



PATHFINDER DAY

GENERAL CONFERENCE YOUTH MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

SEPTEMBER 17, 2016



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REFLECTIONS

*Pako Mokgwane ►
GC Associate Youth Director*



Anything that had to do with Pathfindering had my attention. Being Captain of my unit fueled the passion and the desire to keep the Pathfinder spirit alive. Those who had come before us had set a strong legacy of leadership, commitment and discipline.

At any point, leaders are PASSING ON a certain culture in the lives of Pathfinders. The manner in which they execute their duties has a big influence. My uniform was ever ready. I took great pride in it. We were young soldiers of the gospel. We loved to walk in small groups to church, “faithful as we marched along, in truth and purity.” It created a vibe and aroused interest from onlookers. We were happy to invite them to our programs and explain what the Pathfinder Ministry is all about.

That Pathfindering is actually a program that develops seasoned leaders, young people who are on a mission—that of finishing the gospel commission in their generation. After all we have a message to tell, “King Jesus the Savior is coming back for you and me.”

The Pathfinder day is not only a day decorated in green, white and yellow, it is a day designed to give Pathfinders an opportunity to be seen, heard and

acknowledged in their LOCAL CHURCH. Among the many people that we longed to see in Pathfinder Uniform on Pathfinder day were the Pastor and the Elders. The Pastor and his Elders are the gate keepers of the LOCAL CHURCH. When we saw them in Uniform we sensed support. I am sure in this day and age, a selfie with the church leaders would go a long way instilling confidence and acceptance in the life of the Pathfinder.

It’s a loud statement that says, “We are together in this.” The Pathfinder day is not complete without the Pathfinder Leader. In our days, the leader was a notable catalyst.

Thank you to all the Pathfinder Leaders who sacrifice their time and resources to make the day splendid. Jesus is coming with a reward. Stay faithful!!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pako Mokgwane'.

SERMON:

JESUS THE CENTER

REFOCUSING OUR AIM

Josant Barrientos ►

*Potomac Conference Youth Ministries Director
North American Division*



GREETINGS:

Good morning and happy Sabbath! Today around the world, our church is celebrating a very special ministry. A ministry that has grown so much that today it is the second largest ministry in our church in terms of participation; second only to Sabbath School; we are talking about to the Pathfinder Ministry. Through this ministry, God has touched the hearts of countless people and changed their lives; through this ministry God will continue to bless many more of all ages. Yes! Today we are celebrating the Pathfinders ministry and we are very happy and excited to celebrate it with all of you.

Before we go any further, I would like to invite you to pray with me, please close your eyes and bow your heads, let's pray:

PRAYER:

Dear heavenly father, we thank You for the many blessings You have given us. We thank You for this wonderful Sabbath on which we have come together to praise and worship You. Now, as we open Your Word, we ask You to please anoint us with the Holy Spirit so we can understand and hear Your voice. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Sermon Title:

The title for our sermon today is "REFOCUSING OUR

AIM" and our key Bible text is found in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 14 verse 28, which says:

SCRIPTURE:

Peter said, "Lord, if it is really you, then command me to come to you on the water." Matthew 14:28 (NCV)

INTRO/ILLUSTRATION:

In our lives, we all have special and unique moments or experiences that we like to remember. Experiences that have left footprints in our hearts and minds. Experiences that have taught us important lessons that have shaped our lives. These experiences could include trips, graduations, places, camporee, events, people, family reunions, etc. And in the case of Peter, the experience described in this portion of the Bible was very special and unique. It taught him an important lesson, which is for us as well.

It is great to remember all the special and unique experiences that we have enjoyed, and one of the best ways to remember these special experiences is to look at pictures we have taken. (Show pictures of different events)

How many of us like to see pictures?

How many of us like to take pictures?

What about a Selfie? Yes, that famous picture that we like to take in an event, with our friends or family. (Dramatize

taking a selfie)

How many have already taken a Selfie today? ... I knew it!
Many have done it already.

Where do you keep all your pictures?

Some keep their pictures in albums; either in a binder or their computers. Others keep their pictures in their tablets, and of course, the most popular place where to keep our pictures is in our cell phones. Many of us have our phones packed with pictures, and sometimes we run out of memory that we have to erase old pictures. That is a really difficult thing to do.

How many have had that problem already? I know, many of us, right?

