

Study Guide to the Christian Service

May 2015

1st Week.

Dates: May 3 to 9, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 58.1- 60.2

Chapter 5—The Church a Training Center

The Need of the Hour

That which is needed now for the upbuilding of our churches is the nice work of wise laborers to discern and develop talent in the church,—talent that can be educated for the Master's use. There should be a well organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the upbuilding of the church, and also for unbelievers. It is training, education, that is needed. Those who labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work.—Testimonies for the Church 9:117.{ChS 58.1}

God expects His church to discipline and fit its members for the work of enlightening the world. An education should be given that would result in furnishing hundreds who would put out to the exchangers valuable talents. By the use of these talents, men would be developed who would be prepared to fill positions of trust and influence, and to maintain pure, uncorrupted principles. Thus great good would be accomplished for the Master.—Testimonies for the Church 6:431, 432.{ChS 58.2}

Every worker should be understandingly efficient. Then in a high, broad sense he can present the truth as it is in Jesus.—Testimonies for the Church 7:70.{ChS 58.3}

There should be no delay in this well-planned effort to educate the church members.—Testimonies for the Church 9:119.{ChS 58.4}

The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God, and to depend on Him, not on the ministers.—Testimonies for the Church 7:19.{ChS 58.5}

It is evident that all the sermons that have been preached have not developed a large class of self-denying workers. This subject is to be considered as involving the most serious results. Our future for eternity is at stake. The churches are withering up because they have failed to use their talents in diffusing light. Careful instruction should be given which will be as lessons from the Master, that all may put their light to practical use.—Testimonies for the Church 6:431. {ChS 58.6}

The people have had too much sermonizing; but have they been taught how to labor for those for whom Christ died? Has a line of labor been devised and placed before them in such a way that each has seen the necessity of taking part in the work?—Testimonies for the Church 6:431.{ChS 59.1}

It is by education and practice that persons are to be qualified to meet any emergency which may arise; and wise planning is needed to place each one in his proper sphere, that he may obtain an experience that will fit him to bear responsibility.—Testimonies for the Church 9:221.{ChS 59.2}

The Church Missionary Curriculum

Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath school classes, how best

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to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to work for the unconverted. There should be schools of health, cooking schools, and classes in various lines of Christian help work. There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people, and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example. One example is worth more than many precepts.—The Ministry of Healing, 149.{ChS 59.3}

Special Training

Greater efforts should be put forth to educate the people in the principles of health reform. Cooking schools should be established, and house-to-house instruction should be given in the art of cooking wholesome food. Old and young should learn how to cook more simply. Wherever the truth is presented, the people are to be taught how to prepare food in a simple, yet appetizing way. They are to be shown that a nourishing diet can be provided without the use of flesh foods.—Testimonies for the Church 9:161.{ChS 59.4}

In every place where there is a church, instruction should be given in regard to the preparation of simple, wholesome foods, for the use of those who wish to live in accordance with the principles of health. And the church members should impart to the people of their neighborhoods the light they receive on this subject.—Gospel Workers, 362.{ChS 60.1}

Adapt the Instruction

How many useful and honored workers in God's cause have received a training amid the humble duties of the most lowly positions in life! Moses was the prospective ruler of Egypt, but God could not take him from the king's court to do the work appointed him. Only when he had been for forty years a faithful shepherd was he sent to be the deliverer of his people. Gideon was taken from the threshing floor to be the instrument in the hands of God for delivering the armies of Israel. Elisha was called to leave the plow and do the bidding of God. Amos was a husbandman, a tiller of the soil, when God gave him a message to proclaim. All who become coworkers with Christ will have a great deal of hard, uncongenial labor to perform, and their lessons of instruction should be wisely chosen, and adapted to their peculiarities of character, and the work which they are to pursue.—Gospel Workers, 332, 333.{ChS 60.2}

Question to Ponder- May 9, 2015

1. What is the best help the church can receive?

2nd Week.

