

# **Study Guide to the Christian Service**

## **May 2016**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Week.**

**Dates: May 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Reading Assignment: Pages 211.1- 213.3**

#### *Chapter 22—The Prayer And Missionary Meeting* **Secret of Effectual Prayer**

The upbuilding of the kingdom of God is retarded or urged forward according to the unfaithfulness or fidelity of human agencies. The work is hindered by the failure of the human to co-operate with the divine. Men may pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"; but if they fail of acting out this prayer in their lives, their petitions will be fruitless.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:437, 438.](#) {ChS 211.1}

#### **Devotional Exercises in the Balance**

All heaven is looking upon the inhabitants of the earth. The angels and the God of heaven are looking upon those who claim to be Christians, and weighing their devotional exercises.—[Australasian Signs of the Times, June 22, 1903.](#) {ChS 211.2}

#### **Making the Meetings Interesting**

Let the missionary meeting be turned to account in teaching the people how to do missionary work.—[An Appeal to Our Churches in Behalf of Home Missionary Work, 11.](#) {ChS 211.3}

Our prayer and social meetings should be seasons of special help and encouragement. Each one has a work to do to make these gatherings as interesting and profitable as possible. This can best be done by having a fresh experience daily in the things of God, and by not hesitating to speak of His love in the assemblies of His people. If you allow no darkness or unbelief to enter your hearts, they will not be manifest in your meetings.—[The Southern Watchman, March 7, 1905.](#) {ChS 211.4}

Our meetings should be made intensely interesting. They should be pervaded with the very atmosphere of heaven. Let there be no long, dry speeches and formal prayers, merely for the sake of occupying the time. All should be ready to act their part with promptness, and when their duty is done, the meeting should be closed. Thus the interest will be kept up to the last. This is offering to God acceptable worship. His service should be made interesting and attractive, and not be allowed to degenerate into a dry form. We must live for Christ minute by minute, hour by hour, and day by day

; then Christ will dwell in us, and when we meet together, His love will be in our hearts, welling up like a spring in the desert, refreshing all, and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the waters of life.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:609.](#) {ChS 211.5}

Do not imagine that you can arouse the interest of the young by going to the missionary meeting and preaching a long sermon. Plan ways whereby a live interest may be aroused. From week to week the young should bring in their reports, telling what they have tried to do for the Saviour, and what success has been theirs. If the missionary meeting were made an occasion for bringing in such reports, it would not be dull, tedious, and uninteresting. It would be full of interest, and there would be no lack of attendance.—[Gospel Workers, 210, 211.](#) {ChS 212.1}

When faith lays hold upon Christ, the truth will bring delight to the soul, and the services of religion will not be dull and uninteresting. Your social meetings, now tame and spiritless, will

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be vitalized by the Holy Spirit; daily you will have a rich experience as you practice the Christianity you profess.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:437](#). {ChS 212.2}

### **Testimony of Personal Experience**

As followers of Christ we should make our words such as to be a help and an encouragement to one another in the Christian life. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 338](#). {ChS 212.3}

The church needs the fresh, living experience of members who have habitual communion with God. Dry, stale testimonies and prayers, without the manifestation of Christ in them, are no help to the people. If every one who claims to be a child of God were filled with faith and light and life, what a wonderful witness would be given to those who come to hear the truth! And how many souls might be won to Christ!—[Testimonies for the Church 6:64](#). {ChS 212.4}

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power, that works for the salvation of souls.—[The Ministry of Healing, 100](#). {ChS 213.1}

### **Praise and Thanksgiving**

To praise God in fulness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer. We are to show to the world and to all the heavenly intelligences that we appreciate the wonderful love of God for fallen humanity, and that we are expecting larger and yet larger blessings from His infinite fulness.... After a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, our joy in the Lord and our efficiency in His service would be greatly increased by recounting His goodness and His wonderful works in behalf of His children. These exercises drive back the power of Satan. They expel the spirit of murmuring and complaint, and the tempter loses ground. They cultivate those attributes of character which will fit the dwellers on earth for the heavenly mansions. Such a testimony will have an influence upon others. No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 299, 300](#). {ChS 213.2}

