

Study Guide to the Christian Service

June 2015

1st Week.

Dates: June 1 to 6, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 68.5- 71.1

A Fatal Mistake

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soulsaving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble, consecrated believer upon whom the Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls, is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities.

Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour's commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands.—The Acts of the Apostles, 110.{ChS 68.5}

The idea that the minister must carry all the burdens and do all the work, is a great mistake. Overworked and broken down, he may go into the grave, when, had the burden been shared as the Lord designed, he might have lived. That the burden may be distributed, an education must be given to the church by those who can teach the workers to follow Christ and to work as He worked.—Testimonies for the Church 6:435. {ChS 68.6}

The minister should not feel that it is his duty to do all the talking and all the laboring and all the praying; he should educate helpers in every church. Let different ones take turns in leading the meetings, and in giving Bible readings; in so doing they will be calling into use the talents which God has given them, and at the same time be receiving a training as workers.—Gospel Workers, 197.{ChS 69.1}

Ministers should not do the work which belongs to the church, thus wearying themselves, and preventing others from performing their duty. They should teach the members how to labor in the church and in the community.—Historical Sketches, 291.{ChS 69.2}

When an effort is made to present our faith to unbelievers, the members of the church too often stand back, as if they were not an interested party, and let all the burden rest upon the minister. For this reason the labor of our most able ministers has been at times productive of little good.—Gospel Workers, 196.{ChS 69.3}

The Minister's Duty

The best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. Give each one something to do for others. Help all to see that as receivers of the grace of Christ they are under obligation to work for Him. And let all be taught how to work. Especially should those who are newly come to the faith be educated to become laborers together with God.—Testimonies for the Church 9:82.{ChS 69.4}

Ministers, preach the truths that will lead to personal labor for those who are out of Christ. Encourage personal effort in every possible way.—Testimonies for the Church 9:124.{ChS 69.5}

Let ministers teach church members that in order to grow in spirituality, they must carry the burden that the Lord has laid upon them,—the burden of leading souls into the truth. Those who are not fulfilling their responsibility should be visited, prayed with, labored for. Do not lead people to depend upon you as ministers; teach them rather that they are to use their talents in giving the truth to those around them. In thus working they will have the co-operation of

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heavenly angels, and will obtain an experience that will increase their faith, and give them a strong hold on God.—Gospel Workers, 200. {ChS 69.6}

In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation. Let him labor for them individually, endeavoring to arouse them to seek for a deeper experience themselves, and to work for others. When they are prepared to sustain the minister by their prayers and labors, greater success will attend his efforts.—Gospel Workers, 196.{ChS 70.1}

In some respects the pastor occupies a position similar to that of the foreman of a gang of laboring men or the captain of a ship's crew. They are expected to see that the men over whom they are set, do the work assigned to them correctly and promptly, and only in case of emergency are they to execute in detail. The owner of a large mill once found his superintendent in a wheel-pit, making some simple repairs, while a half-dozen workmen in that line were standing by, idly looking on. The proprietor, after learning the facts, so as to be sure that no injustice was done, called the foreman to his office and handed him his discharge with full pay. In surprise the foreman asked for an explanation. It was given in these words: "I employed you to keep six men at work. I found the six idle, and you doing the work of but one. Your work could have been done just as well by any one of the six. I cannot afford to pay the wages of seven for you to teach the six how to be idle." {ChS 70.2}

This incident may be applicable in some cases, and in others not. But many pastors fail in not knowing how, or in not trying, to get the full membership of the church actively engaged in the various departments of church work. If pastors would give more attention to getting and keeping their flock actively engaged at work, they would accomplish more good, have more time for study and religious visiting, and also avoid many causes of friction.—Gospel Workers, 197, 198.{ChS 70.3}

A Good Example

The apostle [Paul] felt that he was to a large extent responsible for the spiritual welfare of those converted under his labors. His desire for them was that they might increase in a knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He had sent. Often in his ministry he would meet with little companies of men and women who loved Jesus, and bow with them in prayer, asking God to teach them how to maintain a living connection with Him. Often he took counsel with them as to the best methods of giving to others the light of gospel truth. And often, when separated from those for whom he had thus labored, he pleaded with God to keep them from evil, and help them to be earnest, active missionaries.—The Acts of the Apostles, 262.{ChS 71.1}

Questions to Ponder- June 6, 2015

1. What promised is give to the Laymen?
2. What is the best help that minister can give to church members?

2nd Week.

