

Study Guide to the Christian Service

January 2016

1st Week.

Dates: January 3rd to 9th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 160.2- 162.3

The Last Act in the Drama

The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.—

[Testimonies for the Church 7:141.](#) {ChS 160.2}

When our nation shall so abjure the principles of its government as to enact a Sunday law, Protestantism will in this act join hands with popery; it will be nothing else than giving life to the tyranny which has long been eagerly watching its opportunity to spring again into active despotism.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:712.](#){ChS 160.3}

By the decree of enforcing the institution of the Papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:451.](#) {ChS 160.4}

The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation, in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath, will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:464, 465.](#) {ChS 161.1}

Many With Blinded Eyes

There are many, even of those engaged in this movement for Sunday enforcement, who are blinded to the results which will follow this action. They do not see that they are striking directly against religious liberty. There are many who have never understood the claims of the Bible Sabbath, and the false foundation upon which the Sunday institution rests.—

[Testimonies for the Church 5:711.](#) {ChS 161.2}

Responsibilities and Duties of God's People

The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God's witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His Word. We are to receive this Word as a supreme authority. We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But

Study Guide to the Christian Service

when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God's word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A "Thus saith the Lord" is not to be set aside for a "Thus saith the church" or a "Thus saith the state." The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 68, 69.](#) {ChS 161.3}

We as a people have not accomplished the work which God has committed to us. We are not ready for the issue to which the enforcement of the Sunday law will bring us. It is our duty, as we see the signs of approaching peril, to arouse to action. Let none sit in calm expectation of the evil, comforting themselves with the belief that this work must go on because prophecy has foretold it, and that the Lord will shelter his people. We are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience. Fervent, effectual prayer should be ascending to heaven that this calamity may be deferred until we can accomplish the work which has so long been neglected. Let there be more earnest prayer; and then let us work in harmony with our prayers.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:713, 714.](#) {ChS 162.1}

It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger. We should endeavor to disarm prejudice by placing ourselves in a proper light before the people. We should bring before them the real question at issue, thus interposing the most effectual protest against measures to restrict liberty of conscience.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:452.](#) {ChS 162.2}

When God has given us light showing the dangers before us, how can we stand clear in His sight if we neglect to put forth every effort in our power to bring it before the people? Can we be content to leave them to meet this momentous issue unwarned?—[Testimonies for the Church 5:712.](#) {ChS 162.3}

Question to Ponder- January 9th, 2016

1. What is our duty as we see the signs of the Sunday Law approaching? Should we just sit and watch prophecy fulfilled?

2nd Week.

Dates: January 10th to 16th, 201

Reading Assignment: Pages 162.4- 165.1

When the National Reformers began to urge measures to restrict religious liberty, our leading men should have been alive to the situation, and should have labored earnestly to counteract these efforts. It is not in the order of God that light has been kept from our people,—the very present truth which they needed for this time. Not all our ministers who are giving the third angel's message, really understand what constitutes that message. The National Reform movement has been regarded by some as of so little importance that they have not thought it is necessary to give much attention to it, and have even felt that in so doing they would be giving time to questions distinct from the third angel's message. May the Lord forgive our brethren for thus interpreting the very message for this time.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:715](#). {ChS 162.4}

We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; and now that the movement is right upon us, we ask, Will our people do their duty in the matter? Can we not assist in lifting the standard, and in calling to the front those who have a regard for their religious rights and privileges? The time is fast approaching when those who choose to obey God rather than man, will be made to feel the hand of oppression. Shall we then dishonor God by keeping silent while His holy commandments are trodden under foot? While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, let us arouse to comprehend the situation, and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice, and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show people where we are in prophetic history, and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awakening the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:716](#). {ChS 163.1}

The people of our land need to be aroused to resist the advances of this most dangerous foe to civil and religious liberty.—[The Spirit of Prophecy 4:382](#). {ChS 163.2}

Shall we sit with folded hands, and do nothing in this crisis? ... God help us to arouse from the stupor that has hung over us for years.—[The Review and Herald, December 18, 1888](#). {ChS 163.3}

A Wise Course to Pursue

To defy the Sunday laws will but strengthen in their persecution the religious zealots who are seeking to enforce them. Give them no occasion to call you law-breakers. If they are left to rein up men who fear neither God nor man, the reining up will soon lose its novelty for them, and they will see that it is not consistent nor convenient for them to be strict in regard to the observance of Sunday. Keep right on with your missionary work, with your Bibles in your hands, and the enemy will see that he has worsted his own cause. One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:232](#). {ChS 163.4}

When we devote Sunday to missionary work, the whip will be taken out of the hands of the arbitrary zealots who would be well pleased to humiliate Seventh-day Adventists. When they see that we employ ourselves on Sunday in visiting the people and opening the Scriptures to them, they will know that is useless for them to try to hinder our work by making Sunday laws.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:232, 233](#). {ChS 164.1}

