

The Work and the Life

Memory Verse: “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John 1:12).

“The spirit of Christ’s self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss. This is the spirit that Christ’s followers will possess, the work that they will do.”—[Steps to Christ, p. 77](#).

Suggested Reading: *Steps to Christ*, chapter 9, pp. 77–83. (At the bottom of this page)

1. The Life and the Light

Sun, Aug 23

a. What is ignored by the natural heart—and with what result? John 1:4, 5.

John 1:4, 5

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 ¶ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

“God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, like the streams of water bursting from a living spring, blessings flow out from Him to all His creatures. And wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing.”—[Steps to Christ, p. 77](#).

b. When the love of Christ is cherished in the heart, what will be seen in the life? 2 Corinthians 2:14, 15; 5:14.

2 Corinthians 2:14, 15

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. 15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

2 Corinthians 5:14

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

“When the love of Christ is enshrined in the heart, like sweet fragrance it cannot be hidden. Its holy influence will be felt by all with whom we come in contact. The spirit of Christ in the heart is like a spring in the desert, flowing to refresh all and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the water of life.”—[Ibid.](#), p. 77.

“Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests, but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ, minister as He did for the benefit of men.”—[The Desire of Ages](#), p. 152.

2. Partakers of Grace

Mon, Aug 24

a. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, what need is supplied? John 1:12, 13; 1 Corinthians 1:4, 5; Romans 5:1, 2.

John 1:12, 13

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

1 Corinthians 1:4, 5

I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; 5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

Romans 5:1, 2

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

“Those who are the partakers of the grace of Christ will be ready to make any sacrifice, that others for whom He died may share the heavenly gift. They will do all they can to make the world better for their stay in it. This spirit is the sure outgrowth of a soul truly converted. No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell. Like Philip when he found the Saviour, we shall invite others into His presence.”—[Steps to Christ](#), p. 78.

b. When we are faced with problems and difficulties, what is the counsel of the apostle Paul? Hebrews 4:16.

Hebrews 4:16

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

“Jesus knows the needs of His children, and He loves to listen to their prayers. Let the children shut out the world and everything that would attract the thoughts from God, and let them feel that they are alone with God, that His eye looks into the inmost heart, and reads the desire of the soul, and that they may talk with God.”—[Sons and Daughters of God, p. 121](#).

c. Once we become a child of God, what do we owe to others? Romans 1:14, 15.

Romans 1:14, 15

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

“In what sense was Paul debtor both to the Jew and to the Greek? To him had been given the commission, as it is given to every disciple of Christ, ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.’ In accepting Christ, Paul accepted this commission. He realized that upon him rested the obligation of laboring for all classes of men—for Jew and Gentile, learned and unlearned, for those occupying high positions and for those in the most lowly walks of life.”—[The SDA Bible Commentary \[E. G. White Comments\], vol. 6, p. 1067](#).

3. Fruit of Conversion

Tue, Aug 25

a. If the Holy Spirit is in our hearts, what will be one of our first actions? John 1:41, 42.

John 1:41, 42

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

“We shall seek to present to [others] the attractions of Christ and the unseen realities of the world to come. There will be an intensity of desire to follow in the path that Jesus trod. There will be an earnest longing that those around us may ‘behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ John 1:29.

“And the effort to bless others will react in blessings upon ourselves. This was the purpose of God in giving us a part to act in the plan of redemption. He has

granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Creator.

“God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to the heavenly angels. He might have employed other means for accomplishing His purpose. But in His infinite love He chose to make us coworkers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry. We are brought into sympathy with Christ through the fellowship of His sufferings. Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others strengthens the spirit of beneficence in the giver’s heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world, who ‘was rich, yet for your sakes. . . . became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.’ 2 Corinthians 8:9. And it is only as we thus fulfill the divine purpose in our creation that life can be a blessing to us.”—[Steps to Christ, pp. 78–80](#).

b. What example of Christ should guide us in our relationships with relatives and neighbors? Galatians 6:9, 10; John 9:4.