The Lord desires us to make mention of His goodness and tell of His power. He is honored by the expression of praise and thanksgiving. He says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." The people of Israel, as they journeyed through the wilderness, praised God in sacred song. The commandments and promises of the Lord were set to music, and all along the journey these were sung by the pilgrim travelers. And in Canaan, as they met at their sacred feasts, God's wonderful works were to be recounted, and grateful thanksgiving offered to His name. God desired that the whole life of His people should be a life of praise.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 298, 299](#). {ChS 213.3}

## **Question to Ponder- May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

1. How much does the Upbuilding of Kingdom of God depend upon our faithfulness?
2. What practical counsel can we apply to improve the Missionary Meetings?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Week.**

**Dates: May 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Reading Assignment: Pages 214.1- 217.2**

**A Dangerous Policy**

Some, fearing they will suffer loss of earthly treasure, neglect prayer and the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God, that they may have more time to devote to their farms or their business. They show by their works which world they place the highest estimate upon. They sacrifice religious privileges, which are essential to their spiritual advancement, for the things of this life, and fail to obtain a knowledge of the divine will. They come short of perfecting Christian character, and do not meet the measurement of God. They make their temporal, worldly interests first, and rob God of the time which they should devote to His service. Such persons God marks, and they will receive a curse, rather than a blessing.—

[Testimonies for the Church 2:654.](#) {ChS 214.1}

**A Comforting Promise**

God will remember those who have met together and thought upon His name, and He will spare them from the great conflagration. They will be as precious jewels in His sight.—

[Testimonies for the Church 4:107.](#) {ChS 214.2}

**Chapter 23—Miscellaneous Lines of Missionary Work**

**Consideration for the Blind**

Angels are sent to minister to the children of God who are physically blind. Angels guard their steps and save them from a thousand dangers, which, unknown to them, beset their path.—

[Testimonies for the Church 3:516.](#) {ChS 215.1}

He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while ... the blind and the sick are neglected among them.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:518.](#) {ChS 215.2}

If there are those in the church who would cause the blind to stumble, they should be brought to justice; for God has made us guardians of the blind, the afflicted, the widows, and the fatherless. The stumblingblock referred to in the Word of God does not mean a block of wood placed before the feet of the blind to cause him to stumble; but it means much more than this. It means any course that may be pursued to injure the influence of their blind brother, to work against his interest, or to hinder his prosperity.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:519.](#) {ChS 215.3}

The blind man has disadvantages to meet on every side in the loss of his sight. That heart in which pity and sympathy are not excited at seeing a blind man groping his way in a world clothed to him in darkness, is hard indeed, and must be softened by the grace of God.—

[Testimonies for the Church 3:521.](#) {ChS 215.4}

**Care for Orphans**

Until death shall be swallowed up in victory, there will be orphans to be cared for, who will suffer in more ways than one if the tender compassion and loving-kindness of our church members are not exercised in their behalf. The Lord bids us, "Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house." Christianity must supply fathers and mothers for these homeless ones. The compassion for the widow and the orphan manifested in prayers and deeds, will come up in remembrance before God, to be rewarded by and by.—[The Review and Herald, June 27, 1893.](#) {ChS 215.5}

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 216.1}

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There are orphans that can be cared for; but many will not venture to undertake such a work; for it involves more labor than they care to do, leaving them but little time to please themselves. But when the King shall make investigation, these do-nothing, illiberal, selfish souls will then learn that heaven is for those who have been workers, those who have denied themselves for Christ's sake. No provisions have been made for those who have ever taken such special care in loving and looking out for themselves. The terrible punishment the King threatened those on His left hand, in this case, is not because of their great crimes. They are not condemned for the things which they did do, but for that which they did not do. They did not those things Heaven assigned them to do. They pleased themselves, and can take their portion with self-pleasers.—[The Review and Herald, August 16, 1881](#). {ChS 216.2}