Dates: June 7 to 13, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 72.1- 74.4

Chapter 8—Organizing Christian Forces

Organization Essential

Time is short, and our forces must be organized to do a larger work.—Testimonies for the Church 9:27.{ChS 72.1}

The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err.—Testimonies for the Church 7:21, 22.{ChS 72.2}

Let there be in every church, well-organized companies of workers to labor in the vicinity of that church.—The Review and Herald, September 29, 1891.{ChS 72.3}

In every city there should be a corps of organized, well-disciplined workers; not merely one or two, but scores should be set to work.—The General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 30, 1893.{ChS 72.4}

In our churches let companies be formed for service. Let different ones unite in labor as fishers of men. Let them seek to gather souls from the corruption of the world into the saving purity of Christ's love.—Testimonies for the Church 7:21.{ChS 72.5}

The church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purposes, and the Lord desires to see the entire church devising ways and means whereby high and low, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth.—Testimonies for the Church 6:29.{ChS 72.6}

If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers. If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers.—Testimonies for the Church 7:22.{ChS 72.7}

If discipline and order are necessary for successful action on the battlefield, the same are as much more needful in the warfare in which we are engaged as the object to be gained is of greater value and more elevated in character, than those for which opposing forces contend upon the field of battle. In the conflict in which we are engaged, eternal interests are at stake.—Testimonies for the Church 1:649. {ChS 72.8}

God is a God of order. Everything connected with heaven is in perfect order; subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. Success can only attend order and harmonious action. God requires order and system in His work now no less than in the days of Israel. All who are working for Him are to labor intelligently, not in a careless, haphazard manner. He would have His work done with faith and exactness, that He may place the seal of His approval upon it.—Patriarchs and Prophets, 376.{ChS 73.1}

Well-organized work must be done in the church, that its members may understand how to impart the light to others, and thus strengthen their own faith and increase their knowledge. As they impart that which they have received from God, they will be confirmed in the faith. A working church is a living church. We are built up as living stones, and every stone is to emit light. Every Christian is compared to a precious stone that catches the glory of God and reflects it.—Testimonies for the Church 6:435.{ChS 73.2}

Lessons in Perfect Organization

He [God] designs that we should learn lessons of order and organization from the perfect order instituted in the days of Moses, for the benefit of the children of Israel.—Testimonies for the Church 1:653.{ChS 73.3}

First Step in Church Organization

It was at the ordination of the twelve that the first step was taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to carry on His work on the earth.— The Acts of the Apostles, 18.{ChS 73.4}

Model Church Organization

The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel....

Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the organization of the church was further perfected, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained. Every member was exhorted to act well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents intrusted to him.—The Acts of the Apostles, 91, 92. {ChS 73.5}

Fitting Each Into His Place

Every one who is added to the ranks by conversion is to be assigned his post of duty. Every one should be willing to be or to do anything in this warfare.—Testimonies for the Church 7:30.{ChS 74.1}

It is not numerous institutions, large buildings, or great display that God requires, but the harmonious action of a peculiar people, a people chosen by God and precious. Every man is to stand in his lot and place, thinking, speaking, and acting in harmony with the Spirit of God. Then, and not till then, will the work be a complete, symmetrical whole.—Testimonies for the Church 6:293.{ChS 74.2}

