

Families for Christ

*Sabbath Bible Lessons*

Senior Division

*October–December 2002*

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*Sabbath Bible Lessons*, a daily study program, is based solely on the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy without additional comments. The quotations are as brief as possible to provide concise, direct thoughts. Brackets [ ] are supplied in some cases to ensure clarity, proper context, and smooth readability. Further study in the source materials is strongly recommended.

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# Foreword

“One well-ordered, well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached. Such a family gives evidence that the parents have been successful in following God’s directions, and that their children will serve Him in the church. Their influence grows; for as they impart, they receive to impart again. The father and mother find helpers in their children, who give to others the instruction received in the home.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 32.

In the last quarterly we studied the early years of life. In the next three months we will study Christian character as it is developed in the home life. The career is set. The marriage has been performed. What happens now? What kind of family life should we have?

“Home is to be the center of the purest and most elevated affection. Peace, harmony, affection, and happiness should be perseveringly cherished every day, until these precious things abide in the hearts of those who compose the family. The plant of love must be carefully nourished, else it will die. Every good principle must be cherished if we would have it thrive in the soul. That which Satan plants in the heart—envy, jealousy, evil surmising, evil speaking, impatience, prejudice, selfishness, covetousness, and vanity—must be uprooted. If these evil things are allowed to remain in the soul, they will bear fruit by which many shall be defiled. Oh, how many cultivate the poisonous plants that kill out the precious fruits of love and defile the soul!”—*Ibid.*, pp. 195, 196.

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

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## First Sabbath Offering for Papua New Guinea

Originally inhabited by Papuan, Melanesian and Negrito tribes, New Guinea was first explored by Europeans in the 16th century when Spanish and Portuguese explorers were heading for the Pacific. The western half of the island came under Dutch control and is today part of Indonesia. The eastern half came under the control of Germany, Britain and Australia, and eventually achieved its full independence in 1975 as the nation of Papua New Guinea.

The work of Reformation started in this country only in 1996 with the visit of missionaries from Australia. The first interests were in the northern part of the country, but soon the call could be heard from across the vast tropical country. Subsequent visits by other Australian missionaries led to the establishment of the PNG Mission, which is part of the Australasian Union.

As we are mostly subsistence farmers, it is hard for our brethren to raise sufficient funds to build a missionary center ourselves. But we are confident that the Lord will touch your hearts to help us bring the Saviour to our countrymen.

“Never was there greater need of earnest, self-sacrificing labor in the cause of Christ than now, when the hours of probation are fast closing and the last message of mercy is to be given to the world.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5. p. 732.



### VITAL STATISTICS

- **Area:** 461,690 sq km (178,704 sq mi)
- **Population:** 5,049,055 (2001 est.)
- **Capital:** Port Moresby (pop. 250,000)
- **Literacy Rate:** 72.2%
- **Languages:** English, Tok Pisin (a Melanesian Creole English), Hiri Motu, and 717 distinctive native languages
- **Religions:** Over half are Christian, remainder indigenous beliefs

### ECONOMY

- **Monetary Unit:** Kina
- **GDP/PPP:** \$12.2 billion; \$2,500 per capita (2000 est.)
- **Inflation:** 17% (2000 est.)
- **Major Trading Partners:** Australia, Germany, Japan, U.K., South Korea, China, Singapore, New Zealand, USA

PROJECT 04B

*Your brethren from Papua New Guinea*

# The Greatest Evidence

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid” (Matthew 5:14).

“The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 32.

**Suggested Readings:** *The Adventist Home*, pp. 25–39.  
*Welfare Ministry*, pp. 35–49.

## Sunday

September 29

### 1. THE ORIGINAL PLAN

- a. **What was the first institution given by God to His creation? Genesis 2:23, 24. What did this relationship include? Genesis 1:27, 28. How did God describe all that He had created? Genesis 1:31.**

“As the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall ‘leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one’ (Genesis 2:24), He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time. That which the Eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 63, 64.

- b. **How long was this relationship to continue? Matthew 19:4–6.**

“[The marriage] vow links the destinies of the two individuals with bonds which naught but the hand of death should sever.

“Every marriage engagement should be carefully considered, for marriage is a step taken for life. Both the man and the woman should carefully consider whether they can cleave to each other through the vicissitudes of life as long as they both shall live.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 340.

## 2. OUR INFLUENCE ON ONE ANOTHER

- a. **What effect can our influence have on the family? Psalm 128:1–6; 1 Peter 3:1. Which influence will we choose?**

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“No member of the family can enclose himself within himself, where other members of the family shall not feel his influence and spirit. The very expression of the countenance has an influence for good or evil. His spirit, his words, his actions, his attitude toward others, are unmistakable. If he is living in selfishness, he surrounds his soul with a malarious atmosphere; while if he is filled with the love of Christ, he will manifest courtesy, kindness, tender regard for the feelings of others and will communicate to his associates, by his acts of love, a tender, grateful, happy feeling. It will be made manifest that he is living for Jesus and daily learning lessons at His feet, receiving His light and His peace.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 33, 34.

- b. **What effect can we have upon our church family? Acts 2:44–47; John 13:34.**

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“Remember that just as you are in your family, so will you be in the church. Just as you treat your children, so will you treat Christ. If you cherish an un-Christlike spirit, you are dishonoring God.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1131.

- c. **What commitment is needed in both the family and the church? Colossians 3:9, 10; Galatians 5:13.**

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“The happiness of families and churches depends upon home influences. Eternal interests depend upon the proper discharge of the duties of this life. The world is not so much in need of great minds as of good men who will be a blessing in their homes. . . .

“The truth lived at home makes itself felt in disinterested labor abroad. He who lives Christianity in the home will be a bright and shining light everywhere.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 37–39.

## 3. REACHING OUT

- a. **How far should the influence of our family and church reach? Galatians 2:10; James 2:6–8; 1:27.**

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“The first work of Christians is to be united in the family. Then the work is to extend to their neighbors nigh and afar off. Those who have received light are to let the light shine forth in clear rays. Their words, fragrant with the love of Christ, are to be a savor of life unto life.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 37.

- b. **How should we behave toward our neighbors? Galatians 5:14.**

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“God is displeased with the selfish interest so often manifested for ‘me and my family.’ Every family that cherishes this spirit needs to be converted by the pure principles exemplified in the life of Christ. Those who shut themselves up within themselves, who are unwilling to be drawn upon to entertain visitors, lose many blessings.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 344.

“We are in a world of sin and temptation; all around us are souls perishing out of Christ, and God wants us to labor for them in every way possible. If you have a pleasant home, invite to it the youth who have no home, those who are in need of help, who long for sympathy and kind words, for respect and courtesy. If you desire to bring them to Christ, you must show your love and respect for them as the purchase of His blood.”—*Ibid.*, p. 348.

“Unless there is practical self-sacrifice for the good of others, in the family circle, in the neighborhood, in the church, and wherever we may be, then whatever our profession, we are not Christians.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 504.

- c. **What will this accomplish? Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 3:2.**

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“Let the world see that we are not selfishly narrowed up to our own exclusive interests and religious joys, but that we are liberal, and desire them to share our blessings and privileges, through the sanctification of the truth. Let them see that the religion which we profess does not close up or freeze over the avenues to the soul, making us unsympathizing and exacting. . . . We shall then see many souls following the light that shines from our precept and example.”—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 295.

## 4. INTO ALL THE WORLD

a. What is our commission? Mark 16:15.

b. What is the best way to preach the gospel? 1 Timothy 4:12, 16.

“Character is power. The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence. By revealing in our own life the character of Christ we cooperate with Him in the work of saving souls. It is only by revealing in our life His character that we can cooperate with Him. And the wider the sphere of our influence, the more good we may do. When those who profess to serve God follow Christ’s example, practicing the principles of the law in their daily life; when every act bears witness that they love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, then will the church have power to move the world.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 340.

“God would have our families symbols of the family in heaven. Let parents and children bear this in mind every day, relating themselves to one another as members of the family of God. Then their lives will be of such a character as to give to the world an object lesson of what families who love God and keep His commandments may be.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 17.

c. Can we actually have an effect upon the society around us? John 13:35.

“Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are the ‘issues of life’; and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 15.

“One well-ordered, well-disciplined family is a greater power in demonstrating the efficiency of Christianity than all the sermons in the world.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1118.

“Our business in this world . . . is to see what virtues we can teach our children and our families to possess, that they shall have an influence upon other families, and thus we can be an educating power although we never enter into the desk. . . .

“A lamp, however small, if kept steadily burning, may be the means of lighting many other lamps.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 32, 33.

## 5. A SPECTACLE UNTO ANGELS

a. What effect do our positive actions have in heaven? 1 Corinthians 4:9; Hebrews 12:22; Matthew 5:19.

“Angels delight in a home where God reigns supreme and the children are taught to reverence religion, the Bible, and their Creator.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 28.

b. How do our sins and mistakes affect our heavenly Father and the other heavenly beings? Ephesians 4:30; Ezekiel 18:32.

“Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered. . . . Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him.”—*Education*, p. 263.

c. What should be our most important consideration? Romans 15:6. What is the opposite of this, which we must avoid? Matthew 10:33.

“In our mingling in society, in families, or in whatever relations of life we are placed, either limited or extended, there are many ways wherein we may acknowledge our Lord and many ways wherein we may deny Him. We may deny Him in our words, by speaking evil of others, by foolish talking, jesting and joking, by idle or unkind words, or by prevaricating, speaking contrary to truth.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 331, 332.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does God want to accomplish through the family unit?
2. How can we be a better influence in our homes and church?
3. What does God want you to understand about the blessings he bestows?
4. How can the family have an impact on the world?
5. How do you affect the heavenly family in your everyday life?

# How Can We Be a Demonstration?

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

“Before the world, God is developing us as living witnesses to what men and women may become through the grace of Christ.”—*The Signs of the Times*, September 3, 1902.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Adventist Home*, pp. 279–302.

## Sunday

October 6

### 1. PARTNERS IN THE CAUSE

- a. **Before we can help anyone else, what must take place in our own lives individually? Psalm 51:10, 13; Hebrews 8:10.**

“Not until parents themselves walk in the law of the Lord with perfect hearts will they be prepared to command their children after them.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 143.

- b. **What commitment must be understood as we endeavor to work out God’s plan? Joshua 24:15.**

“The father’s duty to his children cannot be transferred to the mother. If she performs her own duty, she has burden enough to bear. Only by working in unison can the father and mother accomplish the work which God has committed to their hands.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 216.

- c. **What purpose are we to keep in mind as families and as a church? Isaiah 58:12; Jeremiah 6:16.**

“Like every other one of God’s good gifts entrusted to the keeping of humanity, marriage has been perverted by sin; but it is the purpose of the gospel to restore its purity and beauty.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 64.

## Monday

October 7

### 2. CHILDREN AS HELPERS

- a. **How should we view children? Psalm 127:3.**

“Christ placed such a high estimate upon your children that He gave His life for them. Treat them as the purchase of His blood.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 279.

- b. **What should be the goal for the parents as well as for the children? Proverbs 20:11.**

“Children are the heritage of the Lord, and the plan of redemption includes their salvation as well as ours. They have been entrusted to parents in order that they might be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that they might be qualified to do their work in time and eternity. . . . They are God’s property; He loves them, and calls upon you to cooperate with Him in helping them to form perfect characters.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 280.

“Children as well as parents have important duties in the home. They should be taught that they are a part of the home firm. They are fed and clothed and loved and cared for; and they should respond to these many mercies by bearing their share of the home burdens and bringing all the happiness possible into the family of which they are members.”—*Ibid.*, p. 282.