There are orphans whom Christ has bidden His followers receive as a trust from God. Too often these are passed by with neglect. They may be ragged, uncouth, and seemingly in every way unattractive; yet they are God's property. They have been bought with a price, and they are as precious in His sight as we are. They are members of God's great household, and Christians as His stewards are responsible for them. "Their souls," He says, "will I require at thine hand."—[Christ's Object Lessons, 386, 387](#). {ChS 216.3}

The Lord calls on every member of the church to do your duty to these orphans. Do not, however, work for them merely from the standpoint of duty, but because you love them, and Christ died to save them. Christ has purchased these souls that need your care, and He expects you to love them as He has loved you in your sins and waywardness.—[The Review and Herald, June 27, 1893](#). {ChS 216.4}

He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while the orphan, the fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick are neglected among them.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:518](#). {ChS 217.1}

There is a wide field before all who will work for the Master in caring for these friendless children and youth, placing them in a position favorable for the formation of a right character, that they may become children of God. There are unpromising children that need to be tenderly sought for; many that would otherwise grow up in ignorance, and drift into associations that lead to vice and crime, may be brought into favorable surroundings, and under Christlike, tender watchcare may be saved to Christ.... This work for others will require effort and self-denial and sacrifice; but what is the little sacrifice that we can make, in comparison with God's great gift of His only begotten Son? God has granted us the privilege of becoming laborers together with Him.—[The Review and Herald, June 27, 1893](#). {ChS 217.2}

### **Questions to Ponder May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

1. What missionary plans can we develop to reach to the blind and the orphans?

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Week.**

**Dates: May 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

**Reading Assignment: Pages 217.3- 220.1**

#### **The Colored Race**

There is in this country a great, unworked field. The colored race, numbering thousands upon thousands, appeals to the consideration and sympathy of every true, practical believer in Christ. These people do not live in a foreign country, and they do not bow down to idols of wood and stone. They live among us, and again and again, through the testimonies of His Spirit, God has called our attention to them, telling us that here are human beings neglected. This broad field lies before us unworked, calling for the light that God has given us in trust.—

[Testimonies for the Church 8:205.](#) {ChS 217.3}

Walls of separation have been built up between the whites and the blacks. These walls of prejudice will tumble down of themselves, as did the walls of Jericho, when Christians obey the Word of God, which enjoins on them supreme love to their Maker and impartial love to their neighbors.... Let every church whose members claim to believe the truth for this time, look at this neglected, downtrodden race, that as a result of slavery have been deprived of the privilege of thinking and acting for themselves.—[The Review and Herald, December 17, 1895.](#) {ChS 217.4}

Let us set ourselves to do a work for the Southern people. Let us not be content with simply looking on, with simply making resolutions that are never acted upon; but let us do something heartily unto the Lord, to alleviate the distress of our colored brethren.—[The Review and Herald, February 4, 1896.](#) {ChS 218.1}

The black man's name is written in the book of life beside the white man's. All are one in Christ. Birth, station, nationality, or color cannot elevate or degrade men. The character makes the man. If a red man, a Chinaman, or an African gives his heart to God in obedience and faith, Jesus loves him none the less for his color. He calls him His well-beloved brother.—[The Southern Work, 8, written March 20, 1891.](#) {ChS 218.2}

The day is coming when the kings and the lordly men of the earth would be glad to exchange places with the humblest African who has laid hold on the hope of the gospel.—[The Southern Work, 8, written March 20, 1891.](#) {ChS 218.3}

God cares no less for the souls of the African race that may be won to serve Him, than He cared for Israel. He requires far more of His people than they have given Him in missionary work among the people of the South of all classes, and especially the colored race. Are we not under even greater obligation to labor for the colored people than for those who have been more highly favored? Who is it that held these people in servitude? Who kept them in ignorance?... If the race is degraded, if they are repulsive in habits and manners, who made them so? Is there not much due to them from the white people? After so great a wrong has been done them, should not an earnest effort be made to lift them up? The truth must be carried to them. They have souls to save as well as we.—[The Southern Work, 11, 12, written March 20, 1891.](#) {ChS 218.4}