Study Guide to the Christian Service

Sunday can be used for carrying forward various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord. On this day open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. House-to-house work can be done. Those who write can devote this day to writing their articles. Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour's love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:233](#). {ChS 164.2}

Let the teachers in our schools devote Sunday to missionary effort. I was instructed that they would thus be able to defeat the purposes of the enemy. Let the teachers take the students with them to hold meetings for those who know not the truth. Thus they will accomplish much more that they could in any other way.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:233](#). {ChS 164.3}

The Triumph of Truth

Skepticism may treat the claims of God's law with jest, scoffing, and denial. The spirit of worldliness may contaminate the many and control the few; the cause of God may hold its ground only by great exertion and continual sacrifice; yet in the end of the truth will triumph gloriously.—[Prophets and Kings, 186](#). {ChS 164.4}

In the closing work of God in the earth, the standard of His law will be again exalted. False religion may prevail, iniquity may abound, the love of many may wax cold, the cross of Calvary may be lost sight of, and darkness, like the pall of death, may spread over the world; the whole force of the popular current may be turned against the truth; plot after plot may be formed to overthrow the people of God; but in the hour of greatest peril, the God of Elijah will raise up human instrumentalities to bear a message that will not be silenced. In the populous cities of the land, and in the places where men have gone to the greatest lengths in speaking against the Most High, the voice of stern rebuke will be heard. Boldly will men of God's appointment denounce the union of the church with the world. Earnestly will they call upon men and women to turn from the observance of a man-made institution to the observance of the true Sabbath.—[Prophets and Kings, 186, 187](#). {ChS 165.1}

Questions to Ponder January 16th, 2016

1. What should Sundays be devoted for?

3rd Week.

Dates: January 17th to 23rd, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 165.2- 167.3

Light in the Darkness

Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke," will "shine as lights in the world." The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine.—[Prophets and Kings, 188, 189.](#) {ChS 165.2}

When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd.—[Australian The Signs of the Times, January 26, 1903, Supplement.](#) {ChS 166.1}

The Divine Protection

But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands.—[Prophets and Kings, 571.](#){ChS 166.2}

Heaven is very near those who suffer for righteousness' sake. Christ identifies His interests with the interests of His faithful people; He suffers in the person of His saints; and whoever touches His chosen ones, touches Him. The power that is near to deliver from physical harm or distress, is also near to save from the greater evil, making it possible for the servant of God to maintain his integrity under all circumstances.—[Prophets and Kings, 545.](#) {ChS 166.3}

At times the Lord may seem to have forgotten the perils of His church, and the injury done her by her enemies. But God has not forgotten. Nothing in this world is so dear to the heart of God as His church. It is not His will that worldly policy shall corrupt her record. He does not leave His people to be overcome by Satan's temptations. He will punish those who misrepresent Him, but He will be gracious to all who sincerely repent.—[Prophets and Kings, 590.](#) {ChS 166.4}

Chapter 15—Harvest Ingathering

The Perplexing Problem

For years the perplexing question has been before us, How can we raise funds adequate for the support of the missions which the Lord has gone before us to open? We read the plain commands of the gospel; and the missions, in both home and foreign fields, present their necessities. The indications, yea, the positive revelations of Providence unite in urging us to

do quickly the work that is waiting to be done.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:114](#). {ChS 167.1}

A Successful Plan

One of the new plans for reaching unbelievers is the Harvest Ingathering campaign for missions. In many places during the past few years, this has proved a success, bringing blessing to many, and increasing the flow of means into the mission treasury. As those not of our faith have been made acquainted with the progress of the third angel's message in heathen lands, their sympathies have been aroused, and some have sought to learn more of the truth that has such power to transform hearts and lives. Men and women of all classes have been reached, and the name of God has been glorified.—MS., "Consecrated Efforts to Reach Unbelievers," June 5, 1914. {ChS 167.2}

Some may question the propriety of receiving gifts from unbelievers. Let such ask themselves: "Who is the real owner of our world? To whom belong its houses and lands, and its treasures of gold and silver?" God has an abundance in our world, and He has placed His goods in the hands of all, both the obedient and the disobedient. He is ready to move upon the hearts of worldly men, even idolaters, to give of their abundance for the support of His work; and He will do this as soon as His people learn to approach these men wisely and to call their attention to that which it is their privilege to do. If the needs of the Lord's work were set forth in a proper light before those who have means and influence, these men might do much to advance the cause of present truth. God's people have lost many privileges of which they could have taken advantage, had they not chosen to stand independent of the world.—The Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. {ChS 167.3}

Question to Ponder January 23rd, 2015

1. Who will shine in the time when darkness covers the earth?
2. What precious promise do we have when God's People suffer for Righteousness' sake?

4th Week.