- c. **When does respect and obligation to our parents end? Colossians 3:20.**

“There is no period in life when children are excused from honoring their parents. . . . The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age.

“God cannot prosper those who go directly contrary to the plainest duty specified in His word, the duty of children to their parents. . . . If they disrespect and dishonor their earthly parents, they will not respect and love their Creator.

“When children have unbelieving parents, and their commands contradict the requirements of Christ, then, painful though it may be, they must obey God and trust the consequences with Him.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 292, 293.

### 3. THE SINGLES' POTENTIAL

#### a. Is it God's will that all should be married? 1 Corinthians 7:8, 9.

"In this age of the world, as the scenes of earth's history are soon to close and we are about to enter upon the time of trouble such as never was, the fewer the marriages contracted, the better for all, both men and women."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 366.

#### b. What purposes can be effectively fulfilled by singles? 1 Corinthians 7:32–35; 1 Peter 2:21.

"The salvation of souls will be the constant aim of those who are abiding in Christ."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 367.

"In the name of Christ the chosen twelve went out, as He had gone, 'to preach the gospel to the poor, . . . to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.'"—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 358.

#### c. What should our greatest desire be, whether married or unmarried? Luke 22:42; Psalm 40:8.

"To everyone there is given a work to do for the Master. To each of His servants are committed special gifts, or talents."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 282.

"Everyone who accepts Christ as his personal Saviour will long for the privilege of serving God. Contemplating what heaven has done for him, his heart is moved with boundless love and adoring gratitude. He is eager to signalize his gratitude by devoting his abilities to God's service. He longs to show his love for Christ and for His purchased possession. He covets toil, hardship, sacrifice. . . .

"There is a picture representing a bullock standing between a plow and an altar, with the inscription, 'Ready for either,' ready to toil in the furrow or to be offered on the altar of sacrifice. This is the position of the true child of God—willing to go where duty calls, to deny self, to sacrifice for the Redeemer's cause."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 502.

### 4. THE WHITE-HAIRED

#### a. How should the older members of our families be regarded? Proverbs 16:31; Leviticus 19:32.

"In these last days children are so noted for their disobedience and disrespect that God has especially noticed it, and it constitutes a sign that the end is near. It shows that Satan has almost complete control of the minds of the young. By many, age is no more respected. It is considered too old-fashioned to respect the aged."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 217, 218.

"Let the members of every family minister to their own relatives. When this is not possible, the work belongs to the church, and it should be accepted both as a duty and as a privilege. All who have Christ's spirit will regard the feeble and aged with special respect and tenderness."—*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 272.

#### b. What unique responsibilities are especially appropriate for these men and women of experience? Titus 2:2, 3; Psalm 71:9, 17, 18.

"[Aged persons] should lay aside anxiety and burdens, and occupy their time as happily as they can, and be ripening up for heaven."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 424.

"The most tender interest should be cherished toward those whose life interest is bound up with the work of God. Notwithstanding their many infirmities, these workers still possess talents that qualify them to stand in their lot and place. God desires them to occupy leading positions in His work. . . .

"As those who have spent their lives in the service of God draw near the close of their earthly history, they will be impressed by the Holy Spirit to recount the experiences they have had in connection with His work. . . .

"The Lord desires the younger laborers to gain wisdom, strength, and maturity by association with the aged laborers who have been spared to the cause. . . .

"May the Lord bless and sustain our old and tried laborers. May He help them to be wise in regard to the preservation of their physical, mental, and spiritual powers. . . . 'God has endowed you with the power of reason, and He desires you to understand and obey the laws that have to do with the health of the being. Do not be imprudent. Do not overwork. Take time to rest.'"—*Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 287–289.

5. THE CHURCH FAMILY

- a. What are the parallels between our blood family and our church family? Ephesians 4:11-16.

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“Teach the children and youth to respect themselves, to be true to God, true to principle; teach them to respect and obey the law of God.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 16.

“The family relationship should be sanctifying in its influence. Christian homes, established and conducted in accordance with God’s plan, are a wonderful help in forming Christian character.”—*Ibid.*, p. 19.

“On the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ’s stead. It is God’s instrumentality for the preservation of order and discipline among His people. . . .

“It may be that much work needs to be done in your character building, that you are a rough stone, which must be squared and polished before it can fill a place in God’s temple. You need not be surprised if with hammer and chisel God cuts away the sharp corners of your character until you are prepared to fill the place He has for you.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, pp. 263, 264.

- b. What does God desire to do through both agencies? Colossians 1:26, 27; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 3:3.

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“Before the world, God is developing us as living witnesses to what men and women may become through the grace of Christ.”—*The Signs of the Times*, September 3, 1902.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Before you can be a witness to the world, what must come first?
2. What part do children and youth have in this work?
3. How does God regard the unmarried?
4. How should you regard the advice and experience of the older members?
5. What is the purpose of the family and the church?

# What Is Needed

“Let [children] learn first to shew piety at home” (1 Timothy 5:4).

“Our work for Christ is to begin with the family in the home.”—*Maranatha*, p. 102.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies*, vol. 7, pp. 45–50.

1. LIFE-LONG COMMITMENT

- a. By His example, how did Christ show us what is needed in our relationships with one another? John 15:13; Philippians 2:2-8.

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“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.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 107.

“In your life union your affections are to be tributary to each other’s happiness. Each is to minister to the happiness of the other. This is the will of God concerning you.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 45.

- b. Of what is marriage a symbol? Isaiah 54:5; Ephesians 5:25.

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“Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, ‘Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.’”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 26.

- c. How long is this relationship to last? Hosea 2:19; Romans 7:2, 3.

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“Marriage is a step taken for life.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 340.

“This vow links the destinies of the two individuals with bonds which nought but the hand of death should sever.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 507.

## 2. LOVE IN ACTION

- a. **What speaks even louder than our words? Titus 2:7; 1 John 3:7-11.**

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“Divine truth exerts little influence upon the world, when it should exert much influence through our practice. The mere profession of religion abounds, but it has little weight. We may claim to be followers of Christ, we may claim to believe every truth in the word of God; but this will do our neighbor no good unless our belief is carried into our daily life. Our profession may be as high as heaven, but it will save neither ourselves nor our fellow men unless we are Christians. A right example will do more to benefit the world than all our profession.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 383.

“Actions speak louder than the most positive profession of godliness.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 579.

“Our words, our actions, our deportment, our dress, everything, should preach. Not only with our words should we speak to the people, but everything pertaining to our person should be a sermon to them, that right impressions may be made upon them, and that the truth spoken may be taken by them to their homes. Thus our faith will stand in a better light before the community.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 618.

- b. **What does Christ teach us regarding those to whom we are to extend our love? Matthew 5:44-48.**

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“You should help those who stand most in need of help, those who are less favorably situated, who are erring and faulty, and who may have injured you and tried your patience to the utmost. It is just such ones that Jesus pities, because Satan has more power over them and is constantly taking advantage of their weak points and driving his arrows to wound them where they are least protected. Jesus exercises His power and mercy for just such pitiable cases.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 75.

“As Christ has borne, and continues to bear, with our errors, our ingratitude and our feeble love, so should we bear with those who test and try our patience. Shall the followers of the self-denying, self-sacrificing Jesus be unlike their Lord? Christians should have hearts of kindness and forbearance.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 111.

## 3. THE REMNANT’S CHARACTERISTICS

- a. **What is the virtue so greatly needed in our lives? Hebrews 12:1.**

- b. **How can we have the patience to exercise when circumstances and individuals test us? Luke 21:19; Matthew 7:7.**

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“Self denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed, and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto.”—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 11.

“Whenever little annoyances and trials arise, ask God in silent prayer to give you strength and grace to bear them patiently. There is a power in silence; do not speak a word until you have sent up your petition to the God of heaven.”—*Historical Sketches*, pp. 157, 158.

“The abuses of the stomach by the gratification of appetite, are the fruitful source of most church trials. Those who eat and work intemperately and irrationally, talk and act irrationally. An intemperate man cannot be a patient man.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 50.

“Impatient words are spoken and unkind deeds are done, dishonest practices are followed and passion is manifested, and all because the nerves of the brain are diseased by the abuse heaped upon the stomach.

“Some cannot be impressed with the necessity of eating and drinking to the glory of God. The indulgence of appetite affects them in all the relations of life. It is seen in their family, in their church, in the prayer meeting, and in the conduct of their children. . . . God has bountifully provided for the sustenance and happiness of all His creatures; and if His laws were never violated, and all acted in harmony with the divine will, health, peace, and happiness, instead of misery and continual evil, would be experienced.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 53, 54.

“All should cultivate patience by practicing patience. By being kind and forbearing, true love may be kept warm in the heart, and qualities will be developed that Heaven will approve.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 106.

## 4. ANOTHER BUILDING BLOCK

- a. **What else is needed in order to be fit representatives of our gracious Lord? 1 Corinthians 9:26; 10:31.**

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“A practical knowledge of the science of human life is necessary in order to glorify God in our bodies. It is therefore of the highest importance that among the studies selected for childhood, physiology should occupy the first place. . . .

“Parents should arouse and in the fear of God inquire, What is truth? A tremendous responsibility rests upon them. They should be practical physiologists, that they may know what are and what are not correct physical habits, and be enabled thereby to instruct their children. The great mass are as ignorant and indifferent in regard to the physical and moral education of their children as the animal creation. And yet they dare assume the responsibilities of parents.

“Every mother should acquaint herself with the laws that govern physical life. . . . To parents is committed the sacred charge of forming the characters of their children in childhood. They should be to their children both teacher and physician. They should understand nature’s wants and nature’s laws.”—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 38, 39.

- b. **How does caring for the physical body affect our character development and witnessing? 3 John 2; Psalm 67:2; 1 Corinthians 9:27.**

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“Our habits of eating and drinking show whether we are of the world or among the number whom the Lord by His mighty cleaver of truth has separated from the world.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 58.

“Should we dress in plain, modest apparel without reference to the fashions; should our tables at all times be set with simple, healthful food, avoiding all luxuries, all extravagance; should our houses be built with becoming plainness, and furnished in the same manner, it would show the sanctifying power of the truth, and would have a telling influence upon unbelievers. But while we conform to the world in these matters, in some cases apparently seeking to excel worldlings in fanciful arrangement, the preaching of the truth will have but little or no effect. Who will believe the solemn truth for this time, when those who already profess to believe it contradict their faith by their works?”—*Ibid.*, p. 90.

## 5. WISDOM

- a. **What is necessary in order to rightly train a family and/or to relate properly to the church family and the world around us? Philipians 1:9; Colossians 1:9, 10.**

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“Children are committed to their parents as a precious trust, which God will one day require at their hands. We should give to their training more time, more care, and more prayer. They need more of the right kind of instruction.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 161.

- b. **What should we consider with regard to having a family and the size of the family? 1 Timothy 5:8.**

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“Parents should not increase their families any faster than they know that their children can be well cared for and educated.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 163.

- c. **What description is given of God’s wisdom, and how can we obtain it? James 3:17; 1:5.**

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“Give the Word its honored position as a guide in the home. Let it be regarded as the counselor in every difficulty, the standard of every practice. Will my brethren and sisters be convinced that there can never be true prosperity to any soul in the family circle unless the truth of God, the wisdom of righteousness, presides?”—*Child Guidance*, p. 509 .

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **What type of commitment is necessary in your life?**
2. **What is the most effective way to witness?**
3. **Describe a most essential virtue you must have and how you gain it.**
4. **What is the connection between your physical well-being and your ability to share Christ with others?**
5. **How can you know how to accomplish the tasks before you?**

# God's Description

“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord” (Genesis 18:19).

