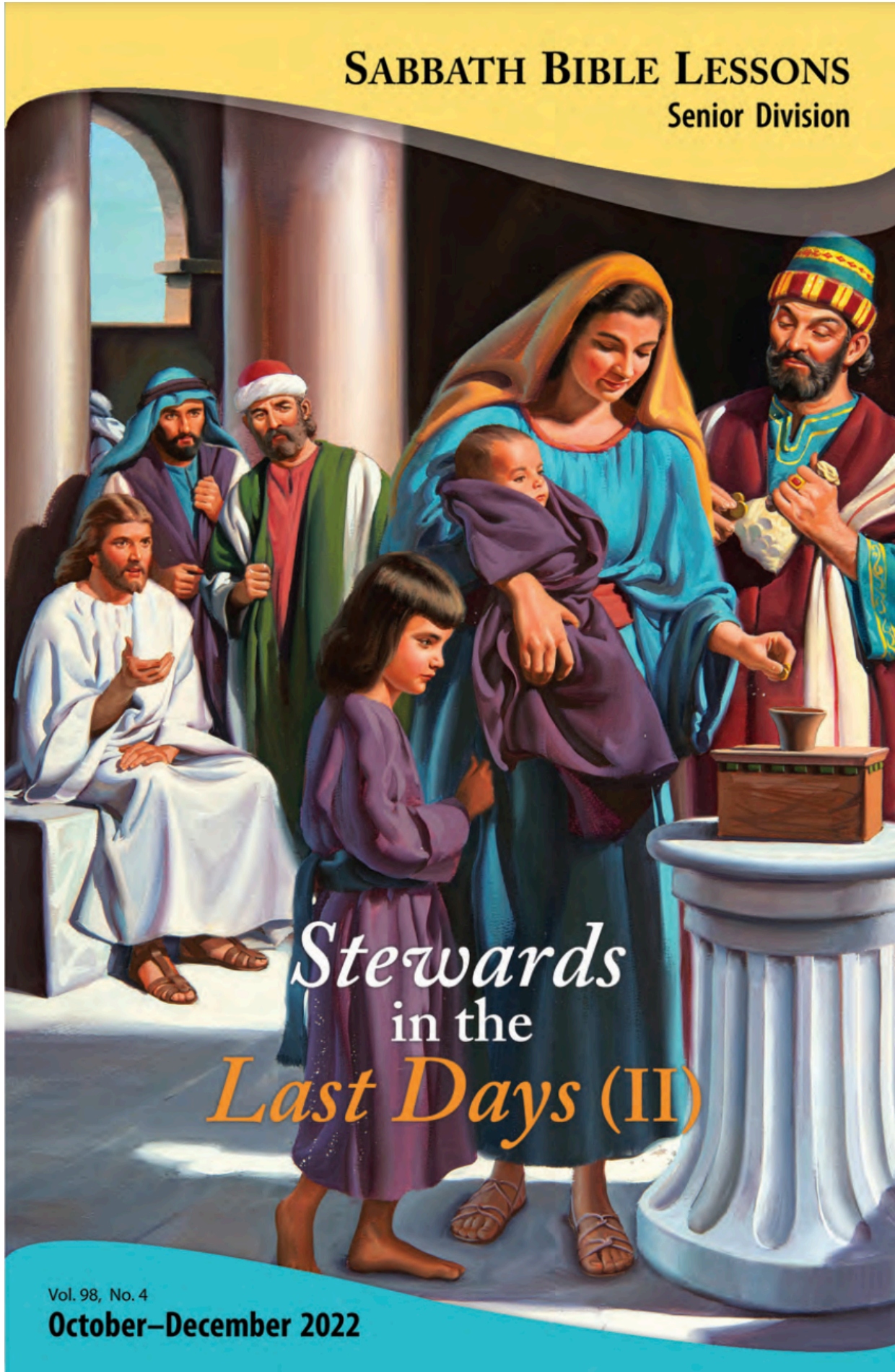


SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS

Senior Division



Stewards in the *Last Days (II)*

Vol. 98, No. 4

October–December 2022

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Forward

We are running out of time! For nearly 180 years, this old planet has been ripe for Christ's return in the clouds of glory. What should be our focus at this late hour? Surely the heavenly Canaan—and how to prepare ourselves and others to be there.

Our topic of study for this quarter is a continuation of Stewards in the Last Days. While on earth, Jesus met a man who claimed to have kept all Ten Commandments from his youth. “Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me” (Mark 10:21).

Are we laying up treasure in heaven? Or, like the rich young ruler, may we be outwardly keeping the Ten Commandments while lacking true heart service for the Master? All that God has given us belongs to Him, and we must make provision for this before our probation closes. Yet, “without obedience and unselfish love, the richest offerings are too meager to be presented to the Possessor of all things” (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 57). It is God's purpose that His children overcome selfishness and fulfill His plan for the evangelization of the earth. He is now preparing a people to do this work—and it will be done whether or not everyone takes hold of the privilege of being involved.

“God calls for men to give the warning to the world that is asleep, dead in trespasses and sins. He calls for freewill offerings from those whose hearts are in the work, who have a burden for souls, that they shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Satan is playing the game of life for the souls of men. He is seeking to secure means, that he may bind it up, so that it shall not be used in advancing the missionary enterprises. Shall we be ignorant of his devices? Shall we allow him to stupefy our senses?”—Ibid., vol.6, p. 446.

“For what shall we hoard up treasures? To be swept away by the flames of the last day? Shall we lay up gold and silver, to be a witness against us in the Judgment—to eat our flesh as it were fire? Shall we cling to our possessions till they fall into the hands of our enemies? The time is coming when commandment keepers can neither buy nor sell. Of what use will houses and lands, bank stock and merchandise, be to us then? Now is the time to place our treasures where they will be eternally secure. . . . That which we give to the cause of God becomes our own forever. Says Christ, ‘Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven’ [Matthew 6:20]. These alone, of all that we possess, are really ours. All that we lay up on earth, we must leave at last. It is only what we give for Christ that we can take with us into the eternal world.”—The Review and Herald, December 6, 1887. [Author's italics.]

The General Conference Sabbath School Department

October - First Sabbath Offering for the Bolivian Union Headquarters

Bolivia is a landlocked nation in the central-western region of South America, bordered on the north and east by Brazil, on the south by Paraguay and Argentina, and on the west by Chile and Peru. While situated in a tropical area, Bolivia has a wide range of temperatures due to the varied altitudes found here—with temperatures ranging from those typically found in the equatorial lowlands all the way to arctic cold. There are over 11.5 million inhabitants living here in an area of 5,479 square miles (1,099 million km²).

The population of Bolivia is multicultural; the main language spoken is Spanish (88.4%) as the mother tongue, followed by the second languages of some among the indigenous peoples: Quechua (25%), Aymara (11%), Guaraní (1%) and others (4%)—including 34 additional indigenous languages.

Bolivia is currently a secular state that guarantees its people freedom of worship. The SDARM message arrived here in the 1940's. The work developed rapidly over the years, as part of the Southern South American Union together with Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

By 1994, the work in Bolivia had grown sufficiently to form a distinct Union—the Bolivian Union—which began operations in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. As the work has continued to advance, we now see the need to build a new headquarters in the city of Cochabamba. With this goal in mind, the brethren together with the Bolivian Union Council, have acquired a large parcel of land that one of our brethren generously donated specifically for this purpose.

In order to build, we will need the kind help of our brethren worldwide. We thank you in advance for your kind contribution toward the development of the cause of God here in Bolivia. They are among those of whom it is written, “in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law.”—Prophets and Kings, pp. 188, 189.

Please extend your helping hand today. May the Lord bless you!

Your brothers and sisters of the Bolivian Union

Lesson 1 - Sabbath, October 1, 2022

The Creator and Owner

MEMORY TEXT: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

“Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the Source and Sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 305.

Suggested Reading: *Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 290-295.*

Sunday, September 25

1. CREATOR AND MAINTAINER

a. What should we realize in gazing upon the magnificent splendor of creation? Psalm 19:1–3; Isaiah 40:18, 21, 22, 26.

Psalm 19:1–3: *1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*

Isaiah 40:18: *18 To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?*

Isaiah 40:21–22: *21 Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:*

Isaiah 40:26: *26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.*

“[Psalm 19:1–3 quoted.] Some may suppose that these grand things in the natural world are God. They are not God. All these wonders in the heavens are only doing the work appointed them. They are the Lord’s agencies. God is the superintendent, as well as the Creator, of all things.” —Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 293, 294.

PRQ1. What facts reveal that our Creator is also our Sustainer?

Sunday, September 25

1. CREATOR AND MAINTAINER

b. What aspect of God’s omnipotence touches us daily? Acts 17:24–29.

Acts 17:24–29: 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with mens hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and mans device.

“The physical organism of man is under the supervision of God; but it is not like a clock, which is set in operation, and must go of itself. The heart beats, pulse succeeds pulse, breath succeeds breath, but the entire being is under the supervision of God. . . . Each heartbeat, each breath, is the inspiration of Him who breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life—the inspiration of the ever-present God, the great I AM.”—*Ibid.*, pp.294, 295.

PRQ1. What facts reveal that our Creator is also our Sustainer?

Monday, September 26

2. WORTHY OF REVERENCE

a. What facts show that God is unique in deserving our continual worship?

Psalm 33:6–9; Jeremiah 10:9–13.

Psalm 33:6–9: *6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. 9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.*

Jeremiah 10:9–13: *9 Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple is their clothing: they are all the work of cunning men. 10 But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. 11 Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. 12 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. 13 When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.*

“God’s claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 336.

“The Divine Being is engaged in upholding the things that He has created. The same hand that holds the mountains and balances them in position, guides the worlds in their mysterious march around the sun. . . .

“God furnishes the matter and the properties with which to carry out His plans. He employs His agencies that vegetation may flourish. He sends the dew and the rain and the sunshine, that verdure may spring forth, and spread its carpet over the earth; that the shrubs and fruit trees may bud and blossom and bring forth.”—Selected Messages, bk. 1, p. 294.

PRQ2. Why is God alone worthy to be worshipped?

Monday, September 26

2. WORTHY OF REVERENCE

b. What questions should inspire us with reverence for God? Job 11:7; 38:1–7. In what way can reverence for our Creator impact our salvation?

Job 11:7: 7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

Job 38:1–7: 1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

“Divine inspiration asks many questions which the most profound scholar cannot answer. These questions were not asked, supposing that we could answer them, but to call our attention to the deep mysteries of God, and to make men know that their wisdom is limited; that in the common things of daily life there are mysteries past the comprehension of finite minds; that the judgment and purposes of God are past finding out, His wisdom unsearchable. If He reveals Himself to man, it is by shrouding Himself in the thick cloud of mystery.

“God’s purpose is to conceal more of Himself than He makes known to man. Could men fully understand the ways and works of God, they would not then believe Him to be the infinite One. He is not to be comprehended by man in His wisdom, and reasons, and purposes. ‘His ways are past finding out’ (Romans 11:33). His love can never be explained upon natural principles. If this could be done, we would not feel that we could trust Him with the interests of our souls. Skeptics refuse to believe, because with their finite minds they cannot comprehend the infinite power by which God reveals Himself to men. Even the mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent.”—The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 3, p. 1141.

PRQ2. Why is God alone worthy to be worshipped?

Tuesday, September 27

3. TRUE OWNERSHIP

a. What has God always wanted us to understand regarding the ownership of property? Psalm 50:7, 10–12.

Psalm 50:7: *7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.*

Psalm 50:10–12: *10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. 11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*

“The Lord sought to teach Israel that in everything He must be first. Thus they were reminded that God was the proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that it was He who sent them the sunshine and the rain that developed and ripened the harvest. Everything that they possessed was His.” —The Acts of the Apostles, p. 337.

“Our bodies belong to God. He paid the price of redemption for the body as well as the soul. ‘Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.’ 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. ‘The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.’ Verse 13. The Creator watches over the human machinery, keeping it in motion. Were it not for His constant care, the pulse would not beat, the action of the heart would cease, the brain would no longer act its part.” —Counsels on Health, p. 586.

PRQ3. How should we respond when we consider that God owns everything, and that he has entrusted dominion of the earth to humans?

Tuesday, September 27

3. TRUE OWNERSHIP

b. How extensive is God’s property? Psalm 24:1, 2; Deuteronomy 10:14. What does this mean to us? Revelation 4:11.

Psalm 24:1-2: *1 The earth is the LORDS, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.*

Deuteronomy 10:14: *14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORDS thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.*

Revelation 4:11: *11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

“Consider that there is only one Proprietor of the universe, and that every man, with his time, his intellect, his resources, belongs to the One who has paid the ransom for the soul. God has a righteous claim to constant service and supreme affection. God’s will, not your pleasure, is to be your criterion.” — Selected Messages, bk. 2, p. 137.

“We should not forget that we are in the service of God, and that he owns us, and he owns the world. Though we are all poor and unable to do large things, the Lord calls upon every soul to practice self-denial in this time of scarcity, and be able to give, not grudgingly nor of necessity, but with cheerful gratitude for God’s unspeakable gift.” — The Review and Herald, August 21, 1894.

“Those who have a constant realization that they stand in this relation to God will not place in the stomach food which pleases the appetite, but which injures the digestive organs. They will not spoil the property of God by indulging improper habits of eating, drinking, or dressing. They will take great care of the human machinery, realizing that they must do this in order to work in copartnership with God. He wills that they shall be healthy, happy, and useful. But in order for them to be this, they must place their wills on the side of His will.” — Child Guidance, p. 399.

PRQ3. How should we respond when we consider that God owns everything, and that he has entrusted dominion of the earth to humans?

Wednesday, September 28

4. WHO HAS DOMINION?

a. To whom did God entrust dominion over His earthly goods? Genesis 1:26–28. Why is this an honor to humanity? Psalm 8:1–9.

Genesis 1:26–28: *26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

Psalm 8:1–9: *1 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. 2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. 3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!*

“He who set the starry worlds on high and tinted with delicate skill the flowers of the field, who filled the earth and the heavens with the wonders of His power, when He came to crown His glorious work, to place one in the midst to stand as ruler of the fair earth, did not fail to create a being worthy of the hand that gave him life. The genealogy of our race, as given by inspiration, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds, but to the great Creator. Though formed from the dust, Adam was ‘the son of God’ [Luke 3:38].” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 45.

Wednesday, September 28

4. WHO HAS DOMINION?

b. Because of Adam's fall, what did the deceiver boast to Christ? Luke 4:5, 6.

Luke 4:5-6: *5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.*

PRQ4. What should we understand about Satan's usurped authority?

Wednesday, September 28

4. WHO HAS DOMINION?

c. When is Christ's dominion over this planet to be fully recovered? Daniel 7:13, 14, 26, 27; Micah 4:8; Revelation 11:15.

Daniel 7:13-14: *13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

Daniel 7:26-27: *26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

Micah 4:8: *8 And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.*

Revelation 11:15: *15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

“When Satan declared to Christ, The kingdom and glory of the world are delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it, he stated what was true only in part, and he declared it to serve his own purpose of deception. Satan's dominion was that wrested from Adam, but Adam was the vicegerent of the Creator. His was not an independent rule. The earth is God's, and He has committed all things to His Son. Adam was to reign subject to Christ. When Adam betrayed his sovereignty into Satan's hands, Christ still remained the rightful King. Thus the Lord had said to King Nebuchadnezzar, ‘The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will’ (Daniel 4:17). Satan can exercise his usurped authority only as God permits.” — The Desire of Ages, pp. 129, 130.

Continued...

“Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of Days in heaven, ‘dominion, and glory, and a kingdom;’ He will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom, ‘prepared as a bride adorned for her husband’ (Daniel 7:14; Revelation 21:2). Having received the kingdom, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to ‘sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,’ at His table in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30), to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb.”—The Great Controversy, p. 427.

PRQ4. What should we understand about Satan’s usurped authority?

Thursday, September 29

5. STEWARDSHIP ENTRUSTED

a. Whenever any degree of dominion—great or small—is entrusted to us, what admonition are we to heed? Deuteronomy 8:11–18.

Deuteronomy 8:11–18: *11 Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: 12 Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; 13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; 14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 15 Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; 16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; 17 And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. 18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.*

“We should regard ourselves as stewards of the Lord’s property and God as the supreme proprietor, to whom we are to render His own when He shall require it.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 480, 481.

PRQ5. What temptation comes when we are entrusted with goods?

Thursday, September 29

5. STEWARDSHIP ENTRUSTED

b. What message bears special force in these final days, just before our Lord's return? Luke 19:11–13.

Luke 19:11–13: *11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. 12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

“God calls us servants, which implies that we are employed by Him to do a certain work and bear certain responsibilities. He has lent us capital for investment. It is not our property, and we displease God if we hoard up our Lord's goods or spend them as we please. . . .

“Every talent which returns to the Master will be scrutinized. The doings and trusts of God's servants will not be considered an unimportant matter. Every individual will be dealt with personally and will be required to give an account of the talents entrusted to him, whether he has improved or abused them. The reward bestowed will be proportionate to the improvement of the talents. The punishment awarded will be according as the talents have been abused. . . .

“The talents are in our hands. Shall we use them to God's glory, or shall we abuse them? We may trade with them today, but tomorrow our probation may end and our account be forever fixed.” —Ibid., vol.2, p. 668. [Author's Italics.]

PRQ5. What temptation comes when we are entrusted with goods?

Friday, September 30

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What facts reveal that our Creator is also our Sustainer?

2. Why is God alone worthy to be worshipped?

3. How should we respond when we consider that God owns everything, and that he has entrusted dominion of the earth to humans?

4. What should we understand about Satan's usurped authority?

5. What temptation comes when we are entrusted with goods?

Sunday, October 2

1. DISTINCTIONS OF GOD'S CHARACTER

a. After bestowing life upon humanity, what else did God provide? Genesis 2:7, 15. Why is this a blessing for us? Ecclesiastes 5:12, 18.