The strength of an army is measured largely by the efficiency of the men in the ranks. A wise general instructs his officers to train every soldier for active service. He seeks to develop the highest efficiency on the part of all. If he were to depend on his officers alone, he could never expect to conduct a successful campaign. He counts on loyal and untiring service from every man in his army. The responsibility rests largely upon the men in the ranks.—Testimonies for the Church 9:116.{ChS 74.3}

The Master calls for gospel workers. Who will respond? Not all who enter the army are to be generals, captains, sergeants, or even corporals. Not all have the care and responsibility of leaders. There is hard work of other kinds to be done. Some must dig trenches and build fortifications; some are to stand as sentinels; some to carry messages. While there are but few officers, it requires many soldiers to form the rank and file of the army; yet its success depends upon the fidelity of every soldier. One man's cowardice or treachery may bring disaster upon the entire army.—Gospel Workers, 84, 85.{ChS 74.4}

Question to Ponder June 13, 2015

1. How much is organization, order and discipline related to success in God's cause?

3rd Week.

Dates: June 14 to 20, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 75.1- 77.3

The Secret of Success

The secret of our success in the work of God will be found in the harmonious working of our people. There must be concentrated action. Every member of the body of Christ must act his part in the cause of God, according to the ability that God has given him. We must press together against obstructions and difficulties, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart.—The Review and Herald, December 2, 1890.{ChS 75.1}

If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world.—Testimonies for the Church 9:221.{ChS 75.2}

Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the cooperation of the heavenly messengers, must work in unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high, will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can co-operate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers place their indorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder.—Testimonies for the Church 1:649, 650.{ChS 75.3}

Timely Warning

There is need of systematic labor; but where some of you are so long in devising, and planning, and getting ready for the work, Satan preoccupies the field with bewitching fables, and the attention of men becomes absorbed in the delusions of the master deceiver.—The Review and Herald, March 13, 1888.{ChS 75.4}

O how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this people, and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential, and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings, and to refute claims not indorsed by the Word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of organization and order that has been built up by wise, careful labor. License must not be given to disorderly elements that desire to control the work at this time.—Gospel Workers, 487. {ChS 75.5}

Chapter 9—The Call to Arouse

The Summons

Let the gospel message ring through our churches, summoning them to universal action. Let the members of the church have increased faith, gaining zeal from their unseen, heavenly allies, from a knowledge of their exhaustless resources, from the greatness of the enterprise in which they are engaged, and from the power of their Leader. Those who place themselves under God's control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place. Inspired with the Spirit of Him who gave His life for the life of the world, they will no longer stand still in impotency, pointing to what they cannot do. Putting on the armor of heaven,

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they will go forth to the warfare willing to do and dare for God, knowing that His omnipotence will supply their need.—Testimonies for the Church 7:14.{ChS 77.1}

Let us arouse! The battle is waging. Truth and error are nearing their final conflict. Let us march under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel, and fight the good fight of faith, and win eternal honors; for the truth will triumph, and we may be more than conquerors through Him who has loved us. The precious hours of probation are closing. Let us make sure work for eternal life, that we may glorify our heavenly Father, and be the means of saving souls for whom Christ died.—The Review and Herald, March 13, 1888.{ChS 77.2}

Marching Orders

The duke of Wellington was once present where a party of Christian men were discussing the possibility of success in missionary effort among the heathen. They appealed to the duke to say whether in his judgment such efforts were likely to prove a success commensurate to the cost. The old soldier replied: “Gentlemen, what are your marching orders? Success is not the question for you to discuss. If I read your orders aright, they run thus, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’ Gentlemen, obey your marching orders.”—Gospel Workers, 115. {ChS 77.3}

Question to Ponder June 20, 2015

1. What is the “Secret of Success”?

4th Week.