Dates: May 10 to 16, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 60.3- 63.3

Responsibility for Providing the Training

When men of promise and ability were converted, as in the case of Timothy, Paul and Barnabas sought earnestly to show them the necessity of laboring in the vineyard. And when the apostles left for another place, the faith of these men did not fail, but rather increased. They had been faithfully instructed in the way of the Lord, and had been taught how to labor unselfishly, earnestly, perseveringly, for the salvation of their fellow men. This careful training of new converts was an important factor in the remarkable success that attended Paul and Barnabas as they preached the gospel in heathen lands.—The Acts of the Apostles, 186, 187.{ChS 60.3}

As churches are established, it should be set before them that it is even from among them that men must be taken to carry the truth to others, and raise new churches; therefore they must all work, and cultivate to the utmost the talents that God has given them, and be training their minds to engage in the service of their Master.—Testimonies for the Church 3:205.{ChS 61.1}

Missionary operations are constantly embarrassed for want of workers of the right class of mind,—workers who have devotion and piety that will correctly represent our faith. There are many who ought to become missionaries, but who never enter the field because those who are united with them in church capacity or in our colleges do not feel the burden to labor with them, to open before them the claims of God upon all their powers, and do not pray with and for them.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 500, 501.{ChS 61.2}

Those who have the spiritual oversight of the church should devise ways and means by which an opportunity may be given to every member of the church to act some part in God's work. Too often in the past this has not been done. Plans have not been clearly laid and fully carried out, whereby the talents of all might be employed in active service. There are but few who realize how much has been lost because of this.—Testimonies for the Church 9:116.{ChS 61.3}

In every church the members should be so trained that they will devote time to the winning of souls to Christ. How can it be said of the church, "Ye are the light of the world," unless the members of the church are actually imparting light? Let those who have charge of the flock of Christ awake to their duty, and set many souls to work.—Testimonies for the Church 6:436.{ChS 61.4}

Select Officers Qualified to Train

Great care should be exercised in selecting officers for the new churches. Let them be men and women who are thoroughly converted. Let those be chosen who are best qualified to give instruction, those who can minister both in word and in deed. There is a deep-seated necessity for work in every line.—Testimonies for the Church 6:85.{ChS 61.5}

The elders and those who have leading places in the church should give more thought to their plans for conducting the work. They should arrange matters so that every member of the church shall have a part to act, that none may lead an aimless life, but that all may accomplish what they can according to their several ability.... It is very essential that such an education should be given to the members of the church that they will become unselfish, devoted, efficient workers for God; and it is only through such a course that the church can be prevented from becoming fruitless and dead.... Let every member of the church become an active worker,—a living stone, emitting light in God's temple.—The Review and Herald, September 2, 1890.{ChS 62.1}

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Church Members to Educate Themselves

Church members must work; they must educate themselves, striving to reach the high standard set before them. This the Lord will help them to reach if they will co-operate with Him.—

Testimonies for the Church 9:140.{ChS 62.2}

We should not let slip even one opportunity of qualifying ourselves intellectually to work for God.—Christ's Object Lessons, 334.{ChS 62.3}

The Divine Standard

The Lord desires us to obtain all the education possible, with the object in view of imparting our knowledge to others. None can know where or how they may be called to labor or to speak for God. Our heavenly Father alone sees what He can make of men. There are before us possibilities which our feeble faith does not discern. Our minds should be so trained that if necessary we can present the truths of His word before the highest earthly authorities in such a way as to glorify His name.—Christ's Object Lessons, 333, 334.{ChS 62.4}

Who have been preparing themselves to go and work in His vineyard? God is not pleased with novices. He wants us to make the very best and highest use that is possible of the talents that He has given us.—The Review and Herald, April 2, 1889.{ChS 62.5}

Illustration

I had dreamed that a person brought to me a web of white cloth, and bade me cut it into garments for persons of all sizes, and all descriptions of character, and circumstances in life. I was told to cut them out, and hang them up all ready to be made when called for. I had the impression that many for whom I was required to cut garments were unworthy. I inquired if that was the last piece of cloth I should have to cut, and was told that it was not; that as soon as I had finished this one, there were others for me to take hold of.{ChS 63.1}