Genesis 2:7: *7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

Genesis 2:15: *15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

Ecclesiastes 5:12: *12 The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.*

Ecclesiastes 5:18: *18 Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.*

“Adam was not to be idle. No sooner was he created than his work was given him. He was to find employment and happiness in tending the things that God had created, and in response to his labor his wants were to be abundantly supplied from the fruits of the Garden of Eden.” —Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, pp. 273, 274.

PRQ1. Name some simple gifts of God bestowed from the days of Eden.

Sunday, October 2

1. DISTINCTIONS OF GOD'S CHARACTER

b. What daily evidences reveal God's abundant love for us? Psalm 36:5–9; Lamentations 3:22, 23; Acts 14:17.

Psalm 36:5–9: *5 Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. 6 Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. 7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. 8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. 9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.*

Lamentations 3:22-23: *22 It is of the LORDS mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

Acts 14:17: *17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.*

“We are indebted to [God] for every moment of existence, and for all the comforts of life.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 17.

“The Lord has given His life to the trees and vines of His creation. His word can increase or decrease the fruit of the land. If men would open their understanding to discern the relation between nature and nature's God, faithful acknowledgments of the Creator's power would be heard. Without the life of God, nature would die. His creative works are dependent upon Him. He bestows life-giving properties on all that nature produces. We are to regard the trees laden with fruit as the gift of God, just as much as though He placed the fruit in our hands.”—Lift Him Up, p. 62.

PRQ1. Name some simple gifts of God bestowed from the days of Eden.

Monday, October 3

2. THE GREATEST GIFT

a. What is the greatest of God's gifts? John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4–7.

John 3:16: *16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Ephesians 2:4–7: *4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

“The treasure of the gospel, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, was among [the Jewish people], but they rejected the greatest gift that Heaven could bestow.”—Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 105.

“The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour’s life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings—all are enlisted in behalf of man’s redemption.”—Steps to Christ, p. 21.

“Christ has purchased us by the price of His own blood. He has paid the purchase money for our redemption, and if we will lay hold upon the treasure, it is ours by the free gift of God.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 245.

Monday, October 3

2. THE GREATEST GIFT

b. When we follow Christ, what gift does the Father promise to His Son?

John 6:37–39; 17:24. Why should this fact encourage all? James 1:17, 18.

John 6:37–39: *37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Fathers will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

John 17:24: *24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

James 1:17-18: *17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

“How much God loves human beings, we never can compute. The universe is filled with proofs of His measureless benevolence.

“Christ has a claim on all in this world. ‘All things are delivered unto Me of My Father,’ He said [Luke 10:22]. ‘All things that the Father hath are mine.’ ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth’ [John 16:15; Matthew 28:18]. All in heaven and in earth is at His service. The great gift of heavenly love was not to be shut up in the bosom of the Father. It was to Christ, to give to needy human beings.

“Christ is full of grace and truth. He is all and in all. Then let no human being take glory to himself. The glory is to be given to the Son of God. Now and forever He is to receive all praise.”—Battle Creek Letters, p. 65.

“Because we are the gift of His Father, and the reward of His work, Jesus loves us. He loves us as His children. Reader, He loves you. Heaven itself can bestow nothing greater, nothing better.”—The Desire of Ages, p. 483.

“It is your privilege to trust in the love of Jesus for salvation, in the fullest, surest, noblest manner; to say, He loves me, He receives me; I will trust Him, for He gave His life for me. Nothing so dispels doubt as coming in contact with the character of Christ.”—Testimonies to Ministers, p. 517.

PRQ2. How does God's greatest gift involve a reciprocal relationship?

Tuesday, October 4

3. WHO IS CHRIST?

a. As we reverence the heavenly Father as Creator, what should we also understand about Jesus Christ? Hebrews 1:1–3; John 1:1–3.

Hebrews 1:1–3: *1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

John 1:1–3: *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

“If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.”—Lift Him Up, p. 16.

“Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, and in purpose—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings. ‘By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers’ (Colossians 1:16); and to Christ, equally with the Father, all heaven gave allegiance.”—The Great Controversy, p. 493.

Tuesday, October 4

3. WHO IS CHRIST?

b. Upon what basis is Christ entitled to our worship and discipleship?

Ephesians 3:9; Philippians 2:5–10.

Ephesians 3:9: *9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:*

Philippians 2:5–10: *5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

“The greatest gift that God could bestow upon men was bestowed in the gift of His beloved Son. The apostle says, ‘He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?’ (Romans 8:32). There was nothing held in reserve. No second probation will ever be provided. If the unspeakable gift of God does not lead man to repentance, there is nothing that ever will move his heart. There is no power held in reserve to act upon his mind, and arouse his sensibilities. The whole character of God was revealed in His Son, the whole range of the possibilities of heaven is displayed for the acceptance of man in the Son of the Infinite One. The way for man’s return to God and heaven has no barriers. The matchless depths of the Saviour’s love have been demonstrated; and if this manifestation of God’s love for the children of men does not prevail to draw men to Himself, there is nothing that ever will.” — The Signs of the Times, December 30, 1889.

“The apostle Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, declares of Christ that ‘all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together’ (Colossians 1:16, 17, RV, margin). The hand that sustains the worlds in space, the hand that holds in their orderly arrangement and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for us.” — Education, p. 132.

PRQ3. Why is it important for us to understand who Christ really is?

Wednesday, October 5

4. A HEAVENLY PRINCIPLE

a. What fundamental concept should we learn from the example of Christ's earthly life? Luke 22:27 (last part); Hebrews 5:8; 12:2, 3.

Luke 22:27: *27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.*

Hebrews 5:8: *8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*

Hebrews 12:2-3: *2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

“The foundation of the plan of salvation was laid in sacrifice. Jesus left the royal courts and became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. All who share this salvation, purchased for them at such an infinite sacrifice by the Son of God, will follow the example of the true Pattern. Christ was the chief Cornerstone, and we must build upon this Foundation. Each must have a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. The life of Christ upon earth was unselfish; it was marked with humiliation and sacrifice. And shall men, partakers of the great salvation which Jesus came from heaven to bring them, refuse to follow their Lord and to share in His self-denial and sacrifice?” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 387. [Author's Italics.]

PRQ4. What fundamental principle underlies the entire plan of salvation?

Wednesday, October 5

4. A HEAVENLY PRINCIPLE

b. In what sense are we to gladly follow Christ's example of sacrifice? 1 Peter 2:21; Romans 12:1, 2.

1 Peter 2:21: *21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

Romans 12:1-2: *1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

“Christ sacrificed everything for man in order to make it possible for him to gain heaven. Now it is for fallen man to show what he will sacrifice on his own account for Christ's sake, that he may win immortal glory. Those who have any just sense of the magnitude of salvation and of its cost will never murmur that their sowing must be in tears and that conflict and self-denial are the Christian's portion in this life.”—Ibid., p.481.

“[Christ] laid aside His glory, His dominion, His riches, and sought after those who were perishing in sin. He humbled Himself to our necessities, that He might exalt us to heaven. Sacrifice, self-denial, and disinterested benevolence characterized His life. He is our pattern. Have you . . . imitated the Pattern?”—Ibid., vol.2, p. 549.

“The words, ‘Ye are not your own,’ ‘ye are bought with a price’ [1 Corinthians 6:19, 20], should be hung in memory's hall, that we may ever recognize God's right to our talents, our property, our influence, our individual selves. We are to learn how to treat this gift of God, in mind, in soul, in body, that as Christ's purchased possession we may do Him healthful savory service.”—Medical Ministry, p. 276.

PRQ4. What fundamental principle underlies the entire plan of salvation?

Thursday, October 6

5. GRACE GRANTED

a. What is grace—and why is it essential for our salvation? Romans 5:6–9; Ephesians 2:8, 9.

Romans 5:6–9: *6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

Ephesians 2:8-9: *8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

“Grace is unmerited favor, and the believer is justified without any merit of his own, without any claim to offer to God. He is justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who stands in the courts of heaven as the sinner’s substitute and surety.”
—Selected Messages, bk. 1, p. 398.

“[The Saviour’s] grace is sufficient to subdue sin.” —The Faith I Live By, p. 87.

PRQ5. How does grace from God impact our preparation for Heaven?

Thursday, October 6

5. GRACE GRANTED

b. How should we respond to God’s bountiful grace? Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:11–14.

Ephesians 2:10: *10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Titus 2:11–14: *11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

“Are good works of no real value? Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity? The Scripture answers, ‘We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.’

“In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ’s merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works.

“It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us.”—Selected Messages, bk. 3, pp. 199, 200.

“All your good works cannot save you; but it is nevertheless impossible for you to be saved without good works. Every sacrifice made for Christ will be for your eternal gain.”—Ibid., p.147.

PRQ5. How does grace from God impact our preparation for Heaven?

Friday, October 7

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. Name some simple gifts of God bestowed from the days of Eden.**
- 2. How does God's greatest gift involve a reciprocal relationship?**
- 3. Why is it important for us to understand who Christ really is?**
- 4. What fundamental principle underlies the entire plan of salvation?**
- 5. How does grace from God impact our preparation for Heaven?**

Lesson 3 - Sabbath, October 15, 2022

All on the Altar

MEMORY TEXT: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment” (Mark 12:30).

“The whole being—heart, soul, mind, and strength—is to be used in God’s service. What is there left that is not devoted to God?”—The Review and Herald, November 6, 1900.

Suggested Reading: *Early Writings, pp. 266-269.*

Sunday, October 9

1. MOTIVE FOR SERVICE

a. What aspects of discipleship are often overlooked by many who profess to follow Christ? Mark 8:34; John 15:19, 20.

Mark 8:34: *34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

John 15:19-20: *19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

“Few are willing to imitate [Christ’s] amazing privations, to endure His sufferings and persecutions, and to share His exhausting labor to bring others to the light. But few will follow His example in earnest, frequent prayer to God for strength to endure the trials of this life and perform its daily duties. Christ is the Captain of our salvation, and by His own sufferings and sacrifice He has given an example to all His followers that watchfulness and prayer, and persevering effort, were necessary on their part if they would rightly represent the love which dwelt in His bosom for the fallen race.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, p. 664.

PRQ1. How did the life of Job reflect the Spirit of Christ?

Sunday, October 9

1. MOTIVE FOR SERVICE

b. What contrast exists between true and false service? Job 31:24–28; 29:11–16. Why must we reexamine our motives?

Job 31:24–28: *24 If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; 25 If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much; 26 If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; 27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: 28 This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.*

Job 29:11–16: *11 When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: 12 Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. 13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widows heart to sing for joy. 14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. 15 I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. 16 I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.*

“With many, the rubbish of the world has clogged the channels of the soul. Selfishness has controlled the mind and warped the character. Were the life hid with Christ in God, His service would be no drudgery. If the whole heart were consecrated to God, all would find something to do, and would covet a part in the work. They would sow beside all waters, praying and believing that the fruit would appear.”—The Review and Herald, December 19, 1878.

PRQ1. How did the life of Job reflect the Spirit of Christ?

Monday, October 10

2. THE KEYNOTE OF CHRIST'S TEACHINGS

a. What unfortunate contrast exists between Christ Himself and many of His professed followers today? Philippians 2:5–8, 21.

Philippians 2:5–8: *5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Philippians 2:21: *21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs.*

“The plan of salvation was laid in a sacrifice so broad and deep and high that it is immeasurable. Christ did not send His angels to this fallen world, while He remained in heaven; but He Himself went without the camp, bearing the reproach. He became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; Himself took our infirmities, and bore our weaknesses. And the absence of self-denial in His professed followers, God regards as a denial of the Christian name. Those who profess to be one with Christ, and indulge their selfish desires for rich and expensive clothing, furniture, and food, are Christians only in name. To be a Christian is to be Christlike.

“And yet how true are the words of the apostle: ‘For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s’ [Philippians 2:21]. Many Christians do not have works corresponding to the name they bear. They act as if they had never heard of the plan of redemption wrought out at infinite cost. The majority aim to make a name for themselves in the world; they adopt its forms and ceremonies, and live for the indulgence of self. They follow out their own purposes as eagerly as do the world, and thus they cut off their power to help in establishing the kingdom of God.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 54.

PRQ2. What common tendency must we overcome if we would be victorious?

Monday, October 10

2. THE KEYNOTE OF CHRIST'S TEACHINGS

b. What heavenly principle does Christ enjoin upon all of His followers today? Why? Matthew 16:24–26.

Matthew 16:24–26: *24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

“Those who would gain the blessing of sanctification must first learn the meaning of self-sacrifice. The cross of Christ is the central pillar on which hangs the ‘far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory’ (2 Corinthians 4:17). [Matthew 16:24 quoted.] It is the fragrance of our love for our fellow men that reveals our love for God. It is patience in service that brings rest to the soul.” — The Acts of the Apostles, p. 560.

“We are to practice the same self-sacrifice that led [Christ] to give Himself up to the death of the cross, to make it possible for human beings to have eternal life. 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.

“We are to place in the Lord’s treasury all the means that we can spare. For this means, needy, unworked fields are calling.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 49.

PRQ2. What common tendency must we overcome if we would be victorious?

Tuesday, October 11

3. LEARNING FROM THE APOSTLES

a. What was the secret of the apostle Paul's fervent love for the souls of men and women? 2 Corinthians 4:15–18; 5:14, 15.

2 Corinthians 4:15–18: *15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. 16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

2 Corinthians 5:14-15: *14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

“How can those for whom Christ has sacrificed so much, continue to enjoy His gifts selfishly? His love and self-denial are without a parallel; and when this love enters into the experience of His followers, they will identify their interests with those of their Redeemer. Their work will be to build up the kingdom of Christ. They will consecrate themselves and their possessions to Him, and use both as His cause may require. . . .

“The love of Jesus in the soul will be revealed in word and deed. The kingdom of Christ will be paramount. Self will be laid a willing sacrifice on the altar of God. Everyone who is truly united with Christ will feel the same love for souls that caused the Son of God to leave His royal throne, His high command, and for our sake become poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 55.

PRQ3. What do Paul and John teach us about cultivating eternal values?

Tuesday, October 11

3. LEARNING FROM THE APOSTLES

b. Of what tendency does the apostle John warn believers—and how may this apply to us? 1 John 2:15–17.

1 John 2:15–17: *15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

“As professed Christians, what are we doing? Souls all around us, close beside our homes, and those afar off, are perishing in their sins, unwarned, uncared for. Every day we pass by those who are without hope and without God in the world, and never open our lips to tell them of Christ and His love. A worldly infatuation keeps men and women spellbound. . . . Soldiers of the cross of Christ should be moving heaven with their prayers for God to work, for His power to cooperate with the human agent to reach men where they are.”—Manuscript Releases, vol. 8, p. 95.

“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 knowledge of the sciences, will venture into pestilential regions, and will go into countries where they think they can obtain commercial advantage; but where are the men and women who will change their location, and move their families into regions that are in need of the light of the truth, in order that their example may tell upon those who shall see in them the representatives of Christ?”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 56.

PRQ3. What do Paul and John teach us about cultivating eternal values?

Wednesday, October 12

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITH

a. As servants of Christ, what should characterize our faith? Why? Ephesians 6:6–8.

Ephesians 6:6–8: *6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; 7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: 8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*

“Is there not danger that the precious, immortal inheritance may be eclipsed by the valueless treasure of earth? There is danger that your usefulness may be destroyed, your faith weakened, your soul-temple defiled with buyers and sellers.” — The Review and Herald, June 19, 1888.

PRQ4. Why is covetousness so detrimental to our souls?

Wednesday, October 12

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITH

b. Why did Christ reiterate the tenth commandment during His ministry? Exodus 20:17; Luke 12:15. What is God's remedy to enable us to overcome the terrible sin of selfishness? Hebrews 12:2, 3.

Exodus 20:17: *17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbours wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbours.*

Luke 12:15: *15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

Hebrews 12:2-3: *2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

“Christ is our example. He gave His life as a sacrifice for us, and He asks us to give our lives as a sacrifice for others. Thus we may cast out the selfishness which Satan is constantly striving to implant in our hearts. This selfishness is death to all piety, and can be overcome only by manifesting love to God and to our fellow men. Christ will not permit one selfish person to enter the courts of heaven. No covetous person can pass through the pearly gates; for all covetousness is idolatry.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 26.

“Constant, self-denying benevolence is God's remedy for the cankering sins of selfishness and covetousness. God has arranged systematic benevolence to sustain His cause and relieve the necessities of the suffering and needy. He has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death. Systematic benevolence is designed in the order of God to tear away treasures from the covetous as fast as they are gained and to consecrate them to the Lord, to whom they belong. . . .

Continued...

“Riches make men selfish, and hoarding feeds covetousness; and these evils strengthen by active exercise. God knows our danger and has hedged us about with means to prevent our own ruin. He requires the constant exercise of benevolence, that the force of habit in good works may break the force of habit in an opposite direction.

“By exercise, benevolence constantly enlarges and strengthens, until it becomes a principle and reigns in the soul. It is highly dangerous to spirituality to allow selfishness and covetousness the least room in the heart.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, pp. 548, 549.

PRQ4. Why is covetousness so detrimental to our souls?

Thursday, October 13

5. FULL SUBMISSION

a. How can we be encouraged by the example of the early Christians in Macedonia? 2 Corinthians 8:1–5.

2 Corinthians 8:1–5: *1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; 2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; 4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.*

“Nearly all the Macedonian believers were poor in this world’s goods, but their hearts were overflowing with love for God and His truth, and they gladly gave for the support of the gospel. When general collections were taken up in the Gentile churches for the relief of the Jewish believers, the liberality of the converts in Macedonia was held up as an example to other churches.” — The Acts of the Apostles, p. 343.

PRQ5. How is wholehearted service rewarded, even in this earthly life?

Thursday, October 13

5. FULL SUBMISSION

b. How does Christ summarize our duty as believers? Mark 12:29–31. What happens as we put this principle into daily practice? Matthew 7:24, 25.

Mark 12:29–31: *29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. 31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.*

Matthew 7:24-25: *24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.*

“The whole being is to be consecrated to the service of the Master.” — The General Conference Bulletin, April 16, 1901.

