

Study Guide to the Christian Service

March 2016

1st Week.

Dates: February 28th to March 5th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 160.2- 162.3

What Doest Thou Here?

Much depends on the unceasing activity of those who are true and loyal; and for this reason Satan puts forth every possible effort to thwart the divine purpose to be wrought out through the obedient. He causes some to lose sight of their high and holy mission, and to become satisfied with the pleasures of this life. He leads them to settle down at ease, or, for the sake of greater worldly advantages, to remove from places where they might be a power for good. Others he causes to flee in discouragement from duty, because of opposition or persecution. But all such are regarded by Heaven with tenderest pity. To every child of God whose voice the enemy of souls had succeeded in silencing, the question is addressed, "What doest thou here?" I commissioned you to go into all the world and preach the gospel, to prepare a people for the day of God. Why are you here? Who sent you?—[Prophets and Kings, 171, 172.](#) {ChS 182.1}

Of families, as of individuals, the question is asked, "What doest thou here?" In many churches there are families well instructed in the truths of God's Word, who might widen the sphere of their influence by moving to places in need of the ministry they are capable of giving.—[Prophets and Kings, 172.](#) {ChS 182.2}

The Call to Christian Families

Missionary families are needed to settle in the waste places. Let farmers, financiers, builders, and those who are skilled in various arts and crafts, go to neglected fields, to improve the land, to establish industries, to prepare humble homes for themselves, and to help their neighbors.—[The Ministry of Healing, 194.](#) {ChS 182.3}

God calls for Christian families to go into communities that are in darkness and error, and work wisely and perseveringly for the Master. To answer this call requires self-sacrifice. While many are waiting to have every obstacle removed, souls are dying without hope and without God in the world. Many, very many, for the sake of worldly advantage, for the sake of acquiring scientific knowledge, will venture into pestilential regions, and endure hardship and privation. Where are those who are willing to do this for the sake of telling others of the Saviour? Where are the men and women who will move into regions that are in need of the gospel, that they may point those in darkness to the Redeemer?—[Testimonies for the Church 9:33.](#) {ChS 182.4}

There are whole families who might be missionaries, engaging in personal labor, toiling for the Master with busy hands and active brains, devising new methods for the success of His work.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:40.](#) {ChS 183.1}

If families would locate in the dark places of the earth, places where the people are enshrouded in spiritual gloom, and let the light of Christ's life shine out through them, a great work might be accomplished. Let them begin their work in a quiet, unobtrusive way, not

drawing on the funds of the conference until the interest becomes so extensive that they cannot manage it without ministerial help.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:442](#). {ChS 183.2}

Transplanting Requires Wise Nurserymen

Prepare workers to go out into the highways and hedges. We need wise nurserymen who will transplant trees to different localities, and give them advantages, that they may grow. It is the positive duty of God's people to go into the regions beyond. Let forces be set at work to clear new ground, to establish new centers of influence wherever an opening can be found. Rally workers who possess true missionary zeal, and let them go forth to diffuse light and knowledge far and near.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:118](#). {ChS 183.3}

Many of the members of our large churches are doing comparatively nothing. They might accomplish a good work if, instead of crowding together, they would scatter into places that have not yet been entered by the truth. Trees that are planted too thickly do not flourish. They are transplanted by the gardener, that they may have room to grow, and not become dwarfed and sickly. The same rule would work well for our large churches. Many of the members are dying spiritually for want of this very work. They are becoming sickly and inefficient. Transplanted, they would have room to grow strong and vigorous.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:244](#). {ChS 183.4}

Assurance of Results

If the lay members of the church will arouse to do the work that they can do, going on a warfare at their own charges, each seeing how much he can accomplish in winning souls to Jesus, we shall see many leaving the ranks of Satan to stand under the banner of Christ. If our people will act upon the light that is given in these few words of instruction, we shall surely see of the salvation of God. Wonderful revivals will follow. Sinners will be converted, and many souls will be added to the church.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:246](#). {ChS 184.1}

Our church members should feel a deep interest in home and foreign missions. Great blessings will come to them as they make self-sacrificing efforts to plant the standard of truth in new territory. The money invested in this work will bring rich returns. New converts, rejoicing in the light received from the Word, will in their turn give of their means to carry the light of truth to others.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:49](#). {ChS 184.2}

In fields where the conditions are so objectionable and disheartening that many workers refuse to go to them, most remarkable changes for the better may be brought about by the efforts of self-sacrificing lay members. These humble workers will accomplish much, because they put forth patient, persevering effort, not relying upon human power, but upon God, who gives them His favor. The amount of good that these workers accomplish will never be known in this world.—[Testimonies for the Church 7:22, 23](#). {ChS 184.3}

Question to Ponder- March 5th, 2016

1. In light of the fact that we have a commission to preach the Gospel, how do we lose sight of our high and holy mission?
2. What would be the results if we as God's people would act according to the light that has been given in regards to missionary work?