“One well-ordered, well-disciplined family is a greater power in demonstrating the efficiency of Christianity than all the sermons in the world.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1118.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 125, 140–144.

## Sunday

October 20

### 1. THE EXAMPLE OF ABRAHAM

- a. **How did Abraham order his household? Genesis 18:19; 26:5. What promise was given to him and to us if we follow the same guidelines? Genesis 28:14; Galatians 3:6–9.**

“Of Abraham it is written that ‘he was called the friend of God.’ . . . It is God that speaks. He who understands the thoughts afar off, and places the right estimate upon men, says, ‘I know him.’”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 140, 141.

- b. **What were Abraham's and his wife's attitudes? Hebrews 11:8–11.**

“Abraham's unquestioning obedience is one of the most striking evidences of faith to be found in all the Bible. . . . Relying upon the divine promise, without the least outward assurance of its fulfillment, he abandoned home and kindred and native land, and went forth, he knew not whither, to follow where God should lead.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 126.

- c. **How did Abraham lead so many individuals in the right way? Psalm 145:18.**

“Abraham, ‘the friend of God,’ set us a worthy example. His was a life of prayer.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 128.

## Monday

October 21

### 2. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WELL-ORDERED?

- a. **Describe heaven's first law. 1 Corinthians 14:40.**

“Order is heaven's first law, and the Lord desires His people to give in their homes a representation of the order and harmony that pervade the heavenly courts. Truth never places her delicate feet in a path of uncleanness or impurity.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 101.

- b. **How do we teach this? Romans 2:21.**

“Begin early to teach the little ones. . . . This work of teaching neatness and order will take a little time each day, but it will pay in the future of your children, and in the end it will save you much time and care.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 111.

- c. **If we have not been taught these habits, how can we learn them? James 1:5; Psalm 25:9, 12.**

“Help must be given . . . to those who seem to have no sense of the meaning and importance of cleanliness. They are to be taught that those who are to represent the high and holy God must keep their souls pure and clean, and that this purity must extend to their dress and to everything in their home, so that the ministering angels will have evidence that the truth has wrought a change in the life, purifying the soul and refining the tastes. Those who, after receiving the truth, make no change in word or deportment, in dress or surroundings, are living to themselves, not to Christ.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 22.

- d. **What else is included in the concept of godly order? Psalm 108:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:5–8.**

“How prevalent is the habit of turning day into night, and night into day. Many youth sleep soundly in the morning, when they should be up with the early singing birds and be stirring when all nature is awake. . . .

“If the youth would form habits of regularity and order, they would improve in health, in spirits, in memory, and in disposition.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 111, 112.

## 3. NEATNESS

- a. What did Jesus teach us about the small details of life? Luke 16:10; 24:1-3, 12; John 20:7.

“[The disciples] saw the shroud and the napkin, but they did not find their Lord. Yet even here was testimony that He had risen. The graveclothes were not thrown heedlessly aside, but carefully folded, each in a place by itself. . . . It was Christ Himself who had placed those graveclothes with such care. . . . In His sight who guides alike the star and the atom, there is nothing unimportant. Order and perfection are seen in all His work.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 789.

- b. Where is this to be implemented? Numbers 24:5-7.

“The home must be kept pure and clean. Unclean, neglected corners in the house will tend to make impure, neglected corners in the soul. . . .

“If parents desire their children to be pure, they must surround them with pure associations such as God can approve.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 114.

“Remember that in heaven there is no disorder, and that your home should be a heaven here below. Remember that in doing faithfully from day to day the little things to be done in the home, you are a laborer together with God, perfecting a Christian character.”—*Ibid.*, p. 110.

“The house of God is often desecrated, and the Sabbath violated by Sabbath-believers’ children. In some cases they are even allowed to run about the house, play, talk, and manifest their evil tempers in the very meetings where the saints should worship God in the beauty of holiness. And the place that should be holy, and where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness, and humility, is made to be a perfect Babylon, ‘confusion.’ This is enough to bring God’s displeasure and shut His presence from our assemblies.”—*Ibid.*, p. 540.

“While we are to guard against needless adornment and display, we are in no case to be careless and indifferent in regard to outward appearance. All about our persons and our homes is to be neat and attractive. The youth are to be taught the importance of presenting an appearance above criticism, an appearance that honors God and the truth.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 102.

## 4. GOOD DISCIPLINE

- a. What does discipline mean and what is its purpose? Hebrews 12:7-13.

“If you want the blessing of God, parents, do as did Abraham. Repress the evil, and encourage the good. Some commanding may be necessary in the place of consulting the inclination and pleasure of the children.

“To allow a child to follow his natural impulses is to allow him to deteriorate and to become proficient in evil. Wise parents will not say to their children, ‘Follow your own choice; go where you will, and do what you will’; but, ‘Listen to the instruction of the Lord.’ Wise rules and regulations must be made and enforced, that the beauty of the home life may not be spoiled.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 234.

- b. What is the difference between punishment and training? Deuteronomy 21:18-21; Proverbs 22:6.

“Children are the heritage of the Lord, and unless parents give them such a training as will enable them to keep the way of the Lord, they neglect solemn duty.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 229.

“Parents, you should commence your first lesson of discipline when your children are babes in your arms. Teach them to yield their will to yours. This can be done by bearing an even hand and manifesting firmness. Parents should have perfect control over their own spirits and, with mildness and yet firmness, bend the will of the child until it shall expect nothing else but to yield to their wishes.”—*Ibid.*, p. 230.

- c. What is the result if we are unbalanced in our training? Proverbs 13:24.

“The parent or teacher who . . . trains the child to self-control will be the most useful and permanently successful. . . .

“To direct the child’s development without hindering it by undue control should be the study of both parent and teacher. Too much management is as bad as too little. The effort to ‘break the will’ of a child is a terrible mistake. Minds are constituted differently; while force may secure outward submission, the result with many children is a more determined rebellion of the heart.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 209, 210.

5. THE WAY TO GO

- a. How do we know what to do? Jeremiah 33:3; Isaiah 30:21; Proverbs 3:5-7.

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- b. Why can we be sure we are not alone in following God’s counsels to train up our children both in the family and in the church? Isaiah 41:10; 40:28-31; Philippians 2:13.

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“Your compassionate Redeemer is watching you with love and sympathy, ready to hear your prayers and to render you the assistance which you need. . . .

“Parents may understand that as they follow God’s directions in the training of their children, they will receive help from on high. They receive much benefit; for as they teach, they learn. . . .

“Parents, are you working with unflinching energy in behalf of your children? The God of heaven marks your solicitude, your earnest work, your constant watchfulness. He hears your prayers. With patience and tenderness, train your children for the Lord. All heaven is interested in your work. . . . God will unite with you, crowning your efforts with success.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 204, 205.

“Even if the character, habits, and practices of parents have been cast in an inferior mold, if the lessons given them in childhood and youth have led to an unhappy development of character, they need not despair. The converting power of God can transform inherited and cultivated tendencies; for the religion of Jesus is uplifting. ‘Born again’, means a transformation, a new birth in Christ Jesus. . . .

“He knows that you are doing the best you can, and He will increase your power. He will Himself do the part of the work that the mother or father cannot do.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 206, 207.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What can you learn from Abraham regarding family training?
2. What is heaven’s first law and what does it include?
3. Explain the relationship between the little details of daily life and your spiritual condition.
4. What is true discipline?
5. How can you accomplish God’s design in your family?

First Sabbath Offering

Literature for poor countries



Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18).

“God works by means of instruments, or second causes. He uses the gospel ministry, medical missionary work, and the publications containing present truth to impress hearts. All are made effectual by means of faith. As the truth is heard or read, the Holy Spirit sends it home to those who hear and read with an earnest desire to know what is right.”—*Evangelism*, p. 547.

“Papers and books are the Lord’s means of keeping the message for this time continually before the people. In enlightening and confirming souls in the truth, the publications will do a far greater work than can be accomplished by the ministry of the Word alone. The silent messengers that are placed in the homes of the people through the work of the canvasser, will strengthen the gospel ministry in every way; for the Holy Spirit will impress minds as they read the books, just as He impresses the minds of those who listen to the preaching of the Word.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 161, 162.

“Our publications should be printed in different languages and sent to every civilized country, at any cost. What is the value of money at this time, in comparison with the value of souls? Every dollar of our means should be considered as the Lord’s, not ours; and as a precious trust from God to us; not to be wasted for needless indulgences, but carefully used in the cause of God, in the work of saving men and women from ruin.”—*Life Sketches*, p. 214.

Dear brethren, sisters and friends: In light of these inspired statements, please remember the urgent need of means to spread the light of present truth to souls starving for the bread of life in poor countries around the world. When the First Sabbath Offering is collected on November 2, 2002, let us stretch forth our hands with open hearts for this timely work. May the Lord richly bless each gift and giver!

# God's Order

“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity” (1 Timothy 3:4).

“Never forget that you are to make the home bright and happy for yourselves and your children by cherishing the Saviour's attributes. If you bring Christ into the home, you will know good from evil. You will be able to help your children to be trees of righteousness, bearing the fruit of the Spirit.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 17.

**Suggested Readings:** *The Adventist Home*, pp. 211–228.  
Ibid., pp. 231–243.

## Sunday

October 27

### 1. CHRIST AS OUR EXAMPLE

- a. **How are we to live if we claim to be followers of Christ? 1 John 2:6. How can we do this? John 15:4, 5.**

“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. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. 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*, p. 69.

- b. **What should we realize about His help in our varying circumstances? Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:15, 16; 2 Corinthians 3:18.**

“Christ came to this world to show that by receiving power from on high, man can live an unsullied life. With unwearied patience and sympathetic helpfulness He met men in their necessities. By the gentle touch of grace He banished from the soul unrest and doubt, changing enmity to love, and unbelief to confidence.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 25.

## Monday

October 28

### 2. HUSBAND AS THE HEAD

- a. **Whom is the husband to represent to his family? Ephesians 5:25, 28, 29, 33.**

“Husbands should study the pattern and seek to know what is meant by the symbol presented in Ephesians, the relation Christ sustains to the church. The husband is to be as a Saviour in his family. Will he stand in his noble, God-given manhood, ever seeking to uplift his wife and children? Will he breathe about him a pure, sweet atmosphere?”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 117.

- b. **How is the husband to show Christ's character in the home? Matthew 20:26, 27.**

“All members of the family center in the father. He is the law-maker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues: energy, integrity, honesty, patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness. The father is in one sense the priest of the household. . . .

“To the man who is a husband and a father, I would say, Be sure that a pure, holy atmosphere surrounds your soul. . . . You are to learn daily of Christ. Never, never are you to show a tyrannical spirit in the home. The man who does this is working in partnership with satanic agencies. Bring your will into submission to the will of God. Do all in your power to make the life of your wife pleasant and happy. Take the word of God as the man of your counsel. In the home live out the teachings of the word. Then you will live them out in the church and will take them with you to your place of business.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 212–214.

- c. **What Bible rule is necessary in order that the family can function in the best possible way? 1 Timothy 3:2. In what area must we be especially guarded?**

“Polygamy had become so widespread that it had ceased to be regarded as a sin, but it was no less a violation of the law of God, and was fatal to the sacredness and peace of the family relation.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 145.

“If those who profess to be the depositaries of God's law become transgressors of its precepts, they separate themselves from God, and they will be unable to stand before their enemies.”—Ibid., p. 457.

### 3. HOW SHALL HE LEAD?

- a. What characteristics are needed by men? Psalm 103:13; 2 Timothy 2:24; 1 Peter 3:7.

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“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. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. 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*, p. 215.