“No one can be truly united with Christ, practicing His lessons, submitting to His yoke of restraint, without realizing that which he can never express in words. New, rich thoughts come to him. Light is given to the intellect, determination to the will, sensitiveness to the conscience, purity to the imagination. The heart becomes more tender, the thoughts more spiritual, the service more Christlike. In the life there is seen that which no words can express—true, faithful, loving devotion of heart, mind, soul, and strength to the work of the Master.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, pp. 476, 477.

PRQ5. How is wholehearted service rewarded, even in this earthly life?

Friday, October 14

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. How did the life of Job reflect the Spirit of Christ?**
- 2. What common tendency must we overcome if we would be victorious?**
- 3. What do Paul and John teach us about cultivating eternal values?**
- 4. Why is covetousness so detrimental to our souls?**
- 5. How is wholehearted service rewarded, even in this earthly life?**

Lesson 4 - Sabbath, October 22, 2022

As Unto the Lord

MEMORY TEXT: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:19).

“All the advantages which God has given are His means to throw ardor into the spirit, zeal into effort, and vigor into the carrying out of His holy will.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 360.

Suggested Reading: Colporteur Ministry, pp. 154, 155.

Sunday, October 16

1. A NEW ATTITUDE NEEDED

a. What should we learn from Christ's warning against murmuring and half-hearted service? Matthew 25:14, 15, 18, 24–30.

Matthew 25:14-15: *14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.*

Matthew 25:18: *18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lords money.*

Matthew 24–30: *24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. 26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: 27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

“How many feel as did the servant with the one talent, that the Lord is an austere man, reaping where He has not sown, and gathering where He has not strewn. This view of the matter is a delusion of the wicked one; for what have we that we did not receive? ‘All things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given Thee’ [1 Chronicles 29:14], should be the language of our grateful hearts.”—The Review and Herald, June 12, 1888.

PRQ1. What warning should we heed from the parable of the talents?

Sunday, October 16

1. A NEW ATTITUDE NEEDED

b. What admonitions of Christ apply with special force in these last days of earth's history? Matthew 24:12; Revelation 2:4.

Matthew 24:12: *12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

Revelation 2:4: *4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

“The members of the church should each have a jealous care that the enemies of our faith have no occasion to triumph over their lifeless, backslidden state. Some have wasted their influence, when with a little self-denial, earnestness, and zeal, they might have been a power on the side of good. This zeal will not come without effort, without earnest struggles.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 287.

PRQ1. What warning should we heed from the parable of the talents?

Monday, October 17

2. ZEAL: A QUALITY TO SEEK

a. How does the Bible depict the vital importance of zeal for God? Psalms 42:1; 84:2. If this quality is lacking in us, how can we acquire it? Jeremiah 29:13.

Psalms 42:1: *1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

Psalms 84:2: *2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.*

Jeremiah 29:13: *13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

“There are many who give no decided evidence that they are true to their baptismal vows. Their zeal is chilled by formality, worldly ambition, pride, and love of self. Occasionally their feelings are stirred, but they do not fall on the Rock, Christ Jesus. They do not come to God with hearts that are broken in repentance and confession. Those who experience the work of true conversion in their hearts will reveal the fruits of the Spirit in their lives.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 155.

“There is need of fasting, humiliation, and prayer over our decaying zeal and languishing spirituality.” — Ibid., vol.4, pp. 535, 536.

Monday, October 17

2. ZEAL: A QUALITY TO SEEK

b. What promise is for all who yearn to become Christlike? Matthew 5:6.

Why is Jacob's experience so valuable to us? Genesis 32:24–30.

Matthew 5:6: *6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

Genesis 32:24–30: *24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacobs thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.*

“God is looking for piety, self-denial, self-sacrifice, compassion for man, and zeal for God. He longs to see in man a deep yearning of soul to save his fellowman from unbelief and ruin.”—The Signs of the Times, February 15, 1899.

“With the great truth we have been privileged to receive, we should, and under the Holy Spirit's power we could, become living channels of light. We could then approach the mercy seat; and seeing the bow of promise, kneel with contrite hearts, and seek the kingdom of heaven with a spiritual violence that would bring its own reward. We would take it by force, as did Jacob. Then our message would be the power of God unto salvation.”—Reflecting Christ, p. 217.

“Go to your closet, and there alone plead with God: ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me’ [Psalm 51:10]. Be in earnest, be sincere. Fervent prayer availeth much. Jacob-like, wrestle in prayer. Agonize. Jesus in the garden sweat great drops of blood; you must make an effort. Do not leave your closet until you feel strong in God; then watch, and just as long as you watch and pray you can keep these evil besetments under, and the grace of God can and will appear in you.”—Messages to Young People, pp. 131, 132.

PRQ2. Which aspect of Jacob's experience is also to be ours—and why?

Tuesday, October 18

3. ZEAL IN ACTION

a. What can we learn from the struggles endured and the victories won by faithful witnesses for God? Jeremiah 20:8–11; Acts 4:14–20.

Jeremiah 20:8–11: *8 For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. 9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. 10 For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. 11 But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.*

Acts 4:14–20: *14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. 17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*

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“So strong was the opposition against Jeremiah’s message, so often was he derided and mocked, that he said, ‘I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name’ [Jeremiah 20:9]. Thus it has ever been. Because of the bitterness, hatred, and opposition manifested against the word of God spoken in reproof, many other messengers of God have decided to do as Jeremiah decided. But what did this prophet of the Lord do after his decision? Try as much as he would, he could not hold his peace. As soon as he came into the assemblies of the people, he found that the Spirit of the Lord was stronger than he was.” —The SDA Bible Commentary [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1156.

“Zeal for God and His cause moved the disciples to bear witness to the gospel with mighty power. Should not a like zeal fire our hearts with a determination to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and Him crucified? It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of the Saviour.” —The Acts of the Apostles, p. 600.

PRQ3. What can we learn from Jeremiah, David, and the early apostles?

Tuesday, October 18

3. ZEAL IN ACTION

b. What type of experience must be echoed in us? Psalm 119:137–140; 1 John 3:1–3.

Psalm 119:137–140: *137 Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments. 138 Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful. 139 My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words. 140 Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.*

1 John 3:1–3: *1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

“Elder Loughborough was a zealous worker in the cause. His whole heart had been in the work. He entered . . . [a] new field of labor, and he was willing to place himself in the humblest position, endure any and every privation, economize, live cheap and poor, labor early and late for the infant cause. . . .” —Manuscript Releases, vol. 21, p. 246.

“If the church will put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness, withdrawing from all allegiance with the world, there is before her the dawn of a bright and glorious day. God’s promise to her will stand fast forever. He will make her an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Truth, passing by those who despise and reject it, will triumph. Although at times apparently retarded, its progress has never been checked. When the message of God meets with opposition, He gives it additional force, that it may exert greater influence. Endowed with divine energy, it will cut its way through the strongest barriers and triumph over every obstacle.” —The Acts of the Apostles, p. 601.

PRQ3. What can we learn from Jeremiah, David, and the early apostles?

Wednesday, October 19

4. AVOIDING MISGUIDED ZEAL

a. What are some ways in which we may be in danger of going astray through misguided zeal? Romans 10:1–3; 1 Corinthians 10:23.

Romans 10:1–3: *1 Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*

1 Corinthians 10:23: *23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

“When some who lack the Spirit and power of God enter a new field, they commence denouncing other denominations, thinking that they can convince the people of the truth by presenting the inconsistencies of the popular churches. It may seem necessary on some occasions to speak of these things, but in general it only creates prejudice against our work and closes the ears of many who might otherwise have listened to the truth. If these teachers were connected closely with Christ, they would have divine wisdom to know how to approach the people.” —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 536.

PRQ4. How might we be manifesting symptoms of misguided zeal?

Wednesday, October 19

4. AVOIDING MISGUIDED ZEAL

b. What was wrong with the false zeal of Jehu? 2 Kings 10:16–19, 28–31.

2 Kings 10:16–19: *16 And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot. 17 And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah. 18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. 19 Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.*

2 Kings 10:28–31: *28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. 29 Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan. 30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. 31 But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.*

“There are many whose religion consists in activities. They want to be engaged in, and have the credit of doing, some great work while the little graces that go to make up a lovely Christian character are entirely overlooked. The busy, bustling service, which gives the impression that one is doing some wonderful work, is not acceptable to God. It is a Jehu spirit, which says, ‘Come, see my zeal for the Lord.’ It is gratifying to self; it feeds a self-complacent feeling; but all the while the soul may be defiled with the plague-spot of unsubdued, uncontrolled selfishness.” — The Signs of the Times, November 20, 1884.

Continued...

“Christian zeal is controlled by principle and is not spasmodic. It is earnest, deep, and strong, engaging the whole soul and arousing to exercise the moral sensibilities. The salvation of souls and the interests of the kingdom of God are matters of the highest importance. . . . Christian zeal will not exhaust itself in talk, but will feel and act with vigor and efficiency. Yet Christian zeal will not act for the sake of being seen. Humility will characterize every effort and be seen in every work. Christian zeal will lead to earnest prayer and humiliation, and to faithfulness in home duties. In the family circle will be seen the gentleness and love, benevolence and compassion, which are ever the fruits of Christian zeal.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, pp. 232, 233.

PRQ4. How might we be manifesting symptoms of misguided zeal?

Thursday, October 20

5. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

a. How was the psalmist's prophecy of godly zeal fulfilled in Christ? Psalm 69:9; John 2:13–17; 4:34. What factors should we learn from Christ's zeal? 1 Corinthians 2:2–4.

Psalm 69:9: *9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*

John 2:13–17: *13 And the Jews passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, 14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: 15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers money, and overthrew the tables; 16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Fathers house an house of merchandise. 17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*

John 4:34: *34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

1 Corinthians 2:2–4: *2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:*

“[Christ] lived the law. His purity and beneficence, His devotion to the truth, and His zeal for God's glory reveal the perfection of the law.” —The Review and Herald, February 26, 1901.

“Christ declared that it was His meat and drink to do His Father's will. The zeal that comes through such sanctification of the truth makes the believer in the truth powerful, for he is the repository of sacred truth, and as he partakes of the truth he will be a helpful Christian. Zeal should always be uniform, manifesting a holiness of character.” —Manuscript Releases, vol. 10, p. 131.

PRQ5. What characterizes genuine zeal?

Thursday, October 20

5. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

b. What appeal does Christ make to each one living in the lukewarm era of Laodicea? Revelation 3:19.

Revelation 3:19: *19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*

“When it comes to the service of God, do men manifest the same zeal for His work as they formerly manifested in the service of the world?” —The Review and Herald, June 12, 1888.

“At this time, when the end of all things is at hand, should not the zeal of the church exceed even that of the early church? Zeal for the glory of God moved the disciples to bear witness to the truth with mighty power. Should not this zeal fire our hearts with a longing to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and Him crucified? Should not the power of God be even more mightily revealed today than in the time of the apostles?” —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 33.

PRQ5. What characterizes genuine zeal?

Friday, October 21

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. What warning should we heed from the parable of the talents?**
- 2. Which aspect of Jacob's experience is also to be ours—and why?**
- 3. What can we learn from Jeremiah, David, and the early apostles?**
- 4. How might we be manifesting symptoms of misguided zeal?**
- 5. What characterizes genuine zeal?**

Lesson 5 - Sabbath, October 29, 2022

Time and Eternity

MEMORY TEXT: “As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand”
(Matthew 10:7).

“Because time is short, we should work with diligence and double energy.”—
Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 159.

Suggested Reading: *Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 342-346.*

Sunday, October 23

1. A TALENT FOR EVERYONE

a. Even in the fast-paced era in which we live, what does God mercifully provide—and why? Ecclesiastes 3:1.

Ecclesiastes 3:1: *1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*

“Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time. . . .

“We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, no time to devote to selfish pleasure, no time for the indulgence of sin. It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the searching judgment.”—Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 342.

PRQ1. Why is time so valuable?

Sunday, October 23

1. A TALENT FOR EVERYONE

**b. What factors should we take into consideration as we plan our use of time?
James 4:13–15.**

James 4:13–15: *13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*

“The shortness of time demands an energy that has not been aroused among those who claim to believe the present truth.”—Counsels on Health, p. 506.

“If all would use their time to the best account, very much means would be saved to the cause of truth. When the heart is in the work, it will be done with earnestness, energy, and dispatch.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 451.

PRQ1. Why is time so valuable?

Monday, October 24

2. PRUDENCE AND VIGILANCE

a. In seeking to advance God’s work, what must we realize? 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:12.

1 Peter 5:8: *8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

Revelation 12:12: *12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

“We have no time to lose. The powers of darkness are working with intense energy, 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 imagine.”—Evangelism, p. 218.

“Oh! we must be terribly in earnest to impress upon every soul that there is a heaven to win and a hell to shun. Every energy of the soul must be aroused to force their passage and seize the kingdom by force. Satan is active, and we must be active too. Satan is untiring and persevering, and we must be the same. There is no time to make excuses and blame others for our backslidings; no time now to flatter the soul [that] if circumstances had only been more favorable, how much better, how much easier [it would be] for us to work the works of God. We must tell even those who profess to believe in Christ, that they must cease to offend God by sinful excuses.”—Manuscript Releases, vol. 12, p. 336.

PRQ2. What common trap may be preventing us from laboring for Christ?

Monday, October 24

2. PRUDENCE AND VIGILANCE

b. What does Inspiration teach about the struggle before us? Ephesians 6:12; Matthew 24:13.

Ephesians 6:12: *12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Matthew 24:13: *13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

“In consideration of the shortness of time we as a people should watch and pray, and in no case allow ourselves to be diverted from the solemn work of preparation for the great event before us. Because the time is apparently extended, many have become careless and indifferent in regard to their words and actions. They do not realize their danger and do not see and understand the mercy of our God in lengthening their probation, that they may have time to form characters for the future, immortal life. Every moment is of the highest value. Time is granted them, not to be employed in studying their own ease and becoming dwellers on the earth, but to be used in the work of overcoming every defect in their own characters and in helping others, by example and personal effort, to see the beauty of holiness.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 306, 307.

“With intensified zeal and energy we are to carry forward the work of the Lord till the close of time.”—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 548.

PRQ2. What common trap may be preventing us from laboring for Christ?

Tuesday, October 25

3. RESOURCES MADE USEFUL

a. What are some points that our Master wants us to understand about the various talents entrusted to us? Luke 19:13.

Luke 19:13: *13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

“However large, however small the possessions of any individual, let him remember that it is his only in trust. For his strength, skill, time, talents, opportunities, and means, he must render an account to God. This is an individual work; God gives to us, that we may become like Him, generous, noble, beneficent, by giving to others. Those who, forgetful of their divine mission, seek only to save or to spend in the indulgence of pride or selfishness, may secure the gains and pleasures of this world; but in God’s sight, estimated by their spiritual attainments, they are poor, wretched, miserable, blind, naked.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 22.

“I cannot find an instance in the life of Christ where He devoted time to play and amusement. He was the great educator for the present and the future life; yet I have not been able to find one instance where He taught the disciples to engage in amusement in order to gain physical exercise. The world’s Redeemer gives to every man his work and bids him, ‘Occupy till I come’ (Luke 19:13). In doing this, the heart warms to the enterprise. All the powers of the being are enlisted in the effort to obey. We have a high and holy calling.”—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 309.

PRQ3. What tendency could be stagnating us in a Laodicean condition?

Tuesday, October 25

3. RESOURCES MADE USEFUL

b. What should we learn from Solomon's experience? Ecclesiastes 2:10, 11.

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11: *10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. 11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.*

“We must turn away from a thousand topics that invite attention. There are matters that consume time and arouse inquiry but end in nothing. The highest interests demand the close attention and energy that are so often given to comparatively insignificant things.” — The Ministry of Healing, p. 456.

“Let the people see that you have a mind for usefulness and duty, and that to the saving of the soul. The amusements that consume time, just to gratify self, do not pay.” — Medical Ministry, p. 82.

“The energy now concentrated on cheap, perishable goods should be enlisted in the work that is to enlighten the world. Let every energy God has given be used in the work which bears with it the blessed satisfaction that it is for time and for eternity.” — Manuscript Releases, vol. 6, p. 267.

PRQ3. What tendency could be stagnating us in a Laodicean condition?

Wednesday, October 26

4. A PURCHASED POSSESSION

a. Why is the attitude of the foolish rich man a warning for us? Luke 12:16–21.

Luke 12:16–21: *16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

“There is a sad withholding from God on the part of His professed people. The means and efforts that should be given to Christ are devoted to self-pleasing. God is robbed of time, money, and service. Self-love, self-gratification, exclude the love of Jesus from the soul, and this is why there is not in the church greater zeal and more fervent love for Him who first loved us.”—The Signs of the Times, December 22, 1890.

“Men act as though they were bereft of their reason. They are buried up in the cares of this life. They have no time to devote to God, no time to serve Him. Work, work, work, is the order of the day. All about them are required to labor upon the high-pressure plan, to take care of large farms. To tear down and build greater is their ambition, that they may have wherewith to bestow their goods. Yet these very men who are weighed down with their riches pass for Christ’s followers. They have the name of believing that Christ is soon to come, that the end of all things is at hand; yet they have no spirit of sacrifice. They are plunging deeper and deeper into the world. They allow themselves but little time to study the word of life and to meditate and pray. Neither do they give others in their family, or those who serve them, this privilege. Yet these men profess to believe that this world is not their home, that they are merely pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, preparing to move to a better country. The example and influence of all such is a curse to the cause of God. Hollow hypocrisy characterizes their professed Christian lives. They love God and the truth just as much as their works show, and no more. A man will act out all the faith he has.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, pp. 662, 663.

PRQ4. What should give us incentive to labor for Christ?

Wednesday, October 26

4. A PURCHASED POSSESSION

b. What should always be foremost in our mind? 1 Corinthians 3:23; 6:20.

