

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS



Second
Quarter

1971

Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

Adult Division, No. 304, Second Quarter, 1971

Lesson Titles for the Quarter

1. Challenging Truths for All Times
2. Toward the Fullness of Christ
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The Blessing of Daily Study

“Every day some portion of time should be appropriated to the study of the lessons, not merely in learning to mechanically repeat the words, while the mind does not comprehend the meaning; but to go to the very foundation, and become familiar with what is brought out in the lesson.”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, page 53.

My Pledge

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath School lesson each day of the week.

(signed)

Studies in the Epistle to the Ephesians

SECOND QUARTER, 1971

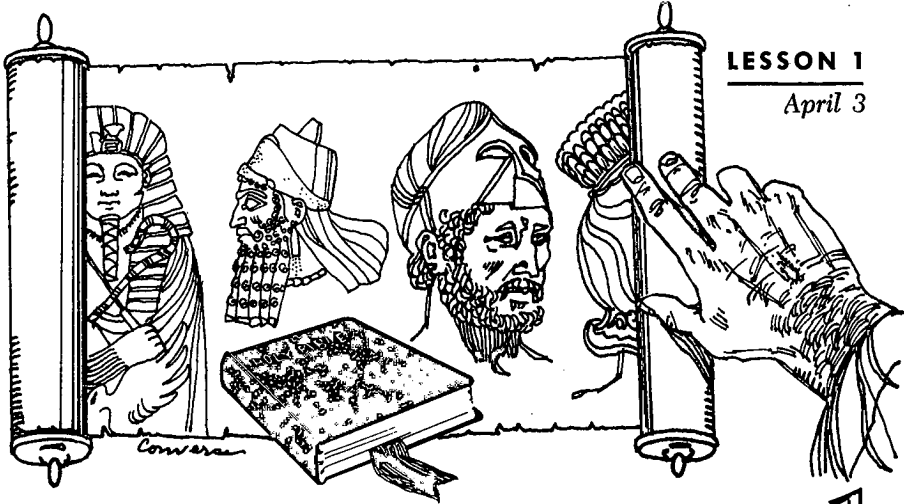
Place of writing and date: "Having exercised his rights as a Roman citizen and appealed to Caesar, Paul was sent to Rome, where he probably arrived in the spring of A.D. 61. Here he was a prisoner for two years. Thus it is likely that this epistle was written about A.D. 62."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 994.

Historical background: "Paul wrote this epistle in times and surroundings that well form a background to his message. The bloody Nero was emperor; licentiousness, luxury, and murder were rampant. It is recorded, for example, that when L. Pedanius Secundus, a senator of Rome, had been murdered by a slave, in accordance with legal rights some 400 slaves of his household were condemned to death in retribution."—*Ibid.*

Theme: "This book of the New Testament . . . may be described as a solemn contemplation of the lofty privilege into which God's eternal purpose has brought believers in Christ, followed by an exhortation to conduct worthy of this high calling. Beneath this simple structure of the epistle and pervading the whole is the fully developed conception of Christ as central in the universe and in history."—*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1946 ed., article, "Epistle to the Ephesians."

Relevance: This letter was written during the closing days of Paul's ministry, while he was a prisoner in Rome. See *The Acts of the Apostles*, page 176; *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 730. His great burden was that the believers should stand firm and that they should all come into "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 fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:13.

"These messages, written with a power not of man but of God, contain lessons which should be studied by all and which may with profit be often repeated. In them practical godliness is outlined, principles are laid down that should be followed in every church, and the way that leads to life eternal is made plain."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 470, 471.



CHALLENGING TRUTHS FOR ALL TIMES

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. 1:7.

Study Helps: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 63-67; *Prophets and Kings*, pages 681-702; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

"This letter, containing the deepest church truth, is a treasure-house of rich spiritual food, highly doctrinal in character. It contains the longest sentence in print, commencing at chapter 1, verse 3, and extending through verse 14."—Kenneth Wuest, *Acts Through Ephesians*, page 213.

"The Epistle to the Ephesians occupies a place of supreme importance in the history of Christian theology. It could almost be said that through the centuries the influence of Paul has been felt primarily through this epistle."—*The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 10, p. 605.

Think on the Writer: Paul was "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." "As a theologian he ranks as perhaps the greatest of all time, having laid much of the foundation upon which Christian dogmatics is built. His elevated concept of Christ has dominated Christianity. He was an able orator (Acts 17:22-31). . . . He was also a great evangelist. . . . Yet in spite of his many gifts and his high calling, he was a man of great humility (1 Cor 15:9;

Eph 3:8). . . . He possessed singleness of purpose (1 Cor 2:2; Php 3:13), composure of mind (Php 4:11, 12; 1 Ti 6:6-8), . . . and unflinching faith (Rom 2:28, 38, 39; Gal 2:20; 2 Ti 1:12)."—*SDA Bible Dictionary*, "Paul," page 832.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Salutation of the Apostle Paul**
Eph. 1:1-3
2. **Chosen for Salvation by God**
Eph. 1:4-6
3. **Redemption Through Christ's Blood**
Eph. 1:7, 8
4. **Amazing Plan Made Known**
Eph. 1:9, 10
5. **Believer's Inheritance Secure**
Eph. 1:11, 12
6. **Sealed With the Spirit of Promise**
Eph. 1:13, 14

March 28

**Part 1
SALUTATION OF
THE APOSTLE PAUL**

Eph. 1:1-3

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

"The will of God." This gave Paul a strong conviction of divine calling. He uses the expression at least six times to the churches. (1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1.)

By direct mandate of Christ he had been chosen (Acts 9:5-15), and by diligence and the grace of God he continued his witness till his death (2 Tim. 4:7). He undoubtedly was, after Christ, the gospel's greatest exponent and model church leader.

"Saints." This is an early use of this word in the sense of "Christians" (Acts 9:13), and occurs in all his epistles except Thessalonians and Galatians and those written to individuals.

"Blessed." He blesses God, who has blessed the saints "with all spiritual blessings." This comprehensive statement would doubtless include the doctrinal revelations such as adoption, resurrection, and immortality, as brought to light in the gospel.

"Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 510, 511.

What is the meaning of "an apostle of Jesus Christ"? Can each believer live every day "by the will of God"? What were the characteristics of a "saint" of Paul's day? From what kind of world had the "faithful" come? Eph. 1:1.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are "all spiritual blessings" available to us today? If we availed ourselves of them, would our homes and churches undergo some change? Have you found by experience that "rejoicing in the Lord" is a helpful attitude in one's life?

"No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow

from the throne of God. Then let us educate our hearts and lips to speak the praise of God for His matchless love."—"The Ministry of Healing," page 253.

**Part 2
CHOSEN FOR
SALVATION
BY GOD**

"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

Eph. 1:4-6

"Through Him He picked us out before the creation of the world, to be consecrated and above reproach in His sight in love. He foreordained us to become His sons by adoption through Christ Jesus, to carry out the happy choice of His will, so that we might praise the splendid favor which He has shown us in His beloved Son."—Charles B. Williams.

The Greek verb from which we get the meaning "to determine beforehand" occurs in Rom. 8:29, 30 and Eph. 1:5, 11. God foresaw those who would accept the conditions of salvation. These He calls, justifies, glorifies. See Rom. 8:30.

"By Jesus Christ." All that God does for us is through Jesus Christ. Paul labored to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Col. 1:28. It is God's will that all should be adopted into the Christian family.

"We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others.

"Give the erring one no occasion for discouragement. . . . Let no tinge of scorn be manifest in the voice. . . . If you take an attitude of indifference, or show suspicion or distrust, it may prove the ruin of a soul. . . . Let him feel the strong clasp of a sympathizing hand, and hear the whisper, Let us pray. . . . Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 250, 251.

What is God's goal for the chosen ones? Having been chosen, what status were they to have in the family of God?

THINK IT THROUGH

Are there dangers in thinking that we are God's chosen persons? What is the antidote to this type of thinking?

"All who will may see the mystery of godliness. But it is only through a correct understanding of Christ's mission and work that the possibility of being complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, is brought within our reach.

. . . And to as many as receive Him, He gives the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."—Ellen G. White *Comments*, "SDA Bible Commentary," Vol. 6, p. 1113.

March 30

Part 3
REDEMPTION
THROUGH
CHRIST'S BLOOD
Eph. 1:7, 8

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."

Redemption comes by the voluntary sacrifice of Christ and by the voluntary faith of man in that sacrifice. Christ's death was unique. The life sacrificed for humanity was without sin (1 Peter 1:19), and it provided a "ransom for all." Not even one is excluded. 1 Tim. 2:6.

Faith in the blood of Christ produces peace (Col. 1:20) and cleanses from sin. 1 John 1:7. We overcome by its power. Rev. 12:11.

"Dear brother, dear sister, when Satan would fill your mind with despondency, gloom, and doubt, resist his suggestions. Tell him of the blood of Jesus, that cleanses from all sin. You cannot save yourself from the tempter's power, but he trembles and flees when the merits of that precious blood are urged."
 —*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 317.

There is no magic in the shed blood. There is a twofold miracle involved in the process of salvation. First, that divine love provided the incarnation and shedding of Christ's blood for all men. Second, that through faith in the death on Calvary's cross, man could repent, confess, find conversion, and thus pass from sinner to saint. From this miracle he finds divine grace to abound "in all wisdom and prudence."

• "He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness."—*Steps to Christ*, page 55.

What changes come to the man who accepts the sacrifice of Christ? How rich and complete is the bestowal of grace? How many have been excluded from the gospel plan? Eph. 1:7; Acts 17:30.

THINK IT THROUGH

As we contemplate the grandeur of the plan of redemption, what can we say about its relation to the believers in the church? Should they be courageous, or fearful?

"But the atonement for a lost world was to be full, abundant, and complete. Christ's offering was exceedingly abundant to reach every soul that God had created. It could not be restricted so as not to exceed the number who would accept the great Gift. All men

are not saved; yet the plan of redemption is not a waste because it does not accomplish all that its liberality has provided for. There must be enough and to spare."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 565, 566.

March 31

**Part 4
AMAZING PLAN
MADE KNOWN**

"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him."

Eph. 1:9, 10

Sin caused disunion. God's plan was to restore unity between heaven and earth. Sin was the cosmic tragedy, and today it is the Number One problem in the world. But God has purposed that in time unity will be restored between heaven and earth.

"The mystery of His will" is made known to man in its broad essentials without explicit mention of all the means used, which means man could not in his finite state understand. Paul speaks of "my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Eph. 3:4. He received by revelation sufficient for the edification of the saints (Gal. 1:12; Col. 1:25), but elsewhere he acknowledges human limits to comprehension of infinite things. 1 Cor. 13:9-12.

"*Fullness of times.* . . . The entire gospel age seems to be comprehended. As there are appropriate times for the sowing of the seed and the gathering of the harvest, there are also suitable seasons for God's activities in connection with the redemption of men. There are some things that could be accomplished at one time and not at another, because He is dealing with beings who are free moral agents whom He will not even attempt to force into compliance with His purposes. Through the ages there have been successive unfoldings of the plans of God, stages of development leading up to the final consummation when there will be a universal unity."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 1:10.

Who only was the author of the plan to bring unity into the universe? When was this plan to be made operative? Who was its center? When will it be completely fulfilled? Eph. 1:10.

THINK IT THROUGH

Does my daily Christian life show that I am giving my full cooperation for my own benefit and that of others?

"It was God's gracious purpose to make this revelation. He was not in the position of finding Himself in a dilemma when faced with the outbreak of sin, nor did He grudgingly set about the glorious, but agonizing, work of redemption. . . . It is not an adequate

or a reverent picture of the character of God to present Him as reluctantly yielding to the persuasions of man or of Christ before He is willing to forgive sin or to come to the aid of His stricken creatures."—"SDA Bible Commentary," on Eph. 1:9.

April 1

Part 5
BELIEVER'S
INHERITANCE
SECURE
Eph. 1:11, 12

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ."

Here Paul pursues the great theme of the divine purpose, the sovereign will of God in working out the ultimate triumph of righteousness over evil. We have a present inheritance, however, and we are to give thanks for it. Col. 1:12.

In some cases this inheritance is both here and in the hereafter. Mark 10:30. Study the use of the word "inheritance" as it applies to our inheritance among the saints (Acts 20:32; 26:18), the present token (earnest) of more to come (Eph. 1:14).

Mention some qualities of the inheritance of the saints through Christ's resurrection. 1 Peter 1:3, 4. For more on rewards and inheritance see Mark 10:29, 30.

"To the praise of His glory" or its equivalent is used three times. Eph. 1:6, 12, 14. Is this praise just word of mouth, or what more is involved in the phrase "that we should be to the praise of His glory"?

"An immense sacrifice was made on the part of God's dear Son, that He might have power to rescue fallen man and exalt him to His own right hand, make him an heir of the world and a possessor of the eternal weight of glory. Language fails to express the value of the immortal inheritance. The glory, riches, and honor offered by the Son of God are of such infinite value that it is beyond the power of men or even angels to give any just idea of their worth, their excellence, their magnificence."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 40.

How is the believer's inheritance made secure? Who has decided that the believer is to have an inheritance? Does the will of God have something to do with the bestowal of the inheritance? Eph. 1:11.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do you think we value our Christian inheritance as intensely as did these first believers? By what means can we obtain this vivid sense of inheritance?

"Christ is coming with power and great glory. He is coming with His own glory and with the glory of the Father. . . . While all the world is plunged in darkness, there will be light in every dwelling of the saints. They will catch the first light of His second appearing. The unsullied light will shine from His

splendor, and Christ the Redeemer will be admired by all who have served Him. While the wicked flee, Christ's followers will rejoice in His presence. Then it is that the redeemed from among men will receive their promised inheritance."—"Prophets and Kings," page 720.

April 2

**Part 6
SEALED WITH
THE SPIRIT
OF PROMISE**

Eph. 1:13, 14

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."

"The word of truth" must here include all that Paul means in Romans 1:16—the whole gospel, of which he was unashamed.

How did they hear this word? It was the apostles' exposition of the Christian gospel based on the Scriptures of their fathers. This was Christ's own method of preaching the word of truth. See Luke 24:27. Today men are seeking for truth from many sources other than the Inspired Word.

"The truth is more than a collection of statements of fact, which would have no salvation in them as such; the truth must finally bring us to Him who is 'the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14:6). Every noble impulse that arises in any man's soul, Christian or heathen, springs from that one Source. Indeed, the influence of the Holy Spirit is necessary to the effective reception of the truth (1 Cor. 2:12-15). . . ."

"There is an orderly change in the believer's life: first there is the hearing, then the believing, and then the sealing that puts upon him, as it were, an impression or stamp."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 1:13.

"The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 507.

What heavenly ministry had come to seal the Ephesians as God's own people? Of what significance was this work? How does the ministry of the Holy Spirit relate to the inheritance? Eph. 1:13.

THINK IT THROUGH

On the basis of my spiritual growth in the last five years, when will the Holy Spirit be the fully controlling and energizing element of my life?

"Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the

manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it."—*Testimonies to Ministers*," page 507.

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**

1. The believer is blessed with (A) The blessings he needs; (B) All spiritual blessings; (C) Blessings for which he asks. _____.
2. Complete: "In whom we have redemption through His _____, the forgiveness of _____, according to the riches of His _____."
3. When were the believers chosen? (A) After sin entered this world; (B) When converted; (C) Before the foundation of the world. _____
4. True or False: God's plan included gathering together all things in Christ. _____
5. By accepting Christ what bestowal does the believer receive? _____
6. True or False: The believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. _____



TOWARD THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST 2

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."
Eph. 1:22, 23.

Study Helps: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 469-484; *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 312-335; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

There are some who insist that the Christian church has lost its influence. Some assert the church has failed in all its goals and therefore is no longer relevant to the life of the world and its needs.

Paul sets out to show the grand potential of the church. The storehouse of God is replete with endless treasure available to the humblest believer. Paul declares that there is a mighty power in reserve for the church and the individual believer.

Think on the Writer: "No man ever lived who was a more earnest, energetic, and self-sacrificing disciple of Christ than was Paul. He was one of the world's greatest teachers. He crossed the seas and traveled far and near, until a large portion of the world had learned from his lips the story of the cross of Christ."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 409.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Faith, Love, and Prayer**
Eph. 1:15, 16
2. **Pray for Wisdom and Knowledge**
Eph. 1:17
3. **Hope of the Calling—Riches of Glory**
Eph. 1:18
4. **Power to Believers**
Eph. 1:19, 20
5. **Grandeur and Majesty of His Exaltation**
Eph. 1:21
6. **Eminence of Jesus in the Church**
Eph. 1:22, 23

April 4

Part 1
FAITH, LOVE,
AND PRAYER
Eph. 1:15, 16

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."

Paul was quick to notice spiritual growth on the part of the believers (1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 1:3, 4), and to express his appreciation, as shown in the text before us. Believers respond positively to words of appreciation. Appreciation finds entrance to the heart. Understanding is of great value in stimulating spiritual growth. "Wherefore" or "for this cause" refers to previous comments, such as verse 8, where the wisdom and prudence of the Ephesian Christians are mentioned.

How could the faith of the Ephesians have been reported for Paul and others to hear about it? Why should Paul be concerned about the welfare of these churches?

This letter was written from a Roman prison, and Paul had reason to wonder about a church "consisting of Jews and Gentiles, Asiatics and Europeans, slaves and freemen—all symbols of a disrupted world that was to be restored to unity in Christ."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 995.

As Paul heard of the Christian growth of the believers, what was he led to do? Eph. 1:16.

"Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. . . . The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 510, 511.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is the disunity of the world reflected in our individual lives? Could Jesus be the instrument of God's reconciliation among individuals without affecting the disunity among various groups in society and among nations?

"When we permit our communion with God to be broken, our defense is departed from us. Not all your good purposes and good intentions will enable you to withstand evil. You must be men and women of prayer. Your petitions must not be faint, occasional, and

fitful, but earnest, persevering, and constant. . . . Let the heart be continually uplifted in silent petition for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. Let every breath be a prayer."—"The Ministry of Healing," pages 510, 511.

April 5

Part 2
PRAY FOR WISDOM
AND KNOWLEDGE
Eph. 1:17

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

The incarnation is involved in the expression "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ." As the God-man, Jesus often referred to God as "Father" (John 17:1), "Our Father" (Luke 11:2), "My heavenly Father" (Matt. 18:35). These many expressions identify Jesus with humanity. Thus "the Father of glory" is both "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "My God, and your God." John 20:17.

"The Father of glory" suggests Stephen's "the God of glory." Acts 7:2. The glory is part of the inheritance of the saints in Eph. 1:18. Does the church always present the picture of a group of saints in whom some form of this glory is seen?

"Wisdom and revelation." Does it require wisdom to understand the revelation of God? Does it require divine guidance to comprehend the revealed Word? Is this a reason for constant and regular study of the Word in which God's wise plan of salvation is revealed?

"It is contrition and faith and love that enable the soul to receive wisdom from heaven. Faith working by love is the key of knowledge, and everyone that loveth 'knoweth God.' 1 John 4:7."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 139.

Through prayer and study knowledge is gained, and in the case of the apostle he is praying that others have knowledge.

What gifts does Paul pray for, for the Ephesians? By praying to God for these gifts, what does he recognize?

"But there must be earnest study [of the Scriptures] and close investigation. . . . And we cannot expect to gain spiritual knowledge without earnest toil. Those who desire to find the treasures of truth must dig for them as the miner digs for the treasure hidden in the earth. . . . It is essential for old and young, not only to read God's Word, but to study it with wholehearted earnestness, praying and searching for truth as for hidden treasure. Those who do this will be rewarded, for Christ will quicken the understanding."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 111.

THINK IT THROUGH

As we study the Bible, what assistance has been supplied to give us understanding? Eph. 1:17; John 16:13. In the past have we taken advantage of this help?

"A true knowledge of the Bible can be gained only through the aid of that Spirit by whom the Word was given. And in order to gain this knowledge we must live by it. All that God's Word commands, we are to obey. All that it

promises, we may claim. The life which it enjoins is the life that, through its power, we are to live. Only as the Bible is thus held can it be studied effectively."—"Education," page 189.

April 6

**Part 3
HOPE OF THE
CALLING—RICHES
OF GLORY**

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Eph. 1:18

"I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined, so that you may know what is the hope to which He calls you, what the wealth and glory of the share He offers you among His people in their heritage." NEB.

The apostle prays that the believers may be ever mindful of the significance of hope as a principle of life here and as a reward and privilege in the hereafter. The Lord Jesus is our hope. 1 Tim. 1:1. God is our guide and protector as we walk through life. We follow the truth of God as our way of life. Then at the end our hope for eternity will be fulfilled in the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

What is your understanding of the phrase: "Know what is the hope of His calling"? Does the hope of your calling inspire and encourage you?

Paul also prays that the believers remember the riches God has for them. Humanity is attracted to riches, but it shuns poverty. The lesson for us is to put our trust in God's riches which are our inheritance. Qualitatively and quantitatively God's riches amaze us as they are lavished on the believer by an eternal and loving heavenly Father. Guidance into truth by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13), redemption through the blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:18, 19), the mediatorial ministry of Christ (1 Tim. 2:5), and everlasting life and happiness in the earth made new are but a few of the riches which God has showered on the believer.

Name some riches of our God not mentioned in the paragraph above.

THINK IT THROUGH

In view of the times we live in, and in view of the grace and love of God to the believer, what should be the practical attitude of the church member to God's riches and worldly riches? Eph. 1:18; Matt. 6:19-21.

"Having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear, which is necessary to the completion of His work. No truth essential to our salvation is withheld, no miracle of mercy is neglected, no divine agency is left unemployed. Favor is heaped upon favor, gift upon gift. The whole treasury of heaven is open to those He seeks to

save. Having collected the riches of the universe, and laid open the resources of infinite power, He gives them all into the hands of Christ, and says, All these are for man. Use these gifts to convince him that there is no love greater than Mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness will be found in loving Me."—"The Desire of Ages," page 57.

April 7

Part 4
POWER TO
BELIEVERS

Eph. 1:19, 20

"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places."

What analogy do you see between the resurrection power in the case of Jesus, and "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward"? How would you contrast the power required to overcome weakness and sin in the believer and that required to raise Jesus from the dead? Does the conquest of sin figure in both cases?

"This same resurrection power is that which gives life to the soul 'dead in trespasses and sins.' Eph. 2:1. That spirit of life in Christ Jesus, 'the power of His resurrection,' sets men 'free from the law of sin and death.' Phil. 3:10; Rom. 8:2. The dominion of evil is broken, and through faith the soul is kept from sin. He who opens his heart to the Spirit of Christ becomes a partaker of that mighty power which shall bring forth his body from the grave."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 209, 210.

"Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave,—not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal."—*Ibid.*, p. 388.

What assurance is given to struggling believers in these verses? What is the proof of God's mighty power in our lives? Could it be the condition described in 1 Cor. 13:4?

THINK IT THROUGH

In what sense does resurrection have meaning in this mortal life? Rom. 6:1-11.

"The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The risen body of the Saviour, His deportment, the accents of His speech, were all familiar to His followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been de-

formed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments of those we love."—E. G. White Comments, "SDA Bible Commentaries," Vol. 6, p. 1092.

April 8

Part 5
GRANDEUR AND
MAJESTY OF
HIS EXALTATION
Eph. 1:21

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Every form of power is here intended. The ancient world feared many "powers," good and evil. The stars represented to them powers of all kinds. Angelic and demonic powers were legion to them. For believers, the coming of Christ into the world banished the fear of all evil powers, for Christ is Lord of all. Compare Rom. 8:38, 39.

The heathen gods were graded, some greater or more evil than others. Christ is "above all." Compare "angels, nor principalities, nor powers" (Rom. 8:38), "angels and authorities and powers" (1 Peter 3:22), et cetera.

The worship of angels appeared in some forms of later Judaism, and the Christian leaders warned against this. (Col. 2:16-18. To them, Christ was the Supreme Person in the universe, sitting at the right hand of God. Ps. 110:1. His name is above every name and has an influence which cannot be estimated for greatness. Revelation 5.

"His [Christ's] resurrection is a pledge of the resurrection of the saints (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:20-22), and His exaltation a pledge of the final exaltation of the saints."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 1:20.

"The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Him, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 787.

How is the power of Christ compared to the other powers in the universe? Compare Heb. 1:2, 3.

THINK IT THROUGH

The power of God is implied in the very name of Jesus: Matt. 12:21; John 14:13; Phil. 2:9-11.

"The disciples were to carry their work forward in Christ's name. Their every word and act was to fasten attention on His name, as possessing that vital power by which sinners may be saved. Their faith was to center in Him who is the source of mercy and power. In His name they were to present their petitions to the Father, and they would receive answer. They were to baptize

in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christ's name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 28.

April 9

Part 6
EMINENCE OF
JESUS IN
THE CHURCH
Eph. 1:22, 23

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

"In this passage these words fill up the picture of our Lord's transcendent dignity, by the declaration of the actual subjugation of all the powers of sin and death, rising up against Him, in the spiritual war which is to go on till the appointed end."—Ellicott's *Commentary*, on Eph. 1:22.

Should this give courage to Christ's church on earth today? In what way is "the church, which is His body" affected by your exemplification of the Lordship of Christ?

"He walks in the midst of His churches throughout the length and breadth of the earth. He watches them with intense interest to see whether they are in such a condition spiritually that they can advance His kingdom. Christ is present in every assembly of the church. He is acquainted with everyone connected with His service. He knows those whose hearts He can fill with the holy oil, that they may impart it to others."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, pp. 418, 419.

In the plan of Heaven God-chosen men were to carry on the work of the church under the direction of Deity. Jesus chose twelve as those who should begin this ministry.

"These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were to be given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 17.

THINK IT THROUGH

How should a reverent understanding of Christ's leadership of the church affect our relationship to leaders and members of that church today? Eph. 4:15, 16.

"Thus in His people He is glorified. . . . The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display. Christ looks upon

His people in their purity and perfection, as the reward of His humiliation, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory."—"The Desire of Ages," page 680.

Answers: (1) C; (2) the spirit of wisdom; (3) The hope of His calling, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance; (4) Power of the resurrection; (5) B; (6) The Head.

- Part 7** ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**
-
1. After Paul heard of the faith of the Ephesians and their love to all the saints, what did he do? (A) Sent them an epistle; (B) Made a pastoral visit to them; (C) Prayed for them. _____
 2. What blessing did Paul ask for the Ephesian believers? _____
 3. What two facts did he ask for them to know after having the eyes of their understanding enlightened? _____
 4. What power worked in the believers? _____
 5. To what status was Christ elevated? (A) Above all the famous men of the world; (B) Above every name that was named; (C) Above the prophets and apostles. _____
 6. What is Christ's status in the church? _____



FROM SINNERS TO SAINTS 3

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

Study Helps: *The Desire of Ages*, pages 31-38, 342-349; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

The apostle Paul places great emphasis on the importance of individual Christian experience. He thought of individuals as integral parts of the whole church. The church rises to a higher degree of spirituality to the extent that its individual members become more like their Lord in character.

Paul lived in a world of idol worshippers with erroneous ideas. The anger of the false gods was believed to be placated by the works of the worshiper. Paul was anxious to show the ancient world that his God was not an angry idol, but a merciful, loving, powerful Deity. The practice of good works was popular and supposed to be meritorious, and the people understood religion that way. Now the time had come for the world to unlearn this error and to learn about divine grace and mercy as the only basis of salvation.

Think on the Writer: "He had been strictly conscientious in his opposition to

Christ and His followers, and when he was arrested and convicted of his sin [on the road to Damascus], he immediately forsook his evil ways, and professed the faith of Jesus."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, page 35.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The Dead in Sin Made Alive**
Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:12, 13
2. **Worldlings Before; Believers Now**
Eph. 2:2, 3
3. **God's Mercy to Sinners**
Eph. 2:4-7
4. **Saved by Grace**
Eph. 2:8, 9
5. **Good Works—God's Purpose**
Eph. 2:10
6. **Profile of Symmetry**
Col. 1:9-12

April 11

Part 1
THE DEAD IN
SIN MADE ALIVE

Eph. 2:1;
Col. 2:12, 13

"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."

"Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses."

Whereas we were "dead in trespasses," we are now dead or irresponsible to the promptings of sin. Does this mean that we are no longer subject to temptation from hereditary human nature? Or does it mean that we now have power to resist temptation till the great day when "we shall all be changed" from mortal to immortal?

"As God raised Christ from the dead, that He might bring life and immortality to light through the gospel, and thus save His people from their sins, so Christ has raised fallen human beings from spiritual death, quickening them with His life, filling their hearts with hope and joy."—E. G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1115.

What experience comes to the sinner after his sins have been forgiven? Through whom and by what process does forgiveness come?

Forgiveness is a great act of divine mercy. Christ has brought us a wonderful blessing in forgiveness. He is the only one who can give us forgiveness. Acts 5:31; 4:12; 1 John 1:7, 9. Forgiveness comes in response to repentance, the first step in turning to God. Acts 3:19. We receive forgiveness through the blood of Jesus. Matt. 26:28.

The believer after receiving forgiveness has a duty to others. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

"Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit. He who is unmerciful toward others shows that he himself is not a partaker of God's pardoning grace."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 251.

THINK IT THROUGH

When others offend us, what should the attitude of the believer be? How should we forgive a brother? Matt. 6:12; 18:35.

"The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith

produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself."—"The Desire of Ages," page 176.

April 12

Part 2
WORLDLINGS
BEFORE;
BELIEVERS NOW

Eph. 2:2, 3

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

In verse 2 Satan is indicated as responsible for the evil course of this world. He claimed power over the world. Luke 4:6. He is the great adversary and tempter of man. 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Thess. 3:5. He is the enemy. Matt. 13:39. He is the deceiver of the whole world. Rev. 12:9. He is the father of lies. John 8:44.

In verse 3 the word "all" must include both Jews and Gentiles. All are guilty before God. In the first chapter of Romans there is an extensive exposition of the guilt of man in the evil course of this world. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. 1:18. All through the exposition of evil in Romans 1:19-32 the personal pronoun is used to indicate the responsibility of men for the evil in their lives.

Before becoming believers in the Lord, in what kind of world had they walked? Explain the responsibility for evil in the world.

In *The Desire of Ages*, pages 36 and 37, there is an extensive description of the world of the first century, from which a few excerpts are taken:

"The deception of sin had reached its height. All the agencies for depraving the souls of men had been put in operation." "Bewildered and deceived, they were moving on in gloomy procession toward eternal ruin,—to death in which is no hope of life, toward night to which comes no morning." "The senses, the nerves, the passions, the organs of men, were worked by supernatural agencies in the indulgence of the vilest lust." "Sin had become a science, and vice was consecrated as a part of religion."

THINK IT THROUGH

Meditate on the wonder of the plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. Should we concentrate on what we were in the past, or on what the present and future offer us in Christ? Eph. 2:7.

"Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. . . . Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do.

Only He who knew the height and the depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, 'with healing in His wings.' Mal. 4:2." —"The Desire of Ages," page 22.

**Part 3
GOD'S MERCY
TO SINNERS**

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Eph. 2:4-7

Quickened. . . . This word . . . and its simpler form . . . refer to a change from death to life, a rebirth, a new life. As Christ was quickened from the grave, so man is quickened from spiritual death. It is God's purpose to bring man into a new sphere, a new relationship in which he is governed by new principles."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 2:5.

"Heavenly places." "If we are raised together with Christ, and are 'in Christ Jesus,' and Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven, then we, in that sense, are sitting with Him in heaven."—*Ibid.*, on Eph. 1:3.

"God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. . . . It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God's law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. . . .

"By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan's charges were refuted."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 762.

Are the riches of God's grace extended to man in the ages to come? in this life? or in both? What difference in manifestation can you suggest?

THINK IT THROUGH

What do you understand by the idiomatic expression "to sit together in heavenly places with Christ"? See Col. 3:1,2.

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. . . . As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ran-

somed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise."—"The Great Controversy," page 678.

April 14

Part 4
SAVED BY GRACE
Eph. 2:8, 9

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

"It is grace on God's part and faith on man's part. Faith accepts the gift of God. It is through the act of entrusting ourselves to Him that we are saved, not that faith is the means of our salvation, but simply the channel."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 2:8.

How does the apostle describe salvation in Rom. 8:24, 25?

"Hope is an essential element of our salvation and must never be omitted from our contemplation of what the Christian life means. Faith accepts; but hope expects. Faith is concerned with Him who promises; but hope is occupied with the good things promised. Faith appropriates; hope anticipates. It is in the power of this hope which the New Testament calls 'that blessed hope' that we are to live and labor. Hope is always centered on the coming of the Lord, and included in that, on the resurrection from the dead with complete deliverance from sin, likeness to Christ, and the full revelation of our sonship to God in Him (1 Cor. 15:51-57; Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; 1 John 3:1, 2)."—W. H. Griffith Thomas, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, page 222.

"He [Christ] saw that the weakness, the curse of the church, would be a spirit of self-righteousness. Men would think they could do something toward earning a place in the kingdom of heaven. . . . Thus there would be an abundance of self and little of Jesus. Many who had made a little advancement would be puffed up and think themselves superior to others. They would be eager for flattery, jealous if not thought most important. Against this danger Christ seeks to guard His disciples."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 400, 401.

What three elements operate in our obtaining salvation? Eph. 2:8. What is the initial and dominating factor in our salvation? Eph. 2:4. How is boasting precluded? Rom. 3:27.

THINK IT THROUGH

Name some reasons, besides the one below, why so few accept this gracious gift.

"Repentance is associated with faith, and is urged in the gospel as essential to salvation. Paul preached repentance. . . . There is no salvation without repentance. No impenitent sinner can believe with his heart unto righteous-

ness. . . . This repentance has in it nothing of the nature of merit, but it prepares the heart for the acceptance of Christ as the only Saviour, the only hope of the lost sinner."—"Selected Messages," Bk. 1, p. 365.

April 15

Part 5
**GOOD WORKS—
 GOD'S PURPOSE**
 Eph. 2:10

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

This verse shows clearly the reason why and where "good works" figure in the Christian life. Christ initiates everything by His grace, abolishing all enmity and uniting us, from whatever background, in one with Him. See verse 15.

What would men say to a new man created by Christ if he did evil works? Do good works flow from man's will to be good, or from inward Christian motives? Gal. 2:20.

"By their good works, Christ's followers are to bring glory, not to themselves, but to Him through whose grace and power they have wrought. It is through the Holy Spirit that every good work is accomplished."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 80.

Is a man saved by his good deeds?

Where faith in the righteousness of Christ is the dominating factor, then, good works always follow. Various aspects of good works are seen in the following quotations:

"Each has his place in the eternal plan of heaven. Each is to work in cooperation with Christ for the salvation of souls. Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 326, 327.

"The rich Christian has a special opportunity to serve his fellowmen and to show to the world the results of grace. When non-Christians see the gracious unselfishness of rich Christians they will naturally tend to have respect for the Christian way of life, and may, indeed, turn to Christ. . . .

"The rich Christian is entrusted with a solemn responsibility. The way he handles wealth will affect his spiritual development as well as the comfort of those less fortunate."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on 1 Tim. 6:18.

"God calls for those who will be workers together with Him. . . . Christ supplies the efficiency, and man becomes a power for good. Truthfulness and integrity are attributes of God, and he who possesses these attributes possesses a power that is invincible."—*Messages to Young People*, page 35.

THINK IT THROUGH

At this late hour evil is rapidly approaching its climax. Does this accentuate the necessity for, or the futility of, good works? Heb. 10:24, 25.

"No one can give place in his own heart and life for the stream of God's blessing to flow to others, without receiving in himself a rich reward. The hillsides and plains that furnish a channel for the mountain streams to reach

the sea suffer no loss thereby. That which they give is repaid a hundred-fold. For the stream that goes singing on its way leaves behind its gift of verdure and fruitfulness."—"*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*," page 81.

April 16

Part 6
PROFILE OF
SYMMETRY

Col. 1:9-12

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it; do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

How can man be "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom," et cetera?

"The 'knowledge' here spoken of is the 'full knowledge,' to be attained in measure here, to be made perfect in heaven."—Ellicott's *Commentary*, on Col. 1:9. This wisdom pertains to the essentials of personal salvation.

Paul desired the Ephesian Christians to "come to understand the height of the Christian's privilege. He opens before them, in the most comprehensive language, the marvelous power and knowledge that they might possess as sons and daughters of the Most High."—*The Great Controversy*, page 476.

"Some may say it is exalting our own merits to expect favor from God through our good works. True, we cannot buy one victory with our good works; yet we cannot be victors without them. The purchase which Christ recommends to us is only complying with the conditions He has given us. True grace, which is of inestimable value, and which will endure the test of trial and adversity, is only obtained through faith and humble, prayerful obedience."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 89.

How many aspects of the Christian life are mentioned in this text besides "every good work"? Name some good deeds of others and the good effects of them.

THINK IT THROUGH

Think over your own Christian experience. Do you find times when to do good deeds has cost you something? Have you encouraged someone lately to continue to do good deeds?

"Good works cost us a sacrifice, but it is in this very sacrifice that they provide discipline. These obligations bring us into conflict with natural feelings and propensities, and in fulfilling them we gain victory after victory over the ob-

jectionable traits of our characters. The warfare goes on, and thus we grow in grace. Thus we . . . are prepared for a place among the blessed in the kingdom of God."—"Testimonies," Vol. 6, pp. 262, 263.

Answers: (1) Quickened them; forgiven their trespasses; (2) Satan and sinners; (3) God called after the sinner first; (4) A; (5) workmanship, good works, walk in them; (6) Power of God.

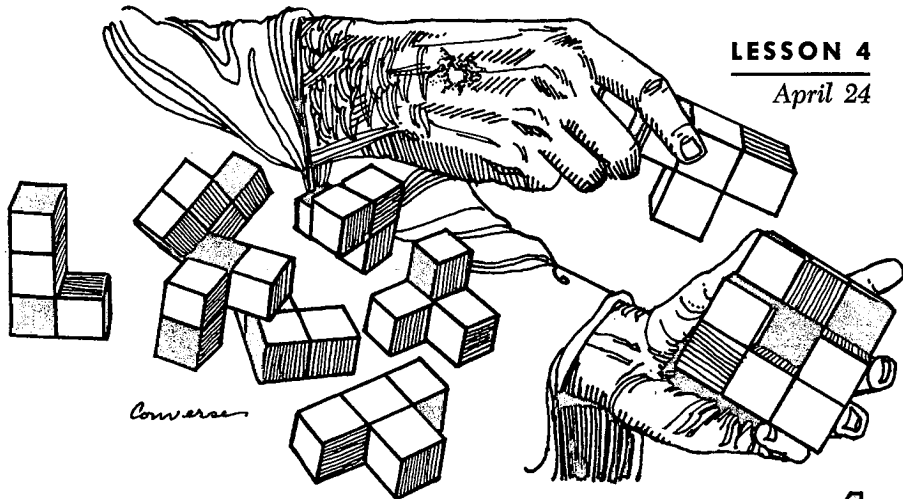
6. With what power is the believer strengthened? _____
 should _____
 unto _____, which God hath before ordained that we
 "_____"
5. Complete: "For we are His _____, created in Christ Jesus
 _____"
4. How are men saved? (A) By grace through faith; (B) By human works.

3. Did God call after the sinner first, or did the sinner call after God first?

2. Who are responsible for the evil in the world?

1. What has God done for those "who were dead in trespasses and sins"?

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



FROM CHAOS TO COMMUNITY 4

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. 2:13.

Study Helps: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 593-602; *The Desire of Ages*, pages 597-600; *The SDA Bible Commentary*.

This lesson makes crystal clear that the change from unbeliever to believer is a reality. The contrast is sharp. The condition before is ugly, hopeless, despairing, and lost; that after is beautiful, hopeful, secure.

"Far off." That is in pagan or heathen unbelief. Can a person be "respectable" today and yet be "far off" from Christ? Paul has other expressions indicating this "far off" condition. For example: "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph. 2:12), "alienated and enemies" (Col. 1:21), "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18). In what ways can you think of alienated people today?

Think on the Writer: "As Paul was brought in direct contact with the idolatrous inhabitants of Ephesus, the power of God was strikingly displayed through him. . . .

"The manifestations of supernatural power which accompanied the apostle's work, were calculated to make a deep impression upon a people given to sorcery. . . . The miracles of Paul were far more

potent than had ever before been witnessed in Ephesus, and were of such a character that they could not be imitated. . . . Thus the Lord exalted His servant, even in the estimation of the idolaters themselves."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, pages 135, 136.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Spiritual Chaos**
Eph. 2:11, 12
2. **Dawn of Community**
Eph. 2:13-15
3. **Christ, the Reconciler**
Eph. 2:16-18
4. **The High Privilege of Community**
Eph. 2:19
5. **Community Foundation**
Eph. 2:20, 21
6. **A Contributing Community**
Eph. 2:22

April 18

Part 1
SPIRITUAL CHAOS

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

Eph. 2:11, 12

Does the victory of the gospel over these Gentiles have any hopeful relevance to the conditions of the world today? Here is a partial list of alienating influences we face in Christian witness: heredity, poverty, ignorance, pride, love of money, friendships. Can you add others?

"Without Christ. . . . This is no condemnation of the Gentiles, but simply an assertion of the fact that, being without connection with the Messiah, they were without the source of regenerative power. . . .

"Strangers. God made His covenants with Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). They were to make the covenant privileges available to the Gentiles and to invite them to participate in the worship of the true God. . . . They failed to carry out God's plan, and the Gentiles remained 'aliens' and 'strangers.' Before Christ came, the knowledge of the 'covenants of promise' was thus confined almost entirely to the Jews.

"No hope. The Gentiles had no hope in the Messiah, hence, no hope for the blessings that would flow from Him. In the catacombs of Rome the word 'hope' is commonly found in Christian inscriptions, but it is never found in the inscriptions on heathen tombs.

"Without God. . . . This is the ultimate in misery and loss. The Gentiles were not atheistic in the sense of lacking gods, for they had many gods. They were without the knowledge of the true God, whose attributes are holiness, love, justice, and mercy."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 2:12.

What were five conditions in the spiritual past of the believers? Why did the apostle propose that they think of their past?

THINK IT THROUGH

As you think of your past Christian experience, is it helpful in the present and the future? If not, is there a remedy?

"The uses of remembrance. . . . I. It tends to deepen the humility of saints as well as to increase their godly sorrow for sin. II. It tends to make us grateful for our mercies and to make us magnify the greatness and freeness of divine love. . . . III. It tends to inspire us with a stronger love for Christ. . . .

IV. It tends to quicken us to greater zeal and activity in the Lord's service. . . . V. It tends to make us more hopeful of the conversion of others who are now what we once were as sinners."—*"Pulpit Commentary,"* on Eph. 2:11, pp. 77, 78.

April 19

Part 2
DAWN OF
COMMUNITY

Eph. 2:13-15

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace."

The blood of Christ is spoken of as bringing us near. Look up the following texts for other blessings the blood of Christ brings to the believer: Rom. 5:9; Col. 1:14, 20.

"He is our peace. . . . Christ is not only the peacemaker; He Himself is peace, the bond of union and of peace. In Him all the divisions of mankind are to be abolished. . . . By being their peace before God, Christ effected peace between Jew and Gentile. . . .

"Middle wall of partition. . . . The imagery may have been derived from the barrier in the Temple separating the court of the Gentiles from the court of the Jews. . . . [In 1871 the stone with the warning inscription from Herod's Temple, which is now in the museum at Istanbul, was found. The inscription in Greek translated into English is: 'No stranger (non-Jew) is to enter within the balustrade around the Temple and enclosure. Whoever is caught will be responsible to himself for his death which will ensue.']

"Law of commandments. This is generally thought of as referring to the ceremonial law. . . . It was the interpretation the Jews placed upon it, the additions they made to it, and the exclusive and hostile attitudes they adopted as a result, that were the basis of the hostility."—SDA Bible Commentary, on Eph. 2:14, 15.

Name the blessings which now come to the believers in their new condition "in Christ." Name some spiritual benefits which are said to come to the believer "by the blood of Christ."

THINK IT THROUGH

May we by our actions re-erect barriers that prevent "access to God"? 1 Cor. 8:9, 11.

"All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of

Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise."—"Christ's Object Lessons," page 386.

See Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:13.

April 20

Part 3
CHRIST, THE
RECONCILER

Eph. 2:16-18

"And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

These verses complement the great passage on reconciliation in 2 Cor. 5:18-21. The word "reconcile" shows two parties once united, then separated by sin, and now brought together again. → This involves the harmonious original creation, the fall, the incarnation, and the whole plan of atonement.

"The reconciliation of God to man, and man to God, is sure when certain conditions are met."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 370. These conditions are faith in Christ as our Sin Bearer, our representative before the Father, our Sustainer and Redeemer.

"Came and preached peace." Jesus not only came and preached peace; "He is our peace." Eph. 2:14. This peace in our hearts is not just a pacific sentiment. It involves action in the battle against sin—surrender to Christ, witness against evil, work for others. It is peace of soul and personal commitment in the struggle against all forms of evil.

"Access unto the Father." "We have access to God through the merits of the name of Christ, and God invites us to bring to Him our trials and temptations; for He understands them all."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1116.