“In life’s toilsome way let the husband and father ‘lead on softly,’ as the companion of his journey is able to endure. Amidst the world’s eager rush for wealth and power, let him learn to stay his steps, to comfort and support the one who is called to walk by his side.”—*Ibid.*, p. 218.

- b. How can we be sure that a father should nevertheless control his family? 1 Timothy 3:4, 5; 1 Samuel 3:13.

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“The children are to be taught that their capabilities were given them for the honor and glory of God. To this end they must learn the lesson of obedience; for only by lives of willing obedience can they render to God the service He requires. . . . Few parents begin early enough to teach their children to obey. . . . Wise parents will not say to their children, ‘Follow your own choice; go where you will, and do what you will’; but, ‘Listen to the instruction of the Lord.’ Wise rules and regulations must be made and enforced, that the beauty of the homelife may not be spoiled.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 172.

- c. How do these principles correspond with the various functions within the church? 1 Timothy 4:12 (last part).

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“No man can bring into the church an influence that he does not exert in his home life and in his business relations.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 179.

### 4. PUT ON KINDNESS

- a. Of what must fathers and all of us be careful in our relationships with both our blood and church families? Colossians 3:21.

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“Those who profess to be followers of Christ and are at the same time rough, unkind, and uncourteous in words and deportment have not learned of Jesus. A blustering, overbearing, faultfinding man is not a Christian; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike. The conduct of some professed Christians is so lacking in kindness and courtesy that their good is evil spoken of. Their sincerity may not be doubted; their uprightness may not be questioned, but sincerity and uprightness will not atone for a lack of kindness and courtesy. The Christian is to be sympathetic as well as true, pitiful and courteous as well as upright and honest.

“Any negligence of acts of politeness and tender regard on the part of brother for brother, any neglect of kind, encouraging words in the family circle, parents with children and children with parents, confirms habits which make the character unchristlike.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 427.

- b. Instead of provoking, what is a husband’s God-given responsibility? Ephesians 6:4.

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“If we would have our children practice kindness, courtesy, and love, we ourselves must set them the example. . . . No rude language should be indulged; no bitter words should be spoken. All may possess a cheerful countenance, a gentle voice, a courteous manner; and these are elements of power. . . . Your courtesy and self-control will have greater influence upon the characters of your children than mere words could have.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 421.

- c. What must be the role of men in the task of training the children in the home and in the church? Proverbs 1:7; 4:1; 13:1; 15:5.

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“The father’s duty to his children cannot be transferred to the mother. If she performs her own duty, she has burden enough to bear. . . . The father should not excuse himself from his part in the work of educating his children for life and immortality. He must share in the responsibility.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 216.

## 5. CHOOSING OUR PRIORITIES

- a. In today's busy society, what should influence the daily decisions we make? Joshua 24:15.

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"The Christian's first duty is in the home."—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 167.

"If you do only those things necessary to your temporal comfort and happiness, you will find time to read your Bible with prayerful interest and to perfect a Christian character."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 112.

- b. What should be kept in mind regarding the responsibility of providing food, clothing and shelter for our families? Matthew 6:33; Mark 4:19; Luke 21:34.

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"Souls are looking at you, fellow Christians, to see whether you are drunken with the cares of this life, or are preparing for the future, immortal life. They will watch to see what the influence of your life is, and whether you are true missionaries at home, training your children for heaven."—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 167.

"If you have given yourself to God, to do His work, you have no need to be anxious for tomorrow. . . . When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. We are taking upon ourselves the responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 100.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who should be the father's example and guide? How do you learn from God?
2. Who is the husband to represent in the family?
3. Explain how the father is to rule in the home.
4. Whose principle responsibility is it to work for the spiritual development of the family?
5. In order to accomplish God's plan, what must be your daily decision?

## God's Order Extended

"Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee" (Psalm 128:1, 2).

"The cause of division and discord in families and in the church is separation from Christ. To come near to Christ is to come near to one another."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 179.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Adventist Home*, pp. 114–120.

## 1. THE CHURCH FAMILY

- a. Describe God's plan both for individual families and for the church? Ephesians 3:14, 15; 2:19–22.

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"The secret of true unity in the church and in the family is not diplomacy, not management, not a superhuman effort to overcome difficulties—though there will be much of this to do—but union with Christ.

"Picture a large circle, from the edge of which are many lines all running to the center. The nearer these lines approach the center, the nearer they are to one another. Thus it is in the Christian life. The closer we come to Christ, the nearer we shall be to one another. God is glorified as His people unite in harmonious action."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 179.

"When religion is manifested in the home, its influence will be felt in the church and in the neighborhood."—*Ibid.*, p. 38.

- b. What is one purpose of the church family? Ephesians 4:12, 13.

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"God has appointed the church as a watchman. . . . The church has a special work to do in educating and training its children that they may not, in attending school, or in any other association, be influenced by those of corrupt habits."—*Child Guidance*, p. 312.

**2. THE GREATEST DUTY**

- a. Who is described as a person of great importance? Proverbs 31:10.

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“Woman should fill the position which God originally designed for her, as her husband’s equal. The world needs mothers who are mothers not merely in name but in every sense of the word. We may safely say that the distinctive duties of woman are more sacred, more holy, than those of man. Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and in the strength and fear of God take up her life mission.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 231.

- b. What is the mother’s role and why is it so important? Titus 2:4, 5.

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“The king upon his throne has no higher work than has the mother. The mother is the queen of her household. She has in her power the molding of her children’s characters, that they may be fitted for the higher, immortal life. An angel could not ask for a higher mission; for in doing this work she is doing service for God. Let her only realize the high character of her task, and it will inspire her with courage.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 231.

- c. Describe how the enemy seeks to weaken the family.

“If you ignore your duty as a wife and mother and hold out your hands for the Lord to put another class of work in them, be sure that He will not contradict Himself; He points you to the duty you have to do at home. If you have the idea that some work greater and holier than this has been entrusted to you, you are under a deception. By faithfulness in your own home, working for the souls of those who are nearest to you, you may be gaining a fitness to work for Christ in a wider field. But be sure that those who are neglectful of their duty in the home circle are not prepared to work for other souls.

“The Lord has not called you to neglect your home and your husband and children. He never works in this way; and He never will. . . . Never for a moment suppose that God has given you a work that will necessitate a separation from your precious little flock.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 245, 246.

**3. SUBMISSION—WHAT IS IT?**

- a. In these days of frequent preoccupation with “women’s rights,” what is Christ’s injunction to wives? Colossians 3:18; Ephesians 5:22–24.

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“In the creation, God had made [Eve] the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—they would ever have been in harmony with each other. . . .

“Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband’s side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God’s plan.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 115.

- b. Is this counsel of submission only for wives? Ephesians 5:21. Are there any conditions as to when is it right to submit and when is it wrong? Colossians 3:18; Acts 5:29.

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“God requires that the wife shall keep the fear and glory of God ever before her. Entire submission is to be made only to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has purchased her as His own child by the infinite price of His life. God has given her a conscience, which she cannot violate with impunity. Her individuality cannot be merged into that of her husband, for she is the purchase of Christ. It is a mistake to imagine that with blind devotion she is to do exactly as her husband says in all things, when she knows that in so doing, injury would be worked for her body and her spirit, which have been ransomed from the slavery of Satan. There is One who stands higher than the husband to the wife; it is her Redeemer, and her submission to her husband is to be rendered as God has directed—‘as it is fit in the Lord.’”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 116.

- c. Explain the purpose and meaning of submission. 1 Peter 3:8.

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“The wife, if she has the spirit of Christ, will be careful of her words; she will control her spirit, she will be submissive, and yet will not feel that she is a bondslave, but a companion to her husband.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 118.

## 4. MORE LOVE

- a. **What else is needed in the marriage, and in the church relationship? 1 Peter 3:1–4; Proverbs 31:26.**

“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. The consciousness of being appreciated is a wonderful stimulus and satisfaction. 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 attempt to exercise over the other an arbitrary control. Do not try to compel each other to yield to your wishes. You cannot do this and retain each other’s love. Be kind, patient, and forbearing, considerate, and courteous. By the grace of God you can succeed in making each other happy, as in your marriage vow you promised to do.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 361.

“Pray for the sweet, molding influence of the Holy Spirit. Let your lips be governed by the law of kindness. Refuse to be sour, uncourteous, unkind. . . . Do not serve the enemy of God by exhibiting a harsh, unkind spirit.”—*This Day With God*, p. 111.

- b. **How should her daily duties be viewed by the wife and by others? Proverbs 31:10–31.**

“The mother seldom appreciates her own work and frequently sets so low an estimate upon her labor that she regards it as domestic drudgery. She goes through the same round day after day, week after week, with no special marked results. She cannot tell at the close of the day the many little things she has accomplished. Placed beside her husband’s achievement, she feels that she has done nothing worth mentioning. . . . While the father has been dealing with the things which must perish and pass away, the mother has been dealing with developing minds and character, working not only for time but for eternity. . . . There are opportunities of inestimable worth, interests infinitely precious, committed to every mother. The humble round of duties which women have come to regard as a wearisome task should be looked upon as a grand and noble work. It is the mother’s privilege to bless the world by her influence, and in doing this she will bring joy to her own heart.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 232–234.

## 5. UNITY IN ACTION

- a. **What do all of us need in our relationships both in the family and in the church? Psalm 133:1; Ephesians 4:2, 3.**

“Parents are to work together as a unit. There must be no division. . . . It sometimes happens that, of the mother and father, one is too indulgent and the other too severe. This difference works against good results in the formation of the characters of their children. . . . If fathers and mothers are at variance, one working against the other to counteract each other’s influence, the family will be in a demoralized condition, and neither the father nor the mother will receive the respect and confidence that are essential to a well-governed family. . . . Children are quick to discern anything that will cast a reflection upon the rules and regulations of a household, especially those regulations that restrict their actions.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 312.

- b. **What are the results of disunity? Mark 3:25.**

“In these first disciples was presented marked diversity. They were to be the world’s teachers, and they represented widely varied types of character. In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these men, differing in natural characteristics and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ’s object to secure. To this end He sought to bring them into unity with Himself.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 20.

- c. **In what are we to be united? 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 2:4, 5; 3:18.**

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **Why does God give us family relationships?**
2. **What is the most important duty for the wife?**
3. **What is submission and how do you accomplish it?**
4. **What are some of the wonderful challenges given to the wife and mother?**
5. **How can we achieve the unity needed in the family and in the church?**

# The Church in Our Home

“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father” (2 John 4).

“The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 304.

**Suggested Reading:** *Child Guidance*, pp. 293–311.

## Sunday

November 10

### 1. PROPERLY TRAINED

- a. **What must we consider in determining our suitability as parents? Deuteronomy 6:5–8.**

“How startling is the proverb, ‘As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined.’ This is to be applied to the training of our children. Parents, will you remember that the education of your children from their earliest years is committed to you as a sacred trust? ... Home education is not by any means to be neglected.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 18.

- b. **What does the Lord desire to see in our homes? Colossians 3:12–14; 2 John 4.**

“God commanded the Hebrews to teach their children His requirements, and to make them acquainted with all His dealings with their people. The home and the school were one. In the place of stranger lips, the loving hearts of the father and mother were to give instruction to their children.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 18, 19.

“Every family is a church, over which the parents preside. The first consideration of the parents should be to work for the salvation of their children. When the father and mother as priest and teacher of the family take their position fully on the side of Christ, a good influence will be exerted in the home.”—*Ibid.*, p. 549.