1 Corinthians 3:23: *23 And ye are Christs; and Christ is Gods.*

1 Corinthians 6:20: *20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods.*

“Whether or not we give mind, soul, and strength to God, it all belongs to Him. God speaks to each human being, saying: ‘I have a claim on you. Give me your zeal, your capabilities, your energy, your means.’ He has a right to ask this; for we are His, redeemed by His boundless love and by the agony of the cross of Calvary from the service of sin.” — The Signs of the Times, January 2, 1901.

PRQ4. What should give us incentive to labor for Christ?

Thursday, October 27

5. PREPARING FOR THE LATTER RAIN

a. What realization should awaken each one to action? 2 Corin-thians 6:2; Matthew 10:7.

Matthew 10:7: *7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

“We need greater earnestness in the cause of Christ. The solemn message of truth should be given with an intensity that would impress unbelievers that God is working with our efforts, that the Most High is our living source of strength. . . .

“Is this indifference to continue from year to year? Is Satan always to triumph, and Christ to be disappointed in the servants whom He has redeemed at an infinite price? We are looking forward to the time when the latter rain will be poured out, confidently hoping for a better day, when the church shall be endued with power from on high, and thus fitted to do more efficient work for God. But the latter rain will never refresh and invigorate indolent souls, that are not using the power God has already given them. Spiritual laziness will not bring us nearer to God. There must be energy and zeal as well as devotion and personal piety, woven into all our works.” — The Signs of the Times, December 9, 1886.

PRQ5. Why will many miss out on receiving the latter rain?

Thursday, October 27

5. PREPARING FOR THE LATTER RAIN

b. What is God's call for us today? Isaiah 60:1, 2; Matthew 5:14–16.

Isaiah 60:1-2: *1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. 2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.*

Matthew 5:14–16: *14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

“A working church is a living church. Church members, let the light shine forth. Let your voices be heard in humble prayer, in witness against the intemperance, the folly, and the amusements of this world, and in the proclamation of the truth for this time. Your voice, your influence, your time—all these are gifts from God and are to be used in winning souls to Christ. Visit your neighbors and show an interest in the salvation of their souls. Arouse every spiritual energy to action. Tell those whom you visit that the end of all things is at hand.”—Medical Ministry, p. 332.

PRQ5. Why will many miss out on receiving the latter rain?

Friday, October 28

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. Why is time so valuable?**
- 2. What common trap may be preventing us from laboring for Christ?**
- 3. What tendency could be stagnating us in a Laodicean condition?**
- 4. What should give us incentive to labor for Christ?**
- 5. Why will many miss out on receiving the latter rain?**

NOVEMBER - First Sabbath Offering for Literature

What is the opposite of confusion? Clarity! The multitudes on Earth are confused—hence the prophetic reference to “Babylon,” i.e., confusion. People’s discernment, perception, and understanding all are foggy. They need clarity. Distinct truths need to be taught.

Will they listen? A few will; many will not—but they might look. They may take a moment to read something that catches their eye, and what they see may speak to the mind and enlighten the understanding.

“The way to dispel darkness is to admit light. The best way to deal with error is to present truth. It is the revelation of God’s love that makes manifest the deformity and sin of the heart centered in self.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 498. When they see the sin, they’ll long for the Saviour.

This wonderful revelation of God’s love can come through the printed pages, by means of many topics, for example:

“There should be more earnest efforts made to enlighten the people upon the great subject of health reform. Tracts of four, eight, twelve, sixteen, and more pages, containing pointed, well-written articles on this great question, should be scattered like the leaves of autumn.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 466.

“Thousands of dollars which are now sacrificed upon the altar of hurtful lust will flow into the Lord’s treasury, multiplying publications in different languages to be scattered like the leaves of autumn. Missions will be established in other nations.”—*Confrontation*, p. 60.

In autumn, the leaves that fall from the trees are so numerous, it’s nearly impossible to count them. Yes, that’s how many tracts, pamphlets, magazines, and booklets containing present truth are needed. These are vital tools in the proclamation of the everlasting gospel. The production of such materials incurs an expense that, sadly, many cannot afford to pay, either in their own behalf or to share with others. Therefore, entrusted as we all are with the task of bearing the truth to others, we each have a duty and privilege to help them receive it.

The First Sabbath Offering today is for literature for needy countries. Your generous—even sacrificial—offering can go a long way to help others learn of and prepare for the Lord’s return.

Thank you for collaborating with Christ!

The General Conference Publishing Department

Lesson 6 - Sabbath, November 5, 2022

The Love of Money

MEMORY TEXT: “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:8).

“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, vol. 9, p. 49.

Suggested Readings: Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pp. 148-157;
Ibid., vol.2, pp. 99, 652–662.

Sunday, October 30

1. HEARTS REVEALED

**a. How does our use of money reveal the depth of our consecration to God?
Matthew 6:21.**

Matthew 6:21: *21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

“There is one thing in which we must be deeply in earnest, and that is in the service of God. There is no danger of having too much zeal here. If we would only work with an eye single to the glory of God, the mists would roll away, and our views of right and wrong would become clear. We should consecrate our property. The language of our hearts would be, ‘Lord, here is the means for which Thou hast made me responsible; what wilt Thou have me do with it?’ ”—The Signs of the Times, January 7, 1886.

“Money is a trust from God. It is not ours to expend for the gratification of pride or ambition.”—The Ministry of Healing, p. 287.

PRQ1. Why can money be a talent that reveals much about our heart?

Sunday, October 30

1. HEARTS REVEALED

b. How does David's devotion to God stand as an inspiration as well as a rebuke to many of us? 1 Chronicles 29:3–5.

1 Chronicles 29:3–5: *3 Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, 4 Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal: 5 The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?*

“Is gratitude dead in the heart? Does not the cross of Christ put to shame a life of selfish ease and indulgence? . . . We are reaping the fruits of this infinite self-sacrifice; and yet, when labor is to be done, when our money is wanted to aid the work of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls, we shrink from duty and pray to be excused.”—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 21.

PRQ1. Why can money be a talent that reveals much about our heart?

Monday, October 31

2. BEING AWARE OF THE ENEMY'S PLAN

a. How are we warned of a sinister plot against Sabbathkeepers? Matthew 20:1–9.

Matthew 20:1–9: *1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. 8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.*

“Those who came into the vineyard at the eleventh hour were thankful for an opportunity to work. Their hearts were full of gratitude to the one who had accepted them; and when at the close of the day the householder paid them for a full day’s work, they were greatly surprised. They knew they had not earned such wages. And the kindness expressed in the countenance of their employer filled them with joy. They never forgot the goodness of the householder or the generous compensation they had received. Thus it is with the sinner who, knowing his unworthiness, has entered the Master’s vineyard at the eleventh hour. His time of service seems so short, he feels that he is undeserving of reward; but he is filled with joy that God has accepted him at all. He works with a humble, trusting spirit, thankful for the privilege of being a coworker with Christ. This spirit God delights to honor.

Continued...

The Lord desires us to rest in Him without a question as to our measure of reward. When Christ abides in the soul, the thought of reward is not uppermost. This is not the motive that actuates our service. It is true that in a subordinate sense we should have respect to the recompense of reward. God desires us to appreciate His promised blessings. But He would not have us eager for rewards nor feel that for every duty we must receive compensation. We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is right, irrespective of all gain. Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive.” —Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 397-399.

PRQ2. Describe one strategy that Satan is plotting against Sabbathkeepers.

Monday, October 31

2. BEING AWARE OF THE ENEMY'S PLAN

b. Why are we specifically warned against covetousness? Luke 12:15.

Luke 12:15: *15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

“Selfishness and covetousness lurking in the human heart are most powerful passions, and the outcome of the conflict is not a mere conjecture. Unless the soul is daily living upon Christ’s flesh and drinking His blood, the godly element will be overcome by the satanic. Selfishness and covetousness will bear away the victory. A self-confident, independent spirit will never enter into the kingdom of God. It is only those who are partakers with Christ in His self-denial and sacrifice that will be partakers with Him in His glory.”—Selected Messages, bk. 2, p. 216.

PRQ2. Describe one strategy that Satan is plotting against Sabbathkeepers.

Tuesday, November 1

3. A SERIOUS MATTER

a. How does the love of money deteriorate our spiritual life—and what is the cure for it? 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.

1 Timothy 6:9-10: *9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

“Christ offered Himself, an infinite sacrifice. This, in and of itself, bears directly against covetousness and exalts benevolence.

“Constant, self-denying benevolence is God’s remedy for the cankering sins of selfishness and covetousness. God has arranged systematic benevolence to sustain His cause and relieve the necessities of the suffering and needy. He has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death. Systematic benevolence is designed in the order of God to tear away treasures from the covetous as fast as they are gained and to consecrate them to the Lord, to whom they belong.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 548.

“Self-sacrifice is the keynote of the teachings of Christ. Often it is presented and enjoined in language that seems authoritative, because God sees that there is no other way to save man than to cut away from his life the selfishness which, if retained, would degrade the whole being.” — Ibid., vol.9, p. 49.

“That which is eating out the vitals of God’s people is the love of money and friendship with the world.” — Ibid., vol.2, p. 657.

PRQ3. How are we blessed by overcoming a love for money?

Tuesday, November 1

3. A SERIOUS MATTER

b. Where does God want us to focus our attention, and why? Colossians 3:1.

Colossians 3:1: *I If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

“Selfishness is a soul-destroying sin. Under this head comes covetousness, which is idolatry. All things belong to God. All the prosperity we enjoy is the result of divine beneficence. God is the great and bountiful giver. If He requires any portion of the liberal supply He has given us, it is not that He may be enriched by our gifts, for He needs nothing from our hand; but it is that we may have an opportunity to exercise self-denial, love, and sympathy for our fellow men, and thus become highly exalted. In every dispensation, from Adam’s time to ours, God has claimed the property of man, saying: I am the rightful owner of the universe; therefore consecrate to Me thy first fruits, bring a tribute of loyalty, surrender to Me My own, thus acknowledging My sovereignty, and you shall be free to retain and enjoy My bounties, and My blessing shall be with you.”—Ibid., vol.4, pp. 476, 477.

PRQ3. *How are we blessed by overcoming a love for money?*

Wednesday, November 2

4. A COVENANT BY SACRIFICE

a. In view of the shortness of time before us, what should each consider in managing personal finances? Haggai 2:8.

Haggai 2:8: *8 The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.*

“With many the possession of wealth has proved a snare. In their desire to follow the fashions of the world, they have lost their zeal for the truth, and they are in peril of losing eternal life.”—This Day With God, p. 349.

“Some close their ears to the calls made for money to be used in sending missionaries to foreign countries and in publishing the truth and scattering it like autumn leaves all over the world. Such excuse their covetousness by informing you that they have made arrangements to be charitable at death. They have considered the cause of God in their wills. Therefore they live a life of avarice, robbing God in tithes and in offerings, and in their wills return to God but a small portion of that which He has lent them, while a very large proportion is appropriated to relatives who have no interest in the truth at death.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 479, 480.

“Dying legacies are a miserable substitute for living benevolence. The servants of God should be making their wills every day, in good works and liberal offerings to God. They should not allow the amount given to God to be disproportionately small when compared with that appropriated to their own use. In making their wills daily, they will remember those objects and friends that hold the largest place in their affections.

“Their best friend is Jesus. He did not withhold His own life from them, but for their sakes became poor, that through His poverty they might be made rich. He deserves the whole heart, the property, all that they have and are. But many professed Christians put off the claims of Jesus in life, and insult Him by giving Him a mere pittance at death.”—Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 326, 327.

PRQ4. *What should be our consideration as the end of time draws nearer?*

Wednesday, November 2

4. A COVENANT BY SACRIFICE

b. What specific warning concerning stewardship does Christ issue to parents? Matthew 10:37.

Matthew 10:37: *37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

“Believing parents have frequently transferred their property to their unbelieving children, thus putting it out of their power to render to God the things that are His. By so doing they lay off that responsibility which God has laid upon them, and place in the enemy’s ranks means which God has entrusted to them to be returned to Him by being invested in His cause when He shall require it of them. It is not in God’s order that parents who are capable of managing their own business should give up the control of their property, even to children who are of the same faith.” —Ibid., vol.1, pp. 528, 529.

PRQ4. What should be our consideration as the end of time draws nearer?

Thursday, November 3

5. THE SAFEST DEPOSIT BOX

a. What comforting assurance does Christ offer all who make a covenant with Him through sacrifice? Matthew 6:28–33.

Matthew 6:28–33: *28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

“Open your hearts to receive [God’s] kingdom and make its service your highest interest. Though it is a spiritual kingdom, fear not that your needs for this life will be uncared for. If you give yourself to God’s service, He who has all power in heaven and earth will provide for your needs. . . .

“Jesus, while He dwelt on earth, dignified life in all its details by keeping before men the glory of God, and by subordinating everything to the will of His Father. If we follow His example, His assurance to us is that all things needful in this life ‘shall be added.’ Poverty or wealth, sickness or health, simplicity or wisdom—all are provided for in the promise of His grace.”—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 99.

“Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others will strengthen the spirit of beneficence in the giver’s heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 20.

PRQ5. What promise is given those who lay up their treasure in heaven?

Thursday, November 3

5. THE SAFEST DEPOSIT BOX

b. What is the most fruitful way to preserve our wealth? Proverbs 3:9, 10.

Proverbs 3:9-10: *9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*

“Would you make your property secure? Place it in the hand that bears the nail prints of the crucifixion. Retain all in your possession, and it will be to your eternal loss. Give it to God, and from that moment it bears His inscription. It is sealed with His immutability.” — Ibid., p.49.

“We are to make investments in heavenly interests and always work with heaven in view, laying our treasure up in the bank of heaven.” — The Signs of the Times, April 4, 1895.

PRQ5. What promise is given those who lay up their treasure in heaven?

Friday, November 4

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. Why can money be a talent that reveals much about our heart?**
- 2. Describe one strategy that Satan is plotting against Sabbathkeepers.**
- 3. How are we blessed by overcoming a love for money?**
- 4. What should be our consideration as the end of time draws nearer?**
- 5. What promise is given those who lay up their treasure in heaven?**

Lesson 7 - Sabbath, November 12, 2022

Treasure in Heaven

MEMORY TEXT: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:19–21).

“God desires us to choose the heavenly in place of the earthly. He opens before us the possibilities of a heavenly investment. He would give encouragement to our loftiest aims, security to our choicest treasure.” —Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 374.

Suggested Reading: The Adventist Home, pp. 367-380.

Sunday, November 6

1. THE RESULT OF GRATITUDE

a. What vital expressions should repeatedly resonate in our hearts? Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31; John 14:1–3.

Psalm 107:8: *8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

Psalm 107:15: *15 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

Psalm 107:21: *21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

Psalm 107:31: *31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*

John 14:1–3: *1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

“Let it be understood that the love of God alone can keep His people true in the self-denial and self-sacrifice that they are called to endure for Christ’s sake. Repeat often the first three verses of the fourteenth chapter of John. This scripture is a panacea for trouble, disappointment, and affliction. A conviction that the hope of eternal life is sure causes the heart to overflow with gratitude and thanksgiving.” —The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters, p. 5.

PRQ1. *When we consider God’s goodness to us, how should it cause us to respond?*

Sunday, November 6

1. THE RESULT OF GRATITUDE

b. As we give of our means to the Lord, what should we ever keep in mind?

Psalm 29:1, 2.

Psalm 29:1-2: 1 Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

“To give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ’s sake sacrifice their life in this world will keep it unto life eternal.” —The Desire of Ages, pp. 623, 624.

“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.” —The Adventist Home, p. 368.

PRQ1. When we consider God’s goodness to us, how should it cause us to respond?

Monday, November 7

2. DIFFERENT THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED

a. What principle given by Jesus is a secret to a happier life? Acts 20:35.

Acts 20:35: *35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

“The principle of worldlings is to get all they can of the perishable things of this life. Selfish love of gain is the ruling principle in their lives. But the purest joy is not found in riches nor where covetousness is always craving, but where contentment reigns and where self-sacrificing love is the ruling principle. There are thousands who are passing their lives in indulgence and whose hearts are filled with repining. They are victims of selfishness and discontent in the vain effort to satisfy their minds with indulgence. But unhappiness is stamped upon their very countenances, and behind them is a desert, because their course is not fruitful in good works.

“In proportion as the love of Christ fills our hearts and controls our lives, covetousness, selfishness, and love of ease will be overcome, and it will be our pleasure to do the will of Christ, whose servants we claim to be. Our happiness will then be proportionate to our unselfish works, prompted by the love of Christ.

“Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed. He that gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree. God could have reached His object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but He knew that man could not be happy without acting a part in the great work in which he would be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 382.

PRQ2. *In what specific ways should I exercise greater self-denial for the good of others?*

Monday, November 7

2. DIFFERENT THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED

b. With what appeal does the Lord bid us align our priorities in life?

Matthew 6:19, 20.

Matthew 6:19-20: *19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

“[God] has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death.” — The Adventist Home, p. 370.

“When the riches that moth devours and rust corrupts shall be swept away, Christ’s followers can rejoice in their heavenly treasure, the riches that are imperishable. . . .

“To those who have squandered His goods, Christ still gives opportunity to secure lasting riches. . . .

“Let your property go beforehand to heaven. Lay up your treasures beside the throne of God.” — Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 374, 375.

PRQ2. In what specific ways should I exercise greater self-denial for the good of others?

Tuesday, November 8

3. A BASIC REQUIREMENT

a. What must every one of us keep in mind in the process of genuine self-denying surrender to Christ in preparation for the kingdom of Heaven? 1 Corinthians 15:31.

1 Corinthians 15:31: *31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.*

“The life of the apostle Paul was a constant conflict with self. He said, ‘I die daily.’ 1 Corinthians 15:31. His will and his desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did God’s will, however crucifying to his nature.

“At the close of his life of conflict, looking back over its struggles and triumphs, he could say, ‘I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.’ 2 Timothy 4:7, 8.

“The Christian life is a battle and a march. In this warfare there is no release; the effort must be continuous and persevering. It is by unceasing endeavor that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. Christian integrity must be sought with resistless energy and maintained with a resolute fixedness of purpose.