I felt discouraged at the amount of work before me, and stated that I had been engaged in cutting garments for others for more than twenty years, and my labors had not been appreciated, neither did I see that my work had accomplished much good. I spoke to the person who brought the cloth to me, of one woman in particular, for whom he had told me to cut a garment. I stated that she would not prize the garment, and that it would be a loss of time and material to present it to her. She was very poor, of inferior intellect, and untidy in her habits, and would soon soil it. The person replied, "Cut out the garments. That is your duty. The loss is not yours, but mine. God sees not as man sees. He lays out the work that He would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that. It will be found that many such poor souls will go into the kingdom, while others, who are favored with all the blessings of life, having all the advantages of improvement, will be left out.—Testimonies for the Church 2:10, 11.{ChS 63.2}

For hours, soldiers are drilled to disencumber themselves of their knapsacks, and place them quickly in position again upon the person. They are taught how to stack their arms, and how to seize them quickly. They are drilled in making a charge against the enemy, and are trained in all kinds of maneuvers. Thus the drill goes on, preparing men for any emergency. And should those who are fighting the battle for Prince Emmanuel be less earnest and painstaking in their preparation for the spiritual warfare?—Gospel Workers, 75.{ChS 63.3}

Questions to Ponder May 16, 2015

1. What was Timothy, Paul and Barnabas's strategy in church planting?
2. What can we learn from the "White Cloth" dream?

3rd Week.

Dates: May 17 to 23, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 64.1- 66.2

Chapter 6—Students to do Missionary Work While in Training

Object of Education

True education is missionary training. Every son and daughter of God is called to be a missionary; we are called to the service of God and our fellow men; and to fit us for this service should be the object of our education.—The Ministry of Healing, 395.{ChS 64.1}

It is to fortify the youth against the temptations of the enemy that we have established schools where they may be qualified for usefulness in this life and for the service of God throughout eternity.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 495.{ChS 64.2}

He who strives to obtain knowledge in order that he may labor for the ignorant and perishing, is acting his part in fulfilling God's great purpose for mankind. In unselfish service for the blessing of others he is meeting the high ideal of Christian education.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 545.{ChS 64.3}

The Lord calls for strong, devoted, self-sacrificing young men and women, who will press to the front, and who, after a short time spent in school, will go forth prepared to give the message to the world.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 549.{ChS 64.4}

Learning by Doing

It is necessary to their complete education that students be given time to do missionary work—time to become acquainted with the spiritual needs of the families in the community around them. They should not be so loaded down with studies that they have no time to use the knowledge they have acquired. They should be encouraged to make earnest missionary effort for those in error, becoming acquainted with them, and taking to them the truth. By working in humility, seeking wisdom from Christ, praying and watching unto prayer, they may give to others the knowledge that has enriched their lives.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 545, 546.{ChS 64.5}

Wherever possible, students should, during the school year, engage in city mission work. They should do missionary work in the surrounding towns and villages. They can form themselves into bands to do Christian help work. Students should take a broad view of their present obligations to God. They are not to look forward to a time, after the school term closes, when they will do some large work for God, but should study how, during their student life, to yoke up with Christ in unselfish service for others.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 547.{ChS 65.1}

It is not enough to fill the minds of the youth with lessons of deep importance; they must learn to impart what they have received.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 545.{ChS 65.2}

From our colleges and training schools missionaries are to be sent forth to distant lands. While at school, let the students improve every opportunity to prepare for this work. Here they are to be tested and proved, that it may be seen what their adaptability is, and whether they have a right hold from above.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 549.{ChS 65.3}