Well, the truth is that we love pictures, because pictures remind us of those special moments that might never happen again. Also, by looking at the pictures we can relive those special moments, because pictures bring back memories, feelings, and emotions of the wonderful experiences we have lived. However, sometimes pictures don't always look good; these do not help us to recapture the special moments and experiences we enjoyed.

One of the most common mistakes in photography is to take a picture in such a way that the "focus" -- the center of interest, concentration of activity, or attention is not where you want it to be (The Merriam-Webster Dictionary) --, thus causing the picture to be blurry. When that happens, you only see the figures but cannot clearly recognize the faces, places, people, activities, etc. Or the picture can also have too much contrast, in which there is a strong difference between the lighter and darker areas of the image. As well as the picture can be overexposed or underexposed, having too much light or being too dark that you cannot see anything.

Sadly, too often, we find out that the pictures are Out-Of-Focus at the time when it is too late to take the picture again. The people have changed positions, have already left, or even worse, the event itself is over. In such circumstances, it is so hard to accept that the uniqueness of the moment has been lost; the many details are gone, and the picture is of no significance because the focus was not where it needed to be. The splendor of the moment is forever lost. (Show some blurry or out-of-focus pictures)

Have you ever had a picture Out-Of-Focus?

Do you still keep it?

I know that many of us still keep the blurry, over or underexposed pictures. But how nice would it be to have the opportunity to take the pictures again and have them clear, sharp, with all the beauty and details of that special and unique moment? Because the aim of the picture was to capture the splendor of the moment so it can bring back memories, feelings and emotions of the experiences of the past.

Sermon

With this in mind, let's go back to our text. That text is like a perfect picture, one in perfect focus and as we look closely, we can observe 3 important lessons. Here we recapture a special and unique moment in the life of the disciples. A moment that deserves clear and sharp pictures that are not out-of-focus. They had just experienced an incredible event with Jesus; he had "healed those who were sick" (Matthew 14:14) and then performed an amazing miracle, where more than 5,000 people were fed with "only five loaves of bread and two fish" (Matthew 14:17); still there were "twelve baskets with the leftover pieces of food" (Matthew 14:20). For the disciples, this was a day to remember! A day filled with moments and experiences that left them with many footprints in their hearts and minds. They had a part to play in the miracles that Jesus performed, but did not fully understand their reason and purpose (Mark 6:52). The disciples were not yet seeing with "missionary eyes." Therefore, Jesus set them up for another miracle that would touch their lives in a very personal way, in order to help them focus on the center of all the miracles -- Jesus himself!

#1 We all experience stormy situations

This brings us to our first lesson. Now the disciples are in a boat in the middle of the sea of Galilee. There is a big storm happening with hurricane strong winds blowing and huge waves rocking the boat, causing it to spin out of control and it felt like the boat was going to flip at anytime and sink. The trip was not supposed to last a long time but because of the force of the storm they had drifted off-shore for more than 3 miles. Now it was between 3:00 to 6:00 AM, known as the fourth watch of the night and they had been fighting for survival for more than 8 hours!

Can you imagine being in that situation?

Can you imagine all the emotions and thoughts that the disciples were experiencing?

They were petrified, exhausted and filled with feelings of humiliation, disappointment, resentment, impatience, and unbelief (SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 5, 416). It did not make sense to them; they could not understand how just a few hours earlier, they had witnessed and experienced amazing supernatural moments with Jesus; but now, they were troubled, fearful, their faith was being tested and they were losing the sight of the center. Their focus was not where it needed to be.

What about us? How many times have we experienced wonderful moments filled with awesome encounters, experiences, and miracles? Maybe at work, school or at home or in camporees, congresses, etc. that left wonderful footprints in our hearts and minds; experiences that we cherish and love to remember. However, because of an unexpected storm in our lives, we find ourselves drifting away for those memories; we become lost on a dark and stormy sea of troubles, far away from shore. Tired,

exhausted, with feelings of humiliation, disappointment, resentment, impatience, and unbelief because we also have tried to control the situation but haven't been able to do it. And our faith is being tested, our focus is not fixed on where it needs to be and our pictures come out blurry, over or under exposed, and as a result we start to lose sight of our aim, Jesus.

#2: Jesus always comes to calm our storms at unexpected times

Look at the disciples; they were struggling, they were having a hard time desperately rowing because a strong wind was blowing against them (Matthew 14:24). But in the midst of all the turbulence Jesus shows up and comes close to them. And this brings us to the second lesson.