“No one will be borne upward without stern, persevering effort in his own behalf. All must engage in this warfare for themselves; no one else can fight our battles. Individually we are responsible for the issues of the struggle.” —The Ministry of Healing, pp. 452, 453.

“ ‘Will ye shun the seven last plagues? Will ye go to glory and enjoy all that God has prepared for those who love Him and are willing to suffer for His sake? If so, ye must die that ye may live. Get ready, get ready, get ready. Ye must have a greater preparation than ye now have, for the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. Sacrifice all to God. Lay all upon His altar—self, property, and all, a living sacrifice. It will take all to enter glory. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where no thief can approach or rust corrupt. Ye must be partakers of Christ’s sufferings here if ye would be partakers with Him of His glory hereafter.’

Continued...

“Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering. We must deny self all along the way, die to self daily, let Jesus alone appear, and keep His glory continually in view. I saw that those who of late have embraced the truth would have to know what it is to suffer for Christ’s sake, that they would have trials to pass through that would be keen and cutting, in order that they may be purified and fitted through suffering to receive the seal of the living God, pass through the time of trouble, see the King in His beauty, and dwell in the presence of God and of pure, holy angels.” — Early Writings, pp. 66, 67.

PRQ3. In what aspects of life do I need to reflect more effectively the apostle’s dying daily?

Wednesday, November 9

4. A GOOD HABIT FROM A YOUNG AGE

a. How does the concept of self-denial apply even to children and youth?

Proverbs 20:11.

Proverbs 20:11: *11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*

“Children of two to four years of age should not be encouraged to think that they must have everything that they ask for. Parents should teach them lessons of self-denial and never treat them in such a way as to make them think they are the center, and that everything revolves about them.

“Many children have inherited selfishness from their parents, but parents should seek to uproot every fiber of this evil tendency from their natures. Christ gave many reproofs to those who were covetous and selfish. Parents should seek, on the first exhibition of selfish traits of character, whether in their presence, or when in association with other children, to restrain and uproot these traits from the character of their children.” —Child Guidance, p. 132.

“If, while traveling, our youth will keep an exact account of the money they expend, item by item, their eyes will be opened to see the leaks. While they may not be called upon to deprive themselves of warm meals, as the early workers did in their itinerant life, they may learn to supply their real wants with less expense than they now think necessary. There are persons who practice self-denial in order to give means to the cause of God; then let the workers in the cause also practice self-denial by limiting their expenses.” —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 400.

PRQ4. How can children be taught the joy of self-denial?

Wednesday, November 9

4. A GOOD HABIT FROM A YOUNG AGE

b. Give an example of how early training in economy was put into practice. 1 Corinthians 11:1.

1 Corinthians 11:1: *I Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

“When I was only twelve years old, I knew what it was to economize. With my sister I learned a trade, and although we would earn only twenty-five cents a day, from this sum we were able to save a little to give to missions. We saved little by little until we had thirty dollars. Then when the message of the Lord’s soon coming came to us, with a call for men and means, we felt it a privilege to hand over the thirty dollars to father, asking him to invest it in tracts and pamphlets to send the message to those who were in darkness. . . .

“With the money that we had earned at our trade, my sister and I provided ourselves with clothes. We would hand our money to mother, saying, ‘Buy so that, after we have paid for our clothing, there will be something left to give for missionary work.’ And she would do this, thus encouraging in us a missionary spirit.” —The Adventist Home, p. 384.

PRQ4. How can children be taught the joy of self-denial?

Thursday, November 10

5. CONTINUING AS WE AGE

a. Just as the young should lay up treasure in heaven, how also should the older ones? Psalm 116:14, 15; Luke 12:33, 34.

Psalm 116:14-15: *14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people. 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.*

Luke 12:33-34: *33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

“To the aged, who are losing their hold on this life, I appeal to make a right disposition of your Lord’s goods before you fall asleep in Jesus. Remember that you are God’s stewards. Give back to the Lord His own while you live. Do not fail of attending to this while you have your reason. As age comes upon us, it is our duty to make a disposition of our means to the instrumentalities that God has established. Satan is using every device to divert from the Lord’s cause the means so much needed. Many are binding up their talent of means in worldly enterprises, when the cause of God needs every dollar to advance His truth and glorify His name. I ask: Shall we not lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven, in bags that wax not old? I would especially urge the aged who are soon to make a disposal of their means to remember those who have ministered faithfully in word and doctrine. Place your means where, should health and life fail, they can be invested in the cause of God. Thus they will be put out to the exchangers and be constantly accumulating. . . .

“Let your hearts be true to Jesus. Although you may feel that you are the least of all saints, yet you are members of Christ’s body, and through Him you are identified with all His human agencies and with the excellence and power of the heavenly intelligences. None of us liveth to himself. To each is assigned a post of duty, not for his own narrow, selfish interests, but that the influence of each may be a strength to all. If we really believed that we were individually a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men, would we not as a church manifest a very different spirit from that which we now manifest? Would we not be a living, working church?” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, pp. 295, 296.

PRQ5. As we advance in years, what appeal continually echoes down to us?

Friday, November 11

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. When we consider God's goodness to us, how should it cause us to respond?**
- 2. In what specific ways should I exercise greater self-denial for the good of others?**
- 3. In what aspects of life do I need to reflect more effectively the apostle's dying daily?**
- 4. How can children be taught the joy of self-denial?**
- 5. As we advance in years, what appeal continually echoes down to us?**

Lesson 8 - Sabbath, November 19, 2022

The Tithe and Firstfruits

MEMORY TEXT: “The tenth shall be holy unto the Lord” (Leviticus 27:32).

“The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 93.

Suggested Reading: *Gospel Workers*, pp. 222-228.

Sunday, November 13

1. FROM THE DAYS OF GENESIS

a. By what means did God reserve for Himself a portion of the garden of Eden? Genesis 2:16, 17. How does this compare to the tithe? Malachi 3:7, 8.

Genesis 2:16-17: *16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Malachi 3:7-8: *7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? 8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.*

“The Lord created every tree in Eden pleasant to the eyes and good for food, and He bade Adam and Eve freely enjoy His bounties. But He made one exception. Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they were not to eat. This tree God reserved as a constant reminder of His ownership of all. Thus He gave them opportunity to demonstrate their faith and trust in Him by their perfect obedience to His requirements. “So it is with God’s claims upon us. He places His treasures in the hands of men but requires that one tenth shall be faithfully laid aside for His work. He requires this portion to be placed in His treasury. It is to be rendered to Him as His own; it is sacred and is to be used for sacred purposes, for the support of those who carry the message of salvation to all parts of the world.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 386.

PRQ1. What object lesson from Eden illustrates the tithing principle?

Sunday, November 13

1. FROM THE DAYS OF GENESIS

b. What was the practice of the early patriarchs regarding the tenth portion of their income? Genesis 14:18–20; 28:20–22.

Genesis 14:18–20: *18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.*

Genesis 28:20–22: *20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my fathers house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be Gods house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*

“The tithing system did not originate with the Hebrews. From the earliest times the Lord claimed a tithe as His, and this claim was recognized and honored.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 525.

PRQ1. What object lesson from Eden illustrates the tithing principle?

Monday, November 14

2. IN THE HEBREW ECONOMY

a. What specific instruction was given to the early Hebrew nation regarding the tithe? Leviticus 27:30–32. How is this principle emphasized in all ages? Malachi 3:10.

Leviticus 27:30–32: *30 And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORDS: it is holy unto the LORD. 31 And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. 32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.*

Malachi 3:10: *10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

“In the Hebrew economy one tenth of the income of the people was set apart to support the public worship of God. . . .

“As the Israelites were about to be established as a nation, the law of tithing was reaffirmed as one of the divinely ordained statutes upon obedience to which their prosperity depended. . . .

“ ‘The tithe . . . is the Lord’s’ [Leviticus 27:30]. Here the same form of expression is employed as in the law of the Sabbath. ‘The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God’ (Exodus 20:10). God reserved to Himself a specified portion of man’s time and of his means, and no man could, without guilt, appropriate either for his own interests.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 525, 526. [Author’s Italics.]

PRQ2. How were the Hebrews to acknowledge God’s claims before returning their tithe to God’s storehouse?

Monday, November 14

2. IN THE HEBREW ECONOMY

b. What was required before the tithe could be reserved? Exodus 22:29; 34:26 (first part); 2 Chronicles 31:5, 6.

Exodus 22:29: *29 Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.*

Exodus 34:26: *26 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mothers milk.*

2 Chronicles 31:5-6: *5 And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly. 6 And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid them by heaps.*

“Even before the tithe could be reserved there had been an acknowledgment of the claims of God. The first that ripened of every product of the land was consecrated to Him. The first of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, the first of the oil and the wine, was set apart for God. So also were the firstborn of all animals; and a redemption price was paid for the firstborn son. The first fruits were to be presented before the Lord at the sanctuary, and were then devoted to the use of the priests.

“Thus the people were constantly reminded that God was the true proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that He sent them sunshine and rain for their seedtime and harvest, and that everything they possessed was of His creation, and He had made them stewards of His goods.

“As the men of Israel, laden with the first fruits of field and orchard and vineyard, gathered at the tabernacle, there was made a public acknowledgment of God’s goodness.”—Ibid., p.526.

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“Besides the tithe the Lord demands the firstfruits of all our increase. These He has reserved in order that His work in the earth may be amply sustained. The Lord’s servants are not to be limited to a meager supply.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 384.

PRQ2. How were the Hebrews to acknowledge God’s claims before returning their tithe to God’s storehouse?

Tuesday, November 15

3. PERPETUAL PRINCIPLES

a. What was included among the reformations made in the days of Nehemiah? Nehemiah 10:34–37; 12:44.

Nehemiah 10:34–37: *34 And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law: 35 And to bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD: 36 Also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God: 37 And that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage.*

Nehemiah 12:44: *44 And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited.*

PRQ3. Why is the tithing system applicable in the New Testament era?

Tuesday, November 15

3. PERPETUAL PRINCIPLES

b. What practice of the Pharisees met with Christ's approval? Matthew 23:23. Why does the tithing principle apply also in the New Testament era? Hebrews 7:1–5, 8, 20, 21.

Matthew 23:23: *23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*

Hebrews 7:1–5: *1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. 4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. 5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:*

Hebrews 7:8: *8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.*

Hebrews 7:20-21: *20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: 21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)*

“The New Testament does not reenact the law of the tithe, as it does not that of the Sabbath; for the validity of both is assumed, and their deep spiritual import explained.

Continued...

“God has made an absolute reservation of a specified portion of our time and our means. To ignore these claims is to rob God.”—The Review and Herald, May 16, 1882.

“The tithe should be consecrated to God. His requirements come first. We are not doing His will if we consecrate to Him what is left after all our wants have been supplied. Before any part of our income is consumed, we should take out and present to Him that portion which He claims as His. When this is done, the remainder will be sanctified and blessed to our own use. But when we withhold that which He says is His, the curse rests upon the whole, and we are recorded in the books of heaven as guilty of robbery. God gives man nine-tenths, but the one-tenth He claims for sacred purposes—as He has given man six days for His own work and has reserved the seventh day to Himself.”—Pacific Union Recorder, October 10, 1901.

“While we as a people are seeking faithfully to give to God the time which He has reserved as His own, shall we not also render to Him that portion of our means which He claims? . . .

“A tithe of all our increase is the Lord’s. He has reserved it to Himself to be employed for religious purposes. It is holy. Nothing less than this has He accepted in any dispensation.”—Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 66, 67.

“The small and the larger streams of beneficence should ever be kept flowing. God’s providence is far ahead of us, moving onward much faster than our liberalities. The way for the advancement and upbuilding of the cause of God is blocked by selfishness, pride, covetousness, extravagance, and love of display. The whole church is charged with a solemn responsibility to lift in every branch of the work. If its members follow Christ, they will deny the inclination for display, the love of dress, the love of elegant houses and costly furniture. There must be far greater humility.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 296.

PRQ3. Why is the tithing system applicable in the New Testament era?

Wednesday, November 16

4. WARNINGS FOR US

a. How does the tithing principle relate to the eighth commandment? Exodus 20:15; Malachi 3:8, 9.

Exodus 20:15: *15 Thou shalt not steal.*

Malachi 3:8-9: *8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*

“God lays His hand upon all man’s possessions, saying: I am the owner of the universe, and these goods are Mine. The tithe you have withheld I reserve for the support of My servants in their work of opening the Scriptures to those who are in the regions of darkness, who do not understand My law. In using My reserve fund to gratify your own desires you have robbed souls of the light which I made provision for them to receive. You have had opportunity to show loyalty to Me, but you have not done this. You have robbed Me; you have stolen My reserve fund. ‘Ye are cursed with a curse’ (Malachi 3:9).” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 387.

PRQ4. What would happen if every Christian paid a faithful tithe?

Wednesday, November 16

4. WARNINGS FOR US

b. What must we never forget about the tithe? 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14.

1 Corinthians 9:13-14: *13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

“The tithe is set apart for a special use. It is not to be regarded as a poor fund. It is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God’s message to the world; and it should not be diverted from this purpose.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 103.

“Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe, to use according to their own judgment. They are not to use it for themselves in an emergency, nor to apply it as they see fit, even in what they may regard as the Lord’s work.”—Gospel Workers, p. 225.

“A very plain, definite message has been given to me for our people. I am bidden to tell them that they are making a mistake in applying the tithe to various objects, which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said that the tithe should be applied. Those who make this use of the tithe are departing from the Lord’s arrangement. God will judge for these things.

“One reasons that the tithe may be applied to school purposes. Still others reason that canvassers and colporteurs should be supported from the tithe. But a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers. There should be today in the field one hundred well-qualified laborers where now there is but one.”—Ibid., p.226.

PRQ4. What would happen if every Christian paid a faithful tithe?

Thursday, November 17

5. OUR FIRST FINANCIAL PRIORITY

a. What is the key to spiritual and temporal prosperity? Matthew 6:33.

Matthew 6:33: *33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

“Not only does the Lord claim the tithe as His own, but He tells us how it should be reserved for Him. He says, ‘Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase’ [Proverbs 3:9]. This does not teach that we are to spend our means on ourselves and bring to the Lord the remnant, even though it should be otherwise an honest tithe. Let God’s portion be first set apart. The directions given by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul in regard to gifts present a principle that applies also to tithing: ‘On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him’ [1 Corinthians 16:2]. Parents and children are here included. Not only the rich, but the poor are addressed.” —The Review and Herald, November 10, 1896. [Author’s Italics.]

PRQ5. *How does faithful tithing benefit everyone?*

Thursday, November 17

5. OUR FIRST FINANCIAL PRIORITY

b. What does God declare to us about that which is His? Malachi 3:10.

Malachi 3:10: *10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

“Let the Lord’s people pay a faithful tithe, and let them, also, from parents to children, lay aside for the Lord the money that is so often spent for self-gratification. The Lord has made us His stewards. He has placed His means in our hands for faithful distribution. He asks us to render to Him His own. He has reserved the tithe as His portion, to be used in sending the gospel to all parts of the world. My brethren and sisters, confess and forsake your selfishness, and bring to the Lord your gifts and offerings. Bring Him also the tithe that you have withheld. Come confessing your neglect. Prove the Lord as He has invited you to do.”—Ibid., November 23, 1905.

PRQ5. How does faithful tithing benefit everyone?

Friday, November 18

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. What object lesson from Eden illustrates the tithing principle?**
- 2. How were the Hebrews to acknowledge God's claims before returning their tithe to God's storehouse?**
- 3. Why is the tithing system applicable in the New Testament era?**
- 4. What would happen if every Christian paid a faithful tithe?**
- 5. How does faithful tithing benefit everyone?**

Sunday, November 20

1. THE CREATOR OWNS ALL

a. Of what are we reminded when we consider the ownership of the world?

Psalm 95:3–5; Proverbs 3:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19 (last part), 20.

Psalm 95:3–5: *3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.*

4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

Proverbs 3:9: *9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:*

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

“God has laid His hand upon all things, both man and his possessions; for all belong to Him. He says, I am the owner of the world; the universe is Mine, and I require you to consecrate to My service the firstfruits of all that I, through My blessing, have caused to come into your hands.” —Counsels on Stewardship, p. 72.

“Money is not ours; houses and grounds, pictures and furniture, garments and luxuries, do not belong to us. We are pilgrims, we are strangers. We have only a grant of those things that are necessary for health and life. . . . Our temporal blessings are given us in trust, to prove whether we can be entrusted with eternal riches. If we endure the proving of God, then we shall receive that purchased possession which is to be our own — glory, honor, and immortality.

“If our own people would only put into the cause of God the money that has been lent them in trust, that portion which they spend in selfish gratification, in idolatry, they would lay up treasure in heaven, and would be doing the very work God requires them to do. But like the rich man in the parable, they live sumptuously. The money God has lent them in trust, to be used to His name’s glory, they spend extravagantly. They do not stop to consider their accountability to God. They do not stop to consider that there is to be a reckoning day not far hence, when they must give an account of their stewardship.” —The Adventist Home, p. 367.

PRQ1. Why does the Lord require us to render our firstfruits unto Him?

Monday, November 21

2. THANK, FREEWILL, AND TRESPASS OFFERINGS

a. What does the Bible teach us about giving? Psalms 50:14; 116:12.

Psalms 50:14: *14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:*

Psalms 116:12: *12 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?*

“Jacob felt that God had claims upon him which he must acknowledge, and that the special tokens of divine favor granted him demanded a return. So does every blessing bestowed upon us call for a response to the Author of all our mercies. . . .

“Our time, our talents, our property, should be sacredly devoted to Him who has given us these blessings in trust. Whenever a special deliverance is wrought in our behalf, or new and unexpected favors are granted us, we should acknowledge God’s goodness, not only by expressing our gratitude in words, but, like Jacob, by gifts and offerings to His cause. As we are continually receiving the blessings of God, so we are to be continually giving.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 187, 188.