Dates: January 24th to 30th, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 168.1- 171.1

The Lord still moves upon the hearts of kings and rulers in behalf of His people. Those who are laboring for Him are to avail themselves of the help that He prompts men to give for the advancement of His cause. The agents through whom these gifts come, may open ways by which the light of truth shall be given to many benighted lands. These men may have no sympathy with God's work, no faith in Christ, no acquaintance with His word; but their gifts are not on this account to be refused.—The Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. {ChS 168.1}

The Lord has placed His goods in the hands of unbelievers as well as believers; all may return to Him His own for the doing of the work that must be done for a fallen world. As long as we are in this world, as long as the Spirit of God strives with the children of men, so long are we to receive favors as well as to impart them. We are to give to the world the light of truth, as revealed in the Scriptures; and we are to receive from the world that which God moves upon them to give in behalf of His cause.—The Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. {ChS 168.2}

Although now almost wholly in the possession of wicked men, all the world, with its riches and treasures, belongs to God. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts." "Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is Mine, and the fulness thereof." O that Christians might realize more and still more fully that it is their privilege and their duty, while cherishing right principles, to take advantage of every heaven-sent opportunity for advancing God's kingdom in this world.—The Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. {ChS 168.3}

Admonition to Workers

To all who are about to take up special missionary work with the paper prepared for use in the Harvest Ingathering campaign, I would say: Be diligent in your efforts; live under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Add daily to your Christian experience. Let those who have special aptitude, work for unbelievers in the high places as well as in the low places of life. Search diligently for perishing souls. Oh, think of the yearning desire Christ has to bring to His fold again those who have gone astray! Watch for souls as they that must give an account. In your church and neighborhood missionary work, let your light shine forth in such clear, steady rays that no man can stand up in the judgment, and say, "Why did you not tell me about this truth? Why did you not care for my soul?" Then let us be diligent in the distribution of literature that has been carefully prepared for use among those not of our faith. Let us make the most of every opportunity to arrest the attention of unbelievers. Let us put literature into every hand that will receive it. Let us consecrate ourselves to the proclamation of the message, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."—MS., "Consecrated Efforts to Reach Unbelievers," June 5, 1914. {ChS 169.1}

Essentials to Success

In following any plan that may be set in operation for carrying to others a knowledge of present truth, and of the marvelous providences connected with the advancing cause, let us first consecrate ourselves fully to Him whose name we wish to exalt. Let us also pray earnestly in behalf of those whom we expect to visit, by living faith bringing them, one by one, into the presence of God. The Lord knows the thought and purposes of man, and how easily

Study Guide to the Christian Service

He can melt us! How His Spirit, like a fire, can subdue the flinty heart! How He can fill the soul with love and tenderness! How He can give us the graces of His Holy Spirit, and fit us to go in and out, in laboring for souls!—MS., “Consecrated Efforts to Reach Unbelievers,” June 5, 1914. {ChS 169.2}

The Lord’s work might receive far greater favors than it is now receiving, if we would approach men in wisdom, acquainting them with the work, and giving them an opportunity of doing that which it is our privilege to induce them to do for its advancement. If we, as God’s servants, would take a wise and prudent course, His good hand would prosper us in our efforts.—The Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. {ChS 170.1}

If all who are engaged in the Lord’s work would realize how much depends upon their fidelity and wise forethought, far greater prosperity would attend their efforts. Through diffidence and backwardness we often fail of securing that which is attainable as a right, from the powers that be. God will work for us, when we are ready to do what we can and should do on our part.—The Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. {ChS 170.2}

Home Missions vs. Foreign Missions

The home missionary work will be farther advanced in every way when a more liberal, self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit is manifested for the prosperity of foreign missions; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working actively to supply the necessities of the cause of God that we bring our souls in touch with the Source of all power.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:27](#) {ChS 170.3}

An American business man, who was an earnest Christian, in conversation with a fellow worker, remarked that he himself worked for Christ twenty-four hours of the day. “In all my business relations,” he said, “I try to represent my Master. As I have opportunity, I try to win others to Him. All day I am working for Christ. And at night, while I sleep, I have a man working for Him in China.” In explanation, He added: “In my youth I determined to go as a missionary to the heathen. But on the death of my father I had to take up his business in order to provide for the family. Now, instead of going myself, I support a missionary. In such a town of such a province of China, my worker is stationed. And so, even while I sleep, I am, through my representative, still working for Christ.” {ChS 170.4}

Are there not Seventh-day Adventists who will do likewise? Instead of keeping the ministers at work for the churches that already know the truth, let the members of the churches say to these laborers: “Go work for souls that are perishing in darkness. We ourselves will carry forward the services of the church. We will keep up the meetings, and, by abiding in Christ, will maintain spiritual life. We will work for souls that are about us, and we will send our prayers and our gifts to sustain the laborers in more needy and destitute fields.”—[Testimonies for the Church 6:29, 30](#). {ChS 171.1}

Questions to Ponder January 30th, 2015

1. What important financial resource should we use?
2. What is diffidence? How does it affect the work of God? What can be done about it?