"We should all study carefully the instruction given in Corinthians and Ephesians regarding our relation to one another as members of the body of Christ."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 500.

What phases of reconciliation are mentioned in our lesson today? Why is it important to the believer to have access to the Father? John 4:23, 24.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is it important to be reconciled both to our fellowmen and to God?

"One of Christ's last commands to His disciples was 'Love one another as I have loved you.' John 13:34. . . . If we have in any way grieved or wounded others, it is our duty to confess our fault and seek for reconcilia-

tion. This is an essential preparation that we may come before God in faith, to ask His blessing."—"Christ's Object Lessons," page 144.

See Matt. 18:15-17.

April 21

Part 4
THE HIGH
PRIVILEGE
OF COMMUNITY
Eph. 2:19

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

Membership in the household of God is "the goal of God's ways with mankind! . . . For this end Jew and Gentile are being gathered into one and compacted into a new humanity."—*The Expositor's Bible*, Vol. 6, p. 39.

Note that whereas the figure used in verse 19 is that of a household, in verse 20 it becomes a building, with "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." Thanks be to the Father for the "household of God"!

"Strangers and foreigners. . . . The strangers . . . were aliens, but the foreigners . . . were half-aliens, residents having no rights of citizenship and more properly called 'sojourners' (see Acts 7:6, 29)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 2:19.

"Household of faith. That is, the church (see 1 Sam. 3:15; Eph. 2:19; 1 Peter 4:17). The church has an obligation to all men everywhere (see Matt. 28:19, 20), but first to its own members. This is true both in spiritual and in material matters. The church cannot serve the world acceptably unless its own house is in order."—*Ibid.*, on Gal. 6:10.

From the chaos of a world divided into Jews, Gentiles, strangers, foreigners, et cetera, Paul passes into an orderly community for which he uses the words fellow citizens, saints (holy ones), household of God. This all recalls God's original plan to make Israel "an holy nation." Ex. 19:6. God can wait and can change the details of His plans, but He always carries out His basic purpose.

THINK IT THROUGH

Does the honor mentioned in the following quotation describe the believers' real situation today?

"We should realize more clearly the value of the promises God has made to us, and appreciate more deeply the honor He has given us. God can bestow no higher honor upon mortals than to

adopt them into His family, giving them the privilege of calling Him Father. There is no degradation in becoming children of God."—"Fundamentals of Christian Education," page 481.

April 22

**Part 5
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
Eph. 2:20, 21**

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

Here the heterogenous group of Jews, Gentiles, strangers, foreigners, become the household of God. Paul's favorite metaphor for this change is "the temple of God," or the church as a "building fitly framed together," et cetera.

Jesus expressed one of the great principles of the kingdom when He said: "I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18. The believers in all ages should be assured by this declaration. Compare 1 Cor. 3:9-17; 2 Cor. 6:16, where the unity of the church of Christ is the great burden of the apostle.

"The prophets to whom God revealed the riches of His grace and the apostles, the special evangels of this grace, constitute the foundation. Other Christians make up the structure of the building. This passage does not say that the church was to be founded on one apostle, Peter, but upon all of them, with Christ, the Chief Cornerstone.

"Chief corner stone. This expression is found only here and in 1 Peter 2:6, where the building is described as made of living stones. . . . The cornerstone is viewed as that which holds together an edifice. Christ holds together the various parts of the spiritual house, giving shape and unity to it. The metaphor is drawn from Ps. 118:22 and was applied by Christ to Himself (Matt. 21:42)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 2:20.

In 1 Peter 2:6, cited from Isaiah 28:16, we have "a Chief Cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded."

THINK IT THROUGH

Does the church today owe anything to the builders of the past? 1 Cor. 3:6, 7; Heb. 1:1, 2.

"One after another the foremost of the builders fell by the hand of the enemy. Stephen was stoned; James was slain by the sword; Paul was beheaded; Peter was crucified; John was exiled. Yet the church grew. New workers took the place of those who fell, and stone after stone was added to the building.

Thus slowly ascended the temple of the church of God. . . .

"Through the ages that have passed since the days of the apostles, the building of God's temple has never ceased." —"The Acts of the Apostles," pages 597, 598.

April 23

Part 6
A CONTRIBUTING
COMMUNITY
Eph. 2:22

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

We have seen how the apostle has traced the experience of the believers in spiritual victories. They have been reconciled, have access to the Father, are members of the "household of God," they have a firm foundation, and then finally they are informed that the community "groweth."

Now the apostle challenges them with the part they are to act in the growth of the church. They are to be a contributing community. They are called upon to perform their part in making the "habitation of God." In 1 Peter 2:5, 9 they are "lively stones" and "a chosen generation." What do all these metaphors mean to you about believers? Do they convey the idea of the importance and value of the church and the responsibilities of the believers?

Believers are to understand that they can build the church by their influence for God, by good works to those in need, by their testimony to others, by their faithful support of the church, by fidelity to God and obedience to His Word.

"This building [the first temple] represents God's spiritual temple, which is composed of material gathered out of every nation, and tongue, and people. . . . They are living stones, quarried out from the world by the truth; and the great Master-Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them, and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. . . .

"The care shown in the building of the temple [of Solomon] is a lesson to us regarding the care that we are to show in our character building. No cheap material was to be used. No haphazard work was to be done in matching the different parts. Piece must fit piece perfectly. Just as God's temple was, so must His church be."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, pp. 1029, 1030.

Of what did the apostle assure the Ephesians regarding their status in the community? Eph. 2:19.

THINK IT THROUGH

In view of the faithfulness of the workers for God in the past, what is our duty as members of the church today?

"Through the ages that have passed since the days of the apostles, the building of God's temple has never ceased. . . .

"Paul and the other apostles, and all the righteous who have lived since then,

have acted their part in the building of the temple. But the structure is not yet complete. We who are living in this age have a work to do, a part to act."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pages 598, 599.

Answers: (1) "Having no hope, and without God in the world"; (2) By the blood of Christ; (3) Christ; (4) fellow citizens, of the household of God; (5) Apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ the Chief Cornerstone; (6) Those whom God has chosen of every nation.

6. Who are built together as an habitation of God through the Spirit? —

5. What is the foundation on which the believers are built? —

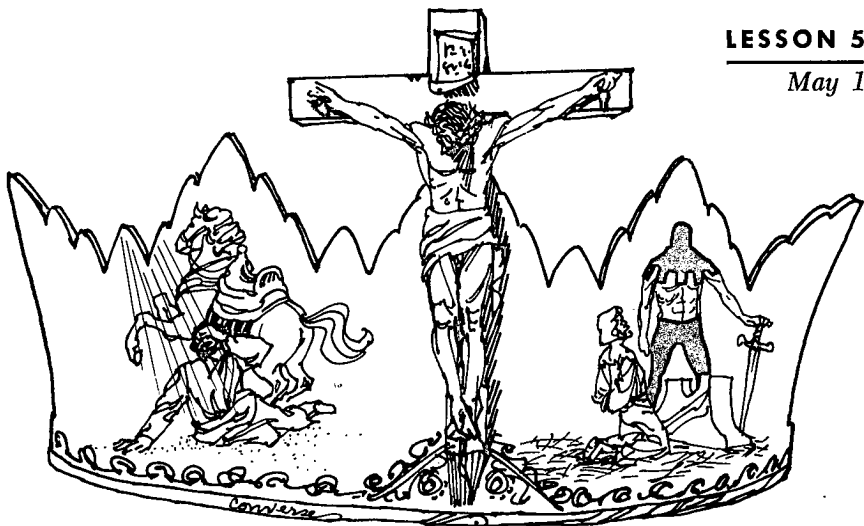
4. Complete: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but _____ with the saints, and _____"

3. Through whom do the believers have access to the Father? —

2. Complete: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh _____"

1. What is man's condition before he accepts Christ? —

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



MISSION—ITS CROSS AND ITS CROWN 5

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. 2:3.

Study Helps: *Steps to Christ*, pages 87, 88; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 112-122, 155-165; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

Most interesting and inspiring is the aspect of church history which deals with the church's sense of mission. This concept is precious and uplifting to each member of the church. To the minister and the Christian worker it is dynamic, charged with the power of God.

Mission has meant much to the Christian church. It seems to have a different approach in each case, but each is alike in its goals. One of the great tasks of the leaders of the church is to maintain balance and unity in fulfilling its mission.

Great numbers of men and women across the centuries and in our own times have gone across the world in mission for God. Others have persevered at desolate and obscure posts of duty for long and torturous years. Sometimes God-authenticated mission seems not too heroic, but it is always glorious in the end.

Think on the Writer: "At the gate of Damascus the vision of the Crucified One

changed the whole current of his life. The persecutor became a disciple, the teacher a learner. . . . To the desert of Arabia he went, there to . . . learn of God." *Education*, page 65.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Call to Duty**
Eph. 3:1-3
2. **Mission Shared**
Eph. 3:3-6
3. **Mission Explained**
Eph. 3:7
4. **Grandeur of the Mission**
Eph. 3:8, 9
5. **Carrying on the Mission**
2 Tim. 1:11, 12
6. **Enduring the Suffering of the Mission**
2 Tim. 4:7, 8

April 25

**Part 1
CALL TO DUTY**

Eph. 3:1-3

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery."

"For this cause." That is, because of the solid foundations and beauty of Christ's church. This phrase occurs in verse 14 and in Titus 1:5, and in no other place in the New Testament. Because of the blessings that have come to the community of the saints, Paul prays for more.

"Dispensation of the grace of God." Does this mean his conversion, his imprisonment, his preaching power to the Gentiles, or his knowledge of truth?

Paul's example of prompt and unreserved obedience to his commission can be followed (1 Cor. 11:1) by all of us in the church. We shall do well to read again the references made to his call to duty on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-31; 22:6-21; 26:12-19) and meditate on the Christian principles involved. To imitate his example will bring freshness and enrichment to our Christian experience.

"The Saviour had spoken to Saul through Stephen, whose clear reasoning could not be controverted. . . . He had witnessed Stephen's forbearance toward his enemies and his forgiveness of them. He had also witnessed the fortitude and cheerful resignation of many whom he had caused to be tormented and afflicted."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 116.

"For you Gentiles. Paul was in prison because of his labors for the Gentiles (Acts 21:28), particularly for his maintaining that they were equally heirs to the promises. It was thus he had gained the hatred of his own countrymen. His breadth of vision leaped across all national barriers."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 3:1.

"To you-ward. That is, to the Gentiles (see Acts 9:15; 22:21). His career and lifework consisted of entire commitment to the service of others (Acts 26:17, 18; Rom. 1:5)."—*Ibid.*, on Eph. 3:2.

Who made the first favorable Christian impression on Paul? Why was Paul a prisoner?

THINK IT THROUGH

In the circumstances of the conversion of Paul, how was the authority of the church confirmed? Acts 9:15.

"Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. . . .

"He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and

salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world. . . .

"Christ is the fountain; the church is the channel of communication."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 122.

April 26

Part 2 “(As I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye
MISSION read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery
SHARED: of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto
 the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy
 apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles
 should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and part-
 Eph. 3:3-6 takers of His promise in Christ by the gospel.”

Jews had no more extra privileges. Gentiles would suffer no discrimination. The gospel now was to know no national borders. To the apostle this had been revealed by the Holy Spirit. He now makes public announcement. Fellow heirs! Fellow saints! Both are admitted to the church on equal footing; both are children of God. Both would suffer with Christ and both would reign with Him. Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:29.

What truth does the apostle now announce? To whom was this truth revealed along with Paul? By whom was it revealed? What three privileges did this revelation give the Gentiles?

“The Saviour longed to unfold to His disciples the truth regarding the breaking down of the ‘middle wall of partition’ between Israel and the other nations. . . . This truth was revealed in part at the time when He rewarded the faith of the centurion at Capernaum, and also when He preached the gospel to the inhabitants of Sychar. Still more plainly was it revealed . . . when He healed the daughter of the Canaanite woman. These experiences helped the disciples to understand that among those whom many regarded as unworthy of salvation, there were souls hungering for the light of truth.

“Thus Christ sought to teach the disciples . . . that in God’s kingdom there are no territorial lines, no caste, no aristocracy. . . . But not until later did they realize in all its fullness that God ‘hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.’”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 19, 20.

THINK IT THROUGH

What can the individual Christian, whatever his social or racial background, do today to eliminate the walls of partition? Does the greeting of Ananias to Saul (“Brother Saul,” Acts 9:17) help us find the way?

“The same agencies that barred men away from Christ eighteen hundred years ago are at work today. . . . Pride and prejudice have built strong walls of separation between different classes of men. Christ and His mission have been misrepresented, and multitudes

feel that they are virtually shut away from the ministry of the gospel. But let them not feel that they are shut away from Christ. There are no barriers which man or Satan can erect but that faith can penetrate.”—“The Desire of Ages,” page 403.

April 27

Part 3
MISSION
EXPLAINED
Eph. 3:7

"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power."

Paul was made a minister by divine appointment. Compare Col. 1:23. The gospel ministry is a gift and an obligation. It is an honor and will be rewarded. 1 Peter 5:2-4. He testifies to the working of God's power in his experience. His conversion as one who persecuted the saints was indeed extraordinary. He recognized the working of the power of God in his call to the ministry and his subsequent success. 1 Cor. 2:4; 2 Cor. 6:6. He came to realize that the strength of God was "made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. 12:9.

"Here, in the solitude of the desert, Paul had ample opportunity for quiet study and meditation. He calmly reviewed his past experience and made sure work of repentance. He sought God with all his heart, resting not until he knew for a certainty that his repentance was accepted and his sin pardoned. He longed for the assurance that Jesus would be with him in his coming ministry. He emptied his soul of the prejudices and traditions that had hitherto shaped his life, and received instruction from the Source of truth. . . .

"When the mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite, the effect on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate. In such communion is found the highest education."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 125, 126.

"Throughout his later ministry, Paul never lost sight of the Source of his wisdom and strength."—*Ibid.*, p. 128.

How graciously did Paul acknowledge Peter's success in labor for Christ? Gal. 2:8, 9: "Wrought effectually in Peter." Compare Eph. 3:7, where Paul spoke of his own work. Does grace make us gracious to all other men? Does this build up Christ's church? Eph. 1:9-12.

THINK IT THROUGH

As we consider Paul's devotion to the cause of God and his earnestness in its work, what does his example inspire us to be and do?

"Paul's was a life of intense and varied activities. From city to city, from country to country, he journeyed, telling the story of the cross, winning converts to the gospel, and establishing churches. For these churches he had a constant care, and he wrote many letters of instruction to them. At times he worked at his trade to earn his daily

bread. But in all the busy activity of his life, he never lost sight of the one great purpose,—to press toward the mark of his high calling.

"Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ."—*"Gospel Workers,"* pages 58, 59.

April 28

Part 4
GRANDEUR OF
MISSION

Eph. 3:8, 9

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 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."

Paul here presents the grandeur of the mission. He remembers his persecution of the saints (1 Cor. 15:9), his human frailty, his need of grace for the monumental task. He is amazed at the truth he is to preach, its unity, its regenerating power. He is to "make all men see" the importance of the gospel. 2 Cor. 5:10, 11. He is to develop fellowship and brotherhood in a world of animosity and division.

"Even these words [Deut. 4:5-8] fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God's purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 13.

God uses men who have made mistakes, but who have repented. Consider the case of the apostle Peter:

"Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon.' Thus God gave evidence of His regard for the gospel ministry and for His organized church. The angel was not commissioned to tell Cornelius the story of the cross. A man subject, even as the centurion himself, to human frailties and temptations, was to be the one to tell him of the crucified and risen Saviour.

"As His representatives among men, God does not choose angels who have never fallen, but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took humanity that He might reach humanity."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 134.

How did Paul consider himself? What were the two characteristics of the message Paul was to preach to the Gentiles? How long had this truth been hidden from the notice of the world? See lesson texts.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is there something for the church to learn from the call, the humility, the earnestness, and the success of the apostle Paul? Mention a few lessons we ought to learn from Paul's experience.

"As your soul yearns after God, you will find more and still more of the unsearchable riches of His grace. As you contemplate these riches you will come into possession of them and will reveal the merits of the Saviour's sac-

rifice, the protection of His righteousness, the fullness of His wisdom, and His power to present you before the Father 'without spot, and blameless.'" —*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 567.

April 29

**Part 5
CARRYING ON
THE MISSION**

2 Tim. 1:11, 12

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

In verse 10 Paul speaks of life and immortality brought to light through the gospel, and now refers to that gospel "whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher." These titles are referred to elsewhere relating to the glorious gospel "committed to my trust." 1 Tim. 1:11; 2:7. Compare Eph. 1:1.

He loved the people. 1 Cor. 16:24. He served the Lord with humility. Acts 20:19. He was diligent and untiring in his labors. 1 Thess. 2:9. He was not covetous. Acts 20:33. He preached the cross of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 2:2. He depended on the prayers of the church. Rom. 15:30-32. He carried a burden for all the churches. 2 Cor. 11:28. He was always planning advance in the Lord's work. Rom. 15:24.

"The apostle felt that he was to a large extent responsible for the spiritual welfare of those converted under his labors. . . . Often in his ministry he would meet with little companies of men and women who loved Jesus, and bow with them in prayer, asking God to teach them how to maintain a living connection with Him. Often he took counsel with them as to the best methods of giving to others the light of gospel truth."
—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 262.

Describe some of the principles used by Paul in his work. Are they valid and relevant to the work of the gospel today? (For example, assurance of divine call; also, a sense of God's power, as in Eph. 1:19.)

THINK IT THROUGH

Should not the churches in general urge young men of talent to prepare for the ministry? In the days just ahead many more ministers will be needed.

"Paul made it a part of his work to educate young men for the gospel ministry. He took them with him on his missionary journeys, and thus they gained an experience that later enabled them to fill positions of responsibility. . . .

"This feature of Paul's work teaches an important lesson to ministers today. Experienced laborers do a noble work when, instead of trying to carry all the burdens themselves, they train younger men, and place burdens on their shoulders."—"Gospel Workers," page 102.

April 30

Part 6
ENDURING THE
SUFFERING OF
THE MISSION
2 Tim. 4:7, 8

"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: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

Note some of the sufferings of the apostle as he carried out his mission. They will give understanding of this wonderful man as he carried on "in Christ." Jesus told His disciples that they would be hated, persecuted, scourged, driven from one city to another. "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." John 15:20. See Matt. 10:17, 22. The apostle Paul had his full measure of persecution and abuse. Acts 14:19, 20; 16:23; 2 Tim. 3:11; 2 Cor. 11:23-27. Do you think we in the church today are ready for a repetition of this kind of persecution?

"Without money, without friends, without counsel, the aged prisoner stood before Nero—the countenance of the emperor bearing the shameful record of the passions that raged within; the face of the accused telling of a heart at peace with God. Paul's experience had been one of poverty, self-denial, and suffering. Notwithstanding constant misrepresentation, reproach, and abuse, by which his enemies had endeavored to intimidate him, he had fearlessly held aloft the standard of the cross. Like his Master, he had been a homeless wanderer, and like Him, he had lived to bless humanity."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 493, 494.

How many times was Paul beaten with stripes? With rods? How many times was he stoned? How many times was he shipwrecked? What was Paul's reaction to persecution for Christ's sake? 2 Cor. 11:23-30. Is persecution an unmixed evil or a blessing to the Christian and to the church? Matt. 5:11, 12.

THINK IT THROUGH

Compare Col. 1:25, 26 and Eph. 1:1, 9 (the call of God to Saul of Tarsus) with today's lesson scriptures, and say what you think of the enduring qualities of man's faith.

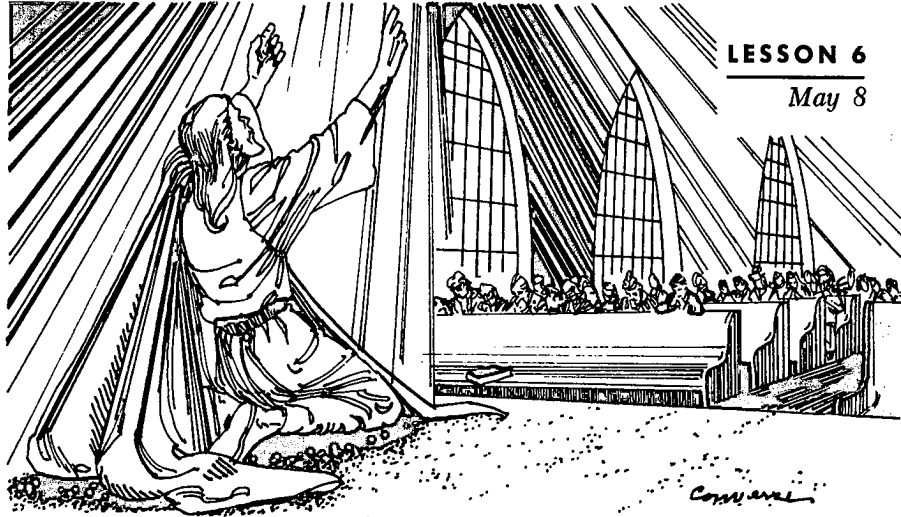
"Amidst the constant storm of opposition, the clamor of enemies, and the desertion of friends the intrepid apostle almost lost heart. But he looked back to Calvary and with new ardor pressed on to spread the knowledge of

the Crucified. He was but treading the blood-stained path that Christ had trodden before him. He sought no discharge from the warfare till he should lay off his armor at the feet of his Redeemer."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 297.

Answers: (1) prisoner of Jesus Christ, Gentiles; (2) His holy apostles and prophets; (3) By divine appointment; (4) Gentiles; (5) preacher, apostle, teacher; (6) good fight, my course, kept the faith.

1. Complete: "For this cause I Paul, the _____, _____
_____ for you _____."
2. To whom is the mystery of God now revealed? _____
3. How was Paul made a minister? _____
4. To whom was Paul to preach especially, Jews or Gentiles? _____
5. Complete: "Whereunto I am appointed a _____, and an _____
_____ of the Gentiles."
6. Complete: "I have fought a _____, I have finished _____
_____, I have _____."

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



GOD'S PURPOSE VICTORIOUSLY FULFILLED

6

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." Eph. 3:16.

Study Helps: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 399-418; *Prophets and Kings*, pages 229-234; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

Our lesson this week is that the church on earth is to have a large part in the vindication of the wisdom and knowledge of God as set forth in the plan of redemption. The church is to be "a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." 1 Cor. 4:9. Beings throughout the universe are to see the working of God's grace, His mercy, His forbearance, and His forgiveness operating for the redemption of sinners. They will behold humanity (as many as will accept) rescued from their plight by Divinity.