PRQ2. *What types of offerings does the Lord still specify for us today?*

Monday, November 21

2. THANK, FREEWILL, AND TRESPASS OFFERINGS

b. Why did Hezekiah see a need for reformation in Judah? 2 Chronicles 29:1–7, 27–33. What reformation do we also need today?

2 Chronicles 29:1–7: *1 Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mothers name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. 2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. 3 He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them. 4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, 5 And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place. 6 For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs. 7 Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel.*

2 Chronicles 27–33: *27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. 28 And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. 29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. 30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.*

Verses continued next page...

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings. 32 And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD. 33 And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.

“There has been a great neglect of duty. Many have withheld means which God claims as His, and in so doing they have committed robbery toward God. Their selfish hearts have not given the tenth of all their increase, which God claims. Neither have they come up to the yearly gatherings with their freewill offerings, their thank offerings, and their trespass offerings. Many have come before the Lord empty-handed. ‘Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings’ [Malachi 3:8].” —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 510.

“Bring in your trespass offerings, your thank offerings, and your freewill offerings; humble your hearts before the Lord, and He will be found ever ready to receive and pardon.” —The Review and Herald, July 8, 1880.

“[The Lord’s] messengers should not be handicapped in their work of holding forth the word of life. As they teach the truth they should have means to invest for the advancement of the work, which must be done at the right time in order to have the best and most saving influence. Deeds of mercy must be done; the poor and suffering must be aided. Gifts and offerings should be appropriated for this purpose. Especially in new fields, where the standard of truth has never yet been uplifted, this work must be done.” —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, pp. 384, 385.

PRQ2. What types of offerings does the Lord still specify for us today?

Tuesday, November 22

3. LEVITICAL LIBERALITY

a. How has God combined duty and blessing? Proverbs 11:24, 25.

Proverbs 11:24-25: *24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. 25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*

“The Levitical dispensation was distinguished in a remarkable manner by the sanctification of property. When we speak of the tithe as the standard of the Jewish contributions to religious purposes, we do not speak understandingly. The Lord kept His claims paramount, and in almost every article they were reminded of the Giver by being required to make returns to Him. . . .

“A conscientious few made returns to God of about one third of all their income for the benefit of religious interests and for the poor. These exactions were not from a particular class of the people, but from all, the requirement being proportioned according to the amount possessed.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 467, 468.

“Whenever God’s people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out His plan in systematic benevolence and in gifts and offerings, they have realized the standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed His requirements.” — Ibid., vol.3, p. 395.

PRQ3. What can we learn from the Hebrews’ example in giving?

Tuesday, November 22

3. LEVITICAL LIBERALITY

**b. In making monetary pledges and vows, what must we never forget?
Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5; Psalm 66:13, 14.**

Ecclesiastes 5:4-5: *4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. 5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*

Psalm 66:13-14: *13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, 14 Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.*

“God would have the members of His church consider their obligations to Him as binding as their indebtedness to the merchant or the market. Let everyone review his past life and see if any unpaid, unredeemed pledges have been neglected, and then make extra exertions to pay the ‘uttermost farthing,’ for we must all meet and abide the final issue of a tribunal where nothing will stand the test but integrity and veracity.” — Ibid., vol.4, p. 476.

“God has made an absolute reservation of a specified portion of our time and our means. To ignore these claims is to rob God. Christians boast that their privileges far exceed those of the Jewish age. Shall we then be content to give less to the cause of God than did His ancient people? The tithe was but a part of their liberalities. Numerous other gifts were required besides the freewill offering, or offering of gratitude, which was then, as now, of perpetual obligation.” — The Review and Herald, May 16, 1882.

PRQ3. What can we learn from the Hebrews’ example in giving?

Wednesday, November 23

4. THE SECOND TITHE

a. In the Hebrew economy, what was the second tithe—and what was its purpose? Deuteronomy 14:22, 23, 27–29; 26:12, 13.

Deuteronomy 14:22-23: *22 Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. 23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.*

Deuteronomy 14:27–29: *27 And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee. 28 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: 29 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.*

Deuteronomy 26:12-13: *12 When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; 13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them:*

Notes on next page...

“To promote the assembling of the people for religious service, as well as to provide for the poor, a second tithe of all the increase was required. Concerning the first tithe, the Lord had declared, ‘I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel’ (Numbers 18:21). But in regard to the second He commanded, ‘Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always’ (Deuteronomy 14:23, 29; 16:11–14). This tithe, or its equivalent in money, they were for two years to bring to the place where the sanctuary was established. After presenting a thank offering to God, and a specified portion to the priest, the offerers were to use the remainder for a religious feast, in which the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow should participate. Thus provision was made for the thank offerings and feasts at the yearly festivals, and the people were drawn to the society of the priests and Levites, that they might receive instruction and encouragement in the service of God. “Every third year, however, this second tithe was to be used at home, in entertaining the Levite and the poor, . . . [Deuteronomy 26:12 quoted.] This tithe would provide a fund for the uses of charity and hospitality.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 530.

PRQ4. For what purposes might the second tithe be used in our days?

Wednesday, November 23

4. THE SECOND TITHE

b. How did the second tithe benefit the giver in a spiritual sense, and in what ways can it be a blessing today? Proverbs 19:17.

Proverbs 19:17: *17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

“The consecration to God of a tithe of all increase, whether of the orchard and harvest field, the flocks and herds, or the labor of brain or hand, the devotion of a second tithe for the relief of the poor and other benevolent uses, tended to keep fresh before the people the truth of God’s ownership of all, and of their opportunity to be channels of His blessings. It was a training adapted to kill out all narrowing selfishness and to cultivate breadth and nobility of character.” — Education, p. 44.

“There will be an abundance of places to use the second tithe in doing earnest missionary work in new places.” — Manuscript Releases, vol. 7, p. 139.

PRQ4. For what purposes might the second tithe be used in our days?

Thursday, November 24

5. GIVING IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT

a. What should we realize in giving to God's cause? Mark 12:41–44. How can we determine the amount of first fruits and other offerings? Deuteronomy 16:17.

Mark 12:41–44: *41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. 43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: 44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.*

Deuteronomy 16:17: *17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.*

“ ‘How much owest thou unto my lord?’ (Luke 16:5). It is impossible to tell. All that we have is from God. He lays His hand upon our possessions, saying: ‘I am the rightful owner of the whole universe; these are My goods. Consecrate to Me the tithes and offerings. As you bring these specified goods as a token of your loyalty and your submission to My sovereignty, My blessing shall increase your substance, and you will have abundance.’ ” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 245.

“The contributions required of the Hebrews for religious and charitable purposes amounted to fully one fourth of their income. So heavy a tax upon the resources of the people might be expected to reduce them to poverty; but, on the contrary, the faithful observance of these regulations was one of the conditions of their prosperity.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 527.

PRQ5. How is the value of a gift measured in God's sight?

Thursday, November 24

5. GIVING IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT

b. What attitude would the Lord have each of us manifest when giving? 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7; Matthew 6:1–4.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7: *6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Matthew 6:1–4: *1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.*

“The Lord does not need our offerings. We cannot enrich Him by our gifts. Says the psalmist: ‘All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee’ [1 Chronicles 29:14]. Yet God permits us to show our appreciation of His mercies by self-sacrificing efforts to extend the same to others. This is the only way in which it is possible for us to manifest our gratitude and love to God. He has provided no other.” — Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 18, 19.

PRQ5. How is the value of a gift measured in God’s sight?

Friday, November 25

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. Why does the Lord require us to render our firstfruits unto Him?**
- 2. What types of offerings does the Lord still specify for us today?**
- 3. What can we learn from the Hebrews' example in giving?**
- 4. For what purposes might the second tithe be used in our days?**
- 5. How is the value of a gift measured in God's sight?**

Lesson 10 - Sabbath, December 3, 2022

God's Storehouse: His Church

MEMORY TEXT: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5).

“The church of Christ is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock.”—The Faith I Live By, p. 280.

Suggested Reading: *The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 9-16.*

Sunday, November 27

1. A FOLD FOR CHRIST'S FLOCK

a. Why does God have a church on earth? 1 Peter 2:5, 9.

1 Peter 2:5: *5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

1 Peter 2:9: *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to ‘the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.”—The Acts of the Apostles, p. 9.

PRQ1. *How can we identify God’s true church?*

Sunday, November 27

1. A FOLD FOR CHRIST'S FLOCK

b. What characteristics are essential in God's true church? Revelation 14:12; Ephesians 4:4–6.

Revelation 14:12: *12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

Ephesians 4:4–6: *4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

“We are to unify but not on a platform of error.” —Manuscript Releases, vol. 15, p. 259.

PRQ1. How can we identify God's true church?

Monday, November 28

2. A SAFE HAVEN

a. Since only the presence of Christ (John 15:4, 5) in our heart can make us one in the truth, what example of the early disciples should we never forget? Acts 1:13, 14; 2:46; 4:32.

John 15:4-5: *4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

Acts 1:13-14: *13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

Acts 2:46: *46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

Acts 4:32: *32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.*

“[The twelve apostles] were brought together, with their different faults, all with inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil; but in and through Christ they were to dwell in the family of God, learning to become one in faith, in doctrine, in spirit. They would have their tests, their grievances, their differences of opinion; but while Christ was abiding in the heart, there could be no dissension. His love would lead to love for one another; the lessons of the Master would lead to the harmonizing of all differences, bringing the disciples into unity, till they would be of one mind and one judgment.” — The Desire of Ages, p. 296.

PRQ2. Why is church membership important for the individual believer?

Monday, November 28

2. A SAFE HAVEN

b. What responsibility comes to each of us when we commit our life to Christ? 1 Timothy 3:15.

1 Timothy 3:15: *15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

“Very close and sacred is the relation between Christ and His church—He the bridegroom, and the church the bride; He the head, and the church the body. Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church.

“The church is organized for service; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties.”—Education, pp. 268, 269.

PRQ2. Why is church membership important for the individual believer?

Monday, November 28

2. A SAFE HAVEN

c. What privilege is extended to every member of God’s true church? 1 John 1:7; Hebrews 10:24, 25.

1 John 1:7: *7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

Hebrews 10:24-25: *24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

“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. God requires His church to nurse those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak unto them words that are ‘like apples of gold in pictures of silver’ [Proverbs 25:11].” —
Evangelism, p. 352.

PRQ2. Why is church membership important for the individual believer?

Tuesday, November 29

3. CALLED TO SERVE

a. **What duty of the believers is often neglected? Psalm 60:4.**

Psalm 60:4: *4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.*

“In many of our organized churches the banner of truth is trailing in the dust because the members are not doing service to God but are serving their own pleasure. They work through the influences that surround the soul. By precept and example, in self-indulgence, in their worldly habits of dress, in their words and actions, they testify against the truth, against self-denial, against the meekness of Christ. They are cold spiritually, and far separated from Christ. If they followed in the footsteps of Christ, they would be partakers of His self-denial, of His self-sacrifice, that they might lift up and save the souls that are ready to perish.”—Manuscript Releases, vol. 19, p. 173.

PRQ3. In what way may we be in danger of testifying against the truth?

Tuesday, November 29

3. CALLED TO SERVE

b. What is the calling of every follower of Christ? 2 Timothy 2:1–4.

2 Timothy 2:1–4: *1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

“The church of Christ is organized for service. Its watchword is ministry. Its members are soldiers, to be trained for conflict under the Captain of their salvation. Christian ministers, physicians, teachers, have a broader work than many have recognized. They are not only to minister to the people, but to teach them to minister. They should not only give instruction in right principles, but educate their hearers to impart these principles. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Its blessing can be retained only as it is shared.” —The Ministry of Healing, pp. 148, 149.

PRQ3. *In what way may we be in danger of testifying against the truth?*

Tuesday, November 29

3. CALLED TO SERVE

c. What helps to unify the church? Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 4:1–3.

Galatians 6:2: *2 Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

Ephesians 4:1–3: *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

“Never can the church reach the position that God desires it to reach until it is bound up in sympathy with its missionary workers. Never can the unity for which Christ prayed exist until spirituality is brought into missionary service, and until the church becomes an agency for the support of missions. The efforts of the missionaries will not accomplish what they should until the church members in the home field show, not only in word, but in deed, that they realize the obligation resting on them to give these missionaries their hearty support.”—Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 47, 48.

PRQ3. *In what way may we be in danger of testifying against the truth?*

Wednesday, November 30

4. GROWING AND DEVELOPING

a. How does Inspiration depict the growth and development of the believer and of the church? Ephesians 2:19–22; 4:14–16; 1 Corinthians 3:9–13.

Ephesians 2:19–22: *19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

Ephesians 4:14–16: *14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

1 Corinthians 3:9-13: *9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

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“God is testing every soul that claims to believe in Him. All are entrusted with talents. The Lord has given men His goods upon which to trade. He has made them His stewards and has placed in their possession money, houses, and lands. All these are to be regarded as the Lord’s goods and used to advance His work, to build up His kingdom in the world. In trading with the Lord’s goods, we are to seek Him for wisdom, that we may not use His sacred trust to glorify ourselves or to indulge selfish impulses. The amount entrusted varies, but those who have the smallest gifts must not feel that because their talent of means is small, they can do nothing with it.”— Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, pp. 245, 246.

“Our work was not sustained by large gifts or legacies; for we have few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard seed has grown to a great tree. The system of organization has proved a grand success. Systematic benevolence was entered into according to the Bible plan. The body has been ‘compactd by that which every joint supplieth’ [Ephesians 4:16].” — Testimonies to Ministers, p. 27.

PRQ4. Name some factors that will foster unity in the church.

Wednesday, November 30

4. GROWING AND DEVELOPING

b. What enables talents and funds to be utilized most efficiently among believers? 1 Corinthians 1:10; 14:40. On the other hand, what causes much to be lost among many Sabbathkeepers?

1 Corinthians 1:10: *10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

1 Corinthians 14:40: *40 Let all things be done decently and in order.*

“Oh, how Satan would rejoice 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 endorsed by the word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of regulation and order. In this way license shall not be given to disorderly elements to control the work at this time. We are living in a time when order, system, and unity of action are most essential.” —Ibid., p.228.

PRQ4. Name some factors that will foster unity in the church.

Thursday, December 1

5. OPTIMUM SERVICE AND CREDIBILITY

a. Describe the condition that must exist among Christ's followers to ensure success in our missionary endeavors. John 10:16; 13:35; 17:18–23.

John 10:16: *16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

John 13:35: *35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 17:18–23: *18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

“As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, organization was indispensable.” — Testimonies to Ministers, p. 26.
 “[Said the angel,] ‘The church must flee to God’s Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.’ This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith.” — Early Writings, p. 100.

“Jesus has prayed that His disciples all might be one. . . . It is through this unity that we are to convince the world of the mission of Christ, and bear our divine credentials to the world.” — The Review and Herald, March 11, 1890.

Continued...

“If there have been difficulties brethren and sisters—if envy, malice, bitterness, evil surmisings, have existed, confess these sins, not in a general way, but go to your brethren and sisters personally. Be definite. If you have committed one wrong and they twenty, confess that one as though you were the chief offender. Take them by the hand, let your heart soften under the influence of the Spirit of God, and say, ‘Will you forgive me? I have not felt right toward you. I want to make right every wrong, that naught may stand registered against me in the books of heaven. I must have a clean record.’ Who, think you, would withstand such a movement as this?”—Ibid., December 16, 1884.

PRQ5. How are we to bear our divine credentials to the world?

Friday, November 30

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. How can we identify God's true church?**
- 2. Why is church membership important for the individual believer?**
- 3. In what way may we be in danger of testifying against the truth?**
- 4. Name some factors that will foster unity in the church.**
- 5. How are we to bear our divine credentials to the world?**

DECEMBER - First Sabbath Offering for a Chapel in Castellón, Spain

Spain, also known as the Kingdom of Spain, is a sovereign member of the European Union. Its form of government is a parliamentary monarchy. This sunny, climatically diverse country shares the Iberian Peninsula with Portugal. The nation covers an area of 195,364 square miles (504,645 km²) with a population of over 47 million. Castilian or Spanish is the official language. Around 96% profess to be Roman Catholic, yet only around 20% of those claim to be practicing their faith.

In 1958, the first Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement group was organized in the city of Barcelona. Back then, there was no freedom of conscience in our country, yet today, we are thankful to enjoy this blessing. The city of Malaga soon became the center of our work, and later Madrid, the capital city. The development of the church was slow, but with God's guidance, a sure foundation was laid.

Beginning in the year 2000, Spain opened its doors to immigration, and brethren from Romania, Ukraine, Moldova, and the Americas began to arrive. It was beautiful to see fellow believers from different countries and languages coming here to earn their livelihood. Proclaiming the present truth was a treasure borne in their hearts in this Catholic land.

We soon faced the problem of finding adequate space for all the worshipers. Renting a premise was the first solution, but it was soon overtaken by the continued arrival of dozens and even hundreds of brethren, especially in the capital city. We faced challenging times.

Then, in 2019, the officers of the Spanish Field, in full harmony with the church of Castellón de la Plana—a city on the east coast—decided to buy a property that adapts to and solves the present and future needs of the church. This property has already been purchased, but it needs to be extensively remodeled—which costs a lot of money—and our resources are limited. We therefore appeal to our brothers, sisters and friends who are members of the Sabbath School from around the world kindly to make a generous offering for the chapel in Castellón.

“There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth” (Proverbs 11:24). We thank you in advance.

Your brothers and sisters from Spain

Lesson 11 - Sabbath, December 10, 2022

Financing God's Work

MEMORY TEXT: “We are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (1 Corinthians 3:9).

“God has made men His stewards. The property which He has placed in their hands is the means that He has provided for the spread of the gospel.” —Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 529.

Suggested Reading: *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 571-575, 645, 646.*

Sunday, December 4

1. SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

**a. What is God’s method of perfecting and uniting His scattered sheep?
Ephesians 4:11–16.**

Ephesians 4:11–16: *11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

“In sending forth His ministers our Saviour gave gifts unto men, for through them He communicates to the world the words of eternal life. This is the means which God has ordained for the perfecting of the saints in knowledge and true holiness.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 237.