At the beginning, when the disciples "saw Jesus walking on the water, they were afraid. They said, "It's a ghost!" and cried out in fear" (Matthew 14:26). At first they were not able to recognize Jesus when they saw Him walking on water but almost immediately the disciples recognized that the "ghost" was Jesus and He quickly responded to them "Have courage! It is I. Do not be afraid." (Matthew 14:27) And again they cried out but this time not because of fear but asking Jesus for help (SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 5, 416), which of course He provided.

Today, the same can be happening to us. We might be going through difficult situations in our lives; storms that are making us feel that we are about to flip over and sink. However, Jesus is walking towards us, getting closer to us maybe not at the time that we think He should come. But Jesus knows when is the best time for Him to show up in our lives. Look at the disciples' experience - when the boat was far away from shore and all their hope was almost gone - it is at that time that Jesus came into the picture, bringing courage and peace.

Something important to mention is that by walking on water, Jesus demonstrated to His disciples that the very thing that they were scared of, the intense, violent, raging and furious storm in the sea, was the very opportunity for Him to come close to them. The same is for us today. The difficult moments of experiences that we are scared of, like friends or family problems, illnesses, financial crisis, disabilities, the loss of loved ones, etc. are only opportunities that can bring Jesus closer to us. And when He comes to our lives, He can give us the courage and peace that we are desperately looking for.

#3 Our aim must be focused on Jesus

Last but not least, there is an important individual that we need to make mention of; and this is Peter. Peter was a real Pathfinder. He was a leader, adventurous, sometimes a little stubborn but willing to do things that nobody else had done before. In the midst of the storm, the turbulent water

and the strong wind, Peter told Jesus that he wanted to go towards Him (Matthew 14:28). I don't know how many of you are willing to go out of the house, car, tent, etc. in the middle of a heavy storm. Well, maybe most of us are more comfortable in staying in a dry, warm, calm and secure place while the storm lasts. Peter wanted to do everything for the Lord, he was just waiting for Jesus to command him to get out of the boat into the water; and he would do it; and that's what he did.

Can you imagine the scene? This was a perfect moment to take a picture: Peter focusing everything on Jesus.

If you look at Peter's special and unique moment, he had to step out of the boat in faith. It was faith that sustained him on the stormy waters and gave him buoyancy. But faith was active only so long as he kept his sight fixed on Jesus (SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 5, 417). When Peter was already walking on the water towards Jesus, with his sight focused on Jesus, "apparently Peter forgot for that moment the wind and the waves. As his feet became accustomed to walking on the surface of the water he evidently thought of his companions in the boat, and wondered what they thought of his newfound skill. Turning his glance momentarily back to the boat, he lost sight of Jesus. At that moment he was in the trough between two waves, and when he returned his gaze again to where Jesus had been he could no longer see Him." (Desire of Ages, 381). "Everything that Peter was able to see was turbulent water and the strong wind. In that brief instant the self-satisfaction had diluted faith with pride, so to speak, and faith lost its sustaining power. Fear came upon Peter and filled his heart and mind; there was nothing that he could do, absolutely nothing, just cried out to Jesus for help." (SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 5, 417).

Yes, Peter's aim was to go to Jesus, he was focused on coming closer to him, no matter the storm, the wind, the situation they were experiencing. However, the moment when Peter focused his sight on something else, when he focused in his interest in himself, in what he wanted, everything fell apart. Now, for us today, how many of us have had the same experience? Or how many are going through this experience? We already know on whom we need to focus, we know what our aim is, and we know that our faith will be strong to sustain us as long as we keep our eyes focused on Jesus. We already know all of this, but sadly, many people have turned away from focusing on Jesus and things are falling apart in their lives. Many are sinking but are desperate for Jesus to help. Here is when we must remember that when we keep our focus on Jesus' power and His amazing love for us, our faith will be strong to endure any storm we might be suffering. Therefore, we must do what Peter did, he refocused his sight in Jesus and cried out for His help!

As soon as Peter asked Jesus for rescue, immediately the

help came. “We must have the assurance that there is no delay on God’s part to respond to the sincere prayer for deliverance from the waves of temptation that ever and now sweep over the soul” (SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 5, 417). As long as our sight and trust is focused on Jesus we never need to fear. His grace and power are always present but as soon as we turn our gaze upon self and upon others we have good reason to be afraid.