#### **Temperance Reform**

Of all who claim to be numbered among the friends of temperance, Seventh-day Adventists should stand in the front ranks.—[Gospel Workers, 384.](#) {ChS 218.5}

On the temperance question, take your position without wavering. Be as firm as a rock.—[Gospel Workers, 394.](#) {ChS 219.1}

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We have a work to do along temperance lines besides that of speaking in public. We must present our principles in pamphlets and in our papers. We must use every possible means of arousing our people to their duty to get into connection with those who know not the truth. The success we have had in missionary work has been fully proportionate to the self-denying, self-sacrificing efforts we have made. The Lord alone knows how much we might have accomplished if as a people we had humbled ourselves before Him, and proclaimed the temperance truth in clear, straight lines.—[Gospel Workers, 385](#). {ChS 219.2}

The temperance question is to receive decided support from God's people. Intemperance is striving for the mastery; self-indulgence is increasing, and the publications treating on health reform are greatly needed. Literature bearing on this point is the helping hand of the gospel, leading souls to search the Bible for a better understanding of the truth. The note of warning against the great evil of intemperance should be sounded; and that this may be done, every Sabbathkeeper should study and practice the instruction contained in our health periodicals and our health books. And they should do more than this: they should make earnest efforts to circulate these publications among their neighbors.—[The Southern Watchman, November 20, 1902](#). {ChS 219.3}

Present the total abstinence pledge, asking that the money they would otherwise spend for liquor, tobacco, or like indulgences, be devoted to the relief of the sick, poor, or for the training of children and youth for usefulness in the world.—[The Ministry of Healing, 211](#). {ChS 219.4}

### **Importance of Follow-up Effort**

As the result of the presentation of the truth in large congregations, a spirit of inquiry is awakened, and it is especially important that this interest be followed up by personal labor. Those who desire to investigate the truth, need to be taught to study diligently the Word of God. Some one must help them to build on the sure foundation. At this critical time in their religious experience, how important it is that wisely directed Bible workers come to their help, and open to their understanding the treasure-house of God's Word.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:111](#). {ChS 219.5}

The golden moment is lost. The impressions made were not followed up. It would have been better had no interest been awakened; for when convictions have been once resisted and overcome, it is very difficult to impress the mind again with the truth.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:118](#). {ChS 220.1}

## **Question to Ponder May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

1. How can we promote temperance?

## **4<sup>th</sup> Week.**

**Dates: May 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Reading Assignment: Pages 220.2- 223.5**

### **Stewardship of Means**

In all our expenditure of means, we are to strive to fulfill the purpose of Him who is the alpha and omega of all Christian effort.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:49](#). {ChS 220.2}

Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God's children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. It is a defense for the oppressed, and a means of help to the sick. But money is of no more value than sand, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and advancing the cause of Christ.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 351](#). {ChS 220.3}

God Himself originated plans for the advancement of His work, and He has provided His people with a surplus of means, that when He calls for help, they may respond, saying, "Lord, Thy pound hath gained other pounds."—[Testimonies for the Church 9:58](#). {ChS 220.4}

Money cannot be carried into the next life; it is not needed there; but the good deeds done in winning souls to Christ are carried to the heavenly courts. But those who selfishly spend the Lord's gifts on themselves, leaving their needy fellow creatures without aid, and doing nothing to advance God's work in the world, dishonor their Maker. Robbery of God is written opposite their names in the books of heaven.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 266](#). {ChS 220.5}

What is the value of money at this time, in comparison with the value of souls? Every dollar of our means should be considered as the Lord's, not ours; and as a precious trust from God to us; not to be wasted for needless indulgences, but carefully used in the cause of God, in the work of saving men and women from ruin.—[Life Sketches, 214](#). {ChS 220.6}