## Monday

November 11

### 2. WHAT SHALL WE TEACH?

- a. **What is included in the mandate to “train up a child”? Exodus 24:12; Deuteronomy 4:1, 9, 10; 20:18.**

“There is a time for training children and a time for educating youth, and it is essential that in school both of these be combined in a great degree. Children may be trained for the service of sin or for the service of righteousness. The early education of youth shapes their characters both in their secular and in their religious life. Solomon says, ‘Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.’ This language is positive. The training which Solomon enjoins is to direct, educate, and develop.

“In order for parents and teachers to do this work, they must themselves understand ‘the way’ the child should go. This embraces more than merely having a knowledge of books. It takes in everything that is good, virtuous, righteous, and holy. It comprehends the practice of temperance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love to God and to one another. In order to attain this object, the physical, mental, moral, and religious education of children must have attention.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 297.

- b. **What parable gives us lessons in child training? Mark 4:28.**

“The gradual development of the plant from the seed is an object lesson in child training. There is ‘first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.’ . . . The work of parents and teachers is here suggested. They should aim so to cultivate the tendencies of the youth that at each stage of their life they may represent the natural beauty appropriate to that period, unfolding naturally, as do the plants in the garden. . . .

“The little ones should be educated in childlike simplicity. They should be trained to be content with the small, helpful duties and the pleasures and experiences natural to their years. . . . The children should not be forced into a precocious maturity but should retain as long as possible the freshness and grace of their early years.

“The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years. This is all that God expects of them. They need to be educated in spiritual things; and parents should give them every advantage that they may form characters after the similitude of the character of Christ.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 82–84.

**3. TRUE OR FALSE EDUCATION?**

- a. **What is the purpose of true education? Colossians 1:9, 10.**

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“True education means more than taking a certain course of study. It is broad. It includes the harmonious development of all the physical powers and the mental faculties. It teaches the love and fear of God and is a preparation for the faithful discharge of life’s duties. Proper education includes not only mental discipline, but that training which will secure sound morals and correct deportment. The first great lesson in all education is to know and understand the will of God. We should bring into every day of life the effort to gain this knowledge.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 293.

- b. **What should be our textbook and the foundation of all our education? 2 Timothy 3:15.**

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“The Bible should be the child’s first textbook. From this book, parents are to give wise instruction. The Word of God is to be made this rule of the life.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 41.

“God designed the Bible to be a lessonbook to all mankind, in childhood, youth, and manhood, and to be studied through all time. He gave His word to men as a revelation of Himself. . . . The study of the Scriptures is the means divinely ordained to bring men into closer connection with their Creator and to give them a clearer knowledge of His will. It is the medium of communication between God and man.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 69.

- c. **What fundamental truths must we be aware of in seeking to educate our children? 1 Corinthians 3:18–20; Colossians 2:8.**

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“There are two classes of educators in the world. One class is those whom God makes channels of light, and the other class is those whom Satan uses as his agents, who are wise to do evil. . . . In planning for the education of their children outside the home, parents should realize that it is no longer safe to send them to the public school, and should endeavor to send them to schools where they will obtain an education based on a Scriptural foundation.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 303, 304.

**4. LIFESTYLE**

- a. **What else is necessary for our own well-being and that of our families? Titus 2:12; Mark 6:31.**

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“An intensity such as never before was seen is taking possession of the world. In amusement, in money-making, in the contest for power, in the very struggle for existence, there is a terrible force that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking. He bids us come apart and commune with Him. “Be still and know that I am God.’ . . .

“Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need.”—*Education*, pp. 260, 261.

“The more quiet and simple the life of the child—the more free from artificial excitement, and the more in harmony with nature—the more favorable is it to physical and mental vigor and to spiritual strength.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 74.

- b. **How can we simplify our lives so that we can make time for being still? 1 Timothy 6:8.**

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“We must turn away from a thousand topics that invite attention. There are matters that consume time and arouse inquiry, but end in nothing.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 456.

“A great work was before [the disciples], and first of all they must learn that their strength was not in self, but in God. Like Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, like David among the hills of Judea, or Elijah by the brook Cherith, the disciples needed to come apart from the scenes of their busy activity, to commune with Christ, with nature, and with their own hearts.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 360.

“I was shown that Sabbathkeepers as a people labor too hard without allowing themselves change or periods of rest. Recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor and is still more essential for those whose labor is principally mental. It is not essential to our salvation, nor for the glory of God, to keep the mind laboring constantly and excessively, even upon religious themes. . . . Recreation in the open air, the contemplation of the works of God in nature, will be of the highest benefit.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 494–496.

## 5. KEEPING THE FOCUS

- a. What warnings has our Saviour given to us? Matthew 6:20; 1 Timothy 6:10.

“Money is not ours; houses and grounds, pictures and furniture, garments and luxuries, do not belong to us. We are pilgrims, we are strangers. We have only a grant of those things that are necessary for health and life. . . . Our temporal blessings are given us in trust, to prove whether we can be entrusted with eternal riches.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 367.

“God’s requirements come first. We are not doing His will if we consecrate to Him what is left of our income after all our imaginary wants have been supplied.”—*Ibid.*, p. 369.

“If we represent the character of Christ, every particle of selfishness must be expelled from the soul. In carrying forward the work He gave to our hands, it will be necessary for us to give every jot and tittle of our means that we can spare. . . . That which is spent for the gratification of pride in dress, in buildings, in furniture, and in decorations would relieve the distress of many wretched, suffering families. God’s stewards are to minister to the needy.”—*Ibid.*, p. 370.

“It is not necessary to specify here how economy may be practiced in every particular. Those whose hearts are fully surrendered to God, and who take His word as their guide, will know how to conduct themselves in all the duties of life. They will learn of Jesus, who is meek and lowly of heart; and in cultivating the meekness of Christ, they will close the door against innumerable temptations.”—*Ibid.*, p. 380.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What should be the fundamental purpose of the home and the church?
2. List some of the things that should be taught to our children.
3. What three areas of your life will be affected by true education?
4. Describe what your priorities in life should be.
5. What guidelines are helpful in family financing?

## A Paradise on Earth

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

“Home should be made all that the word implies. It should be a little heaven upon earth, a place where the affections are cultivated instead of being studiously repressed.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 15.

**Suggested Readings:** *The Adventist Home*, pp. 421–429.  
*Ibid.*, pp. 506–520.

## 1. A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN

- a. How can we have here on earth a little taste of heaven? Matthew 18:3; Colossians 3:16.

“Family religion is a wonderful power. . . . Hearts that are filled with the love of Christ can never get very far apart. . . . Only where Christ reigns can there be deep, true, unselfish love. Then soul will be knit with soul, and the two lives will blend in harmony. Angels of God will be guests in the home.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 94.

- b. What will happen as we enter into an abiding experience with Jesus everyday, and how can this be accomplished in our lives? Galatians 2:20; Colossians 2:6.

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

“When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed.”—*Ibid.*, p. 73.

## 2. SHOWING AFFECTION

- a. Describe what we need to cultivate in our homes and in our churches. Romans 12:10; 1 John 4:12.

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“Home is to be the center of the purest and most elevated affection. Peace, harmony, affection, and happiness should be perseveringly cherished every day, until these precious things abide in the hearts of those who compose the family. The plant of love must be carefully nourished, else it will die. Every good principle must be cherished if we would have it thrive in the soul. That which Satan plants in the heart—envy, jealousy, evil surmising, evil speaking, impatience, prejudice, selfishness, covetousness, and vanity—must be uprooted. If these evil things are allowed to remain in the soul, they will bear fruit by which many shall be defiled. Oh, how many cultivate the poisonous plants that kill out the precious fruits of love and defile the soul!”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 195, 196.

- b. What attitude must we have in order to have the kind of relationships described? 1 Corinthians 13:1–8.

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“Not all can go as missionaries to foreign lands, but all can be home missionaries in their families and neighborhoods. There are many ways in which church members may give the message to those around them. One of the most successful is by living helpful, unselfish Christian lives. Those who are fighting the battle of life at great odds may be refreshed and strengthened by little attentions which cost nothing. Kindly words simply spoken, little attentions simply bestowed, will sweep away the clouds of temptation and doubt that gather over the soul. The true heart expression of Christlike sympathy, given in simplicity, has power to open the door of hearts that need the simple, delicate touch of the spirit of Christ.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 485.

“Some parents—and some teachers as well—seem to forget that they themselves were once children. They are dignified, cold, and unsympathetic. . . . Such discipline is not Christlike. Children thus trained fear their parents or teachers, but do not love them; they do not confide to them their childish experiences. Some of the most valuable qualities of mind and heart are chilled to death, as a tender plant before the wintry blast.

“Smile, parents; smile, teachers. If your heart is sad, let not your face reveal the fact.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 147, 148.

## 3. WHAT SHOULD WE SPEAK?

- a. What kind of words should we use with each other? Philippians 1:27; James 4:11; Ephesians 4:25, 29–32.

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“The voice is an entrusted talent, and it should be used to help and encourage and strengthen our fellow men. If parents will love God and keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, their language will not savor of sickly sentimentalism. It will be of a sound, pure, edifying character. Whether they are at home or abroad, their words will be well chosen. They will descend to no cheapness.

“Every word spoken by fathers and mothers has its influence over the children, for good or for evil.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 434.

- b. How should we speak? 1 Thessalonians 2:7; 2 Chronicles 10:7.

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“Religion is love, and a Christian home is one where love reigns and finds expression in words and acts of thoughtful kindness and gentle courtesy.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 94.

“Parents should keep the atmosphere of the home pure and fragrant with kind words, with tender sympathy and love; but at the same time they are to be firm and unyielding in principle. If you are firm with your children, they may think that you do not love them. This you may expect, but never manifest harshness.”—*Ibid.*, p. 434.

“We must subdue a hasty temper and control our words, and in this we shall gain great victories. Unless we control our words and temper, we are slaves to Satan. We are in subjection to him. He leads us captive. All jangling and unpleasant, impatient, fretful words are an offering presented to his satanic majesty. And it is a costly offering, more costly than any sacrifice we can make for God; for it destroys the peace and happiness of whole families, destroys health, and is eventually the cause of forfeiting an eternal life of happiness.”—*Ibid.*, p. 437.

- c. How should we respond when receiving correction? Proverbs 8:33; 19:20.

## 4. HELPERS IN THE HOME

- a. **How does God want us to spend our time and energy? Colossians 3:23. What warnings are given against idleness? Ecclesiastes 10:18.**

“I have been shown that much sin has resulted from idleness. Active hands and minds do not find time to heed every temptation which the enemy suggests, but idle hands and brains are all ready for Satan to control. The mind, when not properly occupied, dwells upon improper things. Parents should teach their children that idleness is sin. . . .

“The minds of children are active, and if not occupied with that which is good and useful, they will inevitably turn to what is bad. While it is right and necessary for them to have recreation, they should be taught to work, to have regular hours for physical labour and also for reading and study. See that they have employment suited to their years and are supplied with useful and interesting books.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 284.

“Parents should by their example encourage the formation of habits of simplicity, and draw their children away from an artificial to a natural life.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 139.

- b. **What is the necessary principle we must keep in mind in choosing how we will spend our time? Ecclesiastes 11:9.**

“Educate men and women to bring up their children free from false, fashionable practices, to teach them to be useful. . . . There are plenty of necessary, useful things to do in our world that would make the pleasure-amusement exercise almost wholly unnecessary. Brain, bone, and muscle will acquire solidity and strength in using them to a purpose, doing good hard thinking, and in devising plans which shall train them [the youth] to develop powers of intellect and strength of the physical organs, which will be putting into practical use their God-given talents with which they may glorify God.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 321.