Conclusion

Now we know that Jesus is ready to respond to our cry, to our prayers, to our needs, It is up to us to allow him to come close to us. It is only our decision to do something. Just look at Peter’s experience, he was a determined person. A disciple that said things that others were only thinking about. He was a person willing to do things that others were not. Peter was absolutely focused on Jesus. Peter’s deepest desire was to follow Jesus with his whole heart. But, many times he made mistakes and he turned his focus away from Jesus and started to sink and drown. Well, let me ask you:

Where do you see yourself in this story?

Do you see yourself more like Peter?

Ready to ask God to use you?

Willing to get out of the comfort zone and walk on water?

Do you see yourself with the need to refocus your sight on Jesus because you are sinking?

Or maybe you see yourself more like the disciples in the boat? Just waiting to see what would happen to Peter.

What about our Pathfinders? We as Pathfinders have a Motto, a Pledge and a Law, and we love them because they describe who we are, what we do, and why we do it. All of them direct us and help us to prepare and be ready to fulfill our Aim, our mission: “The Advent Message to all the world in my generation.” This is not just a simple aim or goal, this is a wonderful mission (Matthew 28:19-20) but let me ask you:

As Pathfinders, where do you see yourself in this story?

Do you see yourself as Peter, willing to get out of your comfort zone and share the good news in new and relevant ways?

Do you also see yourself with the need to refocus your sight on Jesus because you have been distracted by temptation?

Or maybe you see yourself more like the disciples in the boat? Being comfortable in the Pathfinder club, just waiting to enjoy the events, fairs, hikes, and camporees. Maybe collecting as many pins and patches as possible and

getting all the honors available to have the most packed sash and most decorated uniform.

Remember that the Aim of pathfinders, “The Advent Message to all the world in my generation”, must be your aim as well. We all have been called to share the gospel. To let everybody know that Jesus loves them that He gave His life for all of us and He is coming soon to take us back home, to the best camporee in the universe! (John 3:16)

This must be your Aim, and if you have lost focus of it, it is time to get back on track; it is time to refocus your passion and sight on Jesus, “Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” (Colossians 3:2)

Appeal

The question remains: Do you want to have clear, sharp, good, and beautiful pictures for each special and unique moment of your life? Well, if that is your desire, now is the time to refocus the center of your interest and course of action; and that center must be Jesus! Peter did it and Jesus rescued him, calmed the storm, and brought peace not just for him but also for all the disciples. The truth is that we all have difficult storms in our lives but Jesus is always ready to come and calm our storms at unexpected times. We only need to keep our sight focused on Jesus. He is ready to respond to our prayers, fulfill our needs, and bring us back to the safe place. Never forget that Jesus is the Master in making what it seems to be a catastrophe, the most wonderful miracle of victory and restoration (Romans 8:28).

Therefore, if you know that you need to refocus your sight in our aim Jesus, do not wait, just do it. We have the assurance that there is no delay on God’s part to respond to the sincere prayer. (Hebrews 12:2).

Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, thank You for Your love and mercy. For always being ready to rescue, save, and calm the storms in our lives. We only need to refocus our sight on You and whenever we call upon Your name, just as Peter did, we know that you will respond immediately. Thank You also for the opportunity to celebrate the Pathfinder day together with our friends and family around the world. Please bless them all. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.



You may be wondering, “Why do they give us the numbers?” The work of God and what He accomplishes through the body of Christ is not quantifiable. Our aim is not to have the biggest number of members or the largest population of churches.

However, we want to make sure that you don’t end up on the other side of the spectrum, feeling alone and doubting whether your hard work in the Pathfinder Club really matters.

Here you can see that every single Pathfinder Club is a vital part of the overall ministry in the whole world! Whether your Club has 10 kids or 100, we remember each of you every day and pray for all of you on a consistent basis.

Now you know about your counterparts from all the different parts of the globe. We hope this data encourages you and makes you excited about the bigger picture. God is using Adventist youth in a mighty way and the values of the Pathfinder Club make a very big impact wherever they go. People from other religions and those who don’t know God see the involvement of our youth and youth leaders. It makes them curious about our faith and contributes to the growth of God’s heavenly kingdom.