Think on the Writer: "He felt deeply the danger that threatened those for whom he had labored so earnestly, and he sought as far as possible to supply by written communications the place of his personal instruction. He also sent out authorized delegates to labor among the churches he had raised up. . . . These messengers rendered him faithful service, and being in communication with them, he was informed concerning the conditions and dangers of

the churches, and was enabled to exercise a constant supervision over them."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, page 281.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Church Displays Wisdom of God**
Eph. 3:10, 11
2. **Providence in Tribulation**
Eph. 3:12, 13
3. **Paul's Challenge to Prayer**
Eph. 3:14, 15
4. **Strength in the Inner Man**
Eph. 3:16, 17
5. **Understanding the Love of Christ**
Eph. 3:18, 19
6. **God's Abundance Available to the Believer**
Eph. 3:20, 21

Part 1
CHURCH DISPLAYS
WISDOM OF GOD
Eph. 3:10, 11

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

At creation the beings of other worlds were glad. Job 38:7. Beings in heaven are concerned about the gospel cause. 1 Peter 1:12. One sinner converted stirs heaven. Luke 15:7. God purposes to give the universe a demonstration of His love through the church.

"By the church. . . . The church was intended to be a living demonstration of God's wisdom, even as a recovered patient is a witness to the skill of the physician. . . . The church is not so much an agent of the power and wisdom of God as it is a proof or evidence of it. . . ."

"Manifold wisdom. Especially as manifested in the work of redemption. The wisdom of God is also shown in the manifold forms in the material world, in the complexities of the human mind, and in the innumerable methods He uses to reach men and effect their salvation. The full extent of this wisdom will not be understood until the plan of salvation is ended. . . ."

"Christ Jesus our Lord. . . . Paul reminds his readers that the historic Jesus whom they acknowledged as Lord was the Christ of the eternal purpose of God to effect man's salvation and to vindicate His character. The unity his purpose calls for requires complete submission of each believer's will to its Lord and Master. . . . The church that cannot fuse into unity and a common devotion to its Lord faces certain defeat and rejection."—SDA Bible Commentary, on Eph. 3:10, 11.

Describe the interest of the supernatural beings in the gospel cause on this earth. Eph. 3:10; 1:21; 6:12. Name the parts of God's plan in which Jesus plays a leading role. Eph. 1:11, 12.

THINK IT THROUGH

How are the believers connected with the "final and full display of the love of God"? Does this mean that each individual of each congregation is involved?

"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 church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest . . . the final and full display of the love of God."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 9.

May 3

Part 2
PROVIDENCE IN
TRIBULATION
Eph. 3:12, 13

"In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."

"Boldness" was in speech and witness, as opposed to vain boasting. Paul knew the cause of his tribulation was his preaching the gospel. Col. 4:3; Phil. 1:13; 2 Tim. 2:8, 9. Bonds spread the gospel. Phil. 1:15-18. Paul had written: "All things work together for good." Rom. 8:28.

"The Faith of Him. . . . We can come to God with boldness only on the basis that we have faith in Christ as our Mediator. He has been the only One to bridge the gulf that has separated man from God since the entrance of sin. . . .

"Faint. . . . The apostle in prison was anxious that his flock be not disturbed by his plight. He was concerned, not so much for his own sake, but for theirs. They might conclude that what he had preached had little saving power in it; that the God in whom Paul trusted was unmindful of His servant's fate; that they themselves might soon face similar trials. Suffering courageously borne is doubly glorious when both onlookers and sufferers draw virtue from it.

"Your glory. Paul, like a good pastor, identifies himself with his flock. If he finds glory in his tribulation, they will share it with him. He is suffering on account of his exalted office as apostle and ambassador of God, and the Ephesians are the fruit of that apostleship. Hence they are entitled to reflect the glory." —*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 3:12, 13.

Name some of the conclusions of Paul regarding his bonds. Eph. 3:12-14. What is the importance of access to the throne of grace at such times? Heb. 4:16.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the value of the belief in God's providence to the Christian today? 2 Tim. 3:13-17. Do I trust in God's providential leading in my life?

"Patience as well as courage has its victories. By meekness under trial, no less than by boldness in enterprise, souls may be won to Christ. The Christian who manifests patience and cheerfulness under bereavement and suffering, who meets even death itself with the peace and calmness of an unwavering faith, may accomplish for the

gospel more than he could have effected by a long life of faithful labor. Often when the servant of God is withdrawn from active duty, the mysterious providence which our shortsighted vision would lament is designed by God to accomplish a work that otherwise would never have been done."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 465.

Part 3
PAUL'S CHALLENGE
TO PRAYER
Eph. 3:14, 15

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

The thought interrupted in verse 1 is resumed in verse 14. The apostle's prayer acknowledges that all the saints, Jews and Gentiles, are stones in the same temple. Eph. 2:19-22. He expresses the grand reconciliation by Christ of all in the church.

Paul's admonition, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1), applies at least in part to his example of dependence on prayer.

An enriching idea is introduced with the mention of the family of God. This gives new honor to the family of the redeemed.

"The whole family. . . . Paul appears to be speaking of unity and seems to conceive of the beings in heaven and the saints on earth as one large family. If the translation 'every family' is adopted [instead of 'the whole family'] it seems necessary to conceive of several families in heaven. Such the Scriptures do not describe. It seems better therefore to adopt the reading 'the whole family,' which conveys the sense of unity and wholeness of the community of God, the Father of all, a theme to which the apostle frequently reverts."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 3:15.

"To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. . . . He who is 'holy, harmless, undefiled' . . . is not ashamed to call us brethren. Heb. 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our Brother."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 25, 26.

In whom is the family on earth united to the family in heaven? Eph. 3:15. What are the responsibilities of belonging to this family? 1 John 2:3, 4. The privileges? 1 John 2:5; 5:14, 15.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the significance of the worship of the family on earth?

"The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church. . . . In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimony of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on

earth, and the praise and thanksgiving from the worshipers below is taken up in the heavenly anthem, and praise and rejoicing sound through the heavenly courts because Christ has not died in vain for the fallen sons of Adam."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. 6, p. 366.

May 5

**Part 4
STRENGTH IN
THE INNER MAN
Eph. 3:16, 17**

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love."

"Strengthened with might. The might that strengthens is the power of God. The power is conveyed through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The same power that converts men must continue in them if there is to be Christian growth. . . . As the physical strength is increased by food and the intellectual life by thought, so the spiritual life is sustained by the immediate presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

"In the inner man. The Greek suggests power entering into and remaining there. The vital spiritual powers within a man have not sprung from his own nature; he has nothing of his own to offer, nothing of his own of which to boast. . . .

"By faith. It is faith that opens up the heart of Christ. Faith is a confident trust in God and His promises, and is a continuously sustaining principle of life."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 3:16, 17.

Keeping the words of Christ is closely connected with having the indwelling Christ. John 14:23. If an individual has love in his heart he has an endowment of great value. 1 John 4:7.

What is promised to the believer who obeys the words of Christ? What will be the blessing of one who has love rooted in his heart?

"The plant grows by receiving that which God has provided to sustain its life. It sends down its roots into the earth. It drinks in the sunshine, the dew, and the rain. . . . So the Christian is to grow by cooperating with the divine agencies. Feeling our helplessness, we are to improve all the opportunities granted us to gain a fuller experience. As the plant takes root in the soil, so we are to take deep root in Christ. As the plant receives the sunshine, the dew, the rain, we are to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 66, 67.

THINK IT THROUGH

Have you ever thought of the revival and reform that would come to our own lives, and those of others, if we were to bring fully into our lives the principle of love? 1 John 5:1-5.

"In the contemplation of Christ we linger on the shore of a love that is measureless. We endeavor to tell of this love, and language fails us. We consider His life on earth, His sacrifice for us, His work in heaven as our ad-

vocate, and the mansions He is preparing for those who love Him; and we can only exclaim, O the height and depth of the love of Christ!"—"The Acts of the Apostles," pages 333, 334.

Part 5
UNDERSTANDING
THE LOVE
OF CHRIST
Eph. 3:18, 19

"May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

The goal of the apostle for the saints is to know the love of Christ experimentally. His love for us is dynamic (Gal. 2:20); it impels to duty (2 Cor. 5:14); it has a relation with the commands of Jesus (John 15:10); and it is abundant (1 Tim. 1:14). The love of Christ is of fundamental importance to all believers in their conversion and growth in spiritual things.

"May be able. The subject to be grasped is beyond ordinary comprehension; therefore Paul prays that his hearers may receive a special enabling power for the attainment of it. . . .

"All saints. . . . There are certain spiritual transactions that take place only in the individual heart, but there are other matters that belong to the community of God, and this comprehension of the love of Christ is one of them. It is the common possession that binds believers together. . . .

"Love of Christ. Here, apparently, not our love for Christ, but His love for us. . . .

"Fullness of God. . . . Paul is presenting a most exalted view of the nature of man and of his possibilities for growth in grace. . . . The blessings of God are not parceled out parsimoniously. They lead to an ever-increasing comprehension of the mind of God, to a filling up of the void and empty places in men's lives with spiritual power."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 3:18, 19.

"The contemplation of the matchless depths of a Saviour's love should fill the mind, touch and melt the soul, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 213.

What characteristics of the love of Christ do you see in the words "breadth," "length," "depth," and "height"? How does the love of Christ affect our lives? Can we love Christ and remain unconcerned about other men's welfare?

THINK IT THROUGH

How great should the influence of the love of Christ be in our daily lives? Will others perceive its effects in our deeds and words?

"With untold love our God has loved us, and our love awakens toward Him as we comprehend something of the length and breadth and depth and height of this love that passeth knowledge. By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowl-

edge of His love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued, and the sinner is transformed and becomes a child of heaven."—"Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," pages 76, 77.

Part 6
GOD'S ABUNDANCE
AVAILABLE TO
THE BELIEVER
Eph. 3:20, 21

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

In the doxology here Paul gathers up all that God has done for us through Christ. Compare other New Testament doxologies: Rom. 16:25-27; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Jude 24, 25. Divine grace toward the saints is beyond human thought; hence, such expressions as "exceeding abundantly." God has great and vast power that works in the believers. Accomplishment of His purposes is a mark of His greatness. Rom. 4:21; 2 Cor. 9:8. These words filled the church with high spiritual courage as they realized the approaching dangers (Acts 20:29, 30), persecutions in the present and future (2 Thess. 1:4), and in the great task of building up the work of God (Eph. 2:21, 22). "God is able" has been the cry of the people of God through the centuries. Dan. 3:17; Matt. 3:9; 2 Cor. 9:8. We know He is able also in our day.

"The Lord Jesus seeks the cooperation of those who will become unobstructed channels for the communication of His grace. The first thing to be learned by all who would become workers together with God is the lesson of self-distrust; then they are prepared to have imparted to them the character of Christ. . . .

"It is not the highest work of education to communicate knowledge merely, but to impart that vitalizing energy which is received through the contact of mind with mind, and soul with soul. It is only life than can beget life."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 249, 250.

Give some examples of what God has been able to do for His people in past time. John 6:31; 1 Cor. 10:1-4. What is the extent of divine ability to bless the believer with His power? Ps. 23. What is the connection between the church and the glory of God? Matt. 5:16.

THINK IT THROUGH

Name some of the obstacles to being useful in doing good to others. What are the characteristics which fit one for doing maximum good?

"He who loves Christ the most will do the greatest amount of good. There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, by putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God. If men will endure the necessary discipline, without complain-

ing or fainting by the way, God will teach them hour by hour, and day by day. . . . If His people will remove the obstructions, He will pour forth the waters of salvation in abundant streams through the human channels."—*The Desire of Ages*," pages 250, 251.

Part 7 ◇ SUMMARY QUESTIONS ◇ A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER

1. To whom is the "manifold wisdom of God" to be made known? (A) To the apostles and prophets, (B) to the powers of earth, (C) to the powers in heavenly places.

2. What did Paul think was the cause of his having been made a prisoner? (A) The Roman government, (B) the opposition of the Jews, (C) his preaching of the gospel.

3. Of whom is the family of God composed? _____

4. Complete: "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might _____
_____.

5. Complete: "And to know the love of Christ, _____
_____, that you may be filled with _____
_____."

6. To what degree is God able to help the believer? _____

Answers: (1) C; (2) C; (3) Beings in heaven and the saints on earth; (4) by His Spirit in the inner man; (5) which passeth knowledge; all the fullness of God; (6) "Exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."



UNITY--SOURCE OF PEACE AND PROGRESS 7

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; 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." John 17:20, 21.

Study Helps: *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 236-248; *Steps to Christ*, chapter, "Growing Up Into Christ"; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

This week we are to study the important subject of unity. For the church, unity has always been an important principle, in all its aspects. In fact, unity among the believers and between the believers and God, in the church as a whole, is an imperative for final triumph. Quite generally unity has been a requisite for advancement and progress. Unity strengthens, division weakens. Unity produces peace, while division promotes frustration.

Think on the Writer: "The news he received, of apostasy in churches of his own planting, caused him deep anguish. He greatly feared that his efforts in their behalf would prove to have been in vain. Many a sleepless night was spent in prayer and earnest thought, as he learned of the new and varied methods employed to counteract his work. As he had opportunity, he

wrote to the churches, giving reproof, counsel, admonition, and encouragement, as their state demanded."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, page 147.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Challenge of Unity**
Eph. 4:1-3
2. **Basis of Unity**
Eph. 4:4-7
3. **Gifts of the Spirit for Unity**
Eph. 4:8-11
4. **Fulfillment of God's Purposes Through the Gifts**
Eph. 4:12, 13
5. **Spiritual Strength From Unity**
Eph. 4:14, 15
6. **A Growing, Enlarged Church**
Eph. 4:16

May 9

**Part 1
CHALLENGE
OF UNITY**

Eph. 4:1-3

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The groundwork of unity is the personal relationship between each believer and the "one God, the Father . . . ; and one Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 8:6. The apostle now calls the attention of the believers to the components of the Christian way in some detail: lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance. In his writings mention is made frequently of the calling of the believer. 1 Cor. 7:20; Phil. 3:14; 2 Thess. 1:11; Heb. 3:1. Gracious Christian practice is to endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit." Effort and diligence through the grace of God bring unity.

"The apostle exhorts his brethren to manifest in their lives the power of the truth which he had presented to them. By meekness and gentleness, forbearance and love, they were to exemplify the character of Christ and the blessings of His salvation."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 239.

"The meekness and lowliness of Christ is the Christian's power. It is indeed more precious than all things which genius can create or wealth can buy. Of all things that are sought, cherished, and cultivated, there is nothing so valuable in the sight of God as a pure heart, a disposition imbued with thankfulness and peace."—*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 559.

What does the apostle emphasize as the concern of the believer? Eph. 4:3. Describe what he writes about the calling of the Christian in the texts given above. By what path is unity to be kept in the congregation?

THINK IT THROUGH

Was unity of great importance only for the church of Paul's time, or is it likewise needed in the church today? Am I doing everything to promote unity among the brethren of the church?

"As members of the body of Christ all believers are animated by the same spirit and the same hope. Divisions in the church dishonor the religion of Christ before the world and give occasion to the enemies of truth to justify

their course. Paul's instructions were not written alone for the church in his day. God designed that they should be sent down to us. What are we doing to preserve unity in the bonds of peace?"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 239.

May 10

Part 2
BASIS OF UNITY

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

Eph. 4:4-7

"One body. . . . The Christian is not a solitary pilgrim; he belongs to a vital organism, the family of God. This unit replaces the state, the club, and even the human family as the supreme object of his attachment.

"One Spirit. . . . The Spirit dispels the divisions within a man's own life, the inner disharmonies that make of so many lives veritable battlefields. Disunity is a certain sign that the Holy Spirit is absent.

"One hope. . . . The Spirit validates this hope. . . . Such a hope necessarily leads to the transformed life. . . .

"One Lord. . . . Those who give complete submission and allegiance to the same Lord are not at enmity with one another. He is Lord by creation and by re-creation, and all authority rests with Him. . . .

"One faith. Paul seems here to be speaking of subjective faith in Christ as a personal Saviour rather than of faith as a creedal system. . . . There is only one means of salvation, namely, faith. . . .

"One baptism. Baptism by water aptly symbolizes death and resurrection. Also, it signifies cleansing and separation, and is a public announcement of union with the body of Christ. Those thus initiated into the visible church grow together into the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5).

"One God and Father of all. . . . The common Father is the source of all unity. The greatest fact that the human heart can discover is that God is a Father who can be trusted, one who is a friend to man."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 4:4-6.

Describe these seven concepts which support Christian unity and their relation to the individual believer. What additional concept is given by the apostle in verse 7?

THINK IT THROUGH

Why do the spirit of prophecy writings give repeated warnings against those whose actions tend to disrupt or disunite the church?

"By the influence of the Spirit, the most discordant may be brought into harmony. Unselfishness is to bind God's people together with firm, tender bonds. There is a vast power in the church when the energies of the members are under the control of the Spirit,

gathering good from every source, educating, training, and disciplining self. . . . Thus heaven and earth are connected, and all divine agencies cooperate with human instrumentalities."
—"My Life Today," page 39.

May 11

Part 3
GIFTS OF THE
SPIRIT FOR
UNITY

Eph. 4:8-11

“Wherefore He said, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

The reference in verse 8 is to Psalm 68:18, traditionally connected with the moving of the ark to Mount Zion. Hence, the victory of the church is attributed to God’s enabling power. Wisdom and power (1 Cor. 1:24; Rom. 1:16) are given for the accomplishment of God’s purpose. There are functions to be performed by the believers through God’s grace, for the accomplishment of unity. 1 Cor. 1:10; 13:11; Phil. 1:27.

By what symbolic act did Jesus confer the Holy Spirit on His disciples? John 20:22. This was a promise, for “not until after the ascension was the gift received in its fullness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 327.

“Christ determined that when He ascended from this earth, He would bestow a gift on those who had believed on Him, and those who should believe on Him. . . . It must be worthy of His greatness and His royalty. He determined to give His representative, the Third Person of the Godhead. This gift could not be excelled. He would give all gifts in one, and therefore the divine Spirit, that converting, enlightening, and sanctifying power, would be His donation.”—Ellen G. White *Comments*, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, pp. 1052, 1053.

Is the list of gifts in Ephesians 4:11 complete, or does it indicate that all necessary gifts will be forthcoming when the church needs them? Compare the list in 1 Corinthians 12:28. What attitude of the believer will aid in preserving unity in the church?

THINK IT THROUGH

In what way does the ministry of the church have relevance in our day? What significant truth is made known in the paragraph that follows?

“The Lord has His appointed agencies, and a church that has lived through persecution, conflict, and darkness. Jesus loved the church, and gave Himself for it, and He will replenish, refine, ennoble, and elevate it, so that it shall stand fast amid the corrupting influences of this world. Men appointed

of God have been chosen to watch with jealous care, with vigilant perseverance, that the church may not be overthrown by the evil devices of Satan, but that she shall stand in the world to promote the glory of God among men.”—“Testimonies to Ministers,” pages 52, 53.

May 12

Part 4
FULFILLMENT OF
GOD'S PURPOSES
THROUGH THE GIFTS
 Eph. 4:12, 13

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 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 fullness of Christ."

"Perfecting." "To perfect" (*katartizō*) signifies either (1) to mend what is broken, as in Matt. 4:21, or (2) to complete what is unfinished, as in 1 Thess. 3:10. Continual growth and development in loyalty and character is implied and not the reaching of an ultimate perfection beyond which nothing more can be attained in this life.

Peter writes: "Feed the flock" and gives other thought-provoking suggestions (1 Peter 5:2, 3). What is to be the attitude of the believer toward the minister? (Heb. 13:7, 17).

"They [those endued with power at Pentecost] were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 49, 50.

"There must be a continual advancement. Step by step His followers must make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. Those who would labor for God must work intelligently to replenish the deficiencies in themselves and glorify the Lord God of Israel by standing in the light, working in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. Thus they will carry the church forward and upward and heavenward, making its separation from the world more and more distinct."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 406.

What goal does the apostle hold before the church members and the ministry? In what way should the ministry and the believers work and worship together? How zealous were those at Pentecost in cooperating with the Spirit? Acts 2:46, 47.

THINK IT THROUGH

In God's work what is the part of the ministry? Of the believers? Is our church doing its part?

"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. . . .

"All who have been benefited by the

labors of God's servant should, according to their ability, unite with him in working for the salvation of souls. This is the work of all true believers, ministers and people. They should keep the grand object ever in view."—"Testimonies," Vol. 5, pp. 237, 238.

May 13

**Part 5
SPIRITUAL
STRENGTH
FROM UNITY**

Eph. 4:14, 15

“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; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”

Christians should be alert for deception. Paul often mentions this seriously. 1 Cor. 3:18, 19; 15:33; 2 Tim. 3:13, 14; Col. 2:8.

Growth in spiritual things is a goal set before believers. It is a part of the advantages to be reaped from unity in the Spirit. Paul thanks God for one of the churches which has grown in faith. 2 Thess. 1:3. To another he recommends growing as a part of Christian experience. Col. 1:10. He urges unity as essential. See 1 Thess. 3:12, 13.

“The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ’s day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth has been proved to be insufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness.”—*The Desire of Ages*, page 309.

“Self-righteousness is not true righteousness, and those who cling to it will be left to take the consequences of holding a fatal deception. Many today claim to obey the commandments of God, but they have not the love of God in their hearts to flow forth to others.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 279.

“There can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the growth of character. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be constant advancement.”—*Education*, pages 105, 106.

Name the main points of emphasis of today’s lesson. Name some of the effects of deception. How are the laws of spiritual growth like those for the growth of plants? Jer. 17:7, 8.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is the goal of spiritual growth an imperative for the Christian?

“Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. . . . It

is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way.”—“Steps to Christ,” page 69.

**Part 6
A GROWING,
ENLARGED CHURCH**

Eph. 4:16

"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."

The church is an institution that is to experience growth and enlargement. Increase, enlarge, grow, advance, and build were the ideals Paul cherished. Growth of the whole body was to be accomplished through the efforts of the parts. He had seen the church enlarge from Palestine and Syria to Asia Minor (Acts 13), from Asia to Macedonia (Acts 16:9), and from Macedonia to Achaia (1 Thess. 1:7). In true apostolic style and courage he places before the Ephesian believers this image of the future.

"Fitly joined together" is the same as "fitly framed together," as bonded together in a building. This is a striking symbol for church unity. The body is compacted by the contribution provided by every single joint or member.

"*Fitly joined.* . . . Growing up into Him assures vitality flowing from Him into the members of the body, which are closely joined together. It is thus that persons of greatly varying gifts are able to work together. . . .

"*Maketh increase.* . . . It is a twofold increase—growth of the church in numbers and of the individual in the spiritual graces."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 4:16.