Encourage a Missionary Spirit

The teachers and students in our schools need the divine touch. God can do much more for them than He has done, because in the past His way has been restricted. If a missionary spirit is encouraged, even if it takes some hours from the program of regular study, much of Heaven's blessing will be given, provided there is more faith and spiritual zeal, more of a realization of what God will do.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 546.{ChS 65.4}

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When School Closes

When school closes, there is opportunity for many to go out into the field as evangelistic canvassers. The faithful colporteur finds his way into many homes, where he leaves reading matter containing the truth for this time. Our students should learn how to sell our books. There is need of men of deep Christian experience, men of well-balanced minds, strong, well-educated men, to engage in this branch of the work. Some have the talent, education, and experience that would enable them to educate the youth for canvassing work in such a way that much more would be accomplished than is now being done. Those who have this experience have a special duty to perform in teaching others.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 546, 547. {ChS 65.5}

The Ministry of Song

Students who have learned to sing sweet gospel songs with melody and distinctness, can do much good as singing evangelists. They will find many opportunities to use the talent that God has given them in carrying melody and sunshine into many lonely places darkened by sorrow and affliction, singing to those who seldom have church privileges.{ChS 66.1}

Students, go out into the highways and hedges. Endeavor to reach the higher as well as the lower classes. Enter the homes of the rich as well as the poor, and as you have opportunity, ask, "Would you be pleased to have us sing some gospel hymns?" Then as hearts are softened, the way may open for you to offer a few words of prayer for the blessing of God. Not many will refuse to listen. Such ministry is genuine missionary work.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 547, 548.{ChS 66.2}

Questions to Ponder May 23, 2015

1. How is True Education defined?

4th Week.

Dates: May 24 to 30, 2015

Reading Assignment: Pages 67.1- 68.4

**Chapter 7—Co-operation of Ministers and Laymen
Unitedly Enter the Field of Service**

Let ministers and lay members go forth into the ripening fields. They will find their harvest wherever they proclaim the forgotten truths of the Bible. They will find those who will accept the truth, and who will devote their lives to winning souls to Christ.—Australian The Signs of the Times, August 3, 1903.{ChS 67.1}

It is not the Lord's purpose that ministers should be left to do the greatest part of the work of sowing the seeds of truth. Men who are not called to the ministry are to be encouraged to labor for the Master according to their several ability. Hundreds of men and women now idle could do acceptable service. By carrying the truth into the homes of their friends and neighbors, they could do a great work for the Master.—Testimonies for the Church 7:21.{ChS 67.2}

God has given His ministers the message of truth to proclaim. This the churches are to receive, and in every possible way to communicate, catching the first rays of light and diffusing them.—Testimonies for the Church 6:425.{ChS 67.3}

The people must lift where the minister lifts, thus seconding his efforts and helping him bear his burdens, and then he will not be overworked and become discouraged. There is no influence that can be brought to bear on a church that will be enduring unless the people shall move intelligently, from principle, to do all they can to forward the work.—The Review and Herald, August 23, 1881.{ChS 67.4}

A Convincing Combination

The world will be convinced, not by what the pulpit teaches, but by what the church lives. The minister in the desk announces the theory of the gospel; the practical piety of the church demonstrates its power.—Testimonies for the Church 7:16.{ChS 67.5}

The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.—Gospel Workers, 352.{ChS 68.1}

Preaching is a small part of the work to be done for the salvation of souls. God's Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do.—Testimonies for the Church 4:69.{ChS 68.2}

The dissemination of the truth of God is not confined to a few ordained ministers. The truth is to be scattered by all who claim to be disciples of Christ. It must be sown beside all waters.—The Review and Herald, August 22, 1899.{ChS 68.3}

Ministers may preach pleasing and forcible discourses, and much labor may be put forth to build up and make the church prosperous; but unless its individual members shall act their part as servants of Jesus Christ, the church will ever be in darkness and without strength. Hard and dark as the world is, the influence of a really consistent example will be a power for good.—Testimonies for the Church 4:285, 286.{ChS 68.4}

Questions to Ponder May 30, 2015

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1. How will the World be convinced about the Present Truth?