Galatians 6:9, 10

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. **10** As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

John 9:4

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

“If you will go to work as Christ designs that His disciples shall, and win souls for Him, you will feel the need of a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness. You will plead with God, and your faith will be strengthened, and your soul will drink deeper drafts at the well of salvation. Encountering opposition and trials will drive you to the Bible and prayer. You will grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, and will develop a rich experience.”—[Ibid., p. 80](#).

4. Unselfish Work

Wed, Aug 26

a. Name one great danger for us as members of the church today. Malachi 3:8–10.

Malachi 3:8–10

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. **9** Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. **10** Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts,

if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

“At present [Sabbathkeeping Adventists’] greatest danger is in their accumulations of property. Some are continually increasing their cares and labors; they are overcharged. The result is, God and the wants of His cause are nearly forgotten by them; they are spiritually dead. They are required to make a sacrifice to God, an offering. A sacrifice does not increase, but decreases and consumes. . . . Much of the means among our people is only proving an injury to those who are holding on to it.”—[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 492.](#)

b. What Christian virtues help believers develop in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? 1 Peter 4:8–10; Hebrews 13:2.

1 Peter 4:8–10

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Hebrews 13:2

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

“The privilege granted Abraham and Lot is not denied to us. By showing hospitality to God’s children we, too, may receive His angels into our dwellings. Even in our day, angels in human form enter the homes of men and are entertained by them. And Christians who live in the light of God’s countenance are always accompanied by unseen angels, and these holy beings leave behind them a blessing in our homes.”—[Ibid., vol. 6, p. 342.](#)

c. What need must be filled by believers today? 2 Corinthians 10:16.

2 Corinthians 10:16

To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man’s line of things made ready to our hand.

“The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which, as yet, they have scarcely begun. None should move into new places merely for the sake of worldly advantage; but where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. They should feel a love for souls, a burden of labor for them, and should make it a study how to bring them into the truth. They can distribute our publications, hold meetings in their homes, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to these meetings. Thus they can let their light shine in good works.”—[Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, p. 245.](#)

“Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory.”—[The Acts of the Apostles, p. 111](#).

5. Faithful Representatives

Thur, Aug 27

a. What is expected of all those entrusted with the Gospel—and especially the workers? 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2; Revelation 2:10.

1 Corinthians 4:1, 2

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

Revelation 2:10

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

“It is the privilege of the watchmen on the walls of Zion to live so near to God, and to be so susceptible to the impressions of His Spirit, that He can work through them to tell sinners of their peril, and point them to the place of safety. Chosen of God, sealed with the blood of consecration, they are to rescue men and women from impending destruction. Faithfully are they to warn their fellowmen of the sure result of transgression, and faithfully are they to safeguard the interest of the church.”—[Gospel Workers, p. 15](#).

b. What example did Daniel set for today’s youth? Daniel 1:8, 15.

Daniel 1:8

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Daniel 1:15

And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat.

“The Lord would have us learn a lesson also from the experience of Daniel. There are many who might become mighty men if like this faithful Hebrew they would depend upon God for grace to be overcomers, and for strength and

efficiency in their labors. Daniel manifested the most perfect courtesy, both toward his elders and toward the youth. He stood as a witness for God, and sought to take such a course that he might not be ashamed for heaven to hear his words or to behold his works. When Daniel was required to partake of the luxuries of the king's table, he did not fly into a passion, neither did he express a determination to eat and drink as he pleased. Without speaking one word of defiance, he took the matter to God. He and his companions sought wisdom from the Lord, and when they came forth from earnest prayer their decision was made. With true courage and Christian courtesy, Daniel presented the case to the officer who had them in charge, asking that they might be granted a simple diet. These youth felt that their religious principles were at stake, and they relied upon God, whom they loved and served.”—[Testimonies to Ministers](#), p. 263.