Describe the goals of the apostle as expressed in our Scripture. How had the gospel gone from country to country in the time of Paul as described in the texts in the above paragraph? Of what did the final objective of the apostle consist?

THINK IT THROUGH

According to our text, how is the worldwide mission of the church to be accomplished? Compare Matt. 28:19, 20.

"Christ's followers are to be more than a light in the midst of men. They are the light of the world. . . . As Christ is the channel for the revelation of the Father, so we are to be the channel for the revelation of Christ. While our Saviour is the great source of illumination, forget not, O Christian, that He is revealed through humanity. . . . The church of Christ, every individual disciple of the Master, is heaven's appointed channel for the revelation of God to

men. Angels of glory wait to communicate through you heaven's light and power to souls that are ready to perish."—"Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," page 40.

"Truth is, no doubt, the basis of unity; but love is its vital power, at once keeping together all who are united, and drawing in those who are as yet separated."—Ellicott's "Commentary," on Eph. 4:16.

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**

1. Paul earnestly implored the Ephesian believers "to keep the _____ of the Spirit in the _____."
2. What are the two first reasons mentioned in support of unity in the church?

3. When Jesus ascended up on high, what did He bestow on men? _____
4. Complete: "For the perfecting of the _____, for the work of the _____, for the edifying of the _____."
5. Complete: "But speaking the truth in love, _____ into Him in _____, which is the head, even Christ."
6. What is the twofold increase envisaged in unity in the church? _____

Answers: (1) unity, bond of peace; (2) one body, one Spirit; (3) Gifts of the Spirit; (4) saints, ministry, body of Christ; (5) may grow up, all things; (6) Growth in numbers, in individual spirituality.



PUTTING OFF THE OLD, PUTTING ON THE NEW



"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:32.

Study Helps: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 469-484; *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 239-254; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

The apostle well understood the importance of spiritual maturity and experience in the believer. He proceeded to give instruction to the saints as to what they should be and do in their role in the church with a message to all the world. Paul knew that a deeply spiritual church is composed of deeply spiritual members.

The apostle knew as well that knowledge must precede spirituality. He felt the burden, and rightly so as an apostle, that he should give them instruction. He undoubtedly recognized that instruction which is written has many advantages over that which is spoken. Quite probably he had already spoken to them about the important matters he now wrote to them about. The apostle was a teacher (2 Tim. 1:11), and he proceeded to give the instruction.

Think on the Writer: "In his ministry, Paul was often compelled to stand alone. He was specially taught of God and dared

make no concessions that would involve principle. At times the burden was heavy, but Paul stood firm for the right."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 199.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Abandon the Old**
Eph. 4:17-19
2. **Old Way Not Learned of Christ**
Eph. 4:20-22
3. **Put on the New Man**
Eph. 4:23, 24
4. **Put Away Lying and Anger**
Eph. 4:25-27
5. **Put Off Stealing and Bad Language**
Eph. 4:28, 29
6. **Grieve Not the Holy Spirit—Be Kind**
Eph. 4:30-32

May 16

**Part 1
ABANDON THE OLD**

Eph. 4:17-19

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

"This I say . . . , and testify" is typical of Paul's earnest adjuration of the saints. Compare "I take you to record" (Acts 20:26), and "I testify . . . to every man" (Gal. 5:3). His deep convictions often called on God as witness. Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23. "Testify in the Lord" again indicates his conviction that he was speaking with divine authority.

"Vanity" is the way of the world, as in 1 Cor. 3:20 also. What the world calls wisdom is often ignorance and darkness. It alienates men from God.

"Blindness of their heart" is sometimes rendered "hardness," indicating guilt for such a condition. Compare Mark 8:14-21, where ignorance and hardness appear in the same connection.

Would the phrase "who being past feeling," indicate a condition beyond redemption?

The whole point of this passage is that Christians should turn round and go in a new moral direction.

"The apostle admonishes his brethren, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus, that after having professed the gospel they should not conduct themselves as did the Gentiles, but should show by their daily deportment that they had been truly converted."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 171, 172.

How is the worldly way of life described? What are believers admonished not to do? Eph. 4:17; 1 Peter 1:14.

THINK IT THROUGH

How is our way of life, our manner of living, related to the work we do? What is to be our attitude to "old habits and customs"?

"God will not make men and women channels of light while they are in darkness and are content to remain so, making no special efforts to connect with the Source of light. . . . There is much for each to unlearn with respect to himself, as well as much to learn.

Old habits and customs must be shaken off, and it is only by earnest struggles to correct these errors, and a full reception of the truth in carrying out its principles, by the grace of God, that the victory can be gained."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 485, 486.

May 17

**Part 2
OLD WAY NOT
LEARNED OF CHRIST**

Eph. 4:20-22

“But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.”

“Learned Christ” implies not the use of a magical name, but to come to know both Christ and His way of life. When Paul wrote of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:14), that was another way of expressing the adoption of a new way of life. It was not merely knowledge but a new moral attitude to life.

“The sins that were practiced before conversion, are to be put off, with the old man. With the new man, Christ Jesus, are to be put on ‘kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.’”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, page 300.

There must be detachment from the old man, and attachment to the new man in Christ Jesus. No compromise was possible between the new man and the old. There was to be no possible status of “peaceful coexistence” between them.

“Conversation” in our text means “manner of life, habitual behavior, or personal conduct.”

“*Learned Christ*. . . . To have ‘learned Christ’ is not merely to have learned something about Him; it is to have become acquainted with His office and work as priest, prophet, king, advocate, and mediator, and to have appropriated for one’s life the benefits of His atoning work. When Jesus Himself said ‘learn of Me’ (Matt. 11:29), He was presenting Himself as the example; here He is offered, not as the great teacher, but as the very object of knowledge and faith.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 4:20.

How was the teaching of Christ related to the Gentile way of life? What was the attitude of the believers to the teaching of Christ? What was to be the attitude toward the “old man”?

THINK IT THROUGH

Do you think that we today realize the fact that there is to be no compromise between the “old man” and the “new man”? How often do we need to put on the “new man” to maintain a victorious Christian experience? Luke 9:23.

“The former sinful nature is to be stripped off once and for all, never to be put on again; the new nature is to be put on. . . . The robe of righteousness is to replace the filthy garments of self-righteousness. . . .

“The lusts of the flesh are deceitful

because they promise happiness but give sorrow, promise freedom but give slavery, promise immunity from the results of wrongdoing, only to bring destruction.”—“*SDA Bible Commentary*,” on Eph. 4:22.

May 18

Part 3
PUT ON THE
NEW MAN
Eph. 4:23, 24

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Renewal is not just a wish. It involves a surrender of will to Christ, followed by certain voluntary practices.

“And be renewed: from day to day, in contrast to the advancing corruption of the old man. Similar word, and same idea of progressive renovation, in Col. 3:10, Rom. 12:2.”—J. Agar Beet, *Commentary on Paul's Epistles*, page 345.

“The heart that is surrendered to God, loves the truth of God's Word; for through the truth the soul is regenerated. The carnal mind finds no pleasure in contemplating the Word of God, but he who is renewed in the spirit of his mind, sees new charms in the living oracles; for divine beauty and celestial light seem to shine in every passage.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 182.

“*Be renewed.* . . . Despite centuries of degradation man still shows some traces of the original handiwork of God, and by the work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth and in sanctification ‘the old man’ . . . may be created new again. . . .

“*New.* . . . The putting on the new nature, or ‘man,’ is not something we can accomplish of ourselves, nor is it merely a renovated man. God is the active power in the re-creation, but the change is not effected without man's consent and cooperation. . . .

“*After God.* . . . God Himself is the ideal after which the new man is patterned (Matt. 5:48), and since the ‘new man’ is actually a return to man's original state, it means the restoration of the image of God in the soul.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 4:23, 24.

Who subdues the “old man” in the life of the believer in God? After what pattern is the “new man”? What are the characteristics of the “new man”?

THINK IT THROUGH

Name some careless habits that can lead to the reappearance of “the old man.” In what ways does inward renewal lead to outward change? Who is the judge of the validity of inward renewal? 1 Sam. 16:7; Jer. 17:10.

“I saw that great changes must be wrought in the hearts and lives of very many before God can work in them by His power for the salvation of others. They must be renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holi-

ness. Then . . . every ambition of life calculated to exalt self will be changed by the grace of God and employed in the special work of saving souls for whom Christ died.”—“Testimonies,” Vol. 2, p. 484.

May 19

Part 4
PUT AWAY LYING
AND ANGER
Eph. 4:25-27

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil."

This epistle contains a series of motivating Christian principles, and also a series of prohibitions. It is popular to decry prohibitions as negative, but often it is as important to know what we must and will not do, as it is to know what we will do. For example, before any situation arises, we know that we must not lie. If we are members of the body of Christ, practicing or speaking falsehood to each other is impossible. The word "neighbor" is not limited to fellow Christians. Luke 10:29 and following verses.

"Be ye angry, and sin not." See Ps. 4:4, margin. Here is an exhortation joining anger with sinlessness. What kind of anger? "It is a righteous indignation against sin, which springs from zeal for the glory of God, not that anger prompted by self-love or wounded ambition, which is referred to in the scripture, 'Be ye angry, and sin not.'"—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 101.

"Then Paul gives the reason for telling the truth. It is because we are all members of the same body. We can only live in safety because the senses and the nerves pass true messages to the brain. . . . If, for instance, they told the brain that something was cool and touchable when in fact it was hot and burning, life would very soon come to an end. . . . All deception impairs the working of the body of Christ."—William Barclay, *Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, on Eph. 4:25, page 184.

THINK IT THROUGH

What specific sins named in this lesson are to be put away from the life of the new man? Compare "the wrath of God" and the anger of man. What is the exhortation with regard to anger? How does anger "give place to the devil"? Prov. 15:18.

Do we know from Christian moral principles what we shall or shall not do in a given situation, or do we wait for a difficult situation to arise, and then act on the spirit of the moment? How is righteous indignation identified?

"It is true there is an indignation that is justifiable, even in the followers of Christ. When they see that God is dishonored, and His service brought into disrepute, when they see the innocent oppressed, a righteous indignation stirs the soul. Such anger, born of sensitive morals, is not a sin. But those who at

any supposed provocation feel at liberty to indulge anger or resentment are opening the heart to Satan. Bitterness and animosity must be banished from the soul if we would be in harmony with heaven."—"The Desire of Ages," page 310.

May 20

**Part 5
PUT OFF STEALING
AND BAD
LANGUAGE**

Eph. 4:28, 29

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

"Let the thief no longer steal!" From the lowest dregs of the Greek cities—from its profligate and criminal classes—the gospel had drawn its converts (comp. 1 Cor. vi.9-11). In the Ephesian church there were converted thieves; and Christianity had to make of them honest workmen."—*Expositor's Bible*, Vol. 6, p. 74, on Eph. 4:28. See also 1 Cor. 6:10; 1 Peter 4:15.

"Corrupt communication." Here is a graphic prohibition against inappropriate speech. The gift of speech is to be used to edify, to build up spiritual life.

"The right culture and use of the power of speech has to do with every line of Christian work; it enters into the home life, and into all our intercourse with one another. We should accustom ourselves to speak in pleasant tones, to use pure and correct language, and words that are kind and courteous. Sweet, kind words are as dew and gentle showers to the soul. The Scripture says of Christ that grace was poured into His lips that He might 'know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.' Ps. 45:2; Isa. 50:4. And the Lord bids us, 'Let your speech be alway with grace' (Col. 4:6) 'that it may minister grace unto the hearers' (Eph. 4:29)."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 336.

What does Paul exhort Christians to do as the antidote for stealing? Eph. 4:28. To what place will the thief never be admitted? 1 Cor. 6:10.

THINK IT THROUGH

How should the believer give counsel or correction to his brother? What is given as a good rule in conversation? Would you say that the vast outpouring of words in our day is characterized by quantity or by quality?

"In giving reproof or counsel, many indulge in sharp, severe speech, words not adapted to heal the wounded soul. By these ill-advised expressions the spirit is chafed, and often the erring ones are stirred to rebellion. . . . Under all circumstances reproof should be spoken in love. . . .

"No evil speaking, no frivolous talk,

no fretful repining or impure suggestion, will escape the lips of him who is following Christ. . . .

"When in the company of those who indulge in foolish talk, it is our duty to change the subject of conversation if possible."—*Christ's Object Lessons*," page 337.

**Part 6
GRIEVE NOT THE
HOLY SPIRIT—
BE KIND**

Eph. 4:30-32

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

The sins Paul has been specifying in previous verses all grieve the Holy Spirit. The seal of God is on the man whose faith in Christ’s righteousness produces a holy life. The disciples were so sealed at Pentecost. See Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1055.

A few examples of how the Holy Spirit is grieved:

“But there are many who have little faith. They are always fearing and borrowing trouble. . . . And their fear and repining grieve the Holy Spirit.”—*Gospel Workers*, page 261.

“Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions; when it is resisted, the Spirit of God is grieved.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 120.

“Ananias and Sapphira grieved the Holy Spirit by yielding to feelings of covetousness.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 72.

“When we seem to doubt God’s love and distrust His promises, we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit.”—*Steps to Christ*, page 118.

“It is not the opposition of the world that most endangers the church of Christ. It is the evil cherished in the hearts of believers that works their most grievous disaster and most surely retards the progress of God’s cause. There is no surer way of weakening spirituality than by cherishing envy, suspicion, faultfinding, and evil surmising. On the other hand, the strongest witness that God has sent His Son into the world is the existence of harmony and union among men of varied dispositions who form His church.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 549.

How is the believer to take care with regard to the Holy Spirit? Name the six evils the believer is now exhorted to put away. Eph. 4:31.

THINK IT THROUGH

What attitude should the believer have toward those who have offended him but do not ask his forgiveness?

“We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. It is their part, no doubt, to humble their hearts by repentance and confession; but we

are to have a spirit of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults.”—“Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,” pages 113, 114.

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**

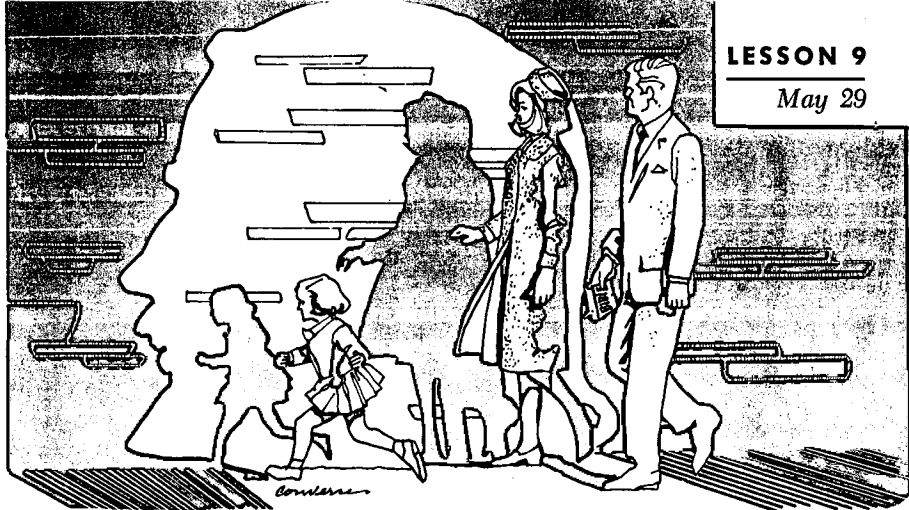
1. Complete: "Having the understanding _____, being alienated from the life of God through the _____ that is in them, because of the _____ of their heart."
2. What is meant by the words: "The old man"? _____

3. What is the meaning of the words: "The new man"? _____

4. Complete: "Let not the sun go down upon your _____."
5. What is the reason Paul gives for exhorting the believer to work with his hands? _____

6. Complete: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, _____
_____, even as God for Christ's sake hath _____
_____."

Answers: (1) darkened, ignorance, blindness; (2) Former evil way of life; (3) Good way of life; (4) wrath; (5) That he may have to give to him that needeth; (6) forgiving one another, forgiven you.



WALK IN THE LIGHT 9

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." Eph. 5:1.

Study Helps: *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, pages 50-55; *The Desire of Ages*, pages 321-327; *Prophets and Kings*, pages 177-179, 186, 187, 207-210; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

In the epistles of Paul the concepts of light and darkness are used as figures to represent righteousness and iniquity. If the recurrence of these figures has value, they must make a deep impression on the listeners.

The intention is clearly to impress the believers with the logic and reason supporting walking in the light. He tells them that they were "sometimes darkness." In other words their way of life before conversion was laid in paths of iniquity. But they have been converted and are now "light in the Lord." Hence it is only logical and natural that they should walk in the light. The force of this reasoning really retains its dynamic for the believers of today. Meditate on this!

Think on the Writer: "Among those who had been converted at Lystra, . . . was one who was afterward to become a prominent worker for Christ. . . . This was . . . Timothy. When Paul was dragged out of

the city [after being stoned], this youthful disciple was among the number who . . . saw him arise, bruised and covered with blood, but with praises upon his lips because he had been permitted to suffer for the sake of Christ."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 184, 185.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Power Through Example**
Eph. 5:1, 2
2. **Conquer or Be Conquered**
Eph. 5:3-5
3. **Don't Be Fooled**
Eph. 5:6, 7
4. **As Children of Light**
Eph. 5:8, 9
5. **Acceptable to God**
Eph. 5:10
6. **The Test Is Light**
Eph. 5:11-13

May 23

Part 1
POWER THROUGH
EXAMPLE
Eph. 5:1, 2

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."

"Therefore be imitators of God" (RSV) "as well loved children imitate their father," (Barclay), raises the question: In what ways can man imitate God? Obviously only in moral qualities. These all find expression in the comprehensive meaning of love.

"When Paul talked of imitation, he was using language which the wise men of Greece could understand. *Mimēsis*, "imitation," was a main part in the training for an orator. The teachers of rhetoric declared that the learning of oratory depended on three things—theory, imitation, and practice."—Barclay, on Eph. 5:1.

Christ is our example, and we are all to imitate His great example. 1 Peter 2:21.

"It is designed that there should be a perpetual unfolding and enlarging of our spiritual powers and excellences. All our desires, hopes, efforts, are to be toward this. We are to be filled with the divine thoughts, replenished with the divine energy, warmed with the divine love. As a child catches the very tone of his father, so we are to catch the tone of our heavenly Father. . . . We are His beloved children."—*The Pulpit Commentary*, New Edition, page 231, on Eph. 5:1-14.

"We may, by following the example of the Saviour, be in holy communion with Him; and by daily seeking to imitate His character and follow His example, we shall be a blessing to the world and shall secure for ourselves contentment here and an eternal reward hereafter."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 227.

What fundamental principle of Christian life does the apostle recommend? Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6. What is meant by being followers "as dear children"?

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the message of the early years of Jesus? Is His example of spiritual benefit even in our days?

"Jesus is our example. There are many who dwell with interest upon the period of His public ministry, while they pass unnoticed the teaching of His early years. But it is in His home life that He is the pattern for all children and youth. The Saviour condescended to poverty, that He might teach how

closely we in a humble lot may walk with God. . . . His work began in consecrating the lowly trade of the craftsmen who toil for their daily bread. He was doing God's service just as much when laboring at the carpenter's bench as when working miracles for the multitude."—"The Desire of Ages," page 74.

May 24

Part 2
CONQUER OR
BE CONQUERED

Eph. 5:3-5

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

All uncleanness: "The vices of the old heathen self must be each of them replaced by the corresponding graces of the new man in Christ Jesus."—*The Expositor's Bible*, Vol. 6, p. 73, on Eph. 4:25 to 5:6. The "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19) include some of the sins here mentioned.

Note how Paul passes from the impurities of the inner heart in verse 3 to their outward expression in verse 4.

Covetousness: "Everywhere its slimy track is seen. It creates discontent and dissension in families; it excites envy and hatred in the poor against the rich; it prompts the grinding oppression of the rich toward the poor. . . . Many a man comes stately to church, and sits at the table of the Lord, while among his possessions are hidden unlawful gains. . . . For a goodly Babylonish garment, multitudes sacrifice the approval of conscience and their hope of heaven. . . . The gospel light is hindered in its course; the scorn of worldlings is kindled by practices that give the lie to the Christian profession; and yet the covetous professor continues to heap up treasures."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 497.

Why were the believers counseled not to talk about the sins of their former lives? What was to take the place of these conversations? Who would not be allowed to enter the kingdom of Christ and of God?

THINK IT THROUGH

In what specific ways do the words on Eph. 5:3-5 relate to the position of the Christian amid the evil conditions of our times?

"The prevailing spirit of our time is one of infidelity and apostasy—a spirit of avowed illumination because of a knowledge of truth, but in reality of the blindest presumption. Human theories are exalted and placed where God and His law should be. Satan tempts men and women to disobey, with the promise that in disobedience they will find liberty and freedom that will make them as gods. There is seen a spirit of

opposition to the plain word of God, of idolatrous exaltation of human wisdom above divine revelation. Men have allowed their minds to become so darkened and confused by conformity to worldly customs and influences that they seem to have lost all power to discriminate between light and darkness, truth and error."—"Prophets and Kings," page 178.

May 25

Part 3
DON'T BE FOOLED
Eph. 5:6, 7

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them."

Vain words: In cities like Corinth and Ephesus there were temples dedicated to the gods maintained by the proceeds of prostitution of priestesses, et cetera. Some philosophers argued the reasonableness of these things since they had always been done. Thus were people deceived "with vain words." Philosophy of many kinds deceives men today. The Bible has much to say about deception of all kinds. See Heb. 3:13; Gal. 6:7; 2 Tim. 3:13, 14.

"Vain words. Literally, 'empty words,' such as words suggesting that the sins enumerated (vs. 3-5) would not keep one out of the kingdom. Heresies were already threatening the infant church. Paul is warning against the deceptive manner in which false teachers were insinuating themselves into the Christian community. For further general warnings about the deceptions that would divide the flock see Rom. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 11:3; Col. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:3, 4."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:6.

"Satan looks with great satisfaction upon those who profess the name of Christ, yet closely adhere to the delusions which he himself has originated. His work is still to devise new delusions, and his power and art in this direction continually increase."—*Early Writings*, page 221.

"All who do not earnestly search the Scriptures and submit every desire and purpose of life to that unerring test, all who do not seek God in prayer for a knowledge of His will, will surely wander from the right path and fall under the deception of Satan."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, page 192.

Where does the voluntary acceptance of deception and delusion inevitably lead men? Rev. 20:12-14.

THINK IT THROUGH

How are the faithful believers to be kept in the time of deception?