PRQ1. What is one way we can help to perfect and unite God’s people?

Sunday, December 4

1. SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

b. How does this involve a duty and a privilege for every believer? 1

Corinthians 3:7, 8.

1 Corinthians 3:7-8: *7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.*

“The Lord has made the proclamation of the gospel dependent on the consecrated ability and the voluntary gifts and offerings of His people. While He has called men to preach the Word, He has made it the privilege of the whole church to share in the work by contributing of their means to its support.”—In Heavenly Places, p. 303.

PRQ1. What is one way we can help to perfect and unite God's people?

Monday, December 5

2. WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT

a. How do many today repeat the sin of Nadab and Abihu? Leviticus 10:1, 2.

Leviticus 10:1-2: *1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.*

“Where, in God’s directions for the support of His work, do we find any mention of bazaars, concerts, fancy fairs, and similar entertainments? Must the Lord’s cause be dependent upon the very things He has forbidden in His word—upon those things that turn the mind away from God, from sobriety, from piety and holiness?

“And what impression is made upon the minds of unbelievers? The holy standard of the word of God is lowered into the dust. Contempt is cast upon God and upon the Christian name. The most corrupt principles are strengthened by this un-Scriptural way of raising means. And this is as Satan would have it. Men are repeating the sin of Nadab and Abihu. They are using common instead of sacred fire in the service of God. The Lord accepts no such offerings.”—Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 204, 205.

PRQ2. How do wrong methods of raising funds contrast with God’s way?

Monday, December 5

2. WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT

b. What can we learn from the way Moses raised funds—and from the Israelites' response? Exodus 35:4, 5, 21, 29; 36:3–7.

Exodus 35:4-5: *4 And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, 5 Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass,*

Exodus 35:21: *21 And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the LORDS offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.*

Exodus 35:29: *29 The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses.*

Exodus 36:3–7: *3 And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it withal. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning. 4 And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; 5 And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the LORD commanded to make. 6 And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. 7 For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.*

Notes on next page...

“The plan of Moses to raise means for the building of the tabernacle was highly successful. No urging was necessary. Nor did he employ any of the devices to which churches in our day so often resort. He made no grand feast. He did not invite the people to scenes of gaiety, dancing, and general amusement; neither did he institute lotteries, nor anything of this profane order, to obtain means to erect the tabernacle for God. The Lord directed Moses to invite the children of Israel to bring their offerings. He was to accept gifts from everyone that gave willingly, from his heart. And the offerings came in so great abundance that Moses bade the people cease bringing, for they had supplied more than could be used.” — Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 529.

“Have you brought to God your gifts and offerings out of the abundance He has bestowed upon you? Have you given Him that which He claims as His own? If not, it is not yet too late for you to make the wrong right. The Spirit of Jesus can melt the icy selfishness that pervades the soul.” — The Review and Herald, October 13, 1896.

PRQ2. How do wrong methods of raising funds contrast with God’s way?

Tuesday, December 6

3. PRACTICAL COUNSEL

a. How may we risk receiving the curse placed on Meroz? Judges 5:23.

Judges 5:23: *23 Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.*

“[Judges 5:23 quoted.] What had Meroz done? Nothing. This was their sin. The curse of God came upon them for what they had not done.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, p. 284.

“The fruits of selfishness always reveal themselves in a neglect of duty, and in a failure to use God’s entrusted gifts for the advancement of His work.” — Counsels on Stewardship, p. 26.

“Only a small amount of means flows into the Lord’s treasury to be appropriated to the saving of souls, and it is with hard labor that even this is obtained. If the eyes of all could be opened to see how prevailing covetousness has hindered the advancement of the work of God, and how much more might have been done had all acted up to God’s plan in tithes and offerings, there would be a decided reform on the part of many; for they would not dare to hinder the work of advancing the cause of God as they have done.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 483.

Tuesday, December 6

3. PRACTICAL COUNSEL

b. What does Scripture teach about personal economy? Proverbs 21:20; John 6:12.

Proverbs 21:20: *20 There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.*

John 6:12: *12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.*

Tuesday, December 6

3. PRACTICAL COUNSEL

c. In what way do the Macedonian cries of today require something from each of us, and how are we blessed in heeding them? Acts 16:9, 10.

Acts 16:9-10: 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

“Each one should strive to do for Jesus all that it is possible for him to do, by personal effort, by gifts, by sacrifices. There should be meat in the house of the Lord, and that means a full treasury, that responses may be made to Macedonian cries coming from every land. How pitiful it is that we are obliged to say to these who cry for help, ‘We cannot send you men or money. We have an empty treasury.’” —Counsels on Stewardship, p. 298.

“We are to place in the Lord’s treasury all the means that we can spare. For this means, needy, unworked fields are calling. From many lands is sounding the cry, ‘Come over, . . . and help us’ [Acts 16:9]. 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.” —Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 49.

PRQ3. How can little personal expenditures hinder God’s work?

Wednesday, December 7

4. OUR PART IN GOD'S PLAN

a. How do our tithes and offerings relate to the opening of new fields? 1

Timothy 5:17, 18.

1 Timothy 5:17-18: *17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*

“The tithe is the Lord’s, and those who meddle with it will be punished with the loss of their heavenly treasure, unless they repent. Let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go. Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained but not from the tithe. God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry. The opening of new fields requires more ministerial efficiency than we now have, and there must be means in the treasury.” — Gospel Workers, pp. 227, 228.

“The preaching of the gospel is God’s appointed way for converting the souls of men. Men must hear in order to be saved. They cannot hear without a preacher, and the preacher must be sent. This makes it necessary to have funds in the treasury in order to provide means whereby the missionary may reach destitute fields. In the light of this fact, how can those who profess to follow Christ, rob God of His own intrusted talents in tithes and offerings? Is it not refusing bread to starving souls? To withhold the means which God has claimed as His own, whereby He has made provision that souls shall be saved, will surely bring a curse upon those who thus rob God. Souls for whom Christ has died, are denied the privilege of hearing the truth, because men refuse to carry out the measures which God has provided for the enlightenment of the lost.

“Money is not to be furnished for the carrying out of the work of the gospel in some mysterious way, and through unseen, mysterious agencies. God will not shower money from the windows of heaven to do His appointed work, to spread the truth in our world, and to save souls unto eternal life. He has made His people stewards of His means to be used for His glory in blessing humanity. . . . God will not pour out gold and silver from the windows of heaven, but that which is of infinitely greater value. He says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon you.’ ” — The Home Missionary, April 1, 1895.

PRQ4. What would happen if all cultivated the magnanimity of David?

Wednesday, December 7

4. OUR PART IN GOD'S PLAN

b. How does David encourage us to be liberal givers? 1 Chronicles 29:10–14.

1 Chronicles 29:10–14: *10 Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. 11 Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. 12 Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. 13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. 14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.*

“Should means flow into the treasury in accordance with this divinely appointed plan—a tenth of all the increase, and liberal offerings—there would be an abundance for the advancement of the Lord’s work.”—The Acts of the Apostles, p. 75.

PRQ4. What would happen if all cultivated the magnanimity of David?

Thursday, December 8

5. A RESPONSIBILITY AND A PRIVILEGE

a. How do God's people hasten or delay Christ's return in the clouds of glory? 2 Peter 3:11, 12.

2 Peter 3:11-12: *11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*

“Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory.” — The Desire of Ages, pp. 633, 634.

“The work of God, which should be going forward with tenfold its present strength and efficiency, is kept back, like a spring season held by the chilling blast of winter, because some of God's professed people are appropriating to themselves the means that should be dedicated to His service. Because Christ's self-sacrificing love is not interwoven in the life practices, the church is weak where it should be strong. By its own course it has put out its light and robbed millions of the gospel of Christ.” — Counsels on Stewardship, p. 54.

PRQ5. How may we be hastening or delaying our Lord's return?

Thursday, December 8

5. A RESPONSIBILITY AND A PRIVILEGE

b. What privilege is extended to every believer? 1 Corinthians 3:9.

1 Corinthians 3:9: *9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are Gods husbandry, ye are Gods building.*

“God has made men His almoners, copartners with Himself in the great work of advancing His kingdom on the earth; but they may pursue the course pursued by the unfaithful servant, and by so doing lose the most precious privileges ever granted to men. For thousands of years God has worked through human agencies, but at His will He can drop out the selfish, the money-loving, and the covetous. He is not dependent upon our means, and He will not be restricted by the human agent. He can carry on His own work though we act no part in it. But who among us would be pleased to have the Lord do this?” —Ibid., pp.198, 199.

PRQ5. How may we be hastening or delaying our Lord's return?

Friday, December 9

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. What is one way we can help to perfect and unite God's people?**
- 2. How do wrong methods of raising funds contrast with God's way?**
- 3. How can little personal expenditures hinder God's work?**
- 4. What would happen if all cultivated the magnanimity of David?**
- 5. How may we be hastening or delaying our Lord's return?**

Sunday, December 11

1. PERSONAL FINANCES

a. What may result now and eternally from neglecting the Lord's cause?

Haggai 1:5–11.

Haggai 1:5–11: *5 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. 6 Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. 7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. 8 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD. 9 Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. 10 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. 11 And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.*

“Those who are selfishly withholding their means need not be surprised if God’s hand scatters. That which should have been devoted to the advancement of the work and cause of God, but which has been withheld, may be entrusted to a reckless son, and he may squander it. A fine horse, the pride of a vain heart, may be found dead in the stable. Occasionally a cow may die. Losses of fruit or other crops may come. God can scatter the means He has lent to His stewards, if they refuse to use it to His glory. Some, I saw, may have none of these losses to remind them of their remissness in duty, but their cases may be the more hopeless.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, pp. 661, 662.

“The neglect to confess Christ in your account books cuts you off from the great privilege of having your name registered in the Lamb’s book of life.” — Our High Calling, p. 192.

PRQ1. How can a receiver of charity become its distributor?

Sunday, December 11

1. PERSONAL FINANCES

b. What should be considered by all who habitually tend to ask help, instead of offering it? Deuteronomy 28:12, 13.

Deuteronomy 28:12-13: *12 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. 13 And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:*

“Those who share in Christ’s glory must share also in His ministry, helping the weak, the wretched, and the despondent.”—Counsels for the Church, p. 60.

PRQ1. How can a receiver of charity become its distributor?

Monday, December 12

2. CONDITIONAL PROMISES

a. What does God desire for His people even today? Deuteronomy 28:1–6.

Deuteronomy 28:1–6: *1 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: 2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God. 3 Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. 4 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. 5 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. 6 Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*

“The word comes to every believer, ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’ [Isaiah 40:3]. Economize in your expenditure of means upon yourself. The first step of self-denial is generally the most difficult but begin without delay. Your self-denying offerings shall be used in this field to supply workers to give the last message of mercy to a fallen world.” —The General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1899.

“It is not God’s purpose that Christians, whose privileges far exceed those of the Jewish nation, shall give less freely than they gave. ‘Unto whomsoever much is given,’ the Saviour declared, ‘of him shall be much required.’ Luke 12:48. The liberality required of the Hebrews was largely to benefit their own nation; today the work of God extends over all the earth. In the hands of His followers, Christ has placed the treasures of the gospel, and upon them He has laid the responsibility of giving the glad tidings of salvation to the world. Surely our obligations are much greater than were those of ancient Israel.” —The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 337, 338.

Monday, December 12

2. CONDITIONAL PROMISES

b. What promises are assured to all who follow God’s financial plan? Malachi 3:11, 12.

Malachi 3:11-12: *11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.*

“All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, woman, and youth may become a treasurer for the Lord, and may be an agent to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle, ‘Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him’ (1 Corinthians 16:2).

“Great objects are accomplished by this system. If one and all would accept it, each would be made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God; and there would be no want of means with which to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world. The treasury will be full if all adopt this system, and the contributors will not be left the poorer. Through every investment made, they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth.”—Messages to Young People, pp. 304, 305.

PRQ2. How should our benevolence compare to that of the ancient Jews?

Tuesday, December 13

3. LESSONS FROM THE DAYS OF CHRIST

a. How can the wise men's devotion to the Child of Bethlehem serve as an encouragement to us? Matthew 2:1, 2, 11.

Matthew 2:1: *1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

Matthew 2:11: *11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*

“The magi had been among the first to welcome the Redeemer. Their gift was the first that was laid at His feet. And through that gift, what privilege of ministry was theirs! The offering from the heart that loves, God delights to honor, giving it highest efficiency in service for Him. If we have given our hearts to Jesus, we also shall bring our gifts to Him. Our gold and silver, our most precious earthly possessions, our highest mental and spiritual endowments, will be freely devoted to Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us.” — The Desire of Ages, p. 65.

PRQ3. What examples of generosity in Christ's day should inspire us?

Tuesday, December 13

3. LESSONS FROM THE DAYS OF CHRIST

b. What should we learn from Mary's anointing of Jesus? Mark 14:3.

Mark 14:3: *3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.*

“In determining the proportion to be given to the cause of God, be sure to exceed, rather than fall short, of the requirements of duty. Consider for whom the offering is to be made. This recollection will put covetousness to flight. Only consider the great love wherewith Christ has loved us, and our richest offerings will seem unworthy of His acceptance. When Christ is the object of our affections, those who have received His pardoning love will not stop to calculate the value of the alabaster box of precious ointment. Covetous Judas could do this; but the receiver of the gift of salvation will only regret that the offering has not a richer perfume and greater value.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 485.

PRQ3. What examples of generosity in Christ's day should inspire us?

Tuesday, December 13

3. LESSONS FROM THE DAYS OF CHRIST

c. How can those who are habitually dependent on charity become—like Mary—givers of charity? Acts 20:35.

Acts 20:35: 35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

“If those who have not made life a success were willing to be instructed, they could train themselves to habits of self-denial and strict economy, and have the satisfaction of being distributors, rather than receivers, of charity. There are many slothful servants. If they would do what it is in their power to do they would experience so great a blessing in helping others that they would indeed realize that ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ [Acts 20:35].” —Ibid., vol.3, pp. 400, 401.

PRQ3. What examples of generosity in Christ’s day should inspire us?

Wednesday, December 14

4. IN THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES

a. In proclaiming the gospel, what intensity of purpose should we share with the early Christians? Acts 4:32–37.

Acts 4:32–37: 32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. 36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles feet.

“[Acts 4:34, 35 quoted.] This liberality on the part of the believers was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. The converts to the gospel were ‘of one heart and of one soul’ [verse 32]. One common interest controlled them—the success of the mission entrusted to them; and covetousness had no place in their lives. Their love for their brethren and the cause they had espoused, was greater than their love of money and possessions. Their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of higher value than earthly wealth.

“Thus it will ever be when the Spirit of God takes possession of the life. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Christ, will follow the example of Him who for our sake became poor, that through His poverty we might be made rich. Money, time, influence—all the gifts they have received from God’s hand, they will value only as a means of advancing the work of the gospel. Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers.”—The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 70, 71.

PRQ4. What can we learn from the spirit of the early Christian church?

Wednesday, December 14

4. IN THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES

b. What can we learn from Ananias and Sapphira's artful deceit and its dire consequence? Acts 5:1–11.

Acts 5:1–11: 1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles feet. 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. 6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. 7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. 9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. 10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. 11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

“Desiring to gain a reputation for self-sacrifice, liberality, and devotion to the Christian faith, Ananias and Sapphira sold their property, and laid part of the proceeds at the feet of the apostles, pretending they had given it all. They had not been urged to give all they had to the cause. God would have accepted part. But they desired it to be thought that they had given all. Thus they thought to gain the reputation they coveted, and at the same time keep back part of their money. They thought they had been successful in their scheme; but they were cheating the Lord, and He dealt summarily with this, the first case of deception and falsehood in the newly formed church. He slew them both, as a warning to all of the danger of sacrificing truth to gain favor.”—Medical Ministry, pp. 126, 127.

PRQ4. What can we learn from the spirit of the early Christian church?

Thursday, December 15

5. SYSTEMATIC SELF-DENIAL

a. What must we realize in the operation and financial sustenance of God's cause in this earth? 1 Corinthians 14:33.

1 Corinthians 14:33: *33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

“[God] desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church.” — The Acts of the Apostles, p. 96.

PRQ5. How can the self-denial of the pioneers of present truth be revived today?

Thursday, December 15

5. SYSTEMATIC SELF-DENIAL

b. What must we learn from the ways in which God's faithful people have exemplified self-denial? Hebrews 11:8–10, 24–26, 37–40.

Hebrews 11:8–10: 8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Hebrews 11:24–26: 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Hebrews 11:37–40: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

“There was a time when there were but few who listened to and embraced the truth, and they had not much of this world's goods. Then it was necessary for some to sell their houses and lands, and obtain cheaper, while their means were freely lent to the Lord to publish the truth, and otherwise aid in advancing the cause of God. These self-sacrificing ones endured privations; but if they endure unto the end, great will be their reward.

Continued...

“God has been moving upon many hearts. The truth for which a few sacrificed so much has triumphed, and multitudes have laid hold of it. In the providence of God, those who have means have been brought into the truth, that, as the work increases, the wants of His cause may be met. God does not now call for the houses His people need to live in; but if those who have an abundance do not hear His voice, cut loose from the world, and sacrifice for God, He will pass them by and will call for those who are willing to do anything for Jesus, even to sell their homes to meet the wants of the cause. God will have freewill offerings. Those who give must esteem it a privilege to do so.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 215.

PRQ5. How can the self-denial of the pioneers of present truth be revived today?

Friday, December 16

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. How can a receiver of charity become its distributor?**
- 2. How should our benevolence compare to that of the ancient Jews?**
- 3. What examples of generosity in Christ's day should inspire us?**
- 4. What can we learn from the spirit of the early Christian church?**
- 5. How can the self-denial of the pioneers of present truth be revived today?**

Sunday, December 18

1. ANSWERING THE MACEDONIAN CRY

a. Although literature is a powerful missionary tool, what steps must follow in order to complete the gospel commission? Matthew 28:18–20. How can this need for diligent gospel workers be fulfilled? Isaiah 52:7, 8.

