

Study Guide to the Christian Service

July 2016

1st Week.

Dates: July 3rd to 9th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 239.3- 243.2

How to Counteract Discouragement

The servants of the Lord must expect every kind of discouragement. They will be tried, not only by the anger, contempt, and cruelty of enemies, but by the indolence, inconsistency, lukewarmness, and treachery of friends and helpers ... Even some who seem to desire the work of God to prosper, will yet weaken the hands of His servants by hearing, reporting, and half believing the slanders, boasts, and menaces of their adversaries.... Amid great discouragements, Nehemiah made God his trust; and here is our defense. A remembrance of what the Lord has done for us will prove a support in every danger. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" And "if God be for us, who can be against us?" However craftily the plots of Satan and his agents may be laid, God can detect them, and bring to naught all their counsels.—The Southern Watchman, April 19, 1904. {ChS 239.3}

Those who, standing in the forefront of the conflict, are impelled by the Holy Spirit to do a special work will frequently feel a reaction when the pressure is removed. Despondency may shake the most heroic faith, and weaken the most steadfast will. But God understands, and He still pities and loves. He reads the motives and the purposes of the heart. To wait patiently, to trust when everything looks dark, is the lesson that the leaders in God's work need to learn. Heaven will not fail them in their day of adversity. Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness, and relies wholly on God.—Prophets and Kings, 174, 175. {ChS 240.1}

The Lord calls for soldiers who will not fail nor be discouraged; but who will accept the work with all its disagreeable features. He would have us all take Christ for our pattern.—The Review and Herald, July 17, 1894. {ChS 240.2}

Those who today teach unpopular truths need not be discouraged if at times they meet with no more favorable reception, even from those who claim to be Christians, than did Paul and his fellow workers from the people among whom they labored. The messengers of the cross must arm themselves with watchfulness and prayers, and move forward with faith and courage, working always in the name of Jesus.—The Acts of the Apostles, 230. {ChS 240.3}

Gentleness

The spirit that is kept gentle under provocation will speak more effectively in favor of the truth than will any argument, however forcible.—The Desire of Ages, 353. {ChS 241.1}

As the dew and the still showers fall upon the withering plants, so let words fall gently when seeking to win men from error. God's plan is first to reach the heart. We are to speak the truth in love, trusting in Him to give it power for the reforming of the life. The Holy Spirit will apply to the soul the word that is spoken in love.—The Ministry of Healing, 157. {ChS 241.2}

A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring, and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His words,—a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God.—Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 129. {ChS 241.3}

Impartiality

So long as he lived among men, our Saviour shared the lot of the poor. He knew by experience their cares and hardships, and He could comfort and encourage all humble workers. Those who have a true conception of the teaching of His life, will never feel that a distinction must be made between classes, that the rich are to be honored above the worthy poor.—The Desire of Ages, 73. {ChS 241.4}

When you turn from those who seem unpromising and unattractive, do you realize that you are neglecting the souls for whom Christ is seeking? At the very time when you turn from them, they may be in the greatest need of your compassion. In every assembly for worship, there are souls longing for rest and peace. They may appear to

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be living careless lives, but they are not insensible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Many among them might be won for Christ.—[Christ's Object Lessons](#), 191. {ChS 241.5}

The gospel invitation is not to be narrowed down, and presented only to a select few, who, we suppose, will do us honor if they accept it. The message is to be given to all. Wherever hearts are open to receive the truth, Christ is ready to instruct them.—[The Desire of Ages](#), 194. {ChS 242.1}

Honesty-Faithfulness-Industry

When responsibilities are to be intrusted to an individual, the question is not asked whether he is eloquent or wealthy, but whether he is honest, faithful, and industrious; for whatever may be his accomplishments, without these qualifications he is utterly unfit for any position of trust.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:413](#). {ChS 242.2}

Unselfishness

Christ's work is to be our example. Constantly He went about doing good. In the temple and the synagogues, in the streets of the cities, in the marketplace and the workshop, by the seaside and among the hills, He preached the gospel and healed the sick. His life was one of unselfish service, and it is to be our lesson book. His tender, pitying love rebukes our selfishness and heartlessness.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:31](#). {ChS 242.3}