2nd Week.

Dates: March 6th to 12th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 162.4- 165.1

A Lesson from the Failure of Ancient Israel

When the Israelites entered Canaan, they did not fulfil God's purpose by taking possession of the whole land. After making a partial conquest, they settled down to enjoy the fruit of their victories. In their unbelief and love of ease, they congregated in the portions already conquered, instead of pushing forward to occupy new territory. Thus they began to depart from God. By their failure to carry out His purpose they made it impossible for Him to fulfill to them His promise of blessing. Is not the church of today doing the same thing? With the whole world before them in need of the gospel, professed Christians congregate where they themselves can enjoy gospel privileges. They do not feel the necessity of occupying new territory, carrying the message of salvation into regions beyond. They refuse to fulfill Christ's commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Are they less guilty than was the Jewish church?—[Testimonies for the Church 8:119.](#) {ChS 184.4}

Chapter 17—Christian Help Work

Tracing the Divine Footprints

Many feel that it would be a great privilege to visit the scenes of Christ's life on earth, to walk where He trod, to look upon the lake beside which He loved to teach, and the hills and valleys on which His eyes so often rested. But we need not go to Nazareth, to Capernaum, or to Bethany, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the sick-bed, in the hovels of poverty, in the crowded alleys of the great city, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall walk in His steps.—[The Desire of Ages, 640.](#) {ChS 186.1}

Jesus worked to relieve every case of suffering that He saw. He had little money to give, but He often denied Himself of food in order to relieve those who appeared more needy than He. His brothers felt that His influence went far to counteract theirs. He possessed a tact which none of them had, or desired to have. When they spoke harshly to poor, degraded beings, Jesus sought out these very ones, and spoke to them words of encouragement. To those who were in need He would give a cup of cold water, and would quietly place His own meal in their hands. As He relieved their sufferings, the truths He taught were associated with His acts of mercy, and were thus riveted in the memory.— [DA, 86, 87.](#) {ChS 186.2}

The Indorsement

The followers of Christ are to labor as He did. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the suffering and afflicted. We are to minister to the despairing, and inspire hope in the hopeless. And to us also the promise will be fulfilled, "Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward."—[The Desire of Ages, 350.](#) {ChS 186.3}

Those who have been engaged in this Christian help work have been doing what the Lord desires to have done, and He has accepted their labors. That which has been done in this line is a work which every Seventh-day Adventist should heartily sympathize with and indorse, and take hold of earnestly. In neglecting this work which is within their own borders, in refusing to bear these burdens, the church is meeting with great loss. Had the church taken up this work as they should have done, they would have been the means of saving many souls.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:295.](#) {ChS 187.1}

Study Guide to the Christian Service

All His gifts are to be used in blessing humanity, in relieving the suffering and the needy. We are to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to care for the widow and the fatherless, to minister to the distressed and downtrodden. God never meant that the widespread misery in the world should exist. He never meant that one man should have an abundance of the luxuries of life, while the children of others should cry for bread. The means over and above the actual necessities of life are intrusted to man to do good, to bless humanity. The Lord says, "Sell that ye have, and give alms." Be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate." "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." "Loose the bands of wickedness," "undo the heavy burdens," "let the oppressed go free," "break every yoke." "Deal thy bread to the hungry," "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house." "When thou seest the naked, ... cover him." "Satisfy the afflicted soul." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." These are the Lord's commands. Are the great body of professed Christians doing this work?—[Christ's Object Lessons, 370, 371.](#) {ChS 187.2}

Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear; kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence, makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels." Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:25.](#) {ChS 187.3}

Questions to Ponder March 12th, 2016

1. What do we need to do to walk in the steps of Jesus?
2. How are we fulfilling Matthew 25: 36- 40?

3rd Week.