"The Scriptures pointing forward to this time [of deception at the end of earth's history] declare that Satan will work with all power and 'with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.' 2 Thess. 2:9, 10. His working is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous errors, heresies, and delusions of these last days. Not only is Satan leading the world

captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. The great apostasy will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. To God's people it will be a night of trial. . . . But out of that night of darkness God's light will shine."—*"Christ's Object Lessons,"* pages 414, 415.

May 26

**Part 4
AS CHILDREN
OF LIGHT
Eph. 5:8, 9**

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth)."

Paul often contrasted the past heathen life of believers with their present Christian life. See Rom. 11:30; Col. 3:7. In Eph. 4:17-20 he speaks of their former darkened understanding and their present enlightenment in Christ. "What communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14) is the same contrast. As an illustration of the Christian life, the apostle uses the word "walk." Walk in "newness of life," "honestly," "in the Spirit," "in wisdom." Rom. 6:4; 13:13; Gal. 5:16; Col. 4:5. The apostle John makes it clear that there is a precious reward to those who walk in the light. 1 John 1:7. Our identification is clear from our "walk," or manner of life.

"Christ commands His followers to walk in the light. Walking means moving onward, exerting ourselves, exercising our ability, being actively engaged. Unless we exercise ourselves in the good work to which our Saviour has called us, and feel the importance of personal effort in this work, we shall have a sickly, stunted religion. . . . We gain activity and strength by walking in the light, that we may have energy to run in the way of God's commandments. We may gain an increase of strength at every step we advance heavenward. God will bless His people only when they try to be a blessing to others."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, pages 436, 437.

Now that the believers were in the light of the gospel, how were they to "walk," or what was to be their manner of life? Explain the connection of the Spirit with the "walk." What was the result of this connection? What do you understand to be the meaning of "walk as children of light"?

THINK IT THROUGH

Is it essential that religious knowledge and practice should flourish together? See Matt. 21:28-31. Can inconsistency exist in a thoroughgoing Christian? How only can an inconsistent professing Christian obtain the happiness of real daily experience with Christ? John 14:21, 23.

"But very few have an experimental knowledge of the sanctifying influence of the truths which they profess. Their obedience and devotion have not been in accordance with their light and privileges. They have no real sense of the obligation resting upon them to walk

as children of the light, and not as children of darkness. . . . It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for those who have been privileged with the clear light . . . but have not profited by it."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, page 488.

Part 5
ACCEPTABLE
TO GOD
Eph. 5:10

"Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord."

In Rom. 12:2 the apostle speaks of proving "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." To prove God's promises we must accept and obey.

"What is acceptable unto the Lord" becomes the intent of obedience. By trial in their experience, in prayer, in the study of the Word, in communion with and contemplation of the Master, Christians are to learn "what is acceptable unto the Lord."

"*Proving*. . . . The Christian must be continually testing the good, the right, and the true with the intent of finding out what is pleasing to God (Rom. 12:2). The will of God as revealed in His Word and in experience is the touchstone by which the testing and approving is to be done. 'What would Jesus do?' becomes an important question continuously in the mind of the believer."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:10.

"*Acceptable unto the Lord*." In Rom. 12:2 Paul speaks of proving the "good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The only way we can prove the good things of God is to be sincere in accepting them. Phil. 1:10. Accepted things in this way become more and more acceptable.

Who is the Lord of our lives? See John 13:13; Phil 3:8. What is to be the great standard by which our conduct is to be judged?

THINK IT THROUGH

Define the meaning of being "acceptable unto the Lord." How does this relate to God's will? How can we know whether or not our lives are acceptable? See Acts 24:16; 2 Cor. 1:12.

"The Pharisee and the publican represent two great classes into which those who come to worship God are divided. Their first two representatives are found in the first two children that were born into the world. Cain thought himself righteous, and he came to God with a thank offering only. He made no confession of sin, and acknowledged no need of mercy. But Abel came with the blood that pointed to the Lamb of God.

He came as a sinner, confessing himself lost; his only hope was the unmerited love of God. The Lord had respect to his offering, but to Cain and his offering He had not respect. The sense of need, the recognition of our poverty and sin, is the very first condition of acceptance with God. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Matt. 5:3."—"Christ's Object Lessons," page 152.

**Part 6
THE TEST
IS LIGHT**

Eph. 5:11-13

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.”

“Unfruitful works of darkness.” Paul exhorts believers to “cast off” these works, because “the night is far spent, the day is at hand.” Rom. 13:12. The time is late, the evil works are fruitless—this is convincing exhortation. “The end of those things is death.” Rom. 6:21. The psalmist says: “Depart from me, ye evildoers.” Ps. 119:115.

Does it take courage to reprove evil, either by word or example? Reproof brings the work of darkness out into the light, but the reproof is both difficult and often resented. Prov. 15:12. Note what Jesus said about reproof. John 3:20, 21. Some do not think of the evil of their ways until reproved; thus reproof brings light to them.

“Reproved. . . . The hidden and dark things in a person’s life are exposed under the bright beams of spiritual light. When Christ turned the light of truth on the hypocrisy of His day, the sham was seen for what it really was. When deeds done in the dark are viewed in the dark, their outlines are obscured, their true character unrevealed.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:13.

What exhortation does Paul give with regard to the believer and the former vices? Name the new attitude to be taken to these works of darkness. Eph. 5:11; Rom. 13:12. How does throwing light on an evil practice affect it?

THINK IT THROUGH

What kind of approach do you think should be made to someone or something needing reproof?

“As you go to the one you suppose to be in error, see that you speak in a meek and lowly spirit. . . . Avoid anything in look or gesture, word or tone, that savors of pride or self-sufficiency. Guard yourself against a word or look that would exalt yourself, or place your goodness and righteousness in contrast with their failings. . . . With care avoid every appearance of anger; and though you use plainness of speech, . . . let

there be no shadow of hate or ill will, no bitterness. . . . Nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow from a heart of love. . . . Bear in mind that the success of reproof depends greatly upon the spirit in which it is given. Do not neglect earnest prayer that you may possess a lowly mind, and that angels of God may go before you.”—“Testimonies,” Vol. 2, pages 52, 53.

Answers: (1) followers of God; (2) Let it not be once named among you; (3) Judgment of God; (4) light in the Lord, children of light; (5) By experience, by prayer, by study of the Word; (6) fellowship, reprove them.

6. Complete: "And have no _____ with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather _____"

5. Paul exhorted the believers to try to learn what was pleasing to the Lord. How were they to do this? _____

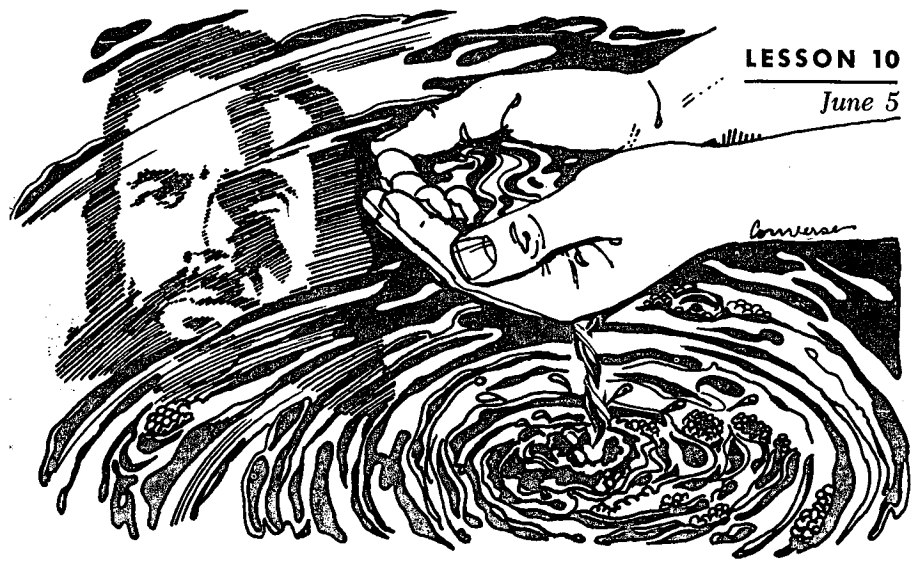
4. Complete: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye _____: walk as _____"

3. What is a synonym for "wrath of God" as used in Ephesians 5:6? _____

2. What did the apostle exhort about all uncleanness, covetousness, and foolish talk? _____

1. Complete: "Be ye therefore _____ as dear children."

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



SPIRITUAL RENEWAL THROUGH CHRIST 10

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Eph. 5:16.

Study Helps: *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 554-564; Vol. 5, pp. 349-354; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

The lesson opens this week with the call to awake. The sleeper seems to be impervious to some condition or influence which has come about since he fell asleep. Failure to awaken from spiritual sleep eventuates in death. To the believers of Ephesus and elsewhere the call to awake now comes.

The Christian life is not stationary, static. It is an experience of growth. It is a battle and a march. The call is ever to higher ground spiritually. In the present case, time appears to have been lost, and time must somehow be redeemed. It must be done with urgency "because the days are evil." Deeper devotion, less selfishness and more selflessness, more and ever more love for others, more helpful favors for the neighbors—these are the challenges.

Think on the Writer: "Who can measure the results to the world of Paul's life-work? Of all those beneficent influences that alleviate suffering, that comfort sor-

row, that restrain evil, that uplift life from the selfish and the sensual, and glorify it with the hope of immortality, how much is due to the labors of Paul and his fellow workers?"—*Education*, page 70.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Awake to Opportunity**
Eph. 5:14
2. **Believer Involvement**
Eph. 5:15, 16
3. **Knowing God's Will**
Eph. 5:17
4. **Infilling of the Spirit**
Eph. 5:18
5. **Spiritual Expression**
Eph. 5:19, 20
6. **Servants One to Another**
Eph. 5:21

**Part 1
AWAKE TO
OPPORTUNITY
Eph. 5:14**

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

"Wake up, O sleeper" (Moffatt) is a peremptory command to (a) some in the church who are not truly in Christ, (b) the sinner who has not yet found Him.

He has a new challenge. We are to wake up, be in earnest, living in the light of Christ's teachings. Christ gives light and life (John 1:4), and He is *the* Light. John 1:9.

"Give thee light. . . . The soul that turns to Christ is assured of the healing rays of light that come from the 'Sun of Righteousness' (Mal. 4:2). The plea is for the impenitent to arouse from their lethargy, and thus to give Christ an opportunity to do His saving work in their souls."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:14.

To be awake is to progress in spiritual life. To be asleep is to backslide.

"God designs that Christians shall grow continually, grow up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ. All who do not grow stronger, and become more firmly rooted and grounded in the truth, are continually retrograding."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 556.

How does the apostle appeal to the Ephesian believers about their spiritual condition? Eph. 5:14. What does it mean to be spiritually asleep? 1 Cor. 15:34.

What is promised to those who awake? What is the nature of the "light" that Christ will give? Acts 26:23.

THINK IT THROUGH

Name some ways in which believers may deny God in their way of life while professing all the time to know God.

"I call upon all who are resting unconcerned in their present state of spiritual deadness, to arouse and arise from the dead, and Christ will give them light. . . . Many profess to know God, and yet deny Him in their works. They reckon themselves among God's peculiar, chosen people, who have a

special, solemn message entrusted to their keeping to sanctify their lives and to give to the world, and yet the power of the truth is scarcely felt or manifested in our midst in zealous work for God. . . . The light has not diminished, but we walk not in its rays."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 451.

Part 2
BELIEVER
INVOLVEMENT
Eph. 5:15, 16

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

Circumspectly. Christians in all ages must live *carefully, strictly*, according to principle. Christians working and living among pagans could accommodate easily to the language, habits, and pastimes of their neighbors. Is it true in our present unbelieving age? The way to meet temptation is to resist it by Christian habits in thought, word, and deed.

"Redeeming the time. Literally, 'buying up for yourselves the opportune time,' that is, making the most of the opportunity. . . . Redeeming the time is more than simply refraining from idleness or frivolous activities. A person is not good merely because he is not bad. Like Jesus, one must be 'about' his 'Father's business' (Luke 2:49), actively seeking opportunity to do good (Gal. 6:10), even to one's enemies (Matt. 5:44). In the parable of the Unjust Steward, Jesus pointed to the diligence and wisdom of the merchants of the world in conducting their affairs, as an example to the children of light."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:16.

"We are admonished to redeem the time. But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption.

"In him who does this, a transformation of character takes place. He becomes a son of God, a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 342.

How does Paul describe the new life of the believer?
Eph. 5:16.

In what way is it suggested that one can make up for lost time? Why is the necessity for this effort very urgent?
Rom. 13:12.

THINK IT THROUGH

What suggestions can you give for "redeeming the time"? Suggest some ways to improve your use of time now and in the future.

"Paul exhorts his Ephesian brethren to redeem the time because the days are evil. . . . You are called upon to reform, to be zealous of good works in the same degree that you have been negligent of duty. Turn square about. Double your diligence. . . . Keep God's commandments, and live, and His law as the apple of your eye. Tax every

moment to the utmost in laboring for your own eternal interest and for the salvation of souls around you. By so doing you may save both yourself and those who are more or less controlled by your example. These are motives which should be duly considered."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. 5, p. 353.

Part 3
KNOWING
GOD'S WILL
Eph. 5:17

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

The Christian's highest wisdom is knowing and doing the will of God, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Fidelity to His Father's will controlled every thought and action of Jesus. John 5:30. He came to earth, not to do His own will, but to do His Father's will. John 6:38. The will of God is for our eternal life. John 6:40. God's will is not arbitrary and capricious, but righteous, full of truth and mercy. His will is perfect. Rom. 12:2.

"Will of the Lord. To know the will of the Lord should be the supreme aim of the believer. . . . The transformed mind has not only a capacity to understand the will of God, but a divinely implanted intuition which is the means of proving it as 'good, and acceptable, and perfect' (Rom. 12:2)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:17.

"Genuine sanctification. . . . is nothing less than a daily dying to self and daily conformity to the will of God. . . . Paul's sanctification was a constant conflict with self. . . . His will and his desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did the will of God, however unpleasant and crucifying to his nature."—*Life Sketches*, page 237.

Name the basic concept of Christian experience mentioned by the apostle. Eph. 6: 6, 7. Give some of the ways in which Jesus followed the will of God. John 4:34; Acts 10:38.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does the believer bring his experience into harmony with the will of God? Can this be done without God's help? Will God help the believer to come into union with His will? John 7:17.

"The victory is not won without much earnest prayer, without the humbling of self at every step. Our will is not to be forced into cooperation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. . . . You are not able, of yourself, to bring your purposes and desires

and inclinations into submission to the will of God; but if you are 'willing to be made willing,' God will accomplish the work for you, . . . 'bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.'"—"Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," page 142.

June 2

Part 4
INFILLING OF
THE SPIRIT
Eph. 5:18

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

Drunk with wine. This is a prohibition in specific terms. Drunkenness is a sinful inconsistency for Christians. It is a reckless waste of money and life. The prodigal son gave way to "riotous living" (Luke 15:13), or living dissolutely. Paul stipulated that church leaders should be "not given to wine." Titus 1:7. He included women in this prohibition in Titus 2:3. By antithesis Paul exhorts believers to be filled with the Spirit of God. Two extremes are here set forth. How did some spectators at Pentecost confuse the two? Acts 2:13. Does being "filled with the Spirit" always involve ecstatic displays of a Pentecostal nature? How would you relate a Spirit-filled life with visible enthusiasm?

"The seeking after an earthly stimulant is replaced by the spiritual enthusiasm of the human spirit energized by the Holy Spirit. Although it is true that soberness accompanies the work of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless, the effect of the presence of the Holy Spirit is seen in enthusiastic witnessing for the faith. On the Day of Pentecost the demonstration of the Spirit in the words and acts of the disciples was scoffingly compared to drunkenness (Acts 2:13)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:18.

"Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 672.

What vice does the apostle single out for condemnation? What is his exhortation regarding the Spirit of God? How may this exhortation be carried out? John 4:34.

THINK IT THROUGH

In the case of those believers who have less than a satisfactory Christian experience, could it be that the difficulty might lie in that they are "halfhearted" instead of being "wholehearted"?

"The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His blessing. It is time we were more intense in our devotion. To us is committed the arduous, but happy, glorious work of revealing Christ to those who are in darkness. We are called to

proclaim the special truths for this time. For all this the outpouring of the Spirit is essential. We should pray for it. The Lord expects us to ask Him. We have not been wholehearted in this work."—*"Testimonies to Ministers,"* pages 511, 512.

Part 5
SPIRITUAL
EXPRESSION
Eph. 5:19, 20

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Across the centuries, singing has been a far-reaching power in the world. It has been a great factor in the life of the Christian church and in the experience of the believer. The apostle exhorts the Ephesians to strengthen their experience by song and by expression of thanks. Spiritual strength results from spiritual song. Col. 3:16. Daniel made his prayers with thanks. Dan. 6:10. There is singing that is vocal, and there is singing in the soul that is silent but joyful. Both express praise to God. Paul is noted for his spirit of unceasing thanksgiving. 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:3.

"Giving thanks. 'Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise' (MH 251). The spirit of praise is an antidote to evil and discouragement. When everything else is at its worst, the Christian is at his best and is most cheerful. The spirit of thankfulness prevails in joy or in sorrow, in victory or in defeat, for it is a permanent, sustaining attribute of Christian character. . . .

"In the name of. God is the recipient of thanksgiving, but it is offered in the name of Jesus Christ. The Father is entitled to gratitude because He is our Father (Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:4-6). He has demonstrated His Fatherhood in the giving of His Son; therefore prayer and thanksgiving are offered in the Son's name. Since through Christ all that the Father has to give has been made available to men, we can approach our God with the utmost confidence (John 14:13; 15:16; 16:23, 24)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:20.

Through what spiritual exercise were the believers to give expression to their faith and their experience? Discuss the relationship of sobriety, excitement, and joyfulness as set forth in this lesson. Should a Christian's thanks be spasmodic or constant?

THINK IT THROUGH

Above all else, what is the blessing for which the believer should be constantly grateful? Ps. 115:1.

"In freeing our souls from the bondage of sin, God has wrought for us a deliverance greater than that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. . . . Those who dwell upon God's great mercies, and are not unmindful of His lesser gifts, will . . . make melody in their hearts to the Lord. The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and

above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude. . . . We should praise God for the blessed hope held out before us in the great plan of redemption, . . . and for His rich promises; praise Him that Jesus lives to intercede for us." —*"Patriarchs and Prophets,"* page 289.

June 4

Part 6
SERVANTS ONE
TO ANOTHER
Eph. 5:21

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

"Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One."—Amplified.

Submission, or humility, is a characteristic of New Testament teaching. In Rom. 13:1-7 we find submission to "the higher powers"; in 1 Peter 2:13 it is "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake"; in 1 Peter 2:18 to 3:7 it covers a wide area from employers and owners to all domestic life. It was the Christian approach to lawful and orderly life and was based upon a deep respect and fear of God as seen in Eph. 5:21.

To fulfill his mission properly, every Christian must have humility. One has tersely said: "Mutual subjection is part of a wise, circumspect walk, *i.e.* mutual recognition of each other's rights and of our obligations to serve them. Humility is not cowardice or servility. It is a recognition first of the sovereignty of God, and second of the Christian equality of man."—Selected.

"Submission, humility, and subjection are essential characteristics of the believer. Before God and one's fellowmen, self is to be brought low. Often the demands we make of one another, even of our rights, are contrary to the spirit of loving ministry, which is the spirit of the gospel (John 13:15, 16; Gal. 5:15). In addition to submission to superiors in age and authority, and respect for those we consider equals, there is also a Christian submission due to those who may be considered inferior in position. This submission reveals itself in consideration, charity, and respect for the personality of all God's children."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:21.

"Only when selfishness is dead, when strife for supremacy is banished, when gratitude fills the heart, and love makes fragrant the life—it is only then that Christ is abiding in the soul, and we are recognized as laborers together with God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 402.

As a crowning virtue, what does the apostle call to the believer's attention? How is this virtue to be exercised?

THINK IT THROUGH

How and why does God work through the humble?
James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6.

"The leader [Gideon] whom God chose to overthrow the Midianites occupied no prominent position in Israel. . . . He thought himself the least in his father's house. But God saw in him a man of courage and integrity. He was distrustful of himself and willing to follow the guidance of the Lord. . . . The Lord can work most effectually through

those who are most sensible of their own insufficiency, and who will rely upon Him as their leader and source of strength. He will make them strong by uniting their weakness to His might, and wise by connecting their ignorance with His wisdom."—*"Patriarchs and Prophets,"* page 553.

Answers: (1) A; (2) Redeeming the time, evil; (3) true; (4) be filled, Spirit; (5) Always; (6) yourselves, in the fear of God.

1. After Paul calls the believer to awake, what is then promised from Christ? (A) light, (B) blessing, (C) eternal life.
2. Complete: "_____, because the days are _____."
3. True or False: The believer is exhorted to understand what the will of the Lord is. This is of first importance.
4. Complete: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but _____ with the _____."
5. How frequently were the saints to give thanks to God? _____
6. Complete: "Submitting _____ one to another _____"

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



TO THE PILLARS OF THE CHRISTIAN HOME

11

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Matt. 19:6.

Study Helps: *The Adventist Home*, pages 211-223; 231-243; *The Ministry of Healing*, pages 349-362, 388-394; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

When Christ came to the earth, He brought a great revelation of gospel truth. This truth immediately came into direct confrontation with the evil practices of mankind in their way of living. Among the areas affected was the marriage institution. The status of women was shamefully low.

Among the Jews a very liberal interpretation of Deut. 24:1 made a wife defenseless before the demand for divorce. A Jew could obtain a divorce from his wife by merely handing her a bill of divorcement which had been written up by a priest. This was done in the presence of two witnesses. It was against the abuse of divorce that Jesus spoke out in Mark 10:2-9 and in Matt. 5:31, 32. He declared that adultery was the only basis for divorce, and not some flimsy whim of a changeable husband.

It is to this situation that the apostle addresses himself in our lesson of this week.

Think on the Writer: "Paul's ministry in Ephesus had been a season of incessant labor, of many trials, and deep anguish. He taught the people in public and from house to house, instructing and warning them

with many tears. He was continually opposed by the unbelieving Jews. . . .

"Here, as at Corinth, he worked with his own hands to supply his necessities. In weariness and painfulness from unceasing toil and constant danger, enfeebled by disease, and at times depressed in spirits, he steadfastly pursued his work."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, page 147.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **As Unto the Lord**
Eph. 5:22, 23
2. **As Christ Also Loved**
Eph. 5:24, 25
3. **Love Exemplified**
Eph. 5:25-27
4. **As His Own Body**
Eph. 5:28-30
5. **Joined Together by God**
Eph. 5:31, 32
6. **Final Appeal**
Eph. 5:33

Part I
AS UNTO THE LORD

Eph. 5:22, 23

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body."