Dates: June 21 to 27, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 78.1- 80.9

No Time for Delay

“The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly.” Zephaniah 1:14. Let us be shod with the gospel shoes, ready to march at a moment’s notice.—Testimonies for the Church 9:48.{ChS 78.1}

Church members ... are to be ever ready to spring into action in obedience to the Master’s commands. Wherever we see work waiting to be done, we are to take it up and do it, constantly looking unto Jesus.... If every church member were a living missionary, the gospel would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to all peoples, nations, and tongues.—Testimonies for the Church 9:32.{ChS 78.2}

We are nearing the close of this earth’s history. We have before us a great work,—the closing work of giving the last warning message to a sinful world. There are men who will be taken from the plow, from the vineyard, from various other branches of work, and sent forth by the Lord to give this message to the world.—Testimonies for the Church 7:270.{ChS 78.3}

Sound an alarm throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Tell the people that the day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly. Let none be left unwarned. We might have been in the place of the poor souls that are in error. We might have been placed among barbarians. According to the truth we have received above others, we are debtors to impart the same to them.—Testimonies for the Church 6:22.{ChS 78.4}

My brethren and sisters, it is too late to devote your time and strength to self-serving. Let not the last day find you destitute of the heavenly treasure. Seek to push the triumphs of the cross, seek to enlighten souls, labor for the salvation of your fellow beings, and your work will abide the trying test of fire.—Testimonies for the Church 9:56.{ChS 78.5}

We must give this message quickly, line upon line, precept upon precept. Men will soon be forced to great decisions, and it is our duty to see that they are given an opportunity to understand the truth, that they may take their stand intelligently on the right side. The Lord calls upon His people to labor—labor earnestly and wisely—while probation lingers.—Testimonies for the Church 9:126, 127.{ChS 79.1}

We have no time to lose. The end is near. The passage from place to place to spread the truth will soon be hedged with dangers on the right hand and on the left. Everything will be placed to obstruct the way of the Lord’s messengers, so that they will not be able to do that which it is possible for them to do now. We must look our work fairly in the face, and advance as fast as possible in aggressive warfare. From the light given me of God I know that the powers of darkness are working with intense energy from beneath, and with stealthy tread Satan is advancing to take those who are now asleep, as a wolf taking his prey. We have warnings now which we may give, a work now which we may do; but soon it will be more difficult than we can imagine. God help us to keep in the channel of light, to work with our eyes fastened on Jesus our leader, and patiently, perseveringly press on to gain the victory.—Testimonies for the Church 6:22.{ChS 79.2}

There is danger in delay. That soul whom you might have found, that soul to whom you might have opened the Scriptures, passes beyond your reach. Satan has prepared some net for his feet, and tomorrow he may be working out the plans of the archenemy of God. Why delay one day? Why not go to work at once?—Testimonies for the Church 6:443.{ChS 79.3}

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Vigilance and fidelity have been required of Christ's followers in every age; but now that we are standing upon the very verge of the eternal world, holding the truths we do, having so great light, so important a work, we must double our diligence. Every one is to do to the very utmost of his ability. My brother, you endanger your own salvation if you hold back now. God will call you to account if you fail in the work He has assigned you.—Testimonies for the Church 5:460, 461.{ChS 79.4}

Important Questions

Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted. What are we thinking of, that we cling to our selfish love of ease, while all around us souls are perishing?{ChS 80.1}

Have our hearts become utterly callous?{ChS 80.2}

Can we not see and understand that we have a work to do in behalf of others?{ChS 80.3}

My brethren and sisters, are you among those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not?{ChS 80.4}

Is it in vain that God has given you a knowledge of His will?{ChS 80.5}

Is it in vain that He has sent you warning after warning of the nearness of the end?{ChS 80.6}

Do you believe the declarations of His word concerning what is coming upon the world?{ChS 80.7}

Do you believe that God's judgments are hanging over the inhabitants of the earth?{ChS 80.8}

How, then, can you sit at ease, careless and indifferent?—Testimonies for the Church 9:26, 27.{ChS 80.9}

Question to Ponder June 27, 2015

1. How would you answer the "Important Questions" listed in this section?