Personal Review Questions

Fri, Aug 28

1. What condition of the world made it necessary for God to infuse light into it?
2. What marvelous change will be seen in the life of believers?
3. When a blessing is received, what should be the response?
4. Describe some ways by which each of us can serve others.
5. How is Daniel's faithfulness an inspiration to me?

Suggested Reading: Steps to Christ, chapter 9, pp. 77-83.

Chapter 9—The Work and the Life

God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, like the streams of water bursting from a living spring, blessings flow out from Him to all His creatures. And wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing. (SC 77.1)

Our Saviour's joy was in the uplifting and redemption of fallen men. For this He counted not His life dear unto Himself, but endured the cross, despising the shame. So angels are ever engaged in working for the happiness of others. This is their joy. That which selfish hearts would regard as humiliating service, ministering to those who are wretched and in every way inferior in character and rank, is the work of sinless angels. The spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss. This is the spirit that Christ's followers will possess, the work that they will do. (SC 77.2)

When the love of Christ is enshrined in the heart, like sweet fragrance it cannot be hidden. Its holy influence will be felt by all with whom we come in contact. The spirit of Christ in the heart is like a spring in the desert, flowing to refresh all and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the water of life. (SC 77.3)

Love to Jesus will be manifested in a desire to work as He worked for the blessing and uplifting of humanity. It will lead to love, tenderness, and sympathy toward all the creatures of our heavenly Father's care. **(SC 77.4)**

The Saviour's life on earth was not a life of ease and devotion to Himself, but He toiled with persistent, earnest, untiring effort for the salvation of lost mankind. From the manger to Calvary He followed the path of self-denial and sought not to be released from arduous tasks, painful travels and exhausting care and labor. He said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matthew 20:28. This was the one great object of His life. Everything else was secondary and subservient. It was His meat and drink to do the will of God and to finish His work. Self and self-interest had no part in His labor. **(SC 78.1)**

So those who are the partakers of the grace of Christ will be ready to make any sacrifice, that others for whom He died may share the heavenly gift. They will do all they can to make the world better for their stay in it. This spirit is the sure outgrowth of a soul truly converted. No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell. Like Philip when he found the Saviour, we shall invite others into His presence. We shall seek to present to them the attractions of Christ and the unseen realities of the world to come. There will be an intensity of desire to follow in the path that Jesus trod. There will be an earnest longing that those around us may "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. **(SC 78.2)**

And the effort to bless others will react in blessings upon ourselves. This was the purpose of God in giving us a part to act in the plan of redemption. He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Creator. **(SC 79.1)**

God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to the heavenly angels. He might have employed other means for accomplishing His purpose. But in His infinite love He chose to make us co-workers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry. **(SC 79.2)**

We are brought into sympathy with Christ through the fellowship of His sufferings. Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others strengthens the spirit of beneficence in the giver's heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world, who "was rich, yet for your sakes ... became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." 2 Corinthians 8:9. And it is only as we thus fulfill the divine purpose in our creation that life can be a blessing to us. **(SC 79.3)**

If you will go to work as Christ designs that His disciples shall, and win souls for Him, you will feel the need of a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness. You will plead with God, and your faith will be strengthened, and your soul will drink deeper drafts at the well of salvation. Encountering opposition and trials will drive you to the Bible and prayer. You will grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, and will develop a rich experience. **(SC 80.1)**

The spirit of unselfish labor for others gives depth, stability, and Christlike loveliness to the character, and brings peace and happiness to its possessor. The aspirations are elevated. There is no room for sloth or selfishness. Those who thus exercise the Christian graces will grow and will become strong to work for God. They will have clear spiritual perceptions, a steady, growing faith, and an increased power in prayer. The Spirit of God, moving upon their spirit, calls forth the sacred harmonies of the soul in answer to the divine touch. Those who thus devote themselves to unselfish effort for the good of others are most surely working out their own salvation. **(SC 80.2)**