The motive that prompts us to work for Lord should have in it nothing akin to self-serving. Unselfish devotion and a spirit of sacrifice have always been and always will be the first requisite of acceptable service. Our Lord and Master designs that not one thread of selfishness shall be woven into His work. Into our efforts we are to bring the tact and skill, the exactitude and wisdom, that the God of perfection required of the builders of the earthly tabernacle; yet in all our labors we are to remember that the greatest talents or the most splendid services are acceptable only when self is laid upon the altar, a living, consuming sacrifice.—[Prophets and Kings](#), 65. {ChS 242.4}

Of all the people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous. In their lives should be seen the true goodness of unselfish deeds.—[The Ministry of Healing](#), 157. {ChS 242.5}

Cease to Worry

Things will go wrong because of unconsecrated workers. You may shed tears over the result of this; but don't worry. The blessed Master has all His work from end to end under His masterly supervision. All He asks is that the workers shall come to Him for their orders, and obey His directions. Everything—our churches, our missions, our Sabbath schools, our institutions—is carried upon His divine heart. Why worry? The intense longing to see the church a living and shining light as God designs it shall be, must be tempered with entire trust in God.—[The Review and Herald, November 14, 1893](#). {ChS 243.1}

Cultivate restfulness, and commit the keeping of your souls unto God as unto a faithful Creator. He will keep that which is committed to His trust. He is not pleased to have us cover His altar with our tears and complaints. You have enough to praise God for already, if you do not see another soul converted. But the good work will go on if you will only go forward, and not be trying to adjust everything to your own ideas. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, and be ye thankful. Let the Lord have room to work. Do not block His way. He can and will work if we will let Him.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:136](#). {ChS 243.2}

Questions to Ponder July 9th, 2016

2nd Week.

Dates: July 10th to 16th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 243.3- 247.3

Bear the Divine Credentials

God can use every person just in proportion as He can put His Spirit into the soul temple. The work that He will accept is the work that reflects His image. His followers are to bear, as their credentials to the world, the ineffaceable characteristics of His immortal principles.—[Testimonies for the Church 7:144](#). {ChS 243.3}

Christ's name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority of their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 28](#). {ChS 243.4}

Minutemen

Be faithful minutemen, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.—[The Review and Herald, January 24, 1893](#). {ChS 243.5}

God's servants should be minutemen, ever ready to move as fast as His providence opens the way. Any delay on their part gives time for Satan to work to defeat them.—[Patriarchs and Prophets, 423](#). {ChS 244.1}

His commandment-keeping people are to stand constantly in readiness for service.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:247](#). {ChS 244.2}

Those who are really representatives of Christ are working for the good of others. They delight in advancing the cause of God both at home and abroad. They are seen and heard, and their influence is felt, at the prayer meeting. They will try to supply the place of the minister, whose labors they cannot have. They do not seek to exalt self, or to receive credit for doing a great work, but labor humbly, meekly, faithfully, doing small errands or doing a greater work, if necessary, because Christ has done so much for them.—[The Review and Herald, September 6, 1881](#). {ChS 244.3}

Brave and True

What the church needs in these days of peril, is an army of workers who, like Paul, have educated themselves for usefulness, who have a deep experience in the things of God, and who are filled with earnestness and zeal. Sanctified, self-sacrificing men are needed; men who will not shun trial and responsibility; men who are brave and true; men in whose hearts Christ is formed "the hope of glory," and who, with lips touched with holy fire, will "preach the word." For want of such workers the cause of God languishes, and fatal errors, like a deadly poison, taint the morals and blight the hopes of a large part of the human race.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 507](#). {ChS 244.4}

By aggressive warfare, in the midst of opposition, peril, loss, and human suffering, the work of soul-saving is to be carried forward. At a certain battle, when one of the regiments of the attacking force was being beaten back by the hordes of the enemy, the ensign in front stood his ground as the troops retreated. The captain shouted to him to bring back the colors, but the reply of the ensign was, "Bring the men up to the colors!" This is the work that devolves upon every faithful standard-bearer,—to bring the men up to the colors. The Lord calls for whole-heartedness. We all know that the sin of many professing Christians is that they lack the courage and energy to bring themselves and those connected with them up to the standard.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:45, 46](#). {ChS 244.5}

God cannot use men who, in time of peril, when the strength, courage, and influence of all are needed, are afraid to take a firm stand for the right. He calls for men who will do faithful battle against wrong, warring against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It is to such as these that He will speak the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant."—[Prophets and Kings, 142](#). {ChS 245.1}