Matthew 28:18–20: *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Isaiah 52:7-8: *7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! 8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.*

“This work of faithfully bringing in all the tithes, that there may be meat in the house of God, would supply laborers for both home and foreign fields. Although books and publications upon present truth are pouring out their treasures of knowledge to all parts of the world, yet missionary posts must be established at different points. The living preacher must proclaim the words of life and salvation. There are open fields inviting workers to enter. The harvest is ripe, and the earnest Macedonian cry for laborers is heard from every part of the world.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 39.

Sunday, December 18

1. ANSWERING THE MACEDONIAN CRY

b. What urgent work needs to be done? Mark 16:15.

Mark 16:15: *15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

“The magnitude of our work calls for willing liberality on the part of the people of God. In Africa, in China, in India, there are thousands, yes, millions, who have not heard the message of the truth for this time. They must be warned. The islands of the sea are waiting for a knowledge of God.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 51.

PRQ1. In what sense is literature limited in its soul-saving ability?

Monday, December 19

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S TITHE

a. How does Inspiration emphasize the personal, human element in soul-saving? Romans 10:13–15. How can we all be involved? Revelation 22:17.

Romans 10:13–15: *13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

Revelation 22:17: *17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

“The preaching of the gospel is God’s appointed way for converting the souls of men. Men must hear in order to be saved. They cannot hear without a preacher, and the preacher must be sent. This makes it necessary to have funds in the treasury in order to provide means whereby the missionary may reach destitute fields. In the light of this fact, how can those who profess to follow Christ, rob God of His own entrusted talents in tithes and offerings? Is it not refusing bread to starving souls? To withhold the means which God has claimed as His own, whereby He has made provision that souls shall be saved, will surely bring a curse upon those who thus rob God.” —The Home Missionary, April 1, 1895.

PRQ2. What reveals the importance of punctuality in tithing?

Monday, December 19

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S TITHE

b. What does God require if we neglect to return His tithe on time? Leviticus 27:31. What experience of a local church in the year 1889 can encourage all today?

Leviticus 27:31: *31 And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.*

“The last Sabbath of the old year, we invited those who felt that they must make confession, to go into one of the vestries, and here a special opportunity was given them. I had spoken upon the last chapter of Malachi: ‘Will a man rob God?’ ‘Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.’ Many confessions were made upon this point. . . .

“Some of those who had not been dealing justly with God, and consequently had been separating themselves from Him, began to restore that which they had withheld. One brother had not paid tithes for two years. He gave his note to the secretary of the conference for the tithe he had withheld and the interest on it, amounting to \$571.50. I thank the Lord that he had the courage to do this. Another gave his note for \$300. Another man who had backslidden from God so far that but little hope was cherished that he would ever turn his feet into the path of righteousness again, gave his note for \$1,000. It was proposed that these long-withheld tithes and offerings be devoted to the Central European Mission; so with these and the Christmas donations, nearly \$6,000 has come into the treasury from this church to be applied to the missionary cause.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pp. 643, 644.

PRQ2. What reveals the importance of punctuality in tithing?

Tuesday, December 20

3. LEARNING FAITHFUL FORESIGHT

a. What objection was made against Mary's generosity towards Jesus? John 12:3–6. How did Christ commend Mary, and how are we warned against making similar objections today? Mark 14:7–9.

John 12:3–6: *3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. 4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simons son, which should betray him, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.*

Mark 14:7–9: *7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. 8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. 9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*

“We make progressive movements; but at every step prejudice and false ideas must be removed. This has been the case with every reformatory movement the world has ever seen. To some of small faith and selfish, money-loving disposition, each advance move has portended general disaster and an extravagant outlay of means. They have felt as did that poor man Judas when the ointment was poured upon the head of Jesus. Why this great waste? said he; this ought to have been sold, and the money given to the poor. Again and again, when some advance step has been taken, the selfish, cautious ones have thought that everything was going to ruin; but when the battle has been fought against all odds, they have hailed the victory as a token that God was in the movement. When it has been so fully demonstrated that the work was of God that unbelief has had to yield, the men who led out, whose foresight was greater than that of others, who worked against all opposition, are hailed as men raised up for the time, and led by the Spirit of God. Do those men who blocked the way realize the work they have done? Do they see that the addition of their money, their strength, their faith, and courage, might have made the work stronger and more influential, and that their neglect to do what they could is sin? . . . “Would that we lived so near the cross that we could see as God sees, and work as He would have us work.”—The Review and Herald, February 5, 1884.

PRQ3. How may we be in danger of repeating the sin of Judas?

Tuesday, December 20

3. LEARNING FAITHFUL FORESIGHT

b. To what realities should we now awaken? John 4:35, 36.

John 4:35-36: *35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. 36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.*

“Money is not to be furnished for the carrying out of the work of the gospel in some mysterious way, and through unseen, mysterious agencies. God will not shower money from the windows of heaven to do His appointed work, to spread the truth in our world, and to save souls unto eternal life. He has made His people stewards of His means to be used for His glory in blessing humanity.” —The Home Missionary, April 1, 1895.

PRQ3. How may we be in danger of repeating the sin of Judas?

Wednesday, December 21

4. SAVORY SALT

a. What exhortations come to all who seek to honor Christ? Matthew 5:13.

Matthew 5:13: *13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

“How much more eager will every faithful steward be to enlarge the proportion of gifts to be placed in the Lord’s treasure house, than to decrease his offering one jot or tittle. Whom is he serving? For whom is he preparing an offering?—For the One upon whom he is dependent for every good thing which he enjoys. Then let not one of us who is receiving the grace of Christ give occasion for the angels to be ashamed of us, and for Jesus to be ashamed to call us brethren. . . .

“Those who are recipients of His grace, who contemplate the cross of Calvary, will not question concerning the proportion to be given, but will feel that the richest offering is all too meager, all disproportionate to the great gift of the only-begotten Son of the infinite God. Through self-denial, the poorest will find ways of obtaining something to give back to God.”—Counsels on Stewardship, p. 200.

Wednesday, December 21

4. SAVORY SALT

b. How is the present truth to be spread throughout the earth? Ecclesiastes 11:1, 6.

Ecclesiastes 11:1: *1 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*

Ecclesiastes 11:6: *6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.*

“The waste places of the earth are to be cultivated. In humble dependence upon God, families are to go forth and settle in the unworked places of His vineyard. As the reward of their self-sacrifice in order to sow the seeds of truth, they will reap a rich harvest.” — The Review and Herald, August 26, 1902.

PRQ4. What should we consider when deciding how much to give for Christ?

Wednesday, December 21

4. SAVORY SALT

c. What is the most urgent call of today, and why? Matthew 9:36–38.

Matthew 9:36–38: *36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

“Who is to blame for the loss of the souls who know not God, and who have had no opportunity for hearing the reasons of our faith? What obligation rests upon the church in reference to a world that is perishing without the gospel? Unless there is more decided self-denial on the part of those who claim to believe the truth, unless there is more decided faithfulness in bringing all the tithes and offerings into the treasury, unless broader plans are laid than have yet been carried into execution, we shall not fulfill the gospel commission to go into all the world and preach Christ to every creature.”—The Home Missionary, April 1, 1895.

PRQ4. What should we consider when deciding how much to give for Christ?

Thursday, December 22

5. ENLIGHTENING EVERY CORNER

a. What will be the glorious result of the gospel commission, and how can we be blessed by taking part in it? Revelation 18:1.

Revelation 18:1: *I And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.*

“All heaven is looking with intense interest upon the church, to see what her individual members are doing to enlighten those who are in darkness. The field is the world, and the openings are so many, the work has so enlarged, that it is beyond the proportion of the means on hand to supply the necessary demands. For years the Lord has been warning His people to bind about their wants, to incur no needless outlay of means. But notwithstanding the counsel of Him who knows the end from the beginning, how needlessly has money been expended. The cautions given have been lightly esteemed, and the minds of men have misinterpreted, turned aside, or wrested the counsel of God, in order that they might follow their own ambitious projects, although by so doing, the very means by which God might have been glorified and honored in extending His truth, is lost to the cause. The Lord has graciously honored man, employing him as the human agent to cooperate with heavenly intelligences, that the light of truth may shine in all parts of the earth. The Lord has His agents who will act a part in the mightiest conflict which the world has ever seen. If the workers remain humble, learning daily, in the school of Christ, meekness and lowliness of heart, the Lord Jesus will work with them. He who is a coworker with Christ will realize that in conferring heavenly benefits on others, he himself will be benefited. He will know that ‘he that watereth shall be watered also himself’ [Proverbs 11:25].” — The Review and Herald, February 27, 1894.

PRQ5. How will the world be enlightened—with us or without us?

Friday, December 23

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1. In what sense is literature limited in its soul-saving ability?**
- 2. What reveals the importance of punctuality in tithing?**
- 3. How may we be in danger of repeating the sin of Judas?**
- 4. What should we consider when deciding how much to give for Christ?**
- 5. How will the world be enlightened — with us or without us?**

Sunday, December 25

1. BEFORE LIFE EXPIRES

a. To what realities are we all subject? Hebrews 9:27. What should this make each of us consider—whether old, young, sick, or healthy? Romans 12:11.

Hebrews 9:27: *27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

Romans 12:11: *11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*

“It often happens that an active businessman is cut down without a moment’s warning and on examination his business is found to be in a most perplexing condition. In the effort to settle his estate the lawyers’ fees eat up a large share, if not all, of the property, while his wife and children and the cause of Christ are robbed. Those who are faithful stewards of the Lord’s means will know just how their business stands, and, like wise men, they will be prepared for any emergency. Should their probation close suddenly, they would not leave such great perplexity upon those who are called to settle their estate.

“Many are not exercised upon the subject of making their wills while they are in apparent health. But this precaution should be taken by our brethren. They should know their financial standing and should not allow their business to become entangled. They should arrange their property in such a manner that they may leave it at any time.”—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 482.

PRQ1. What superstition about making wills is detrimental to God’s cause?

Sunday, December 25

1. BEFORE LIFE EXPIRES

b. In planning our wills, what should we consider? Isaiah 38:1.

Isaiah 38:1: *I In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.*

PRQ1. *What superstition about making wills is detrimental to God's cause?*

Monday, December 26

2. PREPARING FOR THE END

a. Since thousands of dollars are lost because people die without making a legal will, what need should be brought to the attention of the believers? 1 Corinthians 4:2.

1 Corinthians 4:2: *2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

“Some wills are made in so loose a manner that they will not stand the test of the law, and thus thousands of dollars have been lost to the cause. Our brethren should feel that a responsibility rests upon them, as faithful servants in the cause of God, to exercise their intellect in regard to this matter, and secure to the Lord His own.

“Many manifest a needless delicacy on this point. They feel that they are stepping upon forbidden ground when they introduce the subject of property to the aged or to invalids in order to learn what disposition they design to make of it. But this duty is just as sacred as the duty to preach the word to save souls. Here is a man with God’s money or property in his hands. He is about to change his stewardship. Will he place the means which God has lent him to be used in His cause, in the hands of wicked men, just because they are his relatives? Should not Christian men feel interested and anxious for that man’s future good as well as for the interest of God’s cause, that he shall make a right disposition of his Lord’s money, the talents lent him for wise improvement? Will his brethren stand by and see him losing his hold on this life and at the same time robbing the treasury of God? This would be a fearful loss to himself and to the cause; for, by placing his talent of means in the hands of those who have no regard for the truth of God, he would, to all intents and purposes, be wrapping it in a napkin and hiding it in the earth.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 479.

“Death will not come one day sooner, brethren, because you have made your will. In disposing of your property by will to your relatives, be sure that you do not forget God’s cause. You are His agents, holding His property; and His claims should have your first consideration. Your wife and children, of course, should not be left destitute; provision should be made for them if they are needy. But do not, simply because it is customary, bring into your will a long line of relatives who are not needy.” — Ibid., p.482.

PRQ2. Why should we not neglect to speak about making wills?

Monday, December 26

2. PREPARING FOR THE END

b. Whether we live or die, what does God expect each of us to remember?

Romans 14:8, 12.

Romans 14:8: *8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lords.*

Romans 14:12: *12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

PRQ2. Why should we not neglect to speak about making wills?

Tuesday, December 27

3. THE FINAL WORK

a. What is our duty in these last days? 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6; Zechariah 10:1. How can we receive the latter rain or “refreshing”? Acts 3:19–21.

1 Thessalonians 5:1–6: *1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*

Zechariah 10:1: *1 Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.*

Acts 3:19–21: *19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain — ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ [Genesis 4:9].” — *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 52.

“God calls for men to give the warning to the world that is asleep, dead in trespasses and sins. He calls for freewill offerings from those whose hearts are in the work, who have a burden for souls, that they shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 446.

PRQ3. What is one reason why many will fail to receive the latter rain?

Tuesday, December 27

3. THE FINAL WORK

b. What should be foremost in our mind today, as individuals and as a church organization? Ecclesiastes 8:5; John 9:4.

Ecclesiastes 8:5: *5 Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise mans heart discerneth both time and judgment.*

John 9:4: *4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*

“We ought now to be heeding the injunction of our Saviour: ‘Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not’ [Luke 12:33]. It is now that our brethren should be cutting down their possessions instead of increasing them. We are about to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Then let us not be dwellers upon the earth, but be getting things into as compact a compass as possible.”—Ibid., vol.5, p. 152.

“For what shall we hoard up treasures? To be swept away by the flames of the last day? Shall we lay up gold and silver to be a witness against us in the Judgment—to eat our flesh as it were fire? Shall we cling to our possessions till they fall into the hands of our enemies? The time is coming when commandment keepers can neither buy nor sell. Of what use will houses and lands, bank stock and merchandise, be to us then? Now is the time to place our treasures where they will be eternally secure.”—The Review and Herald, December 6, 1887.

PRQ3. What is one reason why many will fail to receive the latter rain?

Wednesday, December 28

4. PRACTICAL PREPARATION

a. Why hasn't Christ returned yet? 2 Peter 3:9. How can we avoid losing all our means in the prophecy that is soon to be fulfilled? Isaiah 2:20; Ezekiel 7:19; Psalm 96:4–8.

2 Peter 3:9: *9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

Isaiah 2:20: *20 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;*

Ezekiel 7:19: *19 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.*

Psalm 96:4–8: *4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens. 6 Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. 7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.*

“If our brethren would learn the value of souls in the light of what their salvation has cost Jesus, they would know that souls are of greater value than houses and lands, gold and precious stones, or high positions of honor.” —The Review and Herald, February 5, 1884.

“The work of God is to become more extensive, and if His people follow His counsel, there will not be much means in their possession to be consumed in the final conflagration. All will have laid up their treasure where moth and rust cannot corrupt; and the heart will not have a cord to bind it to earth.” —Counsels on Stewardship, p. 60.

PRQ4. What should we realize before the approaching time of trouble?

Wednesday, December 28

4. PRACTICAL PREPARATION

b. What does Christ promise to all who through faithful sacrifice are seriously preparing for His return? Isaiah 33:14–17.

Isaiah 33:14–17: *14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? 15 He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; 16 He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. 17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.*

“It is contrary to the Bible to make any provision for our temporal wants in the time of trouble. I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands and strangers would reap their fields. Then will be the time for us to trust wholly in God, and He will sustain us. I saw that our bread and water will be sure at that time, and that we shall not lack or suffer hunger; for God is able to spread a table for us in the wilderness. If necessary He would send ravens to feed us, as He did to feed Elijah, or rain manna from heaven, as He did for the Israelites.

“Houses and lands will be of no use to the saints in the time of trouble, for they will then have to flee before infuriated mobs, and at that time their possessions cannot be disposed of to advance the cause of present truth. I was shown that it is the will of God that the saints should cut loose from every encumbrance before the time of trouble comes, and make a covenant with God through sacrifice. If they have their property on the altar and earnestly inquire of God for duty, He will teach them when to dispose of these things. Then they will be free in the time of trouble and have no clogs to weigh them down.”—Early Writings, pp. 56, 57.

PRQ4. What should we realize before the approaching time of trouble?

Thursday, December 29

5. A HIGH-YIELD INVESTMENT

a. Where is the best investment available today—and why? Luke 12:32–34.

Luke 12:32–34: *32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

“Let us be honest with the Lord. All the blessings that we enjoy come from Him; and if He has entrusted us with the talent of means, that we may help to do His work, shall we hold back? Shall we say, No, Lord; my children would not be pleased, and therefore I shall venture to disobey God, burying His talent in the earth?

“There should be no delay. The cause of God demands your assistance. We ask you, as the Lord’s stewards, to put His means into circulation, to provide facilities by which many will have the opportunity of learning what is truth.”—Counsels on Stewardship, pp. 44, 45.

Thursday, December 29

5. A HIGH-YIELD INVESTMENT

b. What declaration will the Lord make at the end of time? Psalm 50:3–5. How will all who make a covenant by sacrifice be richly rewarded? 1 Corinthians 15:51–58.

Psalm 50:3–5: *3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. 4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. 5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*

1 Corinthians 15:51–58: *51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

“There is reward for the wholehearted, unselfish workers who enter this field, and also for those who contribute willingly for their support. Those engaged in active service in the field, and those who give of their means to sustain these workers, will share the reward of the faithful. . . .

“The self-denial they have practiced in order to support the work is remembered no more. As they look upon the souls they sought to win to Jesus, and see them saved, eternally saved—monuments of God’s mercy and of a Redeemer’s love—there ring through the arches of heaven shouts of praise and thanksgiving.”—Ibid., pp.348, 349.

PRQ5. How and when is the interest paid on treasure laid up in heaven?

Friday, December 30

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What superstition about making wills is detrimental to God's cause?

2. Why should we not neglect to speak about making wills?

3. What is one reason why many will fail to receive the latter rain?

4. What should we realize before the approaching time of trouble?

5. How and when is the interest paid on treasure laid up in heaven?