Is not the missionary work that is to be done in our world of sufficient importance to command our influence and support? Should we not deny ourselves of every extravagance, and put our gifts into the treasury of God, that the truth may be sent into other countries, and that home missions may be sustained? Will not this work meet the approval of Heaven? The work for these last days has not been supported by large legacies, or advanced by worldly influence. It has been sustained by gifts that were the result of self-denial, of the spirit of sacrifice. God has given us the privilege of becoming partakers with Christ in His sufferings here, and He has provided that we may have a title to an inheritance in the earth made new.—[The Review and Herald, December 2, 1890](#). {ChS 221.1}

I was shown that the recording angel makes a faithful record of every offering dedicated to God, and put into the treasury, and also of the final result of the means thus bestowed. The eye of God takes cognizance of every farthing devoted to His cause, and of the willingness or reluctance of the giver. The motive in giving is also chronicled. Those self-sacrificing, consecrated ones who render back to God the things that are His, as He requires of them, will be rewarded according to their works. Even though the means thus consecrated be misapplied, so that it does not accomplish the object which the donor had in view,—the glory of God and the salvation of souls,—those who made the sacrifice in sincerity of soul, with an eye single to the glory of God, will not lose their reward. {ChS 221.2}

Every opportunity to help a brother in need, or to aid the cause of God in the spread of the truth, is a pearl that you can send beforehand, and deposit in the bank of heaven for safe keeping. God is testing and proving you. He has been giving His blessings to you with a lavish hand, and is now watching to see what use you are making of them, to see if you will help those who need help, and if you will feel the worth of souls, and do what you can with the

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means that He has intrusted to you. Every such opportunity improved adds to your heavenly treasure.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:249, 250](#). {ChS 221.3}

### **Heaven's Reporting System**

Angels keep a faithful record of every man's work. {ChS 222.1}

Every act of love, every word of kindness, every prayer in behalf of the suffering and oppressed, is reported before the eternal throne, and placed on heaven's imperishable record.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:133](#). {ChS 222.2}

A report is borne to heaven of every successful effort on our part to dispel the darkness and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. As the deed is recounted before the Father, joy thrills through all the heavenly host.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 154](#). {ChS 222.3}

Angels are commissioned to be our helpers. They are passing between earth and heaven, bearing upward the record of the doings of the children of men.—[The Southern Watchman, April 2, 1903](#). {ChS 222.4}

It were well ... to remember the record kept on high,—that book in which there are no omissions, no mistakes, and out of which they will be judged. There every neglected opportunity to do service for God is recorded; and there, too, every deed of faith and love is held in everlasting remembrance.—[Prophets and Kings, 639](#). {ChS 222.5}

## **Chapter 24—Qualifications for Successful Christian Service**

### **Efficiency**

Listlessness and inefficiency are not piety. When we realize that we are working for God, we shall have a higher sense than we have ever had before of the sacredness of spiritual service. This realization will put life and vigilance and persevering energy into the discharge of every duty.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:150](#). {ChS 223.1}

The time demands greater efficiency and deeper consecration. O, I am so full of this subject that I cry to God, "Raise up and send forth messengers filled with a sense of their responsibility, messengers in whose hearts self-idolatry, which lies at the foundation of all sin, has been crucified."—[Testimonies for the Church 9:27](#). {ChS 223.2}

The work committed to the disciples would require great efficiency; for the tide of evil ran deep and strong against them.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 31](#). {ChS 223.3}

### **Cultured Speech**

The right culture and use of the power of speech has to do with every line of Christian work.... We should accustom ourselves to speak in pleasant tones, to use pure and correct language, and words that are kind and courteous.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 336](#). {ChS 223.4}

Every minister and every teacher should bear in mind that he is giving to the people a message that involves eternal interests. The truth spoken will judge them in the great day of final reckoning. And with some souls the manner of the one delivering the message will determine its reception or rejection. Then let the word be so spoken that it will appeal to the understanding and impress the heart. Slowly, distinctly, and solemnly should it be spoken, yet with all the earnestness which its importance demands.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 336](#). {ChS 223.5}

## **Questions to Ponder May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

1. How can we be Godly Stewards?