God calls for men like Elijah, Nathan, and John the Baptist,—men who will bear His message with faithfulness, regardless of the consequences; men who will speak the truth bravely, though it call for the sacrifice of all they have.—[Prophets and Kings, 142](#). {ChS 245.2}

Shepherdly Care

The shepherd who discovers that one of his sheep is missing, does not look carelessly upon the flock that is safely housed, and say, "I have ninety and nine, and it will cost me too much trouble to go in search of the straying one. Let him come back, and I will open the door of the sheepfold, and let him in." No; no sooner does the sheep go astray than the shepherd is filled with grief and anxiety. He counts and recounts the flock. When he is sure that one sheep is lost, he slumbers not. He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold; and goes in search

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of the straying sheep. The darker and more tempestuous the night, and the more perilous the way, the greater is the shepherd's anxiety, and the more earnest his search. He makes every effort to find that one lost sheep. {ChS 245.3}

With what relief he hears in the distance its first faint cry. Following the sound, he climbs the steepest heights, he goes to the very edge of the precipice, at the risk of his own life. Thus he searches, while the cry, growing fainter, tells him that his sheep is ready to die. At last his effort is rewarded; the lost is found. Then he does not scold it because it has caused him so much trouble. He does not drive it with a whip. He does not even try to lead it home. In his joy he takes the trembling creature upon his shoulders; if it is bruised and wounded, he gathers it in his arms, pressing it close to his bosom, that the warmth of his own heart may give it life. With gratitude that his search has not been in vain, he bears it back to the fold.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 187, 188. {ChS 245.4}

Humility

In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess learning or eloquence or worldly wealth. He asks: "Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me?"—*Testimonies for the Church* 7:144. {ChS 246.1}

In trying to help the poor, the despised, the forsaken, do not work for them mounted on the stilts of your dignity and superiority, for in this way you will accomplish nothing.—*Testimonies for the Church* 6:277. {ChS 246.2}

That which will make our churches vigorous and successful in their efforts, is not bustle, but quiet, humble work; not parade and bombast, but patient, prayerful, persevering effort.—*Testimonies for the Church* 5:130. {ChS 246.3}

The humiliation of defeat often proves a blessing by showing us our inability to do the will of God without His aid.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 633. {ChS 246.4}

The talents of the humble cottager are needed in the house-to-house labor, and can accomplish more in this work than brilliant gifts.—*Testimonies for the Church* 9:37, 38. {ChS 246.5}

All heaven is interested in this work that God's messengers are carrying forward in the world, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. This is a great work, brethren and sisters, and we should humble ourselves daily before God, and not feel that our wisdom is perfect. We should take hold of the work with earnestness. We should not pray for God to humble us; for when God takes hold of us, He will humble us in a way that we would not enjoy. But we must day by day humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and with trembling. While it is God that works in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure, we are to co-operate with Him while He works through us.—*The Review and Herald*, July 12, 1887. {ChS 246.6}

We are to strive to enter in at the strait gate. But this gate does not swing loosely on its hinges. It will not admit doubtful characters. We must now strive for eternal life with an intensity that is proportionate to the value of the prize before us. It is not money or lands or position, but the possession of a Christlike character, that will open to us the gates of Paradise. It is not dignity, it is not intellectual attainments, that will win for us the crown of immortality. Only the meek and lowly ones, who have made God their efficiency, will receive this gift.—*The Southern Watchman*, April 16, 1903. {ChS 247.1}

When you return from doing missionary work, do not praise yourself, but exalt Jesus; lift up the cross of Calvary.—*Testimonies for the Church* 5:596. {ChS 247.2}

Before honor is humility. To fill a high place before men, Heaven chooses the worker who, like John the Baptist, takes a lowly place before God. The most childlike disciple is the most efficient in labor for God. The heavenly intelligences can co-operate with him who is seeking, not to exalt self, but to save souls.—*The Desire of Ages*, 436. {ChS 247.3}

Questions to Ponder July 16th, 2016

3rd Week.