“I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone. I shrink always from the almost sure result which follows in the wake of these amusements. It leads to an outlay of means that should be expended in bringing the light of truth to souls that are perishing out of Christ.”—*Ibid.*, p. 322.

## 5. PREPARING FOR HEAVEN

- a. **In order to prepare to dwell in that holy place called heaven, what must we do now? Genesis 35:2; Colossians 2:5.**

“We should teach our children lessons in simplicity and trust. We should teach them to love, and fear, and obey their Creator. In all the plans and purposes of life His glory should be held paramount; His love should be the mainspring of every action.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 141.

- b. **What are some of the strange gods that should be put away before we are able to meet our Lord? 2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 21: 27.**

“There are amusements such as dancing, card playing, chess, checkers . . . which we cannot approve, because Heaven condemns them.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 514.

“Children are not to be trained to be the devotees of society. They are not to be sacrificed to Molech, but they are to become members of the Lord’s family. . . . They are not to have their minds all engrossed in the fashions and practices of the world. They are not to educate their children to attend parties and concerts and dances, to have and attend feasts, because after this manner the Gentiles walk.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 181.

“In the education of children and youth fairy tales, myths, and fictitious stories are now given a large place. . . . How can Christian parents permit their children to use books so filled with falsehood? . . . Never should books containing a perversion of truth be placed in the hands of children or youth.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 413.

“Some of the most popular amusements, such as football and boxing, have become schools of brutality. They are developing the same characteristics as did the games of ancient Rome.”—*Ibid.*, p. 500.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **Can you now have a little bit of heaven? How?**
2. **How does showing affection help your spiritual development?**
3. **What words should be in your home?**
4. **How can best function the home?**
5. **From what must you cleanse your life in order to be prepared to live in heavenly places?**

# God's Tools

“When he ascended up on high, he . . . gave gifts unto men. . . . For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:8, 12).

“Men were taught that it is possible to obey the law of God; that even while living in the midst of the sinful and corrupt, they were able, by the grace of God, to resist temptation, and become pure and holy.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 88.

**Suggested Readings:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 80–89.  
*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 354–376.

## Sunday

November 24

### 1. RESPECTING GOD'S METHODS

- a. **What are God's tools for the perfecting of His children? 1 Corinthians 12:28.**

“When Christ ascended to heaven, He left the work on earth in the hands of His servants, the undershepherds. [Ephesians 4:11–13 quoted.] 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. The work of Christ's servants is not merely to preach the truth; they are to watch for souls as they that must render account to God. They are to reprove, rebuke, exhort with long-suffering and doctrine.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 237.

- b. **How long will God use this method? Ephesians 4:13, 15. What is our responsibility? James 1:22.**

“I was shown that God had given light through the gifts placed in the church, which would instruct, counsel, guide, reprove, and warn. . . . To disregard light is to reject it. The rejection of light leaves men captives bound about by chains of darkness and unbelief.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 93.

## Monday

November 25

### 2. HEALTH AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

- a. **How does physical health relate to character development? 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6: 19, 20.**

“Let it ever be kept before the mind that the great object of hygienic reform is to secure the highest possible development of mind and soul and body. . . . Obedience to them will promote our happiness in this life, and will aid us in a preparation for the life to come.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 23.

“You need clear, energetic minds, in order to appreciate the exalted character of the truth, to value the atonement, and to place the right estimate upon eternal things. If you pursue a wrong course, and indulge in wrong habits of eating, and thereby weaken the intellectual powers, you will not place that high estimate upon salvation and eternal life which will inspire you to conform your life to the life of Christ.”—*Ibid.*, p. 47.

- b. **How should we respond to all of God's health instruction? Why? Proverbs 4:20–22.**

“There are but few as yet who are aroused sufficiently to understand how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their characters, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. I saw that it is the duty of those who have received the light from heaven, and have realized the benefit of walking in it, to manifest a greater interest for those who are still suffering for want of knowledge.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 51, 52.

- c. **Can we disregard any instruction if it is not convenient for us? Proverbs 1:5; 14:12.**

“There is danger in departing in the least from the Lord's instruction. When we deviate from the plain path of duty, a train of circumstances will arise that seems irresistibly to draw us further and further from the right.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 197, 198.

“There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the *Testimonies* as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the church.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 154.

## 3. HEALTH AND PRAYER

- a. What relationship exists between following God's health principles and having our prayers answered? Proverbs 28:9; 30:5.

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"God gave the light on health reform, and those who rejected it, rejected God."—*Special Testimonies*, Series B, Number 6, p. 31.

- b. Can we properly train our children and youth in our homes and churches while disregarding any of God's instruction? What will the results be? Psalm 119:138; Galatians 6:7.

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"Satan is constantly seeking to gain control of your bodies and spirits. . . . Yet some will say: 'What business is it to anybody what I eat or what I drink?' I have shown you what relation your course has to others. You have seen that it has much to do with the influence you exert in your families. It has much to do with molding the characters of your children. . . . You should be instructing them how to shun the vices and corruptions of this age. Instead of this, many are studying how to get something good to eat. You place upon your tables butter, eggs, and meat, and your children partake of them. They are fed with the very things that will excite their animal passions, and then you come to meeting and ask God to bless and save your children. How high do your prayers go? You have a work to do first. When you have done all for your children which God has left for you to do then you can with confidence claim the special help that God has promised to give you."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 359, 362.

"If light is turned from in one case, it will be disregarded in another. It is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the ten commandments, for we cannot do either without breaking God's law. We cannot love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength while we are loving our appetites, our tastes, a great deal better than we love the Lord."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 45.

"I saw that the reason why God did not hear the prayers of His servants for the sick among us more fully was, that He could not be glorified in so doing while they were violating the laws of health."—*Ibid.*, pp. 25, 26.

## 4. FURTHER EDUCATION

- a. By what other means can we honor our Creator? 1 Timothy 6:11.

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"The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 304.

"There is no education to be gained higher than that given to the early disciples, and which is revealed to us through the word of God. To gain the higher education means to follow this word implicitly; it means to walk in the footsteps of Christ, to practice His virtues. It means to give up selfishness and to devote the life to the service of God. Higher education calls for something greater, something more divine, than the knowledge to be obtained merely from books. It means a personal, experimental knowledge of Christ; it means emancipation from ideas, from habits and practices, that have been gained in the school of the prince of darkness, and which are opposed to loyalty to God. It means to overcome stubbornness, pride, selfishness, worldly ambition, and unbelief. It is the message of deliverance from sin."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 11, 12.

- b. What will be the result of this type of education? Proverbs 22:6; 3 John 4.

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"Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached. Before the student there is opened a path of continual progress. He has an object to achieve, a standard to attain, that includes everything good, and pure, and noble. He will advance as fast and as far as possible in every branch of true knowledge. But his efforts will be directed to objects as much higher than mere selfish and temporal interests as the heavens are higher than the earth."—*Education*, pp. 18, 19.

"It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that Christ desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and character."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 419.

5. PATRIARCHAL EXAMPLES

- a. In what ways did Enoch and Noah leave us examples to follow in these last days? Hebrews 11:5, 7; 2 Corinthians 4:18.

“Enoch’s walk with God was not in a trance or a vision, but in all the duties of his daily life. He did not become a hermit, shutting himself entirely from the world; for he had a work to do for God in the world. In the family and in his intercourse with men, as a husband and father, a friend, a citizen, he was the steadfast, unwavering servant of the Lord.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 85.

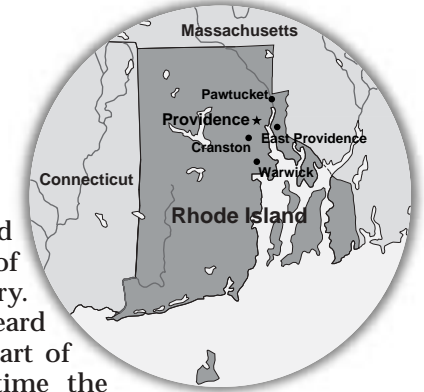
“In the midst of a life of active labor, Enoch steadfastly maintained his communion with God. The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were his prayers. He continued to exclude himself, at certain periods, from all society. After remaining for a time among the people, laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart. Communing thus with God, Enoch came more and more to reflect the divine image. His face was radiant with a holy light, even the light that shineth in the face of Jesus. As he came forth from these divine communings, even the ungodly beheld with awe the impress of heaven upon his countenance.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 86, 87.

“It was through Noah’s consistent faith and works combined that condemned the world. He not only preached the present truth appropriate for that time, but he acted every sermon. Had he never lifted his voice in warning, his works, his holy character among the corrupt and ungodly would have been condemning sermons to the unbelieving and dissolute of that age.”—*This Day With God*, p. 235.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are God’s tools for your perfection?
2. Explain the connection between health reform and character development.
3. Is there something that keeps God from answering your prayers?
4. What is to be the goal of education?
5. What can you learn from those who have lived before you?

First Sabbath Offering for Rhode Island, USA



The work in the New England states of the US has been one of development and deep history. This part of the country has heard the message from the earliest part of the last century. After some time the work was organized into an Eastern US Field, comprising the states east of the Mississippi River. This grew, and eventually the field was split into two portions: the Eastern US Field and the new Southeast US Field. The Eastern Field continued to develop and then was reorganized once more into two fields: the Eastern US Field, and the East-Central US Field.

VITAL STATISTICS

- Area: 2,706 sq km (1,045 sq mi)
- Population: 1,048,319 (2000 est.)
- Capital: Providence
- Languages: English, Spanish widely spoken

What remains of the Eastern US Field are the states of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. Now these brethren, who have helped to foster the work throughout the Eastern US, are working to further develop their territory. The message is spreading into new areas and this work needs your help.

This month’s First Sabbath Offering will be used for the further development of the mission work in the state of Rhode Island. Among the projects your funds will be used for is the refurbishing of the old Providence Church. Providence is the state capital. Once completed the new church, it will be able to serve as a center from which the work can spread throughout the region.

While Rhode Island is the smallest of the US states by area, it is nonetheless densely populated and highly industrialized. From its beginning it has been distinguished by its support for religious liberty. This month, please remember your brethren in the Eastern US Field as they seek to develop the work in this state.

*Your brethren from the Eastern US Field*

# Caring for the Flock

“Feed the flock of God which is among you” (1 Peter 5:2).

“Satan is marshalling his hosts; and are we individually prepared for the fearful conflict that is just before us? Are we preparing our children for the great crisis? Are we preparing ourselves and our households to understand the position of our adversaries and their modes of warfare?”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 186.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Adventist Home*, pp. 181–186.

## Sunday

December 1

### 1. GUARDING OUR FLOCK

- a. **Where did God place Adam and Eve and why? Genesis 2:8, 9, 15. After sin, what did God want Adam and Eve to do and to learn? Genesis 3:19, 23.**

“The home of our first parents was to be a pattern for other homes as their children should go forth to occupy the earth. . . . In the surroundings of the holy pair was a lesson for all time—that true happiness is found, not in the indulgence of pride and luxury, but in communion with God through His created works.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 132.

“Although the earth was blighted with the curse, nature was still to be man’s lesson book. It could not now represent goodness only. . . . From nature, which now revealed the knowledge of good and evil, man was continually to receive warning as to the results of sin.”—*Education*, p. 26.

- b. **Where is the best place to raise our family and why? Isaiah 32:18.**

“Be not controlled by the desire for wealth, the dictates of fashion, or the customs of society. Consider what will tend most to simplicity, purity, health, and real worth. . . . Instead of dwelling where only the works of men can be seen, where the sights and sounds frequently suggest thoughts of evil, where turmoil and confusion bring weariness and disquietude, go where you can look upon the works of God. Find rest of spirit in the beauty and quietude and peace of nature.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 131, 132.