The context of Christian submission is set by the general instruction: "All of you be subject one to another." 1 Peter 5:5. Paul finds it necessary to give some instruction on humility among married believers. The new spiritual condition of the Ephesians, like other aspects of their life, was in need of some religious orientation. The status of women and children in those times was degraded. Thus Paul gave strong and repeated emphases on the real meaning of submission, based on the relation between Christ and the church.

"The headship of the husband consists in his ability and responsibility to care for his wife, in the same way that Christ cares for the church.

"*The body.* . . . As Christ is the 'Saviour of the body,' the church, so the husband should be the protector and sustainer of his wife and family."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:22, 23.

Did submission of member to member in the Christian church make available for witness each person's gifts, or was it degrading? In what manner were the wives to be submissive to their husbands? Eph. 5:23. What was the attitude of the husband to be as he carried on as head of the family? What does "savior of the body" mean? 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

THINK IT THROUGH

According to the text of this lesson, how should problems of the marriage relationship be approached? What is the value of cooperation, counseling together, and decision making in marriage?

"It is no evidence of manliness in the husband for him to dwell constantly upon his position as head of the family. . . . It will not make him more manly to require his wife, the mother of his children, to act upon his plans as if they were infallible. The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of

the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. . . . Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church."—"The Adventist Home," page 215.

June 7

Part 2
AS CHRIST.
ALSO LOVED
Eph. 5:24, 25

"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it."

"The subjection of the church of Christ is a free subjection, arising out of faith in His absolute wisdom and goodness, and of love for His unspeakable love."—Ellicott's *Commentary*, on Eph. 5:23, 24. This text does not mean that the husband's authority is unrestricted. He is to direct and care for his wife and family in love, not with dominating, dictatorial power. He is not like Christ in power and wisdom, but he is to practice Christ's loving care.

The husband's authority must not oppose the wife's fidelity to her God.

"A true husband never utters rude commands. His love will find expression in a variety of ways. It will be given in words of understanding and affection. The husband will properly provide for the wife's temporal support (1 Tim. 5:8); he will do everything possible to assure her happiness (1 Cor. 7:33); he will give her every honor (1 Peter 3:7)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:25.

"Let each give love rather than exact it. Cultivate that which is noblest in yourselves, and be quick to recognize the good qualities in each other. . . . Sympathy and respect encourage the striving after excellence, and love itself increases as it stimulates to nobler aims.

"Neither the husband nor the wife should merge his or her individuality in that of the other. . . .

"Do not try to compel each other to yield to your wishes. You cannot do this and retain each other's love."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 361.

How is the submissiveness of wives described in Eph. 5:24?

How is the nature of the love husbands should have for their wives described in verse 25?

THINK IT THROUGH

When differences arise between husband and wife, when problems come, what approach should be made toward solutions?

"Men and women can reach God's ideal for them if they will take Christ as their helper. What human wisdom cannot do, His grace will accomplish for those who give themselves to Him in loving trust. His providence can unite hearts in bonds that are of heavenly origin. Love will not be a mere exchange of soft and flattering words. The loom

of heaven weaves with warp and woof finer, yet more firm, than can be woven by the looms of earth. The result is not a tissue fabric, but a texture that will bear wear and test and trial. Heart will be bound to heart in the golden bonds of a love that is enduring."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 362.

Part 3
LOVE EXEMPLIFIED

Eph. 5:25-27

"Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

An example of marital devotion to keep in mind in the study of this lesson is that of Joseph in his relations with Mary the mother of Jesus. Matt. 1:19, 20; 2:13, 22; Luke 2:43-45.

"Gave Himself. The supreme test of love is whether it is prepared to forgo happiness in order that the other might have it. In this respect the husband is to imitate Christ, giving up personal pleasures and comforts to obtain his wife's happiness, standing by her side in the hour of sickness. Christ gave Himself for the church because she was in desperate need; He did it to save her. Likewise the husband will give himself for the salvation of his wife, ministering to her spiritual needs, and she to his, in a spirit of mutual love."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:25.

*"As life with its burden of perplexity and care meets the newly wedded pair, the romance with which imagination so often invests marriage disappears. . . . This is a most critical period in their experience. . . . Often they discern in each other unsuspected weaknesses and defects. . . . Let all seek to discover the excellencies rather than the defects. Often it is our own attitude, the atmosphere that surrounds ourselves, which determines what will be revealed to us in another. There are many who regard the expression of love as a weakness, and they maintain a reserve that repels others. . . . Love cannot long exist without expression. Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 360.*

By comparison with Christ's purpose for the church, what kind of homes should Christians have? Eph. 5:27, 28.

THINK IT THROUGH

How should the finances of the married couple be handled? Should little differences in opinion be allowed to become greater?

"You must help each other. Do not look upon it as a virtue to hold fast the purse strings, refusing to give your wife money.

"You should allow your wife a certain sum weekly and should let her do

what she pleases with this money. You have not given her opportunity to exercise her tact or her taste because you have not a proper realization of the position that a wife should occupy."—*"The Adventist Home,"* page 378.

June 9

Part 4
AS HIS OWN BODY

Eph. 5:28-30

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

The unity in the marriage bond as expressed here dispels the errors of domination, inferiority, subjection, et cetera. It is the closest and most blessed unity known among men.

"The Lord Jesus has not been correctly represented in His relation to the church by many husbands in their relation to their wives, for they do not keep the way of the Lord. They declare that their wives must be subject to them in everything. But it was not the design of God that the husband should have control, as head of the house, when he himself does not submit to Christ. He must be under the rule of Christ that he may represent the relation of Christ to the church. If he is a coarse, rough, boisterous, egotistical, harsh, and overbearing man, let him never utter the word that the husband is the head of the wife, and that she must submit to him in everything; for he is not the Lord, he is not the husband in the true significance of the term."—*The Adventist Home*, page 117.

In what words is supreme self-love condemned? Eph. 5:28.

In what way does true marital love resemble the love of Christ for the church? Verse 29.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are you all that a married companion should be? Is it possible to cultivate before marriage the kind of character that would make for a happy marriage companionship?

"Instead of sinking into a mere household drudge, let the wife and mother take time to read, to keep herself well informed, to be a companion to her husband. . . . Let her use wisely the opportunities now hers to influence her dear ones for the higher life. Let her take time to make the dear Saviour a daily Companion and familiar Friend."

"The wife must not consider herself a doll, to be tended, but a woman; one to put her shoulder under real, not imaginary, burdens, and live an understanding, thoughtful life, considering that there are other things to be thought of than herself."—*The Adventist Home*," pages 110, 111.

June 10

Part 5
JOINED TOGETHER
BY GOD
Eph. 5:31, 32

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

The same quotation from Gen. 2:24 is found in Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:7, 8. Here is the basis of the beneficial institution of marriage, from which come the home, the family, and society.

"A great mystery. . . . Paul is saying that the revealed mystery of the union of husband and wife is indeed a great and profound truth, but that he is applying it to the union of Christ and His church. While human marriage can be understood, the mystic union of Christ and believer, though a revealed truth, is still beyond our complete apprehension; we still 'see through a glass, darkly' (1 Cor. 13:12)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:31, 32.

How close is the union of husband and wife said to be? Eph. 5:31. In what sense can the husband be "the head of the wife" (Eph. 5:23) and yet have unity and happiness in marriage? 1 John 3:23, last part.

THINK IT THROUGH

When two are contemplating marriage, what responsibilities are involved?

"The mission of the home extends beyond its own members. The Christian home is to be an object lesson, illustrating the excellence of the true principles of life. . . . As the youth go out from such a home, the lessons they have learned are imparted. Nobler principles of life are introduced into other households, and an uplifting influence works in the community.

"The home in which the members are

polite, courteous Christians exerts a far-reaching influence for good. Other families will mark the results attained by such a home, and will follow the example set. . . . Correct habits are formed. There is a careful recognition of the rights of others. The faith that works by love and purifies the soul stands at the helm, presiding over the whole household."—"The Adventist Home," page 31.

June 11

Part 6
FINAL APPEAL
Eph. 5:33

"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

The primary emphasis in the whole of Paul's comments in Ephesians 5 is on Christ's redeeming love for the church. If believers really understood the depth of that love, there would be fewer marital problems today. Can a husband love Christ supremely and be unkind to his wife and children? Can a wife understand Christ's love and fail in wifely loyalties in her home?

Both man and woman were created by and for God, and in Christ they are still His own. Col. 1:16, 17. In marriage they should act toward each other as Christ's redeemed children.

"Reverence. . . . Paul does not mean cringing fear; that would be out of keeping with the counsel he has been giving. This honor and respect that is urged in no way eliminates love on the part of the wife. It means that God's natural order in the family should not be subverted, and that the special function of leadership that God has laid upon the husband should be regarded. . . . Where there is mutual love and respect, questions of domination or alienation will not arise."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 5:33.

The home of Amram and Jochebed is an example of the influence of the home on the life of a great man—Moses. "She [Jochebed] faithfully improved her opportunity to educate her child for God. . . . The whole future life of Moses, the great mission which he fulfilled . . . , testifies to the importance of the work of the Christian mother. There is no other work that can equal this."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 243, 244.

How much should a husband love his wife? Should we expect this to be reciprocated by the wife? Eph. 5:25, 33.

To what extent do you think right parental attitudes affect the home?

THINK IT THROUGH

Is there any guarantee that a Christian home always produces good children, or a bad home bad children? Are the chances vastly in favor of the good home producing good children?

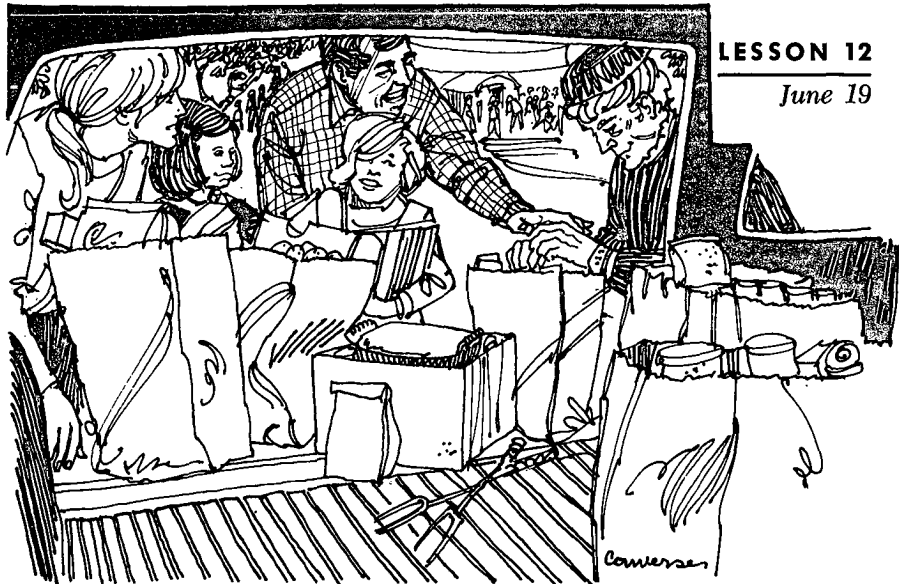
"There is no greater curse upon households than to allow the youth to have their own way. When parents regard every wish of their children and indulge them in what they know is not for their good, the children soon lose all respect for their parents, all regard for the authority of God or man, and

are led captive at the will of Satan. The influence of an ill-regulated family is widespread and disastrous to all society. It accumulates in a tide of evil that affects families, communities, and governments."—*"Patriarchs and Prophets,"* page 579.

Answers: (1) head of the wife, Christ is the head of the church; (2) A; (3) True; (4) God hath joined, put asunder; (5) They are the same flesh; (6) Father and mother.

-
6. Who of his intimate relatives will a man leave for his wife? _____
-
5. What additional motive is now presented supporting the exhortation that a husband love his wife? _____
-
4. Complete: "What therefore _____ together, let not _____ man _____."
-
3. True or False: Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. _____
-
2. Husbands should love their wives (A) as Christ loved the church, (B) as the wives love their husbands, (C) as they love their neighbors. _____
-
1. Complete: "For the husband is the _____ even as _____"
-

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



EXCELLENCE IN ENDEAVOR THROUGH CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES 12

"Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise."
Eph. 6:2.

Study Helps: *Messages to Young People*, pages 325-338; *The Adventist Home*, pages 211-215, 220-228, 231-243; *Steps to Christ*, chapter, "The Work and the Life"; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

This week we study valuable instruction to children and parents. Honor, discipline, and love are the basis of happy, disciplined lives. Spiritual renewal will come to our experience as we rethink these lessons, especially as we see their importance to our homes and our own times.

Think on the Writer: "Amid the constant storm of opposition, the clamor of enemies, and the desertion of friends, the intrepid apostle at times almost lost heart. But he looked back to Calvary, and with new ardor pressed on to spread the knowledge of the Crucified. . . . He sought no discharge from the warfare till he should lay off his armor at the feet of his Re-

deemer."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, page 148.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Message to Children**
Eph. 6:1, 2
2. **Reward of Obedience**
Eph. 6:3
3. **To Fathers About Children**
Eph. 6:4
4. **Instruction for Slaves**
Eph. 6:5-7
5. **Reward of the Worker**
Eph. 6:8
6. **Instruction to Masters**
Eph. 6:9

Part 1
MESSAGE TO
CHILDREN
Eph. 6:1, 2

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise."

One of the main principles of the theocracy of Israel was the education of the children in the religion of the living God. The underlying concept of that education was obedience to God and to parents. One of the Ten Commandments is specific. Ex. 20:12.

Parents in Israel were required to teach their children "diligently" the "commandments, the statutes, and the judgments." See Deut. 6:1, 7.

"The obligation resting upon children to honor their parents is of lifelong duration. If the parents are feeble and old, the affection and attention of the children should be bestowed in proportion to the need of father and mother. . . .

"Our obligation to our parents never ceases. Our love for them, and theirs for us, is not measured by years or distance, and our responsibility can never be set aside."—*The Adventist Home*, page 360.

"Young as he was when brought to minister in the tabernacle, Samuel had even then duties to perform in the service of God, according to his capacity. . . . His religion was carried into every duty of life. He regarded himself as God's servant, and his work as God's work."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 573.

How is the first duty of children described, and for what reason? Eph. 6:1; Ex. 20:12.

THINK IT THROUGH

What connection often exists between home training and the unrest among the youth of today? Is the early home training of little children important in our times?

"This is the first commandment with promise. It is binding upon childhood and youth, upon the middle-aged and the aged. There is no period in life when children are excused from honoring their parents. This solemn obligation is binding upon every son and daughter, and is one of the conditions to their prolonging their lives upon the

land which the Lord will give the faithful. This is not a subject unworthy of notice, but a matter of vital importance. The promise is upon condition of obedience. If you obey you shall live long in the land which the Lord your God gives you. If you disobey you shall not prolong your life in that land."—"Testimonies," Vol. 2, pp. 80, 81.

June 14

Part 2
REWARD OF
OBEDIENCE
Eph. 6:3

"That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

Obedience to God's commandments brings rich blessings. God promised blessings to Israel if they would diligently observe His commandments. Deut. 28:1-14.

"Well with thee. . . . Children are happier when they have learned obedience to parents, and all are happier when they have learned obedience to God.

"Live long. . . . A life that gains the blessing of God on this earth has promise of life everlasting.

"It is well recognized that a wholesome family life, of which obedience is a part, tends to the well-being of society and of nations. Obedience to Christian parents means sobriety, industry, self-control, and all those other virtues that bring both physical and spiritual health. Paul is stating a natural law as well as announcing special blessings of God upon the obedient. The vices that shorten life will not be found in the Christian home."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 6:3.

"It was their conscientious observance of the commands of Holy Scripture, that in the days of Jeremiah's ministry brought to Daniel and his fellows opportunities to exalt the true God before the nations of earth. The instruction these Hebrew children had received in the homes of their parents, made them strong in faith and constant in their service of the living God."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 428.

"Their [Israel's] obedience to the laws of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world. . . . If obedient, they would be preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations and would be blessed with vigor of intellect. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. . . . God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 222.

What is the main lesson in our text today? Compare Matt. 6:33; Deut. 4:40; 5:16. Have we all fully experienced the blessing of obedience?

THINK IT THROUGH

Have our own young people realized that not to obey their parents is to violate God's law? Do they realize that in the judgment they will have to give account for disobedience to their parents?

"Children who dishonor and disobey their parents, and disregard their advice and instruction, can have no part in the earth made new. The purified new earth will be no place for the rebellious, the disobedient, the ungrateful, son or daughter. . . .

"These plain teachings they must meet in the judgment. Yet there is not one young man or young woman in twenty professing the present truth who heeds these Bible teachings."—"Testimonies," Vol. 1, pp. 497, 498.

**Part 3
TO FATHERS
ABOUT CHILDREN
Eph. 6:4**

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Parents are reminded of two duties to their children, one a negative and the other a positive. Training children is a task that is neither easily nor rapidly done. Parents must remember that patience is a great part of teaching. Vexatious commands, incessant teasing, hasty blame and reproof, displays of temper—these are all provocation to children. Rather, show children and young people appreciation and encouragement for the things they have done right.

Parents should remember that example carries far greater weight with children and young people than does advice. Parents' counsel should agree with their own way of life.

"Provoke not. . . . The parallel passage in Colossians gives the reason for this admonition . . . (Col. 3:21). The present low ebb of parental authority sometimes springs from unjust, irritating, or even brutal demands made by parents on children. . . . Another prolific cause of resentment . . . is the capricious, inconsistent demands of some parents. . . .

"Admonition. . . . Admonition encourages a child when he is in the right and warns him when he is in the wrong."*—SDA Bible Commentary, on Eph. 6:4.*

"Parents should be much at home. By precept and example they should teach their children the love and the fear of God; teach them to be intelligent, social, affectionate; to cultivate habits of industry, economy, and self-denial. By giving their children love, sympathy, and encouragement at home, parents may provide for them a safe and welcome retreat from many of the world's temptations."*—The Adventist Home, page 185.*

Tell the two points about which counsel is given. Enumerate the suggestions in the above quotations for giving direction to children and youth. What other elements besides patience are there in the teaching process? Define provocation in your own terms.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can parents of children and youth benefit from this lesson? What responsibility for the youth of the church do church members who are not parents have?

"Happy are the parents whose lives are a true reflection of the divine, so that the promises and commands of God awaken in the child gratitude and reverence; the parents whose tenderness and justice and long-suffering interpret to the child the love and justice

and long-suffering of God, and who by teaching the child to love and trust and obey them, are teaching him to love and trust and obey his Father in heaven."*—"Prophets and Kings," page 245.*

June 16

Part 4
INSTRUCTION
FOR SLAVES

“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.”

Eph. 6:5-7

Paul’s teaching of the gospel was not to start a revolution against the evil of slavery, but an evolution in moral thinking was begun which eventually broke the chains of human bondage. Christian concepts—that “God is no respecter of persons,” and that “all nations of men” were made of one blood (Acts 10:34; 17:27)—were incompatible with belief in slavery. As masters and slaves worshiped the same God (Eph. 4:6), in the same church, and recognized Jesus as their Lord (verse 5), all must have been convinced of the incongruity of the situation socially and spiritually.

The reference to diligence in endeavor, the spirit of the worker, and instruction to the masters, is relevant and useful to both employees and employers of our times.

“The sense of Christ’s Lordship ensures *honesty in work*. So the apostle continues: ‘Not with *eyeservice*, as *menpleasers*.’ . . . It is the common fault and temptation of servants in all degrees to observe the master’s eye, and to work busily or slackly as they are watched or not. Such workmen act as they do because they look to men and not to God. Their work is without conscience and self-respect. The visible master says ‘Well done!’ But there is another Master looking on who says ‘Ill done!’ . . . In His book of accounts there is a stern reckoning in store for deceitful dealers and the makers-up of unsound goods, in whatever handicraft or headcraft they are engaged.”
—G. G. Findlay, *Epistle to the Ephesians*, pages 390, 391.

What three qualities were to characterize the obedience of servants? What is meant by “eyeservice, as menpleasers”? See Matt. 23:5. Does this counsel apply only to slaves in Roman times, or to all men in all ages? What is the predominating feature that should characterize our Christian service? (“To the Lord,” Eph. 6:7. Compare Eph. 5:22.)

THINK IT THROUGH

Would there be some revolution in social relationships today if all Christians would practice fully the gospel principles in our text? Would it open doors to new hearts for the message of a soon-coming Saviour? What effect would come to employee-employer relations?

“Christianity makes a strong bond of union between master and slave, king and subject. . . . They have been washed in the same blood, quickened

by the same Spirit; and they are made one in Christ Jesus.”—“The Acts of the Apostles,” page 460.

June 17

Part 5
REWARD OF
THE WORKER
Eph. 6:8

"Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

The apostle now mentions the judgment, putting all men on the same level. See 2 Cor. 5:10. In the Roman world there were sharp differences in social status, but in the body of Christ this was not to be so. 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27, 28; Col. 3:11. A common human aspiration has been reward for service, but the world often bestows on drudgery little or no reward. Now Paul assures the slave of reward for the good deeds, if not in this world, in the next. To rob service wholly of reward lowers work into the desperation of forced drudgery. Although rewards are not really earned, yet God pictures at least some of His gifts as rewards. Rev. 22:12. This fact must have brought great joy to the slave.

"Knowing. The slave may have the assurance that his life and deeds are observed by Providence, and that the rewards that come to other men will be his also. The great spiritual certainties are the heritage of *all* believers."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 6:8.

The slave, as a member of the church, gets knowledge and understanding of life never before available to him. This knowledge will lead him to faith (Rom. 10:17), and faith to victory.

"Let a living faith run like threads of gold through the performance of even the smallest duties. Then all the daily work will promote Christian growth. There will be a continual looking unto Jesus. Love for Him will give vital force to everything that is undertaken. Thus through the right use of our talents, we may link ourselves by a golden chain to the higher world."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 360.

"But when the Master receives the talents, He approves and rewards the workers as though the merit were all their own. His countenance is full of joy and satisfaction. . . . For every service and every sacrifice He requites them, not because it is a debt He owes, but because His heart is overflowing with love and tenderness."—*Ibid.*, p. 361.

What great truth is now announced to the slave? On what new level of society did this status place him? In what sense are "bond" and "free" on the same level? See Acts 17:26.

THINK IT THROUGH

Besides the rewards and benefits from endeavor mentioned in the notes and texts of this lesson, what others have you experienced? Is there a connection between one's daily work and his religion?

June 18

Part 6
INSTRUCTION
TO MASTERS
Eph. 6:9

"And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him."