Dates: July 17th to 23rd, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 247.4- 251.5.2

Temperate

Would that every child of God might be impressed with the necessity of being temperate in his eating, dressing, and working, that he may do the best work for the cause of God. When the laborer has been under a pressure of work and care, and is overworked in mind and body, he should turn aside and rest awhile, not for selfish gratification, but that he may be better prepared for future duties. We have a vigilant foe, who is ever upon our track, to take advantage of every weakness, that he may make his temptations effective for evil. When the mind is overstrained and the body enfeebled, he can take advantage, and press the soul with his fiercest temptations, that he may cause the downfall of the child of God. Let the laborer for God carefully husband his strength; and when wearied with toil that must come upon him, let him turn aside and rest and commune with Jesus.—[The Review and Herald, November 14, 1893.](#) {ChS 247.4}

The misuse of our physical powers shortens the period of time in which our lives can be used for the glory of God. And it unfits us to accomplish the work God has given us to do. By allowing ourselves to form wrong habits, by keeping late hours, by gratifying appetite at the expense of health, we lay the foundation for feebleness. By neglecting physical exercise, by overworking mind or body, we unbalance the nervous system. Those who thus shorten their lives unfit themselves for service by disregarding nature's laws, are guilty of robbery toward God. And they are robbing their fellow men also. The opportunity of blessing others, the very work for which God sent them into the world, has by their own course of action been cut short. And they have unfitted themselves to do even that which in a briefer period of time they might have accomplished. The Lord holds us guilty when by our injurious habits we thus deprive the world of good.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 346, 347.](#) {ChS 248.1}

Our God is ever merciful, full of compassion, and reasonable in all His requirements. He does not require that we shall pursue a course of action that will result in the loss of our health or the enfeeblement of our powers of mind. He would not have us work under a pressure and strain until exhaustion follows, and prostration of the nerves. The Lord has given us reason, and He expects that we shall exercise reason, and act in harmony with the laws of life implanted within us, obeying them that we may have a well-balanced organization. Day follows day, and each day brings its responsibilities and duties, but the work of tomorrow must not be crowded into today. The workers in the cause of God should feel how sacred is its character, and they should prepare themselves for tomorrow's work by a judicious employment of their powers today.—[The Review and Herald, November 7, 1893.](#) {ChS 248.2}

Rest and Reflection

The disciples of Jesus needed to be educated as to how they should labor, and how they should rest. Today there is need that God's chosen workmen should listen to the command of Christ to go apart and rest awhile. Many valuable lives have been sacrificed, that need not have been, through ignorance of this command.... Though the harvest is great and the laborers are few, nothing is gained by sacrificing health and life.... There are many feeble, worn workmen who feel deeply distressed when they see how much there is to be done, and how little they can do. How they long for physical strength to accomplish more; but it is to this class that Jesus says, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile."—[The Review and Herald, November 7, 1893.](#) {ChS 249.1}

The Christian life is not made up of unceasing activity, or of continual meditation. Christians must work earnestly for the salvation of the lost, and they must also take time for contemplation, for prayer, and the study of the Word of God. It will not do to be always under the strain of the work and excitement, for in this way personal piety is neglected, and the powers of mind and body are injured.—[The Review and Herald, November 7, 1893.](#) {ChS 249.2}

All who are under the training of God need the quiet hour for communion with their own hearts, with nature, and with God. In them is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and they need to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, "Be still, and know that I am God." This is the effectual preparation for all labor for God. Amidst the hurrying throng, and the strain of life's intense activities, he who is thus refreshed, will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. He will receive a new endowment of both physical and mental strength. His life will breathe out a fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men's hearts.—[The Ministry of Healing, 58.](#) {ChS 249.3}

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Chapter 25—The Holy Spirit

The Promise

To us today, as verily as to the first disciples, the promise of the Spirit belongs. God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:20](#). {ChS 250.1}

The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 40](#). {ChS 250.2}

God desires to refresh His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit, baptizing them anew in His love. There is no need for a dearth of the Holy Spirit in the church. After Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting, praying, believing disciples with a fulness and power that reached every heart. In the future the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God. A divine influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth. The earth is to be encircled with an atmosphere of grace. The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them unto men.—[The Southern Watchman, September 5, 1905](#). {ChS 250.3}

It is true that in the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seed-time and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time, the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 54, 55](#). {ChS 250.4}

The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the "former rain," and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant. What is the promise to those living in these days?—"Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee." "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field."—[Testimonies for the Church 8:21](#). {ChS 251.1}

God's Willingness to Bestow

The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 50](#). {ChS 251.2}

At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.—[The Desire of Ages, 669, 670](#). {ChS 251.3}

Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be "laborers together with God."—[The Acts of the Apostles, 56](#). {ChS 251.4}

We are living in the time of the Holy Spirit's power. It is seeking to diffuse itself through the agency of humanity, thus increasing its influence in the world.—[The Southern Watchman, November 3, 1903](#) {ChS 251.5}

Questions to Ponder July 23rd, 2016

4th Week.