Dates: March 13th to 19rd, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 165.2- 167.3

The work of gathering in the needy, the oppressed, the suffering, the destitute, is the very work which every church that believes the truth for this time should long since have been doing. We are to show the tender sympathy of the Samaritan in supplying physical necessities, feeding the hungry, bringing the poor that are cast out to our homes, gathering from God every day grace and strength that will enable us to reach to the very depths of human misery, and help those who cannot possibly help themselves. In doing this work we have a favorable opportunity to set forth Christ the crucified One.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:276. {ChS 188.1}](#)

Many wonder why their prayers are so lifeless, their faith so feeble and wavering, their Christian experience so dark and uncertain. “Have we not fasted,” they say, “and walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?” In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, Christ has shown how this condition of things may be changed.... [Verses 6, 7.](#) This is the recipe that Christ has prescribed for the faint-hearted, doubting, trembling soul. Let the sorrowful ones, who walk mournfully before the Lord, arise and help someone who needs help.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:266. {ChS 188.2}](#)

The glory of heaven is in lifting up the fallen, comforting the distressed. And wherever Christ abides in human hearts, He will be revealed in the same way. Wherever it acts, the religion of Christ will bless. Wherever it works, there is brightness.—[Christ’s Object Lessons, 386. {ChS 188.3}](#)

The widow of Zarephath shared her morsel with Elijah; and in return, her life and that of her son were preserved. And to all who, in time of trial and want, give sympathy and assistance to others more needy, God has promised great blessing. He has not changed. His power is no less now than in the days of Elijah.—[Prophets and Kings, 131, 132. {ChS 188.4}](#)

The love of Christ, manifested in unselfish ministry, will be more effective in reforming the evil-doer than will the sword or the court of justice. These are necessary to strike terror to the lawbreaker, but the loving missionary can do more than this. Often the heart that hardens under reproof will melt under the love of Christ.—[The Ministry of Healing, 106. {ChS 189.1}](#)

To Be Remembered

In all our associations it should be remembered that in the experience of others there are chapters sealed from mortal sight. On the pages of memory are sad histories that are sacredly guarded from curious eyes. There stand registered long, hard battles with trying circumstances, perhaps troubles in the home life, that day by day weaken courage, confidence, and faith. Those who are fighting the battle of life at great odds may be strengthened and encouraged by little attentions that cost only a loving effort. To such the strong, helpful grasp of the hand by a true friend is worth more than gold or silver. Words of kindness are as welcome as the smile of angels.[{ChS 189.2}](#)

There are multitudes struggling with poverty, compelled to labor hard for small wages, and able to secure but the barest necessities of life. Toil and deprivation, with no hope of better things, make their burden very heavy. When pain and sickness are added, the burden is almost insupportable. Careworn and oppressed, they know not where to turn for relief. Sympathize with them in their trials, their heartaches, and disappointments. This will open the

way for you to help them. Speak to them of God's promises, pray with and for them, inspire them with hope.—[The Ministry of Healing, 158. {ChS 189.3}](#)

There are many to whom life is a painful struggle; they feel their deficiencies, and are miserable and unbelieving; they think they have nothing for which to be grateful. Kind words, looks of sympathy, expressions of appreciation, would be to many a struggling and lonely one as the cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. A word of sympathy, an act of kindness, would lift burdens that rest heavily upon weary shoulders. And every word or deed of unselfish kindness is an expression of the love of Christ for lost humanity.—[Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 23. {ChS 189.4}](#)

Extend a Helping Hand

Sin is the greatest of all evils, and it is ours to pity and help the sinner. But not all can be reached in the same way. There are many who hide their soul-hunger. These would be greatly helped by a tender word or a kind remembrance. There are others who are in the greatest need, yet they know it not. They do not realize the terrible destitution of the soul. Multitudes are so sunken in sin that they have lost the sense of eternal realities, lost the similitude of God, and they hardly know whether they have souls to be saved or not. They have neither faith in God nor confidence in man. Many of these can be reached only through acts of disinterested kindness. Their physical wants must first be cared for. They must be fed, cleansed, and decently clothed. As they see the evidence of your unselfish love, it will be easier for them to believe in the love of Christ. [{ChS 190.1}](#)