The only way to grow in grace is to be disinterestedly doing the very work which Christ has enjoined upon us—to engage, to the extent of our ability, in helping and blessing those who need the help we can give them. Strength comes by exercise; activity is the very condition of life. Those who endeavor to maintain Christian life by passively accepting the blessings that come through the means of grace, and doing nothing for Christ, are simply trying to live by eating without working. And in the spiritual as in the natural world, this always results in degeneration and decay. A man who would refuse to exercise his limbs would soon lose all power to use them. Thus the Christian who will not exercise his God-given powers not only fails to grow up into Christ, but he loses the strength that he already had. **(SC 80.3)**

The church of Christ is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. Its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. And the obligation rests upon all Christians. Everyone, to the extent of his talent and opportunity, is to fulfill the Saviour's commission. The love of Christ, revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know Him not. God has given us light, not for ourselves alone, but to shed upon them. **(SC 81.1)**

If the followers of Christ were awake to duty, there would be thousands where there is one today proclaiming the gospel in heathen lands. And all who could not personally engage in the work, would yet sustain it with their means, their sympathy, and their prayers. And there would be far more earnest labor for souls in Christian countries. **(SC 81.2)**

We need not go to heathen lands, or even leave the narrow circle of the home, if it is there that our duty lies, in order to work for Christ. We can do this in the home circle, in the church, among those with whom we associate, and with whom we do business. **(SC 81.3)**

The greater part of our Saviour's life on earth was spent in patient toil in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth. Ministering angels attended the Lord of life as He

walked side by side with peasants and laborers, unrecognized and unhonored. He was as faithfully fulfilling His mission while working at His humble trade as when He healed the sick or walked upon the storm-tossed waves of Galilee. So in the humblest duties and lowliest positions of life, we may walk and work with Jesus. **(SC 81.4)**

The apostle says, "Let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God." 1 Corinthians 7:24. The businessman may conduct his business in a way that will glorify his Master because of his fidelity. If he is a true follower of Christ he will carry his religion into everything that is done and reveal to men the spirit of Christ. The mechanic may be a diligent and faithful representative of Him who toiled in the lowly walks of life among the hills of Galilee. Everyone who names the name of Christ should so work that others, by seeing his good works, may be led to glorify their Creator and Redeemer. **(SC 82.1)**

Many have excused themselves from rendering their gifts to the service of Christ because others were possessed of superior endowments and advantages. The opinion has prevailed that only those who are especially talented are required to consecrate their abilities to the service of God. It has come to be understood by many that talents are given to only a certain favored class to the exclusion of others who of course are not called upon to share in the toils or the rewards. But it is not so represented in the parable. When the master of the house called his servants, he gave to every man his work. **(SC 82.2)**

With a loving spirit we may perform life's humblest duties "as to the Lord." Colossians 3:23. If the love of God is in the heart, it will be manifested in the life. The sweet savor of Christ will surround us, and our influence will elevate and bless. **(SC 82.3)**

You are not to wait for great occasions or to expect extraordinary abilities before you go to work for God. You need not have a thought of what the world will think of you. If your daily life is a testimony to the purity and sincerity of your faith, and others are convinced that you desire to benefit them, your efforts will not be wholly lost. **(SC 83.1)**

The humblest and poorest of the disciples of Jesus can be a blessing to others. They may not realize that they are doing any special good, but by their unconscious influence they may start waves of blessing that will widen and deepen, and the blessed results they may never know until the day of final reward. They do not feel or know that they are doing anything great. They are not required to weary themselves with anxiety about success. They have only to go forward quietly, doing faithfully the work that God's providence assigns, and their life will not be in vain. Their own souls will be growing more and more into the likeness of Christ; they are workers together with God in this life and are thus fitting for the higher work and the unshadowed joy of the life to come. **(SC 83.2)**