WORLD
DIVISIONS
East Central Africa (ECD)
Euro Asia (ESD)
Inter American (IAD)
Inter European (EUD)
North America (NAD)
Northern Asia Pacific (NSD)
South America (SAD)
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean (SID)
South Pacific (SPD)
Southern Asia Pacific (SSD)
Southern Asia (SUD)
Trans-European (TED)
West Central Africa (WAD)
MENA



2015 DIVISIONAL JUNIOR YOUTH STATISTICAL REPORT			
ADVENTURERS		PATHFINDERS	
CLUBS	MEMBERSHIP	CLUBS	MEMBERSHIP
7,261	203,117	8,137	302,901
149	705	362	1,996
3,999	81,375	5,366	132,896
539	6,116	352	6,910
1,660	22,530	2,380	56,625
49	374	394	7,535
4,398	70,267	8,483	210,765
5,489	701,267	6,889	608,910
1,424	26,426	1,731	36,219
2,006	62,965	2,069	76,345
281	14,245	260	19,645
257	5,762	331	7,862
853	10,533	1,677	22,684
11	128	12	190
28,376	1,205,810	38,443	1,491,483



PATHFINDER DAY SERVICE CHURCH SERVICE OPTION 1

1. Prelude
2. Ministers enter
3. Silent prayer
4. Doxology
5. Invocation
6. Presentation of Colors
7. Pathfinders march in and take places Pledge and Law
8. Post flags
9. Honor Guard returns to seats
10. Congregation and Pathfinders seated
11. Scripture reading: 1 Timothy 4:12
12. Hymn No. 529, "Under His Wings"
13. Congregational prayer
14. Offering
15. Special music
16. Pathfinder report--Pathfinder club director
17. Sermon by pastor, child preacher, or guest
18. Hymn No. 508, "Anywhere With Jesus"
19. Benediction
20. Postlude
21. Congregation stands
22. Adult Sabbath School can also be directed by Pathfinders.

PATHFINDER DAY SERVICE CHURCH SERVICE OPTION 2

1. Prelude
2. Personal ministries period Pathfinder missionary experiences
3. Processional Ministers, directors, pathfinders
4. Introit (platform group kneeling) Choir
5. Doxology
6. Invocation Pathfinder
7. Post Colors Color guard
8. Welcome Pastor
9. Scripture Reading: 1 Timothy 4:12 Pathfinder
10. Hymn no. 529, "Under His Wings"
11. Prayer Two Pathfinders
12. Pathfinder Song Pathfinders
13. Pathfinder Happenings Teen Pathfinder
14. Pledge and Law Pathfinder choir
15. Song of Instrumental Selection Pathfinders
16. Pathfinder Objectives Club director
17. Offering
18. Sermon Pastor, child preacher, or guest
19. Hymn no. 508, "Anywhere With Jesus"
20. Benediction
21. Recessional
22. Ministers and directors
23. Color guard
24. Staff
25. Pathfinder units and counselors
26. Congregation



PATHFINDER DAY SERVICE CHURCH SERVICE OPTION 3

1. Prelude
2. Ministers and platform personnel enter
3. Doxology and Invocation
4. Processional: "Onward Christian Soldiers".
(Pathfinders march in led by the national and Pathfinder flags. Color guards post themselves on floor in front of pulpit. All stand when flags enter and remain standing until flags are posted on the platform.)
5. Pathfinder Song Pathfinders
6. Pledge Led by a Pathfinder
7. Law Led by a Pathfinder
8. Posting of Flags
9. Scripture Reading: Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4
10. Prayer: Pathfinder
11. Welcome and Director's Report Pathfinder club
director reports on year's activities, goals for new year and presents any recognition and awards.
12. Special music Pathfinders
13. "Why I Am a Pathfinder" Pathfinder
14. "How did it all begin?"* Director and some Pathfinders
15. Offering: Teen Pathfinder - (Pathfinders)
16. Special music: Pathfinder or Group of Pathfinders
17. Sermonette: Director, guest, child preacher
18. Hymn no. 543, "Jesus, Friend of Little Children"
19. Benediction: Pathfinder
20. Postlude

PATHFINDER DAY SERVICE MORNING & AFTERNOON

1. Introduction
2. Sabbath School
3. Break
4. Assemble for Processional Entrance
5. Processional Entrance
6. Pathfinder Song
7. Pledge, Law
8. Welcome & Introductions
9. Song Service
10. Prayer
11. Offering
12. Special Item (it can be music)
13. Scripture Reading
14. Sermon
15. Special Item (it can be music)
16. Closing Song
17. Closing Prayer & Announcements
18. LUNCH
19. Assemble for Street Procession
20. Street Procession
21. Concert
22. Baptisms
23. Closing Ceremony
24. Small and impactant Devotional
25. Closing Prayer
26. Farewell

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