In the Christian community human rights vitally concern the relationships between members and groups. The high and low, the rich and poor, are all brothers in Christ. Even in servant-and-master relationships in Roman days the spirit of brotherhood was enjoined on all. The golden rule (Matt. 7:12) is to be put into practice. Every action is to take into account that both master and slave have the same Lord in heaven. At the bar of judgment He will ask both "What was done?" and "Who did it?" Then both good and bad deeds will meet their reward regardless of the status of the persons concerned. This kind of thinking and practice among masters and slaves put things entirely in a new light, and the prevailing social systems began to change.

"Forbearing threatening. Special instruction had been given the Hebrews on the treatment of servants (Lev. 25:39-43; Deut. 15:12-14; Jer. 34:14), and even more was expected of Christians, who had a fuller revelation of God in Christ Jesus as regards human relationships. Threatening implies fear and force, whereas the way of the gospel is the way of love. Threatening is usually the beginning of cruelty and must be entirely eliminated. It is a tremendous challenge to any administrator to exercise his authority in love rather than through power and force. It does not mean that he should not expect just service, but his warnings and discipline must be exercised with self-control and Christian charity. Respect for the personalities of others is one of the first evidences of the converted life."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 6:9.

What were the instructions the apostle had for the masters? Eph. 6:9. What were the masters to keep in mind as they dealt with the slaves? Col. 4:1.

THINK IT THROUGH

Was it easy for Roman slave owners to practice these Christian principles? Did slaves and masters need divine grace in these matters as we do today?

"Those who are the partakers of the grace of Christ will be ready to make any sacrifice, that others for whom He died may share the heavenly gift. They

will do all they can to make the world better for their stay in it. This spirit is the sure outgrowth of a soul truly converted."—"Steps to Christ," page 78.

Answers: (1) Obey, for this is right; (2) Prosperity, live long on the earth; (3) Provoke not children to wrath, rear children in nurture of the Lord; (4) As servants of Christ; (5) good thing, doeth, receive of the Lord; (6) Your Master also is in heaven.

6. Of what fact were the masters of servants reminded?

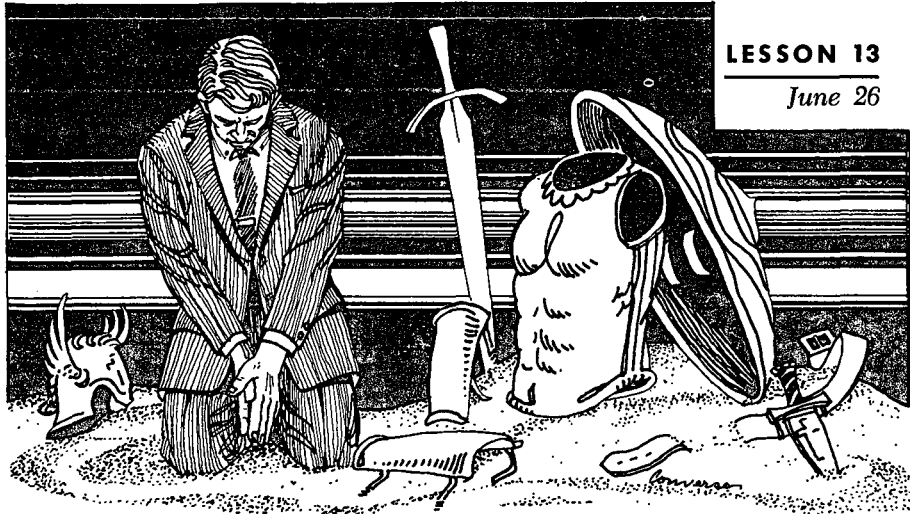
5. Complete: "Knowing that whatsoever _____, the same shall be _____"
_____ any man
4. What model of service was put before the servants?

3. What exhortation is given to the fathers?

2. What is the promise to those who obey this commandment?

1. What is the duty of children toward their parents? Why?

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



BE STRONG IN THE LORD 13

"Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Eph. 6:11.

Study Helps: *Prophets and Kings*, pages 171-176; *The Great Controversy*, pages 613-634; *SDA Bible Commentary*.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians we have studied some of the most profound truths expounded by the apostle Paul. These principles have affected the thinking of millions around the world for almost 2,000 years. The course of human history has undergone a radical change because of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and much credit is due to the apostle Paul as the chief human exponent of the Christian way.

In the lesson this week we study the apostle's final exhortation to the believers. The text is a Biblical classic; its profound significance for the believer in his struggle day by day has been of great inspiration and consolation to large numbers of Christians in all ages.

Think on the Writer: "No faithful hand recorded for the generations to come, the last scenes in the life of this holy man; but inspiration has preserved for us his dying testimony. Like a trumpet peal has his voice rung out through all the ages, nerv-

ing with his own courage thousands of witnesses for Christ, and wakening in thousands of sorrow-stricken hearts the echo of his own triumphant joy."—Ellen G. White, *Sketches From the Life of Paul*, page 334.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Be Strong in His Might**
Eph. 6:10, 11
2. **Fight Against the Powers of Darkness**
Eph. 6:12
3. **The Whole Armor**
Eph. 6:13
4. **Belt, Breastplate, Shoes**
Eph. 6:14, 15
5. **Shield, Helmet, Sword**
Eph. 6:16, 17
6. **Victory Through Prayer**
Eph. 6:18-24

June 20

Part I
BE STRONG
IN HIS MIGHT
Eph. 6:10, 11

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Victory goes to the strong. Spiritual survival is a question of strong faith in Christ. The believers will be strong only in the might of God. Phil. 4:13. Paul always has confidence in the power of God (Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 6:4, 7), and thus he exhorts, "Be strong in the Lord." While believing in the power of God to save, the Christian must ever remember that there is an enemy to watch. 1 Peter 5:8. God always has a means for the salvation of the just, and it is the armor of God.

Ways by which the Christian can be strong in the Lord:

"I saw that the strength of the children of God is in their humility. When they are little in their own eyes, Jesus will be to them their strength and their righteousness, and God will prosper their labors."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, p. 307.

"God has strength and wisdom in store for those who seek for it earnestly, in faith believing."—*Ibid.*, p. 108.

"Faith in Christ's power will impart strength to sustain, and light to guide."—*Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 42.

"Remember that prayer is the source of your strength."—*Ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 243.

"None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 593, 594.

"If the Word of God were appreciated as it should be, both young and old would possess an inward rectitude, a strength of principle, that would enable them to resist temptation."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 319.

Repeat the two exhortations given by the apostle. How does the believer become "strong in the Lord"? 2 Tim. 2:1; 1 Cor. 16:13. What is the reason for putting on the "armor of God"? 1 Peter 5:8.

THINK IT THROUGH

Through what means are the believers to face the snares of Satan?

Some of the snares of Satan in our time are found in vague and fanciful interpretations of Scripture. Ellen G. White discusses many of these dangerous ideas in a chapter entitled "Snares of Satan" in "The Great Controversy," pages 518-530. The following excerpts give some idea of the content of the chapter (numbers in parentheses indi-

cate the pages): "To many, scientific research has become a curse" (522). "To keep the minds of men searching and conjecturing in regard to that which God has not made known" (523). "The fast-spreading belief that Satan has no existence as a personal being" (524). "Worldly wisdom teaches that prayer is not essential" (525).

June 21

Part 2
FIGHT AGAINST
THE POWERS
OF DARKNESS
Eph. 6:12

"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."

With his keen spiritual perception, the apostle saw troublous times coming, not only for the individual but also for the church. There is a fight to be carried on by the believer. 2 Tim. 4:7. There is constant enmity against the church. Rev. 12:17. The enemy stalks as prey those who fear God. 1 Peter 5:8. "Resist" is the watchword for the believer. 1 Peter 5:9.

"In the Word of God are represented two contending parties that influence and control human agencies in our world. Constantly these parties are working with every human being. Those who are under God's control and who are influenced by the heavenly angels, will be able to discern the crafty workings of the unseen powers of darkness. . . . They must give no place whatever to Satan and his angels.

"But unless we are constantly on guard, we shall be overcome by the enemy. Although a solemn revelation of God's will concerning us has been revealed to all, yet a knowledge of His will does not set aside the necessity of offering earnest supplications to Him for help, and of diligently seeking to cooperate with Him in answering the prayers offered."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1119.

"The prayer of Asa is one that every Christian believer may fittingly offer. . . . In life's conflict we must meet evil agencies that have arrayed themselves against the right. Our hope is not in man, but in the living God. With full assurance of faith we may expect that He will unite His omnipotence with the efforts of human instrumentalities, for the glory of His name. . . . We may gain the victory over every foe."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 111.

What should be the attitude of the Christian toward the forces of evil? Eph. 6:14; 1 Cor. 9:26. What is your understanding of the phrase "spiritual wickedness in high places"?

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways do you think the believer must resist evil? 1 Tim. 6:12.

"He [Satan] is now preparing for his last campaign against the church. All who seek to follow Jesus will be brought into conflict with this relentless foe. The more nearly the Christian imitates the divine Pattern, the more surely

will he make himself a mark for the attacks of Satan. . . .

"Christ will give strength to all who seek it. No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan."—"The Great Controversy," page 510.

June 22

Part 3
THE WHOLE ARMOR
Eph. 6:13

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

In the evil day. Does this imply a specific future day? In Eph. 5:16 Paul says, "because the days are evil." So his generation was evil. This was the thought of Jesus: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." In our world every day is an evil day in the sense that the Satanic hosts are always active.

The whole armor. God's armor must not be worn in part. David had less than a full armor when he fell into sin. See 2 Samuel 11; 12. Jacob had only partial armor when he deceived Isaac his father. Genesis 27. Peter was not fully armored when he denied his Lord. Matt. 26:69-75.

The Christian is vulnerable at many spots, and often that characteristic he thinks is his strongest turns out, under temptation, to be his weakest. As a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so the Christian is no stronger than his weakest element of character. In view of the variety of foes that must be met and the various weaknesses of the flesh, nothing less than the entire armor will suffice.

"Having done all. . . . Trusting in God never deprives one of the privilege of exerting his own God-given powers to the utmost. Although it is true that the battle will never be won without God's armor and power, neither will it be won without the cooperation of the human with the divine." [See *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 142.]

"It is the armor of God, because the possession of it is the direct result of the presence of God within. Where the Spirit of God inhabits our nature, His presence ensures our possession of this armor of proof.

"It is the armor of God because Jesus Christ, the God-man, was clothed in it, and in it defeated the foe. At any rate, we may learn what this armor is, and how best to use it, by studying the use Christ made of it."—*Speaker's Bible*, edited by James Hastings, on Eph. 6:13, pages 403, 404.

What danger is involved if the believer is clothed in only a part of the armor? What do the following mean to you: "withstand," "evil day," and "having done all, to stand"? See Luke 1:17, last part; 1 Tim. 6:12.

THINK IT THROUGH

How long will the Christian be involved in the warfare? How long will the warfare be carried on successfully?

"God's servants are to put on every piece of the Christian armor. We are not wrestling simply with human foes. God calls upon every Christian to enter the warfare and fight under His leadership, depending for success on the grace

and help of Heaven. . . . Never are we to yield to Satan's attacks. . . . In this warfare there is no release. . . . Those who are in Christ's service must watch every outpost."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. 9, pp. 219, 220.

June 23

Part 4
**BELT, BREAST-
PLATE, SHOES**
Eph. 6:14, 15

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

"Truth. . . . The truth spoken of here is more than personal honesty; it is the truth of God as it is lodged in the heart, appropriated, and acted upon. . . .

"Righteousness. Some apply this to the righteousness of Christ that covers the child of God; others, to the Christian's personal loyalty to principle. Both are essential for successful warfare. . . .

"Gospel of peace. . . . In this verse . . . the idea seems to be that of steadfastness in the Christian warfare. Hence the gospel, in this instance, is not so much the gospel to be proclaimed, but the gospel that has found lodgment in the heart of the Christian. . . . He stands firm on the knowledge of Christ incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended—the heart of the gospel, and the reason for peace."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 6:14, 15.

All of these figures used to define the Christian's armor are drawn from Roman soldiers' equipment, probably in the order in which the warrior put them on. In another place it is "the armor of light"; it all means to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and to live as He lived.

Does the warrior language of our lesson teach salvation by works? Does a peaceful Christian nevertheless have to fight evil? See James 4:7.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is the witness for truth relevant to man's problems today? How does truth become the Christian's personal possession?

"Truth has a power to elevate the receiver. If Bible truth exerts its sanctifying influence upon the heart and character, it will make believers more intelligent."—"Testimonies," Vol. 4, p. 545.

"The truth in the heart is a wellspring of life. It refreshes the weary and restrains vile thought and utterance."—"Ibid.," Vol. 5, p. 601.

"The truth of God is an anchor."—"Ibid.," Vol. 2, p. 304.

"The truth is designed to elevate the receiver, to refine his taste and sanctify his judgment. There should be a continual effort to imitate the society we expect soon to join; namely, angels of God who have never fallen by sin."—"Ibid.," Vol. 1, p. 216.

June 24

Part 5
SHIELD, HELMET,
WORD
Eph. 6:16, 17

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

The Roman shield protected the whole body against the enemy's arrows, sometimes heated or alight. Compare Ps. 120:4.

"Faith. . . . This faith is active, like the shield that is raised to catch the fiery darts; it is also passive in that it trusts in God for deliverance. Under the impact of temptation of any kind it is faith that restores confidence and enables one to carry on the battle. . . .

"Fiery darts. Ancient arrows sometimes had combustible materials, such as tow and pitch, ignited on the head of the shaft so as to set fire to whatever they hit. This is an appropriate image for the fiery temptations that come to the child of God. They may take the form of fear, discouragement, impatience, unholy thoughts, envy, anger, or any other vice. But faith in God, held aloft like a shield, catches them, snuffs out the flame, and makes them fall harmless to the ground."—SDA Bible Commentary, on Eph. 6:16.

"Paul knew that the higher Christian attainments can be reached only through much prayer and constant watchfulness, and this he tried to instill into their minds. But he knew also that in Christ crucified they were offered power sufficient to convert the soul and divinely adapted to enable them to resist all temptations to evil."—The Acts of the Apostles, page 307.

Name and describe the three weapons of Christian victory mentioned in the lesson. Quote some New Testament words showing that we are "kept [guarded] by the power of God through faith." 1 Peter 1:5.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why do you think Paul mentions only one weapon of attack (the sword) among numerous pieces of defensive armor? Is this to encourage Christians to adopt a stand for truth, and, when the attacks of the enemy are over, to be found still standing for God and truth?

"Many who should stand firm for righteousness and truth have manifested weakness and indecision. . . . Those who fail to grow in grace, not seeking to reach the highest standard in divine attainments, will be overcome.

"This world is to the Christian a land of strangers and enemies. Unless he

shall take for his defense the divine panoply and wield the sword of the Spirit he will become the prey of the powers of darkness. The faith of all will be tested. All will be tried as gold is tried in the fire."—"Testimonies," Vol. 5, p. 104.

June 25

**Part 6
VICTORY
THROUGH
PRAYER**

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Eph. 6:18-24

"Praying always" is linked with "all perseverance" and means effort or exertion in prayer. This is the case in all areas of spiritual life.

"For all saints" is all-inclusive. We should pray for those we naturally like and those we may not like.

"And for me" indicates Paul's conscious need for both words and courage. "Utterance" means not only words but wisdom in choosing and using them. Compare 1 Cor. 12:8, where Paul states that the Spirit gives "the word of wisdom."

"Prayer is not another weapon; rather, it is the spirit, the manner, in which the whole armor is to be worn and the battle fought. Paul is here urging it as a perpetual state of mind, a continuous attitude of communion with God (see Luke 18:1; Phil. 4:6; Heb. 4:16). . . .

"Perseverance in prayer is not for the purpose, by sheer persistence, of making God change His mind, in some such fashion as a begging child finally extracts what he wants from an unwilling parent. Perseverance in prayer, however, clearly indicates on the part of the suppliant a state of mind that gives God an opportunity to do things He could not safely do for him otherwise."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Eph. 6:18.

Is it natural and easy to pray unceasingly, or do we need the Holy Spirit's help in this?

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the main characteristics of acceptable prayer? See Matt. 7:7; James 1:6; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2.

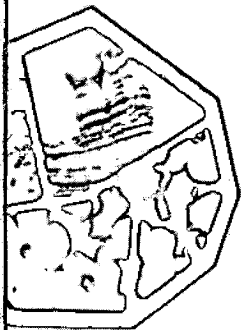
"Pray in faith. And be sure to bring your lives into harmony with your petitions, that you may receive the blessings for which you pray. Let not your

faith weaken, for the blessings received are proportionate to the faith exercised. . . . Pray, believe, rejoice."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. 7, p. 274.

Answers: (1) whole armor, stand, wiles; (2) Real; (3) Whole armor; (4, 5) A. truth, B. righteousness, C. gospel of peace, D. faith, E. salvation, F. Word of God; (6) Praying always.

- armor? _____
6. What act or attitude of devotion is to accompany the use of the Christian
- _____ (C) shoes _____
- _____ (B) breastplate _____
- _____ (E) helmet _____
- _____ (D) shield _____
- (A) belt _____
- proper words in the blank spaces:
- 4, 5. Each piece of armor had a spiritual quality as counterpart. Fill in the
3. How much of the Christian armor should the believer put on? _____
2. Is the believer's battle with evil real or imagined? _____
- able to _____ against the _____ of the devil."
1. Complete: "Put on the _____ of God, that ye may be

Part 7 ◇ **SUMMARY QUESTIONS** ◇ **A TEST OF YOUR STUDY POWER**



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Thirteenth Sabbath Offering

THE NEW AFRO-MIDEAST DIVISION

A Realignment of Nations

The Afro-Mideast Division, recipient of the offering overflow of the second quarter, 1971, was formed at the time of the General Conference Session held in Atlantic City in June, 1970. It includes the territory of the former Middle East Division, the Ethiopian Union, the East Africa Union, and the Tanzania Union. One hundred thirteen thousand church members live in this territory.

The offering overflow will be divided between two educational institutions which serve as training centers for the future workers and leaders of this vast territory. The Bugema Missionary College in Uganda, East Africa, is in desperate need of building and equipment if it is to continue to serve the increasing demands of this region.

Middle East College in Beirut, Lebanon, while offering a strong educational program, must increase its facilities as it seeks to serve the greatly increased constituency of the new division.

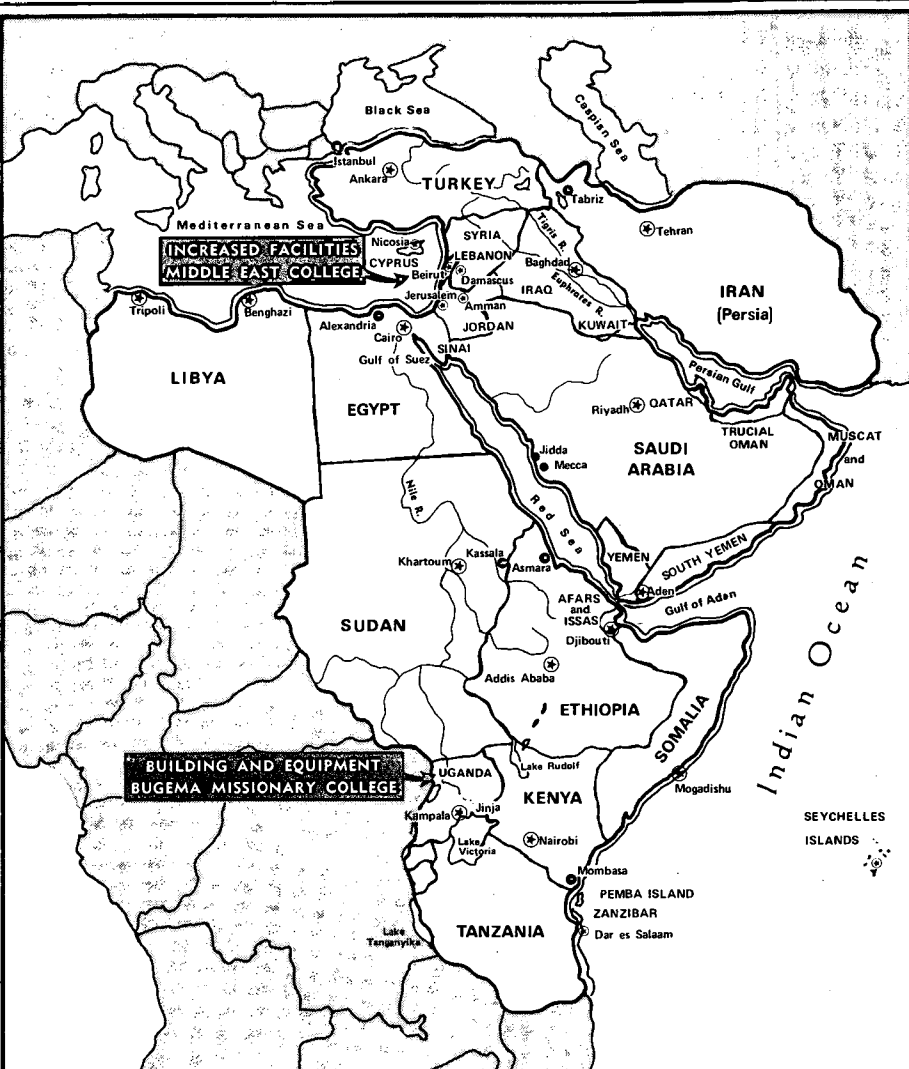
These projects are worthy of the sacrifice of each Sabbath School member. As you give, remember that you will be helping to prepare those who will finish the work of God in this vast territory.

Ray Jacobs, Secretary,
Afro-Mideast Division.

Lessons for the Third Quarter of 1971

Sabbath School members who have not received a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the third quarter of 1971 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The title of the series is "The Church and Its World Mission." The title of the first lesson is "A World in Revolt." The memory verse is 2 Corinthians 5:19.

The outline is as follows: (1) Sin Enters Heaven. Isa. 14:12-15. (2) God's Purpose in Creating This Earth. Isa. 45:18. (3) Controversy Transferred to This Earth. Rev. 12:7, 8, 12, 13. (4) Sin Enters This Earth. Rom. 5:12. (5) Man in Rebellion. Eph. 6:12; Rom. 3:23; Rom. 8:10. (6) Reconciling the World Unto God. Col. 1:20, 21.



AFRO-MIDEAST DIVISION

Union	Population	Churches	Church Memb.	Sab. Sch. Members
East African U.	17,494,570	396	74,207	167,001
Ethiopia U.M.	24,000,000	35	12,027	21,560
Middle East U.	134,550,000	42	3,404	4,457
Tanzania U.	12,231,342	142	23,596	43,353
Division Totals	188,275,912	615	113,234	236,371