiritual self-deception?

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, save me from every shortcut to assurance. Bring me into Your light with honesty and hope. Amen.

### MONDAY

#### When Light Gets Close

*“If we say that we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness...”*

**Reflect:** The first shortcut is the fantasy that we can stay close to God while still protecting darkness. We may want His comfort, but not His searching light. We may want His nearness, but not His cleansing. Yet assurance cannot live in a divided soul. Hiddenness always weakens

peace, because what is hidden must also be defended.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:6 again. What part of your life are you most tempted to keep hidden from God's light?

**Pray:** Lord, I do not want to walk with You while still protecting darkness. Bring into the light what I have tried to keep hidden. Amen.

## TUESDAY

### The Fear of Failing Again

*"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves..."*

**Reflect:** Some believers do not deny sin because they are careless, but because they are afraid. They tie their assurance to how well they are handling sin in the moment. So when they fail, they do not simply grieve it. They panic. But John says the people in the light are not beyond cleansing. They are the very people still being cleansed by Jesus.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:8. When you fail, do you tend to run from God in fear, or return to Him in honesty?

**Pray:** Father, keep me from building assurance on my performance. Teach me to return to You when I fail, not run from You. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY

### The Story I Keep Editing

*"If we say we have not sinned..."*

**Reflect:** The third shortcut goes deeper. Sometimes we do not only deny present sin; we revise the story of our past. We minimize, excuse, and sanitize what God is showing us. But assurance is never built by proving ourselves better than we are. It grows when we stop defending ourselves and stand instead on the mercy of God.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:10. Is there any part of your story that you still explain away rather than surrender to God?

**Pray:** Lord, give me courage to stop editing my story. Help me bring even my past into Your light. Amen.

## THURSDAY

### Telling the Truth About Myself

*"If we confess our sins..."*

**Reflect:** Confession is not despair, and it is not self-hatred. It is agreeing with God about what He is showing you about yourself. It is not seeing everything all at once. It is naming honestly what the light is already revealing. As

you do, something begins to open in you. Honesty feeds honesty.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:9 slowly. What is God showing you about yourself today that needs to be named before Him?

**Pray:** God of light, teach me to tell the truth about what You are showing me about myself. Keep me from hiding behind denial. Amen.

## FRIDAY

### Held in the Light

*“We have fellowship with one another...”*

**Reflect:** Life in the light is not merely private. The same light that opens us to God also opens us to one another. We are not meant to carry our struggles alone. Grace becomes shared.

Accountability becomes protective. The people of God help hold us in the light when we are tempted to hide, retreat, or grow weary.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:7. Who are the trusted people with whom you can be honest, ask for prayer, and receive help?

**Pray:** Jesus, thank You for giving me Your people. Teach

me to live honestly with others and to help hold others in the light as well. Amen.

## SABBATH

### The Risen Lord Who Cleanses

*“The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”*

**Reflect:** This word is especially fitting for Easter Sabbath. The Jesus who cleanses is the risen Lord. The one whose blood cleanses us from all sin now lives and reigns. So when we come to Him who is the light, we are not only forgiven—we are being drawn into resurrected life. He brings us out of hiding into honesty, out of fear into fellowship, and out of the old darkness into the newness of life that only the risen Christ can give.

**Read:** Read 1 John 1:7–9. What does it mean to you today that the One who cleanses you is alive?

**Pray:** Risen Lord Jesus, thank You that Your cleansing is living, present, and powerful. Draw me into Your light, and draw me into the newness of life that only You can give. Amen. 🌹