There are many who err, and who feel their shame and their folly. They look upon their mistakes and errors until they are driven almost to desperation. These souls we are not to neglect. When one has to swim against the stream, there is all the force of the current driving him back. Let a helping hand then be held out to him as was the elder Brother's hand to the sinking Peter. Speak to him hopeful words that will establish confidence and awaken love.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 387. {ChS 190.2}](#)

To the soul weary of a life of sin, but knowing not where to find relief, present the compassionate Saviour. Take him by the hand, lift him up, speak to him words of courage and hope. Help him to grasp the hand of the Saviour.—[The Ministry of Healing, 168. {ChS 190.3}](#)

Question to Ponder March 19th, 2016

1. What is Christ's prescription for the faint-hearted, doubting, trembling soul?
2. How can we strengthened and encouraged those who are going through hard times?

4th Week.

Dates: March 20th to 26th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 168.1- 171.1

Hospitality a Christian Duty

Our work in this world is to live for others' good, to bless others, to be hospitable; and frequently it may be only at some inconvenience that we can entertain those who really need our care and the benefit of our society and our homes. Some avoid these necessary burdens. But some one must bear them; and because the brethren in general are not lovers of hospitality, and do not share equally in these Christian duties, a few who have willing hearts, and who cheerfully make the cases of those who need help their own, are burdened.—

[Testimonies for the Church 2:645.](#) {ChS 191.1}

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” These words have lost none of their force through the lapse of time. Our heavenly Father still continues to place in the pathway of His children opportunities that are blessings in disguise; and those who improve these opportunities find great joy.—PK, 132. {ChS 191.2}

The Testing Process

God tests and proves us by the common occurrences of life. It is the little things which reveal the chapters of the heart. It is the little attentions, the numerous small incidents and simple courtesies of life, that make up the sum of life's happiness; and it is the neglect of kindly, encouraging, affectionate words, and the little courtesies of life, which helps compose the sum of life's wretchedness. It will be found at last that the denial of self for the good and happiness of those around us, constitutes a large share of the life record in heaven.—

[Testimonies for the Church 2:133.](#) {ChS 191.3}

I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God's test of our character. If we have the true religion of the Bible, we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest is due to Christ in behalf of His brethren; and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for His immeasurable love to us while we were sinners unworthy of His grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for those who are our brethren, and who are less fortunate than ourselves.—3T 511. ChS

191.4

A Parable Applied

The two great principles of the law of God are supreme love to God and unselfish love to our neighbor. The first four commandments and the last six hang upon, or grow out of, these two principles. Christ explained to the lawyer who his neighbor was in the illustration of the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, and who fell among thieves, and was robbed, and beaten, and left half dead. The priest and the Levite saw this man suffering, but their hearts did not respond to his wants. They avoided him by passing by on the other side. The Samaritan came that way, and when he saw the stranger's need of help, he did not question whether he was a relative, or was of his country or creed; but he went to work to help the sufferer because there was work which needed to be done. He relieved him as best he could, put him upon his own beast, and carried him to an inn, and made provision for his wants at his own expense. {ChS 192.1}

Study Guide to the Christian Service

This Samaritan, said Christ, was neighbor to him who fell among thieves. The Levite and the priest represent a class in the church who manifest an indifference to the very ones who need their sympathy and help. This class, notwithstanding their position in the church, are commandment breakers. The Samaritan represents a class who are true helpers with Christ, and who are imitating His example in doing good. {ChS 192.2}

Those who have pity for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the afflicted, the widows, the orphans, and the needy, Christ represents as commandment keepers, who shall have eternal life.... Christ regards all acts of mercy, benevolence, and thoughtful consideration for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the sick, the widow, and the orphan, as done to Himself; and these works are reserved in the heavenly records and will be rewarded. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and the Levite to the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others, and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice, and every manifestation of careless indifference to and neglect of the afflicted among us. Every one will finally be rewarded as his works have been.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:511-513](#). {ChS 192.3}

Chapter 18—The Camp-Meeting an Aid in Christian Service

Importance

The camp-meeting is one of the most important agencies in our work. It is one of the most effective methods of arresting the attention of the people.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:31](#). {ChS 194.1}

In our work we have been perplexed to know how to break through the barriers of worldliness and prejudice, and bring before the people the precious truth which means so much to them. The Lord has instructed us that the camp-meeting is one of the most important instrumentalities for the accomplishment of this work.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:31, 32](#). {ChS 194.2}

Questions to Ponder March 26th, 2016

1. How does God test our character?

5th Week.