## Monday

December 2

### 2. BEWARE OF INFLUENCE

- a. **In choosing our home and associations, what counsel does our Lord give us? 1 John 2:15.**

“Life in the cities is false and artificial. The intense passion for money getting, the whirl of excitement and pleasure seeking, the thirst for display, the luxury and extravagance—all are forces that, with the great masses of mankind, are turning the mind from life’s true purpose. They are opening the door to a thousand evils. Upon the youth they have almost irresistible power.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 135.

“In choosing a home, God would have us consider, first of all, the moral and religious influences that will surround us and our families. We should choose the society most favorable to our spiritual advancement, and avail ourselves of every help within our reach; for Satan will oppose many hindrances to make our progress toward heaven as difficult as possible. We may be placed in trying positions, for many cannot have their surroundings what they would; but we should not voluntarily expose ourselves to influences that are unfavorable to the formation of Christian character.”—*Ibid.*, p. 131.

“The physical surroundings in the cities are often a peril to health.”—*Ibid.*, p. 135.

“To parents [the Lord] sends the warning cry: Gather your children into your own houses; gather them away from those who are disregarding the commandments of God, who are teaching and practicing evil.”—*Ibid.*, p. 139.

- b. **What is a more subtle danger that we need to guard against? 2 Timothy 3:5.**

“If we place ourselves among associates whose influence has a tendency to make us forgetful of the high claims the Lord has upon us, we invite temptation and become too weak in moral power to resist it.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 459.

“We must not center our affections on worldly relatives, who have no desire to learn the truth. We may seek in every way, while associated with them, to let our light shine; but our words, our deportment, our customs and practices, should not in any sense be molded by their ideas and customs. We are to show forth the truth in all our intercourse with them. If we cannot do this, the less association we have with them the better it will be for our spirituality.”—*Ibid.*, p. 462.

**3. TRAINING OUR FLOCK**

- a. **What vocation has God often given His people? Why? Proverbs 27:18; Ecclesiastes 3:13.**

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“God provided the conditions most favorable for the development of character. The people who were under His direction still pursued the plan of life that He had appointed in the beginning. Those who departed from God built for themselves cities. . . . But the men who held fast God’s principles of life dwelt among the fields and hills. They were tillers of the soil and keepers of flocks and herds; and in this free, independent life, with its opportunities for labor and study and meditation, they learned of God and taught their children of His works and ways.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 181.

- b. **What does God still desire us to teach our children? Proverbs 12:11; 28:19.**

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“Working the soil is one of the best kinds of employment, calling the muscles into action and resting the mind. Study in agricultural lines should be the A, B, and C of the education given in our schools. This is the very first work that should be entered upon. . . . Had this course been followed, . . . the students would have secured an all-round education, which would have prepared them, not only for practical work in various trades, but for a place on the Lords’ farm in the earth made new.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 179, 177.

- c. **What kind of educational facilities are necessary to accomplish this type of education? Psalm 128:3, 4; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14, 15.**

“In His wisdom the Lord has decreed that the family shall be the greatest of all educational agencies. It is in the home that the education of the child is to begin. . . . One great reason why there is so much evil in the world today is that parents occupy their minds with other things than that which is all important—how to adapt themselves to the work of patiently and kindly teaching their children the way of the Lord. . . .

“It is in the home school that our boys and girls are to be prepared to attend the church school.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 182–185.

**4. ATTITUDES OF THE TIMES**

- a. **What must we also guard against in our thinking and behavior? 1 Timothy 6:3–5.**

- b. **What did Jesus warn us about, and how does this apply to today? Matthew 24:37, 38.**

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“What of the marriage relation today? Is it not perverted and defiled, made even as it was in Noah’s day? Divorce after divorce is recorded in the daily papers. This is the marriage of which Christ speaks when He says that before the Flood, they were ‘marrying and giving in marriage.’”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 56.

“As it was in the days of Noah, every kind of evil is on the increase. Divorce and marriage is the order of the time.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 261.

“Jesus came to our world to rectify mistakes and to restore the moral image of God in man. Wrong sentiments in regard to marriage had found a place in the minds of the teachers of Israel. They were making of none effect the sacred institution of marriage.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 341.

- c. **What should we keep in mind as we face the many varying attitudes of the times in which we live? Matthew 7:13–21; 2 Corinthians 11:13–15.**

- d. **Who only will be found entering the gates of heaven? Revelation 14:12.**

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“By beholding we become changed. By the indulgence of impure thoughts man can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 459.

“Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. . . . ‘Girding up the loins of your mind,’ says the apostle Peter, ‘be sober, . . . not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in . . . your ignorance: but like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living.’”—*Ibid.*, p. 460.

## 5. THE REWARD

- a. What is necessary to gain the reward? Joshua 24:15.
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- b. If we follow God's counsels, what are the promised results? Galatians 6:9.
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"If parents give their children the proper education, they themselves will be made happy by seeing the fruit of their careful training in the Christlike character of their children."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 533.

"With joy unutterable, parents see the crown, the robe, the harp, given to their children. The days of hope and fear are ended. The seed sown with tears and prayers may have seemed to be sown in vain, but their harvest is reaped with joy at last. Their children have been redeemed. Fathers, mothers, shall the voices of your children swell the song of gladness in that day?"—*Child Guidance*, p. 569.

- c. What is the other solemn warning concerning the day of reckoning? Jeremiah 2:4, 5, 9.

"'Weighed in the balance, and found wanting.' To many parents the Judge will say in that day, 'You had My Word, plainly setting forth your duty. Why have you not obeyed its teachings? Knew ye not that it was the voice of God? Did I not bid you search the Scriptures, that you might not go astray? You have not only ruined your own souls, but by your pretensions to godliness you have misled many others. You have no part with Me. Depart; depart.'"—*Child Guidance*, p. 569.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What dwelling will give the best place of safety to our flock?
2. From what influences should you separate?
3. What are the A.B.C.'s of God's educational plan?
4. As reformers, what attitudes must your influence work to correct?
5. What is the reward ahead for you?

## How Shall We Worship?

"O worship the Lord, in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth" (Psalm 96: 9).

"In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 189.

**Suggested Readings:** *The Great Controversy*, pp. 436–438.  
*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 491–500.

## 1. WHAT IS TRUE WORSHIP?

- a. Define true worship. Psalm 24:3, 4; John 4:23, 24; 1 Chronicles 16:29.
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"Although God dwells not in temples made with hands, yet He honors with His presence the assemblies of His people. He has promised that when they come together to seek Him, to acknowledge their sins, and to pray for one another, He will meet with them by His Spirit. But those who assemble to worship Him should put away every evil thing. Unless they worship Him in spirit and truth and in the beauty of holiness, their coming together will be of no avail. Of such the Lord declares, 'This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me' (Matthew 15:8, 9)."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 50.

"Religious instruction means . . . that you are to show in your life that Jesus is everything to you, and that His love makes you patient, kind, forbearing and yet firm in commanding your children after you, as did Abraham. Just as you conduct yourself in your home life, you are registered in the books of heaven. He who would become a saint in heaven must first become a saint in his own family."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 317.

- b. How serious a matter is it to ignore or neglect God's requirements? Matthew 15:8, 9; 7:21–23.
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**2. WHEN SHALL WE WORSHIP?**

- a. **What should be the practice of every individual and family? Psalm 29:2.**

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“If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. . . . And yet, in this time of fearful peril, some who profess to be Christians have no family worship. They do not honor God in the home; they do not teach their children to love and fear Him.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 517.

“In many cases the morning and evening worship is little more than a mere form, a dull, monotonous repetition of set phrases in which the spirit of gratitude or the sense of need finds no expression. The Lord accepts not such service. But the petitions of a humble heart and contrite spirit He will not despise. The opening of our hearts to our heavenly Father, the acknowledgment of our entire dependence, the expressions of our wants, the homage of grateful love—this is true prayer.”—*Ibid.*, p. 518.

“In every family there should be a fixed time for morning and evening worship. How appropriate it is for parents to gather their children about them before the fast is broken, to thank the heavenly Father for His protection during the night, and to ask Him for His help and guidance and watch care during the day! How fitting, also, when evening comes, for parents and children to gather once more before Him and thank Him for the blessings of the day that is past!”—*Ibid.*, p. 520.

- b. **What other time of worship is so important to us? Psalm 19:14.**

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“When the Sabbath commences, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord’s. We should not do ourselves, nor suffer our children to do, any manner of our own work for a livelihood or anything which could have been done on the six working days. . . . God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The Fourth Commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. . . . Fathers and mothers should make it a rule that their children attend public worship on the Sabbath, and should enforce the rule by their own example.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 529, 530.

**3. WHERE SHALL WE WORSHIP?**

- a. **In Leviticus 23:3, what distinct phrase does God use to describe His seventh day, the Sabbath of rest?**

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- b. **What can we learn from the Scriptures as to where we should worship? Matthew 18:20; Acts 2:46.**

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- c. **What should we remember about the place in which we worship our Creator? Psalm 111:9; Genesis 28:17 (last part).**

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“True reverence for God is inspired by a sense of His infinite greatness and a realization of His presence. . . . The hour and place of prayer are sacred, because God is there. . . . Well would it be for old and young to ponder those words of Scripture that show how the place marked by God’s special presence should be regarded. ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet,’ He commanded Moses at the burning bush, ‘for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground’ (Exodus 3:5). . . .

“The God of heaven is not, like the gods of the heathen, confined to temples made with hands; yet He would meet with His people by His Spirit when they should assemble at the house dedicated to His worship.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 48, 49.

“The house is the sanctuary for the family, and the closet or the grove the most retired place for individual worship; but the church is the sanctuary for the congregation. There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping. . . .

“Do not have so little reverence for the house and worship of God as to communicate with one another during the sermon. . . . There should be a sacred spot, like the sanctuary of old, where God is to meet with His people. That place should not be used as a lunchroom or as a business room, but simply for the worship of God.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 541–543.

## 4. HOW SHALL WE WORSHIP?

- a. What instructions are given to us regarding the manner of worshipping our Lord? Hebrews 12:28; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; Exodus 19:10.

“Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things, and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion. They can never, with their uncultivated ideas, appreciate a pure and holy heaven, and be prepared to join with the worshipers in the heavenly courts above, where all is purity and perfection, where every being has perfect reverence for God and His holiness. . . .

“When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. . . . Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers.”—*My Life Today*, pp. 285, 286.

“Do not have so little reverence for the house and worship of God as to communicate with one another during the sermon. . . . When the word of life is spoken, you should remember that you are listening to the voice of God through His delegated servant. Do not lose these words through inattention; if heeded, they may keep your feet from straying into wrong paths.”—*Messages to Young People*, p. 266.

- b. Along with having a correct state of mind and action as we come before our God, what else is necessary? Exodus 19:14.

“All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. . . . The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God. . . . All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 499.

## 5. WHY SHOULD WE WORSHIP?

- a. Who is blessed in the act of worship? Psalms 29:1, 2, 11; 138:1–3, 7, 8; Isaiah 57:15; Psalm 22:3.

“Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work. . . . He is their best friend; and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them, to bless and comfort them, filling their hearts with joy and love. . . . He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 103.

“The hour and place of prayer and the services of public worship the child should be taught to regard as sacred because God is there. And as reverence is manifested in attitude and demeanor, the feeling that inspires it will be deepened.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 539.

- b. Who else joins us in our worship? Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 4:8, 11; 5:11, 12; 7:9–17.