Dates: July 24th to 30th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 252.1- 256.1

Conditions of Receiving

The Holy Spirit will come to all who are begging for the bread of life to give to their neighbors.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:90](#). {ChS 252.1}

When we bring our hearts into unity with Christ, and our lives into harmony with His work, the Spirit that fell on the disciples on the day of Pentecost will fall on us.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:246](#). {ChS 252.2}

It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 419](#). {ChS 252.3}

The Spirit awaits our demand and reception.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 121](#). {ChS 252.4}

Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it?—[The Acts of the Apostles, 50](#). {ChS 252.5}

If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 50](#). {ChS 252.6}

For the daily baptism of the Spirit, every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 50, 51](#). {ChS 252.7}

Let Christians put away all dissension, and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:21](#). {ChS 252.8}

The disciples did not ask for a blessing for themselves. They were weighted with the burden of souls. The gospel was to be carried to the ends of the earth, and they claimed the endowment of power that Christ had promised. Then it was that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and thousands were converted in a day.—[The Southern Watchman, August 1, 1905](#). {ChS 252.9}

Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk *about* Christ and *about* the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His people "to will and to do of His good pleasure." But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive.—[The Desire of Ages, 672](#). {ChS 253.1}

The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.—[The Review and Herald, July 21, 1896](#). {ChS 253.2}

Essential to Success

The presence of the Spirit with God's workers, will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 51](#). {ChS 253.3}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts.—[The Southern Watchman, August 1, 1905](#). {ChS 253.4}

After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were so filled with love for Him [Christ] and for those for whom He died, that hearts were melted by the words they spoke and the prayers they offered. They spoke in the power of the Spirit; and under the influence of that power, thousands were converted.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 22](#). {ChS 254.1}

There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God.—[The Southern Watchman, August 1, 1905](#). {ChS 254.2}

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What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the day of Pentecost?—The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the utmost bounds of the known world.... Under their labors there were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the word of life, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that had filled their hearts with peace and joy. Hundreds proclaimed the message, “The kingdom of God is at hand.” They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them; and wherever they went, the sick were healed, and the poor had the gospel preached unto them. So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.—The Southern Watchman, August 1, 1905. {ChS 254.3}

The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ. Only those who are thus taught of God, those who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ-life is manifested, are to stand as representative men, to minister in behalf of the church.—The Desire of Ages, 805. {ChS 254.4}

Peculiar and rapid changes will soon take place, and God’s people are to be endowed with the Holy Spirit, so that with heavenly wisdom they may meet the emergencies of this age, and as far as possible counteract the demoralizing movements of the world. If the church is not asleep, if the followers of Christ watch and pray, they may have light to comprehend and appreciate the movements of the enemy.—6T436. {ChS 254.5}

Promise Unappreciated

Christ declared that the divine influence of the Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. But the promise is not appreciated as it should be; and therefore its fulfillment is not seen as it might be. The promise of the Spirit is a matter little thought of; and the result is only what might be expected,—spiritual drouth, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Minor matters occupy the attention, and the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in its infinite plenitude.—Testimonies for the Church 8:21. {ChS 255.1}

Some Idly Waiting for Season of Refreshing

There are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service.—The Acts of the Apostles, 54. {ChS 255.2}

Christ’s Successor

The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high. {ChS 255.3}

Holy Spirit at Work from Beginning

From the beginning God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. This was manifest in the lives of the patriarchs. To the church in the wilderness also, in the time of Moses, God gave His “good Spirit to instruct them.” And in the days of the apostles He wrought mightily for His church through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The same power that sustained the patriarchs, that gave Caleb and Joshua faith and courage, and that made the work of the apostolic church effective, has upheld God’s faithful children in every succeeding age. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit that during the Dark Ages the Waldensian Christians helped to prepare the way for the Reformation. It was the same power that made successful the efforts of the noble men and women who pioneered the way for the establishment of modern missions, and for the translation of the Bible into the languages and dialects of all nations and peoples.—The Acts of the Apostles, 53. {ChS 256.1}

Questions to Ponder July 30th, 2016