Dates: March 27th to 26th, 2016

Reading Assignment: Pages 168.1- 171.1

Object

What is the object of assembling together? Is it to inform God, to instruct Him by telling Him all we know in prayer? We meet together to edify one another by an interchange of thoughts and feelings, to gather strength, and light, and courage by becoming acquainted with one another's hopes and aspirations; by our earnest, heartfelt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:578. {ChS 194.3}](#)

Our camp-meetings have another object.... They are to promote spiritual life among our own people.... God has committed to our hands a most sacred work, and we need to meet together to receive instruction, that we may be fitted to perform this work. We need to understand what part we shall individually be called upon to act in building up the cause of God in the earth, in vindicating God's holy law, and in lifting up the Saviour as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." [John 1:29](#). We need to meet together and receive the divine touch that we may understand our work in the home.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:32, 33. {ChS 194.4}](#)

Properly conducted, the camp-meeting is a school where pastors, elders, and deacons can learn to do more perfect work for the Master. It should be a school where the members of the church, old and young, are given opportunity to learn the way of the Lord more perfectly, a place where believers can receive an education that will help them to help others.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:49. {ChS 195.1}](#)

In connection with our camp-meetings in past years, God's servants have improved many precious opportunities for instructing our people in practical methods of presenting the saving truths of the third angel's message to their friends and acquaintances. Many have been taught how to labor as self-supporting missionaries in their home communities. Many have returned home from these annual gatherings, to labor with greater zeal and intelligence than hitherto. It would be pleasing to God if far more of this practical instruction were given the church members who attend our camp-meetings, than has usually been given in years past. Our general workers and our brethren and sisters in every conference should remember that one of the objects of our annual gatherings is that all may gain a knowledge of practical methods of personal missionary work.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:81. {ChS 195.2}](#)

In some of our conferences, the leaders have hesitated to introduce these practical methods of instruction. Some are naturally inclined to sermonize rather than to teach. But on such occasions as our annual camp-meetings, we must never lose sight of the opportunities afforded for teaching the believers how to do practical missionary work in the place where they may live.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:82. {ChS 195.3}](#)

Practical Demonstration of Missionary Methods

By engaging in work at the camp-meeting, all may be learning how to work successfully in their home churches.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:49. {ChS 195.4}](#)

At some of our camp-meetings, strong companies of workers have been organized to go out into the city and its suburbs to distribute literature and invite people to the meetings. By this means hundreds of persons were secured as regular attendants during the last half of the meeting who otherwise might have thought little about it.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:36. {ChS 195.5}](#)

Study Guide to the Christian Service

We can go to the camp-meeting, not merely to receive, but to impart. Every one who is a partaker of Christ's pardoning love, every one who has been enlightened by the Spirit of God and converted to the truth, will feel that for these precious blessings he owes a debt to every soul with whom he comes in contact. Those who are humble in heart the Lord will use to reach souls whom the ordained ministers cannot reach. They will be moved to speak words which reveal the saving grace of Christ.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:43. {ChS 196.1}](#)

When we follow plans of the Lord's devising, we are "laborers together with God." Whatever our position,—whether presidents of conferences, ministers, teachers, students, or lay members,—we are held accountable by the Lord for making the most of our opportunities to enlighten those in need of present truth. And one of the principal agencies He has ordained for our use is the printed page. In our schools and sanitariums, in our home churches, and particularly in our annual camp-meetings, we must learn to make a wise use of this precious agency. With patient diligence, chosen workers must instruct our people how to approach unbelievers in a kindly, winning way, and how to place in their hands literature in which the truth for this time is presented with clearness and power.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:86, 87. {ChS 196.2}](#)

The work at our camp-meetings should be conducted, not according to man's devising, but after the manner of Christ's working. The church members should be drawn out to labor.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:120. {ChS 196.3}](#)

Special Feature of Camp-Meetings Near the End of Time

It has been shown me that our camp-meetings are to increase in interest and success. As we approach nearer the end, I have seen that in these meetings there will be less preaching, and more Bible study. There will be little groups all over the ground with their Bibles in their hands, and different ones leading out in a free, conversational study of the Scriptures.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:87. {ChS 196.4}](#)

Questions to Ponder March 26th, 2016

1. What is the object of assembling together for camp meetings or conferences?