“There are invisible agencies observing every word and deed of human beings. In every assembly for business or pleasure, in every gathering for worship, there are more listeners than can be seen with the natural sight.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 176.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How is worship to be much more than simply a form that you repeat?
2. How often should you worship?
3. Is worship confined to only certain areas?
4. Can you come before God in any way you like?
5. What does worship do?

# Is It Easy?

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” (Ephesians 6:10).

“Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 72.

**Suggested Readings:** *Steps to Christ*, pp. 67–76.  
*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 453–461.

## Sunday

December 15

### 1. THE ENEMY'S ATTACK

- a. **Who are we fighting if we are seeking to do God's will? Ephesians 6:12.**

“There is little enmity against Satan and his works, because there is so great ignorance concerning his power and malice, and the vast extent of his warfare against Christ and His church.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 507.

- b. **Who is the enemy seeking to destroy and how does he propose to do this? Numbers 25:1, 2. What warning should we heed? 1 Corinthians 10:11, 12.**

“Satan is continually seeking to overcome the people of God by breaking down the barriers which separate them from the world. . . . All who are not decided followers of Christ are servants of Satan. In the unregenerate heart there is love of sin and a disposition to cherish and excuse it. In the renewed heart there is hatred of sin and a determined resistance against it.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 508.

“It was by associating with idolaters and joining in their festivities that the Hebrews were led to transgress God's law and bring His judgments upon the nation. So now it is by leading the followers of Christ to associate with the ungodly and unite in their amusements that Satan is most successful in alluring them into sin.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 458.

## Monday

December 16

### 2. PERSEVERE!

- a. **In this warfare, what must we remember? Luke 18:1.**

“Christian life is more than many take it to be. It does not consist wholly in gentleness, patience, meekness, and kindness. These graces are essential; but there is need also of courage, force, energy, and perseverance. The path that Christ marks out is a narrow, self-denying path. To enter that path and press on through difficulties and discouragements requires men who are more than weaklings.”—*Evangelism*, p. 479.

- b. **What will enable us to endure in this warfare and develop perseverance? 2 Peter 1:4; John 14:14.**

“The Scriptures are to be received as God's word to us, not written merely, but spoken. . . . So with all the promises of God's word. In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is ‘for the healing of the nations’ (Revelation 22:2). Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of the character, the inspiration and sustenance of the life. Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing besides can impart the courage and faith which give vital energy to the whole being.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 122.

“If we live according to His word, every precious promise He has given will be fulfilled to us. . . . But only as we live in obedience to His word can we claim the fulfillment of His promises. The psalmist says, ‘If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me’ (Psalm 66:18). If we render to Him only a partial, halfhearted obedience, His promises will not be fulfilled to us.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 226, 227.

- c. **What promises does our Father give us as we seek to develop families that will honor His name? Psalm 32:8.**

“Not only are the best beloved to receive particular attention, but also the restless, wayward children, who need careful training and tender guidance.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 276.

## 3. GOD'S GRACE

- a. As we see our weakness and insufficiency, what promise is especially important to us? 2 Corinthians 12:9.
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- b. What is God's grace? 1 Corinthians 1:4, 5; 2 Corinthians 9:8.
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"Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 161.

"To learn of Christ means to receive His grace, which is His character."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 271.

- c. What other promises are there for the partakers of His grace? Colossians 1:11; Philippians 1:6; Ephesians 1:19.
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"You are to *give* all—your heart, your will, your service—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must *take* all—Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper—to give you power to obey."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70. [Author's italics.]

- d. What circumstances, if any, are very difficult and seemingly impossible to change? Philippians 4:13.
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"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."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 362.

"The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Christ's Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 73.

## 4. HOW CAN I HAVE THIS HELP?

- a. How can I, my family, and my church have this experience with Jesus Christ? John 15:4, 5.
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"Do you ask, 'How am I to abide in Christ?' In the same way as you received Him at first. 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him' (Colossians 2:6). . . . Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, 'Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.' This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 69, 70.

- b. What must be our attitude? Acts 9:6.
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"Many who are really conscientious, and who desire to live for God, he [Satan] too often leads to dwell upon their own faults and weaknesses, and thus by separating them from Christ he hopes to gain the victory. We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved. All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears. . . . Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 71, 72.

"Then if Christ is dwelling in our hearts, He will work in us 'both to will and to do of His good pleasure' (Philippians 2:13). We shall work as He worked; we shall manifest the same spirit. And thus, loving Him and abiding in Him, we shall 'grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ' (Ephesians 4:15)."—*Ibid.*, p. 75.

"At times the heart may be ready to faint; but a living sense of the dangers threatening the present and future happiness of their loved ones should lead Christian parents to seek more earnestly for help from the source of strength and wisdom."—*Child Guidance*, p. 64.

## 5. CONSISTENCY

- a. What commands are given to us who have received such great light and blessing? Ephesians 5:1-8.

“It is the privilege of all to give to the world in their home life, in their customs and practices and order, an evidence of what the gospel can do for those who obey it. Christ came to our world to give us an example of what we may become. He expects His followers to be models of correctness in all the relations of life. He desires the divine touch to be seen upon outward things.

“Our own homes and surroundings should be object lessons, teaching ways of improvement, so that industry, cleanliness, taste, and refinement may take the place of idleness, uncleanness, coarseness, and disorder. By our lives and example we can help others to discern that which is repulsive in their character or their surroundings, and with Christian courtesy we may encourage improvement.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 196.

“The Lord’s workers cannot be too careful that their actions do not contradict their words; for a consistent life alone can command respect. If our practice harmonizes with our teaching, our words will have effect; but a piety which is not based upon conscientious principles is as salt without savor. To speak, and do not, is as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. It is of no use for us to strive to inculcate principles which we do not conscientiously practice.”—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 559, 560.

“The consistent life, the patient forbearance, the spirit unruffled under provocation, is always the most conclusive argument and the most solemn appeal.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 494.

“The pure influence of truth will elevate the whole man. . . . He will carry the sanctifying influence of the truth into his family and let his light so shine before them that they by seeing his good works may glorify God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 415, 416.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What makes the upward walk difficult?
2. How can you persevere and endure unto the end?
3. What is God’s grace and what will it do for you?
4. How can you have a changed life?
5. What will be the result of converted members of the family?

## Twin Institutions

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Hebrews 4:11).

“To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 350.

**Suggested Readings:** *Child Guidance*, pp. 527-537.  
*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 349-368.

## 1. THE FIRST GIFTS

- a. What blessed gifts did God give at creation? Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:2, 3.

“[Jesus] referred [His hearers] to the blessed days of Eden, when God pronounced all things ‘very good.’ Then marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 63.

- b. What does God desire in these last days? Acts 3:19-21.

“In both the Old and the New Testament the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people, the redeemed ones whom He has purchased at the cost of Calvary.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 64.

“In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored. . . . God’s remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 678.

## 2. THE CONNECTION

- a. What is the connection between the family and the Sabbath? Exodus 31:13-17; Deuteronomy 11:19.

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“The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God’s purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. It was God’s plan for the members of the family to be associated in work and study, in worship and recreation, the father as priest of his household, and both father and mother as teachers and companions of their children.”—*Education*, pp. 250, 251.

- b. How does our Sabbath preparation parallel with the preparation for the Lord’s coming? Will we be ready or unprepared? Amos 4:12.

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“I saw that we should not put off the coming of the Lord. Said the angel: ‘Prepare, prepare, for what is coming upon the earth. Let your works correspond with your faith.’”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 123.

“On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun let all secular . . . papers be put out of sight. . . . We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord’s day with quietness of mind. . . .

“There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church should be put away. . . . Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 355, 356.

## 3. A SPECIAL TIME—DON’T WASTE IT

- a. How should we spend the precious hours of the Sabbath? Psalm 95:1-11; Exodus 20:8-11.

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“Before the setting of the sun, let the members of the family assemble to read God’s Word, to sing and pray. . . . We need to confess to God and to one another. . . . This should be a day of blessing to us—a day when we should lay aside all our secular matters and center our thoughts upon God and heaven.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 529.

“The Sabbath school and the meeting for worship occupy only a part of the Sabbath. The portion remaining to the family may be made the most sacred and precious season of all the Sabbath hours. Much of this time parents should spend with their children.”—*Ibid.*, p. 532.

- b. What should we not allow on the Sabbath day? Isaiah 58:13.

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“None should permit themselves, through the week, to become so absorbed in their temporal interests, and so exhausted by their efforts for worldly gain, that on the Sabbath they have no strength or energy to give to the service of God. We are robbing the Lord when we unfit ourselves to worship Him upon His holy day. . . . Let not the precious hours of the Sabbath be wasted in bed. On Sabbath morning the family should be astir early.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 530.

“We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things. Overeating befogs the brain. The most precious words may be heard and not appreciated, because the mind is confused by an improper diet. By overeating on the Sabbath, many have done more than they think to dishonor God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 357.

“In order to keep the Sabbath holy, it is not necessary that we enclose ourselves in walls, shut away from the beautiful scenes of nature and from the free, invigorating air of heaven. . . . The mind cannot be refreshed, enlivened, and elevated by being confined nearly all the Sabbath hours within walls, listening to long sermons and tedious, formal prayers. The Sabbath of the Lord is put to a wrong use if thus celebrated.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 583.

## 4. ACTIVITIES TOGETHER

- a. **What are some special things to do on the Sabbath? Job 12:7–9; Psalm 150:1, 6.**

“Since the Sabbath is the memorial of creative power, it is the day above all others when we should acquaint ourselves with God through His works. In the minds of the children the very thought of the Sabbath should be bound up with the beauty of natural things. Happy is the family who can go to the place of worship on the Sabbath as Jesus and His disciples went to the synagogue—across the fields, along the shores of the lake, or through the groves. Happy the father and mother who can teach their children God’s written word with illustrations from the open pages of the book of nature; who can gather under the green trees, in the fresh, pure air, to study the word and to sing the praise of the Father above.

“By such associations parents may bind their children to their hearts, and thus to God, by ties that can never be broken.”—*Education*, p. 251.

“In pleasant weather let parents walk with their children in the fields and groves. Amid the beautiful things of nature tell them the reason for the institution of the Sabbath. Describe to them God’s great work of creation. . . . Tell them of the way of salvation. . . . Let the sweet story of Bethlehem be repeated. Present before the children Jesus, as a child obedient to His parents, as a youth faithful and industrious, helping to support the family. . . . From time to time read with them the interesting stories in Bible history. Question as to what they have learned in the Sabbath school, and study with them the next Sabbath’s lesson.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 358, 359.

- b. **What else must we include in our Sabbath activities? Hebrews 10:24, 25.**

“The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. God’s holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. . . . The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. . . . Man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

## 5. PREPARING FOR ETERNITY

- a. **What does the Sabbath foreshadow now? Hebrews 4:8–11; Isaiah 66:22, 23; Revelation 21:1.**

“[In the City of God] the redeemed shall ‘know, even as also they are known.’ The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul shall there find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together ‘the whole family in heaven and earth’—these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed. . . . The family of heaven and the family of earth are one.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 544.

- b. **Unto what words of instruction should we take heed in order to be prepared for the great day of God? 2 Peter 3:11–14.**

“‘Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.’ This is the message written in nature, which the Sabbath is appointed to keep in memory. . . . God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **What are the twin institutions which were given at creation and what are their purposes?**
2. **What is the connection between the family and the Sabbath?**
3. **How should you spend your time on the Sabbath day?**
4. **Describe some special activities to do together.**

# FIRST SABBATH OFFERINGS



OCTOBER 5  
for Papua  
New Guinea  
(See p. 4.)

NOVEMBER 2  
Literature for poor  
countries (See p. 25)



DECEMBER 7  
for Rhode Island,  
